

#SOS³: A Phenomenological Study of School Counseling Supervisors' Clinical
Supervision Experiences

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Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
In
Counselor Education and Supervision

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July 28, 2022
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: clinical supervision, school counseling supervisors, school counseling
supervision, school counseling supervision models

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ABSTRACT

School counselors support students' social-emotional, academic, and career readiness (ASCA, 2019). However, who provides support for school counselors to navigate this herculean responsibility? Supervision provides opportunities for counselors to learn, consult, and practice counseling knowledge and skills to offer the most research-informed, inclusive, and culturally responsive services to appropriately support clients' needs (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Ratts et al., 2015; Mitchell & Butler, 2021). With the current state of society, students' mental health and social-emotional needs are paramount, and the support needed for school counselors to assist students' holistic development is critical. The author proposes #S.O.S.³ to promote the *Supervision of School Counselors to Support Students*. Without counseling supervision, research warns of erosion of school counselor self-efficacy. This qualitative, phenomenological study used semi-structured interviews to investigate ten school counseling supervisors' (SCS) counseling supervision experiences. This study uncovered five superordinate themes and related subthemes regarding the supervision experiences of SCS who received and delivered clinical supervision. Implications for SCS, counselor educators, school district and state educational administrators on the needs of SCS that will inform the supervision of school counselors who provide counseling services to support students' social-emotional/mental health needs are discussed.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Supervision provides opportunities for counselors to learn, consult, and practice counseling knowledge and skills to offer the most research-informed, inclusive, and culturally responsive services to appropriately support clients' needs (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Ratts et al., 2015; Mitchell & Butler, 2021). Research has uncovered that school counselors often receive none or minimal clinical supervision compared to counselors in agencies, hospitals, and private practice (Page et al., 2001; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; DeKruyf et al., 2013). Also, research shows school counselors prefer supervisors that have clinical mental health understanding and knowledge (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Roberts & Borders, 1994), and school counselors who participate in clinical supervision continue to develop skills and techniques to assist in appropriate strategies and interventions to support students and families (Bledsoe et al., 2021). However, despite the increased number of studies on school counseling supervision, few studies have explicitly focused on school counseling supervisors' (SCS) experiences. This qualitative, phenomenological study, using semi-structured interviews, investigated the clinical supervision perceptions and experiences of ten SCS who received and provided clinical supervision. This study discovered five superordinate themes and related subthemes regarding clinical supervision experiences, including professional (a) preparation, (b) identity, (c) self-efficacy, (d) challenges, and (e) quality of life. Implications for school counseling supervision are discussed.

Dedication

To Team Mikesh- whose unconditional love and support motivated me on this journey

RJ- who relentlessly believed in me

Cameryn & Sean – who inspire me to be the best version of myself

I love you all, awholebunchalottas!

Acknowledgments

To all the SCS and SC who serve as collaborators, leaders, advocates, and systemic change agents who work alongside students on their journey to support them, thank you for sharing your experiences.

I express my sincere gratitude to my co-chairs, Dr. Tameka Grimes (#Iknowmywhy) and Dr. Gerard Lawson (#trusttheprocess), whose guidance and support served as a guidepost for my journey. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the members of my dissertation committee Dr. Breanna Ellington for providing me opportunities to grow as a scholarly writer and researcher, Dr. David Kniola for your down-to-earth and approachable philosophy of research investigation, and Dr. Laura Welfare for your compassion, always thoughtful, and unconditional positive regard. I admire, and each of you inspires me as leaders, educators, advocates, and dynamic scholars (#LEADS)

To Dr. Nancy Bodenhorn and Dr. Mathew Fullen, thank you for fostering an environment for me to expand my identities as a counselor educator and researcher.

To my Future Professoriate Professors, Dean Karen DePauw, Dr. Homer Murzi, and Dr. Shernita Lee, thank you for expanding my perspective of what it means to be a professor by modeling and providing strategies to facilitate a collaborative learning environment that is inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible.

A special shoutout to the Squadhort for your encouragement and support; you are forever held in my heart #squadhort4ever!

To Joshua Redding and the Team at Hokie Wellness, Thank You for your support on my journey. #StudentsFirst!

To my Sistas-in-Heart- thank you for the care packages, check-ins, and unconditional support to me and my family on this journey.

To my mother- Thank you! You instilled my love for learning, advocacy, and social justice.

To all my teachers at Anna Devine Elementary, Myron J. Michael Junior High, Kingston High School, and my professors at Siena College and University at Albany, you provided the foundation for me to be a critical thinker and a lifelong learner.

To my family, family by choice, and friends, I am grateful for your encouragement and support as this milestone is achieved.

I also want to thank Dr. Patricia Cameron, Dr. Tracy L. Jackson, Heather Ross, Dr. Sue E. Pressman, Dr. Kenya Bledsoe, Dr. Shekila Melchior, and Dr. Emily Goodman-Scott, for your belief in me, for inspiring me, and your guidance, motivation, and support.

*This study was partly supported through an Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Graduate Student Research (GSR) Grant!

#SupportingResearchMatters!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

School counselors support students' social-emotional, academic, and career readiness (ASCA, 2019a; 2019e). However, who provides support for school counselors to navigate this herculean responsibility? School counseling supervisors (SCS) are essential in providing supervision to school counselors. Often, SCS provides supervision to school counselors within three research-informed types of supervision: administrative, programmatic, and clinical (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton & Page, 1994; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). In addition, research shows that SCS provides a continuum of support to school counselors to promote leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change (ASCA, 2019b; 2019e; 2021a). With the numerous responsibilities (ASCA, 2019a; 2021a), role ambiguity (Hays, 1971; Boyd & Walter, 1975), and limited resources (i.e., financial, personnel, professional development; Sutton & Page, 1994) to adequately support the supervision needs of school counselors, there is an opportunity to explore and better understand the experiences of SCS who received and provided clinical supervision

Supervision in the counseling profession is a critical strategic pedagogy for counselors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Supervision provides opportunities for counselors to learn, consult, and practice counseling knowledge and skills to offer the most research-informed, inclusive, and culturally responsive services to appropriately support clients' needs (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Ratts et al., 2015; Mitchell & Butler, 2021). Many SCS implement comprehensive school counseling programs (CSCP) within

a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) with minimal and/or inconsistent opportunities to provide adequate supervision (Jackson, 2014; ASCA, 2019a; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020b; Page et al., 2001; DeKruyf et al., 2013). Research has also uncovered that school counselors often receive none or minimal clinical supervision compared to counselors in agencies, hospitals, and private practice (Page et al., 2001; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; DeKruyf et al., 2013). In the absence of formal clinical supervision, research indicates that school counselors often engage in consultation and/or peer supervision with a group of colleagues (Page et al., 2001; Brott et al., 2021). Also, research shows school counselors prefer supervision supervisors with clinical mental health understanding and knowledge (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Roberts & Borders, 1994). Moreover, school counselors who participate in clinical supervision develop skills and techniques to assist in appropriate strategies and interventions to support students and families (Bledsoe et al., 2021). However, despite the increased number of studies on school counseling supervision, few studies have explicitly focused on school counseling supervisors' (SCS) experiences.

Counseling knowledge and skill development require ongoing supervision during pre and post-graduate studies and training (CACREP, 2016). Compared to the sibling disciplines, such as mental health agency counseling, social work, and school psychology, regular clinical supervision is often not provided nor expected for school counselors. (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Dollarhide & Miller 2006). The intensive and targeted direct counseling services school counselors provide through individual and small group counseling services deserve the same support, including case conceptualization, identifying interventions and strategies, and follow-up on

implementation (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006, Goodman-Scott et al., 2019). However, studies have often indicated that the type of supervision SCS provides is limited to either administrative or programmatic, and not clinical (Boyd & Walter, 1975; Roberts & Borders, 1994; Henderson & Lampe, 1992; Page et al., 2001; Bledsoe et al., 2021).

Context

Current State of Student Social-Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Educational institutions in the United States (US) have prioritized student social-emotional learning and mental and behavioral health amidst a global pandemic and social injustices. School districts must provide culturally sensitive, inclusive, equitable, and accessible educational services that promote academic achievement, career/college readiness, and social-emotional development for all youth (US Department of Education, 2021). As US schools reinstate in-person instruction schools, the reality is mental health and wellness of students is a significant focus for school counselors (Pincus et al., 2020). School counselors provide a continuum of multi-tiered, comprehensive direct and indirect services to students, families, staff, and school communities (ASCA, 2019a; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020b; Goodman-Scott et al., 2019).

As US schools reopen and implement new strategies to support students' holistic development, the mental health needs of many students are yet to be determined. However, preliminary statistics indicate that 59% of youth (ages 12-17) with major depression did not receive mental health treatment in 2020 (Mental Health America, 2021). Research has also shown that mental health services are needed, with 10.8% to 16.8% of youth ages 5-17 receiving mental health treatment (Zablotsky & Terlizzi, 2019). The unprecedented shutdown of schools during the 2019-2020 school year and the

staggered reopening in 2020-2021 has demonstrated a disruption to the educational development of students, as evidenced by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reporting the latest statistics from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS; CDC, 2021; 2019).

Supervision is a strategy or intervention to enhance professional knowledge and skills, consisting of professional standards or best practices, various delivery modalities, service types, and models (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Page et al., 2001; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). Counseling supervision is primarily provided by a senior member of the same profession to a more junior colleague to monitor the quality of services offered. It is a process conducted over time with an evaluative and hierarchical stance (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). When exploring how supervision is conducted in counseling, it is crucial to examine the foundational aspects of supervision. The preparation, including the learning environment, professional counseling identity, and professional practice, is critical to consider when trying to understand the experiences of counseling supervisors. Another consideration of supervision is the standards of practice of counseling supervision, specifically, school counseling supervision.

Supervision Preparation

The Council of Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) has established standards for counselor education and supervision programs for master's and doctoral level students. Three key components CACREP lists in the preparation of counselors are the learning environment, professional counseling identity, and professional practice. The first key component is the learning environment for both master's and doctoral levels, specifically for doctoral-level students to work as

counselor educators, supervisors, researchers, and practitioners in academic and clinical settings (CACREP, 2016). Next, the professional counseling identity requires counselor education programs to address roles in five core areas: counseling supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, and leadership and advocacy (CACREP, 2016). These five areas represent the foundational knowledge required. In particular, supervision has 11 standards, including the purpose of clinical supervision, theoretical frameworks and models of clinical supervision, roles and relationships, skills, development of supervision style, assessment of development level, modalities, administrative procedures, and responsibilities related to clinical supervision, evaluation, remediation, and gatekeeping, legal and ethical issues and responsibilities, and culturally relevant strategies for conducting clinical supervision (CACREP, 2016).

Professional practice is the last component of the master's and doctoral students' standards. Professional preparation for future counseling supervisors requires participation in practicum and internship experiences. In both incidents, students participate in an average of one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout their clinical training. However, once school counselors enter the field, access and opportunity for postgraduate programs are scarce (CACREP, 2016; Sutton & Page, 1994; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a; Bledsoe et al., 2021). The lack of clinical supervision support provided to school counselors post master's degree can be rectified through increased access to school counseling supervisors in school districts (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). Access to clinical supervision would provide the opportunity to develop counseling skills such as case conceptualization, interventions and strategies, and the counseling process (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006).

Supervision Standards

The American Counseling Association (ACA), the largest professional counseling organization, has established a code of ethics that outlines and provides guidance on critical elements of counseling supervision standards. The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) outlines specifications for counseling supervisor education, competence, and supervision evaluation (see ACA Code of Ethics: Section F, 2014). Counseling supervisors are expected to have a theoretical and pedagogical foundation in supervision, knowledge of supervision models, and monitor the services provided by those they supervise (ACA, 2014; Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching, p. 12)

Along with Bernard and Goodyear's (2019) definition of supervision, Borders and colleagues (2014) developed guidelines for clinical supervision to serve as a framework to ensure professional competency in providing clinical supervision. The supervision guideline practices focus on initiating supervision, goal setting, giving feedback, conducting supervision, supervisory relationship, diversity and advocacy consideration, ethical considerations, documentation, evaluation, supervision format, the supervisor, and supervision preparation. These guidelines support the idea that all counselors, including school counselors, can benefit from clinical/counseling supervision. The establishment of ethical considerations and best practices for clinical supervision are critical for all counseling specialties (ACA, 2014; ASCA, 2016; Borders et al., 2014). The opportunity for all counselors to have access to adequate and appropriate supervision is vital to ensure the well-being of those who counselors serve.

School Counseling Supervision

Along with the ACA Code of Ethics and clinical supervision best practices for counseling supervisors, the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) has the ASCA Ethical Standards (2016) for school counselor administrators/supervisors. These standards require that school counselor administrators/supervisors support school counselors to (a) advocate for adequate resources to implement a comprehensive school counseling program and meet student needs, (b) advocate for fair and open distribution of resources among programs supervised, (c) take reasonable steps to ensure school and other resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision and training, (d) provide opportunities for professional development in current research related to school counseling practices and ethics, (e) take steps to eliminate conditions or practices that may violate, discourage, or interfere with compliance with ethics and laws related to the profession, (f) monitor organizational policies, regulations and procedures to ensure practices are consistent with ASCA ethical standards for school counselors (ASCA, 2016; Section C). After reviewing the ethical standards for SCS and the unique roles and responsibilities of SCS, specific school counseling supervision models exist and incorporate the unique aspects of school counseling supervision (i.e., The School Counseling Supervision Model [SCSM]; Luke & Bernard, 2006).

Counseling supervision frameworks such as the Discrimination Model (DM; Bernard, 1979, 1997), Systems Approach to Supervision (SAS; Holloway, 2016), and most recently, the Multicultural Integrated Supervision Model (MISM; Mitchell & Butler, 2021) provide theoretical foundation and guidance on delivering counseling supervision along with psychotherapy based, developmental, process and second-generation models.

However, in the last 15 years, researchers have developed school counseling

supervision models to support school counselors' multi-tiered and multidimensional roles (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Miller & Dollarhide, 2006). Several school counseling supervision models such as Northside Independent School District Model (NISD; Henderson & Lampe, 1992); Goals, Functions, Roles, and Systems Model (GFRSM; Wood & Rayle, 2006); School Counseling Supervision Model (SCSM; Luke & Bernard, 2006); the Change Agent for Equity Model (CAFE; Ockerman, Mason, & Chen Hayes, 2013); and the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003/2019c; Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020) have been developed, yet there is minimal empirical evidence on the school counseling supervisors' experience with these models. Furthermore, most of the school counseling supervision models developed focus primarily on frameworks for school counseling internship site supervisors to utilize with school counselors-in-training, such as the GFRSM (Wood & Rayle, 2006), SCSM (Luke & Bernard, 2006), CAFE (Ockerman et al., 2013), ASCA National Model (Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020).

The absence of research on school counseling supervisors' experiences with receiving and providing supervision, specifically clinical supervision, is alarming. Although there has been progress in developing school counseling supervision models, there is a lack of understanding of the supervisor's experience with the proposed models. Cook et al. (2012) conducted a qualitative study of school counselors' experiences with supervision using the Support, Advocacy, Accessibility, Feedback, and Teamwork Model (SAAFT) with a primary theme of relationship with the supervisor as a critical element in the supervisory experience. They concluded the following categories: support, collaboration, accessibility, feedback on clinical skills, and advocacy. Although this study focuses on school counselors' experiences, it lends insight into how feedback on clinical

skills increased the quality of services provided by school counselors. This study opens the door to understanding the SCS's experience and perspective on clinical supervision.

Recently, Bledsoe and colleagues (2021) conducted a phenomenological investigation of clinical supervision experiences of early career school counselors and discovered clinical supervision reportedly improved counseling services. The rich account of the school counselors' experience provides insight and forges consideration to explore the SCS experience and perspective. Similarly, Goodman-Scott and colleagues (2020a) explored district-level school counseling supervisors' experiences and perceptions regarding school counselor preparation and practice. This study lays the foundation of how SCS makes sense of their interactions and relationships with school counselors. These are recent and encouraging studies that have started to focus on the experiences and contributions of SCS. However, much is still needed to understand better the critical role SCS plays in the development of school counselors and their work.

School Counseling Supervisors Preparation and Models

The lack of supervision preparation specifically for SCS practicing in the field is a challenge. Although there have been school counseling-specific supervision models developed, the reality is many counselors' education programs, specifically school counselor preparation programs, provide minimal supervision training and exposure to school counseling supervision models at the master's level (Neyland-Brown et al., 2019). There is research to support supervision training and models for school counselors who supervise school counselors-in-training (SCITs) in their practicum or internship placement; however, this training may not be offered by all universities that have partnerships with school divisions (Wambu & Myers, 2019; Merlin & Brendel, 2017;

Merlin et al. 2018; Gruman & Purgason, 2019). The qualifications to serve as a school counseling site supervisor are outlined in ASCA's Ethical Standards (2016), and state school counseling site supervisors are licensed and certified school counselors and/or understand comprehensive school counseling programs and have education and training to provide clinical supervision (Section D).

Furthermore, ASCA recently established the ASCA Standards for School Counselor Preparation Programs (ASCA CAEP SAP, 2019d), which provides seven standards to include: (1) foundational knowledge, (2) core theories and concepts, (3) instructional and school counseling interventions, (4) student learning outcomes, (5) designing, implementing, and assessing comprehensive school counseling programs, (6) professional practice, (7) ethical practice. Developing these new standards for school counseling preparatory programs may assist with preparing master's level school counselors who may serve as school counseling supervisors in the future. Although these standards guide counselor education programs to prepare SCITs, the standards lack supervision training for SCITs.

School Counseling Supervision Types

Research has examined more specific types of supervision that are common within the school counseling specialty. Three specific supervision types emerge in the literature: administrative, program development, and clinical/counseling. Barret & Schmidt (1986) recommended suggestions for the counseling professions to consider regarding distinctions between administrative supervision, such as recording keeping and curriculum concerns, and clinical supervision, which supports counselors in managing the needs of students. In addition, several researchers such as Roberts and Borders (1994),

Page and colleagues (2001), and Dollarhide and Miller (2006) similarly identified three forms of supervision: (1) *administrative supervision* with a focus on professionalism such as attendance and outreach to parents; (2) *developmental/program supervision* with a focus on program development, implementation, and management; and (3) *clinical/counseling supervision* with a focus on clinical knowledge and skill working with students in individual or group counseling sessions. Along with these three types of supervision, several modalities of how supervision is delivered and provided, such as individual, peer, triadic, and group supervision, are also examined in the literature (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; Lonn, 2014; Newgent et al. 2006). Furthermore, research provides several school counseling supervision models such as the NSID Model (Henderson & Lampe 1992), GFRS Model (Wood & Rayle, 2006), SCSM (Luke & Bernard, 2006), the CAFE Model (Ockerman et al., 2013), and the use of the ASCA National Model in supervision (Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020). However, it is essential to note that most models focus on school counselor internship site supervisors. Each school counseling supervision type, modality, and model has considerations and influences based on the preparation, ongoing professional development and training, and the supervisor's role and identity (CAREP 201, ASCA, 2016; ACA, 2016).

School Counseling Supervisor Role and Identity

A recent position statement by ASCA, The School Counselor and School Counselor Supervision (2021a) provides insight into the SCS role and identity by describing some of the responsibilities of SCS. According to this position statement, SCS provides the following during supervision: (1) support and encourage counselor development; (2) foster continued development of instruction, appraisal, and advisement

and counseling skills; (3) facilitate personal and professional growth to include cultural competence and anti-racist work; (4) promote adherence to standards and competencies related to leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change; (5) model the development of data-informed and accountable programs; (6) serve as gatekeepers; (7) safeguard students and families; (8) promote ethical behaviors; (9) remain current on trends, techniques and strategies in the field of school counseling; and (10) obtain professional development in supervision (ASCA, 2021a). Participating in supervision and clinical supervision is essential for SCS, the school counselors they supervise, and the welfare and wellbeing of the students served in the school district. Furthermore, this position statement articulates the rationale and evidence to support school counselors' critical need for supervision.

School Counseling Clinical Supervision

Supervision is the cornerstone pedagogy used in the counseling discipline to facilitate counselors' self-efficacy (Brown et al., 2017-2018), professional identity (DeKruyf et al., 2013), and competency (ASCA, 2019e), and as such, we would expect to see a more prominent role of SCS training in supervision and support for this critical role (Page et al., 2001; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020; Tang, 2020; Bledsoe et al., 2021). More specifically, supervision of school counselors requires understanding the multifaceted aspects of the school counselor role (Luke & Bernard, 2006). As indicated in the research, supervision for school counselors vacillates between administrative, programmatic, and clinical/counseling. It can be ambiguous when receiving general supervision and less evident in acquiring and providing clinical supervision (Roberts & Borders, 1994; DeKruyf et al., 2013; Tang, 2020; Bledsoe et al., 2021). However, the

scarcity of research exploring the supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors and, more specifically, their experiences receiving and providing clinical supervision is limited.

Statement of the Problem

Overall, supervision for school counselors is primarily administrative and programmatic, with a focus on developing, delivering, managing, and assessing comprehensive school counseling programs (Barret & Schmidt, 1986, Roberts & Borders, 1994; Page et al., 2001; Jackson, 2014; Bledsoe et al. 2021; Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020). Clinical supervision for school counselors is limited and lacking in the field due to limited school counseling supervisors' preparation and training opportunities in specific school counseling supervision models, the nuance of types of supervision received and provided, and the continued struggle to clarify the professional role and identity for school counselors (Henderson & Lampe, 1992; Page et al. 2001; DeKruyf et al. 2013).

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The past and current research on clinical supervision provide the foundation for understanding supervision's multidimensional and multifaceted nature and the potential impact on school counselors' individual and small group counseling services. However, the actual effect of clinical supervision and a thorough understanding of a school counseling supervisor's experience is limited and has not been explicitly examined. Tangentially, the ASCA National Model encourages school counselors to use data-informed practices such as analysis of state-wide youth health surveys (i.e., VDH, 2019a;

2019b), school district and statewide surveys of climate and working conditions (i.e., VDCJS, 2020), professional development/growth plans (i.e., VDOE, 2021a), and professional self-assessments of knowledge and skills (ASCA, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019e, Lambie & Haugen, 2021) as means to develop closing-the gap goals and professional goals for comprehensive school counseling programs. This process may indirectly facilitate understanding of the SCS experience; however, I propose addressing these gaps by exploring SCS lived experiences of receiving and providing clinical supervision (Bledsoe et al., 2019; Bledsoe et al., 2021; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a; Tang, 2020).

To better understand SCS experiences, a qualitative, phenomenological study using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) explored and answered the following overarching research question and four sub-questions: What are the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors?

1. What are the clinical supervision expectations of SCS?
2. What are the supervision experiences of SCS who received clinical supervision after graduating with their master's degree?
3. What are the supervision experiences of SCS who provided clinical supervision after graduating with their master's degree?
4. What do SCS perceive as the need to provide clinical supervision to school counselors?

These research questions focus on exploring the clinical supervision experiences of SCS who received clinical supervision and provided clinical supervision to school counselors. Furthermore, the broad overarching research question is framed to capture the lived

experiences of SCS from a holistic perspective which may include preparation and training, supervision types and modalities, SCS professional role and identity, and school counseling supervision models.

An IPA approach (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) focused specifically on the lived experiences of SCS, how they perceive the impact of receiving and delivering clinical supervision, and its importance in the development of school counselors and the support they offer students. This understanding is critical, as SCS perceptions of their experiences offer unique perspectives that have been scarce in the literature. My hope is that the findings from this study enables SCS, counselor educators, school district and state educational administrators to understand the needs of SCS. This study aims to provide insight into the systemic supports that will aid SCS to best support school counselors support students' social-emotional and mental health needs and wellbeing. Most importantly, this research offers unique perspectives into the actual experiences of SCS position and role by giving a voice to those in the position and rectifying issues related to clinical supervision to support school counselors supporting students.

Definition of Terms

Administrative Supervision

Administrative supervision is one of the three types of supervision that school counselors often receive. This type of supervision is provided by an SCS, school administrator, school district-level administrator/coordinator/director. This study will define administrative supervision similarly to previous research to focus on organizational responsibilities such as attendance and staff relations (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006).

Clinical/Counseling Supervision

Clinical supervision will be defined as a strategy, as defined by Dollarhide and Miller (2006), as a developmental counseling process to support clinical knowledge and skills through case conceptualizations, interventions, and techniques examining the counseling process.

Collaboration

School counselors often find themselves working with people or organizations to share responsibilities for specific tasks. ASCA (2019c) expands collaboration to include (1) teaming and partnering of school counselors with stakeholders to support fulfillment of annual student outcome goals, (2) school counselors serving on school/district committees to assist with support for the school counseling program, (3) established community partnerships with community members, businesses and other organization to help students with opportunities and positive outcomes, and (4) school counselors work together with others to provide responsive and follow up crisis response services as needed.

School counselors often seek consultation for additional information, opinions, recommendations, and resources to provide adequate direct and indirect services to support students' needs from an expert (ASCA, 2019c).

Counseling Supervisor

A counseling supervisor is a professional counselor who engages in a formal relationship with a practicing counselor to oversee that individual's counseling work or clinical skill development (ACA, 2014, p. 13).

Direct Service

School counselors provide two types of overarching services. Direct services are defined as counseling, consultation, or related professional skills with clients to foster social, cognitive, behavioral, and/or affective change. These activities include (1) assessment, (2) counseling, (3) psychoeducational activities, and (4) consultation. (CACREP, 2016). ASCA (2019a, p. 78) defines direct services as instruction, appraisal and advisement, and counseling that helps students improve achievement, attendance, and discipline. This study defines direct services as instruction, appraisal and advisement, consultation, and counseling.

Indirect Services

The second type of service often provided in the school counseling role is indirect, which usually includes: (1) observing others providing counseling or related services, (2) record-keeping, (3) administrative duties, (4) clinical and/or administrative supervision (CACREP 2016). ASCA (2019a, p. 81) defines the indirect services of school counselors to support student success and promote equity and access for all students through consultation, collaboration, and referrals. This study defines indirect services as administrative duties and referrals within and outside the school community.

Peer Supervision

Many school counselors seek peer support to conceptualize students' strengths and needs, identify appropriate strategies, and implement interventions. Page and colleagues (2001) define peer supervision as a scheduled meeting with one or more school counseling colleagues with the sole purpose of meeting for clinical supervision.

Their research indicated that 29% of school counselors participated in peer supervision, and most (49%) met every other week (Page et al., 2001).

Program Development/Programmatic Supervision

The research literature has several similar definitions to describe program development/programmatic supervision. This study will define program development supervision by focusing on program foundation and development, delivery, coordination and management, and accountability (ASCA, 2019c; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Roberts & Border, 1994).

School Counselor-in-Training (SCIT)

School counselors in training is a term used to define enrolled master's level students interested in becoming a school counselor. Kozlowski and Huss (2013) SCIT's describe SCITs as students who participate in specialized coursework, including practicum and internship experiences, to prepare them to become a licensed professional school counselor as required by CACREP (2016) program standards. The term school counselor-in-training (SCIT) will refer to a master's level student enrolled in counselor education pursuing certification to become a school counselor.

School Counseling Supervisor

In 1971, Hays described an SCS as a "guidance director" concerned only with improving the counseling skills of the counselors within the school system (Hays, 1971; p. 120). ASCA (2016) defines a School Counseling Supervisor as a qualified professional who provides guidance, teaching, and support for the professional development of school counselors. However, more recently, ASCA (2019d) defined School Counseling

Directors/Coordinators as individuals who provide leadership, advocacy, and collaboration. Also, they have a background in school counseling or certification in supervision to enhance school counselors' professional growth and leadership development in their roles as practitioners and potential supervisors (ASCA 2019d). For this study, school counseling supervisors (SCS) are credentialed/licensed individuals by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), hold a pupil services license, have a master's degree in counseling or school counseling, and are currently employed in a public school division, and designated to oversee and/or supervise school counselors to support their professional growth and development as school counseling practitioners. A school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director/lead is an individual who provides leadership to ensure individual and group supervision to school counselors in practice. The role of the school counseling supervisor (SCS) title includes those individuals with the title of coordinator, director, lead, or a similar title with the same function as supervising school counselors.

Supervision

Supervision is a process in which one individual, usually a senior member of a given profession designated as the supervisor, engages in collaborative relationships with another individual or group of a given profession designated as the supervisee(s) to (a) promote the growth and development of the supervisee(s), (b) protect the welfare of the clients seen by the supervisee(s), and (c) evaluate the performance of the supervisee(s) (ACA, 2014, p. 13). ASCA (2016) defines supervision as a collaborative relationship in which one person promotes and/or evaluates the development of another. For this study, supervision is defined as a process in which a school counseling supervisor engages in a

collaborative relationship with school counselor(s) to promote the growth and development of school counselor(s), protects the welfare of students, and provides feedback performance.

Overview of the Method

This research study used a qualitative, IPA approach with semi-structured interviews to provide deeper insights into SCS clinical supervision experiences. The study aimed to investigate the specific nuances SCS had receiving and providing clinical supervision to practicing school counselors in public Pk-12 schools. Furthermore, the study intended to understand the lived experiences of school counseling supervisors who received and delivered clinical supervision. It assisted with understanding how SCS makes sense of preparation, role and position, and professional identity. Also, through individual narratives, insight on how SCS delivers clinical supervision to school counselors can inform how school counselors provide services to students (Bledsoe et al., 2021). By illuminating specific issues of school counseling supervisors who received and provided clinical supervision, this study adds rich information to existing literature and additional guidance on school counseling supervision preparation, training, models, and SCS role clarification.

Document Organization

The organization of the study is discussed in five chapters beginning with Chapter One, which provides an introduction and overview of the entire study. Chapter Two focuses on a review of research literature relevant to school counseling supervisors' clinical supervision experiences. Chapter Three provides a detailed phenomenological

methodology using a qualitative IPA for the research design, method to include data collection and analysis, researcher positionality, procedures to establish rigor, credibility, and trustworthiness, and ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents the findings focusing on the superordinate, subthemes, and clustering themes to help answer the primary research question and four sub-questions. Chapter Five provides a discussion substantiated by the findings, focusing on the implications, limitations, future research, and the study's conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

School counseling supervisors (SCS) are essential in providing supervision to school counselors. This qualitative, phenomenological study examines the experiences and perspectives of SCS who received and provided clinical supervision. To better understand the SCS experiences, review counseling and school counseling supervision research literature, the current state of youth mental health in the nation and Virginia, SCS preparation and training, supervision modalities, types, models, and SCS role and professional identity are discussed.

Context for Counseling Supervision

Youth Mental Health Nationally

Nationally, the CDC Mental Health Statistics of Students, CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Data Summary and Trends Report 2009-2019 conducts a survey every two years of students in grades 9-12 with a focus on youth risk behavior in the areas of sexual behavior, high-risk substance use, experiencing violence and mental health and suicide (CDC, 2019; NIMH, 2021a; 2021b; 2021c). In 2019, about 37% of high school students reported periods of persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the past year (CDC, 2019; NIMH, 2021a; 2021b; 2021c). The CDCYRB report indicates an increase in the percentage of high school students who experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness from 2009 to 2019, 26.1% to 36.7%, respectively (CDC, 2019). Also, high school students who seriously considered attempting suicide increased from 13.8% to 18.8% in 2009 to 2019, respectively (CDC, 2019). Furthermore,

an increase in high school students who reported making a suicide plan (10.9% to 15.7%) and attempted suicide (6.3% to 8.9%) increased from 2009 to 2019 (CDC, 2019).

Mental Health of Youth in Virginia

In Virginia, students' mental health and wellness are a significant focus for school districts. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has gathered resources to help school districts navigate these uncertain times amidst the pandemic and social and racial injustices. The VDOE created an initiative, LEARNS, which promotes leading, engaging, assessing, recovering, nurturing, and succeeding during the 2020-2021 school year (VDOE, 2021b). The VDOE has received financial resources to support school-based mental health through CARES grants, to increase staffing levels of school-based mental health providers (SBMH) (i.e., school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school nurses, community MH providers), and maximize direct service delivery time for SBMH personnel (VDOE, 2021a). School counselors provide a continuum of multi-tiered, comprehensive direct and indirect services to students (ASCA, 2019a; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a; Goodman-Scott, 2019), with mental health support as a significant aspect of their role. The Code of Virginia states, “Each school counselor employed by a school board in a public elementary or secondary school shall spend at least 80 percent of [their] staff time during normal school hours in the direct counseling of individual students or groups of students.” (Code of Virginia, Title 22.1, 2019). This statute is a revision to the previous declaration of school counselor percentage of time of 60%. The increase in the school counselor percentage of time of direct services to students resulted from advocacy to support the mental health needs of students in PK – 12 public schools.

In 2021, Mental Health America (MHA, 2021) reported that Virginia ranked 20th for the prevalence of mental health illness and access to mental health care. The same report ranked states with a 1-10 with a lower prevalence of mental illness and higher rates of access to care for youth compared to states with a ranking of 39-51 as having a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care. MHA (2021) used seven measures to make up the youth ranking which included: (1) youth with one major depressive episode (MDE) in the past year, (2) youth with substance use disorder in the past year, (3) youth with severe MDE, (4) youth with MDE who did not receive mental health services, (5) youth with MDE who received some consistent treatment, (6) children with private insurance that did not cover mental or emotional problems, and (7) students identified with emotional disturbance for an individualized education program. Virginia ranked 27th and is above the national average with 14.28% of youth with at least one MDE compared to 13.84% (MHA, 2021). Also, Virginia ranked 30th and above the national average with 10.2% of youth with severe MDE compared to 9.7% (MHA, 2021). The percentage of youth with MDE who did not receive mental health services in Virginia was 53% (MHA, 2021). The mental health of students is an alarming concern. Virginia schools' mental health access and support are often provided through student services such as school counseling (VDOE, 2020a). However, with the degree of mental health issues and the student--to-school counselor ratio (elementary = 375:1; middle school = 325:1; high school = 300:1), what resources are available to help support school counselors who support student mental health? (VDOE, 2020b; 2021b).

The Virginia Department of Health Virginia Youth Survey (VDHVYS, 2019a; 2019b) provides data on adolescent mental health disorders. VDHVYS describes

adolescent mental health disorders as “severe alterations in the child’s ability to achieve social, emotional, cognitive, and academic milestones to function in a daily setting” (2019a; 2019b). The VDHVYS Middle School 2019 Mental Health (2019a) reported three in 10 (30.7%) middle school students suffered from a mental health issue of “not feeling good about themselves,” with 40.9% of those who identified as female and 20.8% as male. Also reported, non-Hispanic Black students (78.1%) were significantly more likely than Hispanic (74.5%), non-Hispanic Other (70.6%), and non-Hispanic White (67.9%) students to report that they never or rarely got the help they needed when they were in emotional distress (VDHVYS, 2019a). The VDHVYS High School 2019 Mental Health Report (2019b) stated a significant increase of students who reported feeling sad for two weeks or more from 2011 (25.5%) through 2019 (32.4%). LGBTQ students reported feeling sad for two weeks or more than heterosexual students and experienced sexual violence (27.6% vs. 14.8%) and physical dating violence (18.1% vs. 11%) (VDHVYS, 2019b). Also, among those who reported feeling sad for two weeks or more, 39.1% reported that they considered attempting suicide, 29.5% made a suicide plan, 18.0% attempted suicide, and 4.9% made an injurious suicide attempt (VDHVYS, 2019b). Furthermore, nearly three in 10 (29.2%) students who rarely or never got the kind of help they needed when they were in emotional distress had at least one drink of alcohol, on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey (VDHVYS, 2019b). In addition, these reports lack information on students' mental health status in the elementary grades. What are the mental health statistics of the elementary population in Virginia? Mental health issues may seem more prevalent beginning in the middle school years; however, elementary students can experience mental health concerns before

middle school (Cree et al., 2018; Zablotsky & Terlizzi, 2019; Leeb et al., 2020; Loades et al., 2020).

School Counselor Role Identity and Student Mental Health

DeKruyf, Auger, and Trice-Black (2013) examined the rationale for a unified professional identity that provides the blended and unique role of the school counselor as an educational leader and mental health professional. DeKruyf and colleagues identified five key elements that align the school counselor's role as a mental health professional: (1) the large number of students who have unmet mental health needs; (2) the unreliability of referrals; (3) the displacement of school counselors by other mental health providers in schools; (4) the potential loss of the uniqueness of the role of the school counselor and (5) the link between the mental health professional role and-social variables that influence student achievement (p. 273-274).

As students' unmet mental health needs rise, additional individual and group counseling services can help support students and school counselors have an advantage in providing these services because they are visible and accessible in the school environment (DeKruyf et al., 2013). Also, DeKruyf et al. 2013 reported that access to mental health services for students within their school improved students' "academic and personal/social success" (p. 274). Furthermore, four roadblocks identified by DeKruyf et al. (2013) include: (a) student-to-counselor-ratio, (b) administrator perceptions, (c) school counselor self-efficacy, and (d) absence of clinical supervision. Of the five suggestions (i.e., entry-level training, counseling-focused professional development, administrator training, and decreased student-to-school-counselor ratios) provided by DeKruyf and

colleagues (2013), clinical supervision training is one to highlight because it relates to the proposed study.

Current State of School Counseling Profession

Nationally. In response to the traumatic events that have taken place in the US (i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic, racial and social injustices, and unemployment), ASCA conducted a research study in October 2020 to determine the current state of the school counseling profession during the 2020-2021 school year. The *ASCA Research Report: State of the Profession* (ASCA, 2021b) collected 7,000 responses from ASCA members and non-members from all 50 states, territories, and grade levels. The ASCA report stated that 38% of school counselor respondents found “ensuring administrators understood the role of the school counselors” and “participating in professional development appropriate for school counseling” were day-to-day challenges (ASCA, 2021b; p. 8). Also, the same report indicated the top three professional development areas school counselors reported they wanted were: (1) mental health (84%); (2) social-emotional development (83%); and (3) crisis/trauma/violence (81%). Regarding issues related to racism and bias, 36% of respondents indicated their school has taken “no action” to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (ASCA, 2021b; p. 13).

Virginia. In Virginia, a study conducted by Grimes and colleagues (2021) surveyed school counselors ($n=110$) in rural communities in southwest Virginia to investigate their needs and barriers related to professional development. Trauma-informed practices and identification and assessments of mental health were the top two areas reported by school counselors, 56% ($n=62$) and 50% ($n=55$), respectively (Grimes et al., 2021). Furthermore, 59% ($n=65$) of school counselors reported their most

significant concern for students was anxiety (Grimes et al., 2021). Although participation in school district-led and professional organizations can provide opportunities to support school counselors' professional development, the professional development may often be inappropriate or inaccessible due to cost and location (Grimes et al., 2021). The professional development needs school counselors have identified in the ASCA Research Report (2021), and Grimes et al. (2021) indicate professional development would support school counselors in navigating the complex issues students experience.

Research by Roberts and Borders (1992) and Sutton and Page (1994) indicated that one of the significant reasons for receiving counseling supervision is professional development. Furthermore, Page and colleagues (2001) exploratory research analysis indicates the top three areas of importance during supervision are: "taking appropriate action with client problems, developing skills and techniques, and improving skills in diagnosis" (p. 146). Wilson and Remley (1987) reported that SCS's most rewarding aspect of their position was "enhancing counselors' professional skills" (p. 217). In summary, supervision is an opportunity to facilitate and foster the professional growth of school counselors. (DeKruyf et al., 2013; Herlihy et al. 2002). With the many tasks school counselors have to support students' social-emotional, academic, and career readiness needs, who helps school counselors navigate this enormous responsibility?

Supervision

Counseling Supervision

When exploring how supervision is conducted in counseling, it is crucial to examine the foundational aspects of supervision. Borders (2005) provided an overview *snapshot* of clinical supervision in the counseling profession over five years (1999-2004).

Borders (2005) identified 14 topics from articles, including school counseling, supervisors, individual supervision, group supervision, and technology in supervision. Along with Borders' (2005) examination of clinical supervision, it is essential to investigate the standards, preparation, modalities, types, and models when trying to understand the experiences of counseling supervisors (CACREP, 2016). Furthermore, although there are similarities between traditional counseling supervision and school counseling supervision, it is critical to understand there are also differences based on role responsibilities and professional identity (ASCA, 2019; DeKruyf et al., 2013).

School Counseling Supervision

Supervision serves to maintain school counselors' professional competence (DeKruyf et al., 2013; Herlihy et al., 2002) and can provide continued professional development, ongoing consultation regarding legal and ethical issues, and continued clinical skill development (Herlihy et al., 2002). Through the years, there have been investigations of school counseling supervision with conflicting results. For example, before developing the ASCA professional standards and the ASCA school counseling preparation standards, which promote consultation and supervision, Roberts and Borders (1994) reported that 37% of North Carolina school counselors, who participated in the study, indicated they received counseling supervision. In contrast, a study by Sutton and Page (1994) reported that 37% of school counselors in Maine, who participated in the study, indicated no need for clinical supervision (Sutton & Page, 1994).

Although there are many studies on school counseling supervision, the following three studies conducted by Roberts and Borders (1994); Page, Pietrzak, and Sutton

(2001); and Herlihy, Gray, and McCollum (2002) are highlighted and summarized to provide a context for school counseling *clinical* supervision.

Roberts and Borders (1994). Roberts and Borders (1994) conducted a study to describe school practices with administrative, program, and counseling supervision. A random sample of 168 counselors, part of the NCSC Association, participated in the survey. Through descriptive analysis only, most participants were White (83%), female (88%) with an average age of 42 years, held a master's degree in counseling (95%), were employed full time (96%), with most schools in a rural (46%) and suburban (31%) setting (Roberts & Borders, 1994). The survey consisted of a three-part questionnaire asking demographics, current supervision, and preferred supervision questions (Roberts & Border, 1994). Interestingly, this study did not examine any comparisons or correlations between existing supervision practices and preference of supervision, nor did it provide insight into SCS experiences. This study also lacked comparisons or correlations between groups of probationary school counselors vs. non-probationary school counselors and SCS experiences working with these groups. The study yielded the following results: current administrative supervision was received by 85% of participants, with 57% receiving this type of supervision provided by a school principal (Roberts & Borders, 1994). Similarly, other studies have substantiated these results (Page et al., 2001; Bledsoe et al., 2021; Tang, 2020). Reportedly, program supervision was received by 70%, with 32% receiving this type of supervision from a principal or assistant principal (Roberts & Borders, 1994). In addition, counseling supervision was received by 37%, with 24% receiving this type of supervision from a director of counseling and 15% from the principal (Roberts & Borders, 1994). School counselors reported a preference for

administrative supervision from a principal (59%, $n = 89$), program supervision by 86% ($n = 130$), with most ($n = 36$) indicating the director of school counseling, and 79% reported preferred counseling supervision by a supervisor with a counseling background (Roberts & Borders, 1994). This study corroborated other studies that reported that most school counseling supervision is administrative and programmatic; however, most school counselors prefer clinical/counseling supervision (Page et al., 2001; Tang, 2020; Bledsoe, 2021).

Page and Colleagues (2001). In 2001, Page and colleagues conducted a national survey of school counselor supervision. A random sampling of 267 ASCA members with most participants women (74%; average age 43), with an average of 7.92 years as a school counselor, from all grade levels, was typically the only counselor in the building responsible for 555 students. Page et al.'s (2001) purpose of the study was to conduct a national survey of school counselors regarding their current clinical and administrative supervision, perception of the importance of selected supervision goals, and intention to become certified as a clinical supervisor. The survey was adapted from previous studies to assess the views of school counselors and the supervision goals (Page et al., 2001). The results from 243 school counselors indicated most school counselors received administrative supervision most frequently from principals (50%), guidance directors (13%), and assistant principals (10%) (Page et al. 2001). Thirty-five (13%) school counselors reported they were currently receiving individual clinical supervision, and the majority (53%) of those reported receiving weekly supervision (Page et al. 2001). Persons frequently described by school counselors as providing clinical supervision were guidance director (21%); professor of counselor education (12%); licensed counselor

(28%); another school counselor (12%); and school psychologist (11%) (Page et al., 2001). Page et al. (2001) also inquired about the desire to receive clinical supervision, with 57% ($n = 146$; 256) of participants indicating a desire; an additional 10% wanted to continue receiving clinical supervision; 33% indicated they did not need supervision. Also, regarding the type of supervisor preferred by school counselors, a majority (70%; $n = 180$; 256) described the most desirable clinical supervisor as another school counselor with specific supervision training (Page et al., 2001). Next, the top three perceptions of the importance of supervision goals rated by school counselors rated were: (1) “taking appropriate action with client problems;” (2) “developing skills and techniques;” and (3) “improving skills in diagnosis” (Page et al., 2002).

Further analysis yielded a statistically significant analysis of “factor 1: developing self as a counselor and accounted for 44% of the variance (Page et al., 2001; p. 146). Finally, intention to become certified in supervision yielded 20% ($n = 267$) indicated seeking ACS certification; 47% indicated possible seeking; 30% showed no interest. Limitations of this study are the sample of school counselors are only members of the ASCA; a comparison of a national survey to previous state studies can support the research; however, states have different requirements for school counselors and may have other criteria for supervision. In addition, this study recommends using the discrimination model (DM); however, the DM focuses on clinical supervision, and the role and responsibilities of school counselors are multidimensional (Luke & Bernard, 2006; Wood & Rayle, 2006; Henderson & Lampe, 1992). An important takeaway from this study is that most school counselors described the most desirable clinical supervisor as another school counselor who had training in supervision. 60% (combination of principals and

assistant principals) of school counselors indicated they receive supervision from a principal or assistant principal. Although the supervision received from principals is typically administrative, school counselors' unique roles and responsibilities are better supported by professionals who have knowledge and training in counseling and school counselor supervision models (NISD, 1992; GFRS, 2006; SCSM, 2006; CAFE, 2013) to accommodate the multifaceted services school counselors provide.

Herlihy and Colleagues (2002). Herlihy and colleagues (2002) provide insight into the state of school counseling supervision, ethical and legal issues and provide recommendations for consideration for school counselor supervision. Regarding the status of school counselor supervision, Herlihy et al. (2002) identified three reasons why clinical supervision has been neglected in school counseling. First is the perception that school counselors do not have the same level of need as agency counselors, and school administrators believe the primary focus of school counselors is as academic advisors, schedulers, and to provide group and classroom guidance (Herlihy et al., 2002). Second, school counselors may not feel the need to receive clinical supervision, as reported in Page et al.'s (2001) national survey. A final reason is no requirement for post-master's degree supervision (Herlihy et al., 2002). Competence to supervise, confidentiality, boundaries of the supervisory relationship, accountability and liability, and evaluation are four identified ethical and legal issues for consideration (Herlihy et al., 2002). Herlihy et al. (2002) prescribe nine recommendations to support supervision to increase clinical competence, reduce role stress, and respond to challenging ethical and legal issues that arise. The following is a summary of the recommendations: (1) SCS should have thorough preparation, (2) increase available SCS through the use of peer supervision, (3)

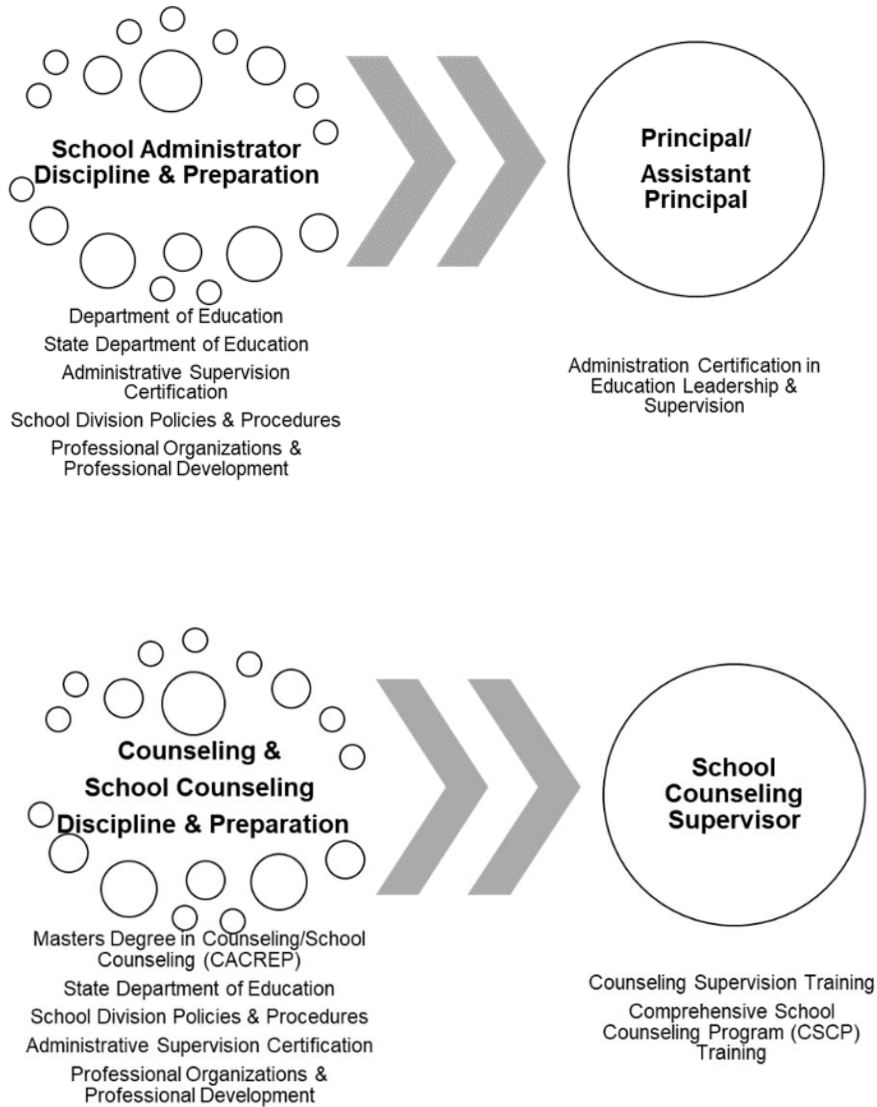
collaborate with counselor educators, (4) collaborate with school administrators to develop policies that support receiving clinical supervision, (5) participate in workshops on counseling and supervision laws and review the code of ethics regularly, (6) protect the confidentiality of students school counselors are supporting, (7) maintain professional relationship boundaries, (8) discuss and explain evaluation process, and (9) obtain professional liability insurance (Herlihy et al., 2002).

With its various specialties in different settings, the counseling profession is unified by focusing on mental health. The unique work environment of SCS usually requires them to work alongside school administrators with no mental health training or understanding of clinical supervision (Childers & Podemski, 1985; Henderson & Lampe, 1992). Often, the SCS is tasked with providing administrative and programmatic supervision because the lack of understanding of the specialized role and professional context of school counseling has influenced the access and delivery of school counseling clinical supervision (Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020; Bledsoe et al., 2021; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). It is critical to note that the educational and professional training required by an SCS and principal differ. Figure 1 compares the school administrators' professional preparation and discipline (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020; Code of Virginia, 2018a NAESP, 2021; NASSP, 2021) to that of an SCS (Code of Virginia 2018b; CACREP, 2016; ACA, 2014; ASCA, 2016). A key element for consideration is the difference in training, master's level in counseling, counseling supervision, and comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP) (CACREP 2016, ACA 2014; ASCA 2016). It is important to note that some school districts also require and prefer SCS to hold an administrative certification, such as school districts like Prince

William County Public Schools (PWCS, 2021a & 2021b) and York County Public Schools in Virginia (YCSD, 2021).

Figure 1

Comparison of Principal and SCS Discipline & Preparation



Recent School Counseling Supervision Research

Tang (2020) examined the impact of school counseling supervision on practicing school counselors' self-efficacy in building CSCP using a quasi-experimental, non-equivalent pre/posttest design during the 2018-2019 school year. The study had 24 experimental participants (years in the field 1-32): male = 8.3%; female 91.6%; Asian/Pacific Islander 33.3%; Bi-racial/mixed race 12.5%; Black African American 16.6%; Hispanic/Latinx 16.6%; White 16.6% and 69 control group participants (years in the field 1 to more than 20): male = 36.6 %; female 63.3%; Asian Pacific Islander 30.9%; Biracial/mixed race 5.6%; Black African American 9.8%; Hispanic/Latinx 21.1%; White 26.7%; declined to state 4.7%. The purpose of the study was to examine school counseling-specific supervision focused on building a CSCP according to the ASCA professional roles and responsibilities on "practicing school counselors' self-efficacy" regarding the role (Tang, 2020; p. 3). The study used the SCSM (Luke & Bernard, 2006) as the intervention in the experiment (Tang, 2020). Thirty urban school districts participated from one state, with 24 practicing school counselors participating in synchronous online supervision using zoom (Tang, 2020).

Thirteen supervision sessions contained two to five participants (grouped based on years of experience), and supervision sessions occurred biweekly for one hour (Tang, 2020). Tang (2020) used the SCSE developed by Bodenhorn & Skaggs (2005) for pre-post assessment for all participants. The results were obtained using exploratory factor analysis, and a t-test for independent samples showed significant differences in self-efficacy between individuals who participated and did not in supervision, with no significant difference between the groups (Tang, 2020). However, the post-test data revealed a statistically significant difference in self-efficacy (Tang, 2020). These results

suggest that supervision can function as an “intervention to increase school counselor self-efficacy” in implementing a comprehensive school counseling program (Tang, 2020; p. 7). This study's findings confirm earlier studies on the importance of supervision for school counselors by school counseling supervisors (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Page et al., 2001; DeKruyf et al., 2013; Bledsoe et al., 2021). However, in Tang's study, those school counselors who received off-site supervision did not specify their type of supervision. Although this study supported the benefits of supervision to increase school counselor self-efficacy and the SCSM, there are limitations. Some limitations include the researcher's possible biases due to employment in the same district of conducted study, sample size, and generalizability with only urban school counselors being assessed. Research shows rural school counselors experience significant challenges in receiving appropriate supervision (Wilson et al., 2015). Finally, although the study demonstrated supervision as an intervention on self-efficacy, based on Bernard and Goodyear's (2019) definition of supervision, how has increased self-efficacy of the school counselors impacted student outcomes? What are SCS perceptions of how supervision affects student outcomes?

Bledsoe and colleagues (2021) conducted an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of early career school counselors' (ECSC) clinical supervision experiences. Bledsoe et al. (2021) interviewed nine ECSCs with less than three years of school counseling experience. The age of participants ranged from 18-57 years, with all participants identifying as female, from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds (White, African American, Hispanic, Biracial), and all graduated from CACREP programs and are in pursuit of a licensed professional counselor (LPC) certification (Bledsoe et al.,

2021). Participants were employed full-time, from across the nation, from different grade levels, worked in rural, suburban, and urban areas, and participated in clinical supervision, either on-site or off-site and during or after school hours (Bledsoe et al., 2021). The purpose of this study was to focus on the supervision experiences of ECSC who seek clinical supervision. The use of the IPA explored the participants' lived experiences with the phenomenon of clinical supervision and provided a way to explore the needs, experiences, and meaning that post-master's clinical supervision had on ECSC (Bledsoe et al., 2021). The research team consisted of five self-identified researchers, from diverse races/ethnicities and genders, as four counselor educators and one clinical professor of research, who all believe clinical supervision is critical regardless of counseling specialty and with a combined 20 years of clinical supervision experience (Bledsoe et al., 2021). Recruited participants engaged in semi-structured interviews conducted between 60- 75 minutes, with one face-to-face and the others via telephone (Bledsoe et al., 2021). The IPA methodology and procedures analyzed the transcripts with reading and re-reading, line-by--by-line coding, including two-member checks, peer review sessions, external audit, participants received copies of transcriptions and created related themes (Bledsoe et al., 2021).

The study's results identified six themes: challenge, support, knowledge, self-efficacy, improved professional identity, and enhanced counseling services resulting from participation in clinical supervision (Bledsoe et al., 2021). Although this study is not generalizable to all school counselors, it provides insight into their possible clinical supervision experiences. The challenges of access to "readily available" supervision once in practice, distance, time, and costs were all identified and support other research

regarding access to supervision (Bledsoe et al., 2021, p. 5; Page et al., 2001; Herlihy et al., 2002; Grimes et al., 2021). Personal and professional support indicated that supervision provided an opportunity for self-care, accountability, and increased confidence, as supported by research (Bledsoe et al., 2021, Tang, 2020; Mullen & Lambie, 2016). Two participants expressed that their supervisors' application of clinical theories was "beneficial" (Bledsoe et al., 2021; p. 5). More specifically, one participant stated, "My supervisor was an elementary and secondary counselor, so she brings a lot of experience and resources to supervision which is why I wanted a school counseling supervisor" (Bledsoe et al., 2021; p. 6) explored the impact on ECSC self-efficacy and found "words like confidence, empowerment, and professional growth emerged from the transcripts" (Bledsoe et al., p. 6).

One participant stated the final theme of improved counseling services: "had it not been for my counseling skills paired with supervision, I wouldn't have been equipped to get to the core of the student's issues" (Bledsoe et al., 2021; p. 6). Although this study highlights the benefits of school counselors' participation in clinical supervision, this study only focused on clinical supervision, which is only one dimension of the school counselor role (ASCA, 2019a; Goodman-Scott et al., 2019, 2020a). This study was limited in the number of participants from diverse racial, gender, abilities, and educational backgrounds. The characteristics of the participants are not generalizable to the school population because this study only investigated school counselors with LPC licensure. There was no disclosure of the cost of supervision, which may be a barrier for many school counselors, as discussed by DeKruyf et al. (2013). All participants were able to participate in some clinical/counseling supervision based on their interests. All

participants were graduates of a CACREP program; however, not all school counselors graduate from such programs. This study, along with others, has indicated that there are challenges related to participation in clinical supervision due to cost, time, access, and scarcity and credentialed supervisors (Boyd & Walter, 1975; Roberts & Borders, 1992; Page et al., 2001; Tang, 2020; Bledsoe et al., 2021). This study connects to the current research, which investigated the clinical supervision experiences and perspectives of SCS to gain insight into current supervision preparation and practices.

The final study related to the proposed research is by Goodman-Scott and colleagues (2020) and is a recent study focusing on the SCS perspective. Goodman-Scott et al. (2020) conducted an exploratory thematic analysis of school counseling district supervisors' experiences and perceptions regarding school counselor preparation for practice. Twelve district supervisors, 75% with master's degrees and 25% with doctoral and/or administrative certifications, comprised 83% women and 17% men who identified from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, with a mean age of 46 years, representing 12 school divisions within one state, and an average of six years in a current supervisor position (Goodman- Scott et al. 2020). The researchers' positionalities were all white cisgender females, and the first researcher has a doctorate and masters in counselor education and supervision and is influenced by her professional experiences as a school counselor; the second researcher is an assistant professor and specializes in school counselor education, and the third researcher is a clinical associate professor in distance clinical mental health counseling. The study used a purposeful sample of district-level supervisors from the largest school districts in one state with various geographical locations (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). The study's methodology consisted of semi-

structured interviews conducted via phone with a range of interview times between 25 to 60 minutes and audio recorded and then transcribed (Goodman-Scott et al. 2020a). The researchers used an inductive thematic analysis and systematically created codes across data sets, organized the data by code, and grouped codes into themes (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Also, researchers reviewed and confirmed the themes and codes to create a thematic map, named and defined themes, confirmed the findings, and wrote the final results (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Goodman-Scott and colleagues (2020) bracketed biases and assumptions through reflexive journaling, used blinded transcripts, and triangulation between researchers to promote the study's trustworthiness.

Results from the study reported three themes: preparation variation (incongruence between preparation and practice; inconsistent professional identity; discrepancies based on CACREP accreditation status); preference for face-to-face preparation (benefits of online preparation; benefits of face-to-face preparation); and strengthening collaboration between school districts and universities and enhancing knowledge of current counseling trends (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Based on this study, preparation of ECSC can vary based on program preparation and corroborated by Bledsoe et al.'s (2021) research. Discrepancies in programs seem to impact early school counselor preparedness for practice, as mentioned in other studies on ECSC from CACREP and non-CACREP programs (Tang, 2020; Bledsoe et al., 2021). Interestingly, the research does not discuss how school counseling supervisors support ECSC in their transition to practice. The lack of supervision highlights the importance of ongoing supervision for ECSC in transitioning from program to practice (Bledsoe et al., 2021; Tang, 2020; Page et al., 2001). The study suggests collaboration between school districts and universities to

provide professional development on recommended best practices to aid ECSC preparation and is considered in the proposed research (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Another suggestion by Goodman-Scott et al. (2020a) suggests increasing access and support to ECSC by providing supervision within the district may provide an opportunity for school district-university partnership in clinical/counseling supervision for post-master's graduates. Although this study seeks to understand district-level SCS perceptions of ECSC, it is limited to examining SCS preparation to provide clinical supervision to ECSC and the impact on direct and indirect services provided by school counselors with various years of experience.

Content Analysis of School Counseling Supervision

While there has been research on school counseling supervision through conceptual articles, national surveys, and ethical dialogues (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Page et al., 2001; Herlihy, 2002), there has been limited research on an examination of SCS experiences and perceptions of clinical supervision. However, a recent study by Bledsoe and colleagues (2019b) investigated school counseling supervision through a content analysis of 69 journal articles found in 11 national and international journals from 1968 to 2017. The study focused on identifying the trends in the published literature, types of literature published, with topics and subtopics addressed in the literature (Bledsoe et al., 2019b). Bledsoe et al. (2019) reported the main publications outlets for school counseling were Professional School Counseling (PSC; $n = 22$, 31.88%), Counselor Education and Supervision (CES; $n = 15$, 21.74%), and Journal of School Counseling (JSC, $n = 15$, 21.74%). The study reported an overall upward trend with a noticeable increase during 2006 ($n = 10$) as a result of CES publishing a special section

on supervision in schools ($n = 6$) (Bledsoe et al., 2019b). Also, of the 69 articles, 31 were empirical studies, and the majority were conceptual ($n = 38$; 55.07%) (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Of the 38 conceptual articles, 13 introduced a model or modified a supervision model, and 8 described the practice of supervision or training (Bledsoe et al., 2019). There were no statistically significant differences among the types of articles published in any of the journals. Furthermore, Bledsoe et al. (2019) identified ten topics and 32 subtopics across the 69 articles with no statistical significance by type of article. Ten topics were identified supervisor, client/student presenting issues, and supervision type. Of these three topics, supervision types ($n = 61$) were most often discussed in the research, followed by supervisor ($n = 44$; roles $n = 22$) and client/student presenting issues ($n = 2$) (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Also, when examining the supervision type most often investigated in research, clinical has the greatest number of times identified in the literature ($n = 46$; Bledsoe et al., 2019). More specifically, only eight out of the 69 articles used a qualitative approach, and of those, three examined the supervisor's role (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Also, the examination of the qualitative studies indicated only seven focused on clinical supervision, and none focused on administrative or programmatic supervision (Bledsoe et al., 2019). Furthermore, only two qualitative studies focused on client/student presenting issues (Bledsoe et al., 2019). This revelation is disheartening because the role of supervision is to monitor the competence and services of the school counselor and ensure the well-being of the client/student (ACA, 2014; ASCA, 2019c; 2019e; 2021a).

Interestingly, the two primary types of supervision provided to school counselors, administrative and programmatic, were each the primary focus of research once (Bledsoe

et al., 2019). Research studies and school counseling supervision literature have reported these two forms of supervision as the primary type, yet they are the least researched (Page et al., 2001; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020; Bledsoe et al., 2021).

Bledsoe and colleagues (2019) propose that future researchers use qualitative approaches to add depth to the information on supervision in school counseling and generate empirical research to investigate supervisor characteristics and supervision models. Although school counseling supervision may seem in its “infancy,” this proposed study plans to examine the lived experiences and perceptions of SCS who received and provided clinical supervision (Bledsoe et al., 2019b; p. 6). The current study aimed to illuminate the preparation, practice, and professional role of the SCS from their perspective by exploring SCS clinical counseling experiences.

Supervision Standards

The American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014), the premier professional counseling organization, has established a code of ethics that outlines and provides guidance on critical elements of counseling supervision standards. Outlined in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), there are specifications for counseling supervisor education, competence, and supervision evaluation (see ACA Code of Ethics: Section F, 2014). Counseling supervisors are expected to have a theoretical and pedagogical foundation in supervision, knowledge of supervision models, and monitor the services provided by those they supervise (ACA, 2014; Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching, p. 12)

Along with Bernard and Goodyear’s (2019) definition of supervision, Borders and colleagues (2014) developed “best practice guidelines for clinical supervision.” These

practices focus on initiating supervision, goal setting, giving feedback, conducting supervision, the supervisory relationship, diversity and advocacy consideration, ethical considerations, documentation, evaluation, supervision format, the supervisor, and supervision preparation (Borders et al., 2014). These guidelines are a proponent to support the need of all counselors benefiting from clinical supervision, including school counselors.

Ethical considerations and best practices are critical for all counseling specialties (Borders et al., 2014). Dye and Borders (1990) article reviews the historical development of why and how ethical standards and practices which began in 1982 with the Supervision Interest Network of Association of Counselor Education and The Interdivisional Task Force for Supervisor Credentialing (Task Force, 1987) and the establishment of American Association for Counselor Development (AACD, 1990) Supervisor Credentialing Task Force (Borders, 1998). The standards were developed to reflect the supervision practices and supervision role in counselor development and describe supervision skills, traits, and knowledge related to the supervision process (Dye & Borders, 1990). As a result, the established standards demonstrate leadership for quality training and service for clients. Secondly, the standards align with training programs for supervisors (Dye & Borders, 1990). Thirdly, the standards are incorporated into counselor credentials and utilized by state licensure boards to develop regulations for approved supervisors (Dye & Borders, 1990).

The opportunity for all counselors to have access to adequate and appropriate supervision is vital to ensure the well-being of those counselors serve (Borders et al., 2014; ACA, 2014). The established supervision standards can serve as a guideline for

supervision, and in the same fashion, the criteria can also serve as a framework for supervision preparation.

Supervision Preparation

Agency/Community/Private Practice Supervisors Preparation

Historically, supervision preparation has existed for thousands of years. (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Bernard and Goodyear (2019) state, “every mental health professional should develop supervisor competence because virtually all eventually will supervise” (p. 2). However, when examining the preparation of counseling supervision, most SCS have not participated in formal supervision preparation training and are often the most senior and/or experienced school counselor and are promoted to the role of SCS (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). Many SCS hold a master’s in school counseling or mental health counseling; however, they have not received supervision preparation training in their counseling education program (CACREP, 2016). How does the level of supervision preparation impact the supervision provided to school counselors?

The Council of Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) has established standards for counseling education and supervision programs for master’s and doctoral level students. Three key components CACREP lists in the preparation of counselors are the learning environment, professional counseling identity, and professional practice (CACREP, 2016). The first key component is the learning environment for both master's and doctoral levels, specifically for doctoral-level students to work as counselor educators, supervisors, researchers, and practitioners in academic and clinical settings (CACREP, 2016). Next, the professional counseling identity requires counselor education programs in doctoral training to address roles in

five core areas: counseling supervision, teaching, research and scholarship, and leadership and advocacy (CACREP, 2016). In particular, supervision has 11 standards, including: the purpose of clinical supervision, theoretical frameworks and models of clinical supervision, roles and relationships, skills, development of supervision style, assessment of development level, modalities, administrative procedures, and responsibilities related to clinical supervision, evaluation, remediation, and gatekeeping, legal and ethical issues and responsibilities, and culturally relevant strategies for conducting clinical supervision (CACREP, 2016). However, the five core areas and 11 standards only apply to doctoral students.

Professional practice is the last component of the CACREP master's and doctoral students' standards. Professional practice for future counseling supervisors requires participation in practicum and internship experiences (CACREP, 2016). To complete a master's degree in counseling, students participate in an average of one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision as required (CACREP, 2016). Post graduate training, counselors in agencies pursuing licensure require supervision for 2,000 to 3,000 hours (Sutton & Page, 1994), with a minimum of one hour of supervision provided weekly. In both instances, counselors-in-training (CIT) and early counseling professionals participate in an average of one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision, and yet for school counselors, the access and opportunity to postgraduate supervision are scarce (CACREP, 2016; Sutton & Page, 1994; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a; Bledsoe et al. 2021). The disparity of clinical supervision support for school counselors, post master's degree, can be rectified through access to SCS in school divisions which can provide professional development (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton

& Page; 1994; Page et al., 2001; Bledsoe et al., 2021). ASCA has outlined in the Professional Ethical Standards Section B Responsibility to Self (B.3) for school counselors to seek consultation and supervision from those familiar with the profession's ethical practices (2016). Furthermore, ASCA states in the CAEP preparation standards to seek consultation and supervision for continual reflection to identify cultural misperceptions and prevent unethical judgment (ASCA CAEP, 7.3; 2019).

Regarding preparation practices, ACA (2014), ASCA (2016), and CACREP (2016) all have set expectations that trained supervisors to understand their role and responsibility as a supervisor, including knowledge of supervision modalities and models. Yet, the dearth of research on SCS supervision experiences and perceptions limits the insight into clinical supervision practices in the school environment. A brief review of SCS preparation will be summarized and discussed.

School Counseling Supervisors Preparation

The American School Counseling Association (ASCA) has the ASCA Ethical Standards (2016) for school counselor administrators/supervisors to corroborate the importance of ethical practices and preparation. ASCA (2016) outlines that school counselor administrators/supervisors support school counselors by (a) advocating for adequate resources to implement a comprehensive school counseling program and meet student needs, (b) advocating for fair and open distribution of resources among programs supervised, (c) take reasonable steps to ensure school and other resources are available to provide appropriate staff supervision and training, (d) provide opportunities for professional development in current research related to school counseling practices and ethics, (e) take steps to eliminate conditions or practices that may violate, discourage, or

interfere with compliance with ethics and laws related to the profession, (f) monitor organizational policies, regulations and procedures to ensure practices are consistent with ASCA ethical standards for school counselors (ASCA, 2016; Section C). After reviewing the ethical standards for SCS and the unique roles and responsibilities of SCS, specific school counseling preparation programs (i.e., ASCA CAEP SAP, 2019) and supervision models have been developed to incorporate the multidimensional and multifaceted aspects of school counseling.

The lack of SCS preparation training programs specifically for SCS practicing in the field is a challenge. Although school counseling-specific supervision models have been developed, the reality is that many counselors' education programs and preparation programs are limited in providing supervision training and exposure to school counseling supervision models at the master's level (Neyland-Brown et al., 2019). There is research to support school counseling site supervision training and models for school counselors who supervise school counselors-in-training (SCITs) in their practicum or internship placement; however, this training may not be offered by all universities that have partnerships with school divisions (Wambu & Myers, 2019; Merlin & Brendel, 2017; Merlin et al. 2018; Gruman & Purgason, 2019). The qualifications to serve as a school counseling site supervisor are outlined in ASCA's Ethical Standards (2016) and expects school counseling site supervisors to be licensed and certified school counselors and/or understand comprehensive school counseling programs and have education and training to provide clinical supervision (Section D).

Although the expectation of SCITs is to design, implement, and assess CSCP as part of the preparation, demonstrate professional responsibility, practice ethically, and

seek consultation and supervision (ASCA CAEP, 2019), exposure to supervision training, modalities, types, and models is not included in the standards.

Supervision Modalities, Types, and Models

Traditional counseling supervision and school counseling supervision both have research regarding different modalities, types, and models. To help understand the differences between conventional counseling and school counseling supervision, a summary of selected counseling supervision modalities and models are discussed, along with an overview of school counseling modalities, types, and models. Summaries from content analysis research on traditional and school counseling are reviewed.

Counseling Supervision Modalities and Models

Counseling Supervision Modalities. Research has shown at least three modalities of counseling supervision: individual (i.e., self-report, process notes, audio tapes, videotapes, live supervision), triadic, and peer/group (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Each type has unique characteristics and purposes. Individual supervision is one-to-one supervision with a supervisor and a supervisee (i.e., CIT or early career counselor) and can be structured or unstructured (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Individual supervision can be completed face-to-face, by telephone, or virtually (i.e., Zoom; ACA, 2014; ASCA, 2016). The supervisor builds a relationship with the supervisee to address counselor knowledge and skills development through a supportive and growth perspective (Newgent et al. 2006). Lonn (2014) defines the second type of supervision as triadic supervision, with two supervisees meeting with a single supervisor. Triadic supervision can have a “split-focus,” where each supervisee receives the same amount of time and

attention during the session or “single focus,” with each supervisee receiving the majority time with alternating weeks (Lonn, 2014). Lyman (2010) reported that triadic supervision is a prominent form of supervision used in counselor education programs. Lyman (2010) surveyed the faculty of 229 CACREP-accredited programs and found that 64% of the participants reported regular triadic supervision, and 61% were trained in its use. The supervisor can assist supervisees in developing their skills in constructive feedback (Newgent et al., 2006). The third type of supervision is peer/group supervision. This modality typically has more than two supervisees with one supervisor (Newgent et al., 2006). The supervisor strives to find a balance between the individual supervisees’ development and group development. This type of supervision provides the opportunity for vicarious learning and for supervisees to share responsibility in the supervision process (Newgent et al., 2006).

Counseling Supervision Models. Bernard and Goodyear (2019) share insights into clinical supervision fundamentals by discussing models grounded in psychotherapy theory, developmental models, process models, and second-generation models. Although there are numerous supervision models, such as the Integrated Developmental Model (IDM; McNeil & Stoltenberg, 2016), The Discrimination Model (DM; Bernard 1979, 1997), The Systems Approach to Supervision Model (SAS; Holloway 1995, 2016), and The Multicultural Integrated Supervision Model (MISM; Mitchell & Butler, 2021), it is important to recognize that each model has unique characteristics and methodologies to describe the role and interventions of the supervisor to support CITs and early career counselors. A summary of IDM, DM, SAS, and MISM is discussed to gain insight into counseling supervision.

The Integrated Developmental Model (IDM). The IDM is the “best known and most widely used developmental supervision model ” (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; p. 33). IDM focuses on three levels of assessing the professional growth of counselors’ (a) self-other awareness, (b) motivation, and (c) autonomy (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Also, IDM focuses on counselors becoming more competent across the following eight domains: (1) intervention skills competence, (2) assessment techniques, (3) interpersonal assessment, (4) client conceptualization, (5) individual differences, (6) theoretical orientation, (7) treatment plan and goals, and (8) professional ethics (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). IDM requires supervisors to know counselors’ developmental level before employing a facilitative, prescriptive, conceptual, confrontational, and catalytic intervention (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). Interestingly, this model has several components that would apply to the role and responsibilities of SCS; however, SCS are often not afforded the time to explore all eight competency domains with each school counselor (Herlihy et al., 2002).

The Discrimination Model (DM). The DM is considered “one of the most accessible models of clinical supervision” (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019; p. 46). The DM, created in the 1970s, is often the first model used by supervisors-in-training (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). The DM has three “foci” and three supervision roles (Bernard 1979, 1997). Bernard (1979, 1997) contends that supervisors may focus on any or all of the following skills of counselors (a) intervention, (b) conceptualization, and (c) personalization. Moreover, supervisors choose which role (i.e., teacher, counselor, and consultant) and approach when working with a counselor depending on the counselor’s ability (Bernard 19779, 1997). Bernard and Goodyear (2019) state a key consideration of

this model is it is “situation-specific, meaning that the supervisor’s roles and foci should change not only across sessions, but also within sessions” (p. 47). The underutilization of clinical supervision in the school setting prompted an adaptation of the DM by Luke and Bernard (SCSM, 2006) to incorporate the multiple roles of school counselors within the comprehensive school counseling program.

The Systems Approach to Supervision Model (SAS). The systems approach to supervision (SAS; Holloway, 2016) is another supervision model classified as a “social role” model with a comprehensive approach (p. 14). Holloway (2016) describes the SAS model as a framework that incorporates six factors (i.e., supervisor, supervisee, supervisor functions, learning tasks, organization, and client), with the supervisory relationship being the “core dimension” (p. 14). The SAS model describes the five factors of professional experience, professional role, theoretical orientation to therapy, cultural worldview, and interpersonal style that influence the supervisor. This model relates to school counseling supervisors in their roles and the ability to establish a supervisory relationship with each school counselor. School districts with 200+ school counselors and one SCS may struggle to build ongoing supervisory relationships regularly due to SCS roles, responsibilities, and time constraints (Herlihy et al., 2002).

The Multicultural Integrated Supervision Model (MISM). The MISM (Mitchell & Butler, 2021) is an integrated approach adapted from McNeil et al. (2016) IDM with the multicultural and social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC; Ratts et al., 2016). The MISM is a contemporary approach with six tenants: (1) all interactions are multicultural and require consideration and/or discussion, (2) the development of the supervisor-supervisee relationship is paramount, (3) the parallel process is imperative as

supervisees begin to integrate multiple counseling skills, (4) supervisee counseling and multicultural efficacy functions along a developmental continuum, (5) supervisees require structure and support to advance along with the developmental framework, and (6) supervisee skills are assessed among eight domains of professional functioning (Mitchell & Butler, 2021; p. 106). Although the MISM is new and has minimal empirical data, the conceptual framework aligns with ASCA's school counselor supervision position that school counselor supervisors "facilitate personal and professional growth for operating in complex educational settings, including cultural competence and anti-racist work." (ASCA, 2021; p1). With the plethora of counseling supervision models available, how do these models compare to each other?

Content Analysis of Supervision Models. Other researchers, such as Simpson-Southward and colleagues (2017), conducted a content analysis of 52 models and identified 71 supervisory elements that were consistent and inconsistent across models. The study found most models focused more on supervisee learning and/or development (88.46%) and less on emotional aspects of work (61.54%) or managerial or ethical responsibilities (57.69%) (Simpson-Southward et al., 2017). Also, a vast majority of models focused on the supervisee (94.23%) and supervisor (80.77%) rather than the client (48.08%) or monitoring client outcomes (13.46%) (Simpson-Southward et al., 2017). Finally, Simpson-Southward et al. (2017) concluded "...none of the models were clearly or adequately empirically based. Although we might expect clinical supervision to contribute to positive client outcomes, the existing models have limited client focus and are inconsistent" (p. 1228).

Although there are various models that supervisors can select that align with their counseling and supervision philosophy and practice, none of the counseling supervision models discussed address the unique multifaceted and multidimensional aspects school counseling supervisors are faced with when supporting school counselors (Simpson-Southward et al., 2017; McNeil et al., 2016; Bernard, 1979, 1997; Holloway, 2016; Mitchell & Butler, 2021). This concern supports the need to uncover SCS experiences and perspectives regarding the clinical supervision they have received, provided, and how they support school counselors.

School Counseling Supervision Modalities, Types, and Models

School Counseling Supervision Modalities and Types. Dollarhide and Miller (2006) identified several school counselor supervision modalities, types, and models. Several primary modalities and types discussed are individual, peer/group, virtual, administrative, clinical, and programmatic (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006).

Regarding *individual supervision*, Crutchfield and Borders (1997) reported that school counselors have received minimum supervision compared to counselors, in other settings. Furthermore, school counselors spent 44% of their time in counseling and consultation, yet received little or no supervision in these areas (Crutchfield & Border, 1997). Crutchfield and Border's (1997) findings demonstrate the significant discrepancy between existing supervision practices and school counselors' needs for supervision. Often school systems' lack of supervision for school counselors attributed to limited funding and due to school administrators' focus on school counselors' time spent on direct service to students and is seen as an "inappropriate goal because of both time and budget constraints" (Crutchfield & Borders, 1997). *Peer/group supervision*, as described

by Crutchfield and Borders (1997), can be seen as a “time-and-cost-efficient approach” with the role of the supervisor as a facilitator; however, for some school systems, it may be a challenge to implement because of the lack of local counselor educators or other trained professionals willing to serve as the supervisor/facilitator (p. 45). Furthermore, Crutchfield and Borders (1997) study with the school counselors that participated in a “systemic peer group supervision” with a trained supervisor versus a peer consultation dyad reported that “support to be the most helpful thing about the sessions, whereas school counselors in the systemic peer groups reported specific feedback on skills and techniques to be most helpful” (p.229). The present study shares SCS perspectives on which modalities of clinical supervision they use to support school counselors.

Research has examined more specific types of supervision common in the school counseling specialty. Three specific supervision modalities seem to emerge in the literature: administrative, clinical, and programmatic, and drawn from Barret and Schmidt’s recommendation to clarify the school counselor identity and supervision (Barrett & Schmidt, 1986). For example, Roberts and Borders (1994) identified three forms of supervision: *administrative* supervision with a focus on professionalism such as attendance, punctuality, staff relations, and outreach to parents; *programmatic* supervision with a focus on program development, implementation, and coordination; and *clinical* supervision with a focus on clinical knowledge and skill working with students in direct counseling sessions. Additionally, Page and colleagues (2001) defined *administrative* supervision as the supervisor managing personnel, verbal and written communications, planning, implementation, and evaluating individuals and/or programs. *Clinical* supervision targets and focuses on interpersonal relationships, individual or

small groups, in which the supervisor helps the counselor learn to apply various assessment and counseling techniques (Page et al., 2001). Finally, Dollarhide and Miller (2006) define three types of supervision *administrative* supervision provided by a school administrator with a focus on organizational topics such as attendance and staff relations; *developmental/program* supervision with a focus on program development, management, and accountability provided by district coordinators; and *clinical/counseling* supervision with a focus on case conceptualization, interventions/techniques, the counseling process and provided by counseling supervisors trained in supervision. With the different types of available supervision for school counselors, which types of supervision best align with the multidimensional role of the school counselor, and who is best trained and equipped to supervise school counselors? The current study uncovers the type of supervision used by SCS to support school counselors.

School Counseling Supervision Models. Several school counseling supervision models such as Northside Independent School District (NISD; Henderson & Lampe, 1992); Goals, Functions, Roles, and Systems Model (GFRSM; Wood & Rayle, 2006), School Counseling Supervision Model (SCSM; Luke & Bernard, 2006), the Professional Academic Response Model (PARM; Henderson & Gysbers, 1998)/Support, Advocacy, Accessibility, Feedback, and Teamwork (SAAFT; Cooke et al. 2012), the Change Agent for Equity Model (CAFE; Ockerman, Mason, & Chen Hayes, 2013) and the ASCA National Model in Supervision (Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020) have all been developed. Yet, there is minimal empirical evidence on the school counseling supervisors' experience with these models. Another consideration is that many models are designed for school counseling site supervisors supervising SCITs. Although there

have been several models intended for school counseling supervision, there is limited insight into the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. The following is a brief summary of six school counseling supervision frameworks that aim to provide a foundation of understanding of how SCS may have received or provided clinical supervision.

The NISD Model. The Northside Independent School District (NISD) clinical supervision model was designed to improve the quality of all counselors' performance in school counseling activities and services (i.e., small group counseling, classroom lessons) (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). The NISD clinical supervision model was adapted from Glickman's (1990) teacher supervision model. The supervisors of the NISD model at the middle school or high school level are often the "head counselor" (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). At the elementary level, the district's director of guidance serves as the supervisor (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). The NISD model focuses on process, feedback, and theoretical foundation (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). The NISD model is a five-step process of clinical supervision that includes: (1) a pre-observation conference, (2) an observation, (3) data analysis, (4) a post-observation conference, and (5) an analysis of the post-observation conference (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). Two identified problems with the NISD Model were changing the status quo and the head counselors' lack of clinical supervision experience and skills (Henderson & Lampe, 1992). Henderson and Lampe (1992) developed four half-day in-service training programs for head counselors to conduct clinical supervision. For more details on the topics discussed during each training session, please refer to Henderson and Lampe's (1992) article. The NISD model demonstrated clinical supervision fosters professional dialogues, is "professionally

invigorating,” opportunity to share new ideas and strategies, and professional development (Henderson & Lampe, 1992; p. 156).

The GFRS Model. The GFRS model was developed for school counseling site supervisors to supervise school-counselors-in-training (SCITs) (Wood & Rayle, 2006). The theoretical foundation for the GFRS model draws upon the Working Alliance Model of Bordin (1993), The DM of Bernard (1979), and the SAS model from Holloway (1995). The GFRS Model has four suppositions:

- (1) Supervision is a constructivist process whereby supervision's goals and subsequent functions are determined within the context of the multiple, dynamic systems involved in school counselor training.
- (2) A symbiotic link exists between the goals of supervision, the experiential activities during school counselor training in internships, and the functions of supervision.
- (3) Shared agreement about the activities, expectations, and optimum outcomes negotiated between the university supervisor, site supervisor (school counselor), and SCIT is key to the successful supervision experience.
- (4) Successful supervision is contingent on SCITs' ability to recognize and work both within and between the multiple systems in the school counseling profession (Wood & Rayle, 2006, p. 256).

The GFRS Model includes four interrelated elements of goals, functions, roles, and systems (Henderson & Lampe, 2006). The first element, goals, was influenced by Bordin's (1993) eight crucial goals for counseling supervision, which are embedded in the ASCA National Model (leadership, advocacy, collaboration, assessment and use of

data, system support, individual planning, guidance curriculum, and responsive services; see, Henderson & Lampe 2006). Next, functions pertain to the activities of the supervisor. Henderson and Lampe (2006) identify six distinct functions of the supervisor: monitoring/evaluating, instructing, advising, modeling, consulting, and supporting and sharing. The GFRS model proposes five supervisor roles: evaluator, adviser, coordinator, teacher, and mentor (see Henderson & Lampe, 2006). The final component of the GFRS model, systems, involves the supervisors' awareness of how systems influence the roles within supervision (Henderson & Lampe, 2006). Although derived from empirically-based models, the GFRS model is primarily theoretically based; however, the GFRS model has not been empirically studied.

The SCS Model. Luke and Bernard (2006) propose the SCSM as an extension of Bernard's DM (1979,1997). The SCSM uses Bernard's (1979, 1997) three foci of supervision (intervention, conceptualization, and personalization) along with the three supervisory roles (teacher, counselor, and consultant), and includes the CSCP domains (large group intervention, counseling and consultation, individual and group advisement, and planning, coordination, and evaluation). Three critical elements within the SCSM are the direction of supervision, the function of the role within supervision, and the point of entry (i.e., large group intervention) (Luke & Bernard, 2006). Luke and Bernard (2006) provide several implications for training and practice: the SCSM can assist supervisors-in-training in supporting SCIT supervision needs; balance with other models of supervision; and parallels the experience SCITs have at their internship sites. The SCSM aligns with CACREP Standard III Q. (CACREP, 2016), which requires preparation programs to provide professional development to site supervisors. Although Bernard's

DM supports the SCSM theoretical foundation, SCSM needs additional empirical research and support.

The PAR Model/SAAFT Model. Henderson and Gysbers (1998) developed the Professional Assessment Response Model (PARM) to integrate the developmental supervision model with the multi-dimensional role of school counselors. The six-step process involves (1) development of a supervision agreement between supervisor and school counselor, (2) observation data collection of school counselors in action, (3) supervisor conceptualization of school counselor strengths and areas of growth, (4) supervisor outline of a professional plan for school counselor, (5) supervisor and school counselor meet to discuss feedback, (6) both supervisor and school counselor reflect on supervision session and implement a plan. Furthermore, Cook and colleagues (2012) conducted a qualitative study of school counselors' experiences with supervision using the PARM, with a primary theme of relationship with the supervisor as a critical element in the supervisory experience and created the support, advocacy, accessibility, feedback and teamwork model (SAAFT). They identified the following categories: support, collaboration, accessibility, feedback on clinical skills, and advocacy (Cook et al., 2012). Although this study focuses on school counselors' experiences, it lends insight into how feedback on clinical skills increased the quality of services provided by school counselors (Cook et al., 2012). The PARM and SAAFT Models have been utilized in school districts; however, there are limited empirical studies on the effectiveness of the models.

The CAFE Model. Ockerman, Mason, and Chen-Hayes (2013) developed a conceptual framework, the Change Agent for Equity (CAFE) model, to train SCIT on how to address several student achievement and opportunity gaps. The CAFE Model

consists of three key elements that begin with an emphasis on identity. Ockerman and colleagues prioritize ASCA's model of the school counselor's identity as the "systemic change agent" (p. 47). The CAFE supervisor's change agent identity influences how the supervisor operates and the supervision process (Ockerman et al., 2013). The CAFE model provides five sample assignments, rubrics, and recommendations that include (1) being visible, (2) engaging in equity-focused and culturally competent leadership and advocacy, (3) identifying and closing-the-achievement-opportunity-attainment-access and funding gaps, (4) creating and using assessments to evaluate change, and (5) sharing results and recommendations with stakeholders. (p. 49-50).

The CAFE model attempts to address the gap between school counseling program coursework and practice in the field. Furthermore, this model focuses on the school counseling supervisor's identity and practices in supervision. However, this model is conceptual with no empirical evidence.

The ASCA National Model in Supervision. The ASCA National Model (2019) is a framework that guides school counselors with four components to develop, implement, deliver, and assess school counseling programs. Quintana and Gooden-Alexis (2020) uncovered that many of the supervision models that exist are "mental-health-based," and many do not infuse the ASCA national model in their approach (p. 15).

Quintana and Gooden-Alexis (2020) provide information on school counseling supervision, ASCA National Model and supervision, and special considerations in school counseling supervision. Quintana and Gooden-Alexis (2020) stated that SCS develops, implements, and assesses school counseling programs and are charged with "guiding and training SCITs and practicing school counselors" (p. 5). Quintana and Gooden-Alexis

confirm that administrative, programmatic, and counseling supervision are the three identified types of supervision provided to school counselors (Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020). Quintana and Gooden-Alexis (2020) state, “all three types of supervision are necessary, as they comprehensively address school counselors’ needs, especially as challenges continue to increase” (p. 7).

The absence of research on school counseling supervisors' experiences with receiving and providing supervision, specifically clinical supervision, is alarming. Although there has been progress in developing school counseling supervision models, there is a lack of understanding of the supervisor's experience with the proposed models. This study opened the door to explore the supervisory relationship from the SCSs experience and perspective and gain insight into the type of school counseling supervision model used.

Overall, supervision for school counselors is primarily administrative and programmatic, focusing on developing, delivering, managing, and assessing comprehensive school counseling programs (Quintana and Gooden-Alexis, 2019; Bledsoe et al., 2021). Clinical supervision for school counselors is limited and lacking in the field due to limited school counseling supervisors’ preparation and training opportunities in specific school counseling supervision models, the nuance of types of supervision received and provided, and the continued struggle with professional role and identity for the profession (Henderson & Lampe, 1992; Page et al. 2001; DeKruyf et al., 2013).

Statement of the Problem

#SOS³: Supervision of School Counselors to Support Students' Mental Health

The morse code signal, SOS (...---...), established in 1908, was used to transmit distress clearly and quickly (Meriam-Webster.com, 2021). Today, via social media, the ubiquitous hashtag (#), started by Twitter and expanded to other cyber platforms, draws attention to an issue, topic, or category (Meriam-Webster.com, 2021). With the current state of society, students' mental health and social-emotional needs are paramount, and the support needed for school counselors to assist students' holistic development is critical. The author proposes #S.O.S.³ to promote the Supervision of School Counselors to Support Students. Research warns of the deterioration of school counselor self-efficacy without clinical supervision and may contribute to a “diminishment of clinical skills” and role confusion (DeKruyf et al., 2013, p. 276).

Moving forward, as students' mental health and social-emotional development needs are assessed, school counselors must be equipped and supported to help with the influx of anticipated and unanticipated school community needs. School counselors provide, on average preventative, targeted, intensive, and culturally responsive services to 431 students with a recommended ratio of 250:1(ASCA, 2019a; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Who and how are supports provided to school counselors?

School Counseling Supervisor Role and Identity

School counseling directors/coordinators are supervisors who work at the state, district, and school levels and support the development, implementation, and assessment of school counseling programs and professional development (Quintana & Gooden-Alexis, 2020). Quintana and Gooden-Alexis (2020) discuss the components of the supervisory working alliance between the SCS and school counselor, including building rapport, expectations, evaluation, and ethical considerations. These components align

with other supervision theoretical models and the role of the supervisor (DM; Bernard, 1979, 1997; SCSM; Luke & Bernard, 2006)

A recent ASCA Position Statement: The School Counselor and School Counselor Supervision (2021d) provides some insight into the SCS role and identity by describing some of the responsibilities of SCS. The following list is what SCS works to provide during supervision: (1) support and encourage counselor development; (2) foster continued development of instruction, appraisal, and advisement and counseling skills; (3) facilitate personal and professional growth to include cultural competence and anti-racist work; (4) promote adherence to standards and competencies related to leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change; (5) model the development of data-informed and accountable programs; (6) serve as gatekeepers; (7) safeguard students and families; (8) promote ethical behaviors; (9) remain current on trends, techniques and strategies in the field of school counseling; and (10) obtain professional development in supervision (ASCA, 2021d). Participating in supervision and clinical supervision is essential for SCS, the school counselors they supervise, and ultimately the welfare and well-being of the students served in the school district. This proponent further propels the support of clinical supervision for school counselors to be readily accessible.

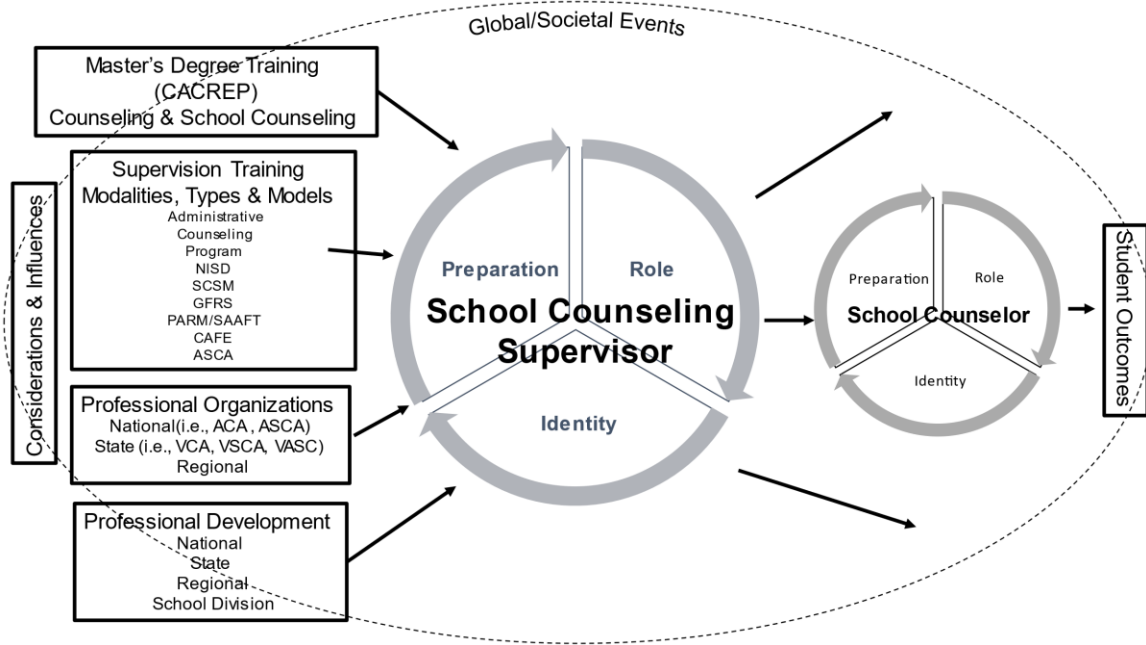
Finally, Goodman-Scott and colleagues (2020) explored district-level school counseling supervisors' experiences and perceptions regarding school counselor preparation and practice. This study lays the foundation of how SCS makes sense of their interactions and relationships with school counselors.

To summarize, Figure 2 is a visual to capture the considerations and influences on the preparation, identity, and role of SCS (CACREP, 2016; ACA, 2014; ASCA 2020;

ASCA 2021). Also, depending on the SCS's master's level training and exposure and experiences with supervision modalities, types, and models, these influences shape the SCS's professional identity. Also, membership in professional counseling organizations and participation in appropriate professional development opportunities such as conferences can influence SCS's professional identity and understanding of their role.

Figure 2

School Counseling Supervisor Considerations and Influences



Summary

Research studies have shown that school counselors' level of supervision compared to counselors in other settings is significantly less (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; DeKruyf et al., 2013). Furthermore, school counselors are often the only mental health professional in the school building to help students with mental health concerns, yet they have limited access to supervision and, more specifically, clinical supervision (Sutton & Page, 1994). Counseling knowledge and skill development require ongoing supervision

opportunities during and after postgraduate studies (CACREP, 2016). Compared to the sibling disciplines such as agency counselors, social work, and school psychology, regular clinical supervision is provided and expected (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). However, studies have shown school counselors either receive administrative or programmatic (Boyd & Walter, 1975; Roberts & Borders, 1994; Henderson & Lampe, 1992; Page et al., 2001; Bledsoe et al., 2021).

Given the importance of supervision as a pedagogical strategy to support school counselors' direct and indirect services, it is essential we better understand the experiences of SCS who have received and provided clinical supervision. Ultimately, the illumination of SCS experiences will inform school counseling supervision preparation, practices, and enable SCS, counselor educators, school district and state educational administrators to understand the needs of SCS better to provide the best support for students' social-emotional well-being.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to explore the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors' (SCS). More specifically, this study reveals the clinical supervision experiences of SCS who received clinical supervision post master's degree and provided clinical supervision to school counselors. This chapter introduces the interpretive phenomenological (IPA) research methodology and design. The methodology of IPA facilitates a thorough and in-depth understanding of the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. Discussion regarding the suitability of IPA qualitative method to answer this study's research questions is shared. In addition, review of the research approach, data collection and analysis, strategies to ensure rigor, credibility, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations are discussed.

Research Design

Research Questions

The following overarching research question guided this exploratory study: What are the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors? To gain an understanding of the clinical supervision experiences of SCS, the following research questions were explored:

1. What are the clinical supervision expectations of SCS?
2. What are the supervision experiences of SCS who received clinical supervision post master's degree?
3. What are the supervision experiences of SCS who provided clinical supervision after graduating with a master's degree?

4. What do SCS perceive as the impact of providing clinical supervision to school counselors?

These research questions focused on exploring the clinical supervision experiences of SCS who received clinical supervision and provided clinical supervision to school counselors. Furthermore, the broad guiding research question is framed to capture the lived experiences of SCS from a holistic perspective, including preparation and training, supervision modalities and types, school counseling supervision models, professional role and identity, self-efficacy, and professional experiences.

Qualitative Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was used to explore the experiences of SCS who received and provided clinical supervision. Qualitative research has various approaches to examine phenomenological and experiential research questions. According to Creswell and Poth (2018) and Moustakas (1994), there are five qualitative approaches to inquiry: case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative research, and phenomenology. For this study, although the primary research question aligns with a traditional phenomenological investigation, an integrated interpretative lens with a focus on the nuanced descriptions from the participants is applied in the study. The methodology of IPA combines the phenomenological, hermeneutics, and idiographic approaches with an interpretative perspective to qualitative research (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015) and is best aligned with this study to address the overarching research question. The methodological approach of IPA is further discussed.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IPA is a form of qualitative inquiry with increased application to investigate research questions in counselor education and supervision (Miller et al., 2018; Dawson & Akhurst, 2015; Bledsoe et al., 2021; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Miller and colleagues (2018) describe IPA as a contemporary qualitative approach theoretically developed and credited to Jonathon A. Smith (2009; Miller et al., 2018) with the historical influence of the phenomenological philosophers Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre (Smith et al. 2009). IPA has been used to explore the circumstantial meaning of individuals related to their lived encounters (Oxley, 2016; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015). Moreover, IPA is an applicable methodology to explore the study's research question because it emphasizes the individual sharing their rich, detailed account of their experience with the synergistic interaction between the participants and the researcher (Miller et al., 2018).

Grounded on the criteria delineated by Lincoln et al. (2018), IPA aligns with constructivism's ontological, epistemological, and methodological paradigm. The interpretive research approach attempts to understand by deciphering participants' perceptions and perspectives (Lincoln et al., 2018). Lincoln et al. (2018) postulate constructivist interpretative research enhances engagement. Therefore, the study provides information to enrich the knowledge, practice, and skills of counselor educators, school and state educational administrators, and SCS who provide clinical supervision to school counselors. The study explored the clinical supervision experiences of SCS to understand their experiences within the broader constructivist framework.

Traditional phenomenological approaches typically examine what participants say, however, IPA researchers attempt to uncover and understand the participant's lived

experiences and how those experiences impact them (Alase, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, it is recommended for IPA researchers to be open-minded, flexible, patient, empathetic, and willing to enter and respond to the participant's world to grasp their perspectives while mitigating any personal bias from interpretation (Smith et al., 2009).

IPA is a research approach focusing on the participant's lived experiences and exploring a particular event or phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). Within IPA, the researcher attempts to make sense of the participants' making sense of what is happening to them (Smith et al., 2009). This research explored the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. An overview of the theoretical foundation of IPA for the context of this study is discussed.

Theoretical Foundation. IPA focuses on the in-depth exploration of the individual's lived experience (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015). IPA strives to capture the authentic and genuine understanding of how individuals make sense of their lived experiences from the phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography theoretical foundations (Smith et al., 2009). This study explored the SCS experiences who received and provided clinical supervision through the inductive process which demonstrates the interface of these foundational theoretical components. IPA focuses on understanding the experience by acknowledging the experience itself is complex and multifaceted (Smith et al., 2009). IPA allows participants to describe the meaning of an experience and through the data analysis process, emergent themes and superordinate themes are identified. The theoretical foundations of IPA (phenomenological, hermeneutics, and idiographic) are described in the following discussion.

Phenomenological. Phenomenology is a philosophical perspective with a continuum of research approaches investigating the lived experience. According to Smith et al. (2009), “phenomenology philosophy provides a rich source of ideas about how to examine and comprehend lived experience” (p. 11). Developed from Husserl’s (1970,1982) philosophy of adopting a “phenomenological attitude” facilitates the researcher’s shift from objects in the world to a direct inward examination toward a broad perception of an individual’s experience (Smith et al. p, 2009; p. 12). IPA integrates the historical perspectives of Husserl (1970, 1982), Heidegger (1927/1962), Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012), and Sartre (1948/2007, 1943/2018) to understand individuals’ lived experiences. Smith and colleagues (2009) surmise the shared philosophies of these phenomenologists have influenced the understanding of the lived experience that is personalized to an individual’s distinctive relationship to a phenomenon. The phenomenon pertinent for the study was the SCS experiences who received and provided clinical supervision. The emergent understanding of the phenomenon of received and provided clinical supervision experiences of SCS requires an interpretative lens to understand how SCSs make sense of their lived experience.

Hermeneutics. The second dimension of IPA is the theory and practice of interpretation which draws from the influential foundations of phenomenology and the work of Heidegger (1927/1962), Gadamer (1960/2013), and Schleiermacher (1998). Smith et al. (2009) discuss the hermeneutic circle as the “key tenant” of hermeneutic theory and the IPA process (p. 28). The hermeneutic circle aids the researcher’s gestalt perspective of the synergetic interpretative process (Smith et al., 2009). Although qualitative research can be seen one dimensional, IPA’s hermeneutic circle acknowledges

the fluid process of different ways to consider the data and the central data analysis process occurs through a dual interpretation process (Smith et al., 2009). In other words, the SCS shares their experience and how they make sense of it and the researcher interprets how the SCS makes sense of their experience. This study aimed to decode the SCS meaning through detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences.

Idiography. A third substantial theoretical influence on IPA is idiography. Harre's work (1979/1993) rationalizes the significance of idiography to IPA (Smith et al., 2009). Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) infer idiography influences IPA through capturing the rich, unique, and specific details of a phenomena, perspective, individuals, and background. Idiography guides IPA's purposeful homogeneous sampling and in-depth single-case analysis as used in this study (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2014). Both single-case and group-level analysis are used in IPA; however, at the group-level, the process of formulating emergent, cluster, subthemes, and superordinate themes occur after all individual cases are channeled through a multi-step data analysis process (Smith et al., 2009). Compared to traditional phenomenological methodologies, which are focused on the "essence" of phenomena, IPA is concerned with the distinct meanings, interpretations, and perceptions participants give to a particular lived experience (Smith et al., 2009; p. 14). The idiographic focus of IPA through individual case analysis offers specific and individualistic analyses of unique occurrences of lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). This study focuses on SCS clinical supervision experiences and provides an in-depth analysis of SCS individual clinical supervision experiences and examines the convergent and divergent themes within and across the individual and group experiences. The IPA approach accomplishes this by utilizing individual interviews based on an interview

guide and a purposeful sample of people with a common lived experience. The methods section details how this was completed in the present study

Method

Participants

Population and Sample

This study aimed to explore the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. Therefore, eligible participants who voluntarily agreed to participate and (a) were currently employed as school counseling supervisors/coordinator/director/lead in a public school district in the state of Virginia, (b) held a master's degree in counseling or school counseling (c) held a school counseling pupil services license from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), (d) received clinical supervision post master's degree, and (e) provided clinical supervision to one or more practicing school counselors in the school district they work. The sample size of ten participants adhered to the IPA research standards of eight to twelve participants. (Pietkiecz & Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). Additionally, IPA studies within the counseling and school counseling profession have ranged from sample sizes of three (Chan, 2018), six (Miller & Barrio-Minton, 2016), nine (Bledsoe et al., 2021), and twelve (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Based on the idiographic nature of IPA, which is “nomothetic” and focuses on individual cases, the traditional qualitative notion of data “saturation” or “theoretical sufficiency” (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; p. 229; Guest et al., 2020) is less of a focus for this study. (Smith et al., 2009). Participants were identified by homogenous and purposeful sampling, which aligns with the methodological framework of IPA (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015).

Recruitment

Recruitment commenced after receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix A for Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board Approval Letter). The researcher used snowball sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Naderifur et al., 2017; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and created a list, in collaboration with research supervisors, to identify exemplar counseling colleagues listed on websites from regional, state, and national professional counseling organizations (i.e., VASC, VSCA, ACA, ASCA) who know school counseling supervisors in Virginia. The researcher contacted exemplar counseling colleagues via email and received names of school counseling supervisors/coordinators/directors/leads who met the eligibility criteria and invited them to participate in the study (see Appendix B for Recruitment Email Script).

With the created list of potential school counseling supervisors, the researcher emailed potential participants an invitation to participate in the research study (see Appendix C Participant Invitations). Participants received an email with a link to Qualtrics, which contained an information sheet about the purpose and aim of the research study, consent to participate in the study, the demographic and supervision background information survey, and a link to schedule the initial interview (see Appendix D, Information Sheet; Appendix E, Demographic and Supervision Background Survey)

Participants who volunteered to participate in the study reviewed the eligibility requirements and were prompted to review the information sheet and consent to participate. The information sheet document includes sections describing the study's aim, confidentiality, participant's rights, risks and benefits of participation, video/audio recording, interview protocols, audio recording transcription procedures, and the process

of disseminating findings. Participants had the opportunity to schedule their initial interview after reviewing the information sheet, consenting to participate in the study, and completing the demographic and supervision background information survey. Upon the participant's informed consent to participate in the study, participants were notified of the interview protocols, anticipated time commitment, steps to protect their privacy, and a reminder of withdrawal from the study at any time. The researcher also obtained verbal consent from participants and documented verbal consent for each of the two interviews in study notes. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher reviewed the participant's information sheet document, asked participants any questions, and confirmed the participant's consent. The researcher began data collection through semi-structured interviews only after receiving consent from participants.

Data Collection

Demographic and Supervision Background Information Survey

Participants who responded were asked to complete a brief demographic and supervision background information survey (i.e., racial identity, gender identity, years of experience, etc.) (see Appendix E) before the initial interview. All participants were provided an opportunity to select a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality and privacy. Also, all participants were offered a gift card (delivered electronically) and a link to a school counseling repository with information and resources on supervision as an acknowledgment of their time and narrative shared. Receipt of the gift card and the school counseling supervision repository link were not contingent upon the completion of the study. Participants were offered the choice to receive a total of \$20.00 gift cards to the ACA bookstore, ASCA bookstore, Amazon, or Starbucks based on the preference

indicated in the demographic and supervision background survey. Participants were offered two opportunities to receive a gift card, one after completion demographic and supervision background survey and one after the initial interview. The researcher discussed the gift card delivery and repository link at the beginning of the initial and follow-up interviews.

Semi-structured Interviews

A semi-structured, in-depth interview based on the interview guide took approximately 60-90 minutes to provide one data source. The data collection method of in-depth interviews allowed for rich, detailed, and first-person accounts of experiences and is best suited for IPA (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015). Semi-structured interviews are the most common method in IPA studies (Smith et al., 2009). Before the initial interview, the researcher sent an electronic copy study information sheet for participants to review. Also, at the beginning and conclusion of the interview, the researcher thanked the participant and invited them to share any questions or concerns related to their participation in the study at any time.

All interviews were video/audio recorded through secure video/audioconferencing software. Participants had the option to connect to the video conference functionality of the conference software (i.e., HIPPA Zoom). The audio recordings were transcribed by a trusted third-party service that met the IRB's confidentiality, privacy, and data security policy (i.e., Rev.com). The researcher compared each transcript to the audio recording and made any necessary edits. Participants received an electronic version of the transcript of their interview via a secure email of their choice. This process supported the participants' reflexivity between the initial semi-structured interview and follow-up

interview. Before the researcher conducted initial interviews with participants, a pilot interview with a SCS was conducted to verify the research design. The pilot interview assessed the effectiveness and relevance of the interview guide, the interviewing technique of the researcher, and revisions to the interview guide (Smith et al., 2009).

Interview Guide

The semi-structured interviews followed an interview guide. Utilizing a semi-structured interview guide allowed the researcher to appropriately respond to the content and process of the interview to collect data for the study (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015). The interview guide facilitated the interview process to collect qualitative data focused on exploring SCS supervision experiences who received and provided clinical supervision. The interview guide was developed using the IPA guidelines for constructing an interview guide for a semi-structured interview suggested by Smith et al. (2009). The guidelines include: (a) develop an interview guide that facilitates a comfortable interaction where the participant can provide a rich and detailed account of the experience under investigation; (b) prepare questions that are open and expansive and facilitate lengthy discussion; (c) sequence the interview questions and process from a narrative or descriptive account to more analytic or evaluative participant account; (d) construct the interview guide includes approximately six to ten questions (Smith et al. 2009). The questions followed a sequential format with a warmup question asking participants, “Please share the name of your current position title and describe your role.” Followed by more general questions such as, “How did you come to be in your current school counseling supervisor position?” To more specific questions like, “How would you describe the clinical supervision you provide to school counselors?” (see Appendix F for

Interview Guide). The interview guide aligns with the traditional IPA semi-structured interview process (Smith et al., 2009; see Appendix F).

Follow-up Interview

Before the follow-up interview, the researcher sent participants an electronic copy of the initial interview transcript through secure and encrypted file sharing. One to three weeks following the first interview, follow-up interviews with participants were conducted via the same video conferencing software used in the initial semi-structured interview (i.e., HIPPA Zoom). The follow-up interview lasted approximately 15 minutes and allowed participants to provide additional information and reflections generated about the phenomenon after the initial interview (see Appendix G for Follow-up Interview Guide). At the beginning of the follow-up interview, the researcher thanked the participant for their willingness to participate in the follow-up interview. The researcher provided a general description of the purpose of the follow-up interview and offered the participant an opportunity to share any questions. Participants were asked if they would like to participate in the follow-up interview. The researcher began the follow-up interview only if the participant consented. After the follow-up interview, the researcher thanked the participant and invited them to share any questions or concerns about their participation in the study. Participants were offered the choice of a \$10.00 gift card and a link to the supervision repository as a token of compensation and appreciation.

Reflexive Journal

The researcher used a reflexive journal throughout the study's design, data collection, and data analysis phase (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The reflexive journal served

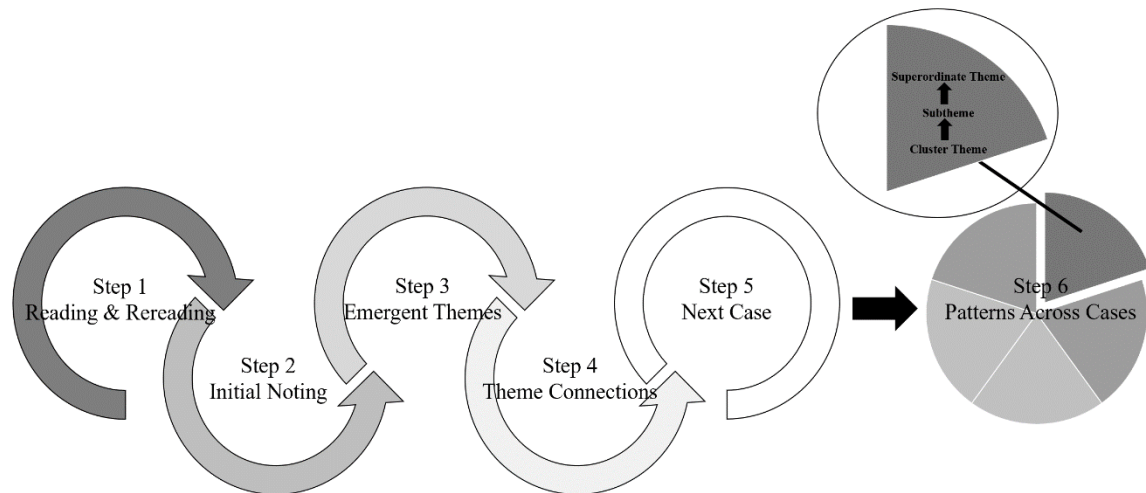
several purposes within this study. First, the reflexive journal permitted the researcher to record and provide a rationale for their methodological approaches and choices, research logistics, and reflect upon their values, biases, and interests within the context and process of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Second, documentation throughout the study ensured the qualitative rigor and trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morse, 2002). Third, the reflexive journal contributed to documentation for the audit trail. Finally, reflexive journaling supported Husserl's (1970, 1982) phenomenological bracketing method during the research process.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process for this study was based on Smith and colleagues (2009) delineated six analytic steps of IPA. The IPA data analysis process focuses on the participants' attempt to make sense and meaning of their lived experiences and is an interactive and inductive cyclical process (Smith, 2007). For this study, the IPA data analysis process included the following six analytical strategies (See Figure 3, IPA Process): (1) reading and re-reading; (2) initial noting; (3) developing emergent themes; (4) searching for connections across emergent themes; (5) moving to the next case; and (6) looking for patterns across group-level cases (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, 2015).

Figure 3

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Process (IPA)



The following discussion describes how the researcher utilized these strategies during the study's multi-phase data analysis portion.

First, upon receiving the transcription of an initial interview, the researcher immersed themselves in the data by reading and re-reading the interview transcript. The researcher listened to the initial interview and reviewed the transcript simultaneously, beginning with the first interview. After the first reading of the transcript, a second re-read of the transcript was conducted by the researcher. After the second reading of the transcript, the researcher progressed to the next phase of the IPA data analysis process. Also, IPA recommends transcribing the first interview before performing any additional interviews (Smith et al., 2009). After reviewing the first interview transcript with a peer reviewer to examine the interview questions' schedule and strategies, the review yielded revisions to the interview guide before conducting the next interview (Smith et al., 2009).

Engagement of initial noting of the first transcript by the researcher was the second phase of data analysis to establish exploratory comments. This phase of the

analytic process is the most detailed and time-consuming. This level of analysis facilitated a deep familiarity with the data and is similar to free textual analysis (Smith et al., 2009). Overall, the exploratory commenting was examined from descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual aspects (Smith et al., 2009). This approach is considered a fluid process of engaging with the text and establishing exploratory comments, which informed emergent themes in the next phase of analyses.

Third, based on the exploratory comments from the review of the initial transcripts, emergent themes were identified by the researcher. The researcher attempted to reduce the volume of data while identifying the interrelationships, connections, and patterns between the researcher's notes and interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). Smith and colleagues (2009) explain the data analysis process as fragmented with a reorganization of the parts of the whole into a "new whole" (p.91).

Fourth, the researcher searched for connections across emergent themes in chronological order. During this phase, the researcher mapped how the themes interrelate and relate to SCS clinical supervision experiences. Throughout this phase of the analytic process, the researcher used strategies such as abstraction, where the researcher identifies similar patterns or polarization focusing on differences across emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). Additional methods used to identify connections across emergent themes were subsumption, contextualization, numeration, and function to develop super-ordinate themes based on the participant's account of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

Recording the initial method of noting, emerging themes, cluster themes, subthemes, and super-ordinate themes aided in the data analysis of the codes and served as a part of the audit trail for the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Fifth, the researcher transitioned to the subsequent transcript and repeated the outlined four-step process. Each transcript was examined individually. Transcripts were reviewed based on the date of the data collection for each interview. To keep with the IPA idiographic commitment, bracketing the ideas that emerged from the first and subsequent cases were utilized and recorded in the reflexive journal. Smith et al. (2009) acknowledge that the researcher will be influenced by what has been found; however, the IPA process allows new themes to emerge with each case. Adherence to outlined data analysis strategies for all interview transcripts was followed by the researcher.

Finally, upon completion of the individualized data analysis collected from each interview transcript, the researcher examined patterns across all interview transcripts according to steps one through five. During this phase, the researcher developed a master table of cluster themes for the group that emerged after examining the collected data analysis's connection, patterns, and themes. Also, the researcher used emergent themes to create clusters of themes and/or subthemes to develop the superordinate themes of the study. The superordinate themes and subthemes identified are the primary themes discussed in the findings. Furthermore, the group-level data analysis aims to distinguish the participants' "unique idiosyncrasies" within each interview transcript and similar complex qualities amongst all interviews (Smith et al. 2009, p. 101).

Rigor, Credibility, and Trustworthiness

Qualitative approaches to rigor, credibility, and trustworthiness require procedures and strategies to ensure methodological quality assurance (Morse et al., 2002; Hays et al., 2021; Williams & Morrow, 2009). This study's rigor aligned with the IPA framework by using a purposeful sample of ten SCS, using an interview guide to conduct

the in-depth semi-structured interview to ensure continuity of questions asked of all participants, and adhering to the IPA data collection and analysis outlined by Smith et al. (2009). To further establish methodological rigor and trustworthiness, the researcher employed the following strategies: prolonged engagement, triangulation, analysis of convergent and divergent themes, bracketing and reflexivity, member checking, and an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Hays et al., 2016).

Evaluation

Qualitative methodologies recommend researchers employ rigor, credible, and trustworthy strategies for accountability and accuracy (i.e., prolonged engagement, member checking, triangulation, audit trail, methodological and theoretical cohesion, bracketing, and reflexivity) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Smith et al. 2009; Morse et al., 2002; Hays et al., 2021; Williams & Morrow, 2009). The researcher employed an audit trail with detailed accounts of interview schedules, receipt of the information sheet, interview checklists, reflexive journaling, transcripts, spreadsheets with emergent, superordinate, and subordinate themes, and prolonged engagement by meeting with each participant for two interviews with email correspondence between interview sessions to answer questions, reminders for interview times, receipt of the gift card, and receipt of repository link, and use the IPA Paper Evaluation Guide created by Smith (2011).

Furthermore, before coding each transcript, the researcher reviewed each transcript while listening to the audio recording for accuracy and masked any identifiable information. After review, the participant received their transcript securely emailed for them to review and provide additional thoughts and comments on their clinical supervision experiences.

The researcher reviewed the IPA approach with a methodologist and reviewed the sampling of transcripts with exploratory comments, emergent themes, and a master theme spreadsheet. The researcher also met with peer reviewers to review transcripts to identify emergent, cluster, sub, and superordinate themes. The first peer reviewer was a white female with over 40 years of experience in interviewing, assessing, and conducting qualitative and quantitative research analysis. This peer reviewer reviewed half of the transcriptions and assisted the researcher in identifying emergent themes, cluster themes, subthemes, and superordinate themes. The second peer reviewer was a white female counselor education and supervision doctoral candidate with experience with quantitative and qualitative research. This peer reviewer reviewed the master table of cluster themes, subthemes, and superordinate themes with the researcher to develop the final superordinate themes. In addition, the researcher examined the cluster, subthemes, and superordinate themes with dissertation committee co-chairs to verify understanding of named superordinate themes. The researcher used suggestions and feedback to create the superordinate themes for the study (see Figure 5 for Example of Cluster and Subthemes to Create Superordinate Themes; Figure 6; School Counseling Supervisors Clinical Supervision Experience Superordinate Themes).

The follow-up interview with each participant lasted between 15 to 30 minutes. During this time, all participants indicated self-reflection as a SCS and provided recommendations and suggestions to the researcher on strategies to support SCS, such as an interest in training on school counseling clinical supervision models. Also, the researcher kept a handwritten reflexive journal with notes throughout the process.

Prolonged Engagement

The researcher used a purposeful, homogenous sample of participants who meet the study eligibility criteria. Engagement with the participants involved several interactive opportunities, including (1) initial email verification of eligibility criteria, (2) followed by contact to review the purpose of the study, review the study information sheet, obtain verbal consent, sending an acknowledgment of participation, (3) conducted the initial interview, and participants completion of the demographic and supervision background information survey, (4) sent transcribed the initial interview for review, and (5) a follow-up interview.

Triangulation

The researcher used multiple forms of evidence to support and describe the findings, including triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation was evidenced by the transcribed interviews' data analysis, the field notes taken during the interviews, the reflexive journaling, the demographic and supervision background analysis, review and feedback from dissertation committee supervisors, peer review of transcripts, and the use of the IPA theoretical framework (Smith et al. 2009).

Audit Trail

The researcher used an audit trail to ensure rigor and trustworthiness of the study. The researcher employed the following components as part of an audit trail for the IPA study: (a) initial notes on the research question; (b) the research proposal; (c) the interview guide; (d) annotated interview transcripts; (e) tables of individual and across

group emergent themes; (f) exploratory comments; and (h) reflexive journal (Smith et al. 2009).

Methodological and Theoretical Cohesion

IPA's framework uses phenomenological, hermeneutic, and idiographic philosophies. This study was carefully designed to be consistent with IPA theory and methodology. The researcher's study to answer the guiding question about SCS clinical supervision experiences, the semi-structured interviews, interview guide, the researcher's bracketing, and reflexivity are examples of adherence to IPA's methodological and theoretical components. The researcher ensured fidelity to IPA methodological and theoretical constructs through supervisory review from dissertation supervisors. The IPA approach promoted descriptions of how participants were selected, how the interview schedule was constructed, how the interview was conducted, and the data analysis procedures (Smith et al., 2009).

Bracketing and Reflexivity

The researcher engaged in bracketing, which aligned with the IPA framework. Bracketing in IPA is a reflexive and cyclical process similar to the hermeneutic circle and is facilitated through reflexive practices (Smith et al., 2009). Bracketing was utilized throughout the study when engaging with participants, interpreting data, and during data collection and analyses. IPA acknowledges that researchers are responsible for bracketing their prior knowledge of the phenomenon while corroborating their interpretations based on the participants' experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

Researcher Bracketing Positionality

The researcher acknowledges the intersectionality of her multiple identities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) by disclosing her interest in the topic, positionality, and perceived ideas on the research topic (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My interest in this research topic stems from my professional experience as a school counselor, middle school counseling director, district-level SCS, and doctoral student supervisor for master's level CITs and SCITs. This study is part of the researcher's personal and professional experiences as it parallels the SCS she will interview. Throughout this research process, the researcher's disclosure about her experiences as a school counselor and SCS is essential to ensure trustworthiness and monitor biases that could influence outcomes.

My combined 12 years' experience as a school counselor and SCS informed me to recognize that school counselors receive minimal regular clinical supervision post master's degree, nor do most SCS receive preparation in school counseling supervision models. As a school counselor in Virginia, I participated in weekly administrative and programmatic supervision sessions with my school administrator. I remember advocating for regularly scheduled meetings to discuss concerns and issues regarding students, staff, and families. I recall when I had my first meeting and arrived with an agenda to discuss concerns with students, it appeared to be unconventional to my administrator. During the supervision session, we were able to review concerns about "frequent flyers," however, we could not discuss the root cause of a student's behavior. Although I appreciated my administrator's confidence in my knowledge and skills as a counselor, there was never an opportunity to discuss counseling strategies/interventions. The meetings were scheduled weekly; however, often, the sessions were canceled due to a school-related crisis,

insufficient time, or the availability of the administrator. Our division offered monthly meetings; however, the meetings were often prescribed with administrative and programmatic tasks (i.e., ASCA national model program components). Sometimes the meetings would provide an opportunity for professional development in topics that supported the work of school counselors; however, there was little time to discuss the application with individual cases or small groups.

As an SCS, I remember seeking opportunities to meet with school counselors to review student cases and see them in action with students and the school. I remember feeling frustrated with prescribed duties and expectations from central office administrators on supporting school counselors. The focus on administrative and programmatic supervision left minimal time to offer counseling supervision. I often felt overwhelmed with managing the administrative and programmatic requirements of developing, implementing, and managing comprehensive school counseling programs. There were times I experienced conflicted feelings of motivation and frustration to provide one-on-one and/or small group supervision. I remember creating and offering “counselor for a day” once a month to provide direct supervision to school counselors. This opportunity provided time for all three types of supervision; however, this was not pragmatic with the number of school counselors to supervise. Typically, high school counseling directors, middle school lead counselors, and elementary counselor facilitators were offered monthly meetings to deliver administrative, programmatic, and in-service training.

As a current full-time counselor education and supervision doctoral candidate, I do not work full-time as an SCS in a school division. I hold a certification as a school

counselor. I am presently not supervising any school counselors; however, I serve as a mentor to a licensed professional counselor (LPC) who works in a school setting.

As I began this research study, I recognized I hold opinions that could be considered biased. First, I consider myself a collaborator, leader, advocate, scholar, and systemic change agent (CLASS) for school counselors and the counseling profession. My professional and doctoral educational experiences have led me to recognize that school counselors and SCS do not receive formal preparation and training in school counseling supervision, including supervision types, modalities, and models. Although some SCS supervisors may participate in supervision training, I question if the training provided includes specifics related to school counseling. Secondly, based on my professional and doctoral education experiences, I believe school counselors and SCS can benefit professionally and personally from formal preparation and training in counseling supervision and, more specifically, school counseling supervision. Finally, from my research, I believe professional organizations, school divisions, and state departments of education need to better support school counselors through preparation and training of supervision and increased access to SCS for counseling supervision to better support the mental wellbeing of the students they serve.

Researcher Reflexivity

For this study, the reflexive journal kept by the researcher served as a primary repository for reflections on the positionality and process of the study (Bledsoe, 2019; Wiley, 2020). The researcher understood their subjectivity, positionality, and influence on the relationship between the participants and the researcher. To demonstrate this reflexive process, the researcher for this study is an adult bi-racial (European-American

and African American) female who lives in a suburban community in northern Virginia. Presently, the researcher is a counselor education and supervision doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech. The researcher is a first-generation undergraduate and graduate student. She has scholarly and professional interests in school counseling supervision. The researcher has 25 years of combined community mental health agency counseling, school-based mental health counseling, and school counseling. She has been a practicing school counselor for nine years, a site supervisor for school counselors-in-training, and a district-level school counseling supervisor for three years. Also, the researcher is a state-certified school counselor. The researcher has completed doctoral-level courses focused on counselor education and supervision, participated in a supervision internship, and served as a graduate assistant providing live, individual, and triadic supervision to master's level counseling students. The combination of professional and academic experiences represents her supervision experiences.

The researcher participated in reflexive journaling throughout the study and recorded perspectives, engaged in discussion with committee chairs and peer reviewers, and reflected on implications (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The reflexive journal was used to document the researcher's justification for methodological decisions, logistics of the study, reflection upon biases and values, interests, and insights within the perspective and process of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reflexive journaling helped to ensure rigor and trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Wiley, 2020).

IPA Quality Evaluation Guide

The researcher employed the criteria established in the IPA quality evaluation guide to ensure the study and process were rigorous and trustworthy. The IPA quality evaluation guide recommends seven criteria to meet the highest level of acceptance: (1) subscribe to the phenomenological, hermeneutic, and idiographic theoretical principles; (2) provide transparency; (3) include “coherent, plausible and interesting analysis”; (4) provide sufficient sampling with detailed evidence for each theme; (5) focused with in-depth analysis; (6) data collection and interpretation are rigorous; and (7) engages and enlightens the reader (Smith, 2011, p. 17).

Ethical Considerations

This research study posed minimal risk to participants. Foreseeable risks that were considered, however, not exhibited, included discomfort discussing supervision experiences received and provided.

Participation was voluntary. Participants had the right to choose what they disclosed or opt out of the study at any time. All interviews were conducted in a private, confidential setting. Interview data were collected using a teleconferencing platform (i.e., HIPPA Zoom). Once collected, the researcher only accessed the interview data using secure log-in information. The recordings were transcribed by a third-party transcription service that met the confidentiality and privacy criteria approved by the IRB (i.e., Rev.com). All digital documents and data (audio recording files, documentation, field notes, forms documenting verbal consent, interview transcripts, etc.) were stored on a password-protected computer that only the researcher could access. The researcher maintained secure digital files, connected participants with IDs and pseudonyms, and kept them in a secured location away from the digital files, transcripts, and participants’

verbal consent forms. The researcher did not observe any participants that appeared distressed or indicated a need for help. The information collected was kept private. Member checking was used in the study to minimize risks. The dissertation committee supervised the researcher on all research activities.

Benefits indicated by some participants included gaining clarity about supervision and clinical supervision experiences, adding greater knowledge about the experiences of SCS supervision and clinical supervision experiences, contributing to the understanding of SCS professional identity, and providing insight into the preparation and training of school counselors and SCS.

Participants were offered a gift card and access to a repository of school counseling supervision information and resources as compensation and acknowledgment of their time. Received gift cards or access to the repository was not contingent upon the completion of the study.

Furthermore, the researcher participated in the Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University required human subjects training.

Summary of Methodology

Chapter Three introduces the research methodology of the IPA study to explore the experiences of SCS who received and provided clinical supervision. It presented the research design, interview guide, data collection and analysis plans, rigor, credibility, trustworthiness strategies, and ethical considerations. In addition, a discussion of IPA's distinctive methodological components and the appropriateness of this approach for the study was shared.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Chapter Four introduces the study participants, their demographic information and school counseling supervision background, details about each participant's interview, and an overview of the findings using the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach (Smith et al. 2009). This research study aimed to uncover the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors (SCS). Within this chapter, the interviews with ten school counseling supervisors (SCS), half identified as district-level school counseling supervisors (DLSCS), who supervise school counselors across the district, and half identified as school building level school counseling supervisors (SBLSCS), who supervise school counselors in the same building, are presented.

The findings presented in this chapter reflect responses to the overarching research question, "What are the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors?" Through IPA, emergent themes, cluster themes, subthemes, and five superordinate themes were identified across all the interviews to illustrate how SCS make sense of their clinical supervision experiences (see Figure 5; Example of Cluster theme(s) and Subtheme(s) creating Superordinate Themes). The superordinate themes anchor the findings of this study (see Figure 6; School Counseling Supervisors Clinical Supervision Experience Superordinate Themes). These include (1) professional preparation (PP) (subthemes: academic preparation as a school counselor and intentional professional learning experiences), (2) professional identity (PI), (3) professional self-efficacy (PSE), (4) professional challenges (PC; subthemes: macro – COVID/pandemic; micro- role expectations, mental health; socio-political influences – social-emotional learning), and

(5) professional quality of life (PQL; subthemes: job satisfaction, compensation, and counselor wellness). The superordinate themes and subthemes, significant findings, and participants' quotes are discussed.

Data Collection Procedures

After securing IRB approval, data collection and analysis procedures were conducted. Figure 4 depicts the data collection and analysis process performed by the researcher. Demographic and supervision experience background information was collected and analyzed from ten eligible participants. All participants completed all four parts of the study: (1) demographic and supervision background information survey; (2) semi-structured, in-depth interview; (3) member checks of their interview transcription; and (4) follow-up interview. A sample size of ten participants was reasonable based on the contemporary literature surrounding IPA (Smith et al. 2009; Smith 2011). Data were collected over two months. After completing the survey and initial interview, participants were offered one \$10 electronic gift card of their choice (i.e., ACA Bookstore, ASCA Bookstore, Amazon, Starbucks). Eight participants chose to receive compensation. All participants were offered a link to a School Counseling Clinical Supervision Repository with information and resources.

Description of the Participants

Brief descriptions of each participant are provided to give an overview of their demographic characteristics, school counseling and supervision background, school district type, Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) region, licensure and certifications, and affiliation with professional organizations. Participants selected

pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality. Based on the information provided by the participants regarding their role title at the district and school-building levels (e.g., coordinator, department chair, director, and supervisor), the term school counseling supervisor (SCS) is used and includes all participants' role titles.

Participants voluntarily shared their clinical supervision experiences, and their demographic information and characteristics are summarized in Table 1. Most participants identified as female and one identified as male, although the racial backgrounds were more diverse; six females identified as White, three females identified as African American/Black, and one male identified as White. The participants worked in rural, suburban, and urban districts, with the majority working in suburban school districts and one in an urban school district. Participants supervised school counselors working in grade-level K to 12. The participants' ages ranged from 27 years to 49 years. All participants are employed full-time and represent five of the eight regions identified by Virginia's Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

All participants are licensed school counselors in Virginia, supervise one or more school counselors in their school district, and have three or more years of experience as school counselors. The participants had an average of 12.3 years of experience as a school counselors, ranging from three to 21 years. On average, the participants had three and half years of experience as a SCS with a range from zero years of experience to 11 years. Half of the participants have zero to two years of experience as a SCS and have only served as SCS during COVID. Half of the participants have three or more years' experience, including pre-pandemic experience. Two participants supervise more than 100 school counselors K-12. On average, eight participants supervise over six school

counselors ranging from two to sixteen. Five participants are district-level SCS (DLSCS), and five are school building level SCS (SBLSCS). One SCS has a dual role as a DLSCS and practicing school counselor. One participant is pursuing a doctorate in counselor education and supervision. One participant is completing their education administration leadership degree, and one has completed their educational administration endorsement. Table 1 presents a summary of the key demographics of the participants. The majority of participants indicated they are members of a professional counseling organization (e.g., VCA, VSCA, ASCA).

Table 1
Participant Summary

Participant	DLSCS/SBLSCS	Grade-Level	SC Years of Experience	SCS Years of Experience	Number of SC Supervise	School Type
Grace	DLSCS	K to 12	10	2	>100	Suburban
Isabel	DLSCS	K to 12	17	5	15	Rural
Denise	DLSCS	K to 12	21	0	>100	Suburban
Savannah	SBLSCS	6 to 8	14	11	2	Suburban
Amy	DLSCS	K to 5	20	2	8	Rural
Nugget	SBLSCS	6 to 8	15	7	2	Urban
Klein	SBLSCS	6 to 8	6	1	3	Suburban
Ciara	SBLSCS	6 to 8	3	3	2	Suburban
Renee	DLSCS	K to 5	10	1	16	Suburban
Amanda	SBLSCS	9 to 12	7	3	3	Suburban

Note. VDOE = Virginia Department of Education; SC = School Counselor; SCS = School Counseling Supervisor;
DLSCS = District Level SCS; SBLSCS = School Building Level SCS

Grace

Grace has three to five years as a SCS and supervises over 100 school counselors for grade levels K-12 in a suburban school district in VDOE Region B. She is a Caucasian American female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans eight to fifteen years. Grace is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as a licensed professional counselor (LPC) or approved clinical supervisor (ACS). She is a member of several professional school counseling organizations. Grace participates in leadership, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in performing her role as a district-level school counseling supervisor.

Isabel

Isabel has zero to two years as SCS and supervises six to fifteen school counselors for grades K-12 in a rural school district in VDOE Region A. She is a White American female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans 16 to 23 years. Isabel is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a member of several professional school counseling organizations. Isabel chooses to participate in leadership, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in performing her role as a district-level school counseling supervisor.

Denise

Denise has zero to two years of experience as a SCS and supervises over 100 school counselors for grade levels K-12 in a suburban school district located in VDOE Region D. She is a Black, African -American female who is 27-49 years of age. Her

experience as a school counselor spans 16 to 23 years. Denise is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a member of several professional school counseling organizations. Denise chooses to participate in leadership, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in performing her role as a district-level school counseling supervisor.

Savannah

Savannah has nine to eleven years as a SCS and supervises one to five school counselors for grade levels 6-8 in a suburban school district located in VDOE Region D. She is a Black, Non-Hispanic female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans eight to fifteen years. Savannah is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She did not indicate she is a member of any professional school counseling organizations. Savannah chooses to participate in leadership, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in performing her role as the school building level school counseling supervisor.

Amy

Amy has zero to two years of experience as a SCS and supervises six to fifteen school counselors for grade levels K-12 in a rural school district in VDOE Region A. She is a white female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans 16 to 23 years. Amy is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a member of several professional school counseling organizations. Amy chooses to participate in leadership, mentorship, and professional development

opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in performing her role as a district-level school counseling supervisor and serves as a full-time school counselor.

Nugget

Nugget has six to eight years of experience as a SCS and supervises one to five school counselors for grade levels 6-8 in an urban school district in VDOE Region E. She is an African American female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans eight to 15 years. Nugget is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a doctoral candidate in counselor education and supervision and a member of several professional school counseling organizations. Nugget chooses to participate in leadership positions, mentorships, and professional development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills in performing her role as a school building level school counseling supervisor.

Klein

Klein has zero to two years of experience as a SCS and supervises one to five school counselors for grade levels 6-8 in a suburban school district located in VDOE Region D. He is a Caucasian, White male who is 27-49 years of age. His experience as a school counselor is zero to seven years. Klein is a licensed school counselor who holds an administration and supervision endorsement, however, he does not have a license as an LPC or ACS. He is a member of several school counseling professional organizations. Klein chooses to participate in leadership positions, mentorships, and professional development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills performing his role as a school building level school counseling supervisor.

Ciara

Ciara has three to five years' experience as a SCS and supervises one to five school counselors for grade levels 6-8 in a suburban school district in VDOE Region C. She is a European American who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans zero to seven years. Ciara is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a member of several school counseling organizations. Ciara chooses to participate in leadership positions and professional development opportunities as a school building level school counseling supervisor.

Renee

Renee has zero to two years of experience as a SCS and supervises sixteen to thirty grade levels K-5 school counselors in a suburban school district in VDOE Region C. She is a White female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans eight to fifteen years. Renee is a licensed school counselor and does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a member of several school counseling organizations. Renee chooses to participate in leadership positions, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to support her role as a district-level school counseling supervisor.

Amanda

Amanda has three to five years' experience as SCS and supervises one to five grade levels 9-12 school counselors in a suburban district in VDOE Region B. She is a White European female who is 27-49 years of age. Her experience as a school counselor spans zero to seven years. Amanda is a licensed school counselor working on her educational administration and supervision degree, however, she does not hold a license as an LPC or ACS. She is a member of several school counseling leadership

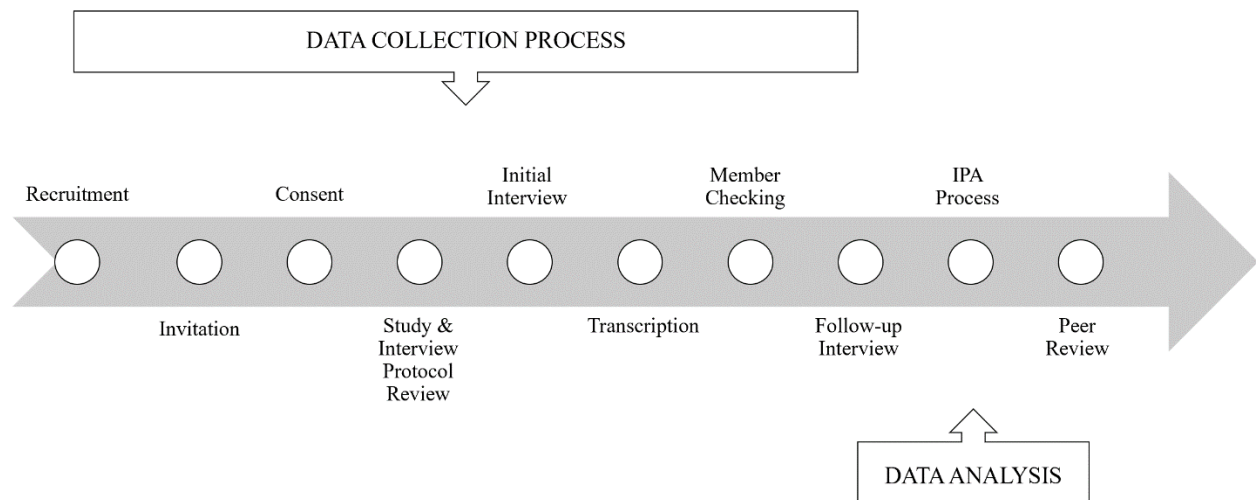
organizations. Amanda chooses to participate in leadership positions, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to support her role as a school building level school counseling supervisor.

Data Collection and Analysis Process

Figure 4 depicts the data collection process, including recruitment, invitation, consent, protocol review, initial interview, transcription, member checking, and the follow-up interview as discussed in Chapter Three’s IPA methodology approach. Also, Figure 4 includes the IPA process and peer-review data analysis process. More detailed information on the data analysis is discussed.

Figure 4

Data Collection and IPA Analysis Process



IPA Data Analysis

Smith and colleagues (2009) developed an interpretative phenomenological analysis approach that includes a comprehensive six-step process for data analysis. This process involves reading and rereading the transcripts, taking initial notes, developing

emergent themes, examining connections across emergent themes, doing the same for each case, and then looking for patterns across cases (see Figure 4). The researcher incorporated the six-step process to analyze participants' stories with the intent to understand and make sense of their experiences and perceptions. Also, the researcher utilized Smith's (2011) IPA Evaluation Guide to maintain methodological cohesion.

Step one encompassed reading and rereading each transcript. First, the researcher listened to the audio recording while reading the digital transcript. Next, the researcher immersed themselves in the data by reading and rereading the printed transcript and placing a clean copy of the interview guide and the research questions imposed on the transcript to reference when examining the participants' transcription.

Step two involved initial noting conceptual and exploratory thoughts and ideas captured in words and/or phrases to identify emergent themes. The researcher used the right margins of the transcription document to record notes with comment boxes of exploratory comments.

Step three focused on developing emergent themes based on participants' transcripts. For example, the researcher designated knowledge and experience as a holistic code and highlighted "years of experience," "site supervisor," and "mentorship" as corresponding in-vivo codes to professional schema and highlighted emergent themes in green. Also, text boxes in the left margins were used to capture meaning related to the research questions highlighted in turquoise.

Step four involved searching for connections across emergent themes within one transcript. The researcher will highlight three types of connections across emergent themes: abstraction, polarization, and numeration; however, additional types of

connections were examined throughout the transcripts. For example, abstraction, a “basic form of identifying patterns between emergent themes” (Smith et al. 2009, p. 9), such as leadership and knowledge, can be seen with excerpts from a SCS’ professional preparation theme of being a “counselor leader.” One participant stated she was prepared for her role as a SCS by participating in “any leadership opportunity [she] could get; a mentor for new school counselors; site supervisor for university students; and part of different committees to look; review curriculum or create curriculum.” A second connection amongst emergent themes, polarization, is opposing relationships between themes, focusing on differences rather than similarities (Smith et al. 2009). Another participant, Isabel, shared an example of polarization as part of the professional preparation theme where she indicated she had no time for reflection and yet reported,

So, I haven't had a whole lot of time for reflection, unfortunately. One of the thoughts I had, though, that I think impacts, I don't know, probably everybody, but this imposter syndrome, self-questioning, what do I have to offer that others don't, that kind of thing. And just wrestling with that...and I just have to keep reminding myself I am enough because I feel like I pour my heart and soul into my work every day. And I really believe that I want to be a change agent in my role, in helping and supporting the school counselors and other staff in our buildings.

The final example type of emergent connection to be discussed is numeration.

Numeration is the frequency with which a theme appears throughout a transcript and can indicate its importance (Smith et al. 2009). An example of numeration from a participant, Ciara, related to the professional preparation theme is,

So, my principal expects me to just get stuff done, because she is the real supervisor, she's not helping me with her power of like, "I'm your legit supervisor. So, you're going to listen to me because I'm the principal. And going to do what I tell you to do, or we're going to have a different conversation." I think I'm missing that power and I don't want to have that power. But I'm missing my counselors getting that power and told to them like, "We are not an island. You do have people watching you, and you need to figure it out." So district level, great, building level could be better.

The word "power" is repeated four times in this excerpt and three times in a follow-up comment. The frequency can indicate importance when analyzing the transcripts and identifying emergent themes.

The researcher recorded connections between emergent themes on the final page of the transcript. These emergent themes were then copied and pasted to a master excel spreadsheet. Step five required moving to the next case after steps one through four were completed. The researcher collaborated with the first peer reviewer to review half of the transcripts to identify emergent, cluster, and sub-themes.

Step six examined patterns across all the transcripts. The emergent themes from each transcript were copied and pasted into an Excel spreadsheet with each interview and research question listed at the top of the document. The researcher highlighted keywords and phrases in red to identify themes across participants and recurrent themes. Each theme corresponded with each interview question and research question across participants. In addition to the first peer reviewer assisting in identifying emergent themes, cluster themes, sub-themes, and superordinate themes, a second peer reviewer

reviewed the master table Excel spreadsheet to identify sub-themes and superordinate themes.

Also, the researcher examined convergent and divergent themes across transcripts and documented them on the spreadsheet. An example of a convergent theme across participants when asked, “What was most meaningful about clinical supervision as a school counselor? All participants responded with words such as “feedback,” “validation,” “consultation,” and “collaboration.” These words were highlighted in red. In contrast, an example of a more divergent theme was when participants were asked, “What is the most challenging aspect of clinical supervision?” participants responded with words like “lack of time” as the most challenging aspect of clinical supervision along with “no SCS with a background in school counseling,” “lack of consistency in receiving clinical supervision,” “being the only school counselor in a building,” and “the SCS not knowing the school parents for each building.” These distinctive experiences reported by the participants illustrate each participant's unique experience.

Furthermore, after analysis of the transcripts and identifying the superordinate themes, the researcher and peer reviewers identified intersectionality with the superordinate themes. The intersectionality of the superordinate themes is illustrated in Figure 6 and presents the superordinate theme findings. In addition, the order of the superordinate themes emerged due to the participants' detailed responses to the interview questions. The researcher aims to use four to five excerpts from participants that demonstrate convergent or divergent aspects of each superordinate theme discussed and recommended for IPA research papers (Smith, 2011). The researcher intentionally presents excerpts from participants' transcripts to have representation from all

participants throughout the chapter and recorded tally marks next to each participant's name in journal note documents.

Figure 5

Example of Cluster theme(s) and Subtheme(s) creating Superordinate Themes

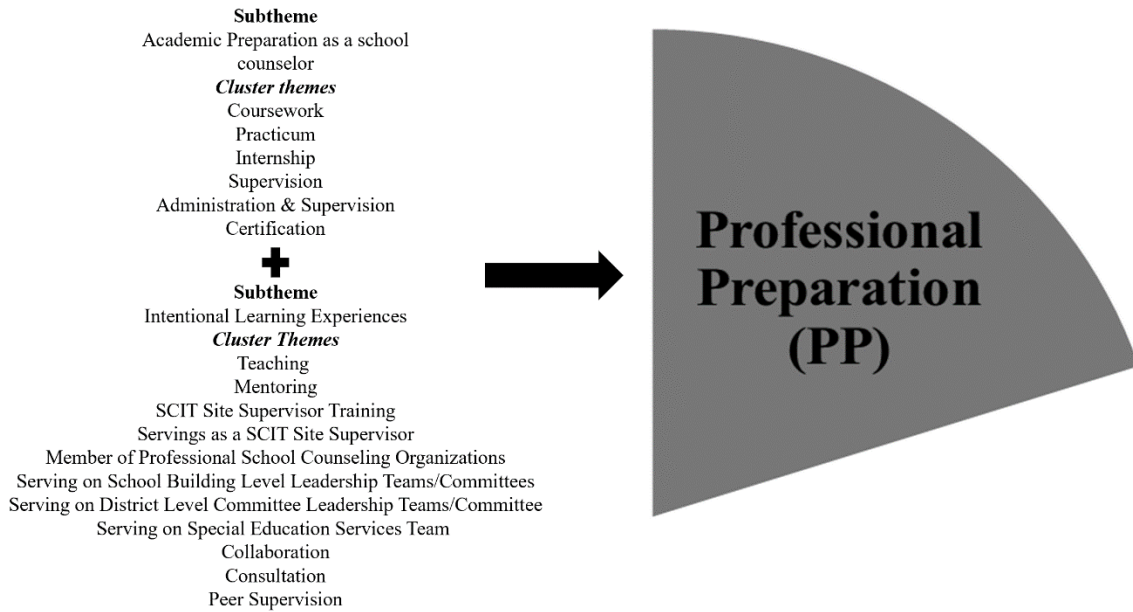


Figure 6

Intersectionality of Superordinate Themes



Research Questions

Research Question One

Research Question One was “What are the clinical supervision expectations of SCS?” All participants were asked questions about their clinical supervision experiences post master’s degree. The expectations of school counseling supervisors were convergent, with all indicating they had an educational background in school counseling. The salient themes and subthemes that emerged from participants related to their role's expectations were identified as professional preparation (subthemes: academic preparation as a school counselor and intentional professional learning experiences), professional identity, professional challenges (subthemes: macro, micro, sociopolitical), and professional quality of life (subthemes: compensation, job satisfaction, school counselor wellness). Each superordinate theme and sub-theme is discussed.

Theme One: Professional Preparation

The initial superordinate theme that emerged was professional preparation. Through the participants’ interviews and responses to the demographic survey, all participants in this study indicated training in school counseling was necessary for their role as a licensed school counselors in Virginia. It is important to note that there is no job description or expectations for SCS licensure listed in the VDOE Standards of Quality for Accreditation (SQA) for SCS (VDOE, 2022). The professional preparation theme has two subthemes: academic preparation as a school counselor and intentional professional learning experiences. Each subtheme is explored.

Academic preparation as a school counselor. Academic preparation as a school counselor includes clusters of themes including coursework, practicum, internship, and

supervision refers to the training school counselors receive in a master's degree program with coursework, practicum, and internships to develop the foundational knowledge and skills to serve as a school counselor, as well as continued professional development and membership in professional counseling organizations. Regarding role expectations and requirements for SCS, Isabel stated, "Well, they specified someone with a master's in school counseling, but I think they really wanted someone with also ed leadership certification or a degree, which I did not have." Denise shared, "My current position is considered central office administration, and so basically, you had to have prior school counseling experience. And that's actually a new piece that they added because the prior person in my position was an administrator, but was not a school counselor." Ciara was reflective and reported, "I think they're the same as a normal counselor, at least from what I gathered from the interview. It's just they made sure that I was going to be okay with those extra duties. I had to be in the admin meetings. I was on the admin team and leadership meetings. Renee added, "So, the qualifications clearly were a master's degree and years of experience, also leadership potential, being able to know the role, advocate, being able to be an advocate." Finally, Amanda shared, "So, the requirement on the job description is that I believe. But to become a director, you need the masters in school counseling, and then I believe it's three to five years of high school counseling experience." Several participants reported that their role has and continues to evolve while in the position. Isabel shared,

So, my current position is supervisor of school counseling, and that has evolved during the time I've been employed. Well, I feel like, to be honest, currently, it's very difficult to nail down my role because it's really all hands-on deck. We're

having a lot of staffing shortages. I've been pulled to substitute in classrooms recently, that kind of thing.

Isabel added that the title of her position has transformed with her advocating for the removal of non-counseling tasks such as academic test coordination. Two other participants shared they have been tasked to provide coverage in school buildings due to staff shortages as a result of the pandemic. Also, one participant stated her position is new to her division, and the responsibilities are being developed. Based on the responses of the participants, all identified specific credentials to serve as a SCS, however, there is not a particular standard between districts or the state level. The expectations and qualifications for most SCS also include experience as a school counselor before attaining a supervisor role. For school counselors who complete a CACREP program, there are specific knowledge and skills essential as a school counselor, however, there are no specific requirements at the master's level for SCS (CACREP, 2016). Also, there are particular licensure requirements by the VDOE (2022) for school counselors, however, there are no listed requirements for SCS at the state level.

Intentional professional learning experiences. Intentional professional learning experiences include cluster themes of teaching, mentoring, SCIT site supervisor, collaboration, consultation, and peer supervision. This subtheme refers to the experience of being a school counselor post master's degree and self-motivated to seek additional knowledge to build skills as a SCS and see themselves as an advocate for the profession and a counselor leader. The majority (n =9) of participants reported on their demographic survey they had three or more years as a school counselor before becoming a SCS (see Table 1). Furthermore, the same majority indicated they volunteered and participated in

counselor leadership roles such as mentor, site supervisor for school counselors in training, and served on leadership teams (district or school building). Also, three of the participants served as teachers before getting their degree in school counseling, such as Savannah, who reported, “So I initially started off as a teacher, I was a teacher for 13 years and decided to go back, and of course, as a teacher you also many times serve the role as counselor, so I decided to go back and get my master's in school counseling.” Another participant example, Nugget expressed her “desire” to become a SCS as depicted in her statement,

“So, mostly driven by a desire to be in that position. So, in my previous school counseling positions, I remember my first school counseling position, and I observed what the [supervisor] at the time was doing. And I always felt like I can totally do that.”

Several participants' experiences as site supervisors, mentors, serving as a member of leadership teams and presenting at conferences prepared them for their role as a SCS. As supported by Renee, who stated,

I had multiple interns. So, every year I had at least one or two interns that I would supervise. I was also the mentor for new counselors that were hired. And then, if there was a new counselor to the division, I would mentor them and meet with them. About every two weeks, we would meet, kind of help them navigate the process because we're all split up across the division. I had presented at VSCA. I had presented at ASCA VSCA. I was a member of the division's school safety committee. I was a member of the division's mental health advisory committee.

Two participants shared they were motivated to pursue additional training to prepare them for their role as a SCS because of their experience receiving supervision. Amanda shared that her motivation to earn another degree in administrative leadership was because she was supervised by an administrator who did not “understand” the school counselor's role. She was driven to become a supervisor who genuinely understood the multidimensional aspects of a school counselor and wanted to provide appropriate support. Amanda shared,

Honestly, I would say besides my three years as a high school counselor, that was very valuable, and I was in a school where we were dealing with a lot of dysregulation, and then also I would say as well, I would give credit to the leaders who were not the best leaders, because I'm like, "I don't want to be like you." And that's what, unfortunately, but that's what kind of drove me to pursue my admin degree in the sense that I was like, "Well, I have seen things not go well. So let me try to be more like the leaders that are empathetic and seem like a human."

Klein, who has completed his administrator endorsement, shared that his intrinsic motivation to learn “anything” and “everything” to support students and school counselors was fostered by opportunities to participate in supervisory tasks. Klein shared,

I just always asked if I could be a part of stuff, anything I hadn't experienced, I wanted to be a part of. And I think I always kind of knew that eventually, I wanted to be in this leadership role, so again, it just, it helped. I completed my administrative program. And due to my position, a lot of the time, I was able to substitute teacher feedback with counselor feedback. So, I say nothing official,

but actually, through an administrative program, I did receive that. It just wasn't counseling specific.

However, he also points out that his program was designed for administrators supervising teachers, not school counselors who plan to serve as school counseling supervisors.

Based on the responses from participants, they appear to adapt their role as a SCS to accommodate the nuanced roles and responsibilities of the SC and school administrators.

Theme Two: Professional Identity

Professional identity has been defined in the counseling profession as the intersectionality between the structure of a role and the attitude changes that influence one's self-conceptualization (Brott & Myers, 1999). Participants demonstrate how they see themselves based on the tasks they are expected to perform. All the participants shared their position titles and summarized their roles and responsibilities from how they conceptualized their position. Grace shared, "I am a [school counseling supervisor], and my role really is the scope of K-12, supporting school counselors with comprehensive programming, with professional development, with any crisis management, so, consultation, collaboration, yeah, I think. I hit the highlights." Furthermore, three of the participants work in middle schools and supervise the SC in their building, however, some of the participants have specific student caseloads, as evidenced by Klein, who shared,

My official title is school counseling [supervisor]. So, within the school that I work at, it is a middle school, six through eight. I oversee the school counseling department as a whole. So, there are three additional school counselors in addition to myself, they each have a whole grade level. And then again, I oversee them and

offer support with any unique situations. I also oversee all of our students with 504 Plans. So, the students specifically are still on each counselor's caseload, but I create and work with their 504 Plans specifically.

To demonstrate the expectations of SCS, one participant supervises only high school counselors. At the same time, one participant, the elementary lead DLSCS, is also a practicing elementary SC. Amy shared,

So, I'm the school counseling [supervisor] for [DIVISION NAME] schools, but I take the lead in elementary. I'm also a counselor at a school. So, yeah, I have a caseload of students at an elementary school. So, I think they recognize that I can't do all of that. Yeah. So, I'm continuing what I was doing, doing a little bit more secondary, but not fully taking on the lead role for the secondary.

Interestingly, opposing views emerged between two participants who viewed the title of their role differently. One participant, Amanda, shared a unique perspective of not preferring her role title of supervisor versus Ciara, who liked the title of supervisor.

Amanda stated,

With the title [supervisor]-- it comes across as very formal to me and the school counselor side of me strives to be relatable and approachable, and the word [supervisor] connotes power and being in charge, etc., which are not necessarily bad, but I think of my role as a [supervisor] as leading alongside others, rather than above.

Whereas Ciara shared her preference for the job title and shared, “[Supervisor] of school counseling for insert middle school here, or, counseling [supervisor]. Sometimes it's nice

to have the [supervisor] first because it's all official, like [supervisor].” These excerpts also intersect with another emergent theme of professional identity.

All the DLSCS participants reported their roles and responsibilities have evolved. Two DLSCS shared details about their roles are detailed. Grace shared how her time is spent providing programmatic, clinical, and administrative supervision:

Yeah. So, really to help support and oversee the comprehensive school counseling and programming for each school in our district. So that can include professional development, that can include one-on-one meetings and consultations with either one school counselor or a whole team of school counselors. Additionally, consultation takes a significant portion of my day. So, a lot of school counselors to maybe feel like their supervision at their school is not adequate for the student situation that they're facing. So an example might be self-harm or a CPS issue. Those are like the top ones. You might also see tasks that were much more specific, like monthly newsletters or holding a specific meeting every month, or informing our stakeholders on X, Y, and Z.

Denise disclosed, in detail, the role and the responsibilities by reading the job description, Supervising all K-12 school counseling programs, developing curriculum, monitor four-year graduation plans, make school visits, provide follow-up consultation, attend school [district] and other professional meetings, [train and manage] school counselors, serve as a liaison for community organizations, and [write and monitor] grant proposals.

This job description provides more details than what the participant shared in an her overview of her role,

Basically, my job is to supervise all of the school counselors in my district. And so that's from the elementary, middle, and high. And so, I am basically the go-between the counselors and my direct supervisor. So, I hold monthly meetings with my high school directors, middle school directors. And then we just now, recently, that was one of the things I got to implement, elementary leads.

Professional development, so I have trainings that I do with not just the directors, but, with all of the school counselors.

Although there was a detailed account of the job description, the use of the term “clinical” supervision was not stated by the participant when reading the job description. Although “supervising all K-12 school counseling programs” was stated initially, it says “programs,” not school counselors. Furthermore, none of the participants initially indicated that they provided “clinical” supervision until asked during the interview process.

All the SBLSCS participants described their role as overseeing the school counseling department and school counselors (one to five), implementing a comprehensive school counseling program (CSCP), coordinating department meetings, serving as a liaison between administration (building and district), and the department as well as having a caseload of students (50 to 350). All SBLSCS are evaluated by their principal. Four of the SBLSCS do not assess the performance of the school counselors. One participant does evaluate school counselors.

Nugget provided an overview of her administrative, programmatic, and clinical supervision responsibilities as

Part of my responsibilities are to just oversee the flow of the school counseling program in the development of a comprehensive program. I have two additional school counselors who I work with, and we split the grade level, so we're in a middle school.

She further described her role and added,

As [a supervisor], my job really is to just supervise overall the flow, like I said, of the department itself, make sure we are meeting our expected goals as a team: anything that comes down from administration. Also, making sure that we are responding effectively to anything that comes down from the School Board Office that needs to be done within our school, coordinate all of team meetings, create agendas, keeps minutes for team meetings and make sure information is communicated with the faculty on behalf of the department.

In addition, she stated,

Other parts of my [supervisor] position is just assisting with making sure that students' grades are completed so that we could take care of report card printing and providing support to my team on cases, circumstances, situation that may arise with particular students and/or parents and/or faculty members as well.

Another experience shared by a participant is evaluation and requesting a caseload. None of the other participants disclosed that they evaluate the school counselors they supervise or requested a caseload. Amanda stated,

So, I supervise and evaluate for licensed high school counselors. So yeah, I do have a caseload, which I asked for. I have one letter and I wanted that because that's my favorite part of the job, but so I'm also still, I'm a [supervisor], but I'm a

school counselor and I always tell students, "I'm here for all of the children, no matter what your last name is." But yeah, so that's my role here.

Overall, when participants were asked to describe their role and responsibilities as SCS, several participants indicated their role included "supervising" school counselors, however, no specific indication of "clinical" supervision was shared. Some participants used the term "consultation" when describing the services they provide to school counselors. Research has identified the term "consultation" in a conceptual model developed by Luke and Bernard (2006) as a recognized role of the school counseling site supervisor. All participants shared they discuss student cases occasionally, however, based on the descriptions by most participants, only one stated she includes case discussion specifically on her meeting agenda to provide structured clinical supervision. Nugget reported,

So on my agenda, I try to make sure I have a line item that says cases or something like that, or anything else that we need to add, because I want them to have an opportunity to openly share about their experiences because what I notice at the school that I'm working at now is that we have a lot of trauma, a lot of trauma with our students and with our staff in the community the department meetings were administrative in nature.

Although most participants may have questioned whether or not they provide clinical supervision to school counselors, most participants described a form of clinical supervision as defined by Luke and Bernard (SCSM, 2006).

Theme Three: Professional Self-Efficacy

All participants described a continuum of a certain level of self-confidence to pursue a SCS position. Whether through their school counseling academic training, self-motivation to pursue leadership opportunities, or identified leadership characteristics by school administrators, a range of self-assessed competence was noted during the interviews. Two participants used the term “imposter syndrome” when reflecting on their role as a SCS and identified their competence within the same excerpt. Isabel disclosed,

One of the thoughts I had though, that I think impacts, I don't know, probably everybody, but this imposter syndrome, self-questioning, what do I have to offer that others don't, that kind of thing. And just wrestling with that and I just have to keep reminding myself I am enough, because I feel like I pour my heart and soul into my work every day. And I really believe that I want to be a change agent in my role, in helping and supporting the school counselors and other staff in our buildings.

Ciara had a similar transformation within the same thought process where she shared,

I wouldn't call it clinical, just personally, from me. It might be imposter syndrome, but I don't feel like I have the credentials for that. But I do.

The process of self-questioning and self-doubt was followed by acknowledging self-identified competence and skills. Renee reflected and shared her belief that the school counselors she supervises feel “supported,” feel like they have an “advocate,” and have a “consistent person.” Nugget elaborated that she “feels good about” providing a consistent and intentional level of supervision that focuses on student needs and providing alternative perspectives and resources to support students. Finally, Amanda shared her growth as a leader and being “cognizant” and “humble” with not knowing the answer to

all the questions and when to seek consultation and collaboration with others. She added that during supervision sessions, she “[empowers] [the school counselors], and I want them to make decisions on their own.” Participants describe a continuum of self-confidence in their role that ranges from feeling in control to compliance to activities that are not appropriate.

Theme Four: Professional Challenges

Professional challenges were identified in terms of the macro (world and district level), micro (school building level), and socio-political (state level) challenges described by the participants. Related to expectations, all the participants described their school counseling supervisor role and responsibilities with similarities.

Macro and Micro Challenges. Participants struggled to identify their job description with the district policy. One participant indicated that the broad depiction of the position did not capture the details of their role. Another participant shared that they often used their job description to help guide them in their role and added the job description is four pages long with detailed responsibilities. Several participants shared that the job description and performed duties can vary between districts (macro) and even within districts (micro). Although all participants provide supervision to school counselors, there are convergent and divergent aspects of the expectations of their role. For example, all participants reported they are expected to supervise school counselors or school counseling programs. Yet, clinical supervision is not used in the district or school building job description.

Furthermore, only one participant reported they are expected to evaluate the school counselors they supervise. All SBLSCS said being supervised by their school

building administrator, who does not have a school counseling or mental health services background. All DLSCS reported an administrator supervises them with experience in school administration, not school counseling or mental health services.

Sociopolitical Challenges. Another sub-theme identified was socio-political challenges. One participant raised concerns about how Virginia House Bill 829 would impact clinical supervision. Virginia HB 829 would allow school divisions to hire non-school counselors to serve as school counselors. Due to this bill, Grace wondered,

With the potential changes, LPCs may acquire positions as school counselors with provisional licensing. How will supervision work with LPCs who are used to routine supervision techniques? Furthermore, how will principals provide that supervision?

Another participant raised concerns about how SCS is to supervise school counselors and school counseling curriculum when there are concerns at the macro-level/sociopolitical regarding “inherently divisive” curriculum. Isabel elaborated,

There's such overlap and layering in terms of what's the difference between character education and social-emotional learning and lots of buzzwords and some that are frankly "triggers" in our current climate politically, like social-emotional learning, [and] equity.

The inconsistent expectations of SCS and the types of supervision they provide are challenged by the varying SCS expectations, non-uniformed job descriptions, guidance provided to districts and school buildings on the role and responsibilities of SCS, and the socio-political sign of the times.

Theme Five: Professional Quality of Life

The superordinate theme of professional quality of life emerged after the subthemes of compensation, job satisfaction, and counselor wellness were identified. Most participants indicated challenges in their role and how these challenges influence how they provide supervision to support school counselors. Stamm (2010) describes the professional quality of life "...is associated with characteristics of the work environment... the individual's personal characteristics and the individual's exposure to primary and secondary trauma in the work setting" (p. 10). Furthermore, Stamm (2010) identified compensation as an occupational factor influencing career-sustaining behaviors. As it relates to expectations, only two of the participants disclosed concerns about the compensation for the work they provide.

Compensation. All participants indicated on their demographic survey and confirmation of review of the information sheet that they are employed full-time in their district and with a full-time salary and benefits. Four participants reported they are compensated at a central administrator level, and one receives a stipend. The other participants' compensation varied. One participant said they receive a salary based as a school building administrator. Two participants reported they have an 11-month contract, however, they are not compensated for their duties as a SCS. They receive the same salary as a school counselor, but have an extended contract. Nugget stated,

"However, I am leaned on heavily in terms of holding my team members accountable for the work that they're supposed to do. So, while it's not a true job expectation in the job description, the administrative staff, the building principal do rely on me to hold them accountable for the tasks that need to be done."

Yet, she is not compensated for the expected work she provides. She went on to say,

I honestly don't think that there exists a real true delineation between the school counselor who is not the [supervisor] and the school counselor who is the [supervisor], other than I work 12 months, they work 11. So that extra month in the summer, I take care of all school counseling-related activities to include the master schedule.

Ciara added that as a SCS, there is “no difference” in her role, however, she has additional duties. She said initially, she received a stipend for her role, however, now, she does not receive any further compensation for her services. Amanda, another SCS, shared she is compensated on a school building administrator scale and stated, “Yeah. I am fortunate that I'm on an admin scale. It's not quite an assistant principal salary, but it's considered an administrative position, and then it also comes with that pay of the [supervisor] of school counseling.”

Denise, a SCS, shared that her position is a central office administrative role that requires her to report to her direct supervisor, who reports to the assistant superintendent. She is compensated at a central office administrator pay scale. She added, “And so I am basically the go-between the counselors and my direct supervisor, who is right under the assistant superintendent of student affairs.”

To summarize the responses from the participants, DLSCS participants are compensated at the central office pay scale, one SBLSCS participant is compensated at the SBL administrator level, one DLSCS participant receives a stipend and the other SBLSCS participants have extended contracts with no additional compensation. Although there are pay scales in each district, there are discrepancies between districts' payment for

tasks SCS provide. Several participants discussed these discrepancies are often driven by the funding provided to school districts and the resources available to fund positions. This challenge is another example of how some of the identified superordinate themes like the professional quality of life intersect with professional challenges because of the macro level of financial disproportionality between school districts and regions.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two was “What are the supervision experiences of SCS who received clinical supervision post master’s degree?” The themes that support this research question were professional preparation (subtheme: intentional professional learning experiences), professional identity, professional self-efficacy, professional challenges (subtheme: profession expectations), and professional quality of life (subtheme: job satisfaction).

Theme One: Professional Preparation

Intentional Professional Learning Experiences. All participants described receiving “sporadic,” “inconsistent,” and “non-structured” clinical supervision during their post-master’s experience as a school counselor. Several participants indicated they sought out clinical supervision to support their professional development. One participant reported they received formal clinical supervision during their first three years in one district; however, when they transferred to another district, clinical supervision was not offered in the same manner previously experienced. One participant reported that she was hired as a SCS right after she graduated and did not have an opportunity to participate in supervision as a school counselor. All participants indicated they desired regular clinical

supervision. Most participants preferred supervision provided by a supervisor with experience as a school counselor. Grace acknowledged the clinical supervision she received was “minimal.” Still, she did “seek out” clinical supervision because she “desired the knowledge from a school counselor” and “expert” rather than her principal, who did not have a background in school counseling. Grace added,

I felt very passionate about reaching out to someone with more school counseling expertise than I, which would typically be the specialist or supervisor. Then we would walk through a case together, and we would talk about the way I felt, the way I perceived my principal was feeling or what he was telling me regarding the case. And then, we would contemplate different strategies on how we might approach the situation with all of the knowledge that we both had.

Similarly, Nugget sought out supervision and does not recall any “structured” time supervision was provided and added that all of her supervision was “administrative.”

Isabel shared that clinical supervision was “lacking always” and “longed for an observation with some feedback.” Amy shared a unique experience from her first SC role and reported a very positive experience. She reflected,

So, when I first started out, my first year in 2001, I was in a totally different school division. And that school division, they actually had a full-time school counseling coordinator for elementary and one for secondary. So, it was a different type of division that I'm in now. They did provide a lot more real supervision. Definitely, my very beginning position was much more in line with what you learned about it, I guess.

Amanda shared her experience of no formal supervision and stated,

I didn't receive the formal clinical supervision in the sense that I felt I could talk about things [mental health concerns of students] with my principal. I felt like I could talk about things [direct and indirect counseling services] with the other counselors, and consulting and collaborating are my number one go-to thing. But I don't know that I necessarily was receiving clinical supervision in the sense of yeah.”

Interestingly, only one SCS remembers receiving “real” clinical supervision post-masters, and several reported they had to pursue clinical supervision independently. Furthermore, most participants indicated they sought peer support when they needed guidance.

Theme Two: Professional Identity

The majority of participants indicated they were supervised and evaluated by their school building administrators when they served as school counselors. Most participants indicated they also participated in professional development opportunities at the district level. Many participants disclosed “frustration” with the type of training and supervision they received because most professional learning opportunities were geared toward classroom teachers, not specific training related to the school counselor's role. All the participants reported that they had to advocate and educate school administrators on the role of the school counselors. Many participants communicated their perceptions of discrepancies between their understanding of their roles and responsibilities and how school administrators viewed their roles. Several participants indicated they preferred consulting with peers rather than their principals because colleagues better understand the role.

Amy shared that in her first three years as a school counselor, she participated in “real” supervision; however, after transferring to a different district, she stated,

None of the divisions I've worked in had any of that. It's more, "You have a situation, and we call each other and consult," best practices. Sometimes I have principals call me about different situations, and we just consult. So, we definitely have collaboration and consulting, just not the formal supervision process that I experienced my first three years of being a school counselor.

Renee also shared how she valued the time to meet with other school counselors who understood the role, and she could “consult” to share ideas. Renee disclosed,

And we always had an opportunity in those [district level meetings] too. If you had a case that you wanted to bring, we would staff it among the counselors that were there. We did have a very informal, close-knit group where it was like, "Hey, this person is really good in this area, this person has expertise in grief, and this person has. We kind of had those niches within our group that we relied on, but nothing formal.

Nugget shared her experience of not being evaluated by an administrator with a background in school counseling. She shared from her school counseling clinical supervision experience, “...And even when there was the evaluative piece of supervision, certainly not provided by another school counselor [as a SCS].”

Klein shared a different perspective by acknowledging he did not receive formal clinical supervision, however, the mentoring he received was very beneficial and supported his understanding of the role and responsibilities of the position. He said,

So, I was very fortunate that even though it wasn't official clinical supervision, but I had a really, really knowledgeable mentor that I was able to go to as a school counselor, because my building administration was fantastic, but they were never a counselor. So, it was a lot of check-ins I guess, again, very unofficial.

The discrepancies as to what defines clinical supervision and who provides it are evident in the participants' responses. Most participants indicated that colleagues and peers served as consultants and helped supervise each other.

Theme Three: Professional Self-Efficacy

School counselors-in-training participate in coursework to learn counseling theories and techniques, practice skill development through practicum and internship training, and participate in regular, weekly, structured clinical supervision (CACREP, 2016). These strategies also influence the SCITs' professional identity as a SC (Brott & Myers, 1999). Research also demonstrates that clinical supervision improves school counselors' self-efficacy (Bledsoe, 2021; Tang, 2020). Yet, the inconsistency and sporadic nature of receiving structured supervision fosters feelings of “frustration” and requires school counselors to take time to find appropriate supervision. Some participants describe positive emotions, such as Klein, who reported feeling “lucky” with his colleague's supervision. Although it was not formal clinical supervision, he stated,

“So I don't think it was official clinical supervision, but it was as close as I was going to get in the district that I was in. And thinking back to being a first-year counselor, you're kind of just, everything you have a question about. It's just, not that you're not confident, but when you've got 200 kids that are relying on you, you've got a lot of questions.”

Klein's perspective demonstrates that clinical supervision helps school counselors with their self-confidence.

Other participants reported that peer supervision was the most meaningful aspect of a school counselor and helped them feel understood and supported. Amy shared that peers were often seen as “experts” in a particular “niche” and could provide support. Each participant appears to have a skill set as a school counselor, such as serving as a leader (mentor & site supervisor) or advocate or were identified by school administrators to have the characteristics to serve as a SCS. Several participants reported that they were selected to become a SCS. Nugget shared,

So before coming to this particular school, I served as [Supervisor] of School Counseling for a high school and worked with the school counseling, the division coordinator supervisor at that previous school district. She moved to the district that we're in now and reached out because she knew I had been looking for new opportunities. Reached out and said, "Hey, I have this position. Are you interested?" "Absolutely."

Another participant shared similar experiences of a school administrator trusting the skills of the school counselor to serve as a SCS and encouraged them to apply for the position, and they were selected. Renee stated that she “advocated” for a SCS role, which was created two years later. She shared, “So again, I had kind of advocated for, "Have we ever considered this position?" So then, when it came about, I applied and was lucky enough to secure it.”

Before becoming SCS, all participants demonstrated leadership and advocacy qualities, as evidenced by Renee, who shared her advocating for the position, and Denise was selected by her administrator. Denise shared,

I was voluntold, I guess, into becoming the counseling [supervisor]. Our [supervisor] moved, and so my principal came to me and asked me would I step up and do it. In retrospect, I'm really glad I did because I was able to really get in and make good changes. And so, I became the counseling director at my high school, and I did that for six years.

Savannah also added,

One of the administrators at the high school, one of the assistant principals, was given the position or hired as a position of principal of a middle school. And he actually asked me to go with him to serve as the director of the middle school that he was going to because he was a new administrator, and he needed a director. And so, since we had worked together at the high school, he asked me to go, which was interesting because I felt like I had never done middle school, I had never been a director, but it was a learning process for both of us. And I kind of think that's kind of how he took it like, "Well, it'll be a learning process for both of us at the same time." But it was a good collaboration.

The range of self-confidence of the participants as school counselors concerning the clinical supervision they received varied among the participants. Some participants felt confident and other participants needed support and guidance. Amanda shared, "And I can remember my first year needing a lot of validation, not personal, but in that, I was doing the right thing. I was like, "Is this the right thing to do?" I was hypersensitive."

Some participants who served as school counselors and had a positive working alliance with their supervisors chose to take the role of SCS after being encouraged and supported. Other participants needed additional time and training to take on a supervisory role.

Theme Four: Professional Challenges

Professional Expectations. The vast majority of participants reported that they received non-structured clinical supervision and participated in monthly professional learning that may or may not have included time to discuss cases. When asked if there was a district policy on support for clinical supervision, several reported that their district provided mentorship; however, all sought supervision support from peers.

A majority of SCS reported that the most meaningful aspect of clinical supervision was receiving “feedback,” feeling “validated,” and receiving support from supervisors and/or peers. Participants describe the main challenge with receiving clinical supervision as “lack of time.” All participants reported that having “time” to discuss and review cases was the most challenging either because of the other administrative and/or programmatic tasks that needed to be addressed or because there was no supervisor with the school counseling training.

Furthermore, participants like Grace shared they desired supervision from a professional school counselor. As Grace put it: “...[a] counseling expert to be able to tell me if I was on the right track, with, you know, a case that I felt pretty passionate about.” A paramount concern presented by participants was the supervisors' knowledge of the school counseling role. Some participants added that although they learned about theories and techniques and participated in practicum and internships, learning “on the job” with

little to no guidance from a supervisor was an experience several participants shared.

Denise shared,

So really, and truly when I came in, there was no formal training or someone to kind of just oversee to make sure that those processes were occurring or happening there. It's just sort of, you come in, and you just work, and even with non-clinical, everything was basically trying to kind of you just learn on the job. You made it up as you went along, but there was no one that was really saying, "Okay, this is the process. And I'm going to monitor and make sure that this is occurring".

To compliment Denise's experience, Savannah, who had been a teacher in the same building she became a school counselor, stated,

"I really feel like I was doing the job before I was really doing the job because I was already in that setting. Yeah, so not to anyone's fault. To some degree it's my fault because I accepted the position, like I said. It was just convenient for everyone."

Another aspect of clinical supervision Savannah appreciated was the ability to be trusted, independent, and supported. Savannah added, "And so I think for me, the follow-up and they never micromanaged me, it was the not treating my questions as if I should know or not treating my questions as if they were stupid.

Some participants had district-level supervisors and valued the support and consultation when available and offered. Klein disclosed,

We had a central office representative that oversaw school counseling as a whole. So, whenever there is a unique situation, we can communicate with that person

and get some really solid supervision. Now it is not he's checking in with us for an hour every week, just because of how many counselors there are in the district would not be possible. But I think when we need that direct supervision, we get it. So, I guess it's kind of a roundabout answer, and I don't think it's ever been official with somebody, but it's that I got it when I needed it, through one way or another.

Renee also appreciated the support from the district-level supervisor, although it was, as she describes,

Sporadic, kind of on case by case as-needed basis. There were certain things that we had that were standard as far as risk assessments [and] threat assessments, those were standard procedures or trainings that we had to go through, but then everything else was. We had monthly meetings where we did case conceptualization, but that's about it.”

Overall, based on the responses from the participants, they most appreciated and valued the clinical supervision when it was provided.

Theme Five: Professional Quality of Life

Job Satisfaction. Although the scope of this study is to investigate SCS experiences, professional quality of life was a superordinate theme that emerged with a sub-theme of job satisfaction. Concerning SCS participants' experiences receiving clinical supervision as a SC, consultation and collaboration were factors that all participants mentioned. The majority of participants indicated that they felt competent in their role as a school counselor and were satisfied with their job. Reflecting on her previous role, Amy shared,

“To see yourself interacting with a student because there's so much you just don't know, you don't see, but like having that video or seeing yourself or getting others' input in the actual counseling process. I remember being powerful.”

She valued the specific feedback on her counseling skills during her clinical supervision sessions in a former district. Klein shared that having a supervisor who understood the role of a school counselor was most meaningful to him. He stated, “So, having someone relate specifically to when they were in a school in a similar situation has been really helpful for me.” Amanda reported, “I think what is most meaningful is hearing how other people [school counselors] might handle situations and what they've done in those sort of situations. That has always been helpful.” Grace shared that feeling validated was a significant aspect of clinical supervision that aided her satisfaction with her job. She shared,

So I felt like it was very validating, and I always learned something. So, either a new technique or a way, specific language to use, with either the principal, or the student, or the parent that was of concern. So, I felt like the language and the techniques, but overall, the validation that we were on the right track.

In contrast, all participants reported frustration due to the lack of time for clinical supervision or personnel to provide the clinical supervision. Isabel reported,

Not having a full-time supervisor was one of those. I think even things like the non-counseling duties, we were responsible for testing and those kinds of things. I think just having those other responsibilities there made it harder too, because you didn't have as much time to do your job or for somebody to be able to observe you doing something school counseling related, whether it's counseling an individual

or running a small group, doing a parent or family informational whatever, educational.

Nugget expressed frustration when she shared,

Yeah, certainly that piece: not getting it [clinical supervision] when I needed it, or just those moments when my colleagues didn't know either. Those again became most frustrating. But then, also just not having that regularly set time to talk through a variety or hearing from other people and how they process their cases as well.

Savannah shared a different perspective and stated that crisis management was the most challenging for her in her experience as a school counselor. She said, “Probably the crisis management piece. Yeah, I think that's always the most challenging because of the sensitivity of it, just the overall sensitivity and the seriousness of it”. Savannah’s experience brings to light how regular clinical supervision to discuss student crises can help increase feelings of confidence in counseling skills and indirectly promote positive job satisfaction.

All participants identified meaningful and challenging aspects of their clinical supervision experiences as school counselors, raising questions about how these experiences may impact their job satisfaction.

Research Question Three

Research Question Three was “What are the supervision experiences of SCS who provided clinical supervision after graduating with a master’s degree?” Participants disclosed their experiences with providing clinical supervision, which uncovered the following themes: professional preparation, professional identity, professional self-

efficacy, professional challenges (macro, i.e., COVID/pandemic and mental health; sociopolitical influences; micro, i.e., profession expectations), and professional quality of life (counselor wellness). All participants identified that time is the most challenging issue with providing clinical supervision. All participants reported they provide supervision. DLSCS participants said they provide scheduled monthly meetings with school counselors, professional development opportunities during the meetings, and provide supervision as needed by school counselors. Denise shared,

I hold monthly meetings with my high school directors, middle school directors. And then we just now, recently that was one of the things I got to implement, elementary leads Professional development, so I have trainings that I do with not just the directors, but with all of the school counselors. So I have, probably at least once a month, and some months, depending on what we're doing, two trainings, and because of the size of our district, we have a pretty large district, that within itself takes because I can't pull all the counselors out at one time because they're needing to do so. We have AM and PM. So for high school, I have AM and PM. For middle I have AM and PM, and for elementary, so that no one building is without a counselor, but everyone is still able to get the training.

SBLSCS participants also shared that they provide scheduled meetings, however, the sessions range from weekly to monthly. One participant stated she checks in with her school counselors every day. Another participant also reported they hold impromptu meetings when an issue or concern arises.

Theme One: Professional Preparation

Intentional Professional Learning Experiences. The intentionality of the participants in how they deliver clinical supervision is depicted in their descriptions of how they provide clinical supervision and their rationale for how and why they provide clinical supervision. Several participants reported being accessible and responsive to support school counselors. Isabel shared,

I also try to like have that open-door policy where if you need me, just call me, text me, email me, I'm here to help and support you. I try to make that or to communicate that all the time. "Just remember, I'm here for you, so you can be here for kids."

Isabel also shared that she intentionally schedules school counselors' observations to provide feedback. Interestingly, Isabel shared,

But I longed for an observation with some feedback. I longed for that. And there were times, sometimes years where I didn't get. I wasn't even observed in the classroom and given any feedback. And so that was hard because how do you grow when you don't know what? You know what I mean?

However, due to her experience as a school counselor, she has intentionally developed a strategy to be available and support school counselors in a manner that she would have appreciated. Similarly, Renee shared,

So I'm attempting to create that framework and consistency. So, what I've done is we still have our monthly meetings, but I've broken them up. So, the beginning of the meeting is new counselors, so new to the division or new to the role. So it's a much smaller group, and we kind of staff cases then, they get to ask any question

that they want about their role. They all have assigned mentors outside of myself, somebody that they can access on a day-to-day basis.

Similar to Isabel's experience as a school counselor, Renee disclosed that she found from her experience as a school counselor that there was no structure in the clinical supervision she received. And as a result of her experience, she attempts to be intentional in establishing structure and system to support school counselors in their clinical supervision.

All participants were asked about their preparation to become a SCS and recalled their experiences receiving clinical supervision. Renee stated,

It's so long ago, but it was more in line of what I learned in grad school as would be a clinical supervision, where you're actually getting permission to have maybe a tape of you interacting with the student. Then you're getting feedback from your colleagues.

Klein shared, "And then I started the administrative program, not with the intention of being a school administrator, but with the goal in mind to eventually be a central office coordinator of school counseling, that goal in mind." Several participants described how they provide clinical supervision based on what was and was not modeled to them by their supervisors. For example, Renee shared, "we had monthly meetings where we did case conceptualization, but that's about it." It became evident that participants either replicated the most meaningful parts of their clinical supervision that they experienced in their role as a school counseling supervisor or intentionally attempted to mitigate their experiences as a school counselor with the school counselors they supervise. The

impression of the participants' supervisors, directly and indirectly, supported the development of SCS and how they provide clinical supervision.

Theme Two: Professional Identity

All participants could provide an overview of their role and responsibilities as a SCS, however, some participants struggled to define and describe their duties. Another participant reported that their job description was four-page with particular tasks, and one participant read their entire job description, which was very comprehensive. Ciara stated that her role as a SCS is, "I think they're the same as a normal counselor, at least from what I gathered from the interview. It's just they made sure that I was going to be okay with those extra duties." Furthermore, one participant, Amy, is a DLSCS and is a practicing school counselor with a full caseload.

Several participants referenced the importance of staying relevant and connected to their school counselor identity. Two participants, Isabel and Denise, indicated that they wanted to stay relevant and valued remembering what it was like to be a school counselor. Denise shared,

And I'm glad that I'm now in it. There's a lot of things that, as a counselor, you see things, and you're like, "Man, if I were, I would." And so now I get to [do] somewhat, not every everything, but a lot of the things that we would sit back and talk about [as school counselors], I can actually help and do, so it's been good, busy but good.

Interestingly, one participant asked explicitly for a caseload because she wanted to stay connected to work with students. Amanda stated,

So yeah, I do have a caseload, which I asked for. I have one letter, and I wanted that because that's my favorite part of the job, but so I'm also still, I'm a director, but I'm a school counselor, and I always tell students, "I'm here for all of the children, no matter what your last name is."

All SBLSCS participants have a caseload, while only one DLSCS participant has a caseload.

All participants provided some form of consultation, administrative, programmatic, and clinical supervision. Furthermore, the SBLSCS participants provide more frequent formal clinical supervision than DLSCS participants. All participants seem to provide responsive clinical supervision to school counselors daily.

Theme Three: Professional Self-Efficacy

The majority of participants are dedicated to supporting their school counselors. Most participants were self-reflective on how they provided clinical supervision. Several participants expressed a desire to have more time to provide the necessary clinical supervision to support the needs of the school counselors. Isabel shared,

I haven't had the opportunity to do as much as I'd like, but especially with school counselors who are new to our school division, I observe. I go observe classroom lessons, something less daunting at first, and meet with them afterward and provide feedback and what I saw, any suggestions I had, those kinds of things. Similar to Isabel's feelings of being overwhelmed with all the tasks and responsibilities as a SCS, Grace similarly reported,

The amount of consultations that we might get in any specific day. Because the work of our work continues, our to-do list continues. But the consultations, you

know, I'm looking at my calendar from last week and Monday I had 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Ten consultations from school counselors with urgent situations. So, that was definitely a difficult day 'cause I felt very like I couldn't, I, I couldn't, I did meet the needs of everyone who needed to talk with me, but I felt it, it felt very reactionary rather than preventative.

In contrast, although some participants felt challenged and struggled with managing time to provide the necessary clinical supervision to school counselors, other participants exhibited confidence in how they provide clinical supervision. For example, Renee, who established a “framework” for how she provides clinical supervision, and Amanda, who has “intercom” meetings regularly to be responsive to school counselors' needs, participants identified strategies and implemented them with success based on the feedback they have received from SC. During a follow-up interview, as participants reflected on the clinical supervision they provided, Denise said, “Just actually maybe taking time to meet individually with my separate groups by level, to get more info from them as to what they feel they need.

Building rapport and creating accessible, consistent, and structured supervision that promotes a positive working alliance is an aspect that all participants alluded to during their interviews. Klein stated,

So like I mentioned, it's [supervision] something that I really enjoy doing for my department. And it's kind of constant right now, again, just because the whole department is brand new. And I don't mean that in a bad way. I told them all when they got hired, "I'd rather you ask than just guess." And they're really good at

doing that. I think they also help each other because they all had different experiences before becoming a school counselor.

Several participants during the follow-up interview were self-reflective. They changed how they interacted with their school counselors by listening to their needs and trusting them to identify what they needed. Denise shared, "I think I'm more mindful a little bit of certain things, just us talking made me really reevaluate my process." She added,

A lot of times, I may envision, "Oh, this is what I think," but especially now, every year, it seems like it's more different than before. COVID counseling may require things that I haven't thought about. So just really taking the time to meet with them, to pick their brains, to say, "Hey, listen, what do you all need from me?"

For some, it seemed like a relinquishing of control and allowing themselves to trust the SC added to building a positive relationship with their school counselors.

Theme Four: Professional Challenges

Within the theme of professional challenges, three subthemes emerged: the micro (school building level), macro (district-level), and sociopolitical. Each subtheme emerged as a result of concerns brought forth by several participants.

Professional Expectations and Sociopolitical Influences. Regarding the micro and macro levels, all participants expressed concern about district and school building level administrators understanding the role of SC and SCS. Several participants shared that they frequently have to educate and advocate for SC and themselves because inappropriate responsibilities such as testing coordination are expected. Renee shared,

There's 17 different administrators that oversee the day-to-day supervision of the counselors. So, I would say that that's the toughest is just navigating the different buildings, the different needs of each building, the different personalities that come with those buildings, and making sure that, again, I'm advocating for my staff and their role.

Another example of a participant advocating for appropriate duties was discussed by Ciara, who stated, "I thought I would have advocated to get testing off of counseling by now."

Additionally, several participants shared concern about the lack of understanding at the macro/state level with direct questions about sociopolitical legislative agendas and the impact on the school counseling profession.

Another consideration that Isabel related to the sociopolitical concerns is the conflict between the ethical standards of SCS and SC to provide academic, social-emotional, and career readiness support to students with the current restrictions on the resources that can be used with students. As Isabel put it,

Frankly, the other [complicated issues] has been the political climate, and in particular, things like having to pull data for a school board,...and just like spending a lot of time doing those kinds of things instead of being able to spend time with counselors."

The inconsistent and reactive strategies of schools, districts, and the state, along with the expectations and requirements of school counselors, seem to be causing confusion and stress for SCS. Furthermore, legislation and policies developed at the state

and district level seem to directly impact the supervision SCS provides to SC, who provide direct and indirect counseling services to students.

Theme Five: Professional Quality of Life

Counselor Wellness. The professional quality life subtheme of counselor wellness emerged from some participants' statements. These statements encompassed ideas such as feeling responsible for ensuring SCs are doing okay. Two participants indicated that part of their clinical supervision is to help check in on how SCs are doing personally. Isabel and Ciara both revealed that making sure the SC are okay is essential because if the school counselors are doing okay, they can be there to do their job and help students. Both indicated that if the SC is not okay, they will not be able to help their students. Two participants mentioned compassion fatigue and burnout as concerns for school counselors and shared examples of how they try to promote counselor wellness and mitigate burnout. Ciara shared an example,

So I definitely check in on my team, and I ask how they're doing mentally and emotionally. And that's sometimes where we get into personal conversations. Like, "We're potty training the two-year-old." Or, "I'm thinking about getting a dog." So, if I can be the person to alleviate some of that stress off of my team, then they can be freed to focus on their kids."

Similarly, Isabel stated,

Trying to find ways to embed opportunities for self-care in our workday. I've tried to advocate for that as well because this is hard, and educators in general, not just school counselors, are getting burned out, and I'm worried because that trickles down too. When adults are impacted, students are going to be impacted too. Just

trying to [pause]. It's [tough] to find opportunities, though. Some administration is more open than others too.

Although two participants specifically mentioned “self-care,” others shared the importance of work-life balance and using supervision as a time to support each other both professionally and personally.

Research Question Four

Research Question Four was “What do SCS perceive as the impact of providing clinical supervision to school counselors?” All participants valued clinical supervision and shared that it positively and directly impacts the direct and indirect counseling services provided to students. The themes that emerged were improved professional preparation, professional identity, professional self-efficacy, and professional challenges. Several participants shared that clinical supervision offers the opportunity to teach, model, and consult on interventions, strategies, and techniques to support students.

Theme One: Professional Preparation

Several participants provided examples of how clinical supervision directly impacts SC's knowledge and skills through teaching and modeling specific strategies and techniques SC can use with students. Denise shared,

I feel like that's what the clinical supervision is, I'm giving you the tools, I'm showing you, I'm modeling it, I'm going to do what I'm telling you to do, and now you can see the benefits because you saw how it benefited you, and now let's do the same thing.

Amy discussed how important it is to conduct a needs assessment to identify what SC needs to help support students and provide the appropriate training. Amy said,

Well, I think honestly, the trauma-informed best practices and tiered interventions. I've given them some background on MTSS and looking at what you're doing in your building and who's doing what on each level and making sure we're communicating, opening those doors of communication with your admin, state, and other staff.

Another participant reported how SCS and SC could collaborate through clinical supervision to develop interventions to support students based on teachers' feedback.

Klein shared,

Also, just yesterday, a teacher went to one of my counselors and said, "I have a huge need for a lesson on inappropriate talk." So appropriate communication. They're using some negative self-talk in the classroom, and she wants to see if there's a lesson that we can teach on positive self-talk. So the counselor came to me and said, "I think this is such a great idea. Do you have any experience in it?" And I said, "Well, I don't think I have a lesson in it, but I'm happy to collaborate with you on it to see if we can come up with it together."

Another example of how clinical supervision can support the direct services provided to students is an excerpt from Grace's experience of supervising a SC and clarifying how to navigate the policy and procedure for risk assessments. Grace shared,

So, a counselor called me needing support because the Sheriff's office had gone in for a well check, or the police department had gone in for the well check of the student regarding something they had, they had shared on social media. And the

student presented as if they were fine, the parents were fine, everything was okay, they were just frustrated and they had statements of self-harm on social media.

So, the next day the counselor was calling me to see if I should just assume to do a screening. You know, a risk assessment screening to see if the student has, what level of degree their self-harm is at today? Uh, should it be more of a, you know? Let's call the student in and see how it goes. Should we call the parents first?

Should we call them after?

Another perspective on how clinical supervision can provide an opportunity to see the growth and development of SC was shared by Klien as he reflected on his role as a SCS, he shared,

I have seen growth because, at the beginning of the year, they were like, "How should I go about this?" And now they're like, "This is what I did." So I'm happy to see that growth, which is really cool. So I think it's just, it's constant. And I like that because I don't have to guess what they're doing.

Another example of one participant's self-reflection as a SCS indicated her being mindful of her role and how it can directly impact the services provided to students. Ciara disclosed,

So I feel like I need to start doing more of that supervisory role of like, "This is what I'm observing, here's why it's a problem and all these things that haven't gotten done. And how I think you can fix it, but you tell me how, now you can talk. Tell me how you see it is.

An example of how clinical supervision impacts school counselors and students is evidenced by a participant, Amanda, who disclosed, "...And my counselors keep me in

the know of things, especially because if it's affecting one student here, it could be an issue that happens across cases that affects students across caseloads. So, we're always consulting and collaborating.” Clinical supervision allows SCS to facilitate connections between SC and create collaboration to promote student success.

Theme Two: Professional Identity

Professional identity discrepancies appear to decrease when SC has access to a SCS to provide clinical supervision. All participants indicated that they provide clinical supervision in the academic, social-emotional, and career readiness domains that support the direct counseling services provided by SC. Regular access to a subject matter expert offers expertise from professionals who understand the multifaceted role and the array of issues SC provides directly to support students. Grace shared her experience as SCS, and the time she offers clinical supervision to support the direct services SCs provide to students with academic, social-emotional, and career readiness needs. Grace stated,

I think the majority of the time. It's, I would say 90, 95% of the time. Well, and I'm gonna take that back. So with the more responsive consultations and supervision sessions, I would say that 95% of the time, they are directly related to direct student services [individual and small group counseling] and typically resulting in either advisement, consultation, collaborations, or sometimes individual and group counseling. But those probably would hit the marks on the majority of the time use. I would say we do have a preventative consultation where school counselors can make meetings with me regarding their comprehensive school counseling programming.

Other participants discussed how clinical supervision provides an opportunity to review counseling theories and techniques to support students. Amanda shared,

I think again, making sure that we're using what theory it is that we're using with the student, what interventions we're using. Also, that we're not causing further unintentional harm, that we're being cognizant. I'm a big believer in policy and practices and looking at who was this helping, who was this hurting and immediately stopping anything that's causing harm. So, I think again, that just that direct of what we're going to do next, and then the counselor does it. And that's that whether it's we're doing a suicide risk assessment or we're making a referral to an outside counselor, or we're on the community link, looking for counseling resources in terms of whatever.

Overall, participants indicate that clinical supervision assists with maintaining a clear understanding of the SC expectations and when to seek in-school and out-of-school community resources to support students.

Theme Three: Professional Self-Efficacy

All participants indicated that clinical supervision improves SC's self-confidence and competency in their work. Some participants reported they conduct needs assessments on professional development topics to support the work of SC. Isabel disclosed an area that SC indicated they wanted to learn more about to best support students was the LGBTQ+ population. Isabel said,

One example I can think of is LGBTQ students and working with them and trying to do a better job. And so, they felt like they needed more training and support around that. I partnered with [an organization], and they came and provided

training for our counselors, and it was super helpful and provided us with resources. I think it made a huge impact on their approach [to] students who may be LGBTQ and also just working with families.

Another example of how clinical supervision has improved SC self-efficacy to support students who experience trauma shared by Nugget, who said,

So, I think clinical supervision for someone who comes into schools where there's a variety of different needs and trauma experiences that it's so important and critical to the development of the professional as a school counselor, but also how that impacts our students. Because if the counselor doesn't know how to effectively respond to a situation when a student comes into their office and they're crying hysterically because their dad got shot last night and they came to school the next day, right?

Overall, participants reported clinical supervision facilitates opportunities for growth and professional learning as a school counselor to help students.

Theme Four: Professional Challenges

Macro, Micro, and Sociopolitical Challenges. Several participants raised concerns about the increase in student mental health needs, COVID, the shortage of staff to provide direct services to students, and the divisiveness of the political climate. The tasks SCSs have to develop, implement and monitor comprehensive school counseling programs and supervise SCs while combating the interconnected professional challenges is arduous.

Participants identified several macro, micro, and sociopolitical challenges that impact their responsibilities as a SCS and the clinical supervision they provided to SC.

Two macro issues discussed by participants are COVID and the increase in mental health needs of students, such as trauma. For example, “COVID” or “Pandemic” were referred to 30 times across the majority of participants.

Amy shared,

And right now, because of COVID, we've just been having virtual check-ins, just more of a consulting. But as far as doing a lot of coordinating, the secondary director is taking the lead on that. Whereas, I'm taking more of the lead of the elementary under the Elementary Director. It's complicated.

At the micro-level, several participants shared they had to provide direct counseling services to students because of staff shortages and the increase in mental health needs of students and staff. Mental health-related concerns, including “crisis,” “risk assessments,” and “trauma,” were mentioned 78 times across transcripts, with 53% related to crisis and risk assessments. Two participants focused on crisis concerns when discussing their districts' mental health issues and needs. Isabel shared, “School [principals] will often call and talk through a situation with me, or if a school counselor's not in a building, I might get called to come help with, especially if it's something like a threat to self. We've seen a pretty large increase in those this year.” The number of crises and lack of resources to support the mental health needs in school districts seems to be the focus and a cause for concern. Several participants disclosed these concerns. For example, Amy reported,

Well, I will say one of the challenges is things keep changing as far as what our resources are, and so working to figure out for our counselors what is available in our community. That's gotten to be really challenging as of late. Actually, I

mentioned that. And it wasn't just me, but one of our division meetings, the region that I'm in, that we talked about this. It's all over. We were having kids in crisis. And there's no crisis stabilization available. There's a waiting list. What do you mean there's a waiting list for crises? How do you have a waiting list for a crisis? That's another thing that's been a challenge. Like I said, I've never seen a year like this one with the staffing shortages in every industry, including mental health. And so, we have kids in mental health crisis, and there's no resources for them in the community or the families, or there's a long waiting list. And so, then they come back to school. It's a societal issue, not just me personally.

Related to the sociopolitical climate, the governor of Virginia issued an executive order to remove an “inherently divisive curriculum” from K-12 schools. Some participants expressed concern about providing direct and indirect counseling services related to social-emotional learning, LGBTQ+ resources, and cultural responsiveness teaching practices.

In contrast, Amy also shared that her school district's view on the SC role “...is shifting, and they're wanting us to come in and really support students that are starting to show behaviors early on.” The interconnectedness of the macro, micro, and socio-political appears to directly impact the support and guidance SCS is providing to SC.

Additional Findings

School Counseling Supervisors to School Counselor Ratios

Although the scope of this study focused on SCS clinical supervision experiences, there were some additional observations of the demographic information provided by the participants. The participants reported the range of school counselors they supervise (see

Table 1, Participant Summary). Demographic data revealed that the DLSCS has a range of ratios of one SCS to six to 100+ SC. By comparison, the SBLSCS participants have a ratio of one SCS to three school counselors on average. It is essential to consider the school type (i.e., rural, suburban, urban).

Participant Recommendations to Support School Counseling Supervisors

During the interview process, participants were invited to share any additional information related to clinical supervision. 90% of the participants stated that more “training” on school counseling supervision would be beneficial. Also, resources for SCS that would provide supervision tools and include job descriptions with detailed required tasks, needs assessments, and a log to track the use of time. Additional recommendations provided by participants are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2*School Counseling Supervisor Recommendations*

1. Training for School Counseling Supervisors on school counseling supervision models.
 2. Training for School Principals and District Administrators on the role of school counselors and school counseling supervisors.
 3. Consistent school counseling supervisor's job descriptions at the district and school building levels.
 4. School Counseling Supervision provided by professionals with experience in school counseling
 5. Consistent department location for school counseling services across districts.
 6. Provide the opportunity for school counselors who are interested in becoming a SCS to participate in professional learning about the role and practices of SCS.
 7. Consider optional coursework in school counseling masters programs for school counselors-in-training to learn about school counseling supervision models and requirements to become a SCS.
 8. School districts provide compensation for SBLSCS who perform supervision tasks to support school counselors and the comprehensive school counseling program.
 9. Provide designated, structured time for SCS to provide quality clinical supervision to support school counselors in their direct and indirect services to support student success.
 10. Provide training and resources on school counseling supervision.
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Summary of Results

Chapter Four provided an overview of the clinical supervision experiences of SCS in Virginia. This IPA approach explored the expectations, the experiences of receiving and providing clinical supervision, and the perceived impact of clinical supervision on the services school counselors provide to students. Additionally, Table 1 summarizes the demographic information about the participants. Moreover, the five superordinate themes were identified: professional preparation, professional identity, professional self-efficacy, professional challenges, and professional quality of life. Each superordinate theme represents convergence across participants and illustrates the participants' idiosyncrasy and divergent experiences and perceptions. Additionally, the corresponding Figures 3, 4, 5, and 6 within Chapter Four, and Appendix H, depict the interpretative research process from the individual analysis of the transcripts to the development of the superordinate themes and their intersectionality.

Chapter Five focuses more deeply on the researcher's interpretation of the results by discussing the findings, implications for future SCS, school building and district-level administrators, state educational administrators, counselor educators, and professional counseling organizations. Also, recommendations from the participants and the researcher on strategies to support SCS, along with addressing the study's limitations, future research directions, and the study's conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Overview

The desire and need for school counseling clinical supervision to support the counseling services provided by school counselors to students is paramount. Over four and half decades of research have provided implications and recommendations to encourage collaboration and facilitation of clinical supervision opportunities for school counselors (Bledsoe et al., 2021; Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a; Brott et al., 2021). This study aimed to explore the clinical supervision experiences of SCSs and add to the growing literature to support the need for clinical supervision in school counseling. The *#S.O.S.*³ call sign has been illuminated and retweeted by the findings of this study. Chapter Five will include a discussion of the findings of this study, implications for selected results, identify limitations, and provide suggestions for areas of future research.

This study utilized the phenomenological approach to investigate the perceptions and experiences of Virginia SCS receiving and providing clinical supervision. Through exploring SCS participants' perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision, the shared and various responses from SCS in the field emerged. Participants' clinical supervision perceptions and experiences revealed five superordinate themes with subthemes and cluster themes of professional preparation (subthemes: academic preparation as a school counselor and intentional professional learning experiences), professional identity, professional self-efficacy, professional challenges (subthemes: macro, micro, sociopolitical), and professional quality of life (subthemes: compensation, job satisfaction, counselor wellness). Also, convergent and divergent perceptions and

experiences of SCS participants were identified and explored. Additionally, this qualitative study provides a foundation for future research, building on the limited empirical studies examining SCS clinical supervision perceptions and experiences.

Broadly, some characteristics that appear to emerge from this phenomenological study are consistent with Luke and Bernard's (2006) conceptual School Counseling Supervision Model (SCSM). Participants describe roles as SCS that reflect the supervisor roles (i.e., teacher, counselor, consultant) defined by the SCSM (Luke & Bernard, 2006). Also, participants described a range of responsibilities similar to the supervision foci (i.e., intervention, conceptualization, personalization) depicted in the SCSM (Luke & Bernard, 2006). Participants described providing individual support and consultation as needed, meeting with school counselors regularly (e.g., once a week, once a month) to discuss social-emotional/mental health trends, student academic and career readiness issues, and concerns. In addition, several participants emphasized providing support to promote professional growth and counselor wellness. Furthermore, all participants reported facilitating and providing large group professional development training on topics school counselors identified as areas of professional learning (e.g., LGBTQ+ information and resources) throughout the school year.

Furthermore, all participants described their current role and job description as a SCS, including what was identified as administrative supervision, focusing on organizational responsibilities such as attendance and staff relations (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006), programmatic supervision, focusing on program foundation, and development, delivery, coordination and management, and accountability (ASCA, 2019c; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Roberts & Border, 1994), and clinical supervision as a

developmental counseling process to support clinical knowledge and skills through case conceptualizations, interventions, and techniques examination of the counseling process (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006).

Moreover, participants reported that one of the most meaningful aspects of clinical supervision is meeting with supervisors with a school counseling background and peers to review, discuss, brainstorm, problem-solve and share recommendations, suggestions, and resources to support students. Participants shared that they see clinical supervision as a vital resource to assess, monitor, support, and plan services to help SC and students' needs.

However, one of the most challenging aspects of their role shared by participants is dedicating time to provide clinical supervision in the fashion it has been designed and recommended as evidence-based practice (Borders et al., 2014). Participants attempt to deliver clinical supervision properly; however, scheduled, structured time to discuss cases is difficult at the district and school building levels.

Furthermore, the majority of participants do not receive supervision from an administrator with a school counseling background. These findings are corroborated by empirical evidence that principals or school administrators are often school counselors' primary supervisors and evaluators (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Page et al., 2001; Herlihy et al., 2002, Fye et al., 2018). A more comprehensive discussion related to each identified theme is discussed.

Theme One: Professional Preparation

Academic Preparation and Intentional Professional Learning Experiences.

Participants identified several professional preparation experiences as subthemes of academic preparation as a school counselor and intentional professional learning experiences. All participants reported graduating with a master's degree to become school counselors. Several participants pursued additional academic and professional learning opportunities (i.e., administration and supervision endorsement, additional graduate coursework) to increase their knowledge and skills to support SCs. Other participants described intentional "on-the-job" learning experiences (i.e., mentor, site supervisor for SCITs, participation on leadership teams), which provided insight and, in some instances, additional training on supporting practicing school counselors. Although most participants sought other professional learning opportunities, only one SCS indicated knowledge of school counseling supervision models. There was minimal mention of any school counseling supervision models, modalities, or types by participants based on the review of the transcripts. One participant, Nugget, mentioned she is familiar with school counseling supervision models; however, they did not mention any by name. All participants did express interest in receiving information on SCS models, frameworks, and resources to support them in their role. Even participants like Klein and Amanda, who attained or are working towards administrative certification, stated that their training focused on becoming a "school principal," not on school counseling supervision. Also, only one participant, Nugget, identifies "administrative supervision" as the primary type of supervision she received as a school counselor. Participants reported that administrative supervision, along with programmatic supervision, seems to be the primary supervision that SC receives post master's degree as

a practicing school counselor, as corroborated by other research studies (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Henderson & Lampe, 1992; Page et al., 2001; Luke & Bernard, 2006). Interestingly, some participants questioned whether what they received or provided was clinical supervision and was evident throughout the study. Based on the participants' discussion and description of how they provide supervision, most deliver a form of clinical supervision in combination with administrative and programmatic supervision.

Whereas the perceptions and experiences of SCS have been lacking in the empirical research, this study explored how SCS describe their perceptions and experiences with receiving and providing clinical supervision. Most participants strive to provide clinical supervision. They explain what they discuss with supervisees, such as strategies, interventions, and referrals to community services that align with the consulting role in the discrimination and school counseling supervision models (Bernard, 1997; Luke & Bernard, 2006). Furthermore, the intentional experientiality of the participants to seek supervision when they were practicing school counselors, attending professional learning opportunities to gain more knowledge and skills on how to support SC, or voluntary leadership roles to serve as a mentor or site supervisor provided training to help their school counselors can be seen in responses made by participants.

The findings of this study align with empirical studies that report a majority of SC do not receive clinical supervision (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton & Page, 1994; Page et al., 2001) and have a critical need for peer clinical supervision (Brott et al., 2021).

Empirical research indicates that differences between administrators' and principals' perceptions of school counselor responsibilities (Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Zalaquett,

2005) facilitate role ambiguity. More importantly, there is limited empirical research on the SCS.

These findings are corroborated by empirical evidence that principals or school administrators are often school counselors' primary supervisors and evaluators (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Page et al., 2001; Herlihy et al., 2002, Fye et al., 2018).

School Counselors often struggle with their role and responsibilities due to their transformation from guidance teachers to guidance counselors to school counselors (Gysbers, 2010; 2022). Historically, school counselors were directed, supervised, and evaluated by their principals or assistant principals.

Most participants gained valuable knowledge and skills serving as site supervisors for SCITs and indicated the training they received has been beneficial in preparing them to serve as an SCS. This experience as a site supervisor corroborates Brown and colleagues (2017-2018) study on the impact of training on the SCSM on school counseling site supervisors.

Theme Two: Professional Identity

Professional identity as a school counselor is a critical foundation in understanding the role of an SCS and has been researched extensively (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Brott & Myers, 1999; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006). Throughout the current study, participants shared discrepancies regarding their professional identity as school counselors and SCSs. Most participants, through their interviews, were aligned in their understanding of their role as an SC and SCS based on the descriptions they provided. However, several participants shared how they have had to educate school administrators

at the school building and district levels on the school counselor's role and how they see it as an SCS. Participants shared how they have "advocated" and "educated" non-school-counseling administrators on the role and responsibilities of SC. The evolution of the school counselor role may be a factor in the continued need to inform administrators on appropriate school counselors' tasks. Gysbers (2022) recently revised his overview of the school counseling profession. Gysbers (2022) recounts the highlights and evolution of the profession with a shift from vocational guidance to the 2001 federal legislation, acknowledged the terminology change from "guidance" counselor to the school counselor and the importance of the role of the elementary school counselor. Furthermore, not until 2019 did ASCA formulate a position that provides guidelines for the essential role of school counseling directors/coordinators (ASCA, 2019b). The absence of guidelines may have perpetuated the *homegrown* job descriptions, which often lack the inclusion of clinical supervision as part of the role and responsibilities of SCS.

A professional identity for most participants appears to be influenced by their preparation to become an SC through academic training, internship experiences, first job experiences, and previous professional experience such as teaching. Three participants were teachers before becoming practicing school counselors. One participant became an SCS while simultaneously serving as an SC right out of graduate school. All other participants served as school counselors for several years before becoming an SCS. In their research, Brott and Meyers (1999) revealed how SC development occurs in phases. They uncovered four phases to include (1) structuring (blending of using an external perspective from counseling program training), (2) interacting (a personal perspective of self conceptualization as a counselor), (3) distinguishing (performance goals and

perceptions), and (4) evolving (interplay of phases) (Brott & Myers, 1999). Brott and Myers (1999) describe the “blending of influences” in the development of the school counselor identity (p. 343). The combination of the participants’ influences from their academic preparation and intentional professional learning experiences is similar to Brott and Myers's (1999) grounded theory.

Furthermore, all participants described their current role and job description as a SCS, including what is identified as administrative supervision, focusing on organizational responsibilities such as attendance and staff relations (Dollarhide & Miller, 2006), programmatic supervision focusing on program foundation and development, delivery, coordination and management, and accountability (ASCA, 2019c; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Roberts & Border, 1994), and clinical supervision as a developmental counseling process to support clinical knowledge and skills through case conceptualizations, interventions, and techniques examination of the counseling process (Dollarhide & miller, 2006).

Similar to SC professional development, there may be a similar application of professional development phases that can be applied to SCS. Furthermore, due to the lack of formal preparation to become an SCS, as described by participants, and variations in job descriptions between school districts, the need for a unified understanding of the SCS roles and responsibilities may aid in supporting a unified professional identity among SCS. Researchers have long advocated for improved role descriptions for the profession (Hays, 1971; Boyd & Walter, 1975; Brott & Myers, 1999; Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Roberts & Borders, 1994; Sutton & Page, 1994; Herlihy et al., 2002)

Although best practices in clinical supervision are established, the principles outlined by Borders and colleagues (2014) have yet to be formally endorsed within the school counseling supervision realm because the “absence of professional expectations regarding [school] counselor supervision continues” (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; p. 53-54). ASCA (2019b) has developed an overview of the roles and responsibilities of SC and the essential role of school counseling directors/coordinators; however, as described by the participants, the SCS role and responsibilities are often *homegrown* and are assigned by non-school-counseling school administrators. Although all participants described similar overall responsibilities as an SCS, some participants have responsibilities that other SCS object to, such as test coordination. By contrast, some participants may embrace the additional responsibilities assigned to them by their school building administrators, often despite misgivings.

Regarding caseloads, all SBLSCS participants have caseloads that range from 50 to 100 plus students. One SBLSCS participant requested a caseload because they believe working with students is the best part of the job. Interestingly, most DLSCS typically do not have caseloads; however, several DLSCS reported they served as school counselors to help provide direct services to students because of district staff shortages due to the impact of COVID-19 and the increase of mental health concerns seen in students.

Role ambiguity as a school counselor appears to have overflowed into the role ambiguity of SCS. ASCA (2019b) has stated that school counseling directors/coordinators provide “leadership to ensure individual and group supervision to school counselors in practice” (p. 1). However, this is inaugural guidance and

endorsement highlighting the SCS role, and more research on the role and responsibilities should be conducted to examine the discrepancies of the SCS role.

Throughout exploring SCS perceptions and experiences, all participants discussed consulting and collaborating with peers when they could not participate in clinical supervision. Participants shared that they would email, call, or discuss how to navigate student cases and seek recommendations for strategies and interventions during district meetings. Some participants shared that as SCSs, they consult with other SCSs to discuss topics from how to complete required state documents to how they conduct risk assessments. Brott and colleagues (2021) have suggested a critical need for peer supervision for school counselors because of the need and desire to receive supervision.

From another perspective, Betters-Bubon and colleagues (2021) uncovered the inconsistent school counselor educator (SCE) identity through their examination of school counselor educators (SCE) reactions to the changes in the profession. Acknowledging that SCEs are struggling to understand their role and are influential in the training and development of future school counselors may perpetuate the inconsistencies and conflictual nature of the profession. SCEs often feel that school counseling is “less valued” in the counseling profession and less prioritized in preparation programs (Betters-Bubon et al., 2021). Like school counselors and SCEs, SCSs are ardent advocates for the school counseling profession (Betters-Bubon et al., 2021). Throughout the interviews, participants’ described advocating for their role and having made systemic changes in their school districts. Two examples are Isabel, who facilitated a title change to reflect the role more accurately, and Renee, who advocated for two years and planted the seed for the position, she now holds.

Bledsoe and colleagues (2021) reported that SCs see improved professional identity due to receiving clinical supervision. This study indicates similar findings from participants who reported the academic, social-emotional/mental health, and career readiness supervision/consultation/professional learning they facilitate directly impacts the direct services school counselors provide to students.

Moss and colleagues (2014) conducted a qualitative grounded theory study to investigate the professional identity development of counselors. The researchers propose a professional identity development model incorporating attitude toward work, energy for work, and personal integration (see Moss et al., 2014 for more details). Moss and their team identified that adjustment to expectations, confidence and freedom, separation versus integration experience, continuous learning, and work with clients were the emergent themes (Moss et al., 2014). They concluded that supervision facilitated increased counselor identity, regardless of experience levels, and lifelong identity development (Moss et al. 2014).

Theme Three: Professional Self-Efficacy

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy construct represents one's belief about their ability to accomplish a task. Research has indicated that increased self-efficacy impacts school counselors' direct and indirect services (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005; Mullen & Lambie, 2016; Bledsoe et al., 2021). Although there has not been an investigation on school counselor supervisors' self-efficacy, a study conducted by Brown and colleagues (2017-2018) investigated the impact of the SCSM on the self-efficacy of school counselor site supervisors. The study demonstrated how supervision training increased SCS self-efficacy and their ability to provide "competent supervision" (Brown et al., 2017-2018; p.

154). The study found a significant positive relationship between supervision training and supervisor self-efficacy (Brown et al., 2017-2018). Although this study's intent was not to examine SCS self-efficacy, all the participants indicated a desire to participate in additional training and access to resources to support them in their role. The researcher created a list of recommendations provided by participants (see Table 2). Several participants reported that the additional coursework and training they attended provided some beneficial applications, although not specific to school counseling.

ASCA (2022) has developed a professional standards and competencies assessment that can be used to evaluate school counselors' professional foundation, direct and indirect student services, planning, and program evaluation. However, there is a lack of professional standards and competencies for SCS. One can wonder if using the established standards and competencies might improve SCS confidence in their role as an SCS and help improve their professional identity by understanding expectations and responsibilities. Several participants indicated struggles with feeling competent in their role. As a result, they have sought additional resources, mentors, training, certification, and degrees to understand how they can best support SCs.

Interestingly, the two participants who have participated explicitly in certification or degrees in administration and supervision indicated that their coursework was geared toward school administrative positions such as principal. They indicated they had to accommodate the information received to align it with the role of SCS. This self-interpretation of SCS responsibilities may perpetuate the inconsistencies of school counseling supervision. Also, the supervision training provided for certification often does not incorporate the nuanced intersectionality of administrative, clinical, and

programmatic supervision provided and needed to supervise school counselors. Furthermore, Cashwell and Dooley (2001) conducted a study on the impact of supervision on counselor self-efficacy. They found that counselors who received regular supervision had a higher counseling self-efficacy than those who did not receive supervision (Cashwell & Dooley, 2001). The continuum of idiosyncrasies of each SC being supervised warrants specialized training to support the nuanced role of the SCS and increase their professional self-efficacy in the role.

Theme Four: Professional Challenges

Macro, Micro, and Sociopolitical Challenges. The present study aimed to understand the perception and experiences of SCS who receive and provide clinical supervision. Analyzing the participants' interviews identified the superordinate theme of professional challenges. Furthermore, several of these professional challenges intersect, similar to Neal and Neal's (2013) networked ecological systemic framework. Neal and Neal (2013) discuss a proposed conceptual model focusing on the developing child using Simmel's notion of intersecting social circles and Bronfenbrenner's writing on social networks. The researchers define the constructs of the ecological environment, setting, micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono- systems to explain the ecological system theory (EST; Neal & Neal, 2013). This model focuses on "how and with whom an individual interacts" (Neal & Neal, 2013; p. 733). Secondly, it allows researchers the more complex relationships among ecological systems (Neal & Neal, 2013). Finally, it incorporates Bronfenbrenner's (1979) "recognition that environmental events and conditions outside any immediate setting containing the person can have a profound influence on behavior and development" (p. 18). Several networked ecological challenges sub-themes emerged

through analysis with peer reviewers, based on the participants' responses, including school counseling profession expectations, COVID/Pandemic, school community mental health concerns, and socio-political influences.

All participants were able to describe their roles in their own words. Interestingly, two participants shared that their role title has changed over time. One stated that the role is so new that the position description is being developed as she executes responsibilities. One participant shared their perceived understanding of their role and then read the detailed job description and identified aspects of the job that they have been unable to address because of the impact of COVID and the increase of mental health issues among students and staff. Interestingly, 80% of the participants identify COVID/Pandemic as a concern that directly impacts how they provide supervision. Two participants indicated that the sociopolitical climate affects how they support and supervise SC because of January 15, 2022, Commonwealth of Virginia Office of the Governor Executive Order (Exec. Order No.1, 2022), which directs “ending the use of inherently divisive concepts, including critical race theory, and restoring excellence in K-12 public education in the commonwealth” (p. 1). Two participants shared concerns about how to direct SCs to deliver direct services if specific topics such as the social-emotional learning curriculum may be divisive. The current sociopolitical climate concerns brought up by participants also challenge the ethical guidelines put forth by the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) and the ASCA Professional Standards and Competencies (2019e). ACA Code of Ethics (2014) Preamble states, “ honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts” (p.3); and “counselors promote the well-being of individual clients or groups

of clients by developing and using appropriate educational, mental health, psychological, and career assessments (ACA, 2014; Section E. p. 11),

In addition, ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016) states, “section f. Respect students’ and families’ values, beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identification/expression, and cultural background and exercise great care to avoid imposing personal beliefs or values rooted in one’s religion, culture, or ethnicity; section m. Promote cultural competence to help create a safer, more inclusive school environment; section i. monitor and expand personal multicultural and social-justice advocacy awareness, knowledge and skills to be an effective culturally competent school counselor” (p. 3). All SCS have an ethical obligation to promote and provide direct and indirect services that are safe, inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all students.

Recent research by Betters-Bubon and colleagues (2021) identified several ecological influences on the school counseling profession. They shared that the profession has been molded by “multiple subsystems, ” including societal changes, professional organizations, and professional leaders (Betters-Bubon et al., 2021; p. 40). The school counseling profession, since its inception, has evolved from vocational guidance to include mental health, comprehensive programming, and, more recently, culturally sustaining school counseling practices (Grothaus et al., 2020), social justice advocacy, and antiracist school counseling (Song et al., 2020; Holcomb-McCoy, 2022).

This study had the researcher reflect on the qualifications of a school administrator supervising mental health professionals. Most school administrators at the school building and district level do not have training as mental health professionals. The question posed by the participant is valid and requires additional examination, which is

beyond the scope of this study. Although the scope of this identified theme is not the primary focus of the study, it indicates that historically and currently, SCS are impacted in what and how they provide clinical supervision to school counselors because of the current state of the nation and the world.

Theme Five: Professional Quality of Life

Compensation, Job Satisfaction, and Counselor Wellness. The superordinate theme of professional quality of life emerged after the subthemes of compensation, job satisfaction, and counselor wellness were identified from participant responses. Most participants indicated challenges in their role and how those challenges influence how they provide supervision to support school counselors. Stamm (2010) describes the professional quality of life as “associated with characteristics of the work environment... the individual’s personal characteristics and the individual’s exposure to primary and secondary trauma in the work setting” (p. 10). Furthermore, Stamm (2010) identified compensation as an occupational factor influencing career-sustaining behaviors. As it relates to expectations, only two of the participants disclosed concerns about the compensation for the work they provide.

Several participants expressed frustration because of the lack of understanding of the school counselor’s role and their role as SCS. One participant verbalized a “hatred ” for being assigned non-counseling tasks. All participants indicated that having time to consult and collaborate was most meaningful as a school counselor receiving clinical supervision and providing clinical supervision as an SCS. One participant described an impromptu group supervision session that would occur when a team member would say, “intercom,” which alerted the team to come together for an impromptu meeting to discuss

an issue with a student. All participants indicated that they valued time to consult and collaborate when they received clinical supervision and provided clinical supervision. Also, those participants who served as mentors or site supervisors for SCITs found serving in those roles beneficial in preparing them for their current roles. One participant reported that when they were a mentee, they did not find their mentor to be helpful. Most learned from their mentor how to do their job. One participant also shared that the VDOE has assigned DLSCSs a mentor. This same participant indicated that before she was assigned an SCS mentor, she had already sought out a mentor.

Finally, school counselor wellness was identified by three participants. Several participants expressed concerns about supporting school counselors and facilitating opportunities to promote work-life balance. Interestingly, none of the participants discussed their wellness plans, but focused on providing support to school counselors. Two indicated they are intentional in scheduled meetings to allocate time for discussion on self-care and wellness. One participant mentioned “compassion fatigue” and said she takes time to check in on team members during regular supervision and shares reminders on work-life balance.

Fye and colleagues (2020) explored the relationship between school counselors’ perceived ASCA National Model implementation, supervision satisfaction, and burnout. The study concluded that their burnout decreased as school supervision satisfaction increased (Fye et al. 2020). Also, the findings from the study are supported by additional research, which states supervision satisfaction is “negatively related to burnout.” (p. 60). All participants reported a range on how often they meet for supervision. The frequency ranged from weekly to monthly. Although DLSCS indicated that they meet with school

counselors monthly for two to three hours, SLSCS reported they meet one hour weekly on average. Fye's team (2020) found that school counselors who participated in monthly six to ten hours of consultation "experienced statistically significant decreases in burnout" compared to those who received 21 or more hours. However, CACREP requires SCITs to participate in a minimum of 1 hour of supervision while participating in practicum and internship experiences. The results of this study support how supervision can support a decrease in school counselors' feelings of burnout and promote counselor wellness. The importance of clinical supervision to help with counselor wellness has been empirically supported. Recent research related to school counselors has indicated that supervision satisfaction can decrease perceived feelings of burnout (Fye et al., 2020).

Overall, clinical supervision appears to be valued by school counselors and SCS based on the responses provided by the participants. The current study can extrapolate implications for school counselors, school counseling supervisors, counselor educators and programs, professional organizations, and policy stakeholders. Although research has demonstrated the positive impact of supervision on SC, this is the first study to explore SCS perspectives and experiences regarding challenges and most meaningful aspects of clinical supervision.

Implications

This study provides a comprehensive, descriptive and nuanced account of school counseling supervisors (SCS) perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision. Five superordinate themes were identified amongst all the interviews to illuminate the clinical supervision perceptions and experiences of SCS. Professional preparation, professional identity, professional self-efficacy, professional challenges, and professional quality of

life are the superordinate themes that emerged from the participants' interviews. Furthermore, the findings of this study have important implications for school counselors, school counseling supervisors, counselor educators, counselor education programs, school and state educational institutions, and professional counseling organizations.

Regarding the expectations of SCS, participants reported they are required to do what their school administrators ask; however, they have to advocate for appropriate roles and responsibilities. There are no consistent expectations across participants because responsibilities are *homegrown*. Next, most participants did not receive regular, consistent clinical supervision even though they *longed* for it and sought other means of support such as peer supervision and consultation. Third, although most participants questioned if they provided clinical supervision to school counselors, the majority used the term consultation. Most aimed to provide clinical supervision regularly; however, time constraints and other responsibilities, along with the increase in students' mental health needs, are challenging to provide more supervision. Many also focused on developing and implementing comprehensive school counseling programs, which may be a form of administrative supervision.

Finally, all participants indicated that they see clinical supervision as directly supporting students' academic, social-emotional, and career readiness. Participants desire more time and training to provide clinical supervision to support the direct and indirect counseling services school counselors provide to students.

Implications For School Counselors

The findings of this study suggest several implications for school counselors. Serving as a practicing school counselor involves participating in appropriate training, understanding roles and responsibilities, and adhering to the professional competencies, standards, and ethics to provide appropriate direct and indirect counseling services (CACREP, 2015; ASCA 2019b; ASCA, 2019c; ACA 2014). The evolution of the school counseling profession may have contributed to the role confusion and ambiguity; however, ASCA has developed guidelines to provide clarity and understanding on the appropriate responsibilities of school counselors, and seeking consultation is encouraged (ASCA, 2019c). Furthermore, as indicated by the responses from participants in this study, additional professional education may assist with understanding appropriate expectations and preparation for future professional development. The majority of participants from this study identified volunteer leadership opportunities to build their skills and referenced the training they received, which has served as a foundation for their current role as a SCS. Pursuing additional coursework or training and experiential learning as a mentor or site supervisor may help acquire the skills necessary to become a SCS. Additionally, 90% of the participants indicated that they participated in school and/or district-level administrative committees and teams. A combination of academic and experiential learning seems to develop participants' professional preparation to become a SCS and is highly recommended.

Clinical supervision may help to clarify school counselors' professional identity. Brott and Myers (1999) explored professional school counselor identity development. They uncovered that professional identity is a "dynamic interplay of phases as school counselors become involved in various strategies and activities when performing in their

role” (Brott & Myers, 1999; p. 347). Also, Brott and Myers (1999) share that professional identity is an evolving phase that spans the practitioner’s professional career. Similarly, the responses provided by all participants of this study demonstrated a positive school counselor identity, even before becoming a SCS. However, they often had to advocate or compromise in their role as a school counselor and sought to be in a leadership role to help educate non-school counseling administrators on the functions of school counseling. Despite the absence of regular school counseling clinical supervision, the participants used peer consultation and collaboration to help validate their work and self-monitor how they delivered direct and indirect services. Several participants indicated that they found meeting with peers the most meaningful and valued their time together to learn from each other. Opportunities for SC and SCS to meet together are beneficial.

Goodman-Scott and colleagues (2020) explored school counseling district supervisors’ experiences and perceptions regarding school counselor preparation for practice. They identified preparation variation, preferring face-to-face preparation, and strengthening school counseling preparation and practice (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Although this study did not inquire about the accreditation status of the participants’ counselor education programs, based on current research, district-level supervisors prefer school counselors who graduate from a CARCREP, in-person counselor education program (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a). Bledsoe and colleagues (2021) reported that because of clinical supervision, SCs had developed “an improved sense of professional identity” (p. 6). All participants in this study said that they “desired,” like Nugget, and “longed-for,” liked Isabel, clinical supervision as a school counselor. All participants valued the opportunity to review cases, “brainstorm,” “problem-solve,” and share

strategies and interventions to support students. Peer and group supervision opportunities are recommended to support the professional development of SC and SCS.

ASCA's School Counselor Role statement (2022) reports that school counselors are leaders, advocates, and collaborators to promote equity and access for all students. One participant, Renee, shared she served as a resource in her district to other school counselors and advocated for a supervisor role to be established. After two years, the SCS role was established, she applied, and she is currently in that position. This disclosure from a participant is an example of how school counselors are agents of change and, with support like clinical supervision, systemic changes to benefit students can happen.

Professional counseling organizations may assist SCS in increasing school counselors' professional identity. 70% of participants indicated they are members of at least one state professional organization (e.g., VSCA), and 60% indicated they are members of a national organization (e.g., ASCA). Professional organizational membership can provide evidenced-based resources to support school counselor identity development. 90% of participants indicated they are members of a professional counseling organization. Furthermore, the majority of professional counseling organizations provide professional development opportunities. Also, presenting at conferences can serve as an opportunity to grow skills as a future SCS.

Another consideration of clinical supervision that can benefit school counselors is how it increases their professional self-efficacy. Bledsoe and colleagues (2021) uncovered that clinical supervision increased school counselors' confidence, empowerment, and professional growth. Furthermore, clinical supervision provides guidance and resources to minimize anxiety and equip school counselors with the self-

reliance to confer with other school and mental health professionals within and outside the school community (Bledsoe et al., 2021). Several participants in this study corroborated this notion by sharing how they felt validated, supported, and more confident when they were school counselors on how to handle specific situations because they had a supervisor who understood the school counselor role and knew how to navigate the nuances of particular situations such as a risk assessment and child protective services referral.

Also, additional research conducted by Tang (2020) added that school counselor self-efficacy increased for new and veteran school counselors with school-counseling-specific supervision provided by a qualified individual and can serve as a “conduit for exposure to new best practices, professional identity maintenance, and a safe space to be reflective” of current counseling practices (p. 9).

Finally, Mullen and Lambie (2016) suggest school counselors seek professional development opportunities and participate in supervision to increase self-efficacy. Each participant indicated that, when they were a school counselor, they participated in professional development provided by their school district, workshops, or conferences. Consistent with Cashwell and Dooley’s (2001) findings that counselors who received supervision had higher levels of self-efficacy and Mullen and Lambie’s (2016) finding that school counselors’ self-efficacy increased with programmatic delivery, the present findings suggest that it is plausible for SCSs’ self-efficacy to increase with more professional development and exposure to providing clinical supervision. Clinical supervision can serve as a resource to grow more SCS, monitor direct and indirect

services provided, monitor and assess skills, strengths and needs, and increase school counselors' professional identity and self-efficacy.

Implications For School Counseling Supervisors

School counseling supervisors (SCS), according to ASCA (2019b), are tasked with the primary responsibility to support the development and implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs based on the school community's identified needs and areas of growth., advocate for student needs based on student data, and ensure school counselors are spending 80% or more of their time providing direct and indirect services to students (ASCA, 2019c). Also, SCS collaborates with experts to ensure regular professional development, consultation, and supervision are provided to school counselors (ASCA 2019b). Another consideration identified by participants from this study is a unified job description that identifies the appropriate responsibilities of a SCS rather than non-school-counseling administrators setting the job descriptions.

Based on the responses from participants in this study, recommendations for SCS are to participate in site supervisor training provided by a local university is beneficial, seek a mentor, and peer consultation/supervision with other professionals. Also, professional preparation academically and professional learning shared by participants through additional coursework, trainings, conferences, workshops, and serving as a site supervisor and mentor seems to have provided the support desired and increased participants' professional self-efficacy.

Advocacy is embedded in the school counseling director/coordinator role, as defined by ASCA (2019b). As an advocate, SCS should share the latest research on how

clinical supervision benefits school counselors by providing students with direct and indirect counseling services. Advocating for the SCS role is based on the understanding that the more support there is for SCS, the more support for school counselors, who ultimately support the needs of students. Tang's (2020) research investigated the impact of school counseling supervision on practicing school counselors' self-efficacy in developing a comprehensive school counseling program. The quasi-experimental study revealed that participants who received supervision significantly increased self-efficacy. Also, Mullen and colleagues (2016) examined school counselors' general self-efficacy, ethical and legal self-efficacy, and ethical and legal knowledge. They suggested school districts can "require supervision or peer consultation groups for new counselors to enhance their development of general self-efficacy and legal knowledge" (Mullen et al., 2016; p. 426.)

Collaboration with local universities may serve as another resource to support the SCS role and the needs of SC. Goodman-Scott and team (2020) suggest that district SCS collaborate with CE to facilitate meetings and initiatives to discuss trends and needs in each setting (p. 8). Also, researchers suggest district-level SCS could serve as guest lectures to share details on the "realities of the field" (Goodman-Scott et al., 2020a; p.8).

Furthermore, peer clinical supervision is a strategy to support school counselors and mitigate the challenge of accessibility and availability of SCS to provide clinical supervision. Brott and colleagues (2021) provide recommendations for school counselors to support clinical supervision to address the mental health needs of children and adolescents. SCS indicated that collaborating and consulting with peers was most meaningful to them to brainstorm, identify interventions and learn new techniques to help

students. Quintana and Gooden-Alexis (2020) define consultation as “a professional relationship in which individuals meet to seek advice, information and/or deliberation to address a student’s need” (p.88). Often peer consultation serves as a form of clinical supervision in the absence of scheduled, formal clinical supervision. Brott et al. (2021) propose that peer clinical supervision “can provide the needed support network among school counselors to maintain their wellness and professional competence as an ethical practice” (p. 54). Peer supervision/consultation was identified as meaningful support to SCS when they were SC and may support SCS as they strive to provide regular structured supervision to SC.

Implications For Counselor Educators and Programs

This study uncovered the professional schema shared by SCS perceptions and experiences of their preparation to become a SCS. Since 1965, it was suggested that “directors” of guidance take course work in school finance, building construction, curriculum, special education, data processing, and supervision and management (Hays, 1971). In 1971, counselor educators reported no course in the organization and administration of guidance services (Hays; p. 126). The lack of coursework and guidance may have fueled and/or shifted the focus of supervision and diluted clinical supervision to transform into school administration. More recently, Betters-Bubon and colleagues (2021) uncovered four themes of school counselor educators’ perceptions of changes in the profession, including a range of reactions, perceptions that school counseling is less valued in the counseling profession, inconsistent school counselor educator identity, and ardent advocacy. Based on the responses from SCEs, researchers suggest SCEs consider

an identity “inclusive of both counseling and education” because SCE identity may influence the identities of practicing school counselors (Betters-Bubon et al., p. 47).

Furthermore, counselor educators must scaffold peer clinical supervision skills as SCIT begins training (Brott et al., 2021). Presently, counselor educators are charged with training highly qualified school counselors to perform the role and responsibilities they have been trained in through their coursework, practicum, and internship experiences. For many SCITs, their professional schema is influenced by the counseling program they attend, the coursework, and who serves as their program and site supervisors.

Furthermore, recent research has examined the school counselor educators’ experiences regarding recent changes within the counseling profession and has raised the question of “inconsistent school counselor educator identity” (Betters-Bubon et al., 2021; p. 45).

However, an important consideration is that those SCITs may become SCS in the future (CACREP, 2015). The scheduled and structured clinical supervision counseling programs and training provided to site supervisors are fundamentally the ethical and professional responsibility of counselor educators (CACREP, 2015).

Moreover, providing direct exposure to supervision models, modalities, and types of school counseling supervision at the master’s level may help prepare SCITs in the future who pursue leadership opportunities to serve as SCSs. Providing explicit explanations during clinical supervision sessions to SCITs during their practicum and internship experiences may benefit the professional schema and self-efficacy of future SCS. Current research by Bledsoe and colleagues (2021) and Tang (2020) propose graduate programs teach school-counseling-specific supervision. Tang (2020) recommends for counseling education programs integrate “school-counseling-specific

supervision for their students to increase self-efficacy related to school counseling best practice” (p.9).

Bagwell & Brott (2019) used the ASCA (2019e) School Counselor Professional Standards and Competencies to develop the suite of supervision which aligns the administrative, programmatic, and clinical supervision practices (p. 95-102). Using this resource to prepare SCITs to understand the type of supervision they should receive and provide in the future would be most beneficial. Additionally, this use of the suite of supervision, inspired by the ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards and Competencies (2019e) and the ASCA National Model (2019c), which is recommended in Virginia, as a guide for the development and implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs, would also serve as a tool in site supervision training to reinforce the expectations and understanding of the role of a SCS. More specifically, regarding clinical supervision, Bagwell & Brott (2019) aligned professional foundation areas with example behaviors such as applied developmental, learning, counseling educational theories and demonstrated understanding of the impact of cultural, social, and environmental influences on student success and opportunities. They also suggest that direct and indirect services such as short-term counseling in a small group and individual settings and consultation to support student achievement are supported by clinical supervision (Bagwell & Brott, 2019). Finally, planning and assessment can be supported using an appropriate school counselor evaluation process (ASCA, 2019; Bagwell & Brott, 2019).

Brown and colleagues (2017-2018) examined the impact of the school counselor supervision Model (SCSM; Luke & Bernard, 2006) on the self-efficacy of school

counseling site supervisors and found a significant positive relationship between supervision training and supervisor self-efficacy. Although this training supports school counseling site supervisors, it may be plausible to suggest that similar training should be provided to school counselors interested in becoming a SCS. All the participants in this study indicated interest and training in school counseling supervision.

This study revealed that mentorship and serving as site supervisors were beneficial preparatory experiences for participants who became SCS. Continued collaboration between universities and school districts to provide training on supervising SCITs may cross over how SCS supervises practicing SC. Also, if counselor educators serve as collaborators and consultants on the latest researched best practices for school counseling supervision and models, this may further develop SCS professional schema and increase SCS professional self-efficacy (Borders et al., 2014; Gysbers & Henderson, 2012; Luke & Bernard, 2006; Wood & Rayle, 2006; Peterson & Deuschle, 2006; Ockerman et al., 2013).

Research conducted by Boyd and Holthouse (1975) shared the strategy of counselor educators at local universities to provide training on supervision to “head” counselors using three approaches: (1) therapeutic, (2) behavioral, and (3) systems (Boyd & Walter, 1975). As a result of this collaboration, the head counselors rewrote their job descriptions to include supervision (Boyd & Walter, 1975). Almost 50 years ago, the partnership between counselor educators and school districts was encouraged to support the profession. Some participants reported they have established relationships with universities to facilitate this type of professional learning and have found the training to be a site supervisor very beneficial in their role as a SCS.

As evidenced by the responses from the participants in the study, navigating the socio-political climate to prepare future school counselors and future SCS presents unique challenges. For example, participants described challenges in providing clinical supervision and combatting racist practices; when there are political barriers, it is vital to demonstrate systemic change and empower those who witness racist practices that cause harm to school counselors and the students they serve. The participants' views were consistent with Mason and colleagues (2021), who expanded the transforming school counseling initiative tenets through a conceptual article to “explicitly” prepare future school counselors for antiracist practices (p. 4).

Implications for Professional Counseling Organizations

National and state professional counseling organizations (e.g., ASCA, ACA, ACES, VSCA, VCA, VASC) should continue to provide professional development and training opportunities for counselors to strengthen their professional identity. CACREP provides standards for counselor training that emphasizes counselor competence and identity development. Furthermore, through previous research, technical school counseling supervision training is desired and corroborated by participants from this study. Goodman-Scott and colleagues (2020) suggested that collaboration in preparing school counselors and continuing professional learning is paramount. Furthermore, specific training for SCS on models, types, and modalities of school counseling supervision would be beneficial to infuse in the training of all counselors to understand the unique, multifaceted nature of the school counseling specialty and how supervisors and counselor educators can support the multidimensional supervision needs of school counselors.

ACA, ASCA, ACES, VCA, and VSCA, have a vision or mission to provide professional development for counselors. VASC has the vision to strengthen the professional identity of school counselors. These professional organizations should intentionally seek opportunities to support SCS by providing professional learning opportunities, including training on school counseling supervision models, modalities, and types. Also, outreach to SCS through training efforts to promote specialized school counseling supervision training is warranted and needed.

To aid in navigating the networked systemic challenges SCS face, Betters-Bubon and colleagues (2021) identified systemic concerns and challenges related to what SCE can do to support the school counseling profession. Three identified recommendations were professional organizations with accreditations, such as CACREP and ASCA Specialized Professional Association (SPA), providing resources for SCEs. Second, researchers recommend that SCEs use their leadership roles in organizations to create a home for collaboration across different specialties to guide policy, preparation, and evaluation (Betters-Bubon et al., 2021). A final suggestion encourages SCEs to advocate within and across ecological systems (Better-Bubon et al., 2021).

Implications for Policy Stakeholder Leaders

School districts are encouraged to create school counseling supervisor role descriptions and expectations that align with appropriate tasks for SCS. ASCA (2019b) developed guidelines for the essential roles of school counseling directors/coordinators that could serve as a resource for creating a SCS job description. Participants recommend training specifically for SCS. The scope of the responsibilities is different; however, clinical supervision at all levels is meaningful and beneficial, and it supports the

professional schema and professional self-efficacy of SCS. Also, non-school-counseling administrators should be invited to participate in training to understand the multidimensional, multifaceted, nuanced role of the school counselor and the SCS. This may aid them in better understanding the needs and type of support that might best meet the needs of the districts and, ultimately, students and the school community.

The VDOE presently does not have a job description for SCS. There are provisions, technical assistance, and mentorship opportunities; however, there will continue to be disparities between districts without guidance to ensure SCS are performing appropriate duties. The lack of guidance on the SCS job descriptions may be partly responsible for the inconsistent caseloads of DLSCS providing supervision to 50 to over 100 school counselors based on the disclosure of participants. The VDOE might consider the following suggestions to recruit, promote and retain school counselors and SCS. First, develop a job description to include appropriate knowledge and skills for SCS to include supervision explicitly. Second, provide guidance on the number of years one should have experience as a school counselor before becoming a SCS. For example, several participants indicated that their school district required a minimum of three years as a school counselor to serve as a mentor. Also, some counselor education preparation programs require school counseling site supervisors to have three or more years of experience to serve as site supervisors. Third, consider developing a SCS certification endorsement that aligns with the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of a SCS. Although some school districts require SCS to hold an administration/supervision endorsement/certification, many of the administrative certification programs do not

include school counseling administrative, clinical, and programmatic coursework and training.

As Neal and Neal (2013) discussed, the networked ecological systems may be applied to the micro, macro, meso, and chrono systems of the SCS ecological systems. The role of the SCS requires guidance and support from national and state institutions and organizations to define the role and responsibilities of SCS better, establish appropriate ratios and caseload sizes, and accommodations to build the capacity for specialized SCS training. The development of guidelines, frameworks, and job descriptions may create a pipeline of SCS to mitigate the issues of school counseling clinical supervision access.

Diving more into a micro-level of the ecological system, McMahon and colleagues (2014) attempt to develop an “intentional” model of ecological school counseling. The conceptual framework’s basic assumptions are that schools are part of an interconnected web of subsystems and suprasystems; healthy, well-functioning school systems are dynamic; balanced, and flexible; diversity within school systems is necessary and adaptive; schools use feedback to identify and address emerging issues; meaning is both constructed and experienced within the school, and their subsystems; and healthy schools are sustainable (p. 462-463). As participants describe their role and responsibilities as SCS, applying this framework may apply to SCS and how they provide clinical supervision. McMahon and colleagues (2014) stated, “it is not uncommon for school counselors, during a day, to move from the micro-level of working with individual students to the meso-level of working with large groups, to the macro level of collaborating with stakeholders on larger policy issues” (p. 469). The same could be said

for SCS. Based on stories shared by study participants, SCS fluctuates between and across levels, from providing individual clinical supervision to the group and professional development to advocacy work at the district, state, and national levels on understanding the role of the school counselor and SCS.

In contrast to historical research studies on supervision, this study identified the integration of administrative, clinical, and programmatic supervision and aligned more with contemporary studies investigating school counseling supervision. Hays (1971) suggested that the function of supervision “should only be concerned with the improvement of counseling skills” (p. 124) and function outside of administration. Hays (1971) also implied that pupil service administrators should embrace their role and “behave” as administrators. (p. 125). Unlike more recent studies, the nuanced supervision types identified by Barret and Schmidt (1986) and later supported by other studies indicate a shift in the role of the SCS (Roberts & Borders, 1994; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Luke & Bernard, 2006).

Limitations

There are several limitations of this study that explored the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. The purpose of the study was to provide a rich, detailed account of the perceptions and experiences of SCS who received and provided clinical supervision. The overarching research question asked: What are the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors? The nature of the study and the guiding research question prompted the use of IPA to investigate this phenomenon.

The first limitation of this study is the researcher is a novice in IPA methodologies. To mitigate concerns related to IPA, the researcher sought guidance and support from research committee members, methodologists, peer reviewers, and researched articles and texts to gain knowledge and skills in conducting an IPA study. The researcher also self-reflected through journaling to identify questions, bracket thoughts and feelings throughout the research process, created an audit trail with all research documents, and met monthly for consultation.

Another limitation of this study is participants voluntarily participated. Participants selected for the study were SCS with a pupil services license in Virginia. The criteria for participation did not limit the type of supervisor. This study identified two types of school counselor supervisors with convergent and divergent perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision. One of SCS identified was district-level school counseling supervisors (DLSCS), who supervise all school counselors in a district or a grade level. The second type of supervisor was school building-level school counseling supervisors (SBLSCS), who supervise school counselors within the same building. Also, important to note that five of the SBLSCS participants have student caseloads from 50 to 300 and supervise one to five school counselors. Most DLSCS participants have no student caseload and have a supervision caseload of one DLSCS to six to over one hundred school counselors.

In addition, half of the participants have less than three years' experience as a SCS. Interestingly, these participants have only served as a SCS during a global pandemic. The intersectionality of the roles and responsibilities of the SCS and the macro events such as COVID, the racial and social injustices, the increase in mental health

needs, and the political climate in the United States and Virginia undoubtedly have had an impact on supervision.

Furthermore, one district-level supervisor served as a practicing school counselor with a caseload, while four supervisors had no caseload. Research reports that other school district-level administrators (i.e., student services directors, student services coordinators, and superintendent cabinet staff) often supervise school counselors; however, they may not hold a school counseling or pupil services license (Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Roberts & Border, 1994). Although a range of roles, titles, and caseloads emerged across all the participants, the majority had similar responsibilities as a DLSCS or SBLSCS. Another limitation of this study is the demographic diversity of the sample. Although there was some demographic diversity in the participants, the majority of the participants were female, with only one male. Most participants were from suburban areas, and most identified as White.

Another limitation for consideration when reviewing these findings is although most participants had some form of additional training or experience (e.g., served as a mentor, site supervisor for SCIT, additional coursework in administration), one participant began their role as a SCS with no previous school counseling experiences. Serving as a SCS directly with no post-graduate school counseling experience was a unique circumstance that was not anticipated, yet provided additional insight for understanding the perceptions and experiences of a SCS who has had minimal experience as a SC.

Moreover, another limitation of the study is the definition of supervision in the school system. Research has identified and described at least three different types of

supervision provided to school counselors to include administrative, clinical, and programmatic (Boyd & Walter, 1975; Barret & Schmidt, 1986; Roberts & Borders, 1994; Dollarhide & Miller, 2006; Bledsoe et al., 2021). This study focused on clinical supervision; however, it recognized the additional types of supervision, including administrative and programmatic, based on the responses from the participants.

A final limitation regarding this study is the positionality of the researcher. The researcher has professional experience as a school counselor and three years of experience as a SCS. As a former practicing school counselor and school counseling supervisor, the researcher kept a reflexive journal to record thoughts and ideas related to the study and share thoughts and feelings with committee chairs to minimize bias and navigate the research process appropriately.

Areas of Future Research

To address the lack of existing theory on school counseling supervisors' clinical supervision experiences, future research utilizing grounded theory methodology could establish a theory of considerations and influences on SCS development through preparation, professional experiences, professional memberships, and leadership opportunities. A theory-building approach would require a vigorous sample size with meticulous methodology with a homogenous sample sizes inclusion criteria, data collection, and analysis. Developing a theory of school counseling clinical supervision in counselor education could facilitate the establishment of a framework specific to school counseling supervision that counselor education programs could implement. This theory could be developmentally integrated into master's level programs and expanded for doctoral-level training.

Creating a model and/or framework of school counseling supervision to be studied using quantitative methods may also create pathways of empirically-based studies to establish appropriate assessments of SCS skills, knowledge, competencies, and standards. Furthermore, it may inform the development of proper coursework and certification training for SCS.

Additionally, more qualitative studies of SCS clinical supervision experiences could provide insights into the essence of school counseling clinical supervision. Data from the current IPA study could help school counselors who pursue SCS positions, current SCS, counselor educators, professional organizations, school districts and state educational organizations to be informed on the unique, nuanced needs of SCS. A case study approach for future qualitative research could explore the roles and tasks of SCS across different states. This type of research would provide a detailed account of the experiential nature of SCS. Also, participant action-based research could serve as an opportunity for first-hand collaboration with SCS to identify additional strategies, frameworks, and models to inform evidenced-based best practices relevant to the SCS role.

A mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative for future research could also investigate the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. Examining the written job descriptions and the performed duties could provide insight into future guidelines for appropriate responsibilities, SCS ratios, and use of time.

Furthermore, prospective studies could investigate particular variables found among SCS who received and provided clinical supervision. Some possible variables could be exposure to school counseling supervision models, modalities, and types,

additional training and or certifications specifically for school counseling supervision, intentional professional experiences (e.g., mentorship, site supervisor), professional school counselor identity, professional self-efficacy as a SCS, professional quality of life (e.g., SCS wellness, SCS burnout), socio-political factors (e.g., executive orders) and global events (e.g., COVID).

Conclusions

This study expands our knowledge of the clinical supervision experiences of SCS. It can be a beacon to navigate how important clinical supervision illuminates school counselors' support for students' mental health needs. *#S.O.S.*³ This study explored how SCS make sense of their perceptions and experiences of receiving and providing clinical supervision. This study utilized the IPA approach to offer a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of clinical supervision perceptions and experiences of SCS. This pioneer study used the IPA methodology to uncover SCS perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision. Ten practicing SCS in Virginia were interviewed to gain insight and understand the perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision. This study provides a rich, detailed narrative account of SCS perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision. Five superordinate themes emerged and were identified across all the interviews to illuminate how SCS interpret their perceptions and experiences of receiving and providing clinical supervision. Overall, these superordinate themes illustrate that SCS perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision are part of their professional preparation, professional identity, professional self-efficacy, professional challenges, and professional quality. These findings add to the expanding research literature on school counseling clinical supervision.

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Appendix A

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University IRB Approval Letter



Division of Scholarly Integrity and
Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4120 (MC 0497)
300 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-3732
irb@vt.edu
<http://www.research.vt.edu/sirc/hrpp>

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 10, 2022
TO: Tameka O Grimes, Anaid Danyelle Shaver, Gerard Francis Lawson
FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572)
PROTOCOL TITLE: #SOS³: A Phenomenological Study of School Counseling Supervisors' Clinical Supervision Experiences
IRB NUMBER: 21-1082

Effective January 10, 2022, the Virginia Tech Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review under 45 CFR 46.104 (d) category(ies) 2(ii).

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit an amendment to the HRPP for a determination.

This exempt determination does not apply to any collaborating institution(s). The Virginia Tech HRPP and IRB cannot provide an exemption that overrides the jurisdiction of a local IRB or other institutional mechanism for determining exemptions.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

<https://secure.research.vt.edu/external/irb/responsibilities.htm>

(Please review responsibilities before beginning your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Determined As: **Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.104(d) category(ies) 2(ii)**
Protocol Determination Date: **January 10, 2022**

ASSOCIATED FUNDING:

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

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Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

Subject line: School Counseling Supervisor Clinical Supervision Experiences Research Request

Dear School Counseling Supervisor/Coordinator/Director/Lead,

Hello! My name is Anaid Shaver, and I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. My dissertation research is an interpretative phenomenological analysis of the clinical supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors.

My dissertation co-chairpeople are Gerard F. Lawson, Ph.D., and Tameka O. Grimes, Ph.D., and this study is approved by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB 21-1082). I believe this research will fill a gap in counselor education and supervision literature by exploring the clinical supervision experiences of current school counseling supervisors.

- Participants
 - Individual who holds a master's degree in counseling or school counseling.
 - Individual holds a Virginia Pupil Services License from the Virginia Department of Education.
 - School Counseling Supervisors/Coordinators/Directors/Leads in Virginia and who received and provide clinical supervision to one or more school counselors in the same school district/division they work.
 - A school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director/lead is an individual who provides leadership to ensure individual and group supervision to school counselors in practice.
- Online Interviews (approximate times)
 - 60- 90 minutes initial interview
 - 15-minute review of initial interview transcript
 - 15-minute follow-up interview
- Acknowledgment
 - \$10 gift card to ACA bookstore, ASCA bookstore, Amazon or Starbucks, after each interview
 - Access to a repository with information and resources on school counseling supervision

If you are interested in participating in this study and meet the eligibility criteria, please click on the link to proceed. If you know of potential participants, please feel free to forward this email to them. If school counseling supervisors are interested in learning more about this research, they may contact me directly by email at anaidshaver@vt.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration in assisting me with my dissertation research.

With deepest appreciation,
Anaid D. Shaver

Appendix C

Participant Invitation letter

Subject line: School Counseling Supervisor Clinical Supervision Experience Research Participation.

Dear School Counseling Supervisor,

Hello! My name is Anaid Shaver, and I am inviting you to participate in a voluntary research study for the completion of my dissertation. I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VT). You were referred to me by a school counseling leader from a professional counseling and/or school counseling organization in Virginia who believes your experience and voice would provide insight to purpose of this research study. The purpose of this research study is to fill an identified gap in understanding the lived experiences and perspectives of school counseling supervisors' clinical supervision experiences. The information collected from this study has the potential to inform counselor educators, school district, and state administrators how to better understand the needs of school counseling supervisors and provide insight into the systemic supports that will aid school counselors to best support students' academic, social-emotional wellbeing, and career readiness.

This study has received IRB approval (insert IRB number) and is supervised by Dr. Gerard F. Lawson and Dr. Tameka O. Grimes, Co-chairs of my dissertation committee. A school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director/lead is an individual who provides leadership to ensure individual and group supervision to school counselors in practice. Participants must be 18 years or older and meet ALL the eligibility criteria for this study which includes:

- Hold ONLY a master's degree in counseling or school counseling.
- Hold a Virginia Department of Education Pupil Services license as a school counselor for pre-k-12 grade levels.
- Currently employed full-time in a public school district in the commonwealth of Virginia.
- Provide clinical supervision to one or more school counselors in the same school district you work.

Participation in this study involves completing a 10-minute demographic and supervision background information survey and a 60-90-minute virtual interview using HIPPA Zoom that will be recorded and transcribed for the purpose of data analysis. Participants will review de-identified transcripts of the initial interview for accuracy and feedback. A 15-minute (approximate) follow-up interview will take place one to three weeks following the initial interview to gather information on participant reflection from the initial interview and answer any questions regarding the study.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the duration of the study. An electronic copy of the informed consent will be provided once you consent to participate in the study.

This is a voluntary, non-funded research study. Consent to withdraw may occur at any time.

Please click on the link below to proceed if you meet the eligibility criteria and would like to participate in the study.

You will be asked to review the consent to take part in the research study, complete a demographic and supervision background survey, and schedule a date and time for the initial interview.

Please email Anaid D. Shaver at anaidshaver@vt.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you again for your willingness to share your experiences and perspectives for this research study.

Sincerely,

Anaid D. Shaver, MS

Doctoral Candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision

Virginia Tech

- I meet the eligibility criteria.
- I do not meet the eligibility criteria.

Appendix D

Information Sheet for Participation in Research Study



Information Sheet for Participation in a Research Study

Principal Investigator:

Tameka O. Grimes, Ph.D., 540.231.3323, togrimes@vt.edu

Co-Investigators:

Gerard F. Lawson, Ph.D., 540.231.9703, glawson@vt.edu

Anaid D. Shaver, M.S., 256.565.4512, anaidshaver@vt.edu

IRB# and Title of Study:

HRPP Protocol #21-1082

#SOS³: A Phenomenological Study of School Counseling Supervisors' Clinical Supervision Experiences

You are invited to participate in a research study. This form includes information about the study and contact information if you have any questions.

I am a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at Virginia Tech, and I am conducting this research as part of my completion of my dissertation. This study has received IRB approval (HRPP Protocol #21-1082) and is supervised by Dr. Tameka O. Grimes and Dr. Gerard F. Lawson, Co-chairs of my dissertation committee. You were referred to me by a school counseling leader from a professional counseling and/or school counseling organization in Virginia who believes your experience and voice would provide insight to purpose of this research study. The purpose of this research study is to fill an identified gap in understanding the lived experiences and perspectives of school counseling supervisors' clinical supervision experiences. The information collected from this study has the potential to inform counselor educators, school district, and state administrators how to better understand the needs of school counseling supervisors and provide insight into the systemic supports that will aid school counselors to best support students' academic, social-emotional wellbeing, and career readiness.

➤ WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

This study involves interview-based research to investigate the supervision experiences of school counseling supervisors. You are invited to participate in the study if you are 18 years or older and (a) hold only a master's degree in counseling or school counseling, (b) hold a Virginia Department of Education Pupil Services license for school counseling Prek-12 (c) currently employed full-time in a public school district in the commonwealth of Virginia, (d) provide clinical supervision to one or more school counselors in the same school district you work, and (e) agree to audio/video recording of interviews.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will complete a survey, and two interviews. As part of the study, you will complete a 10-minute demographic and supervision background information survey and a 60-90-minute virtual interview using HIPPA Zoom that will be audio/video recorded and transcribed for the purpose of data analysis. You will be asked open-ended questions about your role, preparation, and clinical supervision experiences. You will review your de-identified transcript of the initial interview for accuracy and feedback. A 15-minute (approximate) follow-up interview will take place one to three weeks following the initial interview to gather information on your reflection from the initial interview and answer any questions you have regarding the study.

The study should take approximately 100 minutes of your time.

We do not anticipate any risks from completing this study.

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so

➤ CONFIDENTIALITY

We will do our best to protect the confidentiality of the information we gather from you, but we cannot guarantee 100% confidentiality.

Any data collected during this research study will be kept confidential by the researchers. Your interview will be video/audio-recorded using a digital recorder and then transcribed. The researchers will code the transcripts using a pseudonym (false name). The recordings will be uploaded to a secure password-protected computer in the researcher's office. The researchers will maintain a list that includes a key to the code. The master key and the recordings will be stored for 3 years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

➤ WHO CAN I TALK TO?

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Anaid D. Shaver by email at anaidshaver@vt.edu, Dr. Gerard F. Lawson,

glawson@vt.edu, or Dr. Tameka O. Grimes, togrimes@vt.edu. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the Virginia Tech HRPP Office at 540-231-3732 (irb@vt.edu).

Please print out a copy of this information sheet for your records.

If you would like to participate in this study, click yes to begin or no to exit.

https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0BXZ7f50JISWD0G

Appendix E

Demographic and Supervision Experience Background Information Survey

Thank you for your participation in this research study and willingness to complete this survey! Please answer each item based on your current position as a school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director/lead. This information will be used to gain an understanding of your background and supervision experiences. This survey consists of 14 items and will take approximately 10-minutes to complete. Remember, this is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

1. What is your age in years? [slider]
2. How do you describe your gender identity? [text entry]
3. How do you describe your racial heritage? [text entry]
4. How do you describe your ethnic heritage? [text entry]
5. How many years have you worked as a school counselor? [slider]
6. How long have you worked as a school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director/lead? [slider]
7. How many school counselors do you supervise? [multiple choice]
 - 1-5
 - 6-15
 - 16-30
 - 31-50
 - 51-100
 - More than 100
8. What grade-level of school counselors do you supervise? [select all that apply]
 - Elementary (k-5)
 - Middle (6-8)
 - High (9-12)
 - Secondary (6-12)
 - Traditional (k-8)
 - Other
9. How would you describe your school district? [multiple choice]
 - Rural

- Suburban
 - Urban
10. Which is your Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) region? [multiple choice]
- Region 1 Central Virginia
 - Region 2 Tidewater
 - Region 3 Northern Neck
 - Region 4 Northern Virginia
 - Region 5 Valley
 - Region 6 Western Virginia
 - Region 7 Southwest
 - Region 8 Southside
11. What is an approximate percentage of students in your school district/division that qualify for the following subgroups:
- Economically Disadvantaged [slider]
 - English Language Learners [slider]
 - Special Education Recipients [slider]
 - I do not know
12. Please indicate if you are a licensed professional counselor (LPC).
- Yes
 - No
 - I am working towards my LPC.
13. Please indicate if you have any approved clinical supervision (ACS) certification.
- Yes
 - No
 - I am working towards my ACS.
14. Please indicate which professional organizations you are affiliated. [select all that apply]
- American Counseling Association
 - American School Counselor Association
 - Virginia Counselors Association
 - Virginia Alliance for School Counseling
 - Virginia School Counselor Association
 - Other [text entry]

15. Would you be interested in receiving a link to a repository of information and resources on school counseling supervision?

- Yes, I consent to receiving a link to a supervision repository.
- No, I do NOT consent to receiving a link to a supervision repository.
- I do not know.

16. If participant selects “yes”, Please type in a secure email address to send the supervision repository link.

17. In appreciation for your time and sharing your experiences, would you be interested in receiving a \$10 gift card?

- Yes
- No

18. If participant selects “yes”, Which type of gift card would you like to receive?

- ACA bookstore
- ASCA bookstore
- Amazon
- Starbucks

19. Please type in a secure email address to send the gift card electronically.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this survey.

You will be redirected to a Google Calendar to schedule an interview appointment.

I have dates and times available in January 2022.

Click on an open appointment slot to sign up.

If no slots are available, please try a different time range.

To cancel an appointment you've already booked, leave the sign-up page and delete the event from your own calendar.

If you have any issues with scheduling your interview appointment, please email me at anaidshaver@vt.edu.

I look forward to meeting with you!

THANK YOU!

Appendix F

Interview Guide

I want to thank you for taking the time to talk with me about your supervision experiences. Do you have any questions about the information sheet I shared by email? At this point, I would like to obtain your verbal consent to participate in this study. By agreeing, you acknowledge that you understand the information sheet, purpose of the study, and conditions of the project and that all your current questions have been answered. Also, do you agree to have this conversation video/audio-recorded? (*Receive Participant Verbal Consent*). I have sent your \$10.00 gift card electronically to the email address you initially corresponded with me. (*Send the study information sheet to the participant before the interview. Participant consent will be obtained verbally before the interview. The researcher will send the gift card electronically to the participant's email address from which they initially corresponded*).

Semi-Structured Interview

Introduction

As I mentioned to you earlier, this interview is about your supervision experiences. You are invited to describe and reflect on any experiences you determine relevant to the supervision experiences you have received post-graduate studies and provide to school counselors. There are no right or wrong answers to the following interview questions. Also, I want to remind you that you do not have to answer any questions I ask you and that you are free to disclose or not disclose anything you choose. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Warm-Up Question

Please describe your position and how long you have served in your current position.

Questions and Probes

1. How would you describe your role as a school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director?

RQ1

Probes

a. What is a typical day like for you as school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director ?

b. What are your responsibilities as a school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director?

2. What was your preparation to become a school counseling supervisor/coordinator/director?

RQ1

Probes

a. What course work have you taken?

b. What trainings or workshops have you participate in?

Cue participants about the different types of supervision (administrative, programmatic, and clinical) define each supervision (This information can be included in the invitation? Explain that the following questions will focus on clinical supervision experiences.

3. How would you describe the Clinical supervision you received as a school counselor? RQ2

Probes

- a. Describe a supervision experience.
- b. What aspects of the supervision experience were most meaningful to you?
- c. What aspects of the supervision experience were most challenging to you?

4. How would you describe the clinical supervision you provide to school counselors? RQ3

Probes

- a. Describe a recent supervision session.
- b. What aspects of the supervision experience are most meaningful to you?
- c. What aspects of the supervision experience are most challenging to you?

5. How do you address the clinical supervision needs of school counselors? RQ3

Probes

- a. Describe how you conduct clinical supervision.
- b. What aspects of clinical supervision are most meaningful to you?
- c. What aspects of clinical supervision are most challenging to you?

6. How does clinical supervision influence direct counseling services school counselors provide RQ4 to students?

7. How does clinical supervision influence counseling referrals and consultation services? RQ4

8. What else would you like to share, if anything?

Would you be interested in receiving a link to a supervision repository of information and resources on school counseling supervision? (Researcher will obtain verbal consent from participants).

- Yes, I consent to receiving a link to a supervision repository.
- No, I do NOT consent to receiving a link to a supervision repository.
- I do not know.

(If participant indicates “yes” then the following statement will be asked). Please share what type of information and resources would be most beneficial to you? (If participants says, “I do not know,” then the participant will be asked during the follow-up interview the same question).

In appreciation for your time and sharing your experiences, would you be interested in receiving a \$10 gift card?

- Yes
- No

If participant verbally says “yes,” the researcher will ask, “Which type of gift card would you like to receive?”

- ACA bookstore
- ASCA bookstore
- Amazon
- Starbucks

- I do not want a gift card.

You will receive the gift card electronically before the follow-up interview. (Researcher will confirm participants email address).

Thank you for your time and effort in participating in this interview. It has been great to talk with you and to hear about your experiences. Also, I will send an electronic copy of the transcript from this initial interview to you before the follow-up interview for your review and reflection prior to the follow-up interview. (If participant consents to receiving a link to the supervision repository and/or gift card, the researcher will confirm participant's email address and share link when sending transcript from initial interview). I want to go ahead and schedule a date and time to follow up with you in one to three weeks. Do you have a date and time in mind that will work best.

Appendix G

Follow Up Interview Guide

(The follow-up interview will occur 1-3 weeks after the initial interview via the same video conferencing software as the initial interview. The researcher will have sent the transcript of the initial interview to the participant before the follow-up interview. The researcher will send the gift card electronically to the participant's email address from which they initially corresponded).

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this follow-up interview! The questions for this follow-up interview are expected to take approximately 15 minutes to complete. These questions focus on any additional thoughts, reflections, experiences, and observations you may have had since the initial interview and are based on your review and reflection of the initial interview transcript. Before we begin the follow-up interview, what questions do you have at this point? At this point, I would like to obtain your verbal consent to participate in this follow-up interview. By agreeing, you acknowledge that you understand the consent form and conditions of the project and that all your current questions have been answered. Also, do you agree to have this conversation audio-recorded? I have sent your \$10.00 gift card electronically to the email address from which you initially corresponded with me (The researcher will send the gift card electronically to the participant's email address from which they initially corresponded). Would you like to proceed with the follow-up interview?

Follow-Up Interview Questions

1. Have you had any additional reflections or experiences related to your clinical supervision experiences since the initial interview?

- If yes, ask the participant to share and elaborate.

2. Have you noticed anything different about your clinical supervision experiences since the initial interview?

If yes, ask the participant to describe the differences they noticed. Also, ask the participant to share any reflections about the differences they have noticed.

3. What additional thoughts about your clinical supervision experiences would you like to share?

Conclusion

Again, thank you for participating in this follow-up interview and completing this research study. You have made a significant contribution to this study and the future of supervision for counselor education and supervision. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this research study.

Appendix H

Superordinate Themes, Subthemes, and Clustering of Themes Table

Superordinate Theme	Subthemes & Clustering of Themes
Professional Preparation (PP)	<i>Academic Preparation as a School Counselor</i> Coursework Practicum Internship Supervision Administration & Supervision Certification <i>Intentional Professional Learning Experiences</i> Teaching Mentoring SCIT Site Supervisor Training Serving as a SCIT Site Supervisor Member of Professional School Counseling Organizations Serving on School Building Level Leadership Teams/Committees Serving on District Level Committee Leadership Teams/Committee Serving on Special Education Services Team Collaboration Consultation Peer Supervision
Professional Identity (PI)	Expectations of School Counseling Supervisors Self-Reflection as a School Counselor

Self-Reflection as a School Counseling Supervisor

Self-Perception as a School Counseling Supervisor

Perception of School Counselor Role by Non-School Counseling Administrators

Professional Self-Efficacy (PSE)

Imposter Syndrome

Self as School Counselor Leader

Self as School Counseling Advocate

Professional Challenges (PC)

Macro/Micro/Sociopolitical

COVID/Pandemic Impact

School Community Mental Health Concerns

Socio-political Influences

School Counseling Profession Expectations

Professional Quality of Life (PQL)

Compensation for Expertise

Job Satisfaction

School Counselor Wellness
