

SUPERVISION, CULTURE, AND RELATIONSHIP: EXAMINING  
SUPERVISOR CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE WORKING  
ALLIANCE

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ABSTRACT

In the counseling profession, clinical supervision is utilized to facilitate the personal and professional development of counselors in training (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Within this supervisory relationship, supervisors must adhere to the 2015 ACA Code of Ethics, which describes the need for infusing cultural competence into both counseling and supervision practices. This emphasis is warranted; as the population of the United States is growing more diverse and cultural sensitivity in counseling will be needed in order to best serve clients. Both qualitative and quantitative research in various allied fields and settings suggest that supervisor cultural competence positively impacts the supervision working alliance (i.e., Ladany, Brittan-Powell & Pannu, 1997; Ancis & Marshall, 2010; Wong, Wong & Ishiyama, 2013). However, research conducted from the perspective of supervisors working in community settings is limited. This study sampled 78 community supervisors to address the dearth in the counselor education literature concerning the relationships between supervisor cultural competence and the working alliance. Results indicated an overall positively correlated relationship between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance. Additionally, the results suggested that supervisor cultural knowledge and supervisor multicultural skills are the greatest predictors of a strong working alliance, while supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness accounted for some variance. The results support the trend away from a competency-based model of cultural sensitivity and attention in counseling and toward a model of cultural humility.

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ABSTRACT (public)

In order for professional counselors to be effective, they must be prepared to offer services to clients who possess a wide range of diverse cultural characteristics. Much of the training and profession development of counselors happens in supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), and it is through a productive working relationship that the supervisor can best facilitate the cultural sensitivity of counselors-in-training. The level of cultural sensitivity that a supervisor possesses and the influence of that level of cultural sensitivity on the supervision relationship have not yet been studied. This research project examined the impact of supervisor cultural competence on the supervision relationship. The results suggest that there is a relationship between supervisor cultural competence and the strength of the working relationship and that a combination of the factors of supervisor cultural knowledge and cultural skills account for the greatest amount of variance in the working alliance, whereas a combination of the variables of supervisor cultural relationship and cultural awareness accounts for smaller amounts of variance.

This study contributes to a growing body of literature that promotes a shift in language away from competency based cultural models to one of cultural humility. Rather than using the word “competence”, which is commonly associated with a finality to or mastery of, the model for cultural humility encourages developing an “other-oriented” approach to counseling that is a continuing evolution of cultural attentiveness. By promoting cultural humility rather than competence, we may empower supervisors and counselors toward continued curiosity for

cultural understanding while decreasing the shame and fear associated with believing that one must “master” cultural attentiveness.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will contain a rationale for the present study followed by a statement of the problem. A description of the purpose of the study, which will include research questions and hypotheses for each, is then provided. A definition of terms and delimitations for this study follow. The chapter will conclude with a summary.

#### **Rationale**

The United States population is becoming more diverse. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that one international migrant enters the United States every 33 seconds and by the year 2043, there will not be one single racial group that makes up the majority (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Future counselors will provide services to this diverse population, and research has demonstrated that clients who receive counseling services in which the counselor attends to the clients' unique cultural characteristics report greater satisfaction and retention (Constantine, 2002; Fuertes & Brobst, 2002). The profession has recognized and responded to the need for multicultural sensitivity by including it as part of the ethical code, definition of the profession, educational standards and supervision competencies.

The American Counseling Association (ACA) defines counseling as “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” (American Counseling Association [ACA] Code of Ethics, 2014, p. 3). Within this definition, counselors abide by the professional values that are reflected in our ethical commitment. The counseling profession, through the Code of Ethics, encourages those who practice counseling to provide services that are individualized based on each client's distinct social and cultural environment. In the 1970s, counseling training programs

began to recognize the need for the counseling profession to adopt a multicultural focus; however, it was not until the early 1990's that such a focus was finally adopted (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992). Specifically, in 1991 the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) proposed 31 multicultural counseling competencies and petitioned for the American Counseling Association, then called the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD; predecessor to ACA), to adopt these criteria with the hope that the competencies would be used as a standard for the curriculum in training programs (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992). The proposed competencies are based upon awareness, knowledge and skills and included "Counselor Awareness of Own Cultural Values and Biases", "Counselor Awareness of Client's Worldview" and "Culturally Appropriate Intervention Strategies" (Arredondo, Toporek, Brown, Jones, Locke, Sanchez & Stadler, 1996).

Since the 1990's, counselor-training programs have continued to infuse this tripartite model of multicultural competencies into the counseling profession. The most recent revision of the ACA Code of Ethics addresses the fluid cultural climate of the United States by defining one professional value as "honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach" (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014, p. 3). Additionally, five of the nine sections explicitly address the need for multicultural/diversity considerations, with several subsections within "Supervision, Training and Teaching" devoted solely to multicultural competencies. Relatedly, CACREP accredited training programs must demonstrate that they adhere to a multicultural perspective when educating counselors in training. The 2009 CACREP Standards designate an entire core curricular area to "Social and Cultural Diversity", as well as reference the need for training programs to adhere to the ACA Code of Ethics (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs [CACREP], 2009). Based on the explicit prominence of

multicultural competencies by both the ACA and CACREP, there has clearly been a shift toward incorporating multiculturalism into training, practice, and supervision (Ober, Granello & Henfield, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2008; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

In conjunction with professional values and CACREP educational standards, the counseling profession utilizes clinical supervision to train emerging counselors. Clinical supervision plays an influential role in the development of counselors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), and in concordance with the cultural focus in the profession, the American Counseling Association has called for the incorporation of multiculturalism into standards for supervision. Specifically, Section F, article 2.b of the Code of Ethics reads, “counseling supervisors are aware of and address the role of multiculturalism/diversity in the supervisory relationship” (ACA, p. 13). This Code of Ethics also alludes to the previously proposed model of awareness, knowledge and skills with regard to the multicultural competence of the supervisor in Section F, article 11.c by mandating that counselor educators “actively infuse multicultural/diversity competency in their training and supervision practices. They actively train students to gain awareness, knowledge and skills in the competencies of multicultural practice” (ACA, p. 15).

Further evidence of the importance of cultural in supervision can be found in the 2011 Best Practice Standards developed by the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, where attention to cultural variables is mentioned in several sections and addresses several aspects of supervision. For example, Section 1, article C.5 delineates that it is the supervisor’s responsibility to engage supervisees in discussions about culture and the ways in which culture may present in both the supervision and counseling relationships. Culture is again mentioned in reference to promoting the supervision relationship in Section 5, article c. that states, “The supervisor attends to ethical and cultural concerns that impact the supervisory working

relationship” (p. 8). These examples are taken from individual sections of the document and additional evidence of the importance of culture in supervision is found in an entire section called “Diversity and Advocacy Considerations”. It is clear that in order for supervisors to offer the best practices in supervision, incorporating cultural considerations into supervision is imperative.

The population of the United States is becoming more diverse and the need for culturally sensitive counselors is evident. The counseling profession is responding to this need through the professional Code of Ethics and educational training standards in an effort to provide services that will best meet the needs of the client. Clinical supervision is heralded as the signature pedagogy for the counseling profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), so it is essential that within the supervisory relationship, emerging counselors learn and practice multicultural competencies.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Clinical supervision is regarded as crucial for the development of counselors-in-training (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Ladany, Friedlander & Nelson, 2005) and its importance is empirically supported (i.e., Ladany, Ellis & Friedlander, 1999). All state licensing boards require varying hours of clinical supervision before a person can be licensed for independent counseling practice. Additionally, CACREP standards mandate that counselor education programs provide intensive supervision to students during practicum and internship experiences (CACREP, 2009). Research has focused on theoretical frameworks for supervision practices and has utilized Bordin’s Working Alliance as a way to conceptualize the relationship between supervisor and supervisee (Bordin, 1983). Many researchers have explored the three components of this framework; agreement on goals, tasks and emotional bond, as well as discovered that a strong working alliance predicts supervisee satisfaction (e.g., Ladany, Mori & Mehr, 2013). Increased

supervisee satisfaction leads to greater receptivity and incorporation of supervisor feedback (Ladany Ellis & Friedlander, 1999) and ultimately impacts the learning of the counselor in training.

As the counseling profession has matured, it has met the changing demands of a diversifying population by incorporating multicultural competencies into supervision practices (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Research has demonstrated a link between multicultural supervision practices and the multicultural development of counselors in training (Holloway, 1995) and has explored the satisfaction of supervisees who receive supervision from supervisors who demonstrate multicultural competence (Inman, 2006). These advances in understanding the impact of multicultural supervision practices are important and new.

The need for multiculturally competent counselors is evident and the role that supervisors' multicultural competence plays in the development of counselors has been empirically supported (Gatmon et al., 2001; Inman, 2006; Wong, Wong & Ishiyama, 2013). While researchers have addressed supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance independently, there has been limited empirical exploration into the relationship of these constructs. The importance placed on supervisor multicultural competence as well as the recognition that supervision is an integral part of the development of counselors suggests the need for additional research that focuses on the interplay among these important processes.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examined the potential relationship among the working alliance and supervisor multicultural competence. By surveying supervisors who conduct supervision in community settings, this study offered a unique perspective into the relationship between these

constructs within a population that is difficult to study. The research was guided by the following questions:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence (as measured by Multicultural Counseling Inventory), and the working alliance (measured by Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory, Supervisor Version)?

Hypothesis 1: Supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance will be strongly correlated, as demonstrated by higher scores on the Multicultural Counseling Inventory correlating to higher scores on the Supervisory Working Alliance measure.

Research Question 2: How do the scales (1) supervisor multicultural skills, (2) supervisor multicultural awareness, (3) supervisor multicultural relationship, and (4) supervisor multicultural knowledge (as measured by the Multicultural Counseling Inventory) explain the working alliance (as measured by the Supervisory Working Alliance)?

Hypothesis 2: The variables will explain significant variance in the working alliance, with the variables supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness explaining the greatest amount of variance.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the multicultural competence of participants who reported being licensed as professional counselors and those who reported having different professional licensure?

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant difference between the participants who report holding a professional counseling licensure and those who report a different professional licensure.

## **Definition of Terms**

*Clinical Supervision:* “A process in which one individual...engages in a collaborative relationship with another individual or group...in order to (a) promote the growth and development of the supervisee, (b) protect the welfare of the clients seen by the supervisee and (c) evaluate the performance of the supervisee (ACA Code of Ethics, p. 21).

*Supervisor:* Senior member counselors who have been trained to monitor the clinical practice of counselors-in-training. These senior members promote supervisee clinical performance, ensure ethical compliance and protect client welfare (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014).

*Supervisee:* A counselor or counselor-in-training who is engaged in a formal supervisory relationship in which his/her clinical work is reviewed and monitored by a trained supervisor (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014)

*Multicultural/Diversity Competence:* “Counselors’ cultural and diversity awareness and knowledge about self and others, and how this awareness and knowledge are applied effectively in practice with client and client groups” (ACA Code of Ethics, p. 20).

*Working Alliance:* A conceptual framework developed by Bordin (1983) that describes supervision relationship. It is comprised of an agreement on goals and tasks of the supervision relationship as well as an emotional bond between supervisor and supervisee.

## **Delimitations**

Numerous studies have acquired participants from training programs of disciplines that are related, yet distinct, from counselor education. (i.e. Ladany, Brittan-Powell & Pannu, 1997; Inman, 2006). The results of these studies may not fully reflect the professional values to which professional counselors adhere. In an effort to fill this gap in the literature, this study focused on counselors who are currently engaged, or have engaged, in supervision in the community, as well

as supervisors who hold professional licensure in allied professions. The supervisor participants practiced counseling and provided supervision in the state of Virginia. Participants conducted clinical or a combination of clinical and administrative supervision; those engaged in only administrative supervision were excluded.

### **Summary of Chapter**

The use of multicultural competencies in the counseling profession has gained importance over time. To ensure the growth and development of a trainee and promote the use of multiculturalism, the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics mandates infusing multiculturalism into clinical supervision. Clinical supervision has long been regarded as a primary method of training developing counselors (i.e. Barnett, Cornish, Goodyear & Lichtenberg, 2007; Goodyear, Bunch & Claiborn, 2005) and Bordin's (1983) Working Alliance framework is an empirically supported method for clinical supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Researchers have examined supervisors in training programs as well as in allied professions (i.e., Gatmon, 2001; Wong et al., 2013). This study examined supervisor cultural competence and the working alliance in a sample of community practitioners.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

The counseling profession utilizes supervision as a means of training professional counselors, which has been both conceptually and empirically supported (Bordin, 1983; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Ladany, Ellis & Friedlander, 1999). Professional accrediting bodies enforce the completion of supervision as a standard of practice (ACA, 2014; CACREP 2009). This chapter includes an outline of supervision and a comprehensive description of the working alliance. The topic of the use of multicultural competencies in supervision and a discussion of the characteristics of multicultural supervisors follows. Finally, an examination of the current trends in multicultural supervision practice concludes the chapter.

#### **Supervision**

Supervision is one of the underpinnings of the counseling profession (Ladany, 2014). Bernard and Goodyear (2014) define supervision as “an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative, 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, she, he, or they see, and serving as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession” (p. 8). Milne (2007) confirms that this definition has been widely accepted in the literature; however, he conducted a logical analysis followed by a literature review to improve the definition. His efforts resulted in this more comprehensive definition:

“The formal provision, by approved supervisors, of a relationship-based education and training that is work-focused and which manages, supports, develops and evaluates the work of colleague/s. The main methods that supervisors use are corrective feedback on the supervisee's performance, teaching, and collaborative goal-setting. It therefore differs from related activities, such as mentoring and coaching, by incorporating an evaluative component” (p. 439).

Despite the comprehensive nature of this definition, it lacks focus on counseling supervision explicitly. The author notes that the studies that were selected for review were from the mental health field and included any profession (Milne, 2007). The criteria include counseling, but many of the allied, mental health professions do not conduct supervision in congruence with the counseling profession. Regardless, this comprehensive definition was built on Bernard and Goodyear's initial definition of counseling supervision and can therefore be applied to the counseling profession.

It is further important to delineate supervision from other experiences, such as counseling. Milne (2007) addressed the difference between counseling and mentoring in his comprehensive definition. Ladany (2014) warns against supervisors using the supervision relationship to meet therapy needs and Neufeldt and Nelson (1999) explicitly describe the ethical obligations of supervisors in supervision and highlight the ways that offering personal counseling as a supervisor is unethical. The most recent revision of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Best Practices document (2011) also warns against the use of supervision as personal counseling by stating, “The supervisor explains to the supervisee the appropriate parameters of addressing the supervisee's personal issues in supervision” (p. 10)

Supervision also differs from counseling in the goal of the relationship; counseling goals tend to extend to general life circumstances while supervision goals relate specifically to professional competency. Additionally, the pace in counseling is likely to be determined by the clients, whereas supervisors generally set the pace in supervision (Page & Woskett, 2001). Counseling supervision requires an evaluative component that separates the relationship from that of a mentor/mentee relationship. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) describe the evaluative component of supervision as being central to the process and note that evaluation is pervasive during the supervision relationship. More specifically, the nature of the supervision relationship includes evaluation from the supervisor in many interactions (Briggs & Miller, 2005). These evaluations can take the form of intentional interventions, such as a written summary of supervisee progress, or less purposeful means, such as offering verbal praise for an effective supervisee technique. In sum, evaluation is a component of the supervision process that differentiates it from that of counseling or mentoring.

In the counseling profession, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision has established Best Practice Guidelines for Clinical Supervision. This comprehensive document offers a framework for supervisors to adhere to in order to offer the most effective supervision. It was developed using the ACA Code of Ethics as a guideline as well as professional literature concerning supervision. Therefore, the best practices included in the document are to help supervisors legally and ethically meet the professional developmental needs of the supervisee while ensuring client welfare (ACES Best Practices Guidelines, 2011). The document reiterates much of what has been mentioned in the previous research. More specifically, the document is separated into sections that address the appropriate ways to initiate supervision, diversity and

advocacy considerations, ethical considerations and the components of the working alliance, which will be described next.

### **Working Alliance**

To help further understand counseling supervision, it is important to understand the theoretical foundation. One of the most prominently accepted groundings is in Bordin's (1983) pan-theoretical model called the Working Alliance (Ladany, 2014). This framework was initially established to describe the therapeutic relationship, much like other supervisory models, but Bordin (1983) applied the overarching concepts to the supervisory relationship to frame the relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Based on these results and others, Bordin's Working Alliance framework has become well established in the supervision literature and is widely accepted in the field (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). This theory is based upon three components: agreement on goals, agreement on tasks and emotional bond.

**Agreement on goals.** Bordin (1983) argues that the goals identified in the supervisory relationship will not be obtainable without "some basic level of understanding and agreement between the principals involved" (p. 35). The ability of supervisor and supervisee to agree on the goals of supervision and the strength with which they agree will substantially contribute to the amount of progress that is made and the relationship between the two parties. In his description of eight possible goals that guide the supervision process, Bordin (1983) identified general goals that include skill mastery, increased understanding of clients, increased introspection and self-awareness and maintaining best practice standards.

**Agreement on tasks.** Interwoven in the previous concept is the agreement between supervisor and supervisee on the tasks that each is responsible for in reaching the agreed upon goals. Bordin (1983) places the onus on the supervisor in choosing the tasks, emphasizing that

the supervisor must be aware of the capabilities of the supervisee and choose tasks that are realistically achievable for that individual. If the supervisor does not attend to the abilities of the supervisee, it is likely that the strength of the working alliance will suffer (Bordin, 1983). The author offered three tasks that supervisors could use to pursue the goals. Specifically, Bordin (1983) identifies the first task as the supervisee creating a report of the client interactions in which feedback would be beneficial, the second task is the supervisor directly viewing the work of the supervisee, either through live or videotaped observation and the third requires the supervisee to identify problems or issues to be discussed in supervision.

**Emotional bond.** Some authors believe that this is the most important factor in the supervision process (Ladany, Friedlander & Nelson, 2005; Ladany, 2014). In the third component of the working alliance, Bordin (1983) describes the supervisor and supervisee bond as their shared "feelings of liking, caring and trusting" (p. 36). The author emphasizes that a bond is formed between any two people who have a shared mission, and counseling supervision is included in that population. The agreed upon goals and tasks used to achieve those goals will ultimately impact the bond between supervisor and supervisee, along with additional variables that both participants contribute to the supervisory relationship. Because supervision is an interpersonal process, both individuals bring their own personal characteristics to the relationship, including emotional intelligence, supervisory style and supervisee anxiety level. The supervisor must attend to these variables when managing the supervisory relationship and, subsequently, strengthening the emotional bond.

### **Multicultural Supervision**

Historically, some authors have highlighted the importance of supervisors developing an increased focus on multiculturalism in supervision (Liddle, 1984); however, recently,

multicultural supervision has been described as a new wave in counseling supervision (Ladany, 2014). To understand the foundation of multicultural supervision, an appreciation of the conceptual framework developed by Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992) is needed. This framework was first adopted by the American Counseling Association (ACA) to be implemented in counseling practices and was subsequently incorporated into training programs and supervision practices. The authors present the argument that all interactions between two people are cross-cultural, as both individuals bring their specific cultural identity into the relationship. Following this premise, therefore, counselors need to be aware of and attentive to the ways in which culture presents in counseling relationships (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992). This notion has continued to gain importance in the United States, where the population continues to become more diverse. Authors of this theoretical framework emphasize that the counseling profession will need to continue to recognize the importance of cultural characteristics that reinforce the inherent value of each client (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis 1992).

The authors developed a 3x3 matrix that is anchored in the criteria that they labeled “(a) counselor awareness of assumptions, values and biases; (b) understanding the worldview of the culturally different client; and, (c) developing appropriate interventions strategies and techniques” (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992, p. 481). Within each of these categories lie the additional three dimensions of beliefs/attitudes, knowledge and skills. For example, within the realm of counselor awareness, the authors necessitate that counselors must move from being unaware of personal culture to aware of personal culture, culturally competent counselors gain specific knowledge about their personal culture and culturally competent counselors proactively seek opportunities to learn how to be more effective when working with culturally different clients (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992). It needs to be mentioned that this is an elementary

example that is intended to demonstrate the way in which three criteria of attitude/belief, knowledge and skill are encapsulated within the first dimension; the interplay between and within the dimensions involves more than is warranted for this literature review. The important summary is that this competency matrix developed by Sue et al. (1992) has been instrumental in framing how the counseling profession views and approaches multicultural counseling.

Despite these advances and movement toward multicultural sensitivity in supervision, there has not yet been one consensus definition of multicultural supervision. Falender and Shafranske (2004) define multicultural supervision as supervision in which the supervisor possesses:

a working knowledge of the factors that affect worldview; self-identity awareness and competence with respect to diversity in the context of self, supervisee, and client or family; competence in multimodal assessment of the multicultural competence of trainees...models diversity and multicultural conceptualizations throughout the supervision process; models respect, openness, and curiosity toward all aspects of diversity and its impact on behavior, interaction, and the therapy and supervision processes; initiates discussion of diversity factors in supervision. (p. 149)

This definition is helpful in summarizing the many facets of multicultural supervision, and Falender, Burnes and Ellis (2013) support this definition by adding that supervisors must possess cultural competence and integrate diversity into supervision practices. In doing so, the effectiveness of supervision is enhanced. Further evidence of the way in which multicultural competences have been adopted into the counseling profession is seen in the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics. Included in the professional values of counselors is one that reads, “honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach” (ACA

Code of Ethics, 2014, p. 3). This value is upheld through multiple standards in the ACA Code of Ethics, and multicultural supervision practices are explicitly addressed in Section F, article 2.b of the Code of Ethics which states, “counseling supervisors are aware of and address the role of multiculturalism/diversity in the supervisory relationship” (ACA, p. 13). This Code of Ethics also alludes to the previously proposed model of awareness, knowledge and skills with regard to the multicultural competence of the supervisor in Section F, article 11.c by mandating that counselor educators “actively infuse multicultural/diversity competency in their training and supervision practices. They actively train students to gain awareness, knowledge and skills in the competencies of multicultural practice” (ACA, p. 15).

Based on these ACA standards, it is clear that multicultural awareness is gaining importance in counseling supervision. Remington and Dacosta (1989) support this notion in a similar, foundational article that examines the impact of culture in the supervision process. Through a conceptual literature review, the authors developed several recommendations for multicultural competent supervision. They outlined specific supervisor behaviors such as the importance of supervisors remaining aware of personal biases and stereotypes, as well as engaging proactively in discussions about cultural issues. Additionally, the authors posit that a process-oriented model of supervision increases the likelihood that supervisors will attend to cultural factors in supervision. The recommendations extended beyond supervisor behaviors and included training programs. Specifically, this article was one of the first to encourage training programs to incorporate multicultural competencies throughout coursework for trainees.

This article, while not empirical, developed several premises of which the current model of multicultural counseling supervision continues to adhere. The importance of supervisors

proactively discussing culture with supervisees has been supported in numerous studies (Gatmon et al., 2001) as well as process-oriented models of supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

In 1994, Fukuyama conducted a study that supported the position of Remington and Dacosta (1989). By analyzing qualitative survey results from 10 racial-ethnic minority doctoral interns at APA accredited psychology internship sites, the author explored cultural-based critical incidents that either facilitated or hindered supervisee multicultural development. Participants reported that receiving openness and support from the supervisor contributed to positive supervision experiences. Further, participants described critical incidents in which the supervisor took initiative to address cultural characteristics as being positive experiences and contributing to a positive supervision experience (Fukuyama, 1994).

Conversely, participants were asked to describe negative critical events related to multiculturalism. The author clustered these responses into two categories: lack of supervisor cultural awareness and questioning supervisee abilities (Fukuyama, 1994). Supervisees reported diminished self-efficacy as a result of supervisors questioning their ability to work with culturally diverse clients. Additionally, participants provided examples of incidents in which supervisors displayed lack of cultural awareness when discussing client cases as well as in interactions with the supervisee. In these responses, the supervisees highlight the negative impact that these events had on the supervision relationship (Fukuyama, 1994).

The participants were also asked to offer suggestions for making supervision more multicultural focused and effective. One participant again reiterated the importance of supervisors initiating culturally based discussions and three other participants noted the importance of ongoing multicultural training for supervisors (Fukuyama, 1994). These suggestions are congruent with subsequent research that found that supervisees are more satisfied

in supervision relationships in which supervisors engage in multicultural discussions (Gatmon, et al., 2001) as well as research that has found that supervisors who are more multiculturally aware than supervisees and seek continued training in multicultural issues create more desirable supervision outcomes (Ladany, Britton-Powell & Pannu, 1997).

Limitations exist in this study. Specifically, the small sample size limits the generalizability of the study as well as the study being limited to ethnic minorities. Conceptually, it may be difficult for supervisees to make suggestions for more effective supervision, if they have never been a supervisor themselves. The credibility of the suggestions may be lacking because of this. Despite these limitations, this study as well as the research conducted by Remington and Dacosta (1989) contributed to the foundation of multicultural supervision. A more thorough discussion of the characteristics of multiculturally competent supervisors, the perceptions of supervisees engaged in multicultural supervision and the impact of multicultural supervision on the working alliance and supervisee satisfaction will follow.

### **Characteristics of supervisors**

To further understand the importance of multiculturalism in supervision, researchers examined the behaviors and characteristics of supervisors. These studies have important implications, because within the supervisory relationship, the supervisor as the leader of the supervision process must accept responsibility for adhering to the professional code of ethics. Subsequently, supervisors must demonstrate and promote multicultural competence in supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) utilized several research studies to develop four dimensions to which multiculturally competent supervisors attend. While these dimensions are presented independently, they do not operate as such. All dimensions overlap and influence one another considerably.

**Intrapersonal and interpersonal.** Using the research of Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart and Montoya (2006), Bernard and Goodyear termed two dimensions as “Intrapersonal: Identity” and “Interpersonal: Biases and Prejudices”. The first dimension, “Intrapersonal”, refers to a person’s identities that affect the sense of self in relation to other people (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Although intrapersonal in origin, the expression of personal identities takes place in interaction with other people. In the supervision relationship, the supervisor’s sense of self ultimately impacts the ways in which she or he interacts with the supervisee. The second dimension, “Interpersonal: Biases and Prejudices”, is defined by Bernard and Goodyear (2014) as “a person’s expectations and prejudices toward another person based on that person’s membership in a particular group” (p. 108). In supervision, this dimension arises when supervisors do not attend to preconceived notions and potentially stereotypic beliefs about both supervisees and the clients that the supervisees serve (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). In order to demonstrate multicultural competence, supervisors need to address the ways in which personal biases and prejudices are present and may impact the supervision relationship.

**Interpersonal: Cultural identity and behavior.** This third dimension addresses the ways in which culture impacts understandings of social role behavior. All people possess various identities and cultural characteristics and Bernard & Goodyear (2014) posit that ignoring these variations can be harmful to others. In the supervisory relationship, the onus falls on the supervisor to reject this etic approach with supervisees and adopt a position of desire to address cultural differences and learn about the culture of the supervisee. Additionally, the authors emphasize the need for supervisors to attend to culturally normative social behavior in both the supervisory and counseling relationships. Engaging in open discussions with supervisees helps

to demonstrate supervisor multicultural competence as well as increase it in the supervisee (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

**Social/Political.** This dimension addresses the macro-level oppression or privilege that a person experiences based on personal identities (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Because certain cultural characteristics in Western society have inherent power or privilege, supervisors must express multicultural competence by acknowledging the privileged statuses that she or he possesses. By doing so, supervisors can work toward having “power with” rather than “power over” (Hernandez, 2008 as cited in Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). This “power with” stance impacts supervision both directly in the interactions between supervisor and supervisee and indirectly in the relationship between supervisee and client.

These dimensions serve as a base for understanding the intersection between culture and supervision as well as the role that supervisors assume when participating in multicultural supervision. This research helps to give a broad overview of the role of the supervisor in multicultural supervision. Additional research has produced results that help further clarify the behaviors of supervisors who engage in multicultural supervision, such as a 2007 study conducted by Dressel, Consoli, Kim and Atkinson that utilized the Delphi method. The authors acquired a sample size of 21 participants through surveying training directors of counseling centers who belonged to the Association of Counseling Center Training Agencies (Dressel, Consoli, Kim & Atkinson, 2007). The participants met stringent criteria; specifically, they had many years of experience in the field as supervisors/in multicultural experiences, and they had produced scholarly work around multicultural supervision. All participants had earned a doctoral degree, with 15 being counseling psychologists and the remaining 6 being clinical

psychologists. Additionally, each participant had supervised an average of 12 ethnically different supervisees prior to participating in the study (Dressel et al., 2007).

As is characteristic for the Delphi method, authors conducted several rounds of iterations to achieve consensus on the research questions. The authors posed two research questions; to identify specific examples of participants' personal behaviors that contributed to unsuccessful multicultural supervision as well as successful multicultural supervision (Dressel et al., 2007). Given the definitions of successful and unsuccessful multicultural supervisory behaviors, the participants were then asked to create a list of as many specific behaviors for both categories for Round 1. Twenty-one participants returned this survey and identified a total of 141 behaviors for successful multicultural supervision and 64 behaviors for unsuccessful multicultural behaviors (Dressel et al., 2007). Two of the authors then grouped the similar reports and created composites of the responses, attempting to keep the wording as congruent with the original statements as possible. Once this was complete, the fourth author reviewed the composite responses and approved the final list. What resulted was a list of 35 supervisor behaviors of successful multicultural supervision and 33 behaviors of unsuccessful multicultural supervision.

In Round 2, researchers asked participants to rate the composite scores based on how much the described behaviors contributed to multicultural supervision. Using a Likert-type scale, 1 represented that the behavior "makes little or no contribution" to multicultural supervision and 5 representing "makes a major contribution" (Dressel et al., 2007). Through attrition, 18 of the 21 participants from the first round participated in Round 2. Round 3 consisted of thirteen participants. The authors informed these participants of the average rating scores from the previous round, and again asked them to rate the statements for the final round.

Researchers found that the participants rated behaviors that were specific to successful multicultural supervision higher than general behaviors that are important for successful supervision. The most salient way to illustrate this point is that in Round 3, all participants rated “Creating a safe environment for discussion of multicultural issues” as being the most important supervisor behavior that leads to successful multicultural supervision. The other four behaviors that comprised the top 5 supervisor behaviors that contributed to successful multicultural supervision are: “Developing my own self-awareness about cultural/ethnic identity, biases and limitations; Communicating acceptance of and respect for supervisees’ culture and perspectives; Listening to and demonstrating genuine respect for supervisee’s ideas about how culture influences the clinical interaction; Providing openness, genuineness, empathy, warmth and nonjudgmental stance” (Dressel et al., 2007, p. 57).

In contrast, the participants identified 64 behaviors that contributed to unsuccessful multicultural supervision. Researchers truncated this into a list of 33 behavioral statements and in Round 3, all 13 participants independently identified “lacking awareness regarding my own racial/ethnic/cultural biases and stereotyping” as being the most significant contribution to unsatisfactory multicultural supervision (Dressel et al., 2007, p. 58). Other behaviors in the top 5 included “overlooking and/or failing to discuss cultural issues; becoming defensive around racial/ethnic/cultural issues; not recognizing the power of the supervisory role; making assumption about the supervisees’ experiences of beliefs, based on their ethnicity or culture” (Dressel et al., 2007, p. 59).

The results of this study illuminate supervisor behaviors that practicing supervisors believe to be important to successful multicultural supervision. One important note is the way in which participants differentiated between behaviors that foster successful multicultural

supervision and general behaviors in the supervision process. The results may indicate that general supervision behaviors that promote positive supervision processes may contribute to successful multicultural supervision; however, supervisors must demonstrate multicultural competence through specific behaviors, if multicultural supervision is to be successful. The authors also note that the lists can be categorized in ways that help further facilitate our understanding of supervisor multicultural behaviors. One recognizable theme is a relational one; supervisors identified several behaviors that demonstrate support for the supervisee's development through emotional bond or liking. More specifically, the participants reported the need for multicultural competent supervisors to approach the supervisee with "openness, genuineness, empathy and warmth" while also engaging non-defensively with a supervisee (Dressel et al., 2007, p. 61). Further, the participants conveyed the importance of accepting and respecting the supervisee's culture and perspectives, which ultimately helps to create and maintain the bond between supervisor and supervisee. This pattern of interaction emphasizes the importance of the supervisory relationship in multicultural supervision.

Additionally, these results can also be conceptualized using the aforementioned core multicultural competencies of awareness, knowledge and skills developed by Sue et al. (1992). For example, the participants rated self-awareness as a top behavior in successful multicultural supervision; the same criterion is foundational in Sue et al. (1992) multicultural competencies. When examining the other top-ranked behaviors, these could also fall under knowledge ("communicating acceptance of and respect for supervisees' culture and perspectives") and skills ("validating integration of supervisees' professional and racial/ethnic identities and helping to explore potential blocks to this process") (Dressel et al., 2007, p. 57).

A limitation of this study is the narrow definition of multicultural supervision as being one in which supervisor and supervisee was ethnically different. Although the participants spoke to the more complex nature of multiculturalism through their responses, the narrow definition from which the researchers framed the study does not fully encompass the possibilities for multicultural supervision. Additionally, the participant pool utilized members in the psychology field, so the results are less generalizable to members in the counseling profession. Additionally, the small sample size calls into question the validity of the results, as 13 members of a profession certainly do not encapsulate the breadth of experts in the field. A different methodology, perhaps individual qualitative interviews, may have helped to broaden the results. Finally, between Round 1 and Round 2, the researchers altered the definition provided by the participants. Because the participants were not involved in that process, this may weaken the results due to the potential biases of the researchers.

In a qualitative study conducted by Ancis and Marshall (2010), doctoral level supervisees were interviewed to better understand their perceptions of culturally competent supervision. The authors of this study based their research on the five domains of Ancis and Ladany's 2001 multicultural supervision guidelines: (a) personal development, (b) conceptualization, (c) interventions, (d) process, and (e) evaluation (Ancis & Ladany, 2001 as cited in Ancis & Marshall, 2010).

The themes that emerged in this grounded-theory study demonstrated supervisees' perceptions of supervisors who engaged in multicultural supervision. The authors found that participants valued a supervisor's willingness to proactively engage in dialogue concerning multicultural issues and participants felt that supervisor's willingness to acknowledge their limits to multicultural knowledge was a valued part of supervision.

One major limitation of this study is that all participants were screened prior to participation to ensure that they had a high interest in multicultural issues, believed their supervisor to be competent in multiculturalism and believed that the supervisor had demonstrated competence in working with diverse clients (Ancis & Marshall, 2010). These participants were therefore acutely aware of the multicultural aspects of their supervisory relationship. While this selection process was beneficial to researchers in finding a population that could report specifically on multicultural supervision, this is not representative of the population as a whole. Additional limitations with regard to sampling include the educational level of participants and the training setting in which the participants were currently enrolled.

Ladany (2014) takes a contrasting stance to outline supervisory behaviors that hinder the supervision process. The author asserts that supervisor multicultural incompetence can create a disconnect between supervisor and supervisee. This is especially concerning when conceptualized through the lens of the working alliance; the emotional bond component is instrumental in creating a strong working alliance. If the supervisor is demonstrating multicultural incompetence, the supervisee is likely to experience less emotional attachment and thus, a weaker working alliance (Ladany, 2014).

The author further stresses the need for supervisors to seek opportunities for continued multicultural training. The emphasis that training programs are currently placing on multicultural competencies has led to trainees having a more comprehensive knowledge about multicultural issues than supervisors. Ladany (2014) highlights this discrepancy as problematic in the supervisory relationship because of the rift that the differing foci may have on the relationship. Therefore, it is imperative for supervisors to proactively find opportunities to improve multicultural competence while addressing multicultural issues in supervision (Ladany, 2014).

Another recent study by Wong, Wong and Ishiyama (2013) investigated behaviors of the supervisor that both helped and hindered the supervision process. The researchers utilized a sample of 25 counseling psychology graduate students who were members of a visible minority group. In this qualitative study, participants were interviewed and asked to report on what they thought were helpful and harmful supervisor behaviors. After transcribing and coding the interviews, the researchers identified total of 20 themes of positive and negative incidences in supervision. One of the top five themes related to supervisor multicultural competence. Specifically, the theme was identified as “Supervisor had cross-cultural competencies” (Wong et al., p. 72) and over half (52%) of the participants reported to this theme. The researchers also examined negative incidents in supervision that hindered the relationship. Again, supervisor multicultural competence ranked in the top five themes of negative incidents, with the theme being simply labeled, “Supervisor lacked multicultural competencies” (Wong et al., 2013, p. 72). Fourteen of the 25 participants (56%) reported this theme with a frequency of 8.8%. This research reiterates the importance that supervisees place on the multicultural competence of clinical supervisors as well as the negative impact that a lack of multicultural competence can have on the supervision process.

This research clarifies important characteristics and behaviors that supervisors can utilize to promote multicultural supervision. It appears that both supervisors and supervisees view multicultural competent supervisor behaviors as important. Additionally, certain supervisor behaviors are considered explicitly essential to creating strong multicultural supervision. Specifically, supervisors who proactively engage supervisees in discussions about culture, acknowledge personal limits to cultural knowledge and seek further multicultural training are demonstrating behaviors that promote multicultural supervision.

## **Multicultural Competence and Working Alliance**

Because Bordin (1983) asserts that a strong working alliance leads to more productive and beneficial counseling/supervision practices, researchers have studied the impact of multicultural focused supervision on the working alliance. Ladany, Brittan-Powell and Pannu (1997) conducted a foundational study that combined aspects of racial identity development models and the working alliance. This study was based on Helms' Racial Identity Development Model so it is first necessary to understand that model. Helms proposed that the concept of racial identity extends beyond a person's racial category and rather includes how people "think and feel about their race" (Helms, 1990, as cited in Ladany, Brittan-Powell & Pannu, 1997, p. 285). Helms categorized racial identity into two phases that account for cognitive complexity as well as stage of development in the appropriate racial identity development model. Specifically, Phase I encompasses those individuals who operate at the earlier levels of racial identity development such as conformity or disintegration stages for people of color and it includes contact, disintegration and reintegration stages for people who are white. Conversely, Phase II applies to those who are further along in the stages of racial identity development and who operate at a higher level of cognitive complexity (Helms, 1990 as cited in Ladany et al., 1997). Helms later expanded on this model by including racial identity dynamics, or the ways in which people of the same and different races interact. This has obvious implications for both the counseling and supervisory relationships, as all people possess racial identities and within these relationships people of same or different races interact (Ladany et al., 1997).

For the study conducted by Ladany et al., the authors identify four racial identity interactions that could exist in supervisory relationships. These interactions can be conceptualized as a continuum, with "regressive relationships" being those in which "the

supervisee is at a more advanced racial identity status than the supervisor” (p. 286) being the first type to “parallel-high relationships” in which the supervisor and supervisee both operate in Phase II of Helms’ racial identity model (Ladany et al., 1997). The second and third mediating types are called “progressive relationships” and “parallel low” interactions. In the former, the supervisee is at a lower racial identity stage than the supervisor and in the latter, the supervisor and supervisee are at similar stages and unlike “parallel-high relationships”, the supervisee and supervisor are both in early stages in the racial identity model (Ladany et al., 1997).

The authors contributed to the strength of this study by using a sample size of 105 participants, which exceeded the sample size of 80 that was needed to meet the Cohen’s coefficient of .90 with an alpha level of .05. The participants were either studying in counselor education or counseling psychology programs (71%), clinical psychology programs (17.1%) or school counseling programs (9.5%) and were split evenly between doctoral programs (42.9%) and master’s programs (49.5%). The authors used t-tests to determine if the racial identity groups were statistically significant and results indicated that they were all different from one another at the  $p=.05$  level. Upon conducting the multivariate analysis of variance, authors found that racial identity was significantly related to the working alliance factors as well as multicultural competence. Specifically, the progressive and parallel-high relationships had significantly higher emotional bonds than the parallel-low and regressive relationships,  $t(101)=4.01, p<.05$ , as well as agreement on tasks and goals of supervision  $t(101)=3.51, p<.05$  (Ladany et al., 1999). These results indicate that when the supervisee perceived the supervisor to either exceed or match in multicultural awareness, the emotional bond in those relationships was rated as stronger.

A limitation of this study exists in the survey methods. The authors chose to use several validated instruments for measuring racial identity; however, they created a questionnaire to assess supervisee perceptions of supervisor racial identity. Additionally, self-report measures can yield bias results, especially when participants are reporting on socially desirable constructs such as multicultural competencies.

A similar study conducted by Bhat and Davis (2007) revealed that the strongest working alliance in supervision relationships existed in dyads in which supervisors and supervisee had high racial identity development. The authors collected data from 119 counseling supervisors who were offering supervision in the community. This sample size produced a medium effect size of .25 at alpha level of .05. Authors asked supervisors to complete questionnaires that addressed racial identity development (White Racial Identity Attitude Scale if supervisor identified as white and People of Color Racial Identity Attitude Scale if identified as person of color) as well as the racial identity development of one supervisee (Perceptions of Supervisee Racial Identity for Whites or Person of Color). To measure the working alliance, researchers used the Working Alliance Inventory-Supervisor version (Bhat & Davis, 2007).

Through a one-way analysis of variance, Bhat and Davis (2007) found that there was a statistically significant difference in the working alliance between the four racial identity groups ( $F [3,113]=5.165, p<.01$ ) with a small to medium effect size ( $\eta^2=.12$ ). To further examine the differences between groups, the researchers conducted post-hoc tests that indicated significant differences at the .05 level between the parallel high group ( $M=71.22, SD=5.33$ ) and parallel low group ( $M=65.41, SD=6.86$ ) (Bhat & Davis, 2007). These results suggest that the dyadic pairs who reported greater racial identity development also experienced stronger working alliances.

One major limitation of this study is that the supervisors reported on the racial identity development of the supervisee, without the input of the supervisee. This method opens the possibility of misjudgment on the part of the supervisor and thus, incorrect results. Delineating the three components of the working alliance and statistically testing the ways in which those components were impacted by racial identity development could have further strengthened the study and offered a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between the working alliance and racial identity development.

The findings of these studies are important in several ways. First, the relationship between racial identity development and working alliance is important in that it offers support to the argument that a focus on multiculturalism in counseling supervision helps to strengthen the supervisory relationship. In the study conducted by Ladany et al. (1997), the supervisory pairs that reported highest racial identity development also reported highest on the components of the working alliance. While not explicitly stated, it is then reasonable to infer that those dyads valued a focus on multiculturalism in supervision to further develop multicultural competence. Bhat & Davis (2007) confirmed this notion, further demonstrating a potential relationship between multiculturalism and the working alliance in supervision.

Gatmon, Jackson, Koshkarian, Martos-Perry, Molina, Patel and Rodolfa (2001) examined the impact of supervisors engaging in discussions of cultural variables in supervision on the working alliance from the perspective of the supervisee. The sample consisted of 289 pre-doctoral interns that were randomly selected from APA-accredited counseling internship sites, with 73% (n = 212) of the sample identifying as European American and 70% (n = 203) female. Mean age of the participants was not provided.

Participants were asked to complete three measures, specifically: the Working Alliance Inventory, The Supervision Questionnaire-Revised and additional questions concerning the frequency and content of discussion of cultural variables in supervision. Through the use of demographic information, participants also reported whether or not they matched with their supervisors on the constructs of ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Using that information, researchers conducted a Chi-square analysis and found that all three variables were statistically significant, meaning that when supervisors and supervisees did not match on the three variables, they were more likely to discuss them in supervision.

To examine the working alliance, authors utilized a MANOVA to examine the bonds, tasks and goals of the working alliance. The sample was divided between participants who reported that they matched in ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation of their supervisor and those who reported differences. Interestingly, the results indicated that the supervisory pairs that discussed differences in ethnicity reported greater satisfaction in the working alliance,  $F(1,137) = 2.68, p < .047$ , while sexual orientation and gender indicated no significant difference between the groups. Additionally, the bond subscale of the working alliance was found to be statistically significant at  $F(1,137) = 6.24, p < .013$ .

Researchers found that cultural discussions are infrequent in the supervision relationship; however, supervisees rated the working alliance as higher and supervisor competence higher when these cultural discussions occur. It is imperative that supervisors actively engage supervisees in discussions surrounding cultural issues, both present in the supervisory relationship and in supervisee-client relationships. While this study adequately addressed the impact of multicultural discussions on the working alliance, little attention was paid to the supervisor's perception of multicultural competence. A study that includes a self-report measure

of multicultural competence of supervisors to assess the impact on the working alliance may be beneficial. An additional limitation of the study exists in the participant pool. Specifically, the participants in this study are from the psychology field; therefore, changing the participation pool to directly focus on counseling supervision is more applicable to the counseling profession.

Ladany, Lehrman-Waterman, Molinaro and Wolgast (1999) conducted a study to examine the intersection of multicultural ethics and the working alliance in the supervision relationship. Using a participant pool of 151 counseling or clinical psychology students enrolled in masters or doctoral programs, the authors tested the impact of supervisor adherence to ethical standards on the working alliance. Ladany et al. (1999) used the ethical guidelines created by the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision to ground their research and added two additional guidelines that addressed multicultural issues.

The authors chose a mixed-methods approach for the study by using the Supervisor Ethical Practices Questionnaire. This survey was developed for this study and piloted several times before use in the present study. Authors reported that the final version of the survey included changes to confusing wording, eliminated vague items and consisted of open-ended questions in which participants wrote in descriptions of their supervisors ethical violations. The four judges (authors) then reviewed the responses to ensure that the ethical violations described were appropriately categorized. Ladany et al. (1999) created a second survey to complement the open-ended survey. This 45-item measure asked participants to respond with “yes” or “no” about the ethical behavior of their supervisors. Internal consistency for the measure was found to be  $\alpha = .89$ . Finally, the authors chose to use the Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee Version to assess the working alliance. This measure has been validated through numerous studies.

The qualitative component of the study indicated that a combined 14% of participants reported that supervisors had acted unethically with regard to multicultural sensitivity toward clients or toward the supervisee. Results of a multiple regression indicated that supervisor ethical behaviors accounted for a significant amount of variance in working alliance (Pillai's trace = .61,  $F [4,144] = 56.75$ ,  $p < .0001$ ,  $\eta^2_m = .61$ ). To test each subset, the authors examined the correlations in univariate analyses. The results indicated that the greater the unethical behavior of supervisors, the lower the supervisees rated the components of the working alliance and that supervisor ethical behavior accounted for 47% of overall variance in working alliance.

The results of this study have implications for the way in which supervisor's lack of addressing multicultural issues in supervision impacts the working alliance. It is clear from the results that the 20 participants, who reported that the supervisor did not address multicultural issues ethically, also reported a weaker working alliance. This supports the notion that multicultural sensitivity in supervision strengthens the working alliance.

Like other empirical studies, this study has limitations. The most salient limitation may be that the supervisees reported on the behaviors of supervisors. This method does not account for the supervisor's perspective; therefore, a supervisor could have acted in an ethical way that the supervisee perceived as unethical. Additionally, asking supervisees to reflect on supervisor's ethical behaviors before inquiring about the working alliance has the potential to create skewed results.

Burkard et al. (2006) used consensual qualitative research (CQR) to examine the experiences of supervisees in multicultural supervision when supervisors were either responsive or unresponsive to multicultural issues that presented. The participant pool consisted of 26 female doctoral students in either counseling or clinical psychology programs across the United

States. Researchers recruited these participants using snowball techniques as well as e-mail listservs. Two research teams conducted the interviews for this study, with Team A interviewing only participants of color and Team B interviewing only European American participants. Team A consisted of 3 research team members and 4 team members comprised Team B. Both teams were assigned independent auditors who were experienced in CQR (Burkard et al., 2006).

Researchers employed a semi-structured interview protocol that involved a set of standard questions and allowed for interviewers to use probing questions to gain more information. To bolster the strength of the study, the researchers each conducted pilot interviews and used the feedback to modify the questions. The authors also employed two rounds of interviews that offered opportunities for clarification of information and for participants to discuss any reactions from the initial interview. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim and researchers utilized CQR methods to analyze the data. As is standard for CQR, researchers identified concepts and themes from each interview then cross-analyzed the themes to determine themes across cases. All research decisions were reached by team member consensus and then reviewed by external auditors (Burkard et. al, 2006).

Results indicated that both supervisees of color and European American supervisees experienced positive outcomes as a result of cultural discussions in supervision. Specific to the supervision relationship, the majority of the participants reported that discussing cultural issues in supervision improved the supervisory relationship and most of the participants reported an increase in comfort and trust level with the supervisor. Additionally, all of the participants reported that that when a supervisor responded to a cultural event in supervision, it increased satisfaction with supervision (Burkard et. al, 2006). Conversely, when supervisors were unresponsive to cultural events in supervision, all participants reported a negative emotional

reaction. Many of the supervisees of color reported feeling completely dissatisfied with supervision following supervisor unresponsiveness, and many European American supervisees reported decreased satisfaction.

This study offers valuable insight into the experiences of supervisees in multicultural supervision; however, limitations still exist. This qualitative method of research relied solely on supervisee's memories of the cultural events in supervision. Without the input of the supervisor, it is difficult to know if or whether there is a distortion in the supervisee's memory. As with all qualitative studies, the personal, cultural characteristics of the researchers may have impacted the study. The racial make up of the researchers may have further impacted this study in some way, given that the participants were being asked to report about culture specific events.

Inman (2006) also utilized a quantitative approach to examine supervisee perceptions of supervisor multicultural competence. Specifically in this study, the author examined the impact of supervisor multicultural competence and working alliance on supervisee satisfaction and supervisee multicultural competence. The author used three path analysis models to test these relationships. The first is a direct path from supervisor multicultural competence to working alliance, supervisee multicultural competence and supervision satisfaction and the second and third are indirect paths from supervisor multicultural competence to supervision satisfaction and supervisee multicultural competence.

To assess these paths, the author developed an instrument called the Supervisor Multicultural Competence Inventory that can be used to measure supervisor multicultural competence in supervision. This is a 34-item, 6-point Likert-type scale that is self-report and completed by the supervisee. The author denotes that this measure represents the five dimensions of multicultural supervision that Ancis and Ladany (2001) have identified. These

dimensions “focus on supervisor-supervisee personal development, case conceptualization, interventions, process and outcome/evaluations” (Inman, 2006, p. 77). The second instrument used was the Working Alliance-Trainee Version. This instrument is used to examine the supervisee perceptions of the three factors of the working alliance and was developed by using Bordin’s (1983) model of the supervisory alliance. Finally, Inman (2006) employed the Supervision Satisfaction Questionnaire to measure the supervisee satisfaction in supervision.

The author solicited 147 participants through a mailing list from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapists. This yielded a diverse participation pool, with participants from various settings and experience levels. Specifically, the participants experience ranged from trainees in first practicum experiences to post master’s trainees and ages ranged from 21 to 72 years ( $M = 33.44$ ;  $SD = 10.35$ ). All participants were trained in Marriage and Family Therapy programs or worked in settings that served couples and families.

Path analyses were conducted on the direct paths from supervisor multicultural competence, supervisory working alliance and supervisee satisfaction as well as an indirect path from supervisory multicultural competence through working alliance to supervisee satisfaction. The author found that supervisor multicultural competence was strongly associated with working alliance ( $B = .62$ ,  $p < .00$ ) but the direct association between supervisor multicultural competence and supervisee satisfaction was not as strong ( $B = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ ). With regard to the indirect path in which supervisory working alliance acted as a mediating variable between supervisor multicultural competence, authors utilized Baron and Kenny’s (1986) three step approach to determine if the given variable of working alliance satisfied the three criteria of (1) the independent variable is significantly related to the dependent variables and the mediator, (2) the mediator is significantly related to the dependent variables and (3) that the impact of the

independent variable is found to be less after controlling for the mediator (Inman, 2006). Using this approach, authors found that these three criteria were only met by supervisor multicultural competence, working alliance and supervisee satisfaction. Specifically, supervisor multicultural competence was significantly related to supervisee satisfaction as the dependent variable as well as working alliance and that working alliance was significantly related to supervisee satisfaction. In testing for the final criterion, authors found that the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence and supervisee satisfaction decreased when the working alliance was controlled, which suggests that working alliance is a significant mediating factor in the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence and supervisee satisfaction (Inman, 2006).

The results of these studies indicate that supervisees respond favorably to, and prefer for, supervisors to actively approach multicultural discussions. This provides evidence for the importance of multicultural supervision on supervisee satisfaction. There is an implicit relationship between supervisee satisfaction and the emotional bond component of Bordin's (1983) working alliance framework, which has been shown to impact supervision outcomes. Therefore, these results are important in recognizing that supervisor multicultural behaviors contribute to positive supervision outcomes.

Thus far, studies that examine the supervisee or experience have been examined. There have been limited studies conducted that examine the supervisor perspective as well. One such study was conducted in 2004 by Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos and Pope-Davis and utilized a qualitative approach to examine supervisor and supervisee experiences of multicultural critical incidents in supervision. Eleven supervisors and 17 supervisees comprised the sample, with five supervisors and five supervisees being matched dyads. Both groups were enrolled in various

counseling or psychology programs, including school, rehabilitation, counseling psychology or counselor education (Toporek et al., 2004). The authors of this study created a questionnaire to examine critical incidents in the supervision experience, in which participants were asked to describe a critical incident and use a Likert-type scale to rate the incident on the constructs of “positive, negative, helpful, challenging, supportive, offensive, harmful or threatening” (Toporek et al., p. 72). Additionally, participants were asked to explain the ways in which the incident impacted supervisee multicultural competence and recommend ways in which multicultural supervision can improve.

At the completion of the practicum semester, participants received the questionnaire packets in which a cover letter defined multicultural supervision experience. Researchers chose to define multicultural experience and culture broadly in this study. Specifically, researchers defined multicultural experience as “interaction with a culturally different supervisor, and/or working on a client’s presenting issue that was influenced by culture” and culture included race, ethnicity, sex, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background and disability status (Toporek et al., p. 72). These broad definitions contributed to the strength of the study, as they captured the span of possibility for cross-cultural interactions.

When analyzing the qualitative responses to the questionnaire questions, researchers conducted several rounds of analysis. First, two members of the research team reviewed the descriptions of the critical incidents and created content categories. This round of coding also involved examining the relevant cultural variables in each incident and summarizing the recommendations for improvement in multicultural supervision as well as the impact of the incident on supervisee multicultural competence (Toporek et al., 2004). Second level of analysis used the ratings of the critical incidences and the perceived influence of the incidents to organize

how the varied experiences may have led to the recommendations that participants made for multicultural supervision improvement. In the third round, the authors examined the critical incident provided by the matched supervisor and supervisee pairs. In the final round of analysis, an outside reviewer examined the themes and highlighted discrepancies in the data (Toporek et al., 2004).

Several categories emerged as a result of the analyses. Overall, the participants described more positive influences of multicultural critical incidents than negative influences. Participants described an increase in supervisee awareness, knowledge, skill development and confidence. One category addressed the ways in which critical incidents created negative influences. One theme within this category outlined supervisor behaviors that created negative impacts in supervision. The supervisees listed conflict, negative communication, and lack of supervisor intervention around specific cultural variables as contributing to negative supervision experiences (Toporek et al., 2004). This supports other research findings that indicate that lack of supervisor attention to multiculturalism in supervision creates negative supervision outcomes (Ladany, 2014; Gatmon et al., 2001).

Several limitations exist in this study. Fewer than half of the participants were in a matched pair, and this discrepancy may have impacted the results. Relatedly, the authors claimed that the matched pairs offered a unique view into the supervisory dyad; however, the authors under-utilized the supervisor perspective in the study while focusing predominately on the supervisee. Additionally, the authors could have bolstered the strength of the findings by examining the ways in which these critical incidents impacted the supervisory relationship.

Duan and Roehlke (2001) also utilized a matched-pairs sample of supervisory pairs in a college counseling center. Authors 58 supervisors from American Psychological Association

(APA) accredited training facilities that were chosen identified by the counseling center directors as engaging in multicultural supervision. To survey this population, authors designed a questionnaire that contained both scale-type and open-ended questions. The formulation of the questionnaire involved numerous steps including collaboration from a research team and senior faculty members that resulted in 24 items, which researchers then worded in a way that supervisors and supervisees could receive identical surveys (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). These surveys asked participants to respond to questions that comprised four subscales: supervisor knowledge about cultural of supervisee and supervisor behaviors in addressing multicultural issues in supervision; supervisor attitudes toward supervisee; supervisor characteristics; and supervisee comfort with self-disclosure. Researchers also examined overall satisfaction with supervisory relationship. The open-ended questions asked the respondents to report on critical incidents that had occurred in supervision as well as what specifically contributed to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with supervision (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). To examine the validity of the survey, the researchers conducted a factor analysis on both versions. The results indicated that the four subscales existed, but several items on the survey loaded onto two subscales. Overall internal consistency was high, with supervisee version being .71 and supervisor version being .73 (Duan & Roehlke, 2001).

For the preliminary data analysis, researchers conducted *t*-tests to examine the difference between race and sex subgroups of supervisors and supervisees as well as ANOVAs to examine the differences among groups. Because the results indicated no significant differences, researchers combined all responses into two groups comprised of all supervisors and supervisees. Researchers then conducted descriptive and chi-square tests to examine the differences between supervisor and supervisee responses. The majority of the participants in both groups reported

that they agreed on the goal of supervision, conversely, more supervisors viewed the dyad as being a good match than did supervisees (Duan & Roehlke, 2001).

Several other significant differences emerged between groups. In the subscale that addressed supervisor behaviors in addressing multicultural issues, supervisors consistently rated themselves higher. Specifically, 93% of supervisors reported that they addressed cultural issues in supervision, whereas 50% of the supervisee's reported the same. Ninety-one percent of the supervisors also confirmed that they initiated discussions of cultural differences in general, whereas 53% of supervisees agreed (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). The perceptions of supervisors and supervisees also differed in the level of interest/liking of the supervisor. The results of the t-tests indicated that supervisors reported higher levels of interest in ( $t = -.328, p < .001$ ), valuing ( $t = -3.99, p < .001$ ) and respect ( $t = -2.37, p < .05$ ) for the supervisees than the supervisees reported. Despite these differences, the supervisors and supervisees did not differ significantly in overall satisfaction with supervision relationship (Duan & Roehlke, 2001).

Researchers conducted a stepwise multiple regression to further investigate the variables that influenced supervisor and supervisee satisfaction. Using supervisee satisfaction as the criterion variable, the regression indicated that perception of supervisors' positive attitudes toward them as well as comfort to self-disclose was a significant predictor and accounted for 72% of the variance. Conversely, when the supervisor satisfaction was the criterion variable, results indicated that positive attitude toward the supervisee was the strongest predictor, with 37% of the variance explained. Supervisee comfort to self-disclose accounted for an additional 17% of supervisor satisfaction and being seen as trustworthy contributed 5% of the variance (Duan & Roehlke, 2001).

Results of the analysis of the qualitative questions supported the findings from the

quantitative survey. Within this sample, supervisors' multicultural competence was seen as positively influencing the supervision relationship (Duan & Roehlke, 2001). The results for supervisors' perception of satisfaction indicated that supervisors place less emphasis on the influence of multiculturalism in supervision. Rather, 50% of the supervisors listed "supervisees' openness to learning and feedback" as being influential in satisfaction level (Duan & Roehlke, 2001, p. 140). Compared to the 12 supervisees who reported appreciated of discussion of cultural variables in supervision, only 7 supervisors identified discussion about cultural as being a major factor in satisfaction.

This study offered a picture of the impact of multicultural supervision on satisfaction in the supervisory relationship. Supervisee's reported that supervisor multicultural competence, including supervisor initiative in discussing cultural variables and interest in supervisee culture, contributed to greater satisfaction. Supervisors appeared to place less emphasis on the cultural aspects of supervision and more emphasis on supervisee personality characteristics. There are several limitations in the methodology of this study. First, the researchers used factor analysis to measure the internal validity of a study; however, this analysis is not sufficient for validation of the questionnaire. Additionally, while the step-wise regression was useful in delineating the contributions of several variables, the researchers were not intentional in the variables that were chosen. Intentionally choosing variables to run in a sequential regression may have contributed to strength of this study.

Both of these studies reveal the importance of supervisor multicultural competence in supervision. It is interesting to note that supervisors rate themselves higher with regard to multicultural competence, which may indicate the desire to adhere to multicultural considerations in supervision. Additionally, both supervisees and supervisors report positive

outcomes when multicultural incidents are addressed in supervision.

### **Conclusion**

Counseling supervision is a necessary part of the professional development of counselors in training (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). This process has a theoretical backing in Bordin's (1983) Working Alliance that relies on the agreement of goals, tasks and the emotional bond of the supervisor and supervisee. Multicultural competencies have gained importance in the counseling profession, and supervision has aligned with the ACA Code of Ethics by adopting this emphasis as well (Liddle, 1991). Researchers have examined many facets of supervision that incorporate multiculturalism, including the behaviors of supervisors and the impact on the working alliance (i.e. Dressel et al., 2007; Inman, 2006; Gatmon et al., 2001). The results of these studies seem to indicate that a relationship exists between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance as measured from the perspective of the supervisees. The research that has examined supervisor perception of cultural competence in supervision has revealed that supervisors consider themselves to address cultural issues in supervision more frequently than supervisees and both members of the supervision relationship report positive outcomes of multicultural events in supervision (Duan & Roehlke, 2001; Toporek et al., 2004). Additionally, these studies have predominately surveyed supervisors in counseling training programs or supervisors in allied professions. Research on the connection between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance is limited, as much of the current literature is focused on the perceptions of the supervisee. It may benefit the counseling field to expand the research base by examining the connection between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance from the perspective of community supervisors.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter will provide information about the various methodological procedures for the study. It will begin by reviewing the overall research concept followed by a review of the research questions, including the hypothesis for each. Next, the participant pool will be described and a thorough review of the instruments that will be used for data collection provided. The details about the psychometrics of each instrument will be outlined. Finally, the specifics about the method of data collection and data analysis will be described.

Counselor multicultural competence has been a focus of research since the 1990's (i.e. Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992; Falender & Shafranske, 2004; Gatmon et al., 2001). The participants in these studies have mainly been students in training programs of allied professions, such as marriage and family therapy (Inman, 2006), counseling psychology (Gatmon et al., 2001), and clinical psychology (Burkard, et al., 2006). This study intended to fill a gap in the literature by utilizing a participant pool of supervisors in community settings. It was guided by the following research questions:

#### **Research Questions**

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence (as measured by Multicultural Counseling Inventory), and the working alliance (measured by Supervisory Working Alliance, Supervisor Version)?

Hypothesis 1: Supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance will be strongly correlated, as demonstrated by higher scores on the Multicultural Counseling Inventory correlating to higher scores on the Supervisory Working Alliance measure.

Research Question 2: How do the scales (1) supervisor multicultural skills, (2) supervisor multicultural awareness, (3) supervisor multicultural relationship, and (4) supervisor multicultural knowledge (as measured by the Multicultural Counseling Inventory) explain the working alliance (as measured by the Supervisory Working Alliance)?

Hypothesis 2: The variables will explain significant variance in the working alliance, with the combination of the variables of supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness explaining the greatest amount of variance.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the multicultural competence of participants who reported being licensed as professional counselors and those who reported having different professional licensure?

Hypothesis 3: There will be a significant difference between the participants who report holding a professional counseling licensure and those who report a different professional licensure.

### **Participants**

This study examined supervisors in community settings. As such, supervisor participants were, at the time of the study, engaged in dyadic or triadic supervision relationships. It is a frequent occurrence that counseling supervision that takes place in community settings can focus on administrative responsibilities, clinical responsibilities or both (ACES Best Practices Guidelines, 2011). Because this study was focused on the clinical responsibilities, the supervisors were required to have been engaging in supervision that focused on the counseling behaviors of supervisees rather than administrative responsibilities. Additionally, the participants had to hold a professional licensure in counseling, social work, counseling psychology or marriage and family therapy. Participants were recruited through purposeful sampling. The

researcher utilized a pre-existing list that identified potential participants who had completed the training workshop required to provide supervision in the state of Virginia, which focused on important aspects of offering supervision. Additionally, the researcher attended a workshop in person that was offered to members in the community who offered counseling services in community settings.

### **Measures**

Participants were asked to complete a survey packet that included two measures and a demographic questionnaire. Multicultural competence was assessed using the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (Sodowsky et al., 1994). The working alliance was assessed using the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Supervisor version (Efstation, Patton & Kardash, 1990) and the demographic questionnaire will address relevant identity categories.

#### **Demographic Information**

The demographic questionnaire contained questions about categories of identity to which the participants may belong. For example, age, race/ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. The participants were also asked to report on the characteristics of their supervision experience, including how long they have been a supervisor and how long they have worked with their current supervisee. Relevant clinical licensure helped to group participants and was therefore also included on the demographic form. The demographic questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

#### **Multicultural Competence**

In the present study, supervisor self-report measured the construct of supervisor multicultural competence. Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin and Wise (1994) developed the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) to assess the cultural competency of counselors,

psychologists or trainees. It is estimated to take between 15 to 20 minutes to complete (Ponterotto, Reiger, Barrett & Sparks, 1994). Sodowsky et al. (1994) used the Sue et al. (1992) tripartite model of multicultural knowledge, awareness and skills to develop the subscales for this instrument. The authors conducted two studies to examine the psychometrics. In the first, 604 psychology student participants were given the 87-item initial instrument and asked to self-report using a 4-point Likert-type scale. During the data analysis, one item was dropped because 20% of respondent marked “I don’t know”, which resulted in 86 items used in the factor analysis. Additional items were dropped if they did not demonstrate an eigenvalue of at least .30 or if they loaded highly on more than one subscale. (Sodowsky et al., 1994).

Results indicated that 10 factors emerged and accounted for 52.6% of the total variance. The authors examined the factor loadings and decided upon a four factor oblique solution that accounted for 36.1% of the total variance. The final instrument contained 40 items, with each item loading onto only one factor. Sodowsky et al. (1994) labeled the factors “Multicultural Counseling Skills” (eigenvalue of 8.31, accounted for 19.3% of total variance), “Multicultural Awareness” (eigenvalue of 3.2, accounted for 7.4% of total variance), “Multicultural Counseling Relationship” (eigenvalue of 2.3, accounted for 5.5% of total variance) and “Multicultural Counseling Knowledge” (eigenvalue of 1.69, accounted for 3.9% of total variance). The internal consistency coefficients in the study were .83 (Multicultural Counseling Skills), .83 (Multicultural Awareness), .65 (Multicultural Counseling Relationship), .79 (Multicultural Counseling Knowledge), and .88 (full scale). In this study, the MCI is used both as a full scale as well as examined the subscales separately. The MCI can be found in Appendix B.

## **Working Alliance**

For this construct, the participants were given a measure to self-report on perceived strength of the working alliance. Efstation, Patton and Kardash (1990) created the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory (SWAI), which has two complementary forms for the supervisor and supervisee. In initial psychometric testing of this measure, authors based the items on that of a similar, pre-existing measure, the Supervisory Styles Inventory (SSI) (Friedlander & Ward, 1984). Efstation et al. (1990) used the SSI due to its similar constructs and repeated validity and reliability. The authors ran preliminary factor analyses on the original 30 items of the SWAI Trainee and Supervisor instruments and found three factor loadings for the Supervisor version and two factor loadings for the Trainee version. The three factors in the Supervisor form, labeled Client Focus, Rapport and Identification, accounted for 36% of the total variance (Efstation, Patton & Kardash 1990). Authors assessed internal reliability through Cronbach's alpha with a sample size for  $N = 178$ . The coefficients for the Supervisor scales were .71 for Client Focus, .73 for Rapport and .77 for Identification (Efstation, Patton & Kardash, 1990). The SWAI can be found in Appendix C.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

The participants were recruited using a purposeful sampling method. The researcher utilized a list of supervisors in the state of Virginia who had completed a workshop to become an approved supervisor for counselors in residence (e.g. pre-licensure counselors). Participants were contacted via email from the researcher. This email can be found in Appendix D below. Contained in the email was a link to an electronic survey. The researcher followed up with reminder emails approximately one week and two weeks after the initial invitation. Once the on-line data gathering closed, the researcher attended one more training workshop in person to

gather paper and pencil responses from potential participants. In abiding by the requirements of Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board, the researcher gave the participants adequate informed consent prior to participation (Appendix E).

### **Data Analysis**

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence (as measured by Multicultural Counseling Inventory), and the working alliance (measured by Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory)?

For research question 1, a Pearson product correlation was run to determine if there is a relationship between working alliance and supervisor multicultural competence. Because this is an exploratory study, a probability level of .05 was used to determine whether there is a relationship. To run the analysis, the researcher used the total scores on the Supervisory Working Alliance and Supervisor Multicultural Competence Inventory. A correlation analysis was used to determine if a relationship exists as well as the strength of direction of the relationship.

Research Question 2: How do the scales (1) supervisor multicultural skills, (2) supervisor multicultural awareness, (3) supervisor multicultural relationship, and (4) supervisor multicultural knowledge (as measured by the Multicultural Counseling Inventory) explain the working alliance (as measured by the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory)?

Research question 2 will examine how much of the working alliance is explained by the various aspects of supervisor multicultural competence. A hierarchical multiple regression is a form of regression analysis in which two or more independent variables predict the dependent variable and was run to determine which components of multicultural competence impact the working alliance (Keith, 2006). A hierarchical regression is a useful statistical analysis when the researcher intentionally chooses the order of the variables (Keith, 2006), and in this study, the

researcher hypothesized that two of the variables would account for variance over and beyond the other two variables. This hypothesis was reached based on previous research that has demonstrated the importance of multicultural awareness (Ratts et al., 2016) as well as the relationship component, or emotional bond, of the working alliance (Bordin, 1983). Using this prior research, the researcher chose a hierarchical regression to examine the unique variance that was added by these variables.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the multicultural competence of participants who reported being licensed as professional counselors and those who reported having different professional licensure?

Finally, research question 3 was assessed using an independent samples t-test to compare the means of the multicultural competence of the participants who reported professional licensure as counselors and those who reported other professional licensure. This analysis used the total scores from the Multicultural Counseling Inventory.

### **Summary**

To conduct this study, participants who were engaging in triadic or dyadic supervision at the time of the study were recruited using a purposeful sampling method. Participants were contacted by the researcher via a recruitment email and contained in the email was a link to the survey packet. Additionally, the researcher attended a counseling-related training workshop in person to distribute paper and pencil versions of the instruments.

The survey packet contained the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Supervisor version, which was used to assess the working alliance. This 23-item, likert-type scale instrument was developed by Efstation, Patton and Kardash (1990) to assess the strength of the working alliance between supervisee and supervisor. The construct of supervisor multicultural

competence was measured using the Multicultural Counseling Inventory. This 40-item, likert-type scale instrument asks participants to self-report on various aspects of multicultural competence.

The relationship between working alliance and supervisor multicultural competence was assessed through the use of a Pearson product moment correlation. Using the subscales of the Multicultural Counseling Inventory, the researcher used a hierarchical multiple regression to examine how much of the working alliance is explained by the various aspects of supervisor multicultural competence. Finally, an independent samples t-test compared the multicultural competence of groups of participants based on professional licensure.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### **Introduction**

This chapter contains the results from the current study examining the relationships between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance. It begins by describing the measures used in the study followed by a demographic description of the participants as well as the procedures used to recruit the participants. The methods used to screen the data and statistical analyses performed to answer the research questions follow. The chapter concludes with a summary.

#### **Measures**

##### **Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI)**

The MCI was developed by Sadowsky et al. (1994) to assess the multicultural counseling competencies of practicing counselors. This measure is a 40-item, likert-type, self-report measure that has been validated in numerous studies (i.e, Sadowsky, et al., 1994; Sadowsky et al., 1998; Roysircar, 2004). It was developed using Sue et al.'s (1982) cultural counseling competencies and the four subscales that comprise the measure each correspond to the areas of competency in that model. The first factor, Multicultural Counseling Skills, indicates the specific skills used by counselors to attend to cultural in session. The second factor, Multicultural Counseling Awareness, refers to the counselor's cultural self and other awareness. Multicultural Counseling Knowledge, the third factor, acknowledges the counselor's knowledge of cultural theory and research and the fourth factor is one that was added by the researchers that addresses the multicultural counseling relationship that exists between client and counselor (Sadowsky et

al., 1994). The scores on each scale range from 8-44, for a total score on the instrument ranging from 40-160.

### **Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Supervisor Version (SWAI)**

The SWAI is a 23-item, likert-type scale, self-report measure developed by Efstation et al. (1990) and is used to assess the strength of the working alliance from the perspective of both the supervisor and supervisee. For the purposes of this study, the supervisor version was the only one used. This measure consists of three subscales. The Rapport subscale refers to the relationship that exists between the supervisor and supervisee, also known as the emotional bond component of the working alliance. The Client Focus subscale refers to the behaviors, or tasks, within supervision sessions that the supervisor and supervisee exhibit that ultimately reach the goals of supervision. These goals of supervision are encapsulated in the fourth subscale called Identification (Efstation et al., 1990). The scores on each subscale range from 1-7, for a total score on the instrument ranging from 3-21.

### **Demographic Data**

Participants in this study were community supervisors who held a license in professional counseling or a related helping profession. The majority of the participants reported having a professional counseling licensure (67%, n=54) while an additional 29% (n=24) reported a licensure other than counseling and 3 participants did not disclose their relevant professional licensure. To be eligible for the study, all participants had experience providing supervision for trainees in their field who were working toward licensure. A total of 81 participants completed the survey packet. Online participation through the Qualtrics survey website resulted in 68 participants. These participants had attended a workshop for community supervisors and were

contacted through a pre-existing list that was retained as a record from those workshops. In addition, 13 participants completed a paper and pencil version of the survey when attending an additional training workshop attended by community supervisors.

The age of participants ranged from 28 to 70 years, with a mean age of 48.58 (SD = 12.669). Of the 81 participants, 65 self-identified as female, 15 self-identified as male, and 1 self-identified as non-binary. With regard to sexual orientation, 64 participants identified as heterosexual, 9 as gay/lesbian, and 8 participants did not disclose. The racial-ethnic percentages are included in Table 1. Of the participants, 74% (n=59) identified as White/Caucasian, 18% (n=15) identified as Black/African-American, 2.5% (n=2) identified as Asian/Asian-American, 2.5% (n=2) identified as Latino/a, and 2.5% (n=3) did not disclose. This demographic make up is similar to that of all licensed professional counselors, based on a survey taken in 2013 by the Virginia Department of Health Professions. Results of this census indicated that women represent 76% of the licensed professional counselors in Virginia and 64% identified as White/non-Hispanic ethnicity (Virginia Department of Health Professions, 2013). Responses indicated varied amounts of time as supervisors, with 16% (n=13) reporting having supervised 0-1 years, 48% (n=39) reporting having supervised 1-5 years, 12% (n=10) having supervised 5-10 years and 20% (n=16) having supervised greater than 10 years. Three participants did not disclose length of time as a supervisor.

Table 1.  
*Participant Demographics*

Race	African American	14
	Asian/Pacific Islander	2
	Hispanic/Latino(a)	1
	Native American	0
	White (non-Hispanic)	58
	Multi-racial	0
	None of the above	0
	Did not disclose	3

Gender	Male	15
	Female	62
	Non-Binary	1
	Other	0
	Did not disclose	0
Length of time as a supervisor	0-1 years	12
	1-5 years	39
	5-10 years	8
	Greater than 10 years	16
	Did not respond	3
n= 78		

### Analysis of Data

#### Data Screening

Prior to data analysis, the researcher screened the data for missing items, outliers, and normality of distribution using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The researcher examined the skewness and kurtosis of both instruments. The skewness and kurtosis indicates whether or not the data is distributed normally in the sample. Upon examining the kurtosis and skewness, the scores of the subscales and total score for the MCI fell between -1 and 1. A commonly accepted rule in the literature is that scores between -1 and 1 are acceptable (Heppner and Heppner, 2004). The skewness and kurtosis for the total scores is represented in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

*Skewness and Kurtosis of the Multicultural Counseling Inventory and the Supervisory Working Alliance*

Instrument	Skewness	Kurtosis
MCI	.155	-.324
SWA	-.203	-.376

The researcher additionally examined the data for missing values. The researcher chose to delete 3 cases from the original dataset due to excessive missing values (i.e., greater than 50%

missing values per case). Removing these cases brought the total number of participants to 78. Following this deletion, 16 missing cases remained. The researcher chose to impute series means for this data in an effort to prevent artificial deflation of the variables.

## **Measures**

**Multicultural Counseling Inventory.** The MCI is comprised of 40-items that are measured on a Likert-type scale. The items require participants self-report on various aspects of multicultural competence and the items differ depending on the subscale it measures. For example, item 6 assesses the Multicultural Knowledge subscale and reads “I include facts of age, gender roles, and socioeconomic status in my understanding of different minority clients” while item 31 assesses Multicultural Awareness and reads, “I am involved in advocacy efforts against institutional barriers in mental health services for minority clients”. The scale ranges from one to four, with a score of one indicating “Very Inaccurate” to a score of four indicating “Very Accurate” and seven of the items are reverse scored; therefore, the total scores can range from 40 to 160. To test the internal consistency of the MCI and the subscales, the researcher examined Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. The alpha coefficient for the total scores was .761. The scores for the Skills subscale was .706 (n=11), Awareness was .715 (n=10), Relationship was .714 ( n=8) and Knowledge was .668 (n= 11). These subscales are within the generally acceptable range of .7 or higher (Cohen and Swerdlik, 1999).

**Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory.** The SWAI is comprised of 23 items that are measured on a Likert-type scale. Participants self-report on three aspects of the working alliance called Rapport, Client Focus and Identification. The items measure one subscale on the instrument. For example, Item 10 measures Rapport, and reads “I encourage my supervisee to formulate his/her own opinion” while Item 1 measures Client Focus and reads “I help my

supervisee work within a specific treatment plan with his/her clients”. The Likert-type scale ranges from one to seven, with a one representing “Almost Never” and a seven representing “Almost Always”. There are no written designations between these highest and lowest choices. To score the measure, items from each subscale are summed and divided by the number of questions in the subscale. The researcher tested the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the SWA as well. The result was .874 for a total score of the SWA. With regard to the subscales, the Rapport subscale had a coefficient of .727 (n=7), Client Focus had a coefficient of .835 (n=9) and Identification had a coefficient of .705 (n=7).

## **Results**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance. The researcher examined the relationship of supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance through an exploratory correlation and a hierarchical multiple regression. Additionally, the researcher investigated the potential differences between groups of supervisors depending on their professional licensure using an independent samples t-test.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence (as measured by the Multicultural Counseling Inventory) and the working alliance (as measured by the Supervisory Working Alliance)?

Hypothesis 1: Supervisor multicultural competence will be positively correlated to the working alliance, as demonstrated by higher scores on the Multicultural Counseling Inventory correlating to higher scores on the Supervisory Working Alliance measure.

To address this research question, the researcher conducted Pearson product moment correlations to determine the relationships of the variables. The mean for the Multicultural

Counseling Inventory was 128.48 (SD = 10.823, range = 40-160). For the Supervisory Working Alliance the mean was 17.46 (SD = 1.758, range = 3-21). Results indicate a significant positive correlation,  $r(61) = .483, p < .01$ , which equates to an  $R^2$  value of .233. The researcher further examined the relationship of each subscale of the MCI with the overall score of the SWAI. These results can be found in Table 3.

Table 3.

*Correlations for Each Subscale of the MCI and the overall score of the SWAI (N=78)*

Variable	1	2	3	4
1 SWAI				
2 MCC Knowledge	.369**			
3 MCC Skills	.398**	.521**		
4 MCC Awareness	.336**	.367**	.428**	
5 MCC Relationship	.291**	.195*	.183	.356**

*Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ ; SWAI = Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory; MCC = Multicultural Counseling Competency*

Research Question 2: How do the scales (1) supervisor multicultural skills, (2) supervisor multicultural awareness, (3) supervisor multicultural relationship, and (4) supervisor multicultural knowledge (as measured by the Multicultural Counseling Inventory) explain the working alliance (as measured by the Supervisory Working Alliance)?

Hypothesis 2: The variables will explain significant variance in the working alliance, with the combination of variables supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness explaining the greatest amount of variance. The researcher conducted a hierarchical multiple regression to determine if the combination of supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness explained a significant percent of the variance of the supervisory Working Alliance scores over and above the variance explained by the combination of supervisor multicultural skills and supervisor multicultural knowledge. A hierarchical multiple regression is a useful statistical analysis when the researcher intentionally

chooses the order of the variables (Keith, 2006). Because previous research has demonstrated the importance of multicultural awareness (Ratts et al., 2016) as well as the emotional bond of the working alliance (Bordin, 1983), the researcher chose a hierarchical regression for this research question.

The researcher conducted a two-model hierarchical multiple regression using the total scores of the SWAI as the dependent variable and the subscales of the MCI (knowledge, skills, awareness, relationship) as the predictor variables. In model one of the equation, knowledge and skills were entered and awareness and relationship were entered in model two. The researcher chose to enter the variables in this order to examine the contribution to the variance that the hypothesized variables add. Regression statistics can be found in Table 4.

Table 4.  
*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis*

Variable	$\beta$	$t$	$R$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Stage 1			.440	.194	.194
Knowledge	.222	1.826*			
Skills	.282	2.321*			
Stage 2			.493	.244	.049
Knowledge	.176	1.445			
Skills	.226	1.806			
Relationship	.112	1.608			
Awareness	.176	.934			

*Note.*  $N = 62$ ; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

The researcher examined multicollinearity between the variables. The pairwise correlations were less than .8, indicating that multicollinearity does not appear to be present. Results of the hierarchical regression indicated that in model one, knowledge and skills significantly contributed to the model ( $R^2 = .194$ ),  $F(2,75) = 9.027$ ,  $p < .001$  and accounted for 19.4% of the variance. The addition of relationship and awareness variables explained an

additional 4.9% of the variance over and above knowledge and skills and did not significantly contribute to the model,  $R^2$  change = .049,  $F(2,73) = 5.875$ ,  $p > .05$ . These results suggest that the combination of knowledge and skills appear to be the best predictors of the working alliance in this sample and together, all four of the variables explained 24.3% of the variance.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the multicultural competence of participants who reported being licensed as professional counselors and those who reported having different professional licensure?

Hypothesis: There will be a significant difference between the participants who report holding a professional counseling licensure and those who report a different professional licensure. To test this hypothesis, the researcher conducted an independent samples t-test. The researcher tested the assumption of homogeneity of variances using Levene's F-test and the results indicated that this assumption was met  $F(76) = .008$ ,  $p = .930$ . The results indicated that there is a significant difference in the scores for participants who identified as professional counselors ( $M=126.59$ ,  $SD= 10.34$ ,  $N=54$ ) and those who identified as other ( $M=134.25$ ,  $SD=10.88$ ,  $N=24$ );  $t(76)=2.374$ ,  $p < .05$ . These results suggest that the multicultural competence of counselors and allied professionals differ.

### **Additional Findings**

To explore the data further, the research conducted additional analyses that are unrelated to the research questions. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the impact that length of time as a supervisor has on multicultural competence with participants reporting that they had been supervising for either 0-1 years, 1-5 years, 5-10 years or more than 10 years. The researcher tested the homogeneity of variances using Levene's F-test and results indicated that this assumption was met  $F(74) = 2.06$ ,  $p = .112$ . Results of the ANOVA indicated that there is

not a statistically significant difference in the multicultural competence of the groups,  $F(3,74) = .440, p = .725$ . An additional one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare length of time as a supervisor on the working alliance. Results of the Levene's F-test indicated that the variance within each of the groups is equal,  $F(74) = 1.674, p = .180$ . Results of the ANOVA indicated that there is a significant difference between groups when examining the length of time spent as a supervisor and the working alliance,  $F(3,74) = 2.747, p = .049$ . Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score of the 0-1 years group ( $M=16.24, SD=.978$ ) was significantly different than that of the 1-5 years group ( $M=17.63, SD=1.75$ ) and the group that reported greater than 10 years ( $M=17.87, SD=1.76$ ). The 5-10 years ( $M=17.65, SD=2.098$ ) did not differ significantly from the other groups.

Using the participants' reported length of time working with the current supervisee, the researcher conducted an additional ANOVA to compare the effect that length of time working with a supervisee has on the working alliance. Interestingly, results indicated that there is not a significant difference in the working alliance depending on the length of time a supervisor has been working with a supervisee,  $F(3,69) = 1.797, p = .156$ . This non-significant result remained when the researcher examined the "Rapport" subscale of the SWAI and length of time working with a supervisee,  $F(3,69) = .909, p = .441$ .

In conducting additional exploratory analysis, an independent samples t-test revealed that there is not a significant difference in the multicultural competence of participants depending on sexual orientation,  $t(71) = -1.129, p = .263$ . Similarly, the results of an independent samples t-test showed no significant difference in the multicultural competence of participants who identified as Caucasian and those who identified as racial minorities,  $t(75) = -1.019, p = .312$ . A final exploratory one-way ANOVA revealed no significant difference in the multicultural competence

of participants who identified as male, female or non-binary,  $F(1,76) = .728, p = .396$ .

The researcher was also interested in conducting hierarchical regressions to determine if supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness explained a significant percent of the variance of the individual subscales of the SWAI over and above the variance explained by the supervisor multicultural skills and supervisor multicultural knowledge. In the first hierarchical regression, the researcher examined the Rapport subscale of the SWAI. Results of the hierarchical regression indicated that in model one, knowledge and skills significantly contributed to the model ( $R^2 = .108$ ),  $F(2,75) = 4.555, p < .05$  and accounted for 10.8% of the variance. The addition of relationship and awareness variables in model two explained an additional 4.2% of the variance over and above knowledge and skills and did not significantly contribute to the model,  $R^2 \text{ change} = .042, F(2,73) = 3.226, p > .05$ . Again, these results suggest that knowledge and skills appear to be the best predictors of the rapport subscale of the working alliance in this sample.

An additional hierarchical regression was run to determine if supervisor multicultural relationship and supervisor multicultural awareness explained a significant percent of the variance of the “Client Focus” subscale of the SWAI over and above the variance explained by the supervisor multicultural skills and supervisor multicultural knowledge. Results of the hierarchical regression indicated that in model one, knowledge and skills significantly contributed to the model ( $R^2 = .225$ ),  $F(2,75) = 10.839, p < .001$  and accounted for 22% of the variance. The addition of relationship and awareness variables in model two explained an additional 6.0% of the variance over and above knowledge and skills and did not significantly contribute to the model,  $R^2 \text{ change} = .060, F(2,73) = 7.285, p > .05$ . These results also suggest that knowledge and skills appear to be the best predictors of the client focus subscale of the

working alliance in this sample.

A final hierarchical regression was used to determine if supervisor multicultural relationship and awareness explained a significant percent of the variance of the “Identification” subscale of the SWAI over and above the variance explained by supervisor multicultural skills and knowledge. Results of this hierarchical regression were similar to the previous regressions and show that in model one, knowledge and skills significantly contributed to the model ( $R^2 = .085$ ),  $F(2,75) = 3.50$   $p < .05$  and accounted for 8.5% of the variance. The addition of relationship and awareness variables in model two explained an additional 1.7% of the variance over and above knowledge and skills and did not significantly contribute to the model,  $R^2$  change = .012,  $F(2,73) = 2.084$   $p > .05$ . These results are similar to the previous results and suggest that knowledge and skills appear to be the best predictors of the identification subscale of the working alliance in this sample.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher presented the results from the statistical analysis examining the relationships between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance. The demographic information of the participants was provided as well as information about the data screening process used by the researcher. The researcher then answered each research question of the proposed study. Results indicated that there is a significant, positive relationship between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance. Additionally, results indicated that the combination of supervisor multicultural knowledge and supervisor multicultural skills significantly predicted the working alliance; however, the other two variables did not significantly contribute to predicting the working alliance. Finally, results indicated that the multicultural competence of supervisors who hold counseling licensure differ significantly from

those who hold professional licensures of allied professions. In Chapter 5, the researcher will provide a discussion of the results along with implications of these results.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Introduction**

Research has supported the need for adequate supervision as a way to facilitate the professional development and competency of counselors (Ladany, Mori & Mehr, 2014). In fact, supervision has been described as the “signature pedagogy of the counseling profession” because of its prominence as a training tool for emerging counselors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). The clinical skills and cultural competence of counselors-in-training are an outcome of the supervision process, and the supervisor must possess and demonstrate certain skills while conducting supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Conducting supervision in a way that develops counselors to uphold the Code of Ethics is a responsibility of the supervisor and Bordin (1983) developed a theoretical framework for conceptualizing the supervision relationship into one that relies on three components that, when present, facilitate the learning and development of the supervisee. One area of competency for counselors, based on the ACA Code of Ethics, is that of cultural competency. The demographics of the United States are changing and the need for multiculturally competent counselors is evident in order to best serve the diverse clientele. There have been limited studies that examine the multicultural competence of a supervisor in relation to the working alliance from the perspective of the supervisor. This study addresses this gap in the literature.

In this chapter, the researcher will provide a summary of the results as well as discuss the implications. Recommendations for practice and future research will also be provided. Additionally, a discussion of the limitations of the study is included. Finally, the researcher will give a summary of the chapter.

## Summary of Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance in a sample of community supervisors. As hypothesized, there was a positive correlation between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance. Additionally, an examination of the variables of multicultural competence that predict the working alliance revealed that the combination of supervisor multicultural knowledge and skill predicts the greatest amount of variance in the working alliance. Finally, the results indicated that there was a significant difference between the multicultural competence of participants in this sample who are licensed counselors and those who are licensed in an allied field.

## Discussion and Implications

### Research Question 1

The first Research Question addressed the potential relationship between multicultural competence and the working alliance. The hypothesis was supported by a significant positive relationship between the variables,  $r(61) = .483, p < .01$ , which equates to an  $R^2$  value of .233. To date, there have not been any studies that examine multicultural competence and the working alliance from the supervisor's perspective, and limited studies conducted on the general correlation between multicultural competence and the working alliance. However, those that have been conducted from the supervisee perspective on these constructs share similar results to those of the current study. For example, in a study conducted by Burkhard et al. (2006), supervisee's reported feeling emotionally supported by supervisors who demonstrated multicultural competence. As emotional support is a component of the working alliance, this study supports the relationship of those constructs from the supervisee perspective. It is logical

that supervisees would report feeling more emotionally connected to supervisors who attend to the unique cultural variables of the supervisee in supervision, and Inman (2006) supported this in an additional study in which supervisees rated the working alliance as higher when the supervisors engaged in discussions about culture in supervision. Supervisors who are multiculturally competent and therefore capable/willing to better understand their supervisee's culture are likely fostering a stronger emotional bond and, subsequently, a stronger working alliance. The results of the current study indicate a relationship between multicultural competence and the working alliance; thus demonstrating a connection between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance.

The current study provides evidence that the reported level of supervisor multicultural competence is related to the working alliance; possibly indicating that supervisors who consider themselves multiculturally competent may be better at attending to the needs of the supervisee in order to foster a stronger working alliance. This possibility was upheld when the researcher examined the correlation between the MCI and the subscale of the Supervisory Working Alliance called Rapport, which addresses the supervisor's attention to the needs of the supervisee in supervision sessions. The results indicated a moderate, positive correlation between the variables (Keith, 2006). This correlation may indicate that supervisors who practice cultural competence during supervision sessions foster the working alliance through attention to supervisee's cultural characteristics. This notion has been supported in previous research. For example, Gatmon et al. (2001) found that supervisee's reported a stronger working alliance when supervisors engaged in discussions about the cultural characteristics of the supervisee, and Wong, Wong and Ishiyama (2013) noted that inattention to supervisee race in the supervision context can be harmful to supervisees of color.

## Research Question 2

The second research question was designed to examine which variables of supervisor multicultural competence best predicted the working alliance. The results indicated that while all four variables contributed variance to the working alliance, the combination of two significantly predict the working alliance; specifically, Supervisor Multicultural Knowledge and Supervisor Multicultural Skills,  $R^2 = .194$ ,  $F(2,75) = 9.027$ ,  $p < .001$ . The addition of relationship and awareness variables explained an additional 4.9% of the variance over and above knowledge and skills and did not significantly contribute to the model,  $R^2 \text{ change} = .049$ ,  $F(2,73) = 5.875$ ,  $p > .05$ . There has been limited research that has examined the constructs of cultural knowledge and skills. The findings of the current study are congruent with the limited research that has been conducted from the perspective of the supervisee, which suggests that supervisors who demonstrate skills related to culture maintain better working alliances (Gatmon et al., 2001).

Further, the results indicated that Supervisor Multicultural Awareness contributed to the overall variance in the working alliance, which is also congruent with existing research that suggests that cultural awareness is the predecessor for other cultural competencies (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMilian, Butler & McCollough, 2016). More specifically, the competency model suggests that counselors and supervisors must master cultural awareness before moving into the other domains of cultural knowledge and skills. Thus, based on this model, it is reasonable to infer that supervisor multicultural awareness would have also been a strong predictor of the working alliance. Additional research by Ladany, Mori and Mehr (2013) indicated that supervisor awareness of cultural issues in supervision is among the best supervisor behaviors and Burnes, Wood, Inman, Weikson (2013) found that supervisors' ability to practice awareness by reflecting on their role and power in the supervision relationship was helpful to creating an

emotional bond with a supervisee. Further, Ladany (2014) has noted that a supervisors' lack of awareness of cultural issues is an ingredient to supervisor failure. It is therefore surprising that the variable of awareness did not factor into the model in the current study. The results of this study indicate that while Supervisor Cultural Awareness did not significant variance over and above what was already contributed by knowledge and skills, it did contribute some amount of variance and predict the working alliance.

The findings related to the Supervisor Cultural Relationships variable are similar. Research has indicated (i.e., Bordin, 1983; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014) that the emotional bond is the most important factor in the working alliance. Ladany (2014) stated that a supervisors' lack of attention to the relationship in supervision is a condition of supervisor failure. The relationship subscale in this study is significantly correlated with the working alliance and contributes unique variance. While this is the case, the researcher hypothesized that the relationship subscale would account for variance over and above what was accounted for by the knowledge and skills variables. It is interesting to note that it is possible that the instrument used to measure the relationship between counselor and client is not adequately addressing the relationship between supervisor and supervisee in this sample. In examining the items used to assess relationship in the MCI, it is also possible that participants responded in ways that they thought they "should" rather than how they may actually feel. Based on the values of the profession, the desirable choices in the items on this subscale were obvious, such as Item 19, which reads, "I experience discomfort because of the clients' different physical appearance, color, dress, or socioeconomic status". It is reasonable to assume that licensed practitioners may be inclined to underestimate their discomfort in order to answer the way that they believe that they "ought" to answer based

on their professional values. This inclination may have led to artificially decreased scores that, in turn, impacted the overall variance accounted for by this variable.

Both variables that entered into the model; however, are congruent with previous research that examines supervisor behaviors in the supervision. In a qualitative study conducted by Wong et al. (2013), 52% of the participants reported that a supervisors' demonstration of cultural competence was considered a positive incident in supervision. A similar result was found for the cross-cultural relationship, where 80% of the participants reported this as a positive event. It would appear that supervisors who demonstrate both cultural knowledge and skills are perceived as creating stronger working alliances with the supervisees.

### **Research question 3**

The third research question examined the difference in multicultural competence between the participants who reported professional licensure as counselors and those who reported licensure in allied professions. Results indicated that there is a significant difference between the groups. In examining the ethical codes of the professions represented in this study, the emphasis on cultural considerations of each profession is present. However, in the ACA Code of Ethics, both the Mission Statement and the Preamble make explicit mention of culture. Additional direction to respect the cultural characteristics of another person (client or supervisee) is mentioned 22 times throughout the document and out of the nine sections of the Code of Ethics, seven sections mention cultural sensitivity at least once. It would appear that based on the ACA Code of Ethics, cultural considerations are a prominent focus of professional counselors. Alternatively, the two main professions that comprised the "allied professions" group in the current study were psychologist and social workers. In the Code of Ethics for Psychologists, two of the five General Principles refer to cultural considerations and within the Standards of

Practice, cultural considerations are mentioned four times within two of the 10 sections (American Psychological Association, 2002). When examining the Social Worker Code of Ethics, a focus on culture is mentioned in the Preamble and the Core Values. Throughout the document, culture is mentioned nine times in five out of the six sections of the document.

It is possible that participants in this study were influenced by their professions distinct emphasis on culture and the responses therefore reflected this. It is reasonable to infer that professionals desire to uphold their respective code of ethics and therefore would respond in a way that aligns with those codes. This finding illuminates the importance that professional counselors place on cultural competence and offers support for the independent professional identities of these professions.

### **Additional Findings**

Examining multicultural competence and the working alliance in relation to some of the demographic variables reported by the participants yielded mixed results. First, results indicated that multicultural competence did not differ significantly in participants who had been supervising for 0-1 years, 1-5 years, 5-10 years and greater than 10 years. This result could be due to several factors. First, there is a possibility that the non-significant result is an indication that multicultural competence does change the longer a person supervises. It is also possible that all of the participants have been supervisors since the push toward multiculturalism in counselors arose. Meaning, these participants may have all begun supervising after the emphasis on culture was introduced in counseling and supervision, and if the length of time as a supervisor was extended beyond 10 years, results may have differed. Finally, it is possible that all of the participants were influenced by the training that they had previously received in order to become eligible to supervise in Virginia. Sampling participants who did not attend the training workshop

may more adequately represent the relationship between length of time as a supervisor and multicultural competence.

Additional analysis revealed a significant difference in the working alliance of the participants and length of time as a supervisor. The significant differences were present between the participants who reported being a supervisor for 0-1 years, 1-5 years and greater than 10 years. The participants who reported having been supervisors for 5-10 years did not demonstrate significant results. There is difficulty in interpreting these results; however, because the participants were not given the option of writing in the specific length of time. Because of this, it could be possible that the participants in the 0-1 years and 1-5 years groups were early in their supervision (meaning closer to 1 year than to 5 years). If that were the case, then the results could be interpreted to mean that supervisors who are early in their careers as supervisors are less adept at maintaining the working alliance than those who have been supervising for more than 10 years. This conclusion is difficult to make; however, because of the way the survey was developed, as participants were not given the option of writing in a specific length of time. Additionally, research has demonstrated that many factors contribute to the strength of the working alliance, and this analysis did not take into account any of the possible variables.

### **Recommendations of Study**

#### **Implications for Practice**

Results of the current study indicate that there is a correlation between the multicultural competence of supervisors and the working alliance. Based on these results, it is important that supervisors in community settings maintain a cultural focus in both supervision sessions and with regard to the supervisee's work with clients. This notion has been supported in the literature from a supervisee perspective, as Gatmon et al. (2001) found that supervisees reported

greater satisfaction in supervision and a stronger working alliance when supervisors attended to culture in supervision sessions. Supervisees appreciate the cultural competence of supervisors and the current study indicates that supervisor multicultural competence is positively related to the working alliance.

### **Implications for Training/Education**

The current study provided valuable data addressing the importance of multicultural competence for supervisors. The results support the need for continued supervisor training in multicultural competencies, as an increase in the multicultural competence of supervisors may contribute to an increase in supervisee growth and development through a positive working alliance. Ultimately, the professional growth of a supervisee will result in improved service to clients. There is a gap in the literature that currently exists around the training of counseling supervisors. It is generally assumed that supervisors have mastered the cultural competencies necessary to foster a positive working alliance and the current study begins to explore this notion. However, additional research is warranted that looks more explicitly at the areas in which training for supervisors is needed.

### **Implications for Theory**

Use of the term “multicultural competence” is common language in counseling literature to refer to the process of developing the awareness, knowledge and skills necessary to address the needs of culturally diverse clients (Ratts et al., 2016). The use of the word “competency” was introduced in the initial multicultural counseling model developed by Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992) and this model has been pervasively influential in the counseling discipline, through molding the ACA Code of Ethics, CACREP standards of training, and supervision best practices (Ratts et al., 2016). Very recently, this Multicultural Counseling Competency model

was revised to develop the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competency model, with much of the language remaining the same. The underlying principles of these models mandate a continued development of cultural sensitivity (Ratts et al., 2016); however, the word “competence” indicates a finality to, or mastery of, the process. There has been recent research that suggests changing the language from “cultural competence” to “cultural humility”. Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington and Utsey (2013) defined cultural humility as a process that “involves 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” (p. 354). The authors further note that this shift brings the focus from that of “doing” to that of “being”; meaning, counselors and trainees are no longer attempting to achieve cultural competence but rather are beginning to orient themselves as cultural beings in relation with other cultural beings (Hook et al., 2013).

The present study offers support for this shift in focus from competency to orientation. The results indicate that supervisors that maintain a cultural focus also reported greater working alliance, meaning that a supervisor that demonstrates the “other orientation” of cultural humility reported working better with their supervisees. Further, the supervisor multicultural relationship subscale significantly predicted the working alliance and this subscale addresses a supervisor’s ability to appreciate culture in relationships. This again speaks to the “other oriented” approach of cultural humility and is additional support for the modification of language from that of competence to that of humility. Finally, the shift away from competence with regard to relationships in general is more congruent with what we know about relationships, both in counseling and supervision. Research has demonstrated that relationships are dynamic and the interpersonal component of cultural humility best serves the dynamic component of relationships

(Davis, Worthington & Hook, 2010). To apply a model of humility rather than competence is therefore logical, as competence implies mastery rather than a continued process of other-orientation.

### **Implications for Research**

The empirical support for the cultural humility has been conducted solely on counseling relationships (e.g., Hook et al., 2013). Because culture is present in supervision relationships, researching cultural humility in supervision may prove to be a useful direction for future research. More specifically, because some authors have identified the emotional bond component of the working alliance as the most important component of the working alliance (e.g., Bernard & Goodyear, 2014), examining cultural humility as it applies to the working alliance is a direction for future research.

However, this researcher notes that altering the definition of cultural competence is a hefty task, given the historical roots of the competency models. So, in an effort to address another implication for research with regard to the competency model, it is salient to note that the multicultural competencies that are used in supervision research broadly, as well as in the current project, were initially created for counselors. It is reasonable to use these models when discussing supervision, as supervisors were trained as counselors first; however, there has been a call in the field of psychology to develop specific competencies for supervision (Falender et al., 2013). The field of counseling has developed best practice guidelines that establish expectations for supervisors (ACES Executive Council, 2011), and while these guidelines are a useful tool for counseling supervisors, they can not exactly address areas of competence. Moving forward, it may benefit the counseling profession to develop a model for multicultural competence that is specific for counseling supervisors. This model could address components of supervision that are

not present in the counseling relationship and adhere to a cultural humility perspective. For example, Bernard and Goodyear (2014) note that the evaluative component of supervision is one aspect that separates it from counseling. Using a model of cultural competence that is developed for counseling, therefore, does not adequately address this component of the working alliance. Further, it could be argued that there are cultural variables that could present in the evaluative component of supervision, such as gender, age and race privilege/marginalization of the supervisor or supervisee. The current model does not address this, as evaluation is not a factor in the client/counselor relationship, so developing a model for supervision cultural humility that more comprehensively addressed the unique characteristics of supervision may be useful moving forward.

### **Limitations**

The researcher took a number of precautions to ensure that the study was as accurate as possible. However, as in all studies, limitations still exist and it is important to consider these limitations when interpreting the results of this study. In this section, limitations in sampling, accurate reporting issues and generalizability will be discussed.

#### **Sampling Limitations and Generalizability**

The lack of gender and racial diversity in this study presents as a limitation, as participants were predominately White and female. This lack of diversity limits the generalizability of the results. Additionally, all participants were located in one Southeastern state and participated in the same training for supervisors, both factors that further limit the generalizability of the findings. It is a possible limitation that the participants who chose to respond to the recruitment email are those who were interested in the topic of the research and

therefore have more awareness of the issue. This sampling limitation may further influence the generalizability of the results.

### **Social Desirability and Self-Report**

Some studies have shown that social desirability prevents accurate results in research conducted on topics of multicultural considerations (i.e. Ladany & Constantine, 2000; Quinn, A, 2013), as participants may inaccurately report their correct level of cultural competence in an effort to present themselves more favorably. The self-report nature and social desirability may have impacted the results of the current study for the same reason. It is not possible to know if social desirability skewed the results of the study or if participants reported their true behaviors and feelings, but is important to note the possibility of skewed results.

### **Summary of chapter**

The current study examined the relationship between supervisor multicultural competence and the working alliance in a sample of community practitioners. Based on the results of the study, the constructs appear related, with Supervisor Multicultural Knowledge and Supervisor Multicultural Relationship having the greatest impact on the working alliance. It is interesting to note that Supervisor Multicultural Awareness was not included in the factors of supervisors, as current models of cultural competence state that awareness is needed before any other competencies can arise.

This study, and others like it, utilize competency models that were initially designed for counselors rather than supervisors and therefore makes the case for the development of a framework that addresses the unique needs of supervisors. Within this new framework, moving away from a “competency” perspective and into one of “humility” may more accurately reflect

the mission of counseling professionals to be continually evolving cultural beings that deny an end point to our process of cultural orientation.

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Appendix A  
Demographic Questionnaire

**Please indicate your:**

Age:

Sex:

Race:

Ethnicity:

Sexual Orientation:

Relevant professional licensures and certifications:

Primary field of graduate study:

If currently supervising, how long have you been with your current supervisee?

Not currently supervising

0-1 years

1-5 years

5-10 years

Greater than 10 years

Approximately how long have you been a supervisor?

0-1 years

1-5 years

5-10 years

Greater than 10 years

Appendix B  
Multicultural Counseling Inventory



40 Avon Street  
Keene, New Hampshire  
03431 603.283.2183

**Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI)**

Thank you for your purchase of the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI). I have enclosed the instrument for your use as outlined in the written Agreement for Procedural Use.

For scoring purposes, I employed a Likert scale with values of 1 through 4, with 4 indicating high multicultural competence, and 1 indicating poor multicultural competence. Item numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 15, and 19 are to be reversed. Listed below are the specific subscales and items included in each:

Subscale 1 (11 items): Multicultural Counseling Skills, includes the following items: 18, 20, 21, 24, 26, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40.

Subscale 2 (10 items): Multicultural Awareness, includes the following items: 22, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34.

Subscale 3 (8 items): Multicultural Counseling Relationship, includes the following items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, and 19.

Subscale 4 (11 items): Multicultural Counseling Knowledge, includes the following items: 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 23.

Best wishes in your research endeavors.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gargi Roysircar-Sodowsky". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gargi Roysircar-Sodowsky, PhD  
Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology  
Director, Antioch University New England Multicultural Center

**\*\*The MCI cannot be reprinted in full\*\***

### Appendix C Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory

Instructions: Please indicate the frequency with which the behavior described in each of the following items seems characteristic of your work with your supervisee. After each item, check (X) the space over the number corresponding to the appropriate point of the following 7-point scale:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Almost Never						Almost Always
I help my supervisee work within a specific treatment plan with his/her client.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I help my supervisee stay on track during our meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My style is to carefully and systematically consider the material that my supervisee brings to supervision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My supervisee works with me on specific goals in the supervisory session.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In supervision, I expect my supervisee to think about or reflect on my comments to him or her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I teach my supervisee through direct suggestion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In supervision, I place a high priority on our understanding of the client's perspective.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my supervisee to take time to understand what the client is saying and doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When correcting my supervisee's errors with a client, I offer alternative ways of intervening.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my supervisee to formulate his/her own interventions with his/her clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I encourage my supervisee to talk about the work in ways that are comfortable for him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I welcome my supervisee's explanations about his/her client's behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
During supervision, my supervisee talks more than I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I make an effort to understand my supervisee.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I am tactful when commenting about my supervisee's performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I facilitate my supervisee's talking in our sessions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In supervision, my supervisee is more curious than anxious when discussing his/her difficulties with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My supervisee appears to be comfortable working with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My supervisee understands client behavior and treatment techniques similar to the way I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

From Efstation, J. F., Patton, M. J., & Kardash, C. M. (1990). Measuring the working alliance in counselor supervision. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 37*, 322-329.  
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Appendix D  
Recruitment Emails

INITIAL EMAIL:

Dear Colleagues,

You are receiving this email because you have attended training to supervise LPC residents in Virginia. My name is Claudia Howell and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Gerard Lawson. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competencies in the clinical supervision practices of Virginia counselors and would greatly appreciate your participation in my research.

Your participation is completely voluntary and the questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. You may stop responding, withdraw from the study and/or skip questions at any time, without penalty. If you choose to participate, your input will contribute to our understanding of supervision practices in community settings.

To be eligible to participate, you must:

- Currently be conducting clinical supervision.
- Be willing to forward this email to the supervisee with which you have been working the longest amount of time.

Your responses will be kept confidential and participation in this study carries minimal risk. This study has been approved by Virginia Tech IRB (#15-920). Whether or not you complete the study, you can choose to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of three \$20 gift cards from Amazon, with a 1 in 41 odds of winning.

If you would like to participate in the study and meet the above criteria, please click on the link below to complete the survey. Additionally, please forward this email to the supervisee with which you have been working the longest.

The link for supervisors goes here.

For more information, please feel free to contact me at [howellce@vt.edu](mailto:howellce@vt.edu) or (757) 876-2442. You may also contact Gerard Lawson at [glawson@vt.edu](mailto:glawson@vt.edu) or (540) 231-9703. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at [moored@vt.edu](mailto:moored@vt.edu) or (540) 231-4991.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Claudia Howell

To opt out of receiving additional emails, please click the link below:

## FIRST FOLLOW UP EMAIL:

Hello <First Name>,

I hope that you are doing well.

I am writing ask for your help with a research project that will be coming by email from a student of mine. Claudia Howell is working on her dissertation research and is exploring perceptions of both supervisors and supervisees. Because I know all of you have been through training in order to supervise residents for licensure in Virginia, we would greatly appreciate your assistance with this project.

You should receive an invitation to participate in the survey later today. All we ask is that you complete your portion of the survey (about 20 minutes) and forward the bottom part of the email to the supervisee with whom you have been working the longest. They will have their own link to click on, to participate in their survey.

I know how very busy you are and I appreciate you considering this request. If you have any questions you can contact me or Claudia at [howellce@vt.edu](mailto:howellce@vt.edu).

My best,

Gerard

To opt out of receiving additional emails, please click the link below:

## FINAL REMINDER EMAIL:

Hello, <First Name>!

You recently received an invitation to participate in a dissertation research project to examine multicultural competencies in the clinical supervision practices of Virginia counselors. If you have completed the survey already, thank you! If not, this email serves as a reminder that your participation is greatly appreciated.

This study has been approved by Virginia Tech IRB (#15-920). Whether or not you complete the study, you can choose to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of three \$20 gift cards from Amazon, with a 1 in 41 odds of winning. Your responses will be kept confidential and participation in this study carries minimal risk.

Supervisors, follow the link below to participate. Supervisees, please see email below.

For more information, please feel free to contact me at [howellce@vt.edu](mailto:howellce@vt.edu) or (757) 876-2442. You may also contact Gerard Lawson at [glawson@vt.edu](mailto:glawson@vt.edu) or (540) 231-9703. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a

research-related injury or event, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at [moored@vt.edu](mailto:moored@vt.edu) or [\(540\) 231-4991](tel:(540)231-4991).

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Claudia Howell

Appendix E  
Institutional Review Board Approval

**Office of Research Compliance**

Institutional Review Board North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech 300 Turner Street  
NW Blacksburg, Virginia 24061 540/231-4606 Fax 540/231-0959 email [irb@vt.edu](mailto:irb@vt.edu) website  
<http://www.irb.vt.edu>

DATE: October 21, 2015

TO: Gerard Francis Lawson, Claudia Elizabeth Howell

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires July 29, 2020)

PROTOCOL TITLE: Dissertation: Surveying Community Supervision Practices

IRB NUMBER: **15-920**

Effective October 21, 2015, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at: <http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm>

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

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**PROTOCOL INFORMATION:**

Approved As: **Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 2,4**

Protocol Approval Date: **October 21, 2015**

Protocol Expiration Date: **N/A**

Continuing Review Due Date\*: **N/A**

\*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

**FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:**

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research

activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.