Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student's Perception of Their Supervision Training

Jinah Jimenez Rordam
University of South Florida, jrordam@yahoo.com

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Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student's Perception of Their Supervision Training

by

Jinah Jimenez Rordam

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Counselor Education and Supervision Department of Leadership, Counseling, Adult, Career, Higher ED College of Education University of South Florida

Co-Major Professor: Herbert A. Exum, Ph.D.
Co-Major Professor: Tony X. Tan, Ed.D.
Barbara J. Shircliff, Ph.D.
Cynthia M. Topdemir, Ph.D.

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to the mate of my soul, my beloved. Without you none of this would have been possible. You are loved, remembered, and missed every day. For Evan and Lauren who have been on this journey their entire young lives without even knowing it. Words alone cannot begin to describe, nor explain the endless love I have for you both. I hope that you both will remember to acknowledge me in your dissertations in the future. And for my mom and dad whose pride in me knows no bounds.
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Je suis prest.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the supervision process that takes place between the counselor education doctoral student and the doctoral student’s faculty supervisor from the perception of the doctoral student supervisor. The goal of this study is to identify salient constructs that impact the effectiveness of the supervisory experience. A qualitative design was used to collect and analyze data. Six doctoral student supervisors were interviewed and the data analyzed. Themes of the supervisory experience that impact the supervision process and outcome were identified. They were: Supervisor Competency, Supervisor Individual Characteristics, and Supervisory Relationship. Recommendations for future research and implications are discussed.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Many professions have a particular instructional strategy that epitomizes the training of their practitioners; Shulman (2005a) described this strategy as “signature pedagogy”. Clinical supervision is the signature pedagogy of the mental health professions (Barnett, Cornish, Goodyear, & Lichtenberg, 2007; Goodyear, Bunch, & Claiborn, 2005). Similar to signature pedagogies of other professions, clinical supervision is characterized by engagement, uncertainty, and formation (Shulman 2005a): engagement occurs through instructor-learner dialogue; uncertainty due to unclear focus and outcomes of the interactions of beginning teaching; and formation in that the learner’s thought processes are made clear to the instructor (Shulman, 2005b).

Supervision is an important mechanism for preserving the standards and practices of the counseling profession. It provides a method for training novice counselors while protecting clients and monitoring ethical practice. Most beginning counselors experience supervision during their graduate-level coursework. Both the supervisor and supervisee play active roles in the supervision process. In many counseling programs where both master-level and doctoral-level programs are offered, doctoral students supervise master-level counselors in training. Doctoral students must receive training in supervision prior to becoming supervisors. In these counseling programs a triadic supervision model exits. At the top of the triadic supervision model is a member of the faculty who serves as faculty supervisor. In the middle of the model is the student supervisor, also known as the doctoral student supervisor. The faculty supervisor supervises the
doctoral student supervisor. The doctoral student supervisor supervises a novice counselor, a master-level student, the supervisee.

Accredited educational institutions adhere to standards of academic and ethical programs of study. The counseling profession through accreditation guidelines and ethical codes, mandates supervision training. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) developed a number of standards and accreditation-related documents that allowed them to conduct voluntary accreditation of counseling programs. ACES then approached the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA, a pre-cursor to American Counseling Association) about cooperative accreditation efforts and the result was the establishment of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling Related Educational Programs (CACREP) in 1981. The American Counseling Association (ACA) is a professional and educational organization dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession, and is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in various practice settings. The ACA (2014) mission states:

The mission of the American Counseling Association is to enhance the quality of life in society by promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, and using the profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity (p.1).

To continue in the advancement of the counseling profession, the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) aids in infusing the ethical standards and practices of the profession to its practitioners. The Code of Ethics devotes an entire section, one of its nine to Supervision, Training, and Teaching. The introduction of the supervision, training and teaching section describes the ethical and professional responsibility as:

Counselor supervisors, trainers, and educators aspire to foster meaningful and respectful professional relationships and to maintain appropriate boundaries with supervisees and students in both face-to-face and electronic formats. They have theoretical and
pedagogical foundations for their work; have knowledge of supervision models; and aim to be fair, accurate, and honest in their assessments of counselors, students, and supervisees (p.12).

CACREP mandates that doctoral program curriculum include training in both supervision theory and practice (2015). CACREP also has a section of its 2016 Standards devoted to Doctoral Standards for Counselor Education and Supervision. These standards for supervision within the program are listed under the Doctoral Learning Environment. Supervision falls under the area of Doctoral Professional Identity.

In addition to the professional and accreditation organizations that prescribe ethical and program design for the supervision experience, there are numerous supervision models that fall under three major categories of clinical supervision models. The major categories are: models grounded in psychotherapy theory, developmental models, and process models (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

Supervision research is newer than many areas of inquiry, yet the literature has sufficient history to have developed thematic strands (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). One such theme is the question of what constitutes good or effective, or conversely, harmful or ineffective supervision. Further inquiry and exploration in this area is useful in understanding the impact of supervision on student supervisors.

**Problem Statement**

Clinical supervision is a fundamental component of counselor training programs and is widely viewed as one of the most imperative ways by which to assist novice counselors to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills for effective clinical practice (Hein, Lawson, & Rodriguez, 2011). It is one of the primary vehicles by which future counselors acquire practical skills and training in the profession.
Psychologists have long hypothesized that the relationship between doctoral students and their supervisors has a strong impact on doctoral students’ professional development during and after graduate school (Huber, Sauer, Mrdjenvich, & Gugiu, 2010). However, there is limited research on training doctoral students to become supervisors (Nelson, Oliver, & Capps, 2006).

Despite the importance of doctoral student education and preparation in the counseling profession, and, an extensive body of research about clinical supervision, there is a paucity of research on doctoral students and the training they receive in the supervision of master level students and the doctoral students’ supervision practice, including their process of becoming supervisors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Doctoral students’ supervision training experiences have begun to be examined from different perspectives, however, there is still relatively little research regarding the doctoral student supervisor’s experience during training, and more exploration is needed (Trepal & Hammer, 2014).

**Significance of Study**

For many doctoral student supervisors, the relationship and experience between the faculty supervisor and the student supervisor represents a highly significant portion of their training experience, and it is primarily within this experience that student supervisors learn to develop the clinical skills necessary to become effective supervisors. This inquiry is important to the field of Counselor Education in many ways. One of the most important is to add to the limited amount of literature regarding doctoral student supervisor preparation, and the implications it has on training. Counselor education doctoral programs place heavy emphasis on doctoral students’ responsibilities, expectations, and roles as students, teaching assistants, researchers and counselors. In addition to occupying these roles, the doctoral student supervisors
themselves, are enrolled in doctoral practicum or internship while fulfilling their responsibilities as supervisors of master student supervisees (Fernando, 2013).

Understanding the supervisory experience from the perspective of the doctoral student supervisor provides potential for improvements in training and development, and increased effectiveness of supervision experiences for the student supervisor and, by extension, for the master’s student supervisee. Through this increased understanding, better predictions may be made regarding student supervisor outcomes including, but not limited to, competency as a clinical supervisor and practicing counselor, and also overall career satisfaction. This, in addition, may lead to improved outcomes for the master’s student supervisees in becoming competent counselors. Identifying significant attributes of the supervision experience for doctoral students in training may lend to programmatic adjustments and have implications for training that may lead to increased effective supervisory experiences and outcomes, and increased retention among both doctoral and master’s student trainees in counselor education programs.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the supervision process that takes place between the doctoral student and the doctoral student’s faculty supervisor from the perception of the doctoral student supervisor. The goal of this study is to identify salient constructs that impact the effectiveness of the supervisory experience. By examining doctoral student supervisors’ interpersonal experiences during their own supervision, it may be possible to acquire a better understanding of the clinical supervision experience for doctoral students and their process of becoming a clinical supervisor. Understanding clinical supervision from the
point of view of the doctoral student supervisor may lead to improvements in doctoral level
training in counselor education programs.

This exploratory inquiry aims to examine the perceptions of doctoral student supervisors
relative to their own clinical supervision and to identify concepts that render the supervisory
experience effective or not effective.

Questions Leading the Inquiry

There are two questions that are guiding this inquiry. They are:

1. What makes faculty to doctoral student supervision effective from the doctoral
   student supervisor’s perspective?

2. In what ways do the supervisory relationship and the supervisory experiences
   between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor impact
   supervision from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

Study Assumptions

The study assumptions of how the supervision process works are as follows:

1. The dynamic of parallel process occurs during the supervisory experience.
   Parallel process stemmed from psychoanalytic theory and refers to an
   unconscious phenomenon when supervisees present to their supervisors in the
   same manner that their client presented to them (Giordano, Clarke, & Borders,
   2012).

2. The relationship between the supervisor and the student supervisor is integral to
   the effectiveness of the supervision experience. For many trainees, the
   supervisory relationship constitutes a highly important share of their training
experience, as it is within this relationship that students learn to develop the clinical skills necessary to effectively treat their clients (Marmarosh et al., 2013).

3. The phenomenological perspective of the doctoral student supervisor defines the supervision experience as effective or not effective supervision. Should the student supervisor perceive his or her experiences as positive, supervision is effective; however, if he or she views the experience as negative, then supervision is not effective.

Conceptual Framework

For many trainees the supervisory relationship represents a very significant part of their training experience because it is within this relationship that students learn to develop the clinical skills necessary to effectively treat their clients (Marmarosh, et al., 2013). The relationship between doctoral students and their supervisors has a strong impact on the supervisees’ professional development during and post graduate school (Huber, Sauer, Mrdjenovich, & Gugiu, 2010). Qualitative studies suggest interpersonal components, instructional components, and other issues are important parts of advising relationships (Huber, Sauer, Mrdjenovich, & Gugiu, 2010), and this may also be true for the supervisory relationship, as well.

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the attributes of the supervision experience that influence the way student supervisors perceive supervision.
Figure 1: Attributes of the supervision experience that influence the way student supervisors perceive supervision
At the top of the triadic supervision model is the *Faculty Supervisor*. The supervisor has attributes that impact the supervision experience, which in turn, impacts the *Student Supervisor/Doctoral Student*. These characteristics include Knowledge, Supervision Model, Theoretical Orientation, Career Guidance, and Professional Interactions – all of which fall under an instructional commitment.

The individual characteristics of a supervisor plays a role in the supervision experience, these include the supervisor’s age, gender, and cultural characteristics. Another important attribute is the supervisory relationship itself and with it the supervisors’ methods of communication, ways of dealing with conflict, and his expectations of the student supervisor. These are general attributes of the supervisor that may impact the student supervisor, who then has impact on the *Supervisee/Master’s Student*.

Across the triadic supervision experience is the phenomenon of parallel process. Parallel process in the triadic supervision experience is a student supervisor unconsciously presenting to their supervisors in the same manner that their supervisees presented to them. The way in which the student supervisor perceives the supervision experience defines the supervision experience as effective or not effective supervision. Should the student supervisor perceive his experiences as positive, supervision is effective, however, if he views the experience as negative then supervision is not effective. This in turn may affect the supervisee in the same manner.
Definition of Major Terms

Clinical supervision or Supervision is used interchangeably and is defined by Bernard and Goodyear as:

An intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior colleague or colleagues who typically (but not always) are members of that same profession. This relationship is: evaluative and hierarchical, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see; and serving as a gatekeeper for the particular profession the supervisee seeks to enter. (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014, p. 9).

Parallel process refers to an unconscious phenomenon when supervisees present to their supervisors in the same manner that their client presented to them (Giordano, Clarke, & Borders, 2012).

Supervisor is a professional providing supervision, in the counseling education program it is typically a faculty member.

Student supervisor or Doctoral student supervisor is a postgraduate (doctoral student) professional receiving supervision from a faculty supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

Supervisee is a master level student supervised by the student supervisor/doctoral student supervisor.

Supervision relationship refers to the supervisory relationship between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor.

Delimitations

This study will be conducted at only one research extensive university in the southeastern United States using students drawn from only one counselor education doctoral program. The doctoral program in question will not be CACREP accredited. This study will not attempt to compare the experiences with the student supervisors in this program with other student
supervisors in comparable CACREP accredited or non-accredited programs. All of the participants in the study will have had at least one course in theories of supervision but not all of them may have had the same course from the same instructor. The majority of the participants will be women so there will not be an attempt to compare experiences based upon the sex of the student supervisor. The majority, but not all, of the participants will have received clinical supervision from the same clinical supervisor. However, no attempt will be made to compare the experiences of participants who worked with one clinical supervisor versus those who worked with another.

**Chapter Summary**

Chapter One provided an introduction to this study and information regarding the background and purpose of this study. The purpose of this inquiry is to understanding the doctoral student supervisory experience and the counselor education doctoral student’s perceptions of their supervision training. Also detailed were the conceptual framework, and an introduction of what this study aims to accomplish.

**Study Organization**

The remaining chapters of this work will discuss the following: Chapter Two will provide a literature review on the subject of supervision, and will provide an overview of the current models of supervision. This chapter will review and evaluate present literature on supervision specific to student supervisor experience and perceptions of supervision. Chapter Three will discuss the design and methods of this study that will be used to answer the research questions. Chapter Four will discuss the results of the data analysis. Chapter Five will discuss the study conclusions and implications.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Clinical supervision is one of the more common activities that mental health professionals engage, and has a crucial role in the preparation of professional counselors. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) defined supervision as:

An intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior colleague or colleagues who typically (but not always) are members of that same profession. This relationship is: evaluative and hierarchical, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see; and serving as a gatekeeper for the particular profession the supervisee seeks to enter. (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014, p. 9).

Supervision facilitates counselor development and engages the student supervisor and the supervisee in a hierarchal relationship with a supervisor who is more knowledgeable about client care and the counseling process and who evaluates supervisee learning.

Bernard and Goodyear (2014) propose supervision has two central purposes:

1. To foster the supervisee’s professional development – a supportive and educational function
2. To ensure client welfare – the supervisor’s gatekeeping function is a variant of the monitoring of client welfare

Supervision is a distinct intervention, not unlike teaching, counseling, and mental health consultation; however, it differs substantially from those interventions (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). While teaching is central to supervision, it differs from supervision in that teaching is driven by a set of curriculum or protocol, and supervision is driven by the needs of the particular
supervisee and his client. Supervision and counseling both may address recipients’ problematic behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. However, in supervision any therapeutic work with a supervisee must only be to increase effectiveness in working with clients; supervision is evaluative, and counseling clients often have a greater choice of therapists than supervisees have of supervisors. Supervision and consultation both center on assisting the recipient (supervisee or student supervisor) work more effectively as a professional, for more advanced trainees, both supervision and consultation may become indistinguishable. Consultation differs from supervision in that consultation is a relationship between equals, while supervision is hierarchical. Consultation is usually more freely sought out by recipients and like counseling, is not evaluative.

Models of Supervision

Counselor education programs accredited by CACREP require doctoral students to learn supervision theories and practices (CACREP, 2015) and the ACA (2014) code of ethics emphasize that counselors should receive training for services they provide, including supervision. Acquiring knowledge of the models of supervision provide a conceptual framework for supervisors. These models help make supervision cohesive and guide supervisors toward providing supervision that addresses their supervisees’ needs. Models of supervision attend to organizational, societal, and professional contexts and have been developed to attend to supervision of therapy with specific client populations (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). There are three major categories of clinical supervision models: models grounded in psychotherapy theory, developmental models, and process models.

Psychotherapy-based models of supervision have a long history and have affected supervision theory and practice more than any other model (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).
Sigmund Freud is credited not only for the development of the *talking cure*, but also for being the first psychotherapy supervisor with reports that he began to supervise doctors beginning in 1902 (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Psychotherapy-based models of supervision are primarily centered around passing on one therapy approach – a psychotherapeutic theory. Psychotherapy-based supervision is described as a teaching and learning process that gives specific emphasis to the relationships between and among patient, therapist, and supervisor an the process that interplay among them. When utilizing this model of supervision, student supervisors “experience” the theory in supervision, their understanding of their supervisees’ reaction to similar interventions increases. Supervision models grounded in psychotherapy theory include: Psychodynamic, Humanistic-Relationship, Cognitive-Behavioral, Systemic, and Constructivist.

Developmental approaches to supervision are organized around the needs of the supervisee based on some appraisal of his status of professional development relative to some standard of performance. Development is prevalent during supervision, if supervisors did not believe that supervisee development would occur during supervision, then supervision would be reduced to its gatekeeping function only (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). The advantage of working from developmental models is that it keeps the supervisor attuned to the particular needs of supervisees at different levels in their training. These models center on the particulars of the learning process for the supervisee. Developmental models in supervision include: the Loganbill, Hardy, and Delworth model, Integrated Developmental Model, Systemic Cognitive-Developmental Supervision model, Reflective Developmental models, and the Rønnestad and Skovholt Lifespan Developmental model.

Supervision process models emerged from an interest in supervision as an educational and relationship process. These models largely stand back to observe the supervision process
itself, and may be either simple or complex depending on how much of the process the attempt to describe. Supervision process models add more description about the process and may be used within any psychotherapy theory orientation and are compatible with the developmental models. They are valuable to the supervisor as they neutralize stagnation by providing the supervisor a new perspective to use in deconstructing supervision. Process models of supervision include: the discrimination model, Events-Based Model, Hawkins and Shobert, and the Systems Approach to Supervision model.

**Examining the Supervision Experience**

The supervisory relationship is the mainstay of the supervision experience. There are facets of the experience that require attention. As previously stated, there is limited research on training doctoral students to become supervisors (Nelson, Oliver, & Capps, 2006), and psychologists have hypothesized the relationship between doctoral students and their supervisors has a strong impact on the supervisees’ professional development during and post graduate school (Huber, Sauer, Mrdjenovich, & Gugiu, 2010). The following section will discuss studies that have undertaken the task of examining the supervision experience from the doctoral student perspective.

Baker, Exum, and Tyler (2002) conducted a study as a means of beginning the process of conducting empirical investigations to determine whether the training of clinical supervisors is a developmental process. To study that phenomenon they sought to assess the impact of a structured supervision-training program on the development of student supervisors. They used a quantitative measure, the Psychotherapy Supervisor Development Scale (PSDS; Watkins, 1995) and qualitative interview questions corresponding with aspects from the supervisor complexity model (SCM; Watkins, 1993).
The participants were doctoral students enrolled in a Ph.D. program in counselor education. Twelve participants were enrolled in a supervision practicum and their development was the focus of the study. The remaining seven participants were also from the same Ph.D. program, but had not yet enrolled in the supervision practicum or supervision theory and research course that precedes the practicum; they served as a comparison group for the measures of PSDS.

The results of the study suggested the respondents’ scores indicated greater confidence in their supervisory interactions over time, as the scores of the participants in the supervision practicum were significantly higher than the scores of the participants in the control group. Thus indicating that didactic and experiential training in supervision can accelerate the maturation of supervisory skills. The results from the retrospective interview were less definitive; even so, the information from the interviews seemed to provide a rich source of conversational material. This study found some evidence of development in the process of training clinical supervisors, however, the authors suggest there is much more yet to discover and learn about the training of supervisors.

This study seemed to provide evidence of developmental growth of the student supervisor through supervision and was an effective start to understanding the dynamics and processes student supervisors endure through the supervisory experience. It also may have helped to provide a foundation for studies to further seek information regarding the many factors that contribute to a counselor educator’s professional growth from the perspective of the student supervisor.

Nelson, Oliver, and Capps (2006) used qualitative methodology to capture a rich, detailed description of the student supervisor’s personal experience of becoming a supervisor. The
researchers used individual interviews and focus groups over three semesters of practicum and internship with a cohort of 13 doctoral students to explore the process of becoming a supervisor. They identified six emergent themes regarding the process of becoming a supervisor through a data analysis of the transcriptions, student interview notes, researcher memos and reflections using constant comparative methods. The themes that emerged were: learning, supervisee growth, individual uniqueness, reflection, connections, and putting it all together.

The researchers note that using the conversations with the student supervisors as the source of data was the most noteworthy aspect of their project. They believe the process of becoming a supervisor is best understood by listening to directly to the student supervisors. This study contributes to increased understanding of the student supervisor experience in supervision.

The results section provided a wealth of informative material. The way in which each of the six major emergent themes was presented and described was well written and descriptive. The information presented contributes to the field of counselor education by opening the possibility for additional research in the arena of doctoral students becoming supervisors.

Fernando (2013) sought to add to a previous study that indicated that doctoral students supervisors acquired greater confidence in the supervisory interactions with their supervisees as doctoral practica progressed (Baker, Exum, & Tyler, 2002) and the qualitative study by Nelson, Oliver, and Capps (2006) that identified six emerging themes in the process of becoming a supervisor from the doctoral student supervisor perspective. The author’s purpose for the study was to understand the doctoral student supervision training process from the master’s supervisee viewpoint, specifically how master supervisees perceive supervision by doctoral students as measured by their satisfaction with supervision and perceived self-efficacy, and how doctoral student supervisors compare with faculty supervisors based on the supervision outcomes. The
participants were 85 school and community counseling master level students from seven CACREP-accredited counselor education doctoral programs in the United States.

The Supervisory Satisfaction Questionnaire (SSQ; Ladany, Hill, & Nutt, 1996) and the Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE; Larson et al., 1992) were the instruments used in this study. The results from this study indicated the master student supervisees reported overall satisfaction with supervision in the range of good to excellent on average. The author deduced the elements that may contribute to this satisfaction with supervision, they include: comfortable and supportive supervisory relationships; communication style of supervisor in training; the way in which feedback and suggestions are given; student supervisor genuine interest in supervisee development and progress; supervisory behaviors of student supervisor, supervisor sensitivity to supervisee needs at various stages; student supervisor knowledge about supervisee clients and their problems; and student supervisor management of the supervisory session time (Fernando, 2013). Master supervisees report slight to moderate agreement that they have confidence in performing various counseling activities. Those counseling activities include confidence in performing microskills, attending to process and dealing with difficult clients, and behaving in a culturally competent way while being aware of one’s own values. I found the most interesting aspect of this study was the author’s explanation for the finding that supervisees of doctoral student supervisors were satisfied due in large part to the perception of the doctoral student supervisors as models. The author states the reason may be that the supervisees may have had more opportunities to interact with the student supervisors than with faculty, and that master’s student supervisees are also closer to doctoral student supervisors than they are to faculty due to the hierarchy of a university counseling program. This aspect of the findings warrants further
study and has many programmatic and training implications for both doctoral and master level students in counselor education programs.

Frick and Glosoff (2014) sought to further examine the experiences of doctoral student supervisors. The research questions that guided their study were: (a) What are the experiences of counselor education doctoral students who work within a tiered supervision training model as they train to become supervisors? and (b) What experiences influenced their sense of self-efficacy as supervisors? They used a phenomenological research approach to explore how counselor education doctoral students experience and make meaning of their reality (Merriam, 2009).

Focus groups were conducted with 16 doctoral students from three CACREP-accredited counselor education programs in the southeastern United States. During the focus group sessions, interview protocol questions guided the discussions. Several themes emerged from this phenomenological study of doctoral students’ perceptions of self-efficacy as supervisors. The authors note considerable overlap of four themes that emerged across the groups: ambivalence in the middle tier of supervision, influential people, receiving feedback, and conducting evaluations. Of the themes identified, I found the concept of role uncertainty within the ambivalence in the middle tier of supervision interesting. For many in the student supervisor role, being unsure of one’s role when supervising supervisees has an immense implication on outcomes for both the student supervisor and the supervisee. Ethical and competency issues surely are impacted if a student supervisor is uncertain of his role. With regard to the influential people theme, participants indicated that interactions with current and previous supervisors influenced their self-efficacy as supervisors. Thus calling for further investigation of the
perceptions of the student supervisors’ supervision experiences. Additional study in this area may help to understand what factors lead to effective or not effective supervisory experiences.

Trepal and Hammer (2014) examined ways to utilize critical incidents to examine doctoral students’ perceptions of their training experiences in supervision. Eight doctoral counseling students at a large-sized university in the southwest United States were participants. They had spent the previous two semesters taking a supervision theory course and practicum course and were currently enrolled in an internship course. Utilizing the critical incident technique (CIT), researchers asked participants to provide retrospective self-reports. They were asked to think of a critical incident that occurred during their supervision training in the previous semester that either positively or negatively influenced their development as a supervisor. They were then asked to write a paragraph describing the critical incident.

The participant responses were analyzed and developed into three themes: support, parallel process, and gatekeeping. They found the role of support provided the foundation for supervisee development in the form of increased confidence. Incidents in the parallel process theme related to the ways in which the student supervisors’ experiences in supervision parallel other area in their lives and provided a challenge in the ways they worked with supervisees. With regard to gatekeeping, the critical incidents recalled challenging incidents associated with evaluation of supervisees, and the impact that had on their development as supervisors.

The researchers found that support from supervision instructors and other peers seems to have a large role in instilling confidence in student supervisors in training and in their abilities, this is consistent with previous findings of others. Support was found to be crucial to the supervisory relationship in several critical incident studies. This study adds to the limited research available about the doctoral student supervisor-in-training’s developmental experiences.
I found the inclusion of the participant’s responses in their retrospective self-reports to be valuable. Their descriptions of the critical incidents they reported gave more meaningful context to the themes that emerged in the analysis.

In each of the studies examined in this review, an important issue was consistent across the articles and warrants notice. There was repeated mention of a scant availability of research regarding the student supervisor’s experiences and perceptions regarding their preparation of becoming supervisors. This is important, as it is a call to action for more investigation within this area. Much is known about how to execute the supervision training process, however, not enough about understanding the actual process itself. Additional inquiry adds to the existing literature on supervision, which is rich with supervision theories, models, and recommendations for training by the professional associations of the counseling field. Enhanced understanding of the supervision process from the perspective of the doctoral student supervisor has implications for training in counselor education programs and faculty in charge of training supervisors.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented a historical background of clinical supervision and an overview of supervision models. A review and critical evaluation of present literature related to the study of the supervision experience as perceived by supervisees was included. The following chapter will detail the design and methodology of the completed study.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The main purpose of this study was to identify constructs that contribute to effective versus non-effective supervision, as experienced by doctoral level student supervisors.

Methodological Overview

This study employed a qualitative design and I used semi-structured interviews to gather the data. I chose a qualitative design because qualitative design generated both in-depth and detailed data responses. The interview questions I used in this exploratory study examined doctoral student supervisor perceptions of their supervisory experience. This study was considered exploratory because there is limited literature regarding the process of becoming a supervisor from the perspective of the student supervisor.

Data collection was done in the form of interviewing. Lincoln and Guba (1985) list some of the purposes for doing interviews as: obtaining here-and-now constructions of persons, events, activities, organizations, feelings, motivations, claims, concerns, and other entities. The qualitative method of the interview was the best choice for this research as it allowed me to listen to the views of the research participants, while focusing on context and content in which the participants expressed their views. The interview method allowed the supervisee an arena to provide rich detailed descriptions of his or her personal experience of becoming a supervisor and the constructs that made the supervisory experience effective or not effective.
Questions Leading the Inquiry

There were two questions that guided this inquiry. They were:

1. What makes supervision effective from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?
2. How important is the relationship between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

Participants

*Inclusion criteria.* In order to be included in this study the participants must have been current doctoral students, or recent graduates of a counselor education Ph.D. program. The participants will have completed at least one (1) doctoral course on supervision theory, and have completed at least ten (10) supervisory sessions, or [were] currently involved in weekly hour-long individual clinical supervision provided by a faculty supervisor.

*Exclusion criteria.* Doctoral students who had not completed one (1) doctoral course on supervision theory were not a part of this study. Doctoral students who completed one (1) doctoral course on supervision, but not completed ten (10) supervisory sessions with a faculty supervisor were not be a part of the study. Master-level supervisees were not studied at this time.

*Recruitment.* I recruited the participants of this study. Participants were selected from a Counselor Education Ph.D. program at a university located in the southeast United States. Together with the Program Coordinator and Program Assistant, I selected participants from the Ph.D. program. These participants were identified based upon on the inclusion criteria mentioned above. Once identified, I emailed the participants directly a recruitment letter with a description of the study and the manner in which they were invited to participate as well as the Informed Consent form (Appendices C and D). No incentives were offered to the participants to join in the
study. The recruitment process took three months, June 2016 through August 2016.

Eight participants were identified and invited to participate in this study, six agreed to participate and scheduled interview times with me. One doctoral student stated an interest in participating, however, did not respond to further requests for setting an interview time. The other doctoral student failed to respond to the original recruitment email.

Four of the participants were current doctoral students in a Counseling Education and Supervision Ph.D. program who met the inclusion criteria, and two of the participants were recent graduates, within the last six months, of the same Counselor Education and Supervision Ph.D. program.

There were five females and one male participant. The ages of the participants ranged from 30 years to 50 years old. The cultural backgrounds of the participants were diverse. Three participants have origins in Caribbean countries. One participant is from the Middle East, one identifies as Latin, and the sixth participant is Caucasian.

The counseling specialties of the participants were varied. There were two school counselors with several years as school counselors in a public school setting. One of the school counselors had a mental health background. One participant had many years of counseling experience in a community college setting as well as supervisory experience in addition to a master’s degree in Counseling Psychology. Two participants worked in the university setting. The first, as a counselor/advisor in a first year transition program with a mental health background. The next, had a specialty in Marriage and Family counseling and has worked in student affairs and as an administrator at a university. Both had many years of experience working in higher education. The final participant was a seasoned licensed mental health counselor with a private practice.
I was familiar and acquainted with one of the participants in the study as we had met through our Ph.D. program a few years prior to this study. As for the other five participants, my recruitment email was the first time I had contact with them. Speaking with those five participants was the first time I had met them.

The Researcher

I am the researcher and primary investigator conducting this study. I am currently a doctoral candidate in a Counselor Education and Supervision Program of study, and a National Certified Counselor. I have completed studies at the doctoral level in counselor education curriculum that includes supervision theories, qualitative research, and quantitative research methods. My master’s degree is in Counseling, with a concentration in College and Career Counseling, my undergraduate major was in Psychology. I have taught the master’s level practicum in counseling course, supervised master's level counselors in training, while experiencing supervision under the direction of a faculty supervisor. I have taught both undergraduate and graduate courses at a traditional large public university since 2005. In addition to my teaching experiences, I have administrative and professional academic experience in the academic setting. I was the director of a university career center, as well as a career counselor.

Prior to my experiences in academics and counseling, I worked in private industry as a management consultant in a large consulting firm where in addition to my duties as a business consultant specializing in change management and operations, I worked as a mentor, a strategist in growth and retention endeavors, and training internal and external business clients.

My own experiences with supervision, as a supervisee and doctoral student supervisor have influenced my interest in the areas of supervision thus leading to this inquiry. I was
fortunate to have experienced a supervision experience that I feel was most effective. I believe had it not been for my positive supervision experiences, I would not have gotten to this point in the doctoral program. I feel that a positive supervision experience can lead to a mentoring relationship that may have lasting impact on an individual, not only during one’s time during his or her doctoral studies, but throughout a person’s professional career.

**Interview Protocol**

The participants in this study were asked questions regarding their experiences in the supervision process. The original questions that guided the design of the interview were:

1. Before your supervision experience, how did you conceptualize the supervision training experience?
2. What was the supervision experience like for you?
3. How did the supervision process unfold for you?
4. How has your conceptualization of supervision changed from the start through the end?
5. What shifts or turning points in your understanding of the supervision process can you identify?
6. Thinking in the broadest terms possible, how did this supervision experience affect your awareness of diversity?
7. How did the supervision process help you develop your supervisory skills?
8. Looking back over the course of your supervision experience, what was most helpful to you in developing as a supervisor?
9. How would you describe your relationship with your supervisor?
10. To what extent did you share your feelings in supervision?
11. What is your perception of your supervisor’s knowledge? How effective was your supervisor with assisting you solve issues and concerns regarding your issues with your novice counselor?

12. To what degree was the amount of supervision you received the amount you needed?

13. To what extent did you feel supported by your supervisor?

These questions came from previous studies that investigated the doctoral student’s process of developing into supervisors, including Baker, Exum, and Tyler (2002) and Frick and Glossoff, (2014). Questions listed, but not in the mentioned studies were developed by myself under the guidance of my major professor.

I was the only person to conduct all the interviews. All of the interviews were accomplished face to face, though one was conducted via a video electronic communication platform (Skype). The in-person interviews took place on the university campus within the counseling lab or in the main university library. All interviews were recorded. Each interview lasted between 25 minutes to an hour and a half, though I did not set a time limit. The first interview lasted the longest amount of time and the last interview conducted was also the shortest. During the first interview I asked every question that I had identified during the initial interview protocol. By the last interview I had become more efficient in my interviewing and had determined a more concise interviewing protocol to garner the data needed for analysis.

The interview protocol was refined with the help of two doctoral students. Students for the pilot were Ph.D. students in the Counselor Education and Supervision program. Both students met the same inclusion criteria as the participants of the study and had completed doctoral level studies in qualitative research. They assisted me for altruistic reasons, and in the hopes that my study would positively contribute to our field. I interviewed both students using
the questions listed previously in the interview protocol. One interview was conducted via Skype, and the other in the counseling lab at the university. These interviews averaged an hour and 20 minutes. At the end of each interview, I asked each colleague what could be done to improve the interview protocol, neither had suggestions. Adjustments were made to the interview protocol following review of both interviews and the responses generated from the two pilot interviews. I based my changes to the protocol upon the clarity and relevance of the questions as they related to the purpose of the study. The resulting interview protocol was the one I used in the present study. The main questions I asked during each interview were:

1. What was your supervision experience like for you?
2. Was your supervision effective or not effective?
3. What attributes or characteristics of your supervisor, or the supervision experience contributed to the effectiveness of your supervision experience?

Data Collection Procedures

After approval from the dissertation committee regarding this study, I submitted an application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of South Florida. Once the IRB application for my study was approved, I sent a recruitment email to potential participants who matched the inclusion criteria. Upon receiving participant acceptance, I scheduled interview times with each participant. Interviews took place during the fall 2016 semester. Each participant signed an informed consent and all interviews were recorded. I have retained all informed consent forms and all tape recordings from the interviews.

The data collection was a collaborative effort. Participants cooperated fully. The participants appeared to enjoy the dialogue and interview discussion. I believe each participant spoke freely and honestly without anxiety. I believe this was due to our peer relationship and
shared experiences as doctoral students. We all are in the same Counselor Education and Supervision Ph.D. program and have taken the same required coursework, and we have had similar practicum experiences. In addition to those shared experiences, we all have family and other commitments outside academia. At the conclusion of each interview after all responses to my questions and pertinent data were collected, the tape recording was stopped. Each participant used our remaining time to converse openly with me as peers. None of this additional information was used as study data.

**Insuring Trustworthiness**

Research designs are based on different assumptions about what is being investigated, and they seek to answer different questions. In the case of qualitative research, *understanding* is the primary rational for the investigation. Qualitative research is based on a different paradigm than quantitative research so critiques of quantitative studies cannot be used. Concepts such as internal validity, external validity, or generalizability are not appropriate for qualitative research. The primary criterion for evaluating qualitative research is trustworthiness. Qualitative research has strategies for establishing the authenticity and trustworthiness of a study, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that trustworthiness of qualitative research is established through the following criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

*Credibility.* Within qualitative research the charge of establishing internal validity is viewed more as establishing the credibility of the researcher’s data collection and conclusions. Credibility refers to the value and believability of the findings. *Peer Debriefing.* Lincoln and Guba (1985) define peer debriefing as a "process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind" (p. 308). A disinterested
peer is someone who is not an immediate stakeholder in the outcome of a project, but who is a knowledgeable source on the topic. Through frequent and consistent consultation with advisors and committee members throughout this research process I clarified my own thoughts and processes regarding the course of this inquiry.

**Member checking.** Member checking is an opportunity for participants to approve particular aspects of the interpretation of the data they provided. Normally, participants are given transcripts from the narratives they contributed during interview sessions and are asked to verify their accuracy. Participants of this study were informed at the time of the interview that transcripts would be provided to them for their review. Once transcribed, individual transcripts were emailed to each participant. I provided them the opportunity to assess their transcribed interview responses to review for accuracy before all participant data were analyzed together. Four of the six participants responded to the member-checking request by reviewing their transcripts and emailing a response back to me. Only one participant made edits or changes to their interview transcript. The two sets of transcripts from the participants that did not reply or respond to member checking were still used for data analysis.

**Transferability** refers to whether or not particular discoveries can be transferred to another similar situation, while still preserving the meanings and inferences from the completed study. I addressed this by focusing on being as thorough as possible in recording the interview responses. While I attempted to maintain transferability within this study, there is no guarantee that the results of the findings of this study will transfer to another study or setting.

**Thick Descriptions.** The function of thick and rich descriptions is to provide understanding of relevance to other settings. It creates verisimilitude: statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being
described in a study. Thus, credibility is established through the lens of readers who read a narrative account and are transported into a setting or situation. The process of writing using thick description is to provide as much detail as possible. Thick, rich descriptions should draw the reader more closely into the story or narrative to increase coherence and to evoke feelings for and a sense of connection with the participants in the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Throughout the course of this study, I documented, collected, and detailed all the factors I consider relevant to the research questions and responses, and in concert with notes and observations through the participant interviews, used that information to analyze and identify concepts that render the supervision experience as effective or not effective.

**Dependability** is often compared to the concept of reliability in quantitative research and refers to how stable the data is. Establishing dependability may be accomplished by thoroughly documenting how the study design was carried out, by describing the manner in which decisions regarding methodology and research process are made. Throughout my process I consulted and talked with other students who have done qualitative studies and we discussed how my own qualitative study was progressing.

**Audit Trail.** Lincoln and Guba (1985) liken this process to a fiscal audit to describe this process. The audit is often used in formal studies, such as in dissertations, particularly when committee members are trained quantitatively and may be skeptical about qualitative studies. This is a systematic procedure where the auditor/reviewer writes an analysis after carefully studying the documentation provided by the researcher. An audit trail is established by the researcher documenting the inquiry process through journaling and note taking, keeping a research log of all activities, developing a data collection chronology, and recording data analysis procedures clearly. An external auditor examines this documentation with the following
questions in mind: Are the findings grounded in the data? Are inferences logical? Is the category structure appropriate? Can inquiry decisions and methodological shifts be justified? What is the degree of researcher bias? What strategies were used for increasing credibility? (Schwandt & Halpern, 1988). Through this process and review of the documentation by an external auditor, the narrative account becomes credible. I attempted to secure an external auditor outside of my dissertation committee. I was unable to do so, so therefore I sought guidance from my major professor. I thoroughly documented the processes of this study, and noted how decisions about methodology and the research process were made and decided upon.

**Data Analysis**

All interview data and researcher notes were transcribed and retained by the researcher for analysis. All interview transcripts will be found in Appendix A, Transcripts. Codes were generated to organize and manage the data. Coding is the process by which some sort of shorthand designation is assigned to various aspects of data to easily retrieve specific pieces of the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Most often a code is “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2013 p.3). InVivo coding was used to analyze the interview data. InVivo coding prioritizes and honors the participant’s voice (Saldaña, 2009). The researcher must attune to the words and phrases that appear to call for bolding, underlining, italicizing, highlighting, or vocal emphasis.

**Transcript Analysis**

The first step in my process of organizing the data was to re-listen to the taped interviews while reading along with the transcripts from the interviews. During this phase I was able to make any adjustments, corrections, and edits to the transcript as needed, and I began to group
data together in clear and meaningful ways. During the first round of re-listening to the interviews and re-reading the transcripts I underlined phrases within the transcripts I felt provided significant information that answered the research questions. During this phase, I also made notes regarding my impressions about possible patterns. While examining the data and determining coding, I sought to answer the research questions: what makes supervision effective from the perspective of the doctoral student, and how important is the supervisory relationship?

The first question asked of each participant was *what was your supervision experience like for you.* This information was grouped into a category of *Overall Impressions.* The second question determined whether the supervisory experience was effective, *Effective or Not Effective Supervision.* The third question dealt with identifying what attributes of the supervision experience contributed to the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of supervision, the *Constructs* of the supervisory experience. Within the participant responses I first attempted to interpret their overall view of their supervision experience. For example, Participant in Interview 1 responded in Lines 6 – 19:

> Well I think that I am so grateful to have the experience I am having. Ah, just because I have, I feel like there’s so much support. Um, and, within the program itself, but concentrate on the supervisory experience and I feel like this is where most support came. Like people, before it was like only courses and coursework, you did not see the support as much as you do when you are directly working with your supervisor. So I think I am very grateful to have the experience that I am having. For me, especially for me, I came from a background where even at the um, just at the BA level, I didn’t, we didn’t feel like any support from our instructors. And we were maybe, we were made to feel like we couldn’t ask questions, or maybe for me it was like I don’t want to ask questions because what if they feel like I’m not understanding anything so, uh, experiencing the kind of support we have here, it’s totally different from the background I came from. This why I think I appreciate it even more than whoever was in a supportive environment the whole entire time.

When analyzing this data I determined the participant held a positive view of her supervisory experience. From this particular response it appeared the participant experienced effective
supervision, I labeled this as effective supervision/general impression. After determining the overall impression of her supervision was effective, I then sought to determine what about the supervision experience made it effective. The participant mentions support several times in this single response. I had also written in the phrase “effective supervision – support” in my field notes at the time of the taping of the interview. As I re-listened to the interview and read along with the transcript, I made note that the word support was mentioned five times. It had made an impression on me, both during the original interview and then again as it appeared to stand during my review of the interview and transcript. I assigned the code “characteristic” to support because I felt that the term support was a characteristic of what made the supervision experience effective for the participant.

I continued the transcript analysis to further identify patterns and meanings as they related to the research questions. All six participants stated that their supervision experiences were effective. In analyzing the interviews and transcripts I continued to listen, evaluate, and determine patterns and meaning, while trying to tie that information to the research questions. Participant in Interview 2 responded to a question regarding effectiveness of supervision said in Lines 275 – 280:

I had a really good experience with supervision so I probably would not change a thing. I just, could see how supervision for me was based on the relationship that I have established with my supervisor. So if that’s not there for others, I don’t know how you would create a manual to say you have to have these things. It’s more who you are as a person and those genuine characteristics. So yeah, that’s difficult. But I had a quality experience and would not have changed anything.

During that interview I had written in my field notes a note about “relationship”. When reviewing the transcript and listening to the interview again, I noticed that the participant emphasized the phrase supervision for me was based on the relationship that I have established
with my supervisor. That made an impression on me during the initial interview and again as I reviewed the data. I assigned this portion of data the code of “relationship”.

In the same interview I immediately followed-up with asking the participant “how do we create that (relationship)? What renders supervision effective or not effective?” In Lines 284 – 290 she responded:

Really to me it’s acceptance and trust, those are the two, and I think they are the most important for me. I think that if I don’t feel I have a supervisor, that I can trust, that what we talk about that it’s just between us for my own growth, that would discourage me, I couldn’t trust that person. I mean, just acceptance too. I’m imperfect, we’re all imperfect. Just acceptance that, you know I’m gonna come in here with faults and that’s okay. Our job is just to work together. So those are key points for me now that I’m thinking about it.

Here in that response I knew I would code it “relationship”, however, I further determined that the phrases acceptance and trust appeared to be emphasized by the participant. I assigned the code “characteristic” to this set of data as well. I felt that the data could be interpreted in more than one way, meaning, the descriptions provided by participants in the interview could be initially coded and further evaluated as the data provided additional cues in answering the research questions. In relating the data to the research questions I connected effective supervision experiences with both support and relationship. I went through all audio taped interviews and written transcripts using this frame of coding and determining patterns.

Another code I assigned arose from responses regarding attributes or characteristics of the faculty supervisor. I used the code “competency” to data that participants used to describe their supervisor’s skills, abilities, and experience as it pertained to the effectiveness of supervision. Participant in interview 3 Lines 389 – 392 said:

… I feel like my supervisor was competent, not just competent, but competent from years of experiences of looking at gray area and exploring that area. And years of trying not to
reduce things or be black and white. All of that helped me tremendously. The participant used the word competent when she spoke of the supervisor’s skills and how it helped her during her supervision experience.

For the remainder of my data analysis I continued to review the interviews and transcripts using the same method: I listened to the interviews while reviewing field notes made at the time of the interview; I read the transcripts while listening to the tapes and reviewing my notes; and I made new notes of observations as needed. The codes I created include: characteristic, competency, and relationship. It took several reviews of the interviews and transcripts to code and determine any patterns. During the additional reviews of the audio recordings and transcripts of the interviews and review of my notes, I felt the codes accurately reflected what I was examining with respect to the research questions. After coding was completed, I determined that the codes were actually the themes.

The themes emerged through segments of the data that were responsive to the research questions and aided in constructing categories that capture reoccurring patterns that cut across all the data. I identified three themes, they are: Supervisor Competency, Supervisor Individual Characteristics, and Supervisory Relationship. These themes appeared to answer the research questions: What makes supervision effective from the doctoral student perspective, and How important is the relationship between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor form the doctoral supervisor’s perspective. To organize the data, I compiled data from my notes, coding, and interview responses in a table that highlighted the words and descriptions participants provided in the interviews. Table 1 is a table that assisted me in the organization of the data.
Table 1

*Themes of Supervisor or Supervision Experience*

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<th>Supervisor Individual Characteristics</th>
<th>Supervisory Relationship</th>
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<td>Accepting</td>
<td>Accommodating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>Approachable</td>
<td>Advocate</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Caring</td>
<td>Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>Confidence Building</td>
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**Chapter Summary**

This chapter discussed the rationale for the design and methodology that was used in this study. Participant selection and recruitment, as well as interview protocol and a description of the criteria that was used to establish trustworthiness was described and discussed. Lastly, data analysis and the steps I took to determine themes were described. The following chapter will discuss the findings of the study.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter will provide the findings from this study and will be organized and presented via the participants’ responses to the interview protocol as they relate to the two research questions that led this inquiry:

1. What makes faculty to doctoral student supervision effective from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

2. In what ways do the supervisory relationship and the supervisory experiences between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor impact supervision from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

What makes faculty to doctoral student supervision effective from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

When describing what makes doctoral student supervision effective from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective, all six participants spoke about supervision experiences that were supportive, positive, and facilitative. All participants considered their supervision experiences as effective supervision experiences. The faculty clinical supervisor’s individual characteristics contributed greatly to the effectiveness of the doctoral student supervisor’s perception of the supervision experience. Each participant spoke of support. Having a supportive supervisor and feeling supported appeared to be at the root of each participant’s experience.
Feeling supported throughout their supervision experience led to their positive view of the supervision. Participant in Interview 4 Lines 608 – 614 described:

For me, it was just support. To know I wasn’t in it alone. That is very comforting to just know that someone’s a phone call away, you know a walk across campus away, or, you know that was very effective for me. Just to never feel like I was handling any of my clients alone. To always have backup. That was the most effective. And to just know that there was someone knew I could do it, believed in me, and I had backup for those times when I was tripped-up, or hit a speed bump, that was amazing.

Similarly, Participant in Interview 1, Lines 8 - 9 stated, “… concentrate on the supervisory experience and I feel like this is where most support came”. Further in the same interview the participant described feeling supported as she juggled both academic and personal family life in Lines 56 - 60:

All along I feel like um, the flexibility of like, working with you because they understand that you have a family, and you have children, and I never like felt I couldn’t say like, I have something going on in my personal life right now. I’ve always felt if you have something going on, they understand. And, and they are flexible and accommodating with anything that could come.

The participants had varying examples of what support meant to them. It appeared that the participants also recognized that the level of support they felt might not always be present.

Participant in Interview 2 Lines 264 – 269 explained when asked if she felt supported by her supervisor:

Yes, very supported. I feel very lucky. I know that in another situation, at another school, another program it could look very different because we’re all humans so we’re very different with different personalities. So absolutely very supportive and a lot of trust, and it was a safe environment, that’s key for me.

Additionally when describing characteristics of their supervisor, participants discussed the supportive characteristic of their supervisor. Participant in Interview 4 Lines 568 - 576 said:

I think the characteristics of my supervisor, uh, it helped that he was always supremely confident in my skills. And all the times our supervision involved him reminding me of what I was capable of doing, and erasing that self-doubt. And really allowed me to come, to find the answers on my own, would draw things out of me and say, “you already knew
what to do”, you just needed, you know… it was very, I would call it a very Rogerian style of supervision. Very much, you know, “you already know how to get there”, so that was a very helpful process, and fits my style, my counseling philosophy is very Rogerian, so that helped a lot as well.

Knowledge, competency and experience were also key factors in describing their supervisor and the role those characteristics played in the effective supervisory experience. Participant in Interview 3 Lines 389 - 392 describes:

I feel like my supervisor was competent, not just competent, but competent from years of experiences of looking at gray area and exploring that area. And years of trying not to reduce things or be black and white. All of that helped me tremendously.

When replying to a prompt regarding the supervisor’s competency and knowledge, the Participant added in Lines 395 - 400:

And there a couple of times when there were questions that were, well my supervisor didn’t know the answer to, like many of us don’t know the answer to, but he was able to, he was resourceful enough, he was able to teach me how to get those answers and we were able to get those answers together. So even if there wasn’t knowledge about a specific thing, there was knowledge about how to find it.

Challenging the doctoral supervisees while continuing to support them was also a factor. Buoyed by an effective and authentic connection, doctoral students felt supported. It appears that when these doctoral students felt a genuine concern and connection with their supervisor, their supervision experience was made effective. Participant in Interview 5 Lines 670 - 677 explained:

I just think it’s his personality itself, um… my former program where I did my master’s at, I had a female supervisor who was really great too, we had a good connection and I had support. So, the make-up of the person makes a difference. A genuine concern, they care about you, they care about the fact that they want you to become knowledgeable, understand what you’re doing, and be successful. So I think that is the key. Making sure that you know what you’re doing, holding you accountable, but at the same time, holding your hand making sure that you get through, do what’s necessary.

In addition to feeling supported throughout the supervisory experience, participants described supervisory experiences as a forum for professional growth and opportunities to collaborate.
Participant in Interview 2 Lines 152 – 157 stated:

Oh, yes, absolutely. Yes, it was very effective. I, I looked forward to it. I knew even if there wasn’t a concern or an issue with students that day, just having the opportunity to sit and just talk about counseling in general, and just things would come up just organically. That would make sense, I should try that you know, maybe I should include that topic with the students. It wasn’t that I had a question about it, it just kinda arose from our general discussion about counseling.

Participants did not hesitate to describe the characteristics or attributes of their supervisor they felt contributed to the effectiveness of their supervision experiences. Participants had his or her own idea of what made their supervision experience effective. Those descriptions of their supervisory experience appear to lend to a positive and supportive supervisory relationship, thus making the supervision experience effective.

In what ways do the supervisory relationship and the supervisory experiences between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor impact supervision from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

When discussing the supervision relationship and the supervisory experiences between faculty supervisor and doctoral supervisee, it became apparent that the participants each felt their supervisor to be supportive and knowledgeable, as one may expect a faculty supervisor to be. However, the supervisory relationship itself makes an impact on the effectiveness of supervisory experience from the perspective of the doctoral student supervisor. A feeling of a genuine connection and a collaborative and supportive relationship between the faculty supervisor and doctoral supervisor appears to be of great importance in the supervisory experience. When asked, Participant in Interview 6 Lines 890 - 899 described a connection that was forged subtly and naturally:

It felt so natural, I hesitate to answer that way, but it felt natural so, then I’m going to say that quite evidently, there was something he did. But I can’t identify it, because the relationship just flowed very naturally, very comfortably, um, and again he is very subtle
with his skills, subtle with his interventions and the support and what have you, so that I’m not able to pinpoint exactly when and how that happened. But I just felt very comfortable and confident about sharing with him and talking with him, and I’ve never felt misdirected by his guidance. I never felt that his guidance was anything but to benefit my growth professionally, and even personally, even when things were going on. So, um, that fluidity, that openness, just felt natural.

Participants described their supervision time with their faculty supervisor as opportunities to give and receive feedback, gain support when needed, seek answers to questions or concerns, and to grow and gain professional experience. All participants stated that they believed the amount of supervision they received was sufficient, some noting that there was always opportunity for additional supervision time when needed, and that their supervisor was both accommodating and accessible when required outside of scheduled supervision times. As with all the questions asked, the participant’s responses varied with regard to their specific experiences, however it was apparent participants felt that their supervision relationship was important and valued, and because of that perception, they viewed the supervisory experience as effective. Participant in Interview 6 Lines 942 - 946 stated in response to my question “looking back on your supervision experience, what would you say was the most helpful, most effective for you”:

Um, the relationship and the support. For me, and I see that as the umbrella for everything else, you know the guidance and the processing, they all came in under that. For me, those two things made it easier for me to listen and receive and easier for me to be open and to grow, to trust, you know all those other things. Relationship and the support to open up.

Participant in Interview 3 Lines 311 – 332 described what made the supervisory relationship and supervision experience most effective for her:

Yes, okay. So uh, I think that, what has made supervision effective, um, is, feeling like I can talk to my faculty supervisor about any and everything. You know not having to, I guess, we’ve all had those colleagues where we feel like we can’t be completely transparent with because if we reveal this thing, or bad things, they might judge us in the wrong way. And so I have found that being completely transparent, knowing that regardless of what’s going on, there will not be any judgment, instead there will be guidance. That’s very, that was very empowering for me. Uh, and um I think it made the
process a lot more um, meaningful because there was just always open dialogue about everything. So it was, it really was an opportunity to just explore everything. What’s the sense in supervision, when you can’t talk to the supervisor about something you’re afraid to talk about, and then you can’t learn from it. So I think in short uh, one of the things that has made supervision most effective is being able to be completely transparent and have an open dialogue about a variety of issues without the fear of, of getting in trouble, and also, the expectation of some sort of high-five, or hey, you’ve done a good job. You know just kind of eliminating all of that – you’re not going to get reprimanded, or rewarded, it’s just an opportunity for growing and learning. That has been really helpful. I think the things you know, the thing I guess would be, you know ineffective, not that this happened, the opposite of that, what was effective. It would make my experience not as educational, like, so, no supervisor made me feel like I couldn’t be transparent in this doctoral program, uh, but if that were the case, I think I would have gotten less out of the experience.

A supervisory relationship that was collaborative and open-ended was important to participants.

Participant in Interview 2, Line 143-149 described a typical supervision meeting with the faculty supervisor:

So I had a, I had a good experience with supervision. I, would meet with my supervisor, who would meet with me weekly. This was a time I could over any concerns that I heard from the students or concerns I had about the students if I had any at all. It was a time for feedback, encouragement and ideas. Also for possible concerns if I had an issue and possible ways of how to handle it. Or possible resources for the students to utilize, so it was helpful. And it was weekly. Weekly for about an hour, or we would meet for a little more if needed.

Three of the participants stated that their supervisor and the time spent during supervision made them feel valued and capable as doctoral students. Participant in Interview 5, Lines 649-658 describes feeling valued by the connection made with the supervisor:

First of all from day one he was like, “hey, you wouldn’t be here if you couldn’t do it, you know you can do this. You are good enough, you’re great, and should be here.” Yeah, whenever anyone would talk to him, you felt like it was never negative, it was always a positive. Ah, you know coming into a Ph.D. program, you doubt yourself. And so he put that to rest from day one. He was the one person to support you, to encourage you and be honest and help. And certainly he had, the supervisor, had/has the knowledge, background and experience and I think that is important.

All participants stated that during their supervision experiences they were allowed freedom to speak openly and honestly. Each felt their supervisor was truthful and transparent while
remaining completely professional. Participant in Interview 6 Line 804 described that dynamic best saying, “then he always maintained, despite being very familiar and comfortable with him, he always maintained this professional relationship.” Participant in Interview 3, Lines 458 - 466 talked about not knowing what to expect with respect to the doctoral level supervision experience and how that view changed once the supervision relationship and process began:

It was like I didn’t know what to expect, but I walked into this warm room and was just met with love and kindness. So it didn’t matter that I didn’t know and that I was a little bit nervous. I was able to navigate through the process with all this supportive energy, it was so good. I know this isn’t everyone’s experience, but for me, it was. And so I don’t know if I felt prepared because I guess part of our, being in doctoral mode, we’re always wondering if we’re prepared enough, and so I don’t know that I felt I was prepared for it. So it was more, I hope I am prepared for this. I didn’t know what to expect, but I had such a great guide.

Modeling within the supervisory relationship and experience was mentioned by three of the six participants. Modeling in this context is a learner, the doctoral student supervisor, learning in a one-on-one setting that involves an expert, the faculty clinical supervisor, guiding through a particular experience, supervision. The participants who described how their supervisor modeled effective supervisory characteristics stated that the modeling of supervisory techniques and behaviors aided in the ir supervision experience, and also served as an example for their future professional roles as supervisors. Participant in Interview 2 Lines 166 - 177 describes that modeling:

The characteristics of the supervisor were very important for me, as they were a model for me for when I am a future supervisor. Just having a non-judgmental, open, kind of a safe space. I never felt like I was going to be judged or criticized when I went in there. I could always just say what happened and then we always work through a problem, or a solution together. And I think that was really important and I’ve taken that acceptance even into the classes I’m teaching. Just having that rapport with students, that was really important and that something that made all the difference for supervision for me. This is because I knew that whatever I discussed it would be just accepted and then problem solved and then worked through, and that was helpful for me. Not that I had a lot of serious topics, they were a really good group of students. So, but it was nice to know that if I ever had a concern I could bring that up to my supervisor.
Experiencing and observing effective supervision within the supervisory relationship prompted Participant in Interview 1 to aspire to reciprocate the modeled behaviors of the faculty supervisor, Lines 69 – 73:

Yes, and like I feel like they give you, they model, um the, like how, um how dedicated they are, and you want to be dedicated, because the whole atmosphere is like, you feel the dedication from your supervisors towards you. And you are just like, you have a similar, you want to reciprocate, you know you want to work hard from the heart and do what you can do.

Participant in interview 3 described how observing her faculty supervisor within their supervisory relationship allowed her to evaluate her supervision style and make adjustments for improvement, Lines 492 – 500:

…watching Dr. Exum as a model, interpreting supervision as him modeling what the supervisor is supposed to be like, that created a lot of opportunity for me to be like, “oh gosh, that one student, I can’t believe I handled that that way” now seeing if I were more like Dr. Exum, if I handled it like this, what a better outcome that would’ve been for that student, and for me. Like it would be so much better, right, if I had just done that. I know that’s a lot, but the short answer is, the thing that was most helpful to me was having such an incredible supervisor model such beautiful, eloquent supervision to me, as the supervisee, because I know I could do things differently.

In sum, the participants described supportive and facilitative supervision as being essential to an effective supervisory experience. Support from a knowledgeable and experienced supervisor made supervision effective from the perspective of the doctoral student supervisors in this study. With regard to the importance of the relationship between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor, all participants in the study described a supervisory relationship that was crucial to their continued learning, confidence, and professional identity.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the data and findings from the study as they relate to the research questions. The discussion and conclusions will be discussed in the next and final chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the supervision process that takes place between the doctoral student and the doctoral student’s faculty supervisor from the perception of the doctoral student supervisor. I wanted to identify salient constructs that impact the effectiveness of the supervisory experience. The two questions that guided this inquiry were:

1. What makes faculty to doctoral student supervision effective from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

2. In what ways do the supervisory relationship and the supervisory experiences between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor impact supervision from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?

What Makes Supervision Effective From the Doctoral Student Supervisor’s Perspective?

As previously mentioned at the onset of this inquiry, I believe the supervision experience is influenced by the ways in which student supervisors perceive their own supervision. Based on the interviews I conducted as part of this study several themes emerged, they are competency, individual characteristics, and relationship. After analysis of the responses, I found the participant’s responses seemed to intersect over three main attributes: Supervisor Competency, Supervisor Individual Characteristics, and the Supervisory Relationship. My findings do align with what I originally outlined in my conceptual framework. There are constructs within the supervisory experience that impact the doctoral student’s perception of supervision. The
effectiveness of the supervisory experience is rooted in how the participant views the three main attributes.

While there is a paucity of research in this area, what does exist in the literature relates to the findings of this study. My findings are similar to Frick and Glosoff (2014) in that there are extrinsic and intrinsic factors that impact the supervision experience. In their study, interactions with current and previous supervisors influenced the doctoral student’s self-efficacy as supervisors. My data revealed positive and supportive interactions with supervisors positively influenced the participants in my study. Each participant spoke of how the support during the supervisory experience assisted in growing both their confidence and skills as supervisors themselves. In addition, they found that faculty supervisors who modeled their supervision style and techniques were influential for the participants in their study. My findings also suggested that modeling by the faculty supervisor played an important part in influencing the participants.

My findings suggest support plays a large role in the effectiveness of supervision. Similarly, Trepal and Hammer (2014) found that support from supervisors has a large role in instilling confidence in student supervisors. As with my findings, their study found support to be a crucial construct to the supervisory relationship. Support from faculty supervisors and peers played an important role in instilling confidence in doctoral student supervisors and their own abilities.

With regard to the theme of relationship, my findings suggest the attribute of the supervisory relationship is crucial to effective supervision. This finding is similar to the study Nelson, Oliver, and Capps (2006) undertook. One of the two themes that dominated their discussions and data was the importance of the supervisor-supervisee relationship and how important that relationship is to the supervision experience.
In this study all six participants described having effective supervisory experiences. Each participant described his or her supervisor as being knowledgeable, experienced, resourceful, full of guidance, and a good role model. These characteristics fall into the Supervisor Competency category. Effective supervisors have the ability to facilitate growth and development by being dedicated and proficient professionals. This was evident in all six of the participant’s supervisory experience. When asked to describe or explain their supervisor’s characteristics that lead to an effective supervision experience, each participant described their supervisors as having a high level of knowledge and professionalism.

With regard to individual characteristics of the supervisor, the each participant painted a picture of a supervisor who was accepting, committed, authentic, honest, trustworthy, non-judgmental and supportive. While the ways in which participants described his or her supervisor varied, the characteristics they used to describe their effective supervisor overlapped in many areas. Participants described an open and intuitive motivator who remained consistent throughout the supervision experience. More than half the participants described having self-doubt. Those participants spoke of the genuineness, motivation, and support the supervisor provided to facilitate a change in the participants to overcome such doubts. Each participant described a caring and open listener, dedicated to the ensuring the success of the doctoral student supervisor.

The characteristics of the supervisory relationship also appeared to play a large role in the effectiveness of the supervision experience. Overall the participant’s responses appeared to indicate that an open and available, safe and professional relationship is key to an effective supervisory experience. Participants described the importance of a guiding and motivating connection that helped facilitate their growth in confidence, as well as knowledge and skill building. Each participant described a supervisory relationship that was accessible and utilized
the supervision time to clarify and solve questions and concerns while the supervisor was able to
guide participants to the solutions they were seeking. Several participants noted that this kind of
effective supervision relationship and their supervisor’s individual characteristics and
competencies served as prodigious modeling.

*How important is the relationship between the faculty supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor from the doctoral student supervisor’s perspective?*

During the interviews for this study each participant described their supervision as
effective. When explaining what made their supervision experiences effective, the participant’s
spoke of the support and ease of the relationship between themselves and their faculty
supervisor. The construct of support was consistent among the participants. Each spoke about
how feeling connected and supported by their supervisor marked their supervision experiences,
which made their supervision effective. When speaking about their supervisor, the participants
spoke freely and easily about their individual supervision relationships, and, their responses were
very similar across the board. The supervisor was an advocate or a guide, whichever was needed
for the doctoral student supervisor at the time. An accommodating supervisor with an open-door
policy when it comes to supervision appeared to be what each participant experienced in his or
her own experience. For these participants’, the supervisory relationship between the faculty
supervisor and the doctoral student supervisor was very important for a successful supervision
experience.

The findings from the study confirm my conceptual framework. At the top of the triadic
supervision model is the faculty supervisor. I believed there were elements of the faculty
supervisor that impacts the supervision experience, which in turn, impacts the doctoral student
supervisor, who is directly underneath in the triad and in my framework. I suggested there were
constructs that occur or are present in between the two levels that impact the doctoral student’s perception of supervision. In this study the data I analyzed identified three main themes that influence the perception of effective or not effective supervision. They were Supervisor Competency, Supervisor Individual Characterizes, and Supervisory Relationship, confirming what I had proposed. I also suggested the way in which the student supervisor perceives the supervision experience defines the supervision experience as effective or not effective supervision. My findings supported my conceptual framework in that the doctoral students viewed their supervision experience as effective, thus defining their supervision as effective overall.

I learned a great deal over the course of conducting this study. However, the learning did not come from the process of writing and conducting this study alone. My journey to this point of dissertation has been a long one, and certainly not a nice straight line to the finish. Throughout my time as a doctoral student, and in my academia experience, the one thing that remained a constant for me in my program was my own effective supervision experiences. I have had my share of doubt and loss of confidence, and have experienced traumatic events that completely stopped me in my tracks. My supervisor was always present and at the ready to lend support. The opportunities I was given to engage in the supervision of supervision helped restore my sense of self and remind me of all the things I had forgotten, most of which was that I was capable. As the participants I interviewed spoke of how they perceived their supervision, I found I related with what they were relaying to me. I truly understood and empathized with what they were saying. I suppose that is what made the process of data collection and data analysis somewhat easier. I understood what they were talking about, and I had experienced it. I believe that I will always be interested in supervision and finding out what makes it work.
If I had the opportunity to conduct this study again I would change several things. I would include both the faculty supervisor and the master level supervisee in the study. Examining the viewpoint from all levels of the triadic supervision process would give a more complete picture of what makes up the supervision experience. Conducting additional interviews to delve further into each participant’s descriptions of the dynamics of the supervisory relationship would provide deeper and richer descriptions and perhaps reveal additional meaningful constructs. I would also examine factors such as the role of gender and the role of cultural differences that were not examined in this current study. It would be interesting and informative to determine what role if any they each have on the supervisory experience.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. Perhaps the most pertinent is the sample. All participants are from one Counseling Education and Supervision Ph.D. program at one research extensive university in the southeastern United States. The participants and the responses speak only to the specific characteristics of this university Ph.D. program.

Five of the six participants had the same clinical supervisor. All six participants had a male supervisor, none of the participants had a female faculty supervisor. Without a more diverse faculty supervisor pool to describe, there may be certain characteristics, both positive and negative that are not discovered. The majority of participants in this study were women, as is the case in most counseling programs. However, it would be beneficial to include more males in the data collection as that adds to the current information and the trustworthiness of the results.

Suggestions for Future Research

Expanding the study to include other Counselor Education and Supervision Ph.D. programs would allow for a larger and more diverse set of doctoral student supervisors as well as
a larger and more diverse faulty clinical supervisor population. A larger and diverse population of Counselor Education and Supervision Ph.D. programs would yield more data ensuring trustworthiness.

Examining and comparing differences in gender, of both doctoral student supervisors and faculty clinical supervisors would identify any differences that may exist regarding gender that was not examined in this study. Similarly, examining the data against ethnic and cultural backgrounds may provide additional information about possible influences cultural differences may have on the effectiveness of supervision.

Interviewing master level students in the tiered supervision model would contribute to understanding the supervisory experience. In this study only the middle tier of supervision of supervision was examined. Examining the master level novice counselor’s perception of their supervision experience would provide a better understanding of the impact and influence the supervisory process has in all levels of the multilevel supervision model. Does an effective supervisory experience from the perspective of the doctoral student supervisor have implications on the novice counselors? If so, are they similar to the findings from studying doctoral students? Fernando (2013) in a study of master’s-level supervisees satisfaction and self-efficacy found that overall the master level supervisees in that study were satisfied with the supervision they receive from doctoral student supervisors. As that study indicates, it is encouraging for counseling programs that offer a Ph.D. to know that the master level students would receive effective and adequate supervision from doctoral student supervisors who themselves experience effective and adequate supervision. Given that finding, understanding and identifying the constructs that make supervision effective for doctoral student supervisors is crucial as this impacts future counselors and their clients.
Examining the top tier of the supervision triadic will improve understanding of the supervision process. Interviewing clinical faculty supervisors and identifying the constructs that comprise their delivery and expectations of the supervisory experience would provide an all-around view of the supervision process from the top down. Taking a look at supervision from the perspective of the clinical supervisor could open a dialogue for identifying areas of improvement in training.

**Implications for the Field**

The process of becoming a supervisor is multifaceted and not yet understood in its entirety. In counselor education, supervision is an important mechanism for preserving the standards and practices of the counseling profession. It is the method for training new counselors as well as doctoral level supervisors, all while protecting clients and monitoring ethical practices. Further research is needed to understand the development of supervisors to learn which parts of the supervision training process that makes the most impact on effective supervision.

Identifying the constructs that render effective supervision is key to enhancing training programs and may assist doctoral students in developing their own identity as supervisors. Developing competent and ethical supervisors begins with their training and development. In this study all participants indicated their supervision was effective. What would it look like if doctoral students experienced a non-effective supervision experience? There are ethical implications when the supervisory experience is not effective. Participants in this study described their supervision as effective and noted that their supervisors effectively modeled the behaviors and skills of a professional and knowledgeable supervisor, one that each could emulate. Should a doctoral student enter in supervisory relationship with a supervisor who is unethical or incompetent, modeling those behaviors would corrupt the novice counselors they supervise.
In this study the participants appear to have been well placed with their faculty supervisors. Perhaps examining the methods which faculty matches supervisors and doctoral student supervisors in supervision relationships will aid in formulating an effective protocol for matching and pairing compatible supervision relationships that result in effective supervision. The findings from this study appear to indicate that an effective supervision experience is the result of a competent and knowledgeable supervisor, who has equally intrinsic and extrinsic supportive characteristics, who maintains an open and genuine supervisory relationship with the doctoral student supervisor. Understanding how this all works has implications on training, not just for the doctoral student, but also for the faculty supervisor. This could mean a change in program development and design, and possibly additional training and continued education for faculty members. The participants in this study discussed the construct of support throughout the interviews. This leads me to believe that students who may not be receiving the support they need may not complete their program. Understanding the supervisory experience may also impact retention and create strategies for supporting doctoral students throughout the various aspects of their supervisor development. Placing students in effective and supportive supervisory relationships will aid in their effectiveness.

There is still much to learn about the development and training of supervisors. Research in this area can provide an understanding of what contributes to effective supervision and cultivate a productive and positive climate for future clinical supervisors, their supervisees and current faculty supervisors.
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APPENDIX A: Transcripts

Interview 1

Interviewer: So, my main question for you, well the first question I will start with is… Tell me what your supervision experience was like.

Participant: Um like, for my doctoral study, right?

Interviewer: Yes.

Participant: Well I think that I am so grateful to have the experience I am having. Ah, just because I have, I feel like there’s so much support. Um, and, within the program itself, but concentrate on the supervisory experience and I feel like this is where most support came. Like people, before it was like only courses and coursework, you did not see the support as much as you do when you are directly working with your supervisor. So I think I am very grateful to have the experience that I am having. For me, especially for me, I came from a background where even at the um, just at the BA level, I didn’t, we didn’t feel like any support from our instructors. And we were maybe, we were made to feel like we couldn’t ask questions, or maybe for me it was like I don’t want to ask questions because what if they feel like I’m not understanding anything so, uh, experiencing the kind of support we have here, it’s totally different from the background I came from. This why I think I appreciate it even more than whoever was in a supportive environment the whole entire time.
Interviewer: So it sounds like maybe prior to your supervision experience here it was um, a little intimidating.

Participant: It was, I can say it was intimidating for students like to be looked at as not the same way as we are looked at here, you know just like more valuable, I think.

Interviewer: Oh, okay

Participant: Yes, yeah, and over there like your professors are up there and you are the student, like you know they don’t make you feel like you can come to them and ask them questions. You know they’re too busy for you, and here it’s just like you are supported.

Interviewer: Sounds like maybe your prior experience there was more a hierarchal, you know you just feeling where you’re just at the very bottom, yeah, that can be intimidating

Participant: To me, it was like this, it sounds like this, maybe for my peers it was. It may not be, but it just looked like that to me.

Interviewer: Yeah it was real, the experience was tangible enough for you to feel that way. So it certainly was real for you. So you felt a comfort level here, a sense of value

Participant: Yes, yes and the support is, is like now, I feel like for our professor to come back from his retirement, and just like stick with us until we finish, I mean this to me is amazing.

Interviewer: Yes, that’s great. What sort of attribute of your faculty supervisor do you think made an impact on you? Like what sort of things can you identify that gave you that feeling of being valued and supported. Were there, was there anything?

Participant: For me, I started the program… Can I talk about the master’s as well?
Participant: When I started the program I was pregnant, so this was a long time ago. But I was pregnant and I was like how can I go to school pregnant? Like it’s not, so much, you know, especially like again, coming from another culture where you feel like whew, this is the wrong thing to do. But right then, I felt the support from my supervisor. I came to this program, but it was in Lakeland. Uh, but, so I’m like I’m interested in this program, but I’m going to deliver at some point when the program started, and, and I remember the head of the program telling me like, “doesn’t matter because we will work with you no matter when you deliver, or what you have to do, we will make up the work, we will support you”. You know supervise you somehow. Just do the work. And to me this is like, oh, I can still do that when like I’m a mom. It started with support.

Participant: All along I feel like um, the flexibility of like, working with you because they understand that you have a family, and you have children, and I never like felt I couldn’t say like, I have something going on in my personal life right now. I’ve always felt if you have something going on, they understand. And, and they are flexible and accommodating with anything that could come.

Participant: Flexibility, understanding, accommodation, yes all of these happened at some time

Interviewer: And lends to a feeling of being supported because of all of that
Participant: Yes, so the entire, yes the entire program feels supported throughout many little, like if you have family issues, you are sick. I was sick, I got a cold and the next day the supervisor ask me how I’m doing – oh my God, this to me means a lot.

Interviewer: Right, so sincerity too it sounds like

Participant: Yes, and like I feel like they give you, they model, um the, like how, um how dedicated they are, and you want to be dedicated, because the whole atmosphere is like, you feel the dedication from your supervisors towards you. And you are just like, you have a similar, you want to reciprocate, you know you want to work hard from the heart and do what you can do.

Interviewer: So, right, you aspire to be like that, so that the modeling is certainly there and you feel like, so supported yourself, that you want to be able to give that back. Or you feel almost an obligation that, if they are taking all this time out for me, then

Participant: I should be dedicated too. Yes, it’s like a real example of modeling. Yes, true. I mean I loved every year of my graduate experience here.

Interviewer: Would you identify, or are there certain attributes, you know, your supervisor is a different gender, a different ethic background. Would you say that any of those sort of characteristics, age, ah culture, gender, any of that play a role, no role?

Participant: You know I never thought of this, just maybe because I never felt it. So maybe I didn’t’ feel any difference being with someone of the same or different culture.

Again the support is natural, it is there. I feel diversity is encouraged, um, respected, and I feel the same way you know. I never felt that anything got in the way because of these differences.
Interviewer: Um, anything in particular, um, about well, let say, how about conflict resolution. If there was ever a problem, how do you feel your supervisor took care of that for you, or help you resolve issues?

Participant: Yes, there was an issue in one of the semesters, and, you know I felt my supervisor wanted to get both sides of the issue, and look very closely into it. It’s not like the, um, the resolution of the problem came from a deep understanding from both sides, before the supervisor took any decisions, make any decisions about how to resolve the issue, he looked so closely into each of the two sides of the story and um, resolved it in a very professional manner. It was very professional. To me, should I say more, or explain?

Interviewer: Oh no, I was just wondering if too, because of the fairness of the resolution and the professionalism of your supervisor, do you think that comes from perhaps the supervisor’s knowledge and expertise in the field?

Participant: Oh yes, I feel my supervisor is so experienced, so knowledgeable, so, um, he’s an expert in the field. He knows the ins and outs. I’m sure he has had so many conflicts, but to me it was very fair and it was understood.

Interviewer: Is there anything that you would have liked to see? Or was there anything lacking in your supervision? Or areas of improvement?

Participant: I can’t point at any negatives. I’m like very fortunate, I think with my experience. But nothing, that I like go home and say or think, “oh I wish”, expect, “ I wish I had the time to do my work.” But coming from the supervisors and from the environment, and from the supervisory experience, I think that they do the best they can, to provide support, to provide guidance, to provide feedback. Um, I
really am truly blessed with that experience. And you know, and seeing that, when I taught a class, I can now to do the same thing. I want to be there for the students, I wanted to give them like regularly feedback and encourage them, um and get their feedback and so I can do better if I do the experience again. Um, but I think this came from building from what I saw throughout my years of studying here at the same university.

Interviewer: Sounds like you truly experienced supervision that made you feel valued from a very trusted advisor, mentor. That you felt so strongly buy that you could model that behavior in your won teaching and your own interactions

Participant: Yes, I felt like I learned and applied at the same institution, which was wonderful. Yes, last semester, at the very beginning of the semester, my son got into a huge accident, and I was like, dysfunctional for a while, but I did feel that if I need to ask someone to cover my class for me, I would somebody. Like you know, I know we are talking about the supervisor, but the whole program was very supportive of me and if I needed something.

Interviewer: Oh and too, your supervisor happens to be the program director, so I think a lot of that like, bleeds over, not just supervision, but programmatic wise.

Participant: Yes, so you get to share your personal experiences, like if you have something personal going on in your life. It’s really like they are approachable, my supervisors are, you feel like, yes, there is this professional side, but you know there is this human side that you can also approach.

Interviewer: Well thank you, I think that is all I have. Is there anything you would like to add?

Participant: Oh, no, thank you.
Interview 2

Interviewer: So, what I’m just gonna start with a very general question. What was your supervision experience like for you?

Participant: So um, my supervision experience as far as being a doctoral?

Interviewer: Being a doctoral supervisee on the triadic spectrum. So you have a major professor, a faculty supervisor, who is your supervisor, you’re in the middle, and then you have a master student counselor underneath you. So it’s really, your supervision of supervision experience.

Participant: Oh, okay.

Interviewer: So what was that experience for you like, overall?

Participant: So I had a, I had a good experience with supervision. I, would meet with my supervisor, who would meet with me weekly. This was a time I could over any concerns that I heard from the students or concerns I had about the students if I had any at all. It was a time for feedback, encouragement and ideas. Also for possible concerns if I had an issue and possible ways of how to handle it. Or possible resources for the students to utilize, so it was helpful. And it was weekly. Weekly for about an hour, or we would meet for a little more if needed.

Interviewer: Okay and would you say it was effective then? Would you say your supervision was effective?

Participant: Oh, yes, absolutely. Yes, it was very effective. I, I looked forward to it. I knew even if there wasn’t a concern or an issue with students that day, just having the opportunity to sit and just talk about counseling in general, and just things would come up just organically. That would make sense, I should try that you know,
maybe I should include that topic with the students. It wasn’t that I had a question about it, it just kinda arose from our general discussion about counseling.

Interviewer: Okay, so what I’m hearing is um, you found it to be effective, not only did it help with um, the subject matter at hand, like the students you were supervising, but also other areas in which you needed somebody to talk to.

Participant: Absolutely, yes.

Interviewer: I like how you describe it as things, subjects coming up organically through your conversation. So, I um, I’m wondering then, what parts, or would you say there were characteristics, or um, things about either your supervisor, or the experience itself specifically that made it effective?

Participant: Yes. The characteristics of the supervisor were very important for me, as they were a model for me for when I am a future supervisor. Just having a non-judgmental, open, kind of a safe space. I never felt like I was going to be judged or criticized when I went in there. I could always just say what happened and then we always work through a problem, or a solution together. And I think that was really important and I’ve taken that acceptance even into the classes I’m teaching. Just having that rapport with students, that was really important and that something that made all the difference for supervision for me. This is because I knew that whatever I discussed it would be just accepted and then problem solved and then worked through, and that was helpful for me. Not that I had a lot of serious topics, they were a really good group of students. So, but it was nice to know that if I ever had a concern I could bring that up to my supervisor.

Interviewer: So, an openness characteristic?
Participant: Yes, openness, but very caring, just a safe kind of, non-judgmental space. Just to know we are here to help students and do what’s best for the students, and so we’ll work through that. I thought that was really important.

Interviewer: So those are really characteristics of the supervisor, sort of the like attributes that the supervisor displayed in order to garner, uh, a good supervision session. So with that, so those are great um, examples of the characteristics of the supervisor, um with regard to knowledge, or theory, do you think those came into play? Or was that inherent? Do you find your supervisor to be very knowledgeable?

Participant: Yes, absolutely. I came from a very solution focused background and so my supervisor was well versed in many different theoretical orientations and so it was nice when I wanted to discuss options such as: well do you think REBT would work? Or if working with the students, and they had questions like, how they were going to work with their students. I could go to my supervisor and say my student had a question about using REBT, would that be best in that environment? It’s just things that I need to bounce off of someone and yeah, they were knowledgeable. for my supervision also it was nice that sometimes we would have another student come in and, one of my peers. So we could bounce ideas off of each other. And it didn’t happen all the time, but that was really nice too. They were also teaching the same class I was supervising, but just a different day, section. Um, and that was helpful too for those situations as well because many times what would happen is that the, my supervisor would let us facilitate the discussion with the other person instructing the class and we would talk it through. So it was great, it was like he was like facilitating and we were able to
engage each other and problem solve and so that was neat. It didn’t happen all the time, but when we were able to do that, I felt that was super beneficial. But without my supervisor being there, I don’t know if it would have been productive?

Interviewer: Right, those key ways that he was able to guide us to say even just like a prompt, like what does this person think? Or what do you guys think? I think those kind of things are really helpful. Knowing how to facilitate? How to pull um, productivity out of a meeting in your group supervision settings, which didn’t happen often, but you found that valuable?

Participant: I found it really valuable. Yeah, and I think that I was always impressed by that, cause I felt that was something key. It’s not about your supervisor having all the answers, but kind of really just using our resources. We have other resources in the room, to me he was able to do that really effectively.

Interviewer: Ah hum, I had one person describe it as their supervisor may not always have the answer, but was always willing to just say, “that’s a good question, let’s figure that out”. So maybe not necessarily that omnipotent, all knowing, um, but the, the air of let’s work on this together and then helping guide through the process then.

Participant: Yes, I would agree with that.

Interviewer: Okay, would you, um, in terms of diversity, um, within your supervision relationship, did you have any um, I guess have any experiences, did you feel that there was ever any hindrance, or a strength? Was there anything to that, that you can speak to? So with cultural components with my supervision with my students? Or with just with the cultural um, that we both come from different
cultural differences? Um, well, both, was there anything? Or do you think it played a role?

Participant: I think, well, my supervisor and I are both from, different cultures, different backgrounds, and I think I do notice that and I think I can appreciate that he respected my cultural background and things that might come up and discuss it. He was very accepting, “oh tell me more about that”, so I thought that was, , beneficial. I don’t know, I know that in our group supervision as you called it, when I would have other students in there (your peers?), yes, that we were very diverse. I thought that was pretty awesome and amazing. I just would just love sometimes looking around and just seeing the diversity within our group, I was always proud of that. but I don’t know if that’s something that we necessarily said, “oh look at us, we’re so diverse”. It’s not something we ever talked about but, I think it was something I was aware of and appreciated.

Interviewer: Okay, thanks. Um, let’s see. So how would you describe your relationship then, with your supervisor?

Participant: I’d say, I have a lot of respect for my supervisor, I feel he is a leader in a sense that he doesn’t say “I’m a leader”, but’s it’s through his actions and his words, and his affect. You just feel it. He doesn’t have to prove that he’s a leader, he models it. I’ve always appreciated that. I think there’s only been a few people I’ve met in my life when I look back and I say, “oh, I want have that kind of presence”. Oh, that’s what it is, it’s like a presence, like when you’re with them you feel just listened to. When I am with a student, I want to be able to give them that, my full attention. I want to be very mindful of them, and I want to be present
with them. I think that’s what I get most from my supervisor as well. It sounds so simple, but it is so rare because many times I’ll be talking with someone, even other professors that I may have in a class and you can tell their thinking about something else while you’re talking to them, I get it. We’re all pretty busy. We all have stuff, but I think one of the greatest characteristics of people who have impressed me, including my supervisor, is just the presence with me right there, that’s really important.

Interviewer: Right, it sounds like what you describe too is, what it lens itself to is a quality of experience when you have someone who processes a, um, the qualities and characteristics of a good mentor, a good leader, a good supervisor, always lens itself to a good relationship quality-wise because you know that’s, you know, I like what you said, “you don’t have to come out and say, I’m an expert, I’m a leader”, it just kind of exudes from the person. And it does lend itself to quality, it lends to trust. Um, I remember my own supervision, well now I view it as mentoring now. You really need to feel that your supervisor believes in you and that leads to trust. Did you feel supported by your supervisor?

Participant: Yes, very supported. I feel very lucky. I know that in another situation, at another school, another program it could look very different because we’re all humans so we’re very different with different personalities. So absolutely very supportive and a lot of trust, and it was a safe environment, that’s key for me.

Interviewer: It sounds like you’re describing good modeling of supervision um, attributes because then we’ll go out and model the same behavior. Do you feel you had a adequate amount of supervision in this way?
Participant: Oh yes, it was perfect. It was weekly, sometimes an hour, sometimes more, it just depended so…

Interviewer: Now is there anything you would have changed? Anything looking back on it now, anything you would have liked done differently? Any ineffective parts?

Participant: I had a really good experience with supervision so I probably would not change a thing. I just, could see how supervision for me was based on the relationship that I have established with my supervisor. So if that’s not there for others, I don’t know how you would create a manual to say you have to have these things. It’s more who you are as a person and those genuine characteristics. So yeah, that’s difficult. But I had a quality experience and would not have changed anything.

Interviewer: I think that’s really too, a part of what I am trying to examine. How do we create that? What renders supervision effective or not effective? Sometimes it’s hard to pinpoint, hard to identify.

Participant: Really to me it’s acceptance and trust, those are the two, and I think they are the most important for me. I think that if I don’t feel I have a supervisor, that I can trust, that what we talk about that it’s just between us for my own growth, that would discourage me, I couldn’t trust that person. I mean, just acceptance too. I’m imperfect, we’re all imperfect. Just acceptance that, you know I’m gonna come in here with faults and that’s okay. Our job is just to work together. So those are key points for me now that I’m thinking about it.

Interviewer: And as you’re saying it too, you know, part of the I think, supervision of supervision is the training of doctoral students to become effective supervisors because we’re the one’s that go out and supervise the counselors in training, the
novices counselors. So we do carry our own experiences with our supervision into that relationship, so it is far reaching. Much more than just a relationship, I think it permeates any supervision long lasting that doctoral students will do as professors will do later on, the modeling.

Participant: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Okay, think I have what I need. But if you think of anything else, um, that you think of, will you just let me know.

Interviewer: Okay, why don’t you just tell me what was your supervision experience like for you?

Participant: Okay, so I want to be sure that I understand. You did explain things clearly, but I want to be sure. You mean my experience as a doctoral student of supervision from my professors, right?

Interviewer: Yes. So just as a whole. You are a doctoral level supervisor, but you are also a part of the supervision of supervision. I’d like to understand for you, what made the experience effective for you, or not effective for you from the standpoint of your experiences with your faculty supervisor. Does that make sense?

Participant: Yes, okay. So uh, I think that, what has made supervision effective, um, is, feeling like I can talk to my faculty supervisor about any and everything. You know not having to, I guess, we’ve all had those colleagues where we feel like we can’t be completely transparent with because if we reveal this thing, or bad things, they might judge us in the wrong way. And so I have found that being completely transparent, knowing that regardless of what’s going on, there will not be any
judgment, instead there will be guidance. That’s very, that was very empowering for me. Uh, and um I think it made the process a lot more um, meaningful because there was just always open dialogue about everything. So it was, it really was an opportunity to just explore everything. What’s the sense in supervision, when you can’t talk to the supervisor about something you’re afraid to talk about, and then you can’t learn from it. So I think in short uh, one of the things that has made supervision most effective is being able to be completely transparent and have an open dialogue about a variety of issues without the fear of, of getting in trouble, and also, the expectation of some sort of high-five, or hey, you’ve done a good job. You know just kind of eliminating all of that – you’re not going to get reprimanded, or rewarded, it’s just an opportunity for growing and learning. That has been really helpful. I think the things you know, the thing I guess would be, you know ineffective, not that this happened, the opposite of that, what was effective. It would make my experience not as educational, like, so, no supervisor made me feel like I couldn’t be transparent in this doctoral program, uh, but if that were the case, I think I would have gotten less out of the experience. Right. Would you say you like, with regard to that openness, did that help you then as a supervisor of master-level students to sort of mirror those skillsets possibly for your master-level counselors. If they were coming to you in fear of judgment, or of doing something wrong, because you have experienced that transparency again with expectations of no judgment or punishment. Um, do you feel that that um, kinda enabled you to do that for your students as well?
Participant: Absolutely. I actually think it even translated to my work as a counselor too. So I think seeing the, okay, going from seeing the supervisor, who is quick to, you know slap you on the wrist and say “don’t use that theoretical orientation”, or you know going and seeing that as a master’s student to then seeing what supervision can feel like as a doctoral student from doctoral faculty, that communicated to me a difference in experience between professionals. So like, I started to interpret those supervisors who are quick to punish or reward as being the ones who are taking the easy route. As opposed to the more seasoned counselors and supervisors who are not, you know, they don’t care about getting the approval from a student, or getting a gold star so they can be liked. They are not quick to punish for the sake of punishment. So to me the doctoral level supervisors as opposed to the supervisors I had as a masters student, they seem so much more well versed in their supervision skills and that’s while they’re not distracted by the insignificant stuff, like let me give you that pat on the back for signing the informed consent the right way, let me scold you for doing something wrong. They just seem like they have much more experience, they don’t need to go to those places. So taking that seeing these, what I think, more seasoned professionals, experienced supervisors, seeing the way that they delivered supervision, from this non-judgmental, let’s talk about everything, we can talk about, and work through everything kinda of a place. It made me feel like I can be more like that myself. So I started changing my own approach to supervision and instead of being so quick to jump on a student for doing something incorrectly, or jump to the great job, gold star place, I kind of like, I just wasn’t so quick to do
that and I noticed that it facilitated more deeper growth for the supervision student when I approached it that way, as opposed to being quick to react, whether in a positive or negative way.

Interviewer: Okay. Would you say then, having that transparency, that openness, through your own supervision, changed your view of the supervision process from being sort of being this, having to have a judgment call, or a grade, or very tactical meet all these certain points to a more process approach. You know supervision now for you, you see it as a process of growth or process of you know, building skills that maybe not, always associated, with, well look you have to do this this way, etc. But it really being a process, in this case as being doctoral students, we are going through the supervision process. Whereas in your master’s program supervision, and certainly in my own supervision as a master student, it was more do these skill, meet these skills and not think about how you’re growing as a clinician, or a counselor. Would you say that was, that kind of changed your conceptualization of supervision?

Participant: Absolutely. I think my conceptualization of supervision before becoming a doc student is that it was about the destination. Becoming a doctoral student and experiencing supervision on that level it was about the journey.

Interviewer: Okay, yes, that makes sense. Again coming from the master’s programs which are, my goal is to become a MA, LMHC, or school counselor, that’s a terminal degree and you’re just trying to meet all the standard things you have to meet. Where as doctoral students, we are a couple of steps further, where it’s not just acquiring the skills, but the process of these nuances, the willingness to allow for
supervision to take place. Where doctoral students are processing a lot, talking through it and master’s level is looking more for right and wrong. Would you then say your supervisor then, did you feel he was competent? What do you consider his skill level?

Participant: Yes, doctoral level, I feel like my supervisor was competent, not just competent, but competent from years of experiences of looking at gray area and exploring that area. And years of trying not to reduce things or be black and white. All of that helped me tremendously.

Interviewer: And then, knowledge was just a part of the package? Did you ever feel that they were lacking in that area?

Participant: Never. And there a couple of times when there were questions that were, well my supervisor didn’t know the answer to, like many of us don’t know the answer to, but he was able to, he was resourceful enough, he was able to teach me how to get those answers and we were able to get those answers together. So even if there wasn’t knowledge about a specific thing, there was knowledge about how to find it.

Interviewer: And would you say your expectations were, well you weren’t looking for the supervisor who knew everything per se, but knew how to go about finding the answer. As you said they might not know it off hand, but at the same time, allowed for that process, not only for himself, but yourself and allowing time for to come up with that.

Participant: Exactly, exactly.
Interviewer: Um, so it sounds like, I know, it sounds like you felt very supported by your supervisor. So to what extent did you share your feelings and feel comfortable? Were you able to do that?

Participant: Yes. And, well generally, as counselors we’re pretty open, very open book, I’m usually like that with other counselors. But when it comes to supervisors, I’m pretty closed. I kinda keep it professional and to the point, I usually have a filter, especially when expressing feeling. But what I learned through this process was the more comfortable I felt with my supervisor, the more comfortable I felt really letting that guard down and being completely myself you know. Being, and sharing my feeling without thinking about it first, you know letting it out. I guess what I’m saying is, it was very therapeutic, the supervisory experience was very therapeutic.

Interviewer: Do you think you would relate that to no sense of judgment, no um, not feeling like you were breaking any rules, you’re not being viewed as incompetent, or being intimidated. You mentioned the more comfortable you felt with expressing your concerns whether, you had mentioned before it was open, not just your clients, but you could talk about anything, your own processes were going on in this sort of therapeutic way, you were able to express that and um, the supervisor being open to that made you comfortable disclosing more. You felt less guarded.

Participant: Exactly, exactly. It was all that plus the consistency of it, it wasn’t that it was just one conversation, it was a series of conversations and I walking away going, wow, that felt really good and I just learned so much. I’m leaving the conversations feeling like I know so much more than I did before I went into it
and it’s all good. And I think that happening a few times in a row made me feel,
well this is the way that it is. And that built trust, and I can really be myself and
let’s see what happens. And sure enough same thing every single time.

Interviewer: And well going back to trust and having the consistent experience, what sort of
behaviors and attributes your supervisor, your faculty supervisor had, that helped
create that sense of trust. What sort of things created that, and that consistency,
was there anything you could identify that helped you to feel that way.

Participant: Yes, yeah. The genuineness that was a really big factor you know, he was just so
genuinely committed to the process. You know there was no ego associated with
any of it. You know another thing too, thinking about the ego stuff, he never came
across as “I’m the expert in all this stuff” it was always, “we’re all learning”, you
know having this attitude like, I’m open and I don’t know what I don’t know, but
there’s definitely a lot of stuff that I don’t. And that helped, you use the word
intimidated, intimidating here, and I think that’s a really good word to use here.

Interviewer: Okay, I like it, just jottin these good words. Would you say, when you’re
describing it, well I don’t want to put words in your mouth, but would you say
that not having an ego, kind of a humility, a sameness, would you say that, does
that describe, is that a good word for you to describe.

Participant: Totally, yes totally. Yes, it’s like the difference between a boss and a mentor.

Interviewer: That does create a different emotional climate that you mention, you feel more
inclined to um, to admit that you don’t know what you don’t know and the
supervisor agreeing and saying well yeah, me too. It does knock down some of
those walls and you don’t feel that judgment. Did you feel prepared for your doctoral level supervision experience, or did your conceptualization of supervision change? I know we talked about it a little. Like, when you knew you had to enter into supervision of supervision, how was that like for you?

Participant: You know I was a little bit nervous because I didn’t know what to expect. Um, but honestly Jinah it was just such a warm experience. It was like I didn’t know what to expect, but I walked into this warm room and was just met with love and kindness. So it didn’t matter that I didn’t know and that I was a little bit nervous. I was able to navigate through the process with all this supportive energy, it was so good. I know this isn’t everyone’s experience, but for me, it was. And so I don’t know if I felt prepared because I guess part of our, being in doctoral mode, we’re always wondering if we’re prepared enough, and so I don’t know that I felt I was prepared for it. So it was more, I hope I am prepared for this. I didn’t know what to expect, but I had such a great guide.

Interviewer: Sounds like it was a pleasant surprise, like, again like you said as doctoral students we’re always feeling like “what do I need to know” or “I don’t know enough” and that hesitation of entering into something with that fear again, and then that happy surprise that it is enjoyable and not as painful as one thought. I agree. Would you then, well, it sounds like you felt very supported by your supervisor. Do you think that um, did diversity, having a male supervisor with a different cultural background make a difference to you?

Participant: Great question. Um, and I really want to answer honestly, not just an answer that sounds good like, “oh, yes, it made me so much more aware”. Um, to tell you the
truth, I do not think that his gender or his cultural, this is the best way to say it. He is such a skilled supervisor, his proficiency as a supervisor transcended anything at all about gender or cultural. I almost see him as a being, an entity, a genderless, ethnicity-less entity.

Interviewer: The fact that you felt so at ease, that gender or cultural background fell away. Almost like the one human feel.

Participant: Exactly, exactly.

Interviewer: I think that I have everything thing that I need, oh wait let me see. Oh, okay would you, well, so looking over the course of your supervision experience, what was most helpful to you in developing as a supervisor yourself?

Participant: Okay, that’s a good question. So I don’t mean to make this a long winded answer, I just want to give context. You know usually, especially as mother, you see this everyday with your kid. The like, those lessons that are the hardest to learn, and usually when we find ourselves a little bit embarrassed, or like looking back and saying is that really how I handled that, it’s that painful stuff that actually motivates and inspires us to do things differently and grow? So like, bearing that in mind, watching Dr. Exum as a model, interpreting supervision as him modeling what the supervisor is supposed to be like, that created a lot of opportunity for me to be like, “oh gosh, that one student, I can’t believe I handled that that way” now seeing if I were more like Dr. Exum, if I handled it like this, what a better outcome that would’ve been for that student, and for me. Like it would be so much better, right, if I had just done that. I know that’s a lot, but the short answer is, the thing that was most helpful to me was having such an incredible supervisor
model such beautiful, eloquent supervision to me, as the supervisee, because I know I could do things differently.

Interviewer: The parallel process occurs and we find that within our own supervision we find things that we want to translate over into our supervision and how we supervise. In your case as in mine, there was an excellent model for that, and as you know it could go the other way. And to have a supervisor who was not an eloquent speaker, or who was judgmental, we’d learn that and start to treat our supervisees, our clients the same way. In the same way that you were able to feel that you could be open, and honest, you allowed for your master level students to do that as well. I think that’s great; certainly, we all hope to experience something that great to move forward. Is there anything else you think I should ask, or do differently?

Participant: No, I think these are great, and I think you are doing meaningful research. Something that was helpful for me. I know this ties into him being a great model, but particularly being able to watch how Dr. Exum demonstrates assertiveness with students. That has really helped me. I did not know how to be assertive and I’m still like figuring it out. But seeing the way that he channels that, which is so like soft and perfect, I learned, oh it’s okay to be assertive. Being assertive doesn’t mean being bitchy, you can be kind and be at peace and supportive. I gained some confidence by way of learning assertiveness skill because of watching the way that he demonstrated that with others, with master students.

Interviewer: So watching the interaction between your supervisor and other folks that weren’t in the same supervisory relationship with you, helped you to maybe develop your
own skillsets, outside of just counseling. But, assertiveness and probably
interpersonally, um, interpersonal skills. I like what you said that you know, you
don’t have to come across as very bitchy, to say what you want to say. Maybe as
counselors, or especially as women we’re afraid to be assertive, because it does
come across, like you’re just coming in and, just like “she’s a bitch and she wants
it the way she wants it”. And I think that could be a worldview in real life
(totally). And just seeing him display it in a way that isn’t demeaning, that isn’t
trying to put someone in their place, but just speaking out. Seeing that uh, um
personal communication, that that can transcend outside of supervision.

Participant: Yes, that’s right.

Interviewer: Well I really appreciate your help.

Interview 4

Interviewer: My main question for you

Participant: Yes

Interviewer: Um, is, I wanna know what your supervision experience was like – you as the
middle of the triadic, uh, supervision triangle. So, what was your experience like?

Was it effective, not effective? Can you just talk to me about that?

Participant: Do you mean as a doctoral student, master student, or both?

Interviewer: As a doctoral student.

Participant: Okay

Interviewer: And so really with your faculty advisor/supervisor.

Participant: My experience I would say is a very maybe, uh, a very independent experience. I,
um, at that point had been working in the field for quite a while, so my supervisor
definitely gave me some freedom, and I was able to check in when I needed to.

Uh, so I think my process was probably a little more of an independent style of supervision, in that, um, I was able to reach out when I needed to, you know I was definitely checking in when I needed to. But because I think of my work experience, um, it wasn’t what I would call an intrusive supervision.

Interviewer: So it was more autonomous on your part?

Participant: Yes, I was much more of an autonomous I think supervisee, this is true.

Interviewer: Okay, so with that said, in you having the ability to reach out as needed, what was the response like, or what was your experience when you did need help?

Participant: Um, very good experience. Um, you know, I’m pretty good about seeking and about being very persistent, and being the squeaky wheel when I need to be. Um, I never had to take it that far though, my supervisor was very responsive, um, if I had needed something, you know, he was always right there to provide it. No questions asked, so you know I, my experience was a very positive one. Response time was great. I have heard horror stories of people, um, having to almost stalk their supervisors to get any assistance. I definitely did not have that, um, experience at all. I think too because I was so autonomous I think that my supervisor realized if I’m reaching out it truly was something that was pretty important, and that it wasn’t going to be something frivolous, so that helped to speed up response times as well.

Interviewer: Would you then say your, or could you identify characteristics of your supervisor that you think were impactful that made the difference, that made your relationship, your supervision relationship effective?
Participant: I think the characteristics of my supervisor, uh, it helped that he was always supremely confident in my skills. And all the times our supervision involved him reminding me of what I was capable of doing, and erasing that self-doubt. And really allowed me to come, to find the answers on my own, would draw things out of me and say, “you already knew what to do”, you just needed, you know… it was very, I would call it a very Rogerian style of supervision. Very much, you know, “you already know how to get there”, so that was a very helpful process, and fits my style, my counseling philosophy is very Rogerian, so that helped a lot as well.

(A knock on the door, recording stopped)

Interviewer: You were saying that you felt like the style of supervision that you received was very facilitative, (Participant: Yes), prompting you (Participant: Yes) to do it.

Participant: Prompting me to find the solution that was already there, just needed reminding.

Interviewer: Okay, and then would you say, or how would you describe um, um, any non-effective ways? Say there were times, or there were incidences that you felt like it wasn’t effective, your supervision?

Participant: No, I mean I think the one frustration that anyone has with this style really is that there were times that I just want to be told. (Uh huh) Right? I just wanted to be told, just tell me what to do, let me go in and fix it and be done, and so sometimes the process, the more process oriented approach was frustrating when I just wanted the directive approach (right). Um, it was rare, but there times, you know a couple times I can think of where it was just “I just want, just tell me what to do” and just be done and not go through the, you know, the more facilitative
process, (right). So that would probably be the one frustration I may have had, and even then, it wasn’t that much, because it’s also my style. So I got it.

Interviewer: So sort of a parallel process in place?
Participant: Yes, definitely.

Interviewer: For sure, you see your clients doing that, or often times your master’s students encountering that
Participant: Right, Yes

Interviewer: And then you’re doing that with them.
Participant: Right, yes

Interviewer: And then here it’s happening with your own supervision
Participant: Absolutely, absolutely

Interviewer: Um, so we’ll end on a last note – What would you say made your supervision impactful in the relationship? What do you think made it most effective? Cause it does sound like you were very autonomous, you weren’t really dependent on your supervisor. Your style of supervision, um, was very much in line with your own theoretical orientation. But what would you say, was the most important aspect of your supervision that made it effective?
Participant: For me, it was just support. To know I wasn’t in it alone. That is very comforting to just know that someone’s a phone call away, you know a walk across campus away, or, you know that was very effective for me. Just to never feel like I was handling any of my clients alone. To always have backup. That was the most effective. And to just know that there was someone knew I could do it, believed in
me, and I had backup for those times when I was tripped-up, or hit a speed bump, that was amazing.

Interviewer: To know you were always supported.

Participant: Yes

Interviewer: That safety.

Participant: The safety net! That was it that was absolutely it. And it made me more willing to try different things; different approaches too, know that I had that safety net. It allowed me to explore and experiment a little bit more. So that was the most, I think helpful to me to know that I had a back up and that I had support. Yeah.

Interview 5

Interviewer: Okay, my main question for you is, uh, can you tell me about your supervision experience?

Participant: Supervision experience?

Interviewer: Yes, as a doctoral student with your major, with your faculty supervisor.

Participant: Being supervised by faculty supervisor?

Interviewer: Yeah, yes.

Participant: Okay. In that case I think I have had good support from Dr. Exum. I think I chose him, almost like my mentor along with my supervisor. Because initially I was assigned someone else and I never went.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. It wasn’t a good fit?

Participant: No, I just thought, the connection, we just uh, so he taught me supervision so well. And it’s a small program in terms of most of my practicum stuff has come through him as my supervisor. And um, showed me the theory and the things that
provide the foundation… But I think just having that connection and someone you can to go to, uh, you can talk honestly with, I think that’s the piece just feeling connected. That you can be yourself, and um, able to be honest with you and they can be honest with you in terms of helping you develop and grow. I think that is, that’s the piece I value the most.

Interviewer: Okay, so it sounds like your relationship was very important to you.

Participant: Right

Interviewer: That connection between you and your supervisor cause you felt you’re able to be yourself.

Participant: Yes, and be authentic and honest.

Interviewer: And honesty and authenticity, yes. So you were assigned a major advisor, okay, so something the relationship, or something about the attributes of your current supervisor is what drew you to…

Participant: Yes, drew me to him. First of all from day one he was like, “hey, you wouldn’t be here if you couldn’t do it, you know you can do this. You are good enough, you’re great, and should be here.”

Interviewer: So you felt a little validation?

Participant: Yeah, whenever anyone would talk to him, you felt like it was never negative, it was always a positive. Ah, you know coming into a Ph.D. program, you doubt yourself. And so he put that to rest from day one. He was the one person to support you, to encourage you and be honest and help. And certainly he had, the supervisor, had/has the knowledge, background and experience and I think that is important.
Interviewer: It’s sounds as if you expect that you get that experience and the knowledge, but the bonus is the other stuff you got.

Participant: Yes, right, uh huh.

Interviewer: Because yeah you do, you tend to think okay…

Participant: And he really genuinely cares about students, truly cares about you as a student. Not just as a student, but being successful and I think that makes a difference.

Interviewer: Another interesting thing I don’t, well, I asked it of the interviewees… You happen to be one of the few males in the program. Would you say that your supervisor also being a male, do you think that made any difference for you? Cause that’s you know, again, it might, or it might not, do you think there was any?

Participant: I don’t think it made a difference, I just think it’s his personality itself, um… my former program where I did my master’s at, I had a female supervisor who was really great too, we had a good connection and I had support. So, the make-up of the person makes a difference. A genuine concern, they care about you, they care about the fact that they want you to become knowledgeable, understand what you’re doing, and be successful. So I think that is the key. Making sure that you know what you’re doing, holding you accountable, but at the same time, holding your hand making sure that you get through, do what’s necessary.

Interviewer: Similar to a challenge and support theory of student affairs?

Participant: Yes, yep

Interviewer: Giving you free reign to then explore and challenging you to do better, but then to always kinda have your back during the whole thing
Participant: Yep, yeah, that’s it

Interviewer: Yeah, um, so would you say your own supervision was effective

Participant: Very, I think so.

Interviewer: Was there anything that you recall, having to problem solve, or anything that you would have um, issues with, like, let’s say uh, if you had a question and you went to him. Do you feel like you got enough, uh, you know, did you feel like you were able to solve the problem, or a couple of people had mentioned that – I’m trying to think of how they phrased it, or how it came up. But other’s mentioned that knowledge piece was great.

Participant: Right, um, yeah, I think at times overall understanding of your own program, or understanding counseling itself. Whether it was about a case or whether it was about a student I was supervising, or whatever, um general information about what’s next steps – I can get to, but I’m stuck, he was there and I think in terms of the knowledge he’s there. I think he has an experience that’s valuable and I really appreciated that.

Interviewer: Because it helped. Some students had mentioned even if there was a question that he couldn’t answer, he was very open to “that is a good question”

Participant: And if he didn’t know it, he would find out. Or he would help you find out. You know say “we can look into that”. So that was good, you know we would look you know you’re not alone. Or he would point you in the direction or to somebody who would be able to get you some information, so that really helps
Interviewer: Oh and too, we had talked briefly before this interview about the advocacy part.

You know, not only will we find out the answer, but let me, I will advocate for you and put you where you need to be, right?

Participant: Trust me, if he hadn’t advocated for me, I would not be here now. In times, he was just a natural support just being in the program and being an international student, coming here, under the assumption that I, uh you know would be a GA, and then realizing after the first semester, everything was pulled from the program… so, he fought to be sure that we had something. Cause I had moved my whole family and transitioning here in the hopes of having at least that piece covered, I worry about that. When you talk about tuition being pulled and everything else, it’s rather scary… as both my wife and I are studying.

Interviewer: And that’s it too, when you speak of advocacy and getting what you need to get, but also being empathetic to your situation. You know being unique in that you do have a wife who is also studying, and you have children that you have to support. It’s more than just advocacy, but really understanding your needs. And it sounds as if you felt from the valued from the start, you mentioned at the beginning, that you know, he was the one who said, “you deserve to be here, you are more than worthy”, he gave you that validation, and then to show it consistently. It sounds like he showed consistent concern throughout your program.

Participant: Yes, definitely

Interviewer: I think that’s what I need to know for now.
Interviewer: All right, so the first question, we’ve talked about in different ways, but we’ll formalize it right now. (Okay) Could you explain and describe what your supervision experience was like with you as a doctoral level supervisee and your faculty supervisor?

Participant: Okay. Actually when I had the opportunity to supervise, something that was interesting is that, and they sort of teased me at this point. But I ended up with a group of students that were, they were, there was three women, and they were, um, all sort of on the edge of not being successful for different reasons, but they all had started at a particular point, and based on what was happening with their classes, and having to repeat classes, life happening and what have you. They were um, not in the best positions and at risk of being terminated from the program. And Dr. Exum and Dr. Zalaquett stated that they um, gave me that particular group because, I, adjunct at HCC and I teach there, but I’m also a clinical supervisor because our Counseling and Human Services program actually has a three semester practicum, (cool), yeah it’s an accredited program that has, you know. So I have been doing it, and so they thought, hey let’s see, you know, last shot here. And so, having to do that, I found that, you know I had to do quite a bit of mentoring. So in addition to the academic requirements, you know, the, I had to, had to really help them determine if, this is something they really wanted. (Um hum). Because we all get there and if they did, what were they willing to do, and how could I help them through that process and, um, so, our weekly session were quite interesting, because they were blended with both entities. And I made myself available. Once I determined they were committed,
and then I was committed to them. And I grew to know them in a way that, we
talked earlier about this. I guess we didn’t use these words, but the chances to fall
through the cracks were very easy, just based on what was going on in the
program. So these three women, um, really had been identified, targeted, and
determined to be, um, inadequate to the program, or unwilling, you know it was
more about them not wanting and, then Dr. Zalaquett and Exum thought we
probably should really look at this from a different angle, like what was being
reported. And what I found was three wonderful women that really wanted this,
but life really got in the way. They did not feel engaged enough to be able to share
some of their personal stories. So I shared it with the faculty, and they would go,
“I didn’t know”. One had a grandmother loss, one mother very sick and had a
divorce. You know they all had stuff and no one knew. (Um hum). And they had
made the decision not to share it because they didn’t have the trust; they didn’t
feel connect (I see). So we were able to do that and um, they ended up with
successful results fortunately and um, I loved it. And here I was being supervised
by Dr. Exum and receiving much of the same support and encouragement, so
even in my difficult times. I actually became sick while working with these three
(oh wow), um, I, I got so much incredible support, it reinforced anything that I
was doing for them, and I actually learned, despite my own experiences as a
clinical supervisor, I gained, um, so much from my experience supervised by Dr.
Exum. And, and, uh, while still maintaining professional boundaries, yet allowing
that transparency and true empathy, and so for me, it’s been a great experience on
both sides.
Interviewer: You know, uh, this is the second time someone has used transparency, um, which I think is quite telling, uh. When you describe as well, you probably are familiar, and I don’t want to put words into your mouth, but the same time the parallel process – they way in which your own crisis was handled with such care and empathy (Um hum) and concern, you were able to mirror that to your own supervisees (Um hum), and I can see that clearly in play, so to go back to what your experience was, and, obviously you felt very supported and I love that you mentioned that there was still professional boundaries, but yet you still felt comfortable and secure enough to say and feel things. What sort of attributes would you say, your supervisor, or what do you think made your supervision effective?

Participant: Um, well first of all he is an exceptional listener also, um, he’s such a confidence builder, a motivator, and would remind me of things about myself that I didn’t necessarily see, um, you know encouraging me. Trust was also a very, and um, even as, his skill at guiding was very, um, I think the word is unobtrusive. He has this natural ability of getting you to a place without being, without you really realizing that that is where you are going. (Um hum). Not even sure how to put that in a small amount of words. (Kind of a way, a natural way of fostering your development to sort of?) Ah ha, yes. (Subtly nudging you?) Yes, yes. And, um, and then availability.

Interviewer: Um, so would you meet with him on a regular basis, extra, if you needed?

Participant: Yes, yes weekly. Um, and then if there needed to be, well it’s an open door policy, “if you need me”, and you know, he shares his number and he’s one of the
one’s that’s “call me if you need me, don’t hold it in”, it was an open policy. I always personally tried not to bother him outside of certain times, but he’d say, “oh, you should’ve called me”. But yes, very available.

Interviewer: Did you feel, you mentioned, trust. Did you feel that immediately, or did he do anything to create that kind of environment?

Participant: I felt it immediately, he, and I think, he is one that is intuitive, and he has this sense of, and so, his constant statement is “you’re here, because you are capable” you know, “you’re here because you have this”, and yes, you’re gonna get some skills, but you’re bringing in, uh, experience. You know you coming in, it’s not, like you are someone who hasn’t been exposed, hasn’t done much, or hasn’t gained experience. And then he always maintained, despite being very familiar and comfortable with him, he always maintained this professional relationship.

Interviewer: That professionalism, not saying much, but as counselors, we are open, he still maintained a warm feeling and unforced way of acknowledging what you bring to the table, but still maintaining a professionalism. (Yes.) Sounds like he was able to recognize what you bring to the table – even when, you mentioned, you may have forgotten. Sounds like a confidence builder, very intuitive as well. (Yes, definitely.) What would you then say about his knowledge, his expertise, his knowledge base-wise? Did you come to experience it, or how did you view it, through your own supervision?

Participant: I, um, for me, he was very knowledgeable. When it comes to counseling and supervision, I felt him to be very proficient, and really helped me process anything, and something unique that I didn’t mention that before, he was my
direct supervisor, but I also consulted with Dr. Zalaquett regularly. So I say that to say one thing that Dr. Exum did is, Dr. Zalaquett technically oversaw the master’s program, when Dr. Exum, um, determined that his knowledge was limited, he would defer. And so he didn’t try to present himself as expert of everything. If something specific pertained to the masters program he would say something like “I believe that would be a better question for Dr. Zalaquett.” I actually saw Dr. Zalaquett every two weeks, keeping him apprised as the masters person and getting more of the insight, and even meeting with him, again me just checking on the program. And he gave me the space to be creative and would want to hear about how it went, while wanting to grow and improve the program.

Interviewer: So, very collaborative. (Yes.) Again, I think this comes from that trust you mentioned, and trusting you, the doctoral student. And that builds your confidence.

Participant: Yes, it also helped that those two really trust each other and had a really good partnership. So that relationship also could have created it’s own dynamic, and then to add a third person.

Interviewer: Oh for sure. And what you said as well, Dr. Exum was knowledgeable, but when it came to any subject area, or matter of which he was not, he wasn’t indignant or feigned knowledge, he would then find to seek answers. Perhaps a mark of someone who is rare in our environment. Many times people like to associate the Ph.D. with having absolute knowledge (Yes.) And so it is refreshing at times to have someone who is honest. Do you feel that you were adequately prepared for your supervision experience? Like, do you feel, well, it’s a crazy question given
you have a lot of experience. Well, did you have expectations for your
supervision experience?

Participant: Well, I know because I like to know the expectations. Once I realized I’d be doing
it, it was like ok, what do we do? And I knew it would be different than HCC and
I needed to know because they, I’m a seminar instructor too, so you know there is
the seminar, and the supervision, we actually go on site weekly and meet with
them weekly. And here we don’t do that, we focus mainly on the student, so um, I
wanted to see, and that was in interesting time, because, um, that’s when things
around here started falling apart. I wanted to know where the syllabus was, and
Dr. Zalaquett was like “you make it”, and I was like “what?”. But you know
Sandy has everything, and I didn’t even know I had that liberty. So I got one and
made some adjustments and then check with him. And he’s looking at me, like,
well, why are you questioning it? And that insecurity, like what is it I’m doing,
and as I was trying to duplicate things, I wasn’t sure. But then he would clarify
and say I could use the materials, but that I could make it my own. I didn’t know
that I had those liberties, um, I adjusted my thinking, and really just had to you
know think “I’m teaching this class”. And the first session I focused on really
getting to know them and understanding who they are, and you know talking
about expectations. So you know even through the process, you know, as they
were having these life issues while maintaining the requirements of the course. It
was interesting; Because I would have conversations with them individually
outside of the group sessions, but it was always about “I know you have stuff,
how can we make this happen?” And then, I would do the check in between, “are
you still onboard?” Cause if it’s too much sometimes you have to take a break, you have to. I sort of fell into it, you know my comfort zone um, maybe second or third week because I realized I did have autonomy and I was building the relationships with the students. So, I felt prepared, but you know all that freedom at the beginning, I didn’t anticipate having it and being unsure what to do with it.

Interviewer: Right, would you, well in my own personal experience there was no lead up to supervision, you sorta did it. So I really felt ill prepared. I agree with you, that you are given this autonomy to create your own style and as long as your meeting then goals. And so I found for me, I would have my supervision of supervision, this parallel process would come into play and it really helped me so, seeing my supervisor, being very open. I could model that with my supervisees and I felt very comfortable talking about that with him. It took a little while, but eventually I got the hang of it because of the trust and relationship I had with my supervision and the freedom to try. Where, so people don’t like that, and want to be told what to do. And well, you and I shared the same supervisor, so we understand the dynamic and what we had as supervisees. And in your case, given three students who were on the cusp of being unsuccessful, you were given the challenge of okay, here are these students. But with your supervision experiences and your relationship in your own supervision, you were allowed to see what good, healthy boundaries, all these things, supervisory experiences you were able to provide and help these students become successful.

Participant: Absolutely, it really could have gone the other way.
Interviewer: You mentioned support, knowledge, and you feel your supervisor was competent.

Did you share feelings; did you feel confident to do so?

Participant: Yes, most definitely.

Interviewer: Um, well anything, any specific your supervisor did to open that, to open the door for that? Or did you just feel that was a natural uh, component?

Participant: It felt so natural, I hesitate to answer that way, but it felt natural so, then I’m going to say that quite evidently, there was something he did. But I can’t identify it, because the relationship just flowed very naturally, very comfortably, um, and again he is very subtle with his skills, subtle with his interventions and the support and what have you, so that I’m not able to pinpoint exactly when and how that happened. But I just felt very comfortable and confident about sharing with him and talking with him, and I’ve never felt that his guidance was anything but to benefit my growth professionally, and even personally, even when things were going on. So, um, that fluidity, that openness, just felt natural. And there’s a colleague that is gone now, who finished who had some very interesting perspectives of the same supervisor that bothered me. And you know, I sort of wondered where those thoughts came from, and then I recognized that this individual had a very different nature, I guess from myself. I think had some expectations that I think were unrealistic, um, in terms of demanding and what I see of my supervisor is that he is very um, is non-confrontational, not aggressive, he’s um, facilitative, he’s uh, solutions focused, so um, you may go in and vent, but he’s not slapping you around because he realizes that it’s natural for you to want to vent, but, he is very efficiently helps to
redirect that, to not make it an hour long venting session, but you end up leaving feeling really good, like what was that? What happened? Because he helps you to get there without it being so evident. Because he understood and sometimes he would do self-disclosure if needed, but then you get to the solution and he would say, “but you can get there because you’ve handled worse” and he would laugh a little, like the dissertation is just another paper, just another long one. (laughers, well it doesn’t feel like that, make it feel like that). So even in these, that’s an issue you can handle, of many issues, you can handle it, and you’ve got it.

Interviewer: So it certainly sounds like he allowed you to just process things and I think that as counselors, we forget that, we hold ourselves to different standards than we would a client. He would help us to talk through and process where we’re going. You mentioned a fluidly that helps get us to a solution. And he has the ability to help you get where you need to be, even while saying noting, which sometimes we want to be told, or have a reaction. Sometimes that hard, because

Participant: Absolutely and that’s why I mentioned the colleague I had, they couldn’t handle that, because it was hard when your not used to it.

Interviewer: I had one interviewee describe her supervision experience as therapeutic. (Yes, yes.) That’s the first thing I thought when you were describing your

Participant: Yes, absolutely. And that’s why I can say that his knowledge and skills are phenomenal; I would definitely say I had a good experience.

Interviewer: Did diversity affect you in any way?

Participant: Um, it was a non-factor for me, in. Let me rethink that, maybe age, in terms of maturity and experience, I think allowed me to have perspectives that some of my
younger colleague may not have had. It’s given me a level of insight. It wasn’t a negative impact, but one that has given me, insight and a level of discernment and I even think that my relationship with my supervisor may have benefited from that. Because we could skip over some of that neediness that I would have when I was younger to skip to a place where we could just move forward. Thinking about the age thing, any doubts or challenges, they would be in my head, this is where the good supervision comes in, it would be, look at where you are, you bring in a level of experience and you are meant to be here. The conversations would be encouraging, you deserve this, you are meant to be here.

Interviewer: So looking back on your supervision experience, what would you say was the most helpful, most effective for you?

Participant: Um, the relationship and the support. For me, and I see that as the umbrella for everything else, you know the guidance and the processing, they all came in under that. For me, those two things made it easier for me to listen and receive and easier for me to be open and to grow, to trust, you know all those other things. Relationship and the support to open up. As I previously mentioned at the onset of this inquiry, the supervision experience is influenced by the ways in which student supervisors perceive supervision.

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you would like to add? I know we talked about a lot, anything else you would like add or mention about your supervision experience?

Participant: Um, I don’t think so. I just know that it’s just such an important role and experience. You get the knowledge, the understanding from the classroom. But application is just so different, so unique, and our counseling skills come into play.
more than we realize, but it makes such a difference. I believe that it makes such a
difference for a student and their end result.
APPENDIX B: Approved IRB Letter

August 25, 2016

Jinah Rordam
L-CACHE - Leadership, Counseling, Adult, Career & Higher Education
Tampa, FL 33615

RE: Expedited Approval for Initial Review
IRB#: Pro00026520

Title: Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student’s Perceptions of Their Supervision Training

Study Approval Period: 8/25/2016 to 8/25/2017

Dear Ms. Rordam:

On 8/25/2016, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and APPROVED the above application and all documents contained within, including those outlined below.

Approved

Item(s): Protocol

Document(s):
Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student’s Perceptions of Their Supervision Training

Consent/Assent Document(s)*:

Informed Consent form.pdf
*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent document(s) are only valid during the approval period indicated at the top of the form(s).

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45CFR46.110. The research proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review category:

(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval via an amendment. Additionally, all unanticipated problems must be reported to the USF IRB within five (5) calendar days.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board
APPENDIX C: Recruitment Email

Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student’s Perceptions of Their Supervision Training

PRO # 26520

Dear Counselor Education Doctoral Student,
My name is Jinah Rordam and I am conducting research on Counselor Education doctoral student’s perceptions of supervision training. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida in the Counselor Education program. The study you are being asked to participate in involves my dissertation research.

I am conducting interviews as part of a research study to increase our understanding of the doctoral student supervisory experience. As a current counselor education doctoral student, or recent graduate of the doctoral program in Counselor Education you are in an ideal position to provide valuable first hand information from your own perspective.

The interview takes around 45 minutes to an hour, and is very informal. I am simply trying to capture your thoughts and perspectives regarding your doctoral level supervision experiences. Your responses to the questions will be kept confidential. Each interview will be assigned a code to help ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the analysis and write up of findings.

This is a voluntary research study and there is no compensation for participating in this study. However, your participation will be a valuable addition to my research, and findings could lead to greater understanding of what makes the supervisory experience effective or not effective.

If you would like to participate in this study, or would like further information, I may be reached via email at jrordam@mail.usf.edu. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Thanks for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jinah

Jinah J. Rordam, M.A., NCC
Doctoral Student, Counselor Education
Leadership, Counseling, Adult, Career and Higher Education
University of South Florida
Informed Consent to Participate in Research Involving Minimal Risk

Pro # 26520

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

We are asking you to take part in a research study called:

Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student’s Perceptions of Their Supervision Training

The person who is in charge of this research study is Jinah J. Rordam. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. Her major advisor Tony Tan, Ed.D., is guiding her in this research.

The research will be conducted at locations agreed by participant and principal investigator.

Purpose of the study
The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the supervision process that takes place between the doctoral student and the doctoral student’s faculty supervisor from the perception of the doctoral student supervisor.

Why are you being asked to take part?
We are asking you to take part in this research study because you are/were a Doctoral Student Supervisor in a Counselor Education Ph.D. program meeting the criteria of experience needed for the purpose of this study.

Study Procedures:
If you take part in this study, you will be asked to:
• Discuss your experiences as a Doctoral Student Supervisor. Your participation is helpful as your experiences as a Doctoral Student Supervisor will help inform and contribute to the field of supervision and the supervisory experience from the perspective of a Doctoral Student Supervisor
• A predetermined list of questions regarding your experiences as a Doctoral Student Supervisor will be utilized.
• If you participate in this study, you and the principal investigator will meet in person, or via electronic messaging (Skype) to discuss your experiences as a Doctoral Student Supervisor and your perception of your supervisory experiences with your faculty supervisor.
• The predetermined list of questions about your supervisory experience will be used.
• The interview and your responses will be audio-recorded, and later transcribed by the principal investigator. Completion is expected to take approximately 60 minutes. There will be a follow up interview to review the transcripts and to address any additional questions. There are no right or wrong answers.
• Only the principal investigator will have access to the audiotapes, and the tapes will be destroyed five years after the Final Report is submitted to the IRB.
• Participation will occur during the Fall of 2016.

**Total Number of Participants**
About eight (8) individuals will take part in this study at USF.

**Alternatives / Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal**
You do not have to participate in this research study. You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study.

You are free to decide to participate in this research or to withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits that you are entitled to receive if you decide not to participate or to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision will not affect your student status, course grade, recommendations, or access to future courses or training opportunities.

**Benefits**
We are unsure if you will receive any benefits by taking part in this research study.

**Risks or Discomfort**
This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

**Compensation**
You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

**Costs**
It will not cost you anything to take part in the study.

**Privacy and Confidentiality**
We will keep your study records private and confidential. Certain people may need to see your study records. Anyone who looks at your records must keep them confidential. These individuals include:
• The research team, including the Principal Investigator, study coordinator, and all other research staff
• Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study, and individuals who provide oversight to ensure that we are doing the study in the right way.
• The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, including staff in USF Research Integrity and Compliance.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not include your name. We will not publish anything that would let people know who you are.

**You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints**

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, or experience an unanticipated problem, contact Jinah J. Rordam.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 or contact by email at RSCH-IRB@usf.edu.
Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Signature of Person Taking Part in Study                      Date

Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their participation. I confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in their primary language. This research subject has provided legally effective informed consent.

_________________________________________  _______________________
Signature of Person obtaining Informed Consent                      Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent
APPENDIX E: Member Checking Email

Understanding the Doctoral Student Supervisory Experience: A Qualitative Examination of Counselor Education Doctoral Student’s Perceptions of Their Supervision Training

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Dear (Participant),

I hope this note finds you well.

Would you take a look over the transcript of our conversation? Please feel free to make any notes, corrections, or emphasize any of your dialogue with additional points or punctuation marks where needed. In addition, if there is anything you would like to add, please include any and all with a reply.

Again, thanks so much for participating in this research for my dissertation. I really appreciate it!

Hoping all is well with you and yours! Thanks for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jinah J. Rordam, M.A., NCC
Doctoral Student, Counselor Education
Leadership, Counseling, Adult, Career and Higher Education
University of South Florida