

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1.Introduction:

It is evident that many sectors of our Black community in South Africa have had little access to psychological services (Rock,1996). It is clear that many more Black psychologists need to be trained in order to ensure that psychological services are made accessible and appropriate for all people. Historically, however Black people were not allowed free access to psychological training (Rock,1996). In the late eighties, there were less than twenty registered Black clinical psychologists in South Africa, even though the majority of the country was comprised of Black people(Mokutu,Rankoe & Christian,2002). Since the new dispensation of 1994 , the establishment of affirmative action policies has meant that the number of Black people accepted to train as psychologists has increased (Rock,1996). The need to understand how Black supervisees experience psychotherapy supervision with a White supervisor is therefore of critical importance, given the prevalence of White supervisors. In addition to this, understanding whether Black supervisees have needs which are different from White supervisees may also be beneficial.

A scan of recent literature seems to indicate that many studies have focused on student psychologists' perceptions of psychotherapy supervision. There have been a number of empirical studies done on cross-cultural dynamics within supervision. However, only a few qualitative studies have been done in this area. Of these studies, many have focused on either the process of cross cultural supervision or the outcomes of cross cultural supervision. The present

study explores how the Black supervisees' racial identity impacts on the processes, role expectations and outcomes occurring within inter-racial supervision. This research thus aims to contribute to existing knowledge of the subjective impact of racial difference in the supervision context.

This research may thus increase our understanding of the needs of supervisees who have been in or are currently part of a racially mixed supervision dyad. In addition to this however, it is necessary to define what is meant by inter-racial supervision. Within this study, inter-racial supervision will be defined as the supervision content, methods and outcomes which are relevant to supervisee/supervisor dyad where at least one member of the dyad is racially different to the other member (Brown & Landrum, 1995). It is also apparent that there have been few studies done in South Africa dealing directly with the issue of racial dynamics within psychotherapy supervision. The researcher's primary experience of psychotherapy supervision was in the psychodynamic tradition; therefore understanding the processes of inter-racial psychotherapy supervision within this tradition was of interest to the researcher.

1.2.Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to explore how Black psychodynamic psychotherapy supervisees experience psychotherapy supervision with White supervisors, and how this racial difference is perceived to influence the supervisory relationship.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. A Brief Overview

Psychotherapy supervision surfaced as a distinct set of structures, values and practices in response to the growing need by therapists to train others to become therapists (Grant,1999). Supervision is a complex and dynamic process which involves a number of inter-related factors, all of which contribute in one form or another to the process of supervision. The supervisor aims to create a supervisory environment in which the maximum possible reward for both supervisee and client will be obtained. Over the past few years, the number of ethnic minorities who have been accepted to train as therapists has increased dramatically in the United States, simultaneously, the number of clients from ethnic minority groups (Black, Hispanic and Asian) has also subsequently increased (Grant,1999).

In contrast to this however, in the South African context, Black supervisees typically come from a majority group, which was formerly oppressed, whereas supervisors tend to be members of the minority group which formerly oppressed this group under the Apartheid government. Addressing the needs of a supervisee who comes from a formerly oppressed racial group, and who may hold beliefs, attitudes and values which are at odds with the group which formerly served to oppress them is thus of paramount importance if the supervisory process is to be a positive learning experience for such supervisees. In addition to this, individuals who come from a particular racial background, may as a consequence adhere to a specific worldview. This can often be

problematic in racially mixed supervision dyads, particularly if both parties hold differing cultural beliefs and ideologies, and such differences are not adequately understood and addressed within supervision. Both parties may thus have different ways of conceptualizing clients' issues and this could lead to conflict in terms of a defining and implementing an appropriate treatment strategy (Brown & Landrum, 1995). The literature review predominantly explores race in relation to psychotherapy supervision and will therefore not be making reference to literature which explores race in a more general fashion.

2.2. Definitions of supervision

Soldz(1993) describes supervision as a process where an individual of authority scrutinizes or directs the work of a student. Within the framework of psychotherapy supervision, this involves an intricate and complex process of guidance, including the overseeing and the development of the supervisee so as to ensure that the client's therapeutic needs are understood and met in a suitable fashion. In addition , the student is aided in the process of learning specific skills, assimilating both practical and theoretical knowledge and developing these within the interpersonal arena (Eckstein & Wallerstein,1958;. Fleming & Benedek, 1964; Rownstead & Skovholt, 1993; Langa,1994). Casement (1985) describes the holding function of supervision. According to this definition, the supervisor attempts to contain and understand both the supervisee's dilemmas and the client's concerns. The supervisor therefore attempts to empathize with both parties. This model of supervision includes a more supportive element into its framework.

The supervisory relationship can thus provide an integral framework within which students are able to alleviate their anxiety, improve the service which they are providing to clients, enhance their professional insight, and create their own professional identity. It also involves strategizing around approaches to resolving the problems clients present with. “ The primary purpose of supervision is to ensure that the counselor is addressing the needs of the client ” (British Association of Counseling, 1988: pg 45). These definitions seem to illustrate and share one common point, namely the fact that the development and growth of the trainee therapist is of paramount importance in the process of supervision.

2.3. The concept of race in relation to clinical supervision

Carter and Qureshi (1995), suggest that race can be defined in terms of a group of people of common ancestry who are distinguished from others by physical characteristics such as hair type, eye and skin colour and stature. Van de Berghe (2003) defines race as a term which refers to a specific social group which is socially defined on the basis of physical criteria. According to Gordon (2002), race refers to a specific subset of people who are classified as a group because they share similar physical characteristics such as hair form or skin colour; it has no intrinsic connections with cultural patterns or institutions.

A scan of the literature seems to suggest that the way in which race is understood is a contentious issue, with many contrasting views of what race actually refers to. In spite of this, however, it is apparent that the notion of one's racial identity is more than the sum total of one's genetic material. It

appears that the concept of race has evolved within a specific socio-political and cultural environment, and that one is often judged consciously or inadvertently on the basis of skin colour within many societies today. An awareness, or lack of awareness, regarding our racial identity can therefore often have an influence upon how we perceive our social environment and the interactions that occur within it.

South Africa was formerly segregated along racial lines when professional psychological training began in this country. The dominant group during the period of apartheid was the White group and the dominated racial groups during this period were the Black, Coloured and Indian groups. The apartheid era in South Africa thus had a significant influence on the training of clinical psychologists. One of the important implications of this is that many of the psychologists who trained during this period were White, and this isolated them from the broader Black population in South Africa (Rock,1996). In post-apartheid South Africa however, the numbers of Black people who have registered to train as psychologists is steadily increasing (Rock,1996). This means that the number of Black students who are now being accepted into clinical training programs as students psychologists will be mainly exposed to supervision with senior White psychotherapy supervisors.

The supervisory relationship may consist of two people, the supervisor and supervisee and or a number of supervisees and a supervisor, in the case of group supervision. The supervisor is in a position of authority, with the supervisees being subordinate.

The inequality in power in supervision is often manifested in a variety of ways, through the supervisor imposing the supervisory frame, which consists of a specified time, place and length of the supervisory session (Brice-Baker & Copaul-McNicol, 1998).

The level of disclosure between the participants is also fairly asymmetrical with supervisees revealing much more about themselves in the process. Supervisors may tend to reveal very little information about themselves or their clinical work. The rules regarding what should be discussed and how it will be discussed during the session is also explicitly set by the supervisor.

Supervisees, in the absence of adequate education around supervision roles, may introduce more personal information because they are under the false impression that this is a supervisory requirement and that failure to do so could result in disapproval from their supervisors (Brice-Baker & Copaul-McNicol, 1998). Some supervisees may thus disclose personal information beyond describing countertransference issues pertaining to their therapeutic work (Brice-Baker & Copaul-McNicol, 1998). It is clear from the preceding discussion that a definite power imbalance exists within the supervisory relationship at trainee level and that the supervisee more often than not finds themselves in a vulnerable position in relation to their supervisors.

This has important implications for the supervisory dyad, particularly when the supervisor is White and the supervisee is Black. Such a supervisory dyad may

reflect the former inequalities of South African society, where Black individuals were subordinated to their White counterparts. The impact of this power differential may be diffuse and varied. For instance, such a power imbalance between the supervisee and the supervisor, may result in supervisees becoming overly defensive and circumspect in terms of their willingness to expose personal material within supervision, as they may be anxious that such material may be used against them (McNicol-Gopaul & Brice-Baker, 1998).

2.4. Supervision and Psychotherapy : Differences and similarities

It is evident that psychotherapy and supervision share a number of similarities. Firstly the supervisee, not unlike the client in therapy, is often in a vulnerable position and frequently in need of help from a person who adopts the position of helper (Feltham, 1994). In such a position, both supervisee and client are susceptible to being influenced by the supervisor/therapist. In the case of supervision, as in therapy, this influence can often be a positive one, with the supervisee/client internalizing aspects of the supervisor/therapist's insights and way of relating which they may be able to use.

In the case of supervisees, they may be better able to understand their clients and use such information to improve their development as professionals themselves. With clients they will be able to better understand themselves and use the insights they have acquired in therapy to develop their potential within the context of their relationships. Both processes share the common theme of promoting growth in the individual. But both psychotherapy and supervision can also have potentially negative effects for both clients and supervisees depending

on the nature and quality of the interactions which occur in supervision and psychotherapy.

It is not surprising therefore that many therapists bring their own unresolved issues to both the therapy and supervisory setting (Feltham, 1994). These unresolved issues can often create blindspots for supervisees, which is often what makes supervision such a necessary component in providing supervisees with the opportunity to explore how their blindspots may be impinging on their current therapies. Supervisors, due to their experience and training, are equipped to point out these blindspots to the supervisees and recommend appropriate courses of action which trainee therapists can take.

Countertransference problems may emerge within supervision, directly or in more subtle ways, and as may only become apparent to the supervisor as a core behavioural pattern over time (Feltham, 1994). This creates an interesting dilemma within supervision as it raises the extent to which supervisees' personal issues may be brought into supervision. Depending on the framework adopted, one may choose to either ask supervisees to take up these issues in their personal therapy or may choose to deal with such issues in supervision, thus blurring the line between supervision and psychotherapy even further (Feltham, 1994).

It should be evident from the preceding discussion, however, that both psychotherapy and supervision are not wholly objective spaces within which the client and supervisee can flourish. For supervisees bring not only unresolved

issues from their past to supervision, which have their basis in their early developmental histories, but also their racial identity which may form part of their unresolved issues. Such issues related to the racial identity of Black supervisees may play themselves out in specific ways both within their therapies with White clients and within the context of supervision with White supervisors. They may often lead to blindspots, conflicts and sensitivities related to racial difference between themselves and their supervisor. These racially influenced difficulties may also be evident in the supervisor. This may often manifest within the context of supervision as a distinct behavioural pattern, with both participants contributing equally to the development of a maladaptive working alliance based on fear and suspicion rather than trust and openness.

The debate about how far supervisors should take up the personal issues concerning the interaction between themselves and their supervisees becomes critical within the context of inter-racial supervision (Feltham, 1994). The question whether or not to broach racial issues in the beginning of the supervision, and as they arise within the course of the supervisory work, is often underemphasized within the current literature regarding psychotherapy supervision and training. Yet it appears that racially tinged issues can often have an influence on the interactions that take place between supervisor and supervisee. The degree to which supervisors are able to think about how their racial identity may impact on their perception of the supervisory relationship and their supervisee, given that they both come from different racial backgrounds, may have an important bearing on the course of the relationship (Page & Wosket, 1994). The extent to which both the supervisee and

supervisor are willing to explore such issues within supervision, rather than simply denying their existence, and when such issues may be more appropriately dealt with in the supervisees' personal therapy is another vital area which is often not frequently addressed (Grant,1999).

2.5. The White supervisor and Black supervisee: Inter-racial supervision

Due to the inherent power inequalities occurring within the supervisory relationship, these abovementioned issues can often pose specific dilemmas for the supervisory alliance, particularly when the supervisor is White and the supervisee is Black.

The expectations that Black supervisees bring with them to supervision may also reflect the treatment they have received in their larger society (Davis & Proctor,1989) This is certainly the case within the context of South Africa, which has a history of racial discrimination. The supervisory relationship may then to some extent serve to mimic the earlier power imbalances which occurred within South Africa during the Apartheid era between White and Black people. Even though such policies have been eradicated under the new dispensation of 1994, it is not unlikely that Black supervisees' perceptions of the supervisory relationship may be coloured to some extent by South Africa's past social and racial inequalities given the nature of the relationship.

When one member of the supervisory dyad differs, in terms of their racial backgrounds, the process and outcomes of the supervision may be adversely affected (Brown & Landrum-Brown,1995). Difficulties in supervision may

therefore often occur within the context of inter-racial psychotherapy supervision with either one or both parties becoming inhibited. In a study by Vander Kolk (1974) it was found that Black supervisees often anticipate that their White supervisors will display less empathy, respect and unconditional acceptance than to their White counterparts. This study seems to assert that the Black supervisee may often come into supervision with a number of negative perceptions regarding the support and understanding they can expect from a White supervisor. If the supervisee is bringing such baggage with them into supervision, it is plausible that they may be more susceptible to interpreting the reality of the supervisory setting in particular ways and this may as a consequence lead to the creation of a barrier in supervision, rather than the optimal openness which is often helpful in a supervisee's professional development. Problems between the supervisor and supervisee often impact on the supervisees' therapy with their client, and as such can have an impact on the nature and quality of treatment which a client receives.

Supervisees in such supervisory dyads may also be apprehensive about being negatively appraised by their supervisors on the basis on racial stereotypes (McNeill, Hom & Perez, 1995). Supervisees may, as a result of this anxiety, be unwilling to reveal details of their therapeutic work within supervision, in a bid to avoid exposing their errors.

They may also deliberately not disclose certain aspects of their clinical work in a bid to reassert their sense of competence in the supervisory relationship, and by so doing, minimize their vulnerability in relation to their supervisors.

The limiting of information within the context of supervision may occur even when such disclosure may assist a Black supervisee's development, as this defensive maneuver may have been used as a tool of survival for Black people in the past (Grier & Cobbs, 1968). Given the nature of South Africa's past socio-political climate under the Apartheid regime, it is not hard to see how minimal disclosure was used as a means of protecting oneself against racially motivated violence and discrimination.

It is evident that non-disclosure in supervision occurs even in supervisory dyads where both supervisor and supervisee are of the same race. But one could hypothesize that Black supervisees may be more prone to non-disclosure as a means of reducing anxiety within inter-racial supervision, given the nature of South Africa's socio-political history. It is therefore not implausible that such defensive tactics may again be reactivated by the Black supervisee within the context of inter-racial supervision. Kleintjies & Swartz (1996) asserts that Black supervisees are more prone to avoiding racial issues within supervision, when the supervisor is White. For instance, Black supervisees did not discuss the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision, when their supervisor was White, as they were anxious over whether their supervisors may experience such an admission as an attempt to justify mistakes they made with their clients in supervision on the basis of their racial identity (Kleintjies & Swartz, 1996).

In addition to this, supervisees may believe that certain facets of traditional psychological theory and intervention are at odds with the values and beliefs

that form part of their racial identity (McNicol-Gopaul & Brice-Baker,1998).For instance, some Black supervisees may feel that a client's problems are due to broader socio-cultural factors such as bewitchment and this may clash to some extent with a psychodynamic understanding of the client's problems which lays more emphasis on the internal world of the client. In a study by McRoy, Freeman, Logan and Blackmon (1986), it was found that Black supervisees were often concerned about whether they could address such issues within the context of supervision, and what the consequences of such an admission might be for them.

On the other side of the spectrum of difficulties however, both White supervisors and Black supervisees may attempt to either consciously or unconsciously circumvent the issue of their racial difference in supervision (Remington & Dacosta, 1989), by adopting a colour-blind stance. There are a number of reasons for this. On the part of the supervisors, it may be that they lay claim to the fact that their own training did not focus on racial issues, or that they believe that race has no importance insofar as they attempt to treat all supervisees equally (Remington & Costa,1989,Leong & Wagner,1994). Black supervisees may attempt to circumvent the race issue because they may be uncertain as to how their supervisor may take up any concerns about these issues in the course of supervision. They may also adopt this stance with the belief that our current political climate is no longer dominated by the issue of race. Therefore, some Black supervisees may choose to largely ignore the racial discrimination that occurred in the past and the impact that it may have on their current experiences of their supervisory relationships.

The supervisory alliance may be compromised if such issues are not adequately understood and addressed within supervision. The holding capacity of the supervisory relationship may be contaminated causing the supervisee to feel incompetent and uncontained, which will inevitably have a negative impact on the clinical work with their clients(Remington & Dacosta, 1989). In such instances the primary goal of supervision, namely the professional development of the supervisee, may be retarded and the trainee therapist runs the risk of providing poor quality therapy to the client also increases substantially.

Literature concerning trainees' perceptions of the supervisory process is sparse. In a study conducted by Vespia, Heckman-Stone and Delworth (1992) to assess what behaviours clinical supervisees thought were required of a supervisee of their experience level, data analysis revealed that thirty-six of the fifty-two participants in the study felt that an understanding of multicultural dynamics was an important part of the supervision process. Other research, which has focused on the manner in which the supervisor-supervisee relationship can impinge on the treatment of a client has also yielded interesting findings. Baudary (1993) argues that when conflict over management of the client occurs in the supervisory alliance, these conflicts often filter into the therapeutic alliance and can cause problems in the treatment of the client. A study by Nigam, Cameron and Leverette (1997), which explored the effects of conflict within the supervisory alliance on the supervisee, is also relevant. The findings of this research indicate that some supervisees experienced anxiety in relation to having their personal experience of therapy with their client out in

the open, experienced self-doubt in relation to feeling justified in criticizing their supervisor, and often perceived their supervisor as a authority figure whose criticism was experienced as condemnatory. A quantitative study by Donelda and Helms (1988) focused on visible ethnic/racial group supervisees' satisfaction with cross cultural supervision . It was found that a relationship which was characterized by active professional interest on the part of the White supervisors were found to contribute to a greater satisfaction with the supervision process among Black supervisees. Black supervisees in this study experienced their supervisors' attempts to understand their racial background as particularly beneficial as this seemed to imply that their supervisors were willing to understand at some level how their racial identity influenced the supervisory relationship. In a study by Mokutu (1998) cited in (Mokutu, Rankoe & Christian, 2002), it was found that Black trainee psychologists often felt that they were able to better understand the dynamics of their Black clients, and were thus able to enlighten their White supervisors in this regard. Black supervisees in this study therefore seemed to feel that they could aid their White supervisors in understanding the dynamics of their Black clients by bridging the gaps which their supervisors had in terms of their cultural and experiential knowledge of Black clients.

2.6. The Process of supervision

Supervisors training supervisees who come from a different racial background need to examine how they view the process of supervision, to understand how their style of supervision may influence the process of supervision. Most, if not all, psychotherapy training relies largely on a the supervisees ability to engage

in verbal interaction in supervision. The process of supervision is thus dictated to some extent by the supervisees ability to interact verbally (Carter & Qureshi,1995). This presupposes an ability on the part of both members of the supervisory dyad to understand each another. It is imperative to note that even when both parties appear to be utilizing the same language system, they may not necessarily be attaching the same meaning to particular words and phrases (Brown & Landrum,1995).

Black supervisees in South Africa are usually communicating in their second language(i.e English or Afrikaans). The Black supervisee may therefore be unable to fully understand certain elements of what the supervisor is attempting to convey about a particular client or theory. The Black supervisee may also be unable to communicate what a particular client has said in therapy as the supervisee's indigenous language does not possess an English equivalent of the word. In such instances, the process of supervision may be impeded to some extent.

In one study by Peterkin (1983), researchers examined the subjective experiences of supervising Black pastoral care and psychiatric trainees. It was evident that even though both supervisor and supervisee spoke "English" during the course of supervision, language barriers still surfaced as the researchers realized that the supervisees often did not attach the same meaning to certain words which supervisors did. This problem was only resolved once the issue of the supervisee's racial difference within the supervisory dyad was broached directly by the supervisor and once the supervisor sought to understand the

manner in which the supervisee's racial background influenced their understanding of certain words and phrases which were used by their supervisor.

It is likely that most problems related to racial difference occur in the initial phases of supervision, due to the fact that the power imbalance between the supervisor is often most pronounced during the early stages of a supervisee's development as they have not yet gained enough experience to feel comfortable in their role as therapists. It stands to reason that the Black supervisee is less likely to bring up interpersonal difficulties concerning racial issues which they may be experiencing.

This is likely to create an oppressive experience of supervision in the mind of the supervisee. The Black supervisee may often feel that it is the responsibility of the supervisor to bring up such issues in the course of supervision (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995). White supervisees may also be reluctant to discuss certain experiences within the context of same race supervisory dyad, but the Black supervisee in contrast may adopt a much more passive role in relation to the supervisor when specifically confronted with racially tinged issues within supervision. This may be even more difficult when little attention has been paid to the development of an adequate working alliance between the White supervisor and Black supervisee.

The development of an adequate working alliance is of paramount importance even when both the supervisor and supervisee are of the same racial

background. When the supervisor and supervisee are of a different racial background, the development and creation of an effective and understanding working alliance may be of more importance as this will have a direct bearing on the manner in which the Black supervisee experiences their supervision.

While supervisees who find themselves in a same race dyad may often be quite resistant to corrective feedback. Supervisees who come from a different racial background to that of their supervisor may be particularly sensitive to corrective feedback (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995). Black supervisees may therefore resist certain feedback from their supervisor due to the fact that interventions which their supervisor has proposed clashes with practices which are common place from the perspective of their racial background. This may be a bid to protect such cultural beliefs which have an important place in terms of the racial identity. For instance, a Black supervisee may hold the cultural belief that certain problems which a Black person experiences (i.e. Ukuthowisa) requires the assistance of a traditional healer, and that suggesting this to a Black client may benefit them. This may at times be at odds with the more non-directive approach often utilized within the psychodynamic approach which places more emphasis on the therapist exploring the feelings and meaning associated with a specific problem. Some Black supervisees may unwittingly lead to the erosion of an effective working alliance with their supervisors as they passively resist the supervisors input while failing to disclose their difference of opinion with their supervisors.

2.7. The outcomes of psychotherapy supervision

One of the foremost goals of supervision would be to facilitate the independence of supervisees in terms of their ability to conduct psychotherapy as competent psychologists (Feltham,1994). The ultimate goal is thus to promote the professional development of the trainee, and the personal issues which often surface within the context of the supervisory dyad are often left for the supervisee to resolve independently (Emerson,1989).

One of the desired outcomes of supervision is that supervisees develop a level of independence in conducting their own psychotherapy with their client. This independence may often be encouraged within the framework of supervision by allowing the supervisees space for their own thoughts and feelings regarding the process and outcomes of their psychotherapy case. Supervisors may attempt to promote an increase in activity in such areas in some supervisees.

This may pose problems within inter-racial supervision, where the supervisor may misinterpret the behaviour of the Black supervisee in a negative light if it is inconsistent with the goal of increased activity on the part of the supervisee (Brice-baker & Gopaul- McNicol,1998). Black supervisees who maintain a cultural belief that they should show respect to a supervisor due to their racial background, may refrain from talking too much and will attempt to listen more. White supervisors may in turn, feel that the supervisees are lacking in initiative, and not making progress in becoming less dependent on supervision. In a study which examined African-American supervisees' perceptions of their White supervisors cultural competence, the emotional bond between supervisee and supervisor was felt to be an important outcome of supervision

(Townsend,1997). White supervisees' perceptions, on the other hand, regarding the outcomes of psychotherapy supervision seemed to differ to some extent.

An American study which examined White supervisees' perceptions of the goals of psychotherapy supervision yielded interesting findings. It was found that White supervisees' perceived skills enhancement and collegial support as the most important outcomes of supervision (Pennington,1997). It seems from this study that developing competency in technique and maintaining a firm peer support system were the most important outcomes, for White supervisees. By contrast, for African-American supervisees, it was the quality of the relationship which developed between themselves and their supervisor which was viewed as the most important outcome.

These studies highlight the possibility that there may often be an incongruence in terms of what African-American supervisees perceive as important outcomes of psychotherapy supervision, when compared to their White counterparts. This study however appears to focus exclusively on the outcomes of supervision and tends to overlook how supervisees' racial backgrounds influence their perceptions regarding the power relations which occur within supervision or how their racial background impacts on their experience of supervision. The present study, however, attempts to examine how the supervisee's racial background influences their perceptions regarding both the processes and outcomes of supervision within the supervisory dyad.

It is evident from the preceding discussion that some of the goals of traditional supervision and teaching may be inconsistent with what Black supervisees may feel they need.

2.8. Models of supervision

Soldz(1993) argues that the current body of literature regarding psychotherapy supervision is fast expanding. In conjunction with this expansion, the means of training and supervising trainee therapists is also rapidly becoming diverse and specialized. An understanding of the ways in which the various models of psychotherapy supervision may either hinder or aid the professional development of the Black psychotherapy supervisee may therefore be beneficial.

The ways in which supervisors choose to train their supervisees is dictated to a large extent by the manner in which they were supervised, and the theoretical model that they were exposed to during their own training.

Although it is clear from the literature that there are many programs being set up, and some currently in progress, targeted specifically at training senior therapists in supervision, it remains a largely informal process, with many supervising therapists learning on the job. This would appear to account for the large amount of variation in supervisory styles and the relative lack of uniformity observed within the field in this regard.

Even though the supervisor's approach to supervision is often based on their previous experience of supervision, each supervisor endeavors to work in their own unique way, drawing on their knowledge of their theories and often

adapting to the context and supervisee whom they are confronted with. It may be useful to attempt to separate the different models which have emerged throughout the years even though such a differentiation is often artificial as the model represents ideal which is rarely ever used by a supervisor within the context of the real world (Page & Wosket,1994;Taub-Bynum, Hersch, Poey & Spring,1991).

The patient-centered model pertains to the classical model which was first begun by Freud within the Berlin institute(Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat,2001). It is essentially a model which focuses primarily on the client's dynamics and resistances. The supervisor often adopts the role of a distant, clinical observer. The supervisor therefore adopts an "expert" role as he or she possesses knowledge and theory which surpasses that of the supervisee. The supervisor is the one who decides what is good technique, theory and what is happening within the mind of the client. The supervisory relationship is often a didactic one with the supervisee often assuming a much more passive role. One of the strengths of this model is that it often make keep the focus outside of the supervisory relationship and this may facilitate learning especially with a novice supervisee, as less anxiety means more space for teaching and learning (Jacobs, David & Meyer,1995).

One of the biggest limitations of this model is that it does not afford the supervisory couple an opportunity to understand and analyse conflictual interactions within the supervisory dyad which may benefit both the supervisee and the client. Conflictual moments between supervisor and supervisee are often

left unexamined and such opportunities may provide the supervisor an opportunity to demonstrate how difficulties between people can be reflected upon, analysed and resolved. It seems evident that this approach places less emphasis on the interactions between supervisor and supervisee. The current literature however seems to suggest that Black supervisees expect to develop some form of relationship with their supervisor (Pennington,1997). This particular approach may therefore lead to a negative supervisory experience for some Black supervisees.

The ego psychology model of supervision is similar to the patient-centered model of supervision in that the supervisor does adopt a primarily uninvolved and objective stance within the supervisory dyad (Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat,2001). In contrast to the patient centered model however, when the supervisee begins to experience specific problems, the supervisor's role shifts from one of didactic teacher to one of interpreting the resistance within the supervisee. The focus within this approach, centers around resistance and an understanding of the individual psychology of the supervisee. Resistance within this model is understood in terms of learning problems, if it relates to problems occurring within the therapeutic sphere of therapist and client or problems in learning if the problem arises in the supervisee's relationship to the supervisor(Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat,2001). This model clearly appears to pay much more attention to a supervisee's personality and the way in which this may impact on both the treatment situation and the supervisory situation, as such it allows the supervisor an opportunity to aid the supervisee in identifying blindspots which may stem from their particular personality configuration. This provides an

invaluable form of modeling to the supervisee on how to work with their clients.

One of the drawbacks of this model is its relative neglect of the supervisor's pathology which may have an influence on the supervisory dyad, as most of the focus is centered on the supervisee's issues. This particular model may make the supervisor more prone to attributing problems which arise in treatment and within supervision to the unresolved issues of the supervisee. This may often leave the supervisee with feelings of guilt, shame and anxiety. The supervisee is often more prone to becoming a container for all the problems which develop within the context of the supervisory dyad (Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat, 2001). This may be particularly problematic in the case of the Black supervisee as the supervisor may misconstrue certain aspects of the supervisee's behavior (i.e. Black supervisees may remain more passive due to certain cultural beliefs which dictate that they show respect to a supervisor by not talking excessively). The supervisor may take little cognizance of how the racial identity of the Black supervisee impacts on the supervisee's behaviour in supervision.

The empathic model of supervision is a relative departure from both the patient-centered and ego psychology model as it decreases the role of the supervisor as the object, uninvolved expert (Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat, 2001). This model takes the supervisee's perceptions of the supervisor's empathic failures into consideration rather than merely viewing such perceptions as resistance. The supervisor attempts to participate actively within the supervisory dyad in terms

of providing empathic receptiveness, opportunities for idealization and mirroring and the processing of empathic failures within the supervisory relationship (Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat,2001).One the major strengths of this model is the particularly helpful with some supervisees who struggle with issues around shame, failure and anxiety. The availability of empathic responsive and mirroring within the supervisory relationship may help such supervisees develop more confidence in their abilities. The exploration of empathic failures in the supervisory relationship may be beneficial for Black supervisees, as it may open up more space to discuss how the racial difference between supervisor and supervisee may be contributing to the supervisee's difficulties. One of the limitations of this approach is that the supervisor may often not be able to pick up on enactments within the supervisory dyad which could be linked to the therapeutic milieu of the supervisee.

The anxiety focused model places the supervisor in the role of the objective "expert", as the prime area of focus for supervision revolves around aiding the supervisee in working with primitive anxieties which often may be stimulated in them by both the client and the clinical situation(Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat,2001). The supervisor within the context of this model seeks to understand the supervisee's psychology in two ways. Firstly through an understanding of how the unconscious anxieties which are stimulated by the therapeutic setting find their way into the supervisory dyad and secondly how the supervisee may seek to enact certain features of a particular clients internal world within the supervisory relationship (Frawley O-Dea & Sarnat,2001). The primary goal of the supervisor is to aid the supervisee in his or her

understanding of the client through interpretation of enactments and unconscious anxieties.

The supervisor also seeks to provide the necessary freedom within which to explore counter transference anxieties which are experienced as a result of the therapeutic encounter. In other words the holding provided within the supervisory space is viewed as an important component of this model. The supervisor therefore attempts to hold the supervisee emotionally as the supervisee begins to divulge their disturbing experiences within the therapeutic relationship (Jarmon,1990). One of the major strengths of this model is its emphasis on holding which may often facilitate the development of an appropriate working alliance between supervisor and supervisee. The creation of such a supervisory environment can often provide a useful model to the supervisee in terms of how they can best facilitate the creation of such a space within their therapies. As such, supervision is conceptualized as an experiential process which will hopefully be internalized by the supervisee during the course of supervision. While the holding environment of supervision is a beneficial to any supervisee, an exclusive focus on intrapsychic issues, may alienate certain Black supervisees who, due to their racial background, tend to conceptualize their client's problems in terms of broader socio-economic issues (i.e. poverty) occurring in the client's environment (Brown & Landrum,1995).

In the real world the supervisor may use one or more aspects of these particular models to help them deal with specific aspects of a supervisory situation. It seems plausible that a dogmatic adherence to one specific model

over another may prove insufficient when confronted by a supervisory situation which does not respond to the supervisor's usual supervisory style. This highlights the need for the supervisor to be flexible and less rigid with regard to their usual supervisory style. A rigid adherence to one's chosen supervisory model may be detrimental to not only the supervisee's growth but the professional growth of the supervisor as well. This may be particularly true within the context of inter-racial supervision.

2.9. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the current literature on race in relation to psychotherapy supervision. It has defined the concept of psychotherapy supervision and explored the literature on how Black supervisees experience inter-racial clinical supervision. It has also explored how Black supervisees may experience certain models of psychotherapy supervision which a White supervisor may utilize. The next chapter will deal critically with the manner in which the data was collected and analysed in the present study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Selecting a research paradigm:

Qualitative research is broadly defined as a method of research which is largely focused on capturing and defining meaning once the researcher has immersed himself in the data. This is in contrast to quantitative research where the researcher often begins with a specific set of hypotheses which the researcher will seek to test during the course of their research. Qualitative research on the other hand attempts to hone in on the meaning and the personal experience of the research participants (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996). As a result of this, the qualitative design invariably produces a large amount of rich data from a relatively small sample (Neuman, 1994). The qualitative design therefore makes it possible for the researcher to adopt a largely interpretive stance toward the data. This affords the researcher a greater deal of flexibility, freedom and creativity. Such freedom however, does not preclude the researcher from being cautious in his interpretation of the data, and does not mean that data analysis will proceed in a less systematic and introspective manner when compared to other types of research methods.

The researcher generally tends to interpret data by assigning to it specific meanings and attempting to form a coherent narrative which will be understandable. In other words, “data analysis seeks to understand how specific research subjects perceive their world, how they understand their situations and experiences and the meaning which they attach to their experiences”

(Geertz,1973; p29).

A qualitative research methodology was used in context of this study. Berg (1995) asserts that researcher who utilizes qualitative methodology explores how people understand both themselves and others in their environment. Qualitative methodology therefore allows the researcher the opportunity to share in the subjective experiences of others and discover the ways in which people structure and give meaning to their lives(Berg,1995). In the context of this study, the research is geared towards understanding how Black supervisees experience both themselves and their supervisors within inter-racial psychotherapy supervision. This particular research study therefore lends itself to qualitative research methodology as the study seeks to understand the perceptions of Black psychotherapy supervisees within a specific context. The research aims to understand the unique experiences of a limited amount of subjects within a specific population in an in-depth manner, rather than aiming to make generalizations from a large sample. Thematic content analysis was used in the context of this study. Neuman (1994) asserts that thematic content analysis allows a researcher to discover the meanings, messages and symbols contained within a text. Thematic content analysis was therefore well suited as a method for analysing the data in the present study, as the study aimed to understand the subjective experiences of participants and the meanings they attached to their experiences within inter-racial psychotherapy supervision. The use of interviews, coupled with thematic content analysis was utilized as the research seeks to elicit themes from the large amount of data which will be captured through the interview schedule.

3.2. Sample:

A convenience, non-probability sampling strategy was utilized. Purposive sampling was utilized as the researcher sought specific subjects from a specialized target population. Criterion sampling has been employed in this study as all the participants were expected to meet the following criteria for inclusion in the study. Firstly, only Black African psychotherapy supervisees who have either been in or were currently a part of a inter-racial supervision dyad. Secondly, only people who had completed their first year of clinical training and who were currently completing their internship at an internship site were selected for the study. The main reason for including supervisees who were completing their internship was that they would have had much more exposure to supervision in comparison to first year clinical psychology masters students. They would thus be in a better position to offer their perceptions of psychotherapy supervision. A sample of four Black psychotherapy supervisees was utilized as the research attempted to gain an in-depth understanding of specific supervisees' subjective perceptions of inter-racial supervision through a semi-structured interview schedule.

The researcher approached the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand and obtained the names and telephone numbers of potential participants. The Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand was approached, as it allowed the most convenient access to Black psychotherapy supervisees who were being trained exclusively in psychodynamic therapy. Potential participants were contacted telephonically and

the researcher explained the nature of the study, the aims and the possible length of time which would be required for the interviews. Potential participants who expressed an interest, negotiated an appropriate time that they would be available for the interview with the researcher at the time of the initial call. Appointments were arranged with five potential participants. Four arrived for their interviews and one failed to arrive.

3.3. The Wits Psychology training model

The Wits psychology training model comprises training in both long term and short term psychotherapy. Students provide counseling under supervision at both Alexandra Clinic and Trauma clinic. Students in groups of six rotate bi-annually between these two clinics where the focus is on much shorter term psychotherapy. Students are required to have two long term patients during the course of their first year's training. Clients are pre-screened and selected by a member of the clinical team. Participants in the context of this study focused on their experience of psychotherapy supervision with their long term clients only as this involved supervision from one supervisor as opposed to the supervision with their short term clients which generally involved two supervisors. Students receive two psychotherapy supervision sessions a week for their long term clients.

There is no structured model of psychotherapy supervision stipulated within the framework of the clinical psychology masters program at the University of the Witwatersrand. Psychotherapy supervisors within the program would however profess to supervise from a psychodynamic framework. What constitutes

psychodynamic supervision however, would be interpreted differently by various supervisors in the program. Psychotherapy supervisors have variable experience and have received no formal training in psychotherapy supervision.

3.4. Ethics

Informed consent to be interviewed was obtained from all participants, and they were required to sign an informed consent form (See appendix 1). The participants were informed of the nature of the study, the amount of time required of them, and that the audio-taped interviews would be destroyed by the researcher within two years following the completion of the research project. The participants provided written consent to interviews being audio recorded and transcribed (See appendix 2), and were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Confidentiality was guaranteed and participants' names were not used in the research.

3.5. The research interview

A semi structured interview schedule comprising open ended questions was utilized to explore participants' experiences of their own racially mixed supervision. A semi-structured interview schedule was utilized in this study as the researcher aimed to explore the subjective world of the participants. One major advantage of utilizing a semi-structured interview is that it allows the researcher an opportunity to establish trust and rapport with participants before attempting to probe sensitive areas. This is particularly important in the context of this research as the questions probed areas which were potentially emotive and sensitive for participants. It also allows the researcher to aid

participants in their interpretation of questions (Rosnow & Rosenthal,1996). The semi-structured interview is often thought of as a “speech event”, closer to a conversation (Neuman,1994). The interview however departs from a friendly conversation as it has an explicit purpose; to discover something about the subject and their personal experiences.

A semi-structured interview schedule is thus a much more flexible research tool when compared to a more structured interview schedule. It is the flexibility of the semi structured interview schedule which allows the researcher the freedom to create questions which are more congruent with the positions and comments of the interviewee (Burman, Taylor & Tundall,1994; Eral,1994). The interview schedule compromised three categories, each representing a specific theme for analysis. These themes were derived from the literature review. The main themes covered by the schedule were :

A)Role expectations in supervision

- 1)What do you understand the purpose of clinical supervision to be?
- 2)What was your experience of the supervisory relationship so far?
- 3)Considering your answers to the above questions do you think that your racial identity impacted on the perceptions you had regarding the supervisory relationship?

B)Process of supervision

- 4)In what ways, if any, did your supervisor raise the issue of your racial difference as a topic in supervision?
- 5)In what ways, if any, did you raise the issue of your racial difference as a topic in supervision?
- 6)Do you think your racial difference had any influence on the nature and quality of supervision you received ?

- 7)What aspects of supervision made it easier or more difficult to discuss the concerns you had with your clients?
- 8)Did you have many clients that were from a different racial background to that of your supervisor?
- 9)Do you feel that your supervisor understood the nature of your clients problems considering that they came from a different racial background to that of your supervisor?
- 10)What influence do you think your racial identity has on the interactions that occurred between yourself and your supervisor?
- 11)Do you feel that your supervisors level of awareness of your racial identity impacted on the interactions between yourself and your supervisor?
- 12)In what ways, if any, did your awareness of your supervisors racial identity influence the perceptions you had regarding the interactions which occurred between yourself and your supervisor?

C)Outcomes of supervision

- 13)What do you see as being the most important outcomes of supervisions.?
- 14)Have these those outcomes been met in supervision so far?
- 15)Would you say that Black supervisees' need anything additional or different from White supervisees' ?

The questions utilized in the interview emerged organically from the existing literature on inter-racial psychotherapy supervision. The first two questions were aimed at eliciting the participants' thoughts concerning the supervisory relationship in a more general manner, as it was hoped that this would aid the researcher in building rapport with and allaying the anxiety of the participants. The third question was meant to elicit more specific information regarding how participants felt that their experiences of psychotherapy supervision with White supervisors was coloured by their racial identity. The objective served by asking the first three questions, was to get a sense of what role participants assumed in relation to their White supervisors. Questions four and five were

asked in a bid to explore how the issue of race was discussed from the participant's perspective and the supervisor's perspective. Question six was asked in order to gain an impression of whether the participants felt that their racial identity influenced the way their supervisory experience was structured by either themselves or their supervisors. Question seven was asked to elicit a more general impression of the interpersonal dynamics operating between participants and their supervisors. Question eight was aimed at clarifying whether participants had seen Black clients, as the subsequent questions dealt more explicitly with how their White supervisors understood their Black clients. Question nine was asked with the objective of gaining an understanding of whether participants felt that their supervisors understood their Black clients and how they perceived their supervisors formulations. Question ten was meant to elicit more specific information in regard to participants' perceptions of the interpersonal dynamics in supervision and the extent to which this was informed by the participants racial identity. Questions eleven and twelve were aimed at exploring more specifically the participants' thoughts about how their supervisor may have interacted with them due to their awareness of their racial background and how the supervisor's racial identity influenced the behaviour of the participant in supervision. Question thirteen was aimed at eliciting the general impressions which participants had regarding the outcomes of supervision. It was also hoped that this would again reduce any anxiety which may have been generated from the preceding questioning. Question fourteen was merely an attempt to clarify more specifically whether the participant felt that these outcomes were achieved within the context of their supervisory experience. Question fifteen was aimed

at exploring what Black supervisees felt they needed in psychotherapy supervision as the existing literature seems to suggest that Black supervisee's may have different perceptions regarding what they need in supervision when compared to White supervisees.

3.6. Interpretive reflexivity

Interpretive reflexivity is defined as a systematic exploration and acknowledgement of the bias, values and interests which a researcher brings to a qualitative research design (Creswell, 2003). An integral part of qualitative methodology requires that the researcher reflect on how their own identity, experiences and beliefs may impinge on the manner in which the data is collected and interpreted. This was of paramount importance within the context of the present study. The researcher's own racial background (Indian), which was different to that of the participants, may have had a significant impact on the interview process. The researcher may have inadvertently probed into certain areas which the participants may have found quite sensitive, particularly around the interactions with their White supervisors. De La Rey & Duncan (2003) argue that while all Black people were affected by racism, racism as a phenomenon continues to impact on those labeled by the past Apartheid government as Coloured, Indian and Black in significantly different ways. As a result of this, it was apparent that Indian and Coloured people, while considerably more deprived than their White counterparts, were still allowed more access to political, economic and social resources than Black people. The fact that the researcher may have had different experiences with White people may have led the researcher to probe into areas which some participants may have

experienced as sensitive because the researcher did not experience those issues as sensitive due to his previous experiences with White people. On the other hand however, the researcher may have also had preconceived expectations about participants' answers, based on the participants and the interviewer's racial background.

The preconceived expectations which the researcher may have had as a result of their racial background may led the researcher to assume that Black participants would answer certain questions in a particular way. This may have led the researcher to fail to probe further around certain issues, as the answers which the participants gave may have been consistent with what the researcher anticipated as being important to Black psychotherapy supervisees.

Although every effort was made by the researcher to remain neutral during the data analysis phase of the present study, the results of the study were to some extent interpreted through the lens of the researcher's own beliefs, experiences and values. The fact that the researcher was of a different racial background to that of the participants may have made it easier for him to identify certain themes as these may have resonated with the researcher's own experience with White psychotherapy supervisors. In contrast to this however, the researcher may have failed to engage adequately with some themes which were identified in the data as these did not resonate with the researcher's own background and experiences.

3.7. Analysis

Thematic content analysis was utilized as the research attempted to elicit themes from the data gathered through the interview. Thematic content analysis is a coherent manner of organizing or reading data obtained through the interview schedule in relation to particular research questions (Burman, Taylor & Tundall, 1994). In addition to this, content analysis can reveal messages which form part of the text so that individuals who read it are able to discern themes, biases and characteristics of a text (Banister, 1994).

The interview schedule utilized in this study was divided into sections, comprising role expectations, experience of the process of supervision and perceptions of the outcomes of supervision. The perceptions of trainee therapists was elicited through these different sections. In other words, how a trainee perceived their role in supervision and their supervisor's role, how they perceive the process of supervision and what they identified as the outcomes of supervision was obtained through these various sections. In all of these sections, the interviewees were asked to consider how their perceptions of their role in supervision, the process of supervision and the outcomes of supervision are influenced by their racial identity, and their perception of their supervisor's different racial identity. The dominant themes which emerged from each section were extracted and analyzed to create a holistic picture of the participants' perceptions of inter-racial psychotherapy supervision.

3.8. Stages of thematic content analysis

Stage 1

Each interview was repeatedly read and listened to in order to get an overall feel for the content.

Stage 2

The themes which recurred within a specific category (i.e. role expectations, experience of the process of supervision and perceptions of the outcomes of supervision) were noted.

Stage 3

Responses which were contradictory within a specific category and which reflected a unique and individual response by a participant were also noted.

Stage 4

Individual responses within a given category which could not be subsumed within a specific theme and which indicated a significant difference of experience when compared to other participant's responses within the same category were also taken into consideration. Themes emerged from the data within each category.

For example, one of the themes identified during the course of data analysis revealed a theme revolving around a sense of passivity. The following responses from participants were found to fall into this particular theme

1. "It often felt like she brought a western approach(an approach which predominantly conceptualized Black clients' current difficulties in terms of their internal world, to the relative exclusion of other factors such as the clients racial and cultural background) to supervision and that I had

to accommodate to such an approach like she brought the superior approach as a White supervisor and that put her on top....I guess I felt a bit inferior in terms of my racial identity as a Black person in relation to her”.

2. “...I felt that she was constantly reminding me that I was young, Black and therefore I don’t know anything about psychodynamics you know like for instance she would ask us the Blacks, the darkies " Do you understand transference?"...." Do you know what it means?" ...and then go all the way to explain even if we told her we know what transference means you know when your explaining something like your explaining to a two year old you know.”

The following responses by participants two and four were found to fall within the theme of misconceptions:

- 1) “ She didn’t understand most of the things that happen to people in the township”.

- 2) Participant two reported that “Initially I felt this person was not going to understand me because I mean we come from two different worlds”.

Within the context of this research, categories derived from the research literature on inter-racial supervision were used. Categories were used as this made it easier to create questions which would fall into a specific categories and make the interview schedule more structured. An inductive approach was

utilizing within the context of this study as the researcher sought to extract common themes and differences within specific categories of questions. The inductive approach asserts that the researcher “submerges” himself in the research data in order to document the themes which arise within the personal narrative of a research participant. In the deductive approach in contrast, categories are extracted from a particular theoretical approach and the data is analysed for material which either supports or refutes these categories. Berg (1995) asserts that in order to present the perceptions of the research subjects in a candid manner, one has to rely much more on an inductive approach.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the researcher’s reasons for utilizing a qualitative approach and the type of data collection and analysis procedures utilized. It has also outlined in detail the instrument which was used and how the researcher’s biases, values and beliefs may have impinged on the interview process and data interpretation. The subsequent chapter will deal with a comprehensive discussion of the results obtained.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will focus on the discussion of the data collected. The transcripts were subjected to thematic content analysis and the following themes arose. The transcripts are attached in Appendix four.

4.2. Summary of findings

The data yielded the following findings after being subjected to thematic content analysis. Two participants in the study experienced a sense of passivity in relation to their supervisor due to their racial identity. All four participants felt that their White supervisors had the potential to misinterpret either their own behaviour or their clients. Only one participant felt that there should be more of an emotional bond between supervisor and supervisee within inter-racial supervision. Two participants perceived their racial identity as having a negative impact on the quality of supervision they received.

Although participants felt that some of the outcomes of supervision were met, the responses to what were important outcomes in psychotherapy supervision differed widely between participants. For instance, two participants perceived their personal growth as an important outcome of supervision. Other participants seemed to feel that their supervisors needed to be aware of their cultural beliefs. Only one participant seemed to experience the disclosure of their mistakes within the therapeutic context as inherently shameful. Two participants perceived their supervisor's differing racial identity as a potential block to the

creation of an effective supervisory relationship. Three participants felt unable to or were not willing to bring up the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision. All of the participants in the study perceived their supervisor's ability to understand the clients' dynamics in varying ways, when their clients came from a different racial background to that of their supervisor. Only one participant adopted a passive aggressive stance in supervision, at times when the supervisory alliance was weakened by conflict around how a client's racial identity may be contributing to their difficulties.

4.3. Passivity

It was evident from the study that two Black supervisees often experienced themselves as being seen to be inferior in relation to their White supervisors. For instance, participant three reported that "It often felt like she brought a western approach (an approach which predominantly conceptualized Black clients' difficulties in terms of their internal world, to the relative exclusion of other factors such as the clients racial and cultural background) to supervision and that I had to accommodate to such an approach, like she brought the superior approach and that put her on top....I guess I felt a bit inferior in terms of my racial identity as a Black person in relation to her". Participant four reported that "I felt that she was constantly reminding me that I was young and Black and therefore I don't know psychodynamics". This experience of feeling inadequate is not however uncommon among trainee therapists as they are relatively inexperienced in conducting psychotherapy. Black supervisees in this study, however, seem to associate their feelings of inferiority with how they feel treated because they belong to a specific racial group.

In addition to this, both participants three and four seemed to experience their White supervisors as adopting a patronising, authoritative and superior stance in relation to them within supervisory relationship. A supervisor, however, may adopt a more authoritative role in such a context as he or she has more experience, and is as such more able to direct the trainee therapist in aspects of psychotherapeutic process regardless of their racial background. In the context of this study however, Black supervisees connected their experience of their supervisors as superior and patronising with their supervisor's racial background. For instance, participant three reported that "Often times I felt that my background as a Black person, and my experiences of being part of this racial group was beneath the western approach(an approach which predominantly conceptualized Black clients' difficulties in terms of their internal world, to the relative exclusion of other factors such as the client's racial and cultural background) of my supervisor.... and I took a passive approach in just accepting her suggestions".

Participant four reported that "Because for her I felt that she thought that Black people cannot be competent in psychodynamics or as therapists...I don't know if she was concerned if I was young but the way she carried on it was more discouraging than encouraging and....I felt that most of it was because I was Black and she was White". The experience of passivity is one that most supervisees potentially experience at the beginning of psychotherapy supervision, even within the context of same race supervision dyads. It is not surprising therefore that a supervisee of any race would assume a much more

subservient role in the supervisory relationship. Within the present study however it seems evident that Black supervisees tended to adopt a much more subservient and passive role in relation to their White supervisors due to their racial identity.

The perception of the supervisor as all powerful and knowledgeable therefore has added implications for the supervisee when they are Black. The imbalance in power between the White supervisor and Black supervisee, in favour of the former, may arouse in the latter feelings of inferiority. It is plausible that such feelings may lead Black supervisees to assume a much more passive role in the supervisory relationship. This means that the supervisor's authority is not only perceived in terms of their level of experience which they possess as professionals, but may be further enhanced by the supervisor's racial identity.

The adoption of a passive role within inter-racial supervision may, however have an extra racial dimension for Black supervisees. One could hypothesize that such a perception of the supervisory relationship and the Black supervisee's role in the relationship may in part be due to the historical legacy of Apartheid policy in South Africa which perpetuated such beliefs, ideals and representations.

Brice-Baker & Copaul- McNicol (1998) assert that inter-racial supervisory dyads often mirror the relationship between ethnic minorities and members of the majority found in society in terms of the power imbalance between both parties. Within the context of South African society, the previous history of

Apartheid allowed the White minority power over the Black majority. It is therefore not surprising that a power imbalance within the context of inter-racial psychotherapy supervision between a White supervisor and Black supervisee may serve to reawaken feelings and perceptions associated with our Apartheid legacy.

4.4. Misconceptions

Within the context of this study, it seems that all four Black supervisees often had a sense that their White supervisor had the potential to misinterpret either their own behaviour or their clients behaviour. Misinterpreting either a supervisee's behavior or their clients' behaviour is a relatively common occurrence, even within same race supervision dyads. In the context of this study, however, Black supervisees seemed to be apprehensive about whether the supervisor would be able to understand them and their client's behavior as they were from a different racial background to that of their supervisor.

For instance, Participant four reported that "She didn't understand most of the things that happen to people in the township". Participant two reported that "Initially I felt this person was not going to understand me because I mean we come from two different worlds". Participant one reported that "There were times that I felt that my supervisor somehow couldn't understand some of my clients' issues especially from the context of being Black.....you know its like everything was interpreted from the western point of view". Participant three reported that "It did(her supervisor's racial identity) ... Ya.... it did in the sense that we don't look at things the same way, and we have to have some kind of

connection. And unfortunately you don't get to choose your supervisor, and fortunately as well....I can say I was concerned that her understanding of Black clients was inadequate". Black supervisees, within the context of this study seemed to experience their supervisor's racial identity as relative obstruction in them being able to understand their behaviour and their clients dynamics.

Ibrahim (1985) argues that anxiety and frustration within therapy is often provoked by a lack of knowledge. A lack of understanding can also therefore play a major role in creating frustration and anxiety within the context of the supervisory relationship. This may potentially create a rupture in the supervisory alliance and hamper the development of the Black supervisee. Grant (1999) argues that supervisors need to have some knowledge regarding the racial groups which they are working with and that pressure should not unduly be exerted on Black supervisees to provide this knowledge.

In other words, the Black supervisee should not be used as the primary source of information regarding their racial group, although their input around such issues may be valuable at times. If such attempts at understanding are made by the supervisor, it may lead to less of the feelings that White supervisors have the potential to misunderstand the Black supervisee's behaviour.

4.5. The need for a relationship

Only one supervisee in the study felt that there should be more of an emotional bond between the supervisor and supervisee within the context of inter-racial

supervision. Participant three reported “Some kind of guidance... to understand the client’s problems. And it’s a relationship as well, believe me, it’s a relationship as well....Initially getting to express somehow there’s, a thin line between therapy, and supervision and that was the hard part because you just have to make some connection with the person”. This may, in part, reflect intra-individual differences between participants, which reflects something of their own personalities and issues, played out within the supervisory relationship.

This is inconsistent with previous literature. Townsend (1997) asserts that an emotional bond between supervisor and supervisee was perceived as important by African-American supervisees. The lack of such a perception by other participants in this study may reflect the effect of intra-individual differences between participants, but may also allude to the impact of acculturation on participants’ perceptions regarding the supervisory relationship.

It may also therefore indicate how broader socio-cultural patterns found in specific contexts (i.e. United States) impact on racial identity. It seems likely that different contexts produce different socio-cultural trends which impact differently upon an individual’s sense of his or her racial identity.

The sense among African-American participants that an emotional bond between supervisor and supervisee is important, in the above study may be as a result of the experiences which this particular group experienced in the context of the United States. The lack of such a response by participants in

this study may also therefore reflect the fact that South Africa's unique socio-cultural history has impacted differently upon the expectations of Black supervisees.

It may also reflect the different levels of acculturation which an individual and a group may experience within a given context. Acculturation is defined as a psychosocial trend which is signaled by psychological changes which occur in an individual as a result of their experiences with a new culture (Berry & Annis, 1974; Brislin, Lonner & Thorndike, 1973; Olmeda, 1979). In other words, the participant who perceived the need for a relationship as an important part of the supervisory process may have not fully acculturated to the dominant Western culture of South African society and as such may have a stronger identification with the values and beliefs associated with their racial background.

4.6. The impact of racial identity on psychotherapy supervision

Within this study, two Black supervisees seemed to experience their racial identity as having a negative impact on the quality of supervision they received during the course of their training. There were differences, however, in the manner in which Black supervisees felt that their racial identity impacted on the quality of their supervisory experience. For instance, participant four reported that "I think so....because she would try very hard instead of focusing on the more important issues, she would focus on the unnecessary issues like teaching me about counter-transference or transference instead of going through the process notes, and helping me...Ya...because I

was Black therefore I couldn't understand these concepts, therefore we had to talk about the concepts instead of that sessions.... I did my undergrad somewhere in the bundu area and I was young and Black that definitely influenced our relationship. The first session we had was about introducing ourselves and talking about ourselves you know academic wise, and from there she just had the sense that.... she concluded from there that I was incompetent, and therefore this and that and that.

It is evident that participant four experienced her supervisor as belittling, as she focused too much attention on the theoretical aspects of therapy to the relative exclusion of the more practical elements. This particular participant seemed to have a sense that the supervisor had an impression that she needed more input in this area because of her racial identity, thereby conveying that she had little understanding of such concepts.

In contrast, however, participant three perceived the lack of disclosure around racial issues, in particular, the supervisor's perceived inability to raise the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision, as being the most difficult part of supervision. Participant three reported that "It did because I felt that sometimes when you had different opinions she couldn't tell me her exact opinion... I would have to figure it out. By actually agreeing she [the supervisor] is going to accept it [the supervisee's opinion] because I don't know, if I can say it, because she doesn't want me to feel hurt that I am Black person....I felt like she ignored it, yet she knew it was significant. She was always trying to reassure me, and give me positive input because I was

Black instead of outwardly disagreeing with something I said”.

It seems as if this led to participant three feeling that she needed to inhibit and filter certain information from the supervisor because of their racial difference, in order to protect her supervisor. For instance, participant three reported that “I have to filter certain things out, and I have to protect the both of us in the relationship. I don’t know about her but we were both trying to protect each other in the relationship. But I think to some extent we both tried to protect each other, and I think the underlying theme was that of racial difference”.

Both these participants seemed to feel that their racial identity had a negative impact on the quality of supervision they experienced. The reasons for this seem to vary widely between both participants. Participant three seemed to perceive her supervisor’s response to her as a stereotypical White response to people of her race.

Donelda & Helms (1988) reported that in a study of White supervisors’ perceptions regarding Hispanic, Black and Asian supervisees, researchers found that White supervisors perceived these supervisees as less open to self exploration and less able to accept constructive criticism. This particular study seems to suggest that certain White supervisors may be more prone to perceiving racially different supervisees in a stereotyped manner. This may often lead to a lack of openness in the supervisor, and also to a consequent lack of openness in the supervisee as they may feel that they need to

disconfirm this perception by presenting clinical work which they believe their supervisor will find little fault with.

Participant three seems to have experienced her supervisor as adopting a colour blind approach in supervision as she experienced her supervisor as being quite wary of hurting her feelings. This seemed to be experienced by the supervisee as a defensive maneuver on the part of the supervisor to not only protect the supervisee but herself in the process as well.

Remington & Costa (1989) assert that some supervisors may attempt to actively avoid criticizing Black supervisees in a bid to avoid being labeled as a racist. It seems likely from this that some White supervisors may perceive their Black supervisees as potentially associating their criticism with an attempt to be biased against them due to their racial background.

Black supervisees may, however, not benefit from such an approach. Firstly, they may fail to get accurate feedback regarding their progress. This may impede them as they are then largely unaware of the areas in which they need to improve their therapeutic skills. Secondly, they may have to deal with the resentment which their White colleagues may feel towards them as a result of their perceived preferential treatment (Remington & Decosta, 1989). Thirdly, they may learn little about how to constructively deal with differences of opinions between themselves and their supervisor, something which is important to their development as trainee therapists (Brice- Baker & Copaul-McNicol, 1998).

The Black supervisee may then be disadvantaged in terms of them developing as competent professionals within the field of psychology.

It was evident from the study that two Black supervisees in the study experienced their racial identity as having a positive impact on the nature and quality of supervision which they received. This seemed to be a result of their perception that their supervisor was actively interested in understanding their racial background. This seemed to contribute to them perceiving their racial identity as something which facilitated the development of a working alliance within psychotherapy supervision.

Participant two reported that “I think what made my supervision easier I don’t know because of her interest in cultural issues. That’s why I was so open. She even gave me some articles on Ukuthowisa and acknowledged that White supervisors need to be aware of all these African epistemologies of mental disorders”.

Participant one reported that “she was more open to learning and understanding how our culture interpreted things you know and make some symbolism to such things... she would say I know that even as a Black person, and even as a White person you might feel offended about this, but this is how I understand this thing I am not trying to offend you or ridicule you, but this is my understanding of this. And if we felt uncomfortable, she would always ask us to bring forward our opinions”.

Grant (1999) argues that knowledge about a particular racial group in itself is not sufficient to provoke a change in attitude. In addition to gaining knowledge about a particular racial group, the individual has to be more aware of how their behaviour will influence a member of another racial group. In other words, there needs to be awareness of the pattern of behaviour that one adopts when supervising people from a different racial group. Although there are no set rules governing the way an individual should interact with individuals who come from a different racial group, it is likely that superficial contact between both parties would be insufficient in refuting the stereotypes about particular racial groups.

The supervisory relationship was experienced as beneficial by participants' who perceived their supervisor as taking an active interest in their racial background and utilizing this knowledge to adapt to their needs. It seems apparent that it was this particular change in behavior on the part of the supervisor which contributed to the feeling that the supervisor was accommodating rather than demeaning. In other words, it was the fact that the supervisor reflected their awareness of their racial difference in adjusting their supervisory style to cater to the needs of these participants which was viewed as helpful.

4.7. The outcomes of supervision

It was evident that Black supervisees within this study experienced some of the outcomes of supervision as being satisfied. The outcomes of supervision were however highly specific in terms of what each participant felt was important outcomes in psychotherapy supervision. Responses varied widely

between the four participants. For instance, participant four reported that “Having the theory there and the patients there, knowing how to apply theory. Because we have lots of theories knowing which theory to apply to which patient, not force a theory to a patient. And just growth as a clinician, to understand things much better and the same time to be critical.” It is evident that this particular participant experienced their growth in terms of their clinical skills with their clients as an important outcome of the supervisory process.

Participant one reported that “Oh. Ya. A lot were met in supervision. Talking about my personal growth as a person there were times I avoided interpreting some of the issues or stuff that the client was bringing, and such issues and things were explored further”. It is evident that this particular participant viewed their personal growth, in terms of gaining insight into themselves as being an important outcome of supervision.

In contrast to this, however two participants seemed to feel that the most important aspect that a Black supervisee needed in contrast to a White supervisee, centered around academic concerns rather than relational issues within the supervisory dyad. For instance participant four reported that “I would put it this way those, who are not familiar with the (psychodynamic) theory might need more input”. Participant two reported that “sometimes we had to write the process notes and submit case reports. The question of your use of language especially in terms of writing, and in terms of process notes became an issue, sometimes my Black colleagues struggled”.

All of the Black supervisees in the study seemed to locate the need for change in terms of their supervisor's level of awareness regarding their racial background. For instance, one of the participants in the study felt that their supervisor needed to take into account that English was their second language and that this may hinder their ability to communicate certain concepts relating to their client in supervision and may also influence their writing in terms of academic work.

Only one participant experienced the issue of using English as their second language in supervision, as posing difficulties for them in terms of being able to convey an adequate understanding of their clients issues. In other words, this particular participant located a need for change in terms of the supervisors being able to take into consideration that Black supervisees may struggle to communicate certain ideas or concepts in English as there is no equivalent concept in their native tongue. For instance, participant two reported that "I think at times I want to say something to my supervisor about a client, I don't find a relevant concept in English to explain what I am saying.... so maybe the issue of language for Black supervisees maybe needs to be taken up".

This substantiates the current literature, which suggests that language does pose certain barriers within the context of inter-racial psychotherapy supervision (Peterkin,1983). It is evident that a Black supervisee may not be able to communicate a certain expression in English, as a corresponding concept does not exist in their native tongue.

However, other participants in the study did not identify this as an important outcome of psychotherapy supervision. Casas & Pytluk (1995) found that for Hispanics who were exposed to an environment in which the Hispanic language was spoken more often, there was a greater chance that the acculturation process would have a less significant impact on their racial identity. The opposite may be true for individuals who find themselves predominantly in an environment which is non-Hispanic (Casas, 1984; Casas & Pytluk, 1995; Casas & Casas, 1994).

This may serve to illustrate the potential reasons underlying the discrepancy in responses among participants in the study. The participant who felt that the language of the supervisee should be taken into consideration by the supervisor may have found herself, while growing up, exposed more often to an environment in which the use of her native tongue was encouraged. Less exposure to the dominant language (i.e. English) may have therefore led to this particular participant's difficulty in communicating certain concepts in English. In contrast, the other participants may have been exposed to a context in which the dominant language was frequently utilized, and this may have made it easier for these participants to communicate effectively in English. In other words, it is plausible that the greater the identification one has with one's own racial background, the greater the exposure one has to their native tongue and the less exposure they have to the dominant language.

In addition to this, the quality of education which supervisees may have been exposed to during their schooling careers, may also have influenced their ability to utilize English. It is plausible that they may have had a better command of the English language if they had attended a private school where the teaching was conducted in English in contrast to a government school where they may have received instruction in their native tongue.

The responses of these specific participants seems to contradict existing literature on what Black supervisees perceive as important outcomes in psychotherapy supervision. Townsend (1997) found that the emotional bond between supervisee and supervisor was felt to be an important outcome of supervision (Townsend,1997).

Black supervisees perceived the quality of relationship which developed between supervisor and supervisee as an important outcome. In contrast to this, Pennington (1997) found that White supervisees perceived skill enhancement as one of the important outcomes of psychotherapy. Within the context of this study, these particular participants seem to indicate that skills enhancement in terms of academic concerns is an important outcome for them. Only one participant in the study perceived the relationship as an important outcome of supervision.

This response may reflect the level of acculturation which certain participants in the study may have achieved, in terms of assimilating attitudes and behaviours which are consistent with the dominant culture. Casas & Pytluk

(1995) assert that the psychological and social changes which occur as a result of the acculturation process is dependent to some degree on the personal characteristics of the individual. For instance, the level of identification which the individual makes with their own racial background and the value attributed to culture of the dominant racial group may also affect this process.

The reason for the discrepancy between the participants may reflect something of the level of identification which these particular participants have made with their racial background and the value they have attributed to the culture of the dominant racial group. It serves to indicate that these particular respondents may have identified less strongly with their racial background and attributed more significance to the attitudes and values associated with the dominant racial group.

It may also reflect the manner in which the personal characteristics of the participants in this study serve to influence the level of acculturation which they experience and the manner in which this affects both their understanding of their racial identity and their attitudes and values.

Two participants felt that the supervisor needed to take into account the cultural beliefs which stemmed from their racial background when attempted to understand their behaviour and that of their clients. Bodibe (1992) asserts that in many parts of Africa, almost every form of illness which an individual experiences is perceived to be the result of the machinations of a foe and the malevolent influence of spirits which are part of the external environment. For

instance, some Black supervisees may feel that White supervisors need to take into consideration the belief in certain Black cultures that people can be bewitched through magical means to suffer from an illness, by someone who wishes them harm. Participant three reported that “A supervisor who is very open-minded in a way of not only what is happening between the student and supervisor, but what is happening around them...and what is happening in society has an impact on them it cannot be assumed that because we are both therapists or trainee and whatever, that we are thinking along the same lines. The supervisor needs to be open to change and transition in our society”.

Participant one reported that “I would think that White supervisors need to learn a lot. Let me not say even before they can supervise Black people but I think that they need to understand where Black people come from. I am not trying to be racial but I am being rational. I think they need to understand where Blacks come from and what there beliefs are because at times a supervisor is entitled to challenge one’s beliefs but the supervisor needs to understand where those beliefs come from”.

Grant (1999) confirms this perception by arguing that Black supervisees may often not bring up racial issues in supervision as they may fear a bad report. It is therefore likely that Black supervisees may prefer to maintain a low profile and expect that the supervisor should be responsible for changing in terms of increasing their understanding regarding their supervisees’ racial background. This may be the case as the supervisor is always the one who is in a position of authority and as such may be also therefore perceived as the one who should

be responsible for gaining an understanding of the supervisees' racial background.

4.8. Shame

Only one participant seem to experience the disclosure of their mistakes within the therapeutic context as inherently shameful. Participant two reported that "It got to a stage where I just wanted to present a good part only. Because if I made I mistake she wouldn't really understand that I am human and I am still training, and I am entitled to make mistakes..... I avoided to present the mistakes... I tried to prove to her that I was competent by only showing her the good parts."

It seems clear that this participant was concerned about feelings of shame in relation to her mistakes and shortcoming as trainee therapists. This participant did not however attribute this to either their racial background or their supervisors' racial background. This seems to indicate the presence of individual differences in participants which reflects something of their own character and unresolved issues which is expressed within the context of the supervisory relationship.

4.9. The Black supervisee's awareness of the supervisors racial identity

Two of the Black supervisees in the study perceived their supervisor's differing racial identity as a potential block to the creation of an effective supervisory relationship. It seemed to lead them into becoming inhibited and initially

mistrustful of their supervisor. Participant two reported that “Initially I thought how is this person going to understand.... and I didn’t want to bring up certain things that I had maybe said to the client. So I kept certain things to myself and I didn’t tell her initially”.

Participant three reported that “I wouldn’t say everything I was thinking or feeling. I wouldn’t disclose much because it was quite sensitive to the fact that... um....I was trying to protect her from me because being aware of it. I knew that it was a sensitive thing for her”.

This is consistent with previous literature, as Vander Kolk (1974) reported that Black supervisees anticipate less empathy, congruence and respect from White supervisors. It is therefore not unlikely that Black supervisees may be inhibited in fully trusting their White supervisors. Such a perception on the part of the Black supervisee may approach an inter-racial supervisory relationship with a degree of caution.

It is likely however that the White supervisor is also cautious in their approach with Black supervisees. Grant(1999) asserts that White supervisors are often tentative in their approach with Black supervisees as they are anxious about being perceived as a racist by their Black supervisees. Adopting such a position may lead to the creation of a collusive relationship, with each partner expressing views which they believe the other would like to hear.

4.10. The issue of race as a topic

Three participants within the framework of this study felt unable to or were not willing to bring up the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision. This apparent inability to discuss the issue of their racial difference was brought about by an anxiety over how such an issue may be perceived by their supervisor. For instance, participant two reported, “I didn’t want her to think that I was focused on racial issues in supervision. I thought maybe she will think I am playing the race card with her”.

Participant three reported that “I never raised it between us though. I think I was afraid that it would have been me being defensive, justifying something of my race, of myself, or my client, and also because it was a top down relationship”.

It seemed that these participants’ anxiety around disclosing racial issues in supervision was fuelled by their perception that bringing up their racial difference as a topic in supervision may be experienced by their supervisor as self-protective, and as a justification for certain aspects of their behaviour in supervision, which they may not have had recourse to if they were White supervisees. These particular participants seemed to be quite concerned that they should not appear to be using their racial backgrounds as an excuse for any problems arising within the context of the supervisory relationship.

Two participants in the study experienced their supervisors as not directly addressing the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision. For instance, participant two reported that, “Well to be honest I don’t remember ..a

..situation where my supervisor raised the racial issue; instead she was more open to learning and understanding how our culture interpreted things, you know, and make some symbolism to such things". Participant three reported that "Well it was never raised except when I was seeing a client, and she asked me about the client's nationality. But it was never raised between me, and her it was assumed that it looked as it was assumed that we as therapists were thinking along the same lines".

Only one participant in the study raised the issue of race as a topic in supervision. Participant one reported that "Well I think I raised it in many ways. Especially when my client's behaviour was interpreted as being like resistance. You know such things, that's when I raised some racial issues just to make my supervisor aware that I mean such things, yes, they could be interpreted as resistance, and so forth but in our Black culture it's a normal thing". The participant seemed to raise the issue of how the client's racial background may influence their current problems. The participant did not choose to raise the issue of the difference in racial background between supervisor and supervisee as a topic in supervision.

It was evident that one participant within the study experienced their supervisor as raising the issue of race outside the context of the supervisory relationship. In other words, the supervisor was experienced as raising the issue of race within the context of the therapeutic relationship between the supervisee and their client. For instance, participant four reported that " You have to understand that you're a young Black girl so you have to be aware of that in

therapy.... I should be aware I am Black and therefore things can't be easy for me you know".

Only one participant reported that their supervisor addressed the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision. Participant two reported that "she raised that in our first two meetings, she asked me the same questions you asked me. What are your perceptions about being supervised by a White person?".

The reasons for their lack of willingness to raise the issue of their racial difference in supervision differed widely between the participants.

Participants two and three seemed to suggest that they were anxious over whether to raise the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision as they felt that such an admission may be experienced by their supervisor as a way of justifying certain aspects of their behaviour on the basis of their racial background. This seemed to suggest that they were quite concerned that they should be treated like every other supervisee regardless of their racial background.

This is consistent with previous literature which asserts that Black supervisees are often reluctant to raise the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision as they are anxious that such an admission may be experienced by their supervisor as justifying an aspect of their behaviour due to their racial background which a White supervisee may not have recourse to (Kleintjies &

Swartz,1996). Black supervisees often failed to raise the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision as they feared that this may be interpreted by their supervisor as an attempt to rationalize aspects of their behaviour (i.e. mistakes they made with clients or with their supervisor) due to their racial background.

Two participants seemed to experience their supervisor as not broaching the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision. Those particular participants did not experience this in a negative manner. It is clear that both the supervisee and supervisor were comfortable in adopting a colour-blind approach in supervision.

This confirms the literature, which asserts that many White supervisors may adopt a colour-blind approach when confronted with a supervisee of a different racial background (Remington & DeCosta,1989). Adopting such a stance in supervision may also allow the Black supervisee the opportunity to circumvent the issue of the manner in which their racial identity impacts on the process of supervision. It may also have negative consequences for the Black supervisee as well. It can lead to the creation of certain blindspots in supervision, as both parties fail to explore the impact which race has on the supervisory process. Issues around race differences are often not explored adequately, and if left unresolved, can lead to the creation of a bland, and superficial supervisory process (Jones, Lightfoot, Palmer, Wilkerson & Williams,1970).

Two participants reported that she had experienced her supervisor as raising the issue of race as a topic in supervision. Participant four experienced the supervisor as raising the issue within the context of the therapeutic encounter. The issue of race was thus perceived to be confined to the supervisee's clinical work and the impact of her racial identity on the supervisory process was largely absent. Raising the issue of race within the context of clinical work with the supervisee may be valuable to the supervisee in terms of them gaining an understanding of the manner in which their racial background may impact on the psychotherapeutic process with certain clients.

Participant two perceived the supervisor's willingness to discuss the issue of her racial difference as a topic in supervision as beneficial. An exploration of such issues in supervision can often sensitise supervisees to the possibility of the manner in which race dynamics on their clients as well as encourage the development of the professional identity of the supervisor (Ruskin,1994).

But to largely ignore the way in which the racial background of the supervisee may influence the process of supervision within the context of inter-racial supervision, may run the risk of creating a perception in the mind of the supervisee that the supervisor is undermining the supervisee, by focusing exclusively on racial issues in their clinical work while avoiding the racial issues which are occurring within the context of the supervisory relationship.

4.11. The supervisor's ability to understand the racial dynamics of a supervisee's clients

It was evident that when a supervisee's client came from a different racial background to that of the supervisor, supervisees perceived their supervisor's ability to understand the client's dynamics in varying ways.

Participant three reported that "She did understand the nature when that involved ignoring the cultural and racial backgrounds." Participant four reported that "she understood them not in a racial manner. Racially she didn't understand most of the things that happen to people in the township. She understood them as clients, as she would understand any other client, like when it came to the race part, she hardly understood anything. I must say she had to ask me some of the things. Like how is this done in the township". It seems evident from these responses that these particular participants experienced their supervisor as not being able to fully understand the way in which the client's racial identity may be influencing their current difficulties.

Participant one reported that "the only concern that arose out of me was whether my supervisor would understand my clients. There were times when I wondered whether she had Black clientele, and how well she understood them. You know and whether everything that they presented with in therapy was interpreted psychodynamically or whether she considered their racial difference between herself and them".

It was clear that these participants felt that their supervisor potentially had little understanding regarding the racial background of their clients and that this had a direct impact on their experience of their supervisors ability to

understand their clients. It is evident that while these participants perceived their supervisor as having an adequate understanding regarding the nature of the client's problems, the participants experienced their supervisor as lacking specifically in terms of understanding how the client's racial dynamics have an influence upon the client's problems.

This perception on the part of these particular participants may have been due to the (psychodynamic) theoretical framework which the supervisor adopted in terms of understanding the client's issues. Many authors have disapproved of the overarching emphasis being placed on understanding the internal world of the client to the relative exclusion of other external factors which may play a role in influencing how the client sees the world and their current difficulties (Smail,1985; Pilgrim,1997).

One of the issues which seem to arouse a great deal of contention is the perception that such an emphasis on the internal world of the client places all of the responsibility for the client's difficulties on the client himself or herself rather than on external factors which may also be contributing to his or her problems as well. It seems likely that the client's racial background is one external factor which may directly influence how the client perceives his or her current difficulties.

Hawkins and Shohet (1989) argues that one of the most important abilities a supervisor should have is to be capable to viewing clients in terms of ever widening contexts so that they may be able to be assessed and worked with

from the vantage point of these various systems. This essentially involved understanding how various systems, such as the person's racial identity, impact on the life of the individual. This may result in the client being made responsible for things which are their problem and interventions which are geared towards change can integrate an understanding of the individual from a more systemic point of view.

In contrast to this however, one participant felt that her supervisor had an adequate understanding of her client's dynamics when the client came from a different racial background to that of the supervisor. Participant one reported that "As I indicated earlier on because of her interest in cultural issues she was in a good position to relate to what I was saying [concerning Black clients]". This particular supervisee, however, perceived her supervisor's awareness of cultural issues as aiding her in her understanding of clients who were racially different from her.

This participant's perception of her supervisor's ability to understand her client's issues was attributed to her existing knowledge, and interest in the racial background of the client. The participant perceived the supervisor as willing to understand how broader issues in the environment of the client, due to the client's racial background, might be hindering or aiding the client in terms of their immediate difficulties. The participant also seems to perceive this as particularly beneficial in terms of gaining a clearer understanding of her client's issues. It seems evident that the participant found the supervisor's ability to take into account broader systemic issues as quite helpful in not only aiding

the client but in terms of the supervisee's development as a professional as well.

4.12. The passive aggressive stance

One participant in the study seemed to adopt a passive aggressive stance in supervision, particularly at times when the supervisory alliance was weakened by conflict around how a client's racial identity may be contributing to their difficulties or concerns.

Participant one reported that, "There were times where I felt very frustrated. That I mean really this is how I conceptualize this thing in terms of my understanding of the client's racial identity, and my own racial identity as a Black person. I survived by being passive aggressive, by not communicating some of things that I wasn't comfortable with. Sometimes not doing my work, not submitting my work on time even though I knew the implications of that."

This supports the existing literature, which asserts that Black supervisees may be particularly resistant to corrective feedback especially when the interventions proposed by a supervisor clash with the supervisee's understanding of how the racial background of the client may be impacting on the difficulties which they are experiencing (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995; Landrum & Batts, 1985). The Black supervisee may often wish to maintain their racial identity as well as what they believe to be the cultural relevance of their therapeutic approaches with Black clients. For instance, a Black supervisee may actively suggest solutions to a Black client as a means of securing a therapeutic alliance, if

they hold the belief that Black clients from a more rural setting tend to expect advice from people whom they perceive as holding an authoritative position. This may be at odds with psychodynamic interventions which are far more non-directive and targeted at exploring the internal world of the client. This can lead to a rupture in the working alliance between the Black supervisee and White supervisor.

4.13. Conclusion

This chapter has focused on a discussion of the data obtained from the interviews. A number of themes have emerged, which suggest that participants have experienced their White supervisors in a similar manner. The differences in responses among participants however, serve to illustrate the potential effects of acculturation on some participants. It also serves to highlight how the various participants' personalities may have influenced their perceptions of their supervisory experience. The following chapter will deal with recommendations for White supervisors, suggestions for further research and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Recommendations arising from the study

In light of this study's findings, the following recommendations are intended to target the areas where Black supervisees have experienced difficulty within the context of inter-racial supervision

Firstly, it is of paramount importance that the supervisor, when confronted with a racially different supervisee, raise the issue of their racial difference as a topic in supervision. This may involve attempting to understand how the supervisee's racial identity may impact on the supervisory process.

Secondly, given that Black supervisees may often be using English as their second language, White supervisors may need to be more cautious, and explore more fully the meaning which a Black supervisee may attach to a particular concept, as the supervisor may interpret the same concept in a different manner. More support and guidance in terms of assisting Black supervisees by exploring with them the potential meanings which a concept have in English, which their Black clients have expressed, may benefit the learning process. The supervisor should therefore attempt to adapt their existing supervisory style to the individual needs of the supervisee.

Thirdly, supervisors may need to become more aware of the racial background of the supervisees, but also of how their own racial background could influence the supervisory process.

Fourthly, the supervisory space is often relatively intimidating for supervisees who have supervisors of the same racial background. The sense of power and authority which a supervisor has however, may be further increased when the supervisor is White and the supervisee is Black. White supervisors may need to create a supervisory space in which the Black supervisee may feel comfortable enough to put forward alternative proposals regarding the management of a psychotherapy case, particularly when the client is Black.

Lastly, Black supervisees may need their White supervisors to take an active interest in attempting to understand the beliefs and values associated with their cultural background. This may enhance the working alliance between the White supervisor and Black supervisee.

5.2. Suggestions for further research

A study which took into account the effect which acculturation had on the racial identity of Black supervisees and how this subsequently affected their perceptions of inter-racial supervision may be beneficial.

A study which examined White supervisees' perceptions of clinical supervision with Black supervisors may also indicate how White supervisees experience inter-racial supervision.

A study which explored the Black supervisors' perceptions of clinical supervision with White supervisees may also serve to indicate how Black

supervisors experience their position as supervisors when confronted with White supervisees as opposed to Black supervisees.

5.3. Limitations of the study

Due to the small sample size and the fact that the sample was extracted from a specific population, it is difficult to make broader inferences based on the data from the present study. The researcher's racial background, which was different to that of the participants, may have also had a further influence upon the nature of the responses which the participants gave within the context of the current study.

5.4. Conclusion

Research conducted into inter-racial psychotherapy supervision is a challenging and difficult task. This is partly a result of the tension that arises when the topic of race is raised within the context of an inter-racial relationship. This is not surprising considering our history of racial segregation, that Black people would still find it difficult to broach these issues with White people. The exploration of the experiences of Black supervisees in clinical supervision seems to be of critical importance as more Black people are admitted into professional psychology training courses. Research into this area is of immense benefit in indicating what Black supervisees feel they need from clinical supervision, which may be different to some extent from what White supervisees may feel they need. This will hopefully improve the quality of training which Black supervisees will be able to obtain. It may also serve to improve their experiences which they have in the context of inter-racial

supervision. The possibility of producing relatively confident Black professional psychologists may therefore be more of a reality in such a scenario.

The results of this study however seem to indicate that issues around racial difference need to be explored within the context of inter-racial supervision as this may lead to the creation of a firmer working alliance which will benefit both parties. It also suggests that their level of acculturation which a Black supervisee has achieved may also impact on their level of identification with their racial background. This seems to account for individual differences between participants in terms of their perceptions regarding psychotherapy supervision with a White supervisor.