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CROSS-CULTURAL SUPERVISION WITH TRAINEES FROM INTERNATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

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Summary of the Major Research Project

Section A

A literature review using systematic search strategies was completed to identify and explore existing research on the experiences of international trainees and clinical supervisors in cross-cultural supervision. The quality of the selected studies varied, with the overall methodological quality deemed low. The findings highlighted the influence of international trainees' contextual issues in supervision, supervisory relationship dynamics, including barriers and facilitators to the supervisory alliance, and the experience of learning and growth for both groups. Recommendations for training courses, trainees and supervisors are provided. The review suggests that future research efforts should prioritise methodological rigour and explore international settings beyond the United States.

Section B

A study using grounded theory methodology was conducted to examine processes underpinning clinical supervision with UK-based trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds who speak English as a second or additional language. The constructed model illustrates an iterative process through which participants engaged in supervisory relationships. The findings suggest that both supervisors and trainees may experience growth as they encounter challenges and successes and continue to adapt their approach, with wider support playing a potentially significant role in facilitating this process. Suggestions for improving cross-cultural supervision practices with this group and future research recommendations are included.

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Section B

Section A: Literature Review

International trainees' and clinical supervisors' experiences of clinical supervision

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Abstract

Psychological professions increasingly recognise the importance of cultural and contextual factors in clinical practice, training, and supervision. In the context of supervision, multicultural competence (Ancis & Ladany; 2010) and multicultural orientation (Hook et al., 2018; Watkins et al., 2019) have emerged as key theoretical developments, while recent empirical research has brought attention to the unique concerns and experiences of trainees from international backgrounds. This review, with a focus on qualitative studies, aimed to explore the experiences of international trainees and clinical supervisors in cross-cultural supervision. A systematic search was completed on PsycINFO, PubMed, and ProQuest databases, yielding 11 papers. Three central themes were identified, highlighting the influence of international trainees' contextual issues in supervision, supervisory relationship dynamics, including barriers and facilitators to the supervisory alliance, and the experience of learning and growth for both groups. The current review offers recommendations for supervision with international trainees while also acknowledging the limited quality of the included papers. The paucity of studies outside the United States, underrepresentation of various trainee backgrounds, and lack of supervisor perspectives are also noted. To advance the field and enhance cross-cultural supervision practices, more robust and comprehensive research is needed, especially within a variety of international contexts.

Keywords: cross-cultural supervision, international students, multicultural competence, multicultural orientation

Introduction

Recognising the impact of global migration and evolving societal demographics, particularly in industrialised countries (e.g., Gallardo et al., 2009; Kapitan, 2015; Smith, 2016; Sohelian et al., 2014), psychological professions have become more attentive to contextual and cultural factors in both clinical practice and training (Metzger et al., 2014). For the purpose of this review, they are defined as "a diverse group of professions whose work is informed by the disciplines of psychology and psychological therapy" and who "work to prevent and alleviate psychological and emotional distress, manage mental health and wellbeing and empower individuals and communities to improve their lives" (Health Education England [HEE], 2021). The initial focus on cultural variables in therapeutic work has extended into the context of clinical supervision (Estrada et al., 2004), introducing new terms and theoretical concepts. The term "multicultural supervision" is typically used to describe supervisory relationships in which supervisors and supervisees engage in exploring various cultural factors that are important for effective work with individuals from diverse backgrounds (Constantine, 1997; Stone, 1997). The term "cross-cultural supervision" specifically refers to supervisory interactions that involve a supervisor and a supervisee from two culturally distinct groups (Leong & Wagner, 1994).

Recent reviews of supervision literature (Chircop Coleiro et al., 2023; Mahon, 2024; Tohidian & Quek, 2017) reveal that research on cultural factors in the supervisory relationship primarily comes from the United States and tends to focus on local ethnically minoritised groups. However, cultural distinctions extend beyond ethnic and racial dimensions and a broader range of differences warrant consideration. International trainees are one of the groups that have started to attract more attention from scholars, possibly due to the expanding global reach of training programs. Data from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) shows a steady increase in the

proportion of non-US resident master's and doctoral counselling students, rising from 0.89% in 2013 (CACREP, 2014) to 1.29% in 2022 (CACREP, 2023). Although this may seem like a small increase, it is noteworthy given that the overall student enrolment grew from 39,502 to 71,944 during the same period. In psychology programmes accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), around 8% to 10% of the student population are international students, with higher figures in counselling psychology PhD courses compared to clinical psychology (Norcross et al., 2021). Specific data regarding psychology and counselling training in the United Kingdom are not available. However, the country ranks second globally in terms of its overall international student population, following the United States, and this number has grown consistently over the past decade (Universities UK, 2023). The increase is especially noticeable at the postgraduate level, where international students, including those from the European Union, accounted for 45.4% of all postgraduates in 2021-2022.

The emerging research on trainees from international backgrounds suggests that this population presents with unique concerns that have direct implications for clinical supervision (Lee, 2018). Acculturation, defined as "intraindividual change processes resulting from a person moving into a new cultural environment" (Doucerain et al., 2017, p. 98), is central to this topic given trainees' experiences of migration. Drawing on empirical research and dominant theories in the acculturation literature, Schartner and Young (2016) propose that international students undergo adjustment in the following domains: psychological (coping with transition stress and finding a sense of wellbeing within the host culture), sociocultural (feeling able to carry out daily life tasks, interact effectively and "fit in") and academic (adjusting to learning in the new educational system). The outcome in all three domains is influenced by factors like social contact, support, and personal dispositional traits, such as language ability. For international students pursuing a qualification in psychology,

counselling or psychotherapy these pressures might be heightened, as their professional choice necessitates not only exceptional linguistic and communicative skills but also a deep understanding of cultural nuances to effectively work with clients (Nilsson & Wang, 2008). Unsurprisingly, empirical studies examining international trainees' experiences highlight their sense of stress and insecurity due to being seen as cultural outsiders (Lau & Ng 2012; McDowell et al. 2012; Mittal & Wieling 2006; Zhu & Degeneffe, 2011), loneliness and isolation (Lee et al., 2022; Mittal & Wieling 2006; Xiong et al., 2022), concerns around academic performance (Ng & Smith, 2009), anxiety related to language proficiency (Georgiadou, 2014; Lee et al., 2022; Morris & Lee, 2004; Ng & Smith, 2009; Peng et al., 2020), complex and painful emotions associated with acculturation (Interiano & Lim, 2018), systemic barriers and perceived lack of support from training programmes (Lau & Ng, 2012; Lee et al., 2022; Xiong et al., 2022), and experiences of discrimination from clients, faculty and peers (Mittal & Wieling, 2006; Ng & Smith, 2009; Peng et al., 2020; Xiong et al., 2022).

The growing interest in cross-cultural supervision has prompted a re-evaluation of traditional supervision models and theories (Patel, 2012), leading to the exploration of new ideas and their relevance for the international trainee population. In the context of these new theoretical developments, supervisor multicultural competence has emerged as a focal point, with the model of Multicultural Supervision Competency (MSC) (Ancis & Ladany; 2010) standing as a notable example. This model outlines the supervisor's responsibilities across six domains, encompassing supervisor personal development, supervisee personal development, conceptualisation, intervention, process, and evaluation, and has been further adapted for working with international trainees (Amanor-Boadu & Baptist, 2008). However, since Ancis and Ladany's (2010) work, additional perspectives have emerged, highlighting that while supervisor knowledge and skills are essential, they are not sufficient on their own. It is argued that multicultural orientation, underpinned by a stance of cultural humility, is essential in

addition to multicultural competence (Hook et al., 2018; Watkins et al., 2019). Hook et al. (2018) draw particular attention to the importance of cultural humility in cultivating a strong supervisory alliance. Using three vignettes that reflect real supervision experiences, Zhou et al. (2020) offer practical insights on how to apply the framework of cultural humility in supervision with international trainees. Authors place emphasis on the supervisor's expression of curiosity, respect, and openness in trying to understand the supervisee's cultural background and acculturation process and highlight the need to engage in continuous self-reflection and efforts to address power imbalance.

The field of empirical research focused on the international trainee population has been steadily expanding. In addition to increasing attention to international trainees' background, which has relevance to supervision, there has been a surge in theorising about the ideal supervision practices. However, scoping searches completed in preparation for this project did not identify any reviews that systematically examine available literature on international trainees' and supervisors' experiences of clinical supervision. Given this gap, it is appropriate and timely to undertake such a review to consolidate existing findings. As supervision is a dyadic relationship, both supervisor and supervisee perspectives are important to consider to gain a well-rounded understanding of the current supervision practices that involve international trainees.

This review aimed to explore experiences of cross-cultural supervision provided to trainees from international backgrounds by answering the following questions:

- What does the literature say about how international trainees in psychological professions experience clinical supervision?
- What does the literature say about how supervisors working with this group experience clinical supervision?

Methods

Search Strategy

Scoping searches, completed between May and August 2023, informed the development of the search strategy, including the selection of keywords and electronic databases. A systematic search was carried out on the PsycInfo, PubMed and ProQuest databases in August 2023. Keywords were applied in the following combination, searching in titles and abstracts:

- (student* OR trainee* OR intern OR interns)
- AND (internation* OR foreign* OR non-nativ* OR overseas OR non-British OR non-UK OR non-domestic OR immigrant* OR migrant* OR EU OR Europe*)
- AND supervis*
- AND (counsel* OR psychol* OR therap* OR psychother*)
- AND (focus group* OR interview* OR surv* OR qualitat* OR case* OR grounded theory OR phenomenolog* OR narrative OR mixed method* OR discourse* OR thematic OR content)

Study Selection

Search results were restricted to records in English. Duplicates were removed using an automated function on RefWorks after importing the list of references generated by the search. Papers were scanned by title, abstract and full text and screened against the inclusion and exclusion criteria (Table 1). Additional eligible studies were identified by searching reference lists and Google Scholar. Figure 1 summarises the screening process. A summary of the reviewed papers is provided in Table 2.

Table 1

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Category	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Research focus	The study's main focus is on exploring the experience of clinical supervision delivered to students/trainees (in psychological professions) who come from international backgrounds.	Studies that focus on the experience of clinical supervision only in part or primarily explore other topics (e.g., broader training experience, academic supervision).
Participants	The majority of participants have to be: • students, trainees or interns in psychological professions at the time of the study or recently qualified and come from countries where English is not the main language • or clinical supervisors who have had experience of supervising trainees/students from international backgrounds.	Studies that include participants from professions that do not provide psychotherapy (e.g., organisational psychology).
Setting/country	Studies conducted in predominantly English-speaking training settings (due to the unique popularity of training courses in English-speaking countries in terms of attracting international trainees).	Studies exploring clinical supervision with international trainees in other countries, as they may present idiosyncratic processes and challenges.
Design	Qualitative or mixed-method	Quantitative
Language	English	Other languages
Type	Published or unpublished primary empirical research (including doctoral dissertations)	Non-empirical (e.g., book chapters) and secondary research (e.g., systematic reviews)

Note. Studies were considered relevant if they focused on individuals training for 12 psychological professions outlined by HEE or licensed psychotherapy provider roles that exist outside the United Kingdom (e.g., marriage and family therapists, professional counsellors, mental health counsellors and clinical social workers). Since the review aimed to capture diverse viewpoints and personal experiences, it specifically focused on studies with a qualitative component capable of providing such insights. Purely quantitative research was not considered because of its reliance on measurable concepts and testing of predetermined hypotheses, which did not align with the objectives of this review.

Figure 1

PRISMA Flowchart

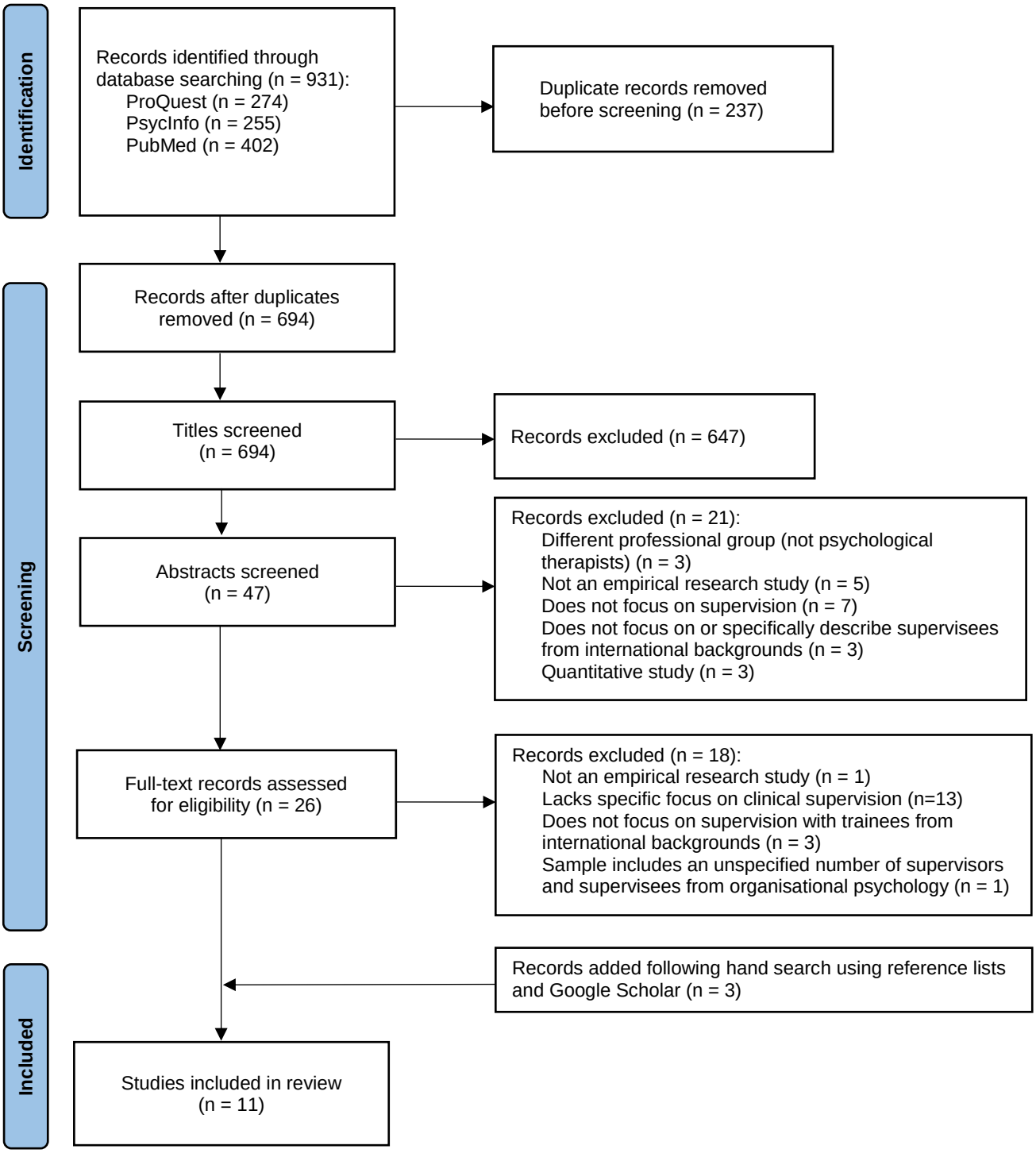

Table 2

Summary of the Selected Studies

Title, publication type, author(s), date and country	Aim	Participants	Design, methodology, data analysis	Main findings
Asian Foreign-born Therapist Experience of Cross-cultural Supervision with European-American Supervisors Doctoral dissertation Ninomiya (2012) United States	To explore the experience of Asian foreign-born therapists in supervision with European-American supervisors	7 Asian foreign-born therapists Demographics: • Age range: 27 to 43, mean age – 35 • Gender: 5 – female, 2 – male • Countries of origin: Japan (3), Taiwan (1), China (1), India (1), not specified South East Asian country (1) • 5 Clinical Psychology students (PsyD), 1 Counselling Psychology student (PhD), 1 recent Clinical Psychology graduate (PsyD)	Qualitative study, interviews, phenomenological reduction	Supervisees' experiences varied from positive and supportive to challenging and difficult. Relational ruptures reportedly occurred due to supervisors' cultural stereotyping, misunderstandings in relation to supervisees' cultural values and limited familiarity with the new therapeutic modality, a mismatch between supervisors' and supervisees' theoretical orientation or therapeutic approach, and supervisors' underdeveloped general and multicultural competency. Supervisees' increasing acculturation was described as contributing to clinical competency and subsequently more positive and collaborative supervisory alliances.
The Experiences of Non-native English-Speaking International Students in Clinical Supervision: A Narrative Inquiry Doctoral dissertation Ho (2021) Canada and United States	To investigate the experiences of non-native English-speaking international student (NNESIS) trainees in training programmes and in the context of clinical supervision	12 NNESIS enrolled in counselling and applied psychology graduate programmes in Canada or the United States Demographics: • Age range: 26 to 41 • Gender: 9 – female, 3 – male • Countries of origin: Brazil, China, France, India, Iran, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan • 6 based in Canada, 6 based in the US • Sexual orientation: 1 – bisexual, 2 – queer, 9 – heterosexual	Qualitative study, interviews, narrative inquiry	Supervision was perceived as useful and multiculturally informed when supervisors considered trainees' preferred communication styles, experiences of privilege and oppressed identities, bilingualism and needs for skills or knowledge development. Supervisors' pathologising of participants' backgrounds, neglectful attitudes toward cultural factors and discriminatory behaviour were reported as causing dissatisfaction with supervision.

Clinical Supervision for International Counselors-in-Training: Implications for Supervisors Research article Sangganjanavanich & Black (2009) United States	To identify the supervisory needs, experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of international counsellors-in-training during their first practicum	5 international counsellors-in-training Demographics: • Age range: 25 to 36 • Geographic region of origin: Asia (3), South America (1), Africa (1) • 4 master's students and 1 doctoral student	Qualitative study, interviews, phenomenology	Participants' narratives revealed themes of supervisor insensitivity, a sense of isolation and cultural stereotyping, which resulted in feelings of frustration and disappointment. Some participants reported finding meaning and value in this experience, expressing a belief that it enhanced their multicultural competence and empathy for clients. However, a wish for a more positive and supportive supervisory environment was also shared.
The Lived Experiences of International Counselor Education Students during Their Field-Based Clinical Supervision in the United States Doctoral dissertation Rasheed (2015) United States	To examine lived experiences of international counsellor education students during their training in the United States, specifically focussing on the effectiveness of clinical supervision	9 international counsellors-in-training in CACREP programmes, intending to practise in their home countries Demographics: • Age range: 25 to 35 • Gender: 9 – female, 3 – male • Countries of origin: Saudi Arabia (2), Turkey (3), Malaysia (1), Brazil (1), Taiwan (1), United Arab Emirates (1) • 5 doctoral students, 4 master's students	Qualitative design, a focus group and 5 individual interviews, ethnographic framework with a phenomenological perspective	Participants experienced a lack of support and attention during their clinical training. Their development and performance was felt to be hindered by challenges related to language proficiency, cultural differences and transferability of Western psychological theories to their cultures of origin. Clinical supervisors were perceived as lacking cultural competence to address participants' unique needs and expectations as cultural outsiders and neglected to discuss their future plans, which left them feeling unprepared to practise in their home countries.
"A Big Part Is To Address the Elephant": International Counseling Trainees' Experiences in Clinical Supervision in the United States Research article Kiteki et al. (2022) United States	To examine master's and doctoral international counselling trainees' experiences in clinical supervision during practicum and/or internship	14 international counselling trainees in CACREP programmes Demographics: • Age range: 30 to 47, mean age – 28.85 • Gender: 11 – female, 3 – male • Countries of origin: Dominica (1), Thailand (1), South Korea (1), Canada (1), India (1), Greece (1), Turkey (1), Saudi Arabia (1), Nigeria (1), Indonesia (1), China (2), Ecuador (1), Taiwan (1) • Self-identified cultural background: 12 – collectivistic, 2 – individualistic • 5 master's students, 9 doctoral students	Qualitative study, interviews, reflective thematic analysis	Participants emphasised the need to address cultural differences in the supervisory relationship, which led to discomfort as supervisors were perceived as failing to initiate these conversation. A need for support due to acculturative challenges experienced during training was reported. Experiences of both supportive (empathetic and compassionate) and unsupportive (judgmental and indifferent) supervision were described, highlighting the need for supervisors' cultural curiosity, knowledge, competence and sensitivity.

Cross-cultural clinical supervision: The voices of international doctoral trainees Research article Jin et al. (2022) United States	To investigate international supervisees' perceptions and experiences of clinical supervision	10 international students in APA-accredited Counselling or Clinical Psychology programmes or postdoc trainees receiving clinical supervision and graduating within 12 months Demographics: • Mean age – 31.60 (SD=2.80) • Gender: 5 – female, 5 – male • Countries of origin: China (4), Taiwan (2), Malaysia (1) , Mexico (1), Brazil (1), Hong Kong (1) • Ethnic/racial identity: Asian (8), Latinx (2) • Sexual orientation: 10 – heterosexual	Qualitative study, survey, two-step procedure to data analysis: sorting and summarising using Dedoose software, followed by phenomenological analysis	Four themes were identified. Common challenges included language and cultural barriers, client prejudice, institutional and legal issues, supervisor insensitivity and cultural beliefs affecting communication. Supervisors' multicultural competency captured experiences of supervisors showing cultural sensitivity, humility and support, or lacking them. Growth-facilitating strategies encompassed actions that contributed to supervisees' development such as recognising their challenges and initiating cultural conversations. Strategies to address power differential included supervisor naming it, inviting the supervisee's clinical input and feedback, and using power-reducing self-disclosures.
International Supervisees' Experiences with Discrimination: A Critical Events Model Investigation Doctoral dissertation Pendse (2017) United States	To identify the types of discriminatory events experienced by international supervisees in counselling and psychotherapy supervision, their reactions to these events, and the types of supervisor interventions used to address them	70 international students in psychology or related graduate programs, who had experienced at least one instance of discrimination in supervision or counselling Demographics: • Age range: 23 to 39, mean age – 28.27 (SD=3.57) • Gender: 73% cis-gender women, 22.9% cis-gender men, 4.3% other • Sexual orientation: 82.9% heterosexual, 8.6% bisexual, 5.7% gay, 1.4% queer, 1.4% other • Ethnic/racial identity: 67% Asian, 13% Caucasians/White/European, 7% Latino/Hispanic, 5% Middle Eastern, 3% Black, 5% other • Countries of origin: 47% from East Asian countries (e.g., China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea), 14% from India, 13% from European countries (e.g., Turkey, France), 26% from other countries (e.g., Iran, Brazil, Mexico, Honduras) • 22.8% master's students, 74.3% doctoral students, 2.8% other	Mixed-method study, survey, concept mapping, consensual qualitative research-modified	Seven types of discriminatory events were identified: negative attitudes toward participants' language skills, witnessing prejudiced comments, cultural assumptions, invalidation of cross-cultural experiences, perceived incompetence, questioning of interpersonal styles, and lack of supervisory support. Participants' reactions were described in terms of emotions (e.g., sadness, anger, confusion), thoughts (e.g., self-doubt, rationalisation) and behaviours (e.g., concealing emotions, seeking support from external networks). Four types of supervisor interventions in such situations were reported: attending to the trainee's self-efficacy, focussing on skills, evaluation, and exploring feelings.

Linguistic Minority International Counseling Psychology Trainees' Experiences in Clinical Supervision Garrison et al. (2022) Research article United States	To identify sociolinguistic experiences in clinical settings, as well as examples of the helpful and hindering supervisory events that are perceived by International Counselling Psychology (ICP) trainees	20 ICP doctoral trainees in APA counselling psychology or combined clinical/counselling psychology programme, supervised in a clinical setting for at least one semester Demographics: • Mean age – 28.63 (SD=4.73) • Gender: 18 cisgender women, 2 cisgender men • Geographic region of origin: East Asia (17), Southeast Asia (1), South America (1), Europe (1) • Sexual orientation: 16 – heterosexual, 4 – bisexual, 1 – pansexual	Mixed-method study, interviews and a survey (based on core statements identified in the interviews), concept mapping	Participants reported experiencing challenges (barriers to self-expression, feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt) as well as growth by embracing vulnerability and leaning into their linguistic identity. Trainees reported helpful supervisory events promoting their development such as supervisors' curiosity, validation of linguistic identity, affirmation of strengths, facilitation of clinical communication, multicultural awareness and cultural humility, compassion, and emphasis on factors other than language in clinical work. Hindering events included supervisors' reliance on a deficit-based approach, lack of self-awareness and cultural humility, disregard and lack of interest, judgment and over-correction, disempowerment, and superficial fixes.

Lived Experiences of Counselor Educators during Their Supervisory Relationship with International Counselors in Training
 	
Doctoral dissertation
 	
Chimbanda (2021)
 	
United States
	To understand clinical supervisors' experiences working with International Counsellors in Training (ICTs) during their supervisory relationship	10 clinical supervisors with recent experience of working with ICTs
		
		Demographics:
		• Age range: 30 to 56 and above
		• Gender: 6 – female, 3 – males, 1 – not disclosed
		• Racial and ethnic/cultural identity:
		  ○ White or Caucasian (7): Norwegian (1), Polish and German (1), Polish (1), Italian (1), Non-Hispanic/Latinx (1), Turkish (1), Polish/French/Native/American/Christian (1)
		  ○ Black (2): Hispanic and Latino American (1), Black American (1)
		  ○ Asian/Chinese (1): Han Chinese
		• Countries of origin: US/Midwest (6), US/Southeast (2), China (1), Turkey (1)
			Qualitative study, interviews, interpretative phenomenological analysis	Supervision with ICTs was perceived as leading to growth and increased cultural awareness. Supervisors' growth was perceived to be a result of cross-cultural adjustments and learning to overcome challenges arising from their biases and power and privilege in relation to ICTs. Recognising the need to be more culturally sensitive allowed some supervisors to repair relational ruptures with ICTs. Supervisors made effort to facilitate the transfer of counselling skills across cultures to enable ICTs practise in their countries of origin. However, teaching ICTs dominant theoretical models, embedded in a Western European framework, was recognised as problematic. Supervisors, who were former ICTs, described their ability to relate to ICTs' struggles with increased empathy and provide guidance while respecting the ICTs' personal development journey.

Cross-cultural supervision: Clinical supervisors' perception of working with international students Research article Jin et al. (2023) United States	To explore the cross-cultural supervision experiences from the perspective of clinical supervisors	10 supervisors who were licensed psychologists and had the experience of providing clinical supervision to international students/trainees Demographics: • Mean age – 48 (SD=10.38) • Gender: 5 – female, 5 – male • Countries of origin: China (1), Taiwan (3), South Korea (1), United States (5) • Ethnic/racial identity: Asian (6), White (4)	Qualitative study, survey, two-step procedure to data analysis: sorting and summarising using Dedoose software, followed by phenomenological analysis	Three themes were identified. Systemic issues, acculturation, and power differential faced by trainees were acknowledged as important to consider and attend to in supervision. The theme of reciprocal learning and supervisory relationship captured participants' appreciation of international supervisees' cultural practices and work ethics, use of a strengths-based approach, mutual learning process, and development of a strong supervisory relationship. Reported effective supervision strategies included validation, empathy and support, facilitating supervisees' multicultural awareness and self-awareness, engaging in self-disclosure and modelling, facilitating the development of trainees' personal and professional identity and approaching supervision with cultural humility.
Differences Making a Difference Research article Killian (2001) United States	To examine how differences in culture of origin influence supervisory relationships (between supervisors and supervisees in Marriage and Family Therapy)	12 participants: 6 trainees on master's and doctoral courses in Marriage and Family Therapy and 6 clinical supervisors Trainee demographics: • Age range: 24 to 38 • Gender: 4 – female, 2 – male • Gender, ethnic and racial identity: 3 Asian women (from Japan, Korea, and Vietnam), a Latina woman from Mexico, a White man from Russia, a man from Spain who identified racially as White and ethnically as Arab Supervisor demographics: • Age range: from 36 to 60 • Gender: 4 – female, 2 – male • Gender, ethnic and racial identity: a Latina woman from Mexico, a Black man from South America, a White Persian woman from the Middle East, a White man from the US, a White woman from the US, a White Jewish woman from the US	Qualitative study, interviews, not known (both phenomenology and Corbin and Strauss' approach to analysis are mentioned)	Four themes were identified. The theme of cultural identity captured the importance of recognising and respecting cultural backgrounds of both parties. Issues and challenges were described in terms of tension and discomfort experienced by supervisors as well as supervisees' frustration and alienation in relation to their supervisors. The importance of focusing on commonalities and supervisors holding an active interest was emphasised as part of rapport-building. Recommendations for cross-cultural supervision included the need for supervisors to be aware of cultural perspectives, show interest in supervisees' challenges, and take a proactive stance in discussing expectations and personal styles. The theme of supervisor sensitivity captured collaborative and respectful supervisory process that avoids putting culturally different supervisees in uncomfortable situations of having to disclose their feelings in the relationship before their supervisor has done so.

Structure

This review followed a systematic review format based on Grant and Booth (2009), encompassing a systematic search, appraisal, and synthesis of research. Initially, key study characteristics from the included papers are presented, followed by a quality appraisal using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP; 2018) tool for qualitative studies.

The narrative synthesis approach was employed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the results and context, following Popay et al. (2006) guidelines. Specific tools and techniques were drawn from Arai et al. (2007) and Rodgers et al. (2009), including tabulation, textual descriptions, grouping and clustering, and case descriptions. Tabulation was implemented first to identify key study characteristics, followed by textual descriptions – production of more detailed summaries of the selected papers. These steps informed the section "Overview of the Studies" and Table 2.

Grouping and clustering was then used to explore possible dominant groups and clusters of characteristics (e.g., intervention type, context, participants, and focus of the study) among the selected studies. This was completed by examining the data extraction table and textual descriptions, with distinct similarities and differences noted according to participant group (supervisor/supervisee) and focus of the study (supervisee needs, relational processes, and outcomes), which informed the structure of the review findings.

Further case reports were developed for each study, focussing on salient clustering characteristics and any unique aspects of research. This process facilitated the identification of elements possibly overlooked in earlier stages and highlighted anomalies and inconsistencies. For example, Pendse (2017) described a negative impact of shared identities on supervisor-supervisee relationship building, which diverged from other studies and was taken into account when presenting synthesised findings. The review themes were primarily organised by study focus, providing detail on supervisee and supervisor perspectives, and

refined through repeated comparison of primary study data. The discussion of the findings addressed practical implications and recommendations for future research.

Findings

Overview of the Studies

Eleven studies met the inclusion criteria. Six of them were peer-reviewed research articles, and five were doctoral dissertations. Ten studies were undertaken in the United States, and one was conducted across Canada and the United States. The most common research design was qualitative, adopted in nine studies. The remaining two followed a mixed-methods design. Four studies reported the use of open-ended surveys, while others utilised interviews, including one study (Rasheed, 2015) that combined a focus group with individual interviews. A phenomenological approach to data analysis was applied by six authors. The others reported using narrative inquiry, thematic analysis, and concept mapping. One author, Killian (2001), did not specify his approach.

In terms of participants, two studies involved supervisors, one had a mixed sample of supervisors and supervisees, and eight focused on supervisees. The research encompassed supervisees from various international backgrounds enrolled in master's and doctorate-level training programmes in clinical and counselling psychology, marriage and family therapy, counselling, and social work across the United States and Canada. The highest proportion of supervisee participants were from Asian countries. The selected studies primarily aimed to explore the experiences of supervisors or international trainees in the context of clinical supervision. Notably, one study focused exclusively on Asian trainees' experiences (Ninomiya, 2012), and another examined the experiences of international trainees planning to practise in their home countries (Rasheed, 2015). In terms of other more specific aims, Pendse's study (2017) sought to understand supervisees' experiences of discrimination and how it was addressed in supervision, while Garrison et al. (2022) investigated experiences of

linguistic minority international trainees with a focus on both helpful and hindering supervisory events.

Quality Assessment

The quality of the studies was evaluated using the CASP (2018) checklist, which employs a rating system of "yes," "can't tell," and "no" across 10 criteria. The final criterion, "How valuable is the research?" does not have a standardised answer. Quality ratings for each study can be found in Table 3, with additional details that have informed the assessment provided in Appendix A and B. While the tool does not generate an overall score, based on the assessment information, only one study (Ninomiya, 2012) was deemed to be of strong quality. Across the studies, common issues were identified in several areas, including a lack of detail in data collection descriptions (e.g., absence of interview guides, inadequate justification for interview settings, and unsupported claims of achieving theoretical saturation), limited consideration of the researcher-participant relationship, insufficient information on ethical aspects (e.g., missing details on ethics approval, informed consent, or potential participant distress), minimal explanation of the data analysis process (e.g., lack of examples to illustrate code and theme development), and discussions of findings that lacked depth in addressing credibility and alternative explanations.

Table 3

Quality Assessment Ratings

CASP criteria	Ninomiya (2012)	Ho (2021)	Sangganjanavanich & Black (2009)	Rasheed (2015)	Kiteki et al. (2022)	Jin et al. (2022)	Pendse (2017)	Garrison et al. (2022)	Chimbanda (2021)	Jin et al. (2023)	Killian (2001)
Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?											
Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?											
Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?											
Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?											
Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?											
Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?											
Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?											
Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?											
Is there a clear statement of findings?											
How valuable is the research?											

Note. Colours represent quality ratings: green – “yes”, yellow – “can’t tell”, and red – “no”.

Studies With Supervisee Participants

The eight studies focussing on supervisees varied significantly in terms of quality and sample size, depending on the methodology used. Participant numbers in the studies employing interviews ranged from five (Sangganjanavanich & Black; 2009) to 14 (Kiteki et al., 2022). In contrast, those relying on surveys had higher respondent numbers with 10 (Jin et al., 2022), 20 (Garrison et al.; 2022), and 70 trainees (Pendse, et al., 2017) taking part, but often lacked a clear explanation for their choice of methodology and data collection method. The absence of in-depth researcher reflexivity was also a common limitation of survey-based studies. While the authors acknowledged their international backgrounds and reported engaging in self-reflection as a team, they did not offer specific information about how their personal backgrounds and assumptions might have influenced the research process and findings. Despite the argument that surveys might make participants more comfortable sharing personal experiences (Jin, 2023), none of these studies addressed the issue of preventing and managing potential negative effects. This is especially significant given that all the surveys were conducted online and involved sensitive questions about challenging experiences in supervision, which may have caused distress.

In studies that reported interview data, the choice of a qualitative design was generally well explained, including the rationale for a specific approach to data analysis. However, the rigour of data analysis was difficult to assess, as none of the papers provided sufficient information to illustrate how codes and themes were developed or how contradictory data were managed. All authors, except Sangganjanavanich and Black (2009), mentioned using strategies like journaling and peer debriefing to enhance self-reflection and reduce researcher bias. However, a comprehensive discussion of the researcher's assumptions and their potential impact was only provided by Ninomiya (2012). Ninomiya (2012) was also the only one to inform participants about available support and explicitly stated that none of the

participants exhibited distress as a result of taking part in the study. Three studies used member checking, sending interview summaries (Ho, 2021), interview transcripts (Rasheed, 2015), or interview transcripts along with preliminary themes (Ninomiya, 2012) to participants for feedback. Ninomiya (2012) was the only one to specify the number of respondents and corrections made. Rasheed's study (2015), which involved a focus group with five international trainees and five individual interviews, was considered lower in quality compared to other studies. The author's approach to data analysis was particularly unclear, as the study mentioned using an ethnographic framework with a phenomenological perspective without explaining it sufficiently. This was the only study with supervisee participants that mentioned data saturation, claiming it was achieved after the third individual interview, although no evidence was presented to support this. In addition to common methodological issues found in other studies, Rasheed's study (2015) also lacked a clear statement of its findings, failed to discuss its findings in relation to the initial research questions, and made limited connections to existing literature.

Studies With Supervisor Participants

Of the three papers that involved supervisors, Chimbanda's (2021) study stood out as having the most robust methodology. It included individual interviews with 10 clinical supervisors and used interpretative phenomenological analysis to examine their experiences of supervision with international trainees. The author made efforts to minimise the risk of bias by acknowledging her background as an international counsellor-in-training and clinical supervisor. It was reported that she engaged in self-reflection through journaling and used member-checking, gathering feedback from all participants on transcripts and themes. However, the author's claim of achieving data saturation after the seventh interview lacked adequate support. Additionally, pre-existing relationships with participants were not

sufficiently addressed, as the author acknowledged having interacted with some of them previously but did not elaborate on how this might have impacted the research process.

In contrast to Chimbanda's (2021) study, Jin et al. (2023) employed an online survey to gather data from 10 clinical supervisors, but did not provide details about their approach to data analysis. This study shares similar limitations with those discussed earlier, including a lack of discussion regarding the research team's specific assumptions, the absence of examples to clarify code and theme development, and no mention of contradictory data, data saturation or potential impact on study participants.

Killian's (2001) study, which included individual interviews with six trainees and six clinical supervisors in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy, was rated as having the lowest overall quality among the selected papers. This study, although unique in exploring both supervisors' and supervisees' perspectives, exhibited numerous methodological issues. These included a lack of clear research aims, insufficient explanation of research design and method selection, unclear approach to data analysis, no information about participant recruitment and selection, substantial lack of critical examination of the researcher's biases, no discussion of ethical considerations or strategies to enhance research credibility, and lack of clarity and depth in the discussion of study findings.

The Need to Address International Trainees' Contextual Issues in Supervision

The stated need to address international trainees' contextual issues was present across literature and broadly framed as a challenge that introduced dilemmas and influenced the overall supervision experience from the outset. The ability to navigate them with a high level of awareness, sensitivity and skill was considered necessary on the part of the supervisor. Nevertheless, it was reported that supervisors often reacted negatively, overlooked, or failed to fully acknowledge these contextual factors. Reported challenges of being an international supervisee included language barriers, acculturation stress, discrimination outside of

supervision, systemic, legal, financial and family issues, and cultural incongruity with the host country's professional practices.

Language Barriers

Supervisees' lack of confidence related to English proficiency (e.g., ability to express oneself clearly, understand different accents, or conduct therapy in English as a second or additional language) was highlighted by all studies with trainee participants. Nine of them, including both higher and lower quality research, specifically discussed how language differences complicated their interactions with supervisors (Garrison et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2022; Kiteki et al., 2022; Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). In addition to common language barriers that affected international supervisees, Ninomiya (2012) reported that they required more time for paperwork compared to American trainees and experienced heightened anxiety in supervisory interactions, which further compromised their English proficiency. Some studies noted instances where supervisees felt misinterpreted by their supervisors (Rasheed, 2015), encountered negative attitudes from supervisors due to their language skills or accent (Garrison et al., 2022; Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2022; Pendse, 2017; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009), or had their language-related concerns dismissed or not recognised (Garrison et al., 2022; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015). Additionally, some supervisors were described as being insensitive to trainees' distress and embarrassment when language barriers were discussed (Garrison et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2022; Kiteki et al., 2022; Ninomyia, 2012),

Trainees' linguistic challenges were explored to a lesser extent in research reporting supervisors' perspectives. Chimbanda's (2021) study, rated as higher quality than the other two papers, was the only one to provide significant insights into supervisors' experiences. Participants in this study acknowledged challenges that come with speaking English as a second language and described their own difficulties in supervision with trainees from

international backgrounds, such as trouble understanding supervisees' written or verbal communication. They noted a need to be cautious, empathic and authentic in their support, while also avoiding ethnocentric and dismissive attitudes toward supervisees. Jin et al. (2023) reported that two supervisors who completed the survey found it important to differentiate between trainees' clinical abilities and the impact of cultural and language barriers when evaluating their performance. However, no quotes were provided to explain this finding further.

Acculturation Stress

Four studies exploring supervisees' experience discussed their frequently unmet need for additional support in relation to challenges participants faced trying to understand and adjust to a new country and culture (Kiteki et al., 2022; Ninomiya, 2012; Rasheed, 2015; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). Furthermore, authors of five papers indicated that supervisory interactions were complicated by trainees' ways of relating influenced by cultural norms in their home countries (e.g., softer and more indirect communication, reverence for authority figures, expectations for didactic interaction) (Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2021; Kilian, 2021; Kiteki et al., 2022; Ninomiya, 2012) and the pressure they experienced from supervisors to assimilate into the host culture (Jin et al., 2021; Pendse, 2017; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). The difficulty of transitioning from a more collectivist to an individualist society, not fully appreciated by supervisors, was noted by supervisees in Rasheed's (2015) study. While the study's methodological rigour is questionable, these findings might be attributed to the sample composition, which differed markedly from the other studies. The researcher specifically focused on trainees who were planning to return to their home countries, explicitly stated that all participants identified with a collectivist background, and included the largest number of trainees (five) from countries in the Arabian Peninsula. Ninomiya's (2012) findings provided a different perspective on acculturation

challenges, which could be understood in terms of participants' intention to stay and practise in the United States. In this study, Asian trainees reported positive shifts in their supervisory relationships resulting from a complex acculturation process they went through during training. As part of this process, trainees reported recognising both favourable and potentially problematic aspects of their cultural background, which could impact their success in the American cultural context. It also involved adopting American cultural values and behaviours (e.g., open expression of opinions), which were perceived as enhancing their supervisory interactions.

In terms of supervisor experience in relation to trainee acculturation, two studies (Chimbanda, 2021; Killian, 2001) reported that supervisors, especially those from international backgrounds, recognised the challenges and time required for trainees to adapt to the host culture. Some supervisors also acknowledged their previous misjudgements of supervisees' acculturation levels (Chimbanda, 2021) or failure to explicitly discuss differences in values and communication, negatively impacting the supervision process (Killian, 2001). However, Jin's (2023) study presented contrasting evidence regarding supervisors' perspectives on trainee acculturation. Some participants in this study expressed a view that trainees, who considered their international background to be a barrier, had an underdeveloped cultural identity and were struggling with internalised racism. Furthermore, the pressure for acculturation was attributed to international trainees' internal desire to fit in.

Wider Experiences of Discrimination

An additional need for support in supervision as a result of international trainees' experience of racial and other forms of discrimination from clients, peers, training programmes, and workplaces was also reported in the literature (Garrison et al., 2022; Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2022; Killian, 2001; Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017). Pendse (2017) highlighted the significance of the wider socio-political context, as participants in this study

reported encountering overt communication from clients describing international students or immigrants as an “annoyance” and “unwelcome” in the context of 2016 presidential election. It was indicated that trainees’ attempts to discuss such experiences in supervision were met with varying responses from their supervisors. Some participants expressed feeling supported and validated (Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017), while others reported dismissive or minimising reactions (Ho, 2021; Ninomiya, 2012). Furthermore, in one study, supervisors were described as hesitant to advocate for international trainees in cases of racism or microaggressions, even when requested to do so (Jin et al., 2022). Reportedly this view was expressed by six supervisees; however, the study’s methodological quality is relatively low, and the authors did not include quotes or additional details that could help clarify trainees’ experiences.

Supervisors in two studies expressed awareness of the issues related to discrimination by clients and peers, institutional racism and the impact of socio-political context, some voicing deep compassion for their supervisees (Chimbanda, 2021; Jin et al., 2023). Chimbanda (2021) also reported that participants who had personally endured oppression or discrimination due to their minority status felt an increased ability to understand, connect, and empathise with international trainees, who shared similar experiences.

Systemic, Legal, Financial and Family Pressures

Unique external pressures faced by international trainees were framed as having an impact on cross-cultural supervision. Trainee participants in four studies described different ways such pressures created challenges in their supervisory relationships, although it should be highlighted that only Ninomya’s (2012) study was considered of sufficient quality. Kiteki et al. (2022) and Sangganjanavanich and Black (2009) reported that supervisees experienced a lack of awareness and empathy on the part of supervisors when they attempted to discuss feelings of isolation, having moved away from their support networks. Concerns about

supervisor evaluations and financial implications for those reliant on family support to complete their training were also noted by Ninomiya (2013). Jin et al. (2022) reported that international trainees experienced a unique sense of vulnerability due to their visa status, which led to distress, fear and dependence on supervisors, with some feeling indebted when supervisors provided assistance and advocacy.

Some evidence regarding supervisors' understanding of the external pressures faced by international students was provided in two papers (Chimbanda 2021; Jin et al., 2023). Jin et al. (2023) reported that trainees' struggles with systemic and legal constraints were seen as significant in the context of supervision, although did not elaborate on this finding or provide quotes from the survey. Chimbanda (2021), who interviewed the same number of participants, offered a more comprehensive account of supervisors' experiences in relation to this issue. Supervisors reported the need to support international trainees with various family-related stressors (e.g., issues related to geographical distance and family expectations), as well as concerns about immigration status, such as the requirement to maintain high academic performance to sustain their student visa status.

Cultural Incongruity With the Host Country's Professional Practices

The need to support trainee development in a way that is respectful of their cultural background and helps integrate it with psychological knowledge and theories imparted on training was addressed in four studies, each offering a detailed exploration of this issue**.** Ninomiya (2012) indicated that trainees from Asian countries faced challenges in reconciling their cultural understanding of distress and psychological support with Western approaches to assessment and intervention, which they could not openly discuss with supervisors. Reportedly, training was seen as prioritising European-American issues and supervisors showed limited interest in alternative cultural perspectives and practices. Rasheed's (2015) primary finding focussed on international trainees' concerns about the applicability of

Western-based knowledge in their respective cultures, with a common perception that supervisors failed to address trainees' plans to practise in their home countries. It was further reported that the lack of discussion regarding their future expectations left supervisees feeling unprepared and having to navigate these challenges independently.

The need to consider issues around trainees' cultural background and psychological practices of the United States was a central theme in two papers exploring supervisors' perspectives (Chimbanda, 2021; Kilian 2023). In contrast to Ninomiya's (2013) and Rasheed's (2015) results highlighting supervisors' neglectful attitudes, these studies described genuine efforts on the part of supervisors, even though participants acknowledged that it was a challenging task. Supervisors in Killian's (2001) study reported taking a proactive stance in discussing trainees' goals, cultural contexts they intended to work in and ways supervisees' culture informed their perception of interventions, as well as their comfort levels with American practices. Similarly, Chimbanda's (2021) study discussed supervisors' efforts to understand international trainees' goals and facilitate the transfer of skills learnt in the United States, recognising that certain models might not align with international trainees' needs and calling for greater theoretical inclusiveness. Study participants expressed criticism about the dominant therapeutic approaches rooted in a White male Western European perspective, raising concerns about their applicability in other countries.

Supervisory Relationship Dynamics: Barriers and Facilitators

The theme of supervisory relationship dynamics was consistently present across all the studies included in this review. It was discussed in terms of obstacles, such as power differential and relational ruptures, and factors that facilitated the development of a supervisory alliance.

Barriers to the Supervisory Alliance

Eight studies exploring supervisees' experiences reported challenges in building the supervisory alliance that were linked to the supervisor's behaviour including overt discrimination, assumptions of incompetence, reliance on a deficit-based approach, focussing on evaluation over getting to know the trainee as a person, inattention to cultural differences, lack of self-awareness, cultural stereotyping, and dismissiveness (Garrison et al., 2022, Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2022; Kiteki et al., 2022; Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). Sangganjanavanich and Black (2009), Kiteki et al. (2022), and Ninomiya (2012) further noted that the lack of supervisory initiative in discussing multicultural issues placed the responsibility for initiating these conversations on trainees. Instances that involved insensitive, prejudicial or discriminatory comments and behaviours from supervisors were reported as having a particularly damaging effect on the relationship, leaving supervisees angry, humiliated, and silenced (Jin et al., 2022; Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). Raising multicultural issues with supervisors, especially in the context of relational ruptures, was felt to be difficult due to perceived power imbalance and fear of negative evaluation (Jin et al., 2022; Garrison et al., 2022; Ho, 2013; Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017). Multiple authors also reported various coping strategies used by trainees. These included self-preservation and avoidance, such as limiting self-disclosures and concealing emotions in supervision (Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2022; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015), seeking support outside of the supervisory relationship (Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015), and rationalising supervisors' behaviour (Pendse, 2017).

All three studies exploring supervisors' views made references to their experiences related to issues of power, which were felt to have had a significant impact on relationship building. Killian (2001) highlighted one participant's regret for stepping into her authority as

a supervisor and asking international supervisees to disclose their feelings regarding the power differential and cultural differences in the supervisory relationship. The participant recognised that her expectation for supervisees to be so open before she had shared her own feelings and reactions placed undue pressure on them and undermined the development of trust. This contrasted with the perspectives shared by supervisors in the study by Jin et al. (2023). While these supervisors also acknowledged the significance of being aware of the power differential and the need to discuss it, they did not consider that certain ways of broaching this topic might perpetuate the existing power imbalance. Chimbanda's (2021) study not only reported supervisors' awareness of the adverse consequences of unaddressed power imbalances, but also described the impact of their personal biases, assumptions, and inadvertent engagement in discriminatory behaviour. In relation to this, participants highlighted a lack of adequate training and support, and having to navigate cross-cultural supervision challenges through trial and error, self-education, and intuition. It was indicated that this left them feeling exhausted in their supervisory role, which required constant attentiveness and caution to avoid unintentionally hurting supervisees' feelings. Additionally, supervisors observed that international trainees were not always forthcoming about their challenges, which was also a barrier to developing a strong working relationship.

Facilitators of the Supervisory Alliance

Ten of the selected studies indicated strategies and events that helped promote the development of the supervisory alliance and resolve ruptures. The supervisor's genuine interest in the trainee's cultural background and unique challenges, cultural sensitivity, humility, willingness to learn from the supervisee, displays of compassion, appreciation and encouragement, and use of a strengths-based approach were frequently reported as facilitators in studies exploring supervisee perspective (Garrison et al., 2022; Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2022; Killian, 2001; Kiteki et al., 2022; Ninomiya, 2012; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015). Three

authors also indicated that supervisors' personal experiences, especially if they were from a minority or international background or had meaningful exposure to different cultures (e.g., through living abroad), were perceived by trainees as an important factor that increased supervisors' cultural sensitivity and ability to connect (Ho, 2021, Killian, 2001; Rasheed, 2015). However, it is worth noting that these papers were of lower methodological quality. What is more, Pendse (2017) described a discriminatory event that occurred when supervisors expressed assumptions about international trainees based on a shared cultural identity, although did not specify the number of participants who had reported this. Trainees' experiences of supervisors initiating conversations about power imbalances and their own identities, which contributed to the development of supervisory relationships, were noted by Jin et al. (2022) and Ho (2021). Additionally, five studies indicated that trainees found it helpful when their supervisors were willing to self-disclose and share their vulnerable feelings, past training struggles, or underprivileged identities (Ho, 2021; Jin et al., 2022; Killian, 2001; Pendse, 2017; Rasheed, 2015), although a negative impact of the supervisor's inappropriate self-disclosure that involved excessive discussion of personal matters was also observed (Ninomiya, 2012).

Findings from research focussing on trainees were echoed by the three studies exploring supervisors' experiences. Jin et al. (2023) reported the biggest range of supervisor behaviours perceived to facilitate relationship building. These included providing validation, empathy and support, approaching supervisees with cultural humility, making an effort to learn about their culture outside of supervision, adopting a "not-knowing" stance and suspending assumptions, using a strengths-based approach, engaging in self-disclosure (e.g., of sociocultural identities and personal experiences), modelling emotional vulnerability and apologising for mistakes, and assisting trainees in developing their personal and professional identities. However, it was noted that showing cultural curiosity was challenging in some

cases, for example, when supervisors lacked awareness that trainees wished to distance themselves from their cultures of origin. In line with research involving trainees, Chimbanda's (2021) findings indicated that supervisors from minority or international backgrounds expressed an improved ability to establish connections with international trainees and fulfil their supervisory role by drawing on their personal histories and experiences. Supervisors interviewed by both Killian (2001) and Chimbanda (2021) emphasised that their work was helped by exposure to diverse cultures through personal life experiences. A consistent theme across all three studies was the importance of supervisors disclosing their identities to foster a sense of safety in the supervisory relationship (Chimbanda, 2021; Jin et al., 2023; Kilian, 2021).

Learning and Growth

A theme of learning and growth was also present across trainees' and supervisors' accounts. Supervisees discussed finding learning, value and meaning in painful and difficult supervision experiences, as well as benefitting from supportive ones. Personal and professional growth resulting from challenging experiences, such as becoming more independent and outspoken, was acknowledged by Rasheed (2015), Ninomiya (2012), and Sangganjanavanich and Black (2009). Some trainees also reported that supervisors' neglectful attitudes towards culture prompted them to become more culturally sensitive in their clinical work (Rasheed, 2015; Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2009). However, Sangganjanavanich and Black (2009) described mixed perspectives, with some participants expressing disagreement and indicating that while it was a unique learning opportunity, they would have benefited more from a supportive, understanding, and positive supervisory environment. This perspective was substantiated by three additional studies, in which international trainees reported positive experiences with supportive supervisors that enabled them to feel more empowered (Jin et al., 2022), recognise their identity as a strength

(Garrison et al., 2022) and experience personal growth through processing past negative supervisory and training experiences (Ninomiya, 2012). Furthermore, Ninomiya (2012) observed that these positive supervisory encounters also contributed to trainees' development of multicultural skills, such as effective self-disclosure. In addition to this, a theme of trainees contributing to supervisors' development, specifically by educating them about cultural issues, was present in the findings of Rasheed (2015), Ninomiya, 2012, Jin et al. (2022) and Kiteki et al. (2022), who termed this process "reverse mentoring".

The idea of reciprocal learning in the context of supervision was particularly prominent across supervisor accounts reported by Jin et al. (2023) and Chimbanda (2021). Participants in these studies saw their experiences of working with international trainees as meaningful and rewarding. The findings from Chimbanda's study (2021) stated that supervisors' growth was made possible having to navigate a significant learning curve. It was reported that during this process they faced various challenges and complex emotions, including feelings of shame related to their own biases and lack of multicultural competence.

Discussion

Summary of Findings

This review has examined and appraised eleven studies that explored the experiences of cross-cultural supervision from the perspective of international trainees and clinical supervisors. The quality of the selected papers varied, with the majority of them lacking clarity, detail and justification for their chosen methodologies and analyses. Nevertheless, some common themes were identified across studies of different quality. These included the need to address international trainees' contextual issues in supervision, supervisory relationship dynamics, including barriers and facilitators to a good alliance, and the experience of learning and growth by both parties.

International supervisees' contextual issues that necessitated supervisor support was the most significant theme identified across the eleven studies. It encompassed language barriers, acculturation stress, wider experiences of discrimination, systemic, legal, financial and family issues, and cultural incongruity with the professional practices of the host country. The literature highlighted the significance of these unique sociocultural factors in the context of supervision, as international trainees presented with distinct needs and vulnerabilities that required supervisors' sensitivity, awareness and support. This theme aligns with the principles of the MCS model developed by Ancis and Ladany (2010). The findings from this review lend particular support to the first domain of supervisor multicultural competence, referred to as supervisor personal development. This domain emphasises the responsibility of supervisors working with international trainees to enhance their understanding of contextual factors relevant to this group, including supervisees' countries of origin, migration experiences and language barriers (Amanor-Boadu & Baptist, 2008). The model also emphasises that supervisors should be knowledgeable about alternative approaches to helping beyond those typically found in North American and Northern European contexts and promote supervisee flexibility regarding traditional interventions and alternative approaches (Ancis & Ladany, 2010). This aligns with a specific need identified in four papers around helping trainees integrate their cultural background with psychological theories and approaches taught during training. Supervisors in these studies were perceived and perceived themselves as lacking this broader understanding and unable to ensure that the models taught were culturally relevant and enabled supervisees to practise effectively in both the host culture and their home country.

Supervisory relationship dynamics were discussed in terms of barriers and facilitators to the development of the supervisory alliance. The many reports emphasising relational dynamics in supervision suggest that supervisory alliance, described as "the very heart and

soul of supervision itself" (Watkins 2013), holds the same level of significance when working with international trainees. The alliance between the supervisor and the supervisee is not an instant development but an evolving process, punctuated by ruptures and repairs (Watkins, 2014), and the findings from this review shed light on this pattern within the context of supervising international trainees. Both supervisor and supervisee participants primarily focussed on the negative impact of supervisors' actions, ranging from overt discrimination to a lack of attention to cultural factors and dismissiveness. It is notable, however, that supervisor accounts included fewer and less detailed examples of their engagement in discriminatory or culturally insensitive behaviour towards supervisees. The emphasis on supervisors' actions and their limited awareness or discomfort in acknowledging the effects of their behaviour on trainees may be attributed to the inherent power imbalance in supervision, compounded by differences in both individuals' social locations (Hernández & McDowell, 2010). Supervisors' misuse of power and failure to address the power imbalance in a meaningful and sensitive manner seemed to underpin challenges in establishing a bond, a fundamental component of the supervisory alliance that encompasses mutual trust, acceptance and confidence (Horvath & Greenberg, 1989). This was evident in supervisees' reports of feeling responsible for initiating conversations about culture and supervisors' reflections on challenges and risks in navigating cross-cultural supervision, such as broaching the topic of differences in a way that enacted and perpetuated the power imbalance. The unaddressed power differential seemed to also hinder the repair process after supervisors' behaviour (such as stereotyping or dismissiveness) led to ruptures, as trainees reported feeling hesitant to put themselves in a vulnerable position and voice their experiences.

The facilitators of the supervisory alliance encompassed supervisors' qualities and actions that contributed to building trust and resolving issues within the relationship. These findings align with the widely accepted notion that supervisors bear responsibility for

establishing safety and trust (Patel, 2012). To a large degree, they also overlap with the principles of alliance-based supervision (Gard & Lewis, 2008), grounded in empirical research and contemporary psychoanalytic theory. These principles were proposed to assist clinicians supervising novice therapists and include several key elements such as creating a compassionate environment, employing a non-interrogative style of questioning, concentrating on reducing the supervisee's self-criticism, emphasising strengths rather than deficits, and maintaining self-awareness to avoid negative perceptions that could impede the supervisee's development. In terms of supervision with international trainees, an additional layer of complexity is introduced as it is important to consider supervisees' background and experiences (for example, related to language difference), which make them particularly susceptible to self-criticism and fear of negative evaluation, as highlighted by the findings of this review. For instance, Gard and Lewis (2008) suggest that supervisors can establish a compassionate atmosphere through power-reducing self-disclosures about challenges they have encountered in clinical work. Across the selected studies, supervisor self-disclosure was generally considered helpful by both participant groups, but disclosures centred on supervisors' socio-cultural identities were seen as particularly valuable. This way of attuning to and accommodating cultural factors with supervisees who are not only novice therapists but also come from international backgrounds can be described as working from a stance of cultural humility (Hook et al. 2018; Zhou et al., 2020). The review findings underscore the value of adopting this stance, as both supervisors and supervisees indicated that the supervisor's attentiveness to cultural and contextual factors, self-awareness and interest in learning about the supervisee's culture (from them and independently) were key in developing the supervisory alliance.

The theme of learning and growth captured the personal and professional development that supervisors and international supervisees experienced as a result of their

supervisory interactions. Both groups acknowledged the meaning and value of these experiences, even when they entailed significant challenges. However, in the case of trainees, positive supervision seemed to have been particularly beneficial due to its potential corrective effect in relation to their past negative experiences (Zhou et al., 2020). The idea of reciprocal learning, which highlighted international trainees' unique contribution to the growth of supervisors, was found in six studies and expressed particularly strongly by supervisors. This finding is in line with feminist multicultural supervision models that emphasise the reciprocal and relational nature of supervision (Estrada, 2018). Notably, the experiences of mutual learning reported by international trainees and supervisors closely mirror one of the findings in Arczynski's and Morrow's (2017) study. In their exploration of feminist multicultural supervision practices, the authors highlighted that learning in clinical supervision was not unidirectional but involved mutual growth through supervisors' collaborative engagement with their supervisees.

Limitations

While this review aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the literature, several limitations should be considered. It must be noted that the overall quality of the selected papers was poor, making it difficult to draw robust conclusions. A lack of explanation of the data analysis process and researcher reflexivity was a particularly significant issue as most authors were current or former trainees from international backgrounds, which introduced potential bias and may have prevented a more nuanced understanding of cross-cultural supervision.

The use of CASP for the assessment of study quality presents another limitation. Although frequently used to evaluate qualitative research, this tool does not assess reporting quality or consider potential sources of bias that are not explicitly mentioned in the study.

This means that factors such as selective reporting or response bias may not have been accounted for during the quality appraisal process.

Although the review uses the term “trainees from international backgrounds” and offers an overview of common themes within the selected papers, international students are not a homogeneous group, as evidenced by the demographic data of the samples. Yoon and Portman (2004) caution against overgeneralising research findings to all international students and overlooking the diversity within this population, a concern that is particularly relevant to the current review, given the prevalence of participants from Asian countries.

In addition to this, the scope of the review was limited to research reporting qualitative data on the supervisory experiences of trainees from international backgrounds and clinical supervisors who had worked with this population. Consequently, quantitative evidence (e.g., on supervisory alliance) that may have provided further insight into the subject was not considered. Additional valuable information might have also been missed by not including other types of research (e.g., non-empirical). As a result, the findings may not fully capture the nuances and complexities of clinical supervision with international trainees.

It is also essential to acknowledge the potential for bias in the narrative presented in this review. The absence of a research team is a significant limitation, as having a single reviewer can increase the risk of bias at different stages of the process (Shang et al., 2023). Although consultations with the research supervisor were sought to mitigate these risks, the review was likely influenced by the author’s subjectivity.

Implications

The findings offer several implications in relation to clinical supervision practices. Supervisors working with international trainees can have a significant positive influence on the supervision process by adopting a stance of cultural humility, showing curiosity about trainees’ cultural backgrounds and engaging in self-reflection and continuous learning (Zhou

et al., 2020). Prioritising the supervisory alliance is essential and requires supervisors' active efforts to build trust, address power imbalances and manage ruptures with sensitivity and care (Gard & Lewis, 2008).

Training programmes also have an important role in enhancing supervision practices. Integrating multicultural competence and orientation (Watkins et al., 2019) training into their curricula and providing ongoing professional development opportunities would facilitate supervisors' development and address any gaps that may emerge throughout their careers. The courses can also contribute by facilitating communication between supervisors and international trainees, creating platforms for trainees to express concerns and providing support to help them manage external pressures.

Furthermore, based on the review findings, international trainees may benefit from taking proactive steps to address their support needs. Communicating one's needs, cultural context and future plans can provide valuable insights to supervisors who may lack confidence in their multicultural skills but display attitudes indicative of cultural humility (e.g., willingness to learn). It can also alert supervisors to the limitations of conventional psychological approaches, emphasising the need to integrate a multicultural perspective. In cases of culturally insensitive supervision, trainees would benefit from seeking support from sources that can offer validation, advocacy, and help with managing training demands or external stressors.

Future Research

Future research into cross-cultural supervision with international trainees should address several key areas. Studies with strong methodologies are noticeably lacking and the available evidence is limited to the United States. Research efforts should be broadened to include diverse international contexts, such as the United Kingdom and other countries, offering training to individuals from international backgrounds.

Additionally, more research is necessary to understand the experiences of supervisors, examining their specific challenges, learning processes and strategies for successful cross-cultural supervision. Sufficient evidence from both perspectives would contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of cross-cultural supervision dynamics.

Quantitative or mixed-method studies conducted over a longer timeframe could offer valuable insights into the impact of culturally sensitive supervision on trainees, including its effects on clinical competence, self-efficacy and overall well-being. Similarly, evaluating the effectiveness of interventions designed to enhance supervisors' multicultural competence and orientation would help elucidate the potential benefits and outcomes of such initiatives.

Conclusion

The current review aimed to explore international trainees' and clinical supervisors' experiences of cross-cultural supervision. Three major themes were identified across the eleven studies, highlighting the influence of international trainees' contextual issues in supervision, supervisory relationship dynamics, including barriers and facilitators to the supervisory alliance, and learning and growth experienced by both groups. However, the overall methodological quality of these studies was lacking, and the available evidence primarily represented the perspectives of supervisees from Asian countries completing training in the United States. To better understand and enhance cross-cultural supervision practices, more comprehensive and robust research is needed, especially within diverse international contexts.

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Section B: Empirical Paper

Cross-cultural supervision with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds: A grounded theory

Word Count: 8000 (159)

For submission to “Training and Education in Professional Psychology”

Abstract

The importance of salient differences and cultural humility has been recognised not only in therapeutic work but also in clinical supervision (e.g., Hook et al., 2016; Calahan et al., 2019). While cross-cultural supervision with international trainees has received some attention from researchers in the United States, the topic remains largely unexplored in the United Kingdom, especially in the context of clinical psychology training. This study used Corbin and Strauss' (2015) grounded theory approach to examine processes underpinning clinical supervision with trainees from international backgrounds who speak English as a second or additional language. Three focus groups and seven individual interviews were conducted with 16 participants, including 11 trainees and five supervisors. The constructed model encompasses six major categories ("what comes into the supervisory relationship", "starting point", "unfolding supervisory relationship", "exploration of the cultural and the personal", "navigating complexity", and "integrating"), outlining an iterative process through which participants engaged in supervisory relationships. The findings suggest that both supervisors and trainees may experience growth as they encounter challenges and successes and continue to adapt their approach, with wider support playing a potentially significant role in facilitating this process. Training courses are well-positioned to improve supervision practice with this population by incorporating multicultural orientation and competence perspective into their teaching, supervisor training, and direct interventions on placement with individual trainees and supervisors.

Keywords: cross-cultural supervision, international trainees, grounded theory, multicultural orientation, cultural humility

Introduction

Amidst increasing globalisation, changes are also taking place in the professional landscape of psychological therapies. As the option to train and practise in a different country is embraced more widely, situations where clients, clinicians and supervisors come from different cultural backgrounds have become more common (Beinart & Clohessy, 2017). Within the field of clinical supervision, Vargas et al. (2008, p. 122) define culture as: "…the dynamic and active process of constructing shared meaning, as represented by shared ideas, beliefs, attitudes, values, norms, practices, language, spirituality, and symbols, with acknowledgement and consideration of positions of power, privilege, and oppression". Perspectives on cultural identity, such as Sue's (2001) Tripartite Model, highlight multiple dimensions of difference that may have varying salience for individuals, with their importance changing over time and across contexts (Sue et al., 2016).

With growing attention to cultural issues, multicultural competence, initially promoted in clinical work, has become increasingly emphasised as a necessary supervisory skill. Yet, it has also been criticised for reinforcing simplistic, decontextualised and static views of difference, neglecting self-examination and exploration of the power dynamics, and inadvertent "othering" (Buchtel, 2014; Garran & Werkmeister Rozas, 2013; Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998). In response to this, there has been a shift towards the idea of cultural humility that prioritises the ability to acknowledge power differential, unfamiliarity, and bias (Patallo, 2019). This stance has been endorsed in supervision across different therapeutic orientations, including systemic (Hernandez-Wolfe & McDowell, 2014), psychoanalytic (Watkins & Hook, 2016) and cognitive behavioural (Calloway & Creed, 2022), as well as more broadly. For example, Callahan et al. (2019), using empirical and theoretical literature to provide support for the recently developed generic model of psychotherapy supervision

(GMPS; Watkins, 2018), highlighted that conversations grounded in cultural humility are critical to building the supervisory alliance.

In light of greater appreciation of salient differences and cultural humility in supervision, there is increased effort, particularly in the United States, to understand and improve supervision practice with therapists and trainees from international backgrounds. In the United Kingdom, however, little attention has been given to this topic, despite the professional workforce likely undergoing similar changes due to increasing internationalism (Migration Observatory, 2022) and the global appeal of the country's higher education (Migration Observatory, 2024). To date, only a handful of studies, primarily limited to doctoral dissertations, have tried to address the experience of practitioners who relocated to the United Kingdom (Arshadi, 2018; Efstathiou, 2017; Georgiadou, 2013; Principi, 2021; Radeva-Petrova, 2021; Scollard, 2021; Zhou, 2021). Participants in this research were mainly trainee or qualified counselling psychologists and psychotherapists, with a sample of trainee clinical psychologists, specifically from Chinese backgrounds, recruited only in one study (Zhou, 2021).

Although none of these studies focus exclusively on supervision, it emerges as a recurrent theme in their findings. For example, Radeva-Petrova (2021), who interviewed psychotherapists and counselling psychologists raised in countries with authoritarian regimes primarily in Central and Eastern Europe, highlighted challenging relational dynamics with supervisors as authority figures that participants had to work through during their training in the United Kingdom. Zhou (2021) noted a reverent style of relating and "a humble learning-from-others attitude" among participants in her study, while Principi (2021) identified supervisor support in helping psychotherapists from international backgrounds overcome insecurities related to culture and language in clinical work.

The doctorate in clinical psychology is one of the few professional training courses funded by the NHS, which means that students with a "home fee status" (UK and non-UK citizens eligible to work in the country) receive NHS salary and are exempt from tuition fees. A small number of self-funded places are also offered annually (Clearing House, 2023), allowing trainees from international backgrounds to come to the country and complete training on a student visa. Due to "overseas fee status" this group is often referred to as "international trainees". This potentially introduces a layer of complexity, as the current system may position "home fee" trainees from international backgrounds as locals, rendering their cultural differences invisible, and place those on student visas at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers. Two surveys (Hayat, 2021; Teo & Yong, 2020) with the latter group indicate the need for support, supervisor awareness and curiosity, and highlight adverse experiences in supervision and workplace.

Given the emerging understanding in this area and a significant gap in evidence from the supervisors' perspective, a deeper exploration of supervision processes with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds is needed. The current study aimed to address this by using a grounded theory (GT) methodology and incorporating both perspectives. The terms "international trainees" and "trainees from international backgrounds" will be used interchangeably throughout this report. The project aligns with NHS values of "everyone counts" and "respect and dignity" by examining support provided to this specific subgroup of the NHS workforce through supervision and was guided by the following questions:

- What challenges do supervisors and trainees experience in cross-cultural supervision and how are they navigated by both parties?
- What is the supervisors' and trainees' experience of conversations about cultural factors?

- What are the perceived implications of such discussions for trainee clinical psychologists from the perspective of both parties?

Methods

Design

The project used a qualitative research design based on GT methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), enabling the exploration of complex psychosocial phenomena and the construction of theoretical explanations (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The research was approached from a critical-realist stance, which assumes the existence of a reality that is separate and independent of our knowledge but emphasises the role of interpretation in understanding it through participants' experiences (Willig, 2013). Data collection involved focus groups and individual interviews – a recognised strategy for enhancing data richness (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). Three focus groups and two individual interviews were held with trainees, and five individual interviews were conducted with supervising clinicians.

Participants

The study included 16 participants (11 trainees and five supervisors). Language was considered a potentially important cultural difference to be included in eligibility criteria (Table 1). Table 2 describes participant characteristics.

There were two male and nine female participants aged 25 to 37 in the trainee group. Three of them indicated Hong Kong as their country/region of origin, while the rest came from various European countries. Nine trainees had lived in the United Kingdom for over five years and were on NHS-funded places. Two participants resided in Wales, five in London, three in the South West, and one in the East of England.

All supervisors were women aged 35 to 43 and worked as clinical psychologists. Four of them had a recent experience of supervising an international trainee (within the past year or at the time of the study). All identified as White or White British. One participant was

Czech and spoke English as a second or additional language. In terms of location, two supervisors were based in London and three in the South East.

Table 1

Participant Inclusion Criteria

Participant Group	Inclusion Criteria
Trainees	• Enrolled on a doctorate clinical psychology programme in the United Kingdom at the time of this study • Born and received school education outside of the United Kingdom • Speak English as a second or additional language
Supervisors	• Employed by the NHS at the time of this study • Have provided clinical supervision within the past four years to a clinical psychology trainee who comes from an international background and whose first language is not English

Note. Supervisor criteria were expanded during recruitment to broaden the participant pool. Initially, only those with relevant supervision experience within the past year were eligible.

Table 2

Participant Characteristics

Participant ID	Trainee Demographics					
	Training year	**Funding status**	**No. of years in the UK**	**Gender**	**Ethnicity**	**First language**
Trainee1	2	NHS-funded	6 to 10	Female	White – Eastern European	Romanian
Trainee2	2	NHS-funded	Over 10	Female	White – Other	Greek
Trainee3	1	NHS-funded	Over 10	Female	White European	French
Trainee4	1	NHS-funded	6 to 10	Female	Romanian	Romanian
Trainee5	3	Self-funded	2 to 5	Male	Hong Kong Chinese	Cantonese
Trainee6	2	NHS-funded	Over 10	Female	Lithuanian	Lithuanian
Trainee7	2	NHS-funded	6 to 10	Female	White European	French
Trainee8	3	NHS-funded	6 to 10	Female	White – Other	Polish
Trainee9	1	NHS-funded	6 to 10	Female	Polish	Polish
Trainee10	2	NHS-funded	6 to 10	Male	Hong Kong Chinese	Cantonese
Trainee11	1	Self-funded	Less than 2	Female	Chinese	Cantonese
	Supervisor Demographics					
	Professional role			**Gender**	**Ethnicity**	**Nationality**
Supervisor1	Clinical Psychologist			Female	White British	British
Supervisor2	Highly Specialised Clinical Psychologist			Female	White British	British
Supervisor3	Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist			Female	White	British
Supervisor4	Clinical Psychologist			Female	White	Czech
Supervisor5	Clinical Psychologist			Female	White	British

Note. Potentially identifying information (age, disability, country of origin, current location and trainee nationality) has been excluded.

Interview Schedule

Semi-structured focus group and individual interview schedules (Appendix C, D, E and F) were developed following a literature review and in consultation with the research supervisor and two trainee clinical psychologists from my personal network who met the study's inclusion criteria.

Procedure

Participants were recruited using opportunistic and purposive sampling, primarily by advertising (Appendix G) on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn and through my personal and professional connections (e.g., asking other trainees to share the poster with potential participants). Additionally, I contacted three clinical psychology courses with large cohorts, asking them to circulate the poster to their trainees and clinical supervisors. Trainees who had taken part were also asked to share information about the project with their current and past supervisors on placements.

Participant information sheet (Appendix H) and consent form (Appendix I) were made available to prospective participants on an online platform (Gorilla), which also hosted a demographic survey (Appendix J) for screening and theoretical sampling (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009) purposes. Out of 24 trainees who signed up, four were excluded for not having completed their entire school education outside the United Kingdom. 16 out of 20 eligible trainees and all five supervisors who expressed interest responded to the email invitation and took part in the study.

Recruitment and data collection ran concurrently between July and December 2023, guided by theoretical sampling. Focus group data informed the decision to seek interview participants from more diverse backgrounds regarding gender, funding status, and ethnicity. To support theory development, an interview was also arranged with a supervisor from an international background. Due to challenges in the supervisor recruitment process and

scheduling, it was not possible to set up a focus group, and all supervisors were interviewed individually. In line with theoretical sampling, interview schedules were modified during the data collection phase to explore emergent hypotheses (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Appendix K describes these changes. Given the time constraints, the intention was to achieve a degree of conceptual depth (Nelson, 2017) commensurate with the project's scope.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted via MS Teams, using an audio recorder and the MS Teams transcription feature to support the transcription process. Focus groups varied in size (with two, three, and four participants) but were of similar duration, lasting between 86 and 92 minutes. The two individual interviews with trainees were 56 and 58 minutes long. Supervisor interviews lasted between 55 to 75 minutes. In total, over 11 hours of data were generated.

Ethical Considerations

The study was approved by Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology Ethics Panel (Appendix L). Participants provided informed consent online and, at the start of the meeting, were reminded of the study's aims, procedures, and their right to withdraw. Focus group attendees were briefed on confidentiality expectations, and all participants were offered an opportunity to ask questions. Two trainees in the final focus group disclosed being on the same course but were comfortable proceeding and did not raise any concerns during or after the group. All participants were sent a debrief form (Appendix M) via email. No requests for additional support were received.

Data Analysis

Data analysis (Table 3) was completed following Corbin and Strauss (1990; 2015). Transcripts were initially organised and coded using Microsoft Word, with the comment function facilitating memo writing. Microsoft Excel was employed in later stages of the analysis.

Table 3

Data Analysis Process

Stage	Description
Open coding	Incident-to-incident and line-by-line coding was used interchangeably to complete the initial open coding of all 10 transcripts. Following Corbin and Strauss (2015), line-by-line coding was employed when a more detailed analysis was needed to understand the meaning of certain sections of the data.
Axial coding	Memo writing and diagramming during the open coding stage facilitated a transition into axial coding, focused on the development, grouping and integration of concepts identified in the raw data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). An initial theoretical framework, describing relationships between categories, along with their properties and dimensions, was gradually created through the iterative process of constant comparison.
Selective coding	Selective coding, the final stage of analysis, involved the identification of the core category and the refinement of the conceptual framework (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Constant comparison of data, use of memos and diagrams, and consultations with my supervisor shaped the final theoretical model.

Note. Due to the dynamic and fluid nature of the data analysis process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), stages should be seen as overlapping rather than discrete.

Quality Assurance

In recognition of my subjectivity, several measures recommended by Tufford and Newman (2010) and Roulston (2010) were implemented. These included a bracketing interview before starting data collection (see Appendix N for a position statement based on this interview), maintaining a reflective diary (Appendix O), and introducing memos and diagrams (Appendix P, Q, R and S) early in the analysis to enhance reflexivity and evidence theory-building process.

Results

Overview of the Model

Figure 1 presents a cyclical model of cross-cultural supervision, depicting the iterative process through which participants engaged in supervisory relationships. The model captures how, according to the data from these participants, over time and over multiple supervisory relationships, both supervisors and trainees may experience growth as they encounter challenges and successes and continue to adapt their approach. Three-level categories are presented in Table 4.

Figure 1

Model of Cross-Cultural Supervision Process

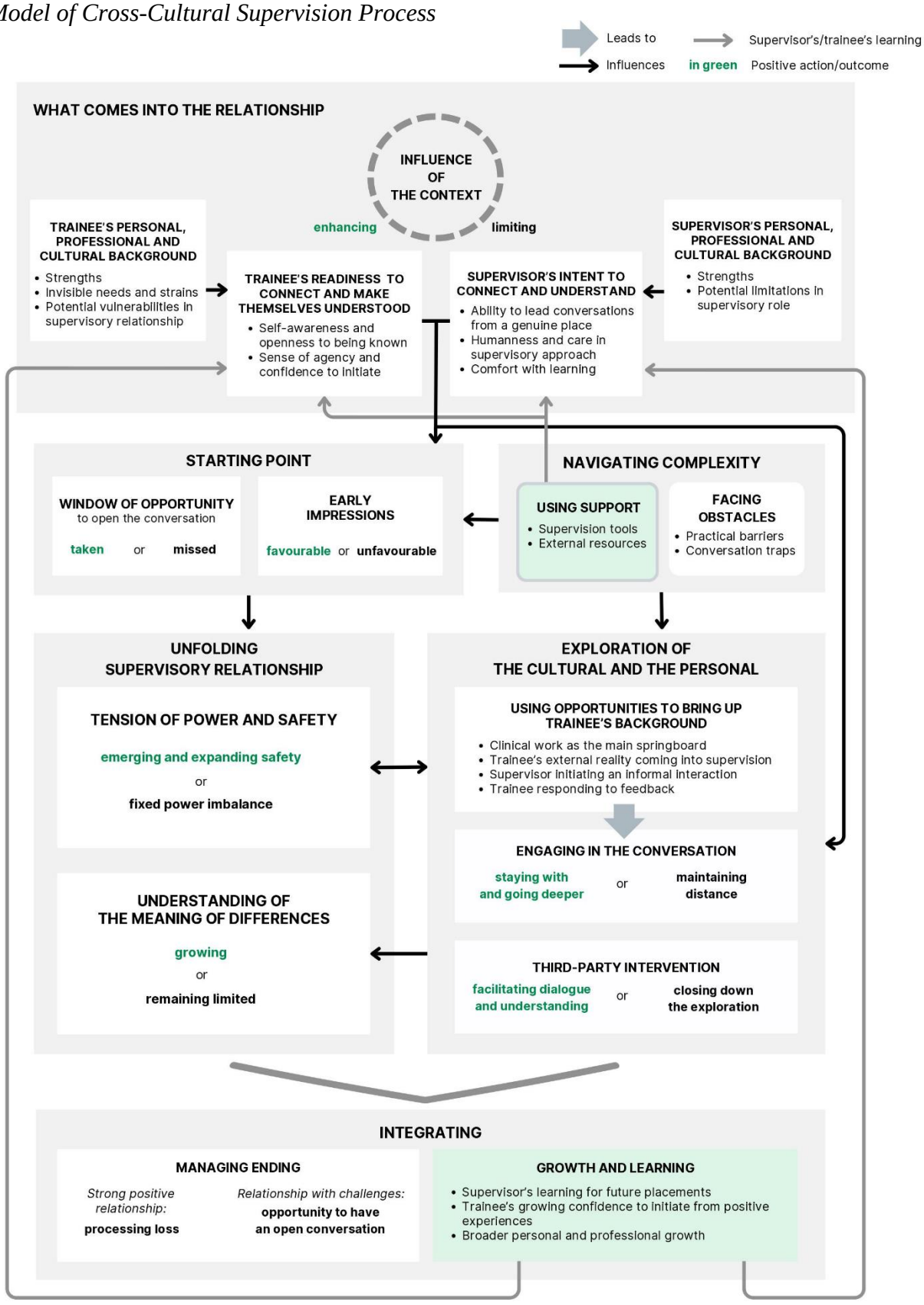

Table 4

Model Categories

Category	Sub-category	Sub-subcategory
A. What comes into the relationship	1. Trainee's personal, professional and cultural background	1.1. Strengths
		1.2. Invisible needs and strains
		1.3. Potential vulnerabilities in supervisory relationship
	2. Trainee's readiness to connect and make themselves understood	2.1. Self-awareness and openness to being known
		2.2. Sense of agency and confidence to initiate
	3. Supervisor's personal, professional and cultural background	3.1. Strengths
		3.2. Potential limitations in supervisory role
	4. Supervisor's intent to connect and understand	4.1. Ability to lead conversations from a genuine place
		4.2. Humanness and care in supervisory approach
		4.3. Comfort with learning
	5. Influence of the context	5.1. Enhancing
		5.2. Inhibiting
B. Starting point	6. Window of opportunity	6.1. Taken
		6.2. Missed
	7. Early impressions	7.1. Favourable
		7.2. Unfavourable
C. Unfolding supervisory relationship	8. Tension of safety and power	8.1. Emerging and expanding safety
		8.2. Fixed power imbalance
	9. Understanding of the meaning of differences	9.1. Growing
		9.2. Remaining limited

D. Exploration of the cultural and the personal	10. Using opportunities to bring up trainee's background	10.1. Clinical work as the main springboard
		10.2. Trainee's external reality coming into supervision
		10.3. Supervisor initiating an informal interaction
		10.4. Trainee responding to feedback
	11. Engaging in the conversation	11.1. Staying with and going deeper
		11.2. Keeping distance
	12. Third-party intervention	12.1. Facilitating dialogue and understanding
		12.2. Closing down the exploration
E. Navigating complexity	13. Facing obstacles	13.1. Practical barriers
		13.2. Conversation traps
	14. Using support	14.1. Supervision tools
		14.2. External resources
F. Integrating	15. Managing ending	15.1. Processing loss
		15.2. Opportunity to have an open conversation
	16. Growth and learning	16.1. Supervisor's learning for future placements
		16.2. Trainee's growing courage to initiate from positive experiences
		16.3. Broader personal and professional growth

Core Category

"Cross-cultural supervisory relationship: mutual growth through trial and error" was identified as the core category. This section briefly explains how it relates to other categories.

The overall process was influenced by what came into supervision, including the trainee's and the supervisor's backgrounds and the influence of the wider context. The trainee's readiness to connect and make themselves understood, along with the supervisor's intent to connect and understand, shaped the starting point of the relationship and its unfolding.

Trainees' development flourished through meaningful exploration, growing understanding and increasing safety as they discovered what worked well in supervision and felt more confident to initiate conversations on subsequent placements. Furthermore, these experiences facilitated broader personal and professional growth, empowering trainees in clinical work and future supervisory roles. Growth, especially in cultural self-awareness, also came from challenging experiences. In such instances, leaning on external support was particularly valuable, as it helped trainees align with their wish for a more positive experience and contributed to their readiness to connect.

Cross-cultural supervision was also a learning process for supervisors, presenting unexpected challenges they had to find a way to navigate through. Building safety and engaging in a meaningful exploration of differences required work and intentionality on the supervisors' part. Achieving success in these endeavours was experienced as rewarding and facilitated both personal and professional growth. Similarly to trainees, difficult experiences also provided valuable lessons to supervisors, leading to greater awareness and informing their approach with future supervisees.

What Comes Into The Relationship

This category encompasses what both parties intentionally and unintentionally brought into the supervisory encounter, along with external influences.

Trainee's Personal, Professional and Cultural Background

Trainees' backgrounds influenced how they came into the relationship. Participants identified specific **strengths** that added to their **readiness to connect and make themselves understood,** such being *"a curious person in general"* (Trainee8), enjoying *"getting to know people"* (Trainee10) and appreciating the value of their differences and experiences of acculturation:

> *…there is great value in bringing those, you know, those two different things. You know, the fact that you're coming, you know, from a different culture, you've came to this country, you've tried to blend in, but you can always like bring everything in.* (Trainee2)

For trainees, their background extended beyond cultural differences, encompassing *"social, economic background and everything that comes with the culture"* (Trainee1) and creating **invisible needs and strains**. For self-funded trainees, *"that lack of financial support, that burden and that how it affects you mentally as well"* (Trainee11) was highlighted as particularly challenging. From supervisors' perspective, important things to hold in mind included the strain of working in a second language and *"doing an extra level of processing even if the fluency is is fluent*" (Supervisor2), *"visual assumptions that people make about your culture versus that sense of kind of accent in language*" (Supervisor1) and other complexities of *"geopolitical stuff on top of the cultural stuff and the language stuff"* (Supervisor5).

Some aspects of trainees' backgrounds created **potential vulnerabilities in supervisory relationships**. Susceptibility to negative evaluation and self-criticism was

especially strong for those who had moved to the country more recently, such as Trainee5: *"…sometimes the challenging bit would be my supervisors make some assumptions that I should know something, I should be able to to write or to say something naturally"*. However, vulnerability related to language was shared by others too: *"…it's hard to know whether it's … a micromanaging feature of the supervisor or as a special relationship to me not being, like not having English as my first language"* (Trainee7). Culturally influenced ways of communicating and relating created challenges for some, which was also noted by supervisors. For example, Supervisor3 described a trainee who *"felt that their… the relevance of their cultural and language background hasn't really been fully appreciated, considered or heard, I guess, in evaluating their training competencies [previously]"*. One participant, Trainee11, also explained how her international background increased sensitivity to power differential:*"…they [supervisors] don't understand that we put so much on the line … I just feel like I've risked so much that it's better for me to pretend and to not broach subjects that make them feel uncomfortable."*

Trainees' Readiness to Connect and Make Themselves Understood

Influenced by their **backgrounds**, trainees approached supervision with varying degrees of **readiness to connect and make themselves understood**. Their **self-awareness and openness to being known** were considered important in how much the topic of culture became part of supervision. For instance, Trainee3 wondered if it relates to *"how we bring ourselves in supervision and whether people see it as something that we need to talk about or not"*, while Trainee9 shared – *"maybe it's me who is not open enough to talk about my culture"*. An example from Supervisor1 illustrated the value of trainees' self-awareness and ability to communicate it:

> *…something that she raised like in a really helpful way is about, I guess, just cultural norms for communication. So I guess we have this very British way of being very*

careful and like edging around anything that's kind of feels a bit uncomfortable and she was saying actually for for her kind of coming from from Poland, she's very blunt.

Trainees' sense of agency and **confidence to initiate** conversations about their background was also noted. For Trainee11 *"it was just automatic that I assume that, you know, it's always just business, they just want to ask me how my caseload is".* Others assumed responsibility – *"there is definitely something about us needing to bring that in and doing that more during training"* (Trainee2) – or found more confidence as time went on: *"…maybe in placement four or five that I was more open or courageous enough to to raise those issues"* (Trainee5).

Supervisor's Personal, Professional and Cultural Background

The supervision process was also influenced by the supervisor's **background**. Multiple participants, such as Supervisor5, highlighted openness and curiosity as key **strengths**: *"I'm very nosy and I'm quite open"*. Supervisor2 further explained: *"…it's partly why I thought being a psychologist would be a good job for me, you know, nosiness, but in a compassionate way"*. Participants also emphasised supervisors' lived experience of cultural difference or migration, which "*made it easier for them to find the way of relating"* (Trainee6), although familiarity with trainees' struggles or culture through other experiences was considered helpful too. For example, Supervisor3 felt that because of her recent visit to Hong Kong, *"there was a hook in me on which I could hang some of what she [trainee] was sharing"*.

In terms of **potential limitations**, supervisors' blind spots, especially due to limited exposure to trainees' challenges, were highlighted by multiple participants, including Trainee6: *"…it's not something a person thinks about"*. Trainees wondered about a lack of meaningful training, a concern also expressed by Supervisor2, who had trained alongside international trainees and drew from this experience: *"…you can say [in supervisor*

training], 'There will be people who are international students', but that's actually not the same as I think the more meaningful communication of the experiential aspect of it".

Although less commonly, other potential limitations were mentioned, such as being *"new to supervising trainees"* (Trainee9) and *"anticipatory anxiety"* (Supervisor 5).

Supervisor's Intent to Connect and Understand

Supervisors' **strengths and limitations** informed their **intent to connect** with and **understand** international trainees. The **ability to lead conversations from a genuine place** was deemed necessary by participants in both groups:

> *…they can be approached sort of from like a task-based kind of mind-set as opposed to "actually this is, this is an opportunity to kind of learn and think differently and think about the things that I don't know." So I… I think it's that genuine interest, that genuine curiosity.* (Supervisor2)

> *…you can't fake being interested in somebody's culture, in my opinion. And that kind of approach I'm having now where the supervisor is curious and asks, and does the genogram with you … you get the sense that this person actually cares about it.* (Trainee3)

Humanness and care in the supervisory approach was recognised when there was *"a bit of informality"* (Trainee11) and *"a bit of self-disclosure"* (Trainee3) as opposed to the supervisor being *"very business-like"* (Trainee11). Trainee1 thought that *"it really is about just being human and removing those power dynamics"*, which was supported by Supervisor3 experience of using self-disclosure:

> *And I think where I had chosen to be quite quite open with her maybe about my my thoughts and experiences in that way potentially contributing to her feeling more able to bring some more challenging or kind of less spoken about elements*.

Humanness and care was further demonstrated by attending to trainee's past supervisory experiences – *"it also felt like a theme that was going to be… That talking about was going to be reparative for her*" (Supervisor3) – and insecurities:

> *…what I've been talking about with my kind of current trainee is thinking about working with teenagers and how kind of having areas of difference can be really helpful… rather than being something that I think at the moment she really sees it as a barrier.* (Supervisor1)

Several participants spoke about supervisors' **comfort with learning**, needed in cross-cultural supervision. For example, Trainee5 commented on their reluctance to learn from international trainees: *"…that's a huge assumption or myth that supervisor is someone who is teaching a trainee, which in some sense is true, but something is missing there".* While trainees appreciated supervisors' curiosity, Supervisor5 described a potential dilemma from her perspective: *"It should not be a trainee's job to educate me as a supervisor. I also cannot know everything about every culture, and even if I did, it wouldn't be the same as your lived experience."*

Influence of the Context

Both participant groups emphasised the positive influence of the wider **context,** especially diversity, in **enhancing** their awareness and empowerment. For example, Supervisor1 highlighted that she was *"trying to develop as a psychologist kind of working with young people from very diverse backgrounds".* Trainee10 thought that it directly influenced his supervision*: "It [trainee's background] does come into supervision quite a lot because … the borough I work in has quite an ethnically diverse population, and so my caseload reflects that".*

The impact of staff diversity was mentioned as well:

> *…if I hear other people in the offices speak with an accent or someone who is like a psychologist … and they are not from England, that always empowers me to talk about where I'm from a bit more…* (Trainee8)

Trainees also emphasised the positive impact of the course, such as feeling "*more comfortable [to initiate] from all the training"* (Trainee2) and finding it *"helpful that in the teaching these social graces were emphasised"* (Trainee4). This was echoed by one of the supervisors: *"…because that university the trainee went to was very much about, you know, exploring the differences … it kind of like lended itself to us having that conversation very early on"* (Supervisor4). Supervisor1 further noted awareness in the service and wider profession: "…*it was seeing those conversations and being part of those conversations in lots of other settings".*

The dominance of one ethnic group among clients or staff was considered the main **limiting** factor. Trainee10 explained: *"My previous borough was also diverse, but it was like a big population of one particular ethnic group … And so our conversations were based a lot more on that."* Staff diversity was emphasised by others: *"If I feel as a minority then I wouldn't probably bring it [trainee's background] up"* (Trainee1). Trainee9 also raised this in relation to the course:

> *…I'm the only person in my cohort who has an accent and who is not, who didn't grow up in England. So I was very self-aware of my language… And I spoke about it to my clinical tutor … But the response [laughs] I got was that I can… Basically clinical tutor signposted me to wellbeing services, which felt very invalidating, which made me feel like I definitely do not want to mention anything about my culture later on.*

Starting Point

This category captures the importance of early interactions. A positive start was most likely when trainees arrived **ready to connect and make themselves understood** and supervisors showed **intent to connect and understand**.

Window of Opportunity

The starting point presented a **window of opportunity** to get to know each other and open a conversation about the trainee's as well as the supervisor's background. Multiple participants shared the following idea expressed by Trainee8:

> *…there is a window of opportunity to bring those conversations to supervision early on and when you miss that… it feels that you can't really talk about your culture anymore after a month because you are already into the supervision…*

Taking the opportunity was considered important *"to build those, you know, relationships at the very start"* (Trainee2). The opportunity was **missed** when the difference was not acknowledged or discussed meaningfully enough, as in the case of Supervisor4: *"…we kind of knew that we were different and that was okay and… But I think what we didn't talk about is how different we were".*

Early Impressions

Early impressions made at this point also influenced the **unfolding** of the **relationship**. It was felt that **favourable** impressions set participants on the right course: *"…it feels kind of positive early on in a supervisory relationship to to be able to really talk about those things that have been really difficult in previous kind of placements"* (Supervisor1). This was also expressed by a trainee:

> *And I remember myself thinking "Oh, I like you", you know, "I like you, you know, to be my supervisor"… I think that was for me like a starting point, you know, where I felt – "Okay, yeah, this is going to work really well*." (Trainee2)

Unfavourable impressions were described when a more personal conversation had not taken place and the supervisor's expectations had not been met in some way. For example, Trainee2, who was unfamiliar with the NHS at the start of his second placement, described his supervisor's reaction as "*quite shocked"* which led to *"lots of self-blaming"* and wanting *"to quit training".* In the following example, friction was associated with the trainee's unexpected style of relating*:*

> *…[trainee's] frustration with with what I see as a completely normal part of working for the NHS just kind of rubbed [me] I think the wrong way… it was not so much that, you know, they raised it with me. It was the way they did it and, yeah, I just thought, "Oh, I'm not sure I would have spoken to my supervisor this way*." (Supervisor4)

Unfolding Supervisory Relationship

This category captures relationship development over the course of placement in terms of safety and level of understanding reached.

Tension of Power and Safety

Supervisors and trainees emphasised **power imbalance** in the supervisory relationship and the challenge of creating **safety**. Those whose supervision experiences involved a meaningfully **taken** initial opportunity noted its significance for **emerging and expanding safety**: *"I feel the power dynamic has been completely removed with her [supervisor] since the genogram, since the beginning really"* (Trainee1). Supervisor3 highlighted how this also led to the **exploration of the cultural and the personal:** *"…something about the way that we had contracted at the beginning or kind of bonded and thought about things together at the beginning established a sense of safety where it did feel that things could be talked about."*

Safety in the relationship was seen as not only enabling the **exploration** but growing as a result of it too: *"…when it [culture] is brought up in supervision, I feel much closer …*

And that kind of trust develops to a whole new level" (Trainee3). Two supervisors acknowledged a potential for rupture within these conversations, although it was also recognised as an opportunity for greater safety: *"…my experience is that missteps, if they're then properly repaired, also in a different way deepen and strengthen the relationship once they're, yeah, once they're repaired."* (Supervisor5)

However, without the supervisor's active effort, there was a risk of a **fixed power imbalance** with limited safety that posed a barrier to **exploration**: *"…creating the safety for that [conversations] to happen takes work and time and thought. And it's definitely something that I think can slip" (*Supervisor2). Experience of negative assessment which lacked cultural sensitivity was felt to be particularly damaging. Trainee11 explained that it not only inhibited her openness but led her to become *"a chameleon"* and *"put on a White man's voice"* in sessions with clients, which resulted in better ratings from her supervisor but left her disempowered:

> *…what I wanted to say [in response to positive feedback] was – "That's because I've literally been mirroring you and I've been forcing it because, you know, to you, you think I lack empathy, even though the way we express empathy is very different.*"

Understanding of the Meaning of Differences

Taking the initial opportunity prompted **understanding the meaning of differences**. Throughout the placement, if conversations were happening, this understanding continued to **grow** and develop, often focussing on the implications of the trainee's background for clinical practice and future plans. For example, Trainee3 shared: *"…we're always linking kind of culture to how that then impacts my work and how I am as a practitioner"*. Supervisor2 described this process towards the end of placement: *"…we were kind of thinking, 'Okay, well, how has it been? How does this tie into what you might want to do next?'... I was curious about sort of whether she wanted to stay in the UK or not"*.

Understanding the meaning of differences in the supervisory relationship received less attention, but was highlighted by some: *"My supervisor was recognising that it [trainee's communication style] was coming from kind of my cultural background and the way I think because of that rather than me being rude*" (Trainee6). Supervisor3 also explained that during a year-long placement she was able to explore and understand more complex and sensitive issues such as *"prejudices and conflicts that are experienced in the employment status of international trainees"*, trainee's experiences on the course where *"conversations were often quite polarised around Black and Brown people and White people"* and *"the difference between [the host] culture, your your culture of origin and your acculturated self"*.

However, in some cases, understanding **remained limited**. Trainee7 and several others reported a complete lack of acknowledgement of their differences: *"I don't think... with the four supervisors I've had, we've really had any conversation to acknowledge the fact that I grew up in France, and they've all been British, and English is my second language, and things like that."* Supervisor4, who named difference early on but did not explore it more deeply, also reflected on her limited understanding:

> *...they were relatively silent and sometimes the responses they would give me were very much based on the theory and the knowledge … And I think that kind of struck me as I don't really know what to make of it. So the way I was understanding it was just a confidence thing.*

Exploration of the Cultural and the Personal

This category captures how conversations about trainees' and supervisors' backgrounds started and developed.

Using Opportunities to Bring up Trainee's Background

Clinical work served **as the main springboard** for such conversations: *"…it's like a bit of a springboard – so you talk about a case and then that would generate the appropriate themes or topics to talk about"* (Trainee10). Trainees gave multiple examples of bringing up their background in relation to *"a specific difference or specific similarity that you have with the client"* (Trainee1). Aside from clinical need, this was also seen as a safer way to introduce the conversation: *"Just none of it has come up and I tried to bring it. Not about myself, because that didn't feel right because there is no kind of invitation there, but about kind of clients and clients' cultures."* (Trainee3)

The **trainee's external reality coming into supervision** was another common route to more personal conversations. Some were prompted by trainees' needs such as more *"flexibility, like in terms of the working hours"* (Trainee5) or external events: *"…we talked a lot about families when because it coincided with the war in Ukraine starting"* (Trainee6). For Trainee10, conversations about *"personal connections not being here"* happened as part of *"a check-in"*, while Trainee1 noted that the topic came up *"in the context of annual leave"*.

Instances of **supervisors** taking an opportunity to **initiate an informal interaction** were less common and felt more risky:

> *... supervisor mentioned something around me going somewhere with my lovely French accent and I was a bit struck by it, because that's not at all how I see my accent and and we never talk about the fact that I'm French to start with.* (Trainee7)

However, the following initiative, which occurred in the context of emerging safety, was reported as being received well by the trainee: *"I remember overhearing him like talking to himself and remember being like, 'What language do you think in?' [giggles]."* (Supervisor5)

Two trainees also gave examples of bringing up their cultural differences **in response to** or in anticipation of **supervisors' feedback**:

> *We had a conversation about the way I communicate … I kind of had to bring in, because it was something that the supervisor I think noticed and I called it like "I lose the English ruffles when I'm tired". And I was explaining a bit.* (Trainee6)
>
> *She [supervisor] just thought, "That's [written language] something I would love you to correct". Yeah, that's it. But I thought it's more than that, that we should talk about and would be helpful to talk about, yeah. So it was quite a polite dance…* (Trainee5)

Engaging in the Conversation

When supervisors and trainees engaged by **staying with** the topic **and going deeper,** this contributed to the **growing understanding of the meaning of differences** as reflected by the following:

> *…that led us into a conversation about, I guess, kind of core values and asking her where that kind of concept of kindness comes from, what kindness looks like within her culture. And that led her to say to me that what she needed to explain to me was about Confucianism … So she drew me a a diagram.* (Supervisor3)

Furthermore, Supervisor2 highlighted that *"it was an evolving conversation – it didn't happen once only"*.

More commonly, however, trainees reported that supervisors chose to **maintain** their **distance** by staying at an impersonal level or closing down the conversation: *"…if I bring it up, my supervisor will say, 'Okay, that's really interesting', but there won't be a follow up"*

(Trainee9). Trainee3 also explained how her supervisor's dismissing response reinforced the existing **power imbalance**:

> *…it just kind of confirmed for me, you know, that actually if there's not an interest there then then it's not really like a… Don't know if safe space is the right word because I didn't feel threatened. But it's not a conducive space to have those conversations*.

Third-Party Intervention

When direct conversations did not feel possible due to **power imbalance** or did not resolve misunderstandings, concerns were raised with the course, as in the case of Trainee5: "*…at the very end I asked help from uni … So yeah, it required some interventions from a third party."* The intervention was experienced as helpful when a course representative **facilitated dialogue and mutual understanding**:

> *…[placement] reviewer brought in a very helpful broader picture or the broader context of what's going on for an international trainee, especially for one who has just arrived in the country. So, and then I guess that helped my supervisor understand.* (Trainee5)

Trainee11, however, reported that her placement reviewer *"took their [supervisor's] side",* **closing down the exploration**. A similar experience was described by Supervisor4, who voiced concerns about the trainee working continuously without taking leave :

> *I do wonder whether, you know, the university was kind of taking an easy way out of just kind of, you know, looking away slightly and saying, "Well, it's a cultural difference that we have."*

Navigating Complexity

This category describes various challenges to the supervision process and participants' use of support.

Facing Obstacles

Participants identified a range of **obstacles** that could interfere with supervision. Supervisors emphasised **practical barriers** such as limited capacity and needing to a have *"a bit of a headspace"* (Supervisor1) for a proper start, a shared office *"to go over and kind of just check in"* (Supervisor5), *"in-person contact time"* (Supervisor3), being *"co-located"* (Supervisor3), and longer time on placement as *"the brevity of that contact doesn't give a lot of chance for safety to develop"* (Supervisor3). For trainee participants, such as Trainee5, competing priorities and times pressures within supervision were key: *"Sometimes we just don't have time"*.

In addition to **practical barriers**, various **conversation traps** were noted. Multiple supervisors reported feeling inhibited and "*worried about saying the wrong thing"* (Supervisor1). Trainees also commented on supervisors *"stepping on the eggshells"* (Trainee9), avoiding *"to talk about you or go to a personal level because it's safer"* (Trainee11) and being reluctant to share because it might feel *"too personal and too much"* (Trainee6). Becoming *"detail-focused and intervention-focused"* (Supervisor5) because of the need to prioritise skill-building was noted too. In addition to neglecting deeper exploration, this also risked feeling like overcorrection, as captured by the following: *"She [supervisor] kind of explained from the top … when maybe I did have similar concepts. It's just that the way we express it in our culture is very different"* (Trainee11). Participants further highlighted a risk of overemphasising difference and *"imposing"* (Supervisor2) the conversation and neglecting to raise topics that do not directly flow from clinical work unless they are introduced by the trainee, such as implications of their culture in the supervisory

relationship: *"I really wished they had said that earlier on in the placement because we could have had a conversation about it … And sadly, you know, this happened on the last week of the placement"* (Supervisor4).

Using Support

The use of **tools,** especially to facilitate the initial conversation, was common and included the framework of social *"graces"* (Supervisor4), *"genogram"* (Supervisor3) and *"placement contract"* (Supervisor1). Trainees also considered them helpful, although acknowledged that it was not *"a simple solution to just find frameworks"* (Trainee4). For Trainee2, **supervisor's readiness to connect** was more important than **tools**: *"So we didn't do any activities, any exercises, but it was just that interest"*.

Participants also **drew on external resources,** including the supervisor's *"own supervision"* (Supervisor1), the trainee's *"personal therapy"* (Trainee8), *"peer support"* (Trainee5) within the course and *"cross-training courses peer support group"* (Trainee6). Many participants, such as Supervisor5, noted that taking part in this study prompted reflection and learning: *"I will probably put some things on the agenda for like the next couple of meetings … It's like, well, we change the position of an electron when we look at it"*. For some trainees who had few positive experiences, connecting with others through a shared identity was particularly powerful: *"…it [focus group] encouraged me to continue having those conversations within supervision and everyone around"* (Trainee9).

Integrating

This category captures participants' approach to ending and their development from supervision experience.

Managing Endings

Managing the ending depended on the experience of the **unfolding supervisory relationship** and the **exploration of the cultural and the personal**. When this went

particularly well, a **need to process loss** was noted, as in the case of Supervisor3: *"...I'd really hoped that we were going to be able to recruit her to stay in our service. Because she was fantastic. So I felt kind of sad for us, sad for me, sad for our service."*

Alternatively, when challenges occurred in the supervision process, the ending provided another **opportunity to have an open conversation.** Trainees felt more able to initiate these conversations as *"the worry of passing the placement was gone"* (Supervisor4), although Trainee11 noted that her communication *"was still that very like nice, vague"*. While Supervisor4 appreciated the trainee's initiative to explain the influence of their cultural background and *"was really grateful to the trainee for pointing it out"*, Trainee5 reported that his *"conversation didn't go well"* and both parties *"were not actually hearing each other, but more like ... defending"*.

Growth and Learning

Reflecting on missed opportunities and successes, supervisors highlighted their **learning for future placements**, such as the importance of *"being really quite explicit and open about it"* (Supervisor1) or talking about differences in terms of *"what it means for us personally ... and what do we expect from one another"* (Supervisor4).

For trainees, **positive experiences**, in particular, **led to growing confidence to initiate**: *"...that first experience just just gives me this, you know, push"* (Trainee4). This also applied to a successful third-party intervention: *"I think that's quite a turning point ... for me that things could change because of this transparency ... And yeah, I think that definitely prompted me to say a bit more."* (Trainee5)

Finally, **broader personal and professional growth was reported,** acknowledging that it was *"helpful and a little bit painful at the same time"* (Supervisor3). Trainees highlighted benefits such as awareness *"in MDTs and different meetings of how would that [trainee's communication] maybe come across to people"* (Trainee6), *"role modelling for*

trainee to do similar things for their future trainees once they have qualified" (Trainee5) and overcoming insecurity around language – *"I stopped seeing it like, you know, 'oh it's a, it's a major barrier'"* (Trainee4). Supervisors appreciated *"a privilege to get to learn about things I would not have known about"* (Supervisor2), which could also inform their practice: *"…it gives me also some information about like if I have a trainee or a patient that I'm seeing from a similar background"* (Supervisor5). This was felt particularly strongly by Supervisor3:

> *…there's such enormous potential for growth in your own ways of thinking about culture in supervision, but also the ways that that then knock on, knocks on to the richness of the conversations you can have with yourself and with your clients about the way that culture plays out in your clinical work too. Because I think the two aren't separate, the learnings flow in both directions between those two.*

Discussion

Summary of Findings

The study provides a model for understanding processes of cross-cultural supervision with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds. The results support broad theoretical concepts and specific developments highlighting a cultural perspective in supervision.

The GMPS (Watkins et al., 2018), proposed as a meta-theory of psychotherapy supervision, delineates common input, process, and output variables, many of which were captured in this research. The sub-category "what comes into the supervisory relationship" largely overlaps with input in the GMPS. The findings contribute to this conceptualisation by illuminating specific salient external influences (e.g., workplace diversity) and areas of strength and vulnerability that both parties may bring into supervision with international trainees.

According to the GMPS, supervisors' and supervisees' characteristics affect their self-relatedness – a process variable which continually influences supervision interactions and relationship development (Watkins et al., 2018). Self-relatedness is considered an expression of one's self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-control. Defensive behaviour and psychological rigidity are seen as signs of negative self-relatedness. The two sub-categories – "trainee's readiness to connect and make themselves understood" and "supervisor's intent to connect and understand" – are consistent with this theoretical proposition, suggesting that both parties' relational stance may be especially pertinent in cross-cultural supervision.

Of central importance in the GMPS framework is the supervision bond. Watkins (2018) suggests that it is best understood "as a synergistic combination of both the supervisory working alliance and real relationship", meaning that it involves the work bond needed to complete supervision tasks and associated with the supervisory alliance (Bordin, 1983) as well as the personal bond arising from ordinary human connecting also known as the real relationship (Gelso, 2011; Watkins, 2011). Drawing from research on therapeutic relationships, Watkins (2015) argues that the personal bond in supervision develops in a similar way, starting with initial automatic judgements, which, if positive, give rise to mutual liking and prompt the formation of trust and attachment. This process is apparent in participants' accounts of "early impressions" and "tension of power and safety". From this perspective, strong personal bonds may be attributed to trainees and supervisors who reported favourable impressions, followed by emerging and expanding safety, continuous and deepening exploration, and growing understanding of more complex and sensitive issues.

"Learning and growth" identified in the data further support several output variables of the GMPS. Interestingly, the GMPS describes supervisees' progress solely as clinicians while highlighting supervisors' development in their supervisory capacity. However, this

research suggests that supervision experiences may facilitate the growth of both individuals in their respective supervisory roles and promote their broader personal development.

The study also provides valuable insights into multicultural orientation and its key tenet – cultural humility (Hook et al., 2018; Watkins et al., 2019). Hook et al. (2018) refer to multicultural orientation as a "way of being" that has to precede multicultural competence as a "way of doing". Participants seemed to share this view, as they noted limitations of supervisor training and tools, indicating that an action-oriented approach to supervision was unlikely to work without the supervisor's genuine interest and openness.

Hook et al. (2018) propose that supervisors can demonstrate cultural humility by directly acknowledging cultural differences in the supervisory dyad or by focusing on cultural aspects of the supervisee's clinical work. However, both approaches risk evading a meaningful conversation due to traps identified in this study, as supervisors may neglect to explore the implications of differences in the supervisory relationship or, in the case of clinical discussions, leave differences unacknowledged and avoid deeper conversations regarding trainees' backgrounds. This supports the idea that opportunities for exploration might be missed if the supervisor shows cultural humility but is inhibited by too much discomfort (Watkins et al., 2019).

Cultural comfort and cultural opportunities are considered the other two pillars of multicultural orientation (Watkins et al., 2019). The current findings endorse the notion that there are multiple opportunities for cultural conversations which can contribute to relationship-building if supervisors remain attentive to them. Furthermore, the "window of opportunity" sub-category is consistent with the recommendation that supervisors should broach the topic early in the relationship.

Limitations and Research Recommendations

While this study is notable for integrating both perspectives, it may reflect supervisors' experiences less well due to fewer participants in this group. Additionally, as the sample was self-selected and those with little interest in cultural issues were unlikely to participate, some aspects of the supervision process were potentially overlooked. Although some diversity was achieved among study participants, time constraints limited further recruitment. Recognising my subjectivity as a researcher and the likely influence of my identity on participant recruitment and responses, the transferability of these findings should be considered tentatively.

Future research should prioritise efforts to include individuals from diverse backgrounds. In line with US-based studies, more focused research with trainees from specific countries or backgrounds could help illuminate unique processes that may not be universally shared in cross-cultural supervision. While more evidence from the supervisors' perspective is needed, future studies could also involve course staff, for example, in tutor roles, to incorporate their viewpoint.

Implications

Based on the study findings, several key implications were identified. The study highlighted the significance of the initial phases of the supervisory relationship and the way both parties entered supervision in terms of its development. On an individual level, both members of the supervisory dyad could contribute to a more positive experience by approaching early supervision with a degree of openness and intentionality. A stance of genuine curiosity and effort to explicitly state expectations and meaningfully acknowledge cultural differences would likely facilitate contracting, whether it is completed formally or informally. From participants' accounts, both supervisors and supervisees may bring anxieties that inhibit self-expression and mutual understanding. Finding agency to share such

concerns (e.g., supervisors' lack of familiarity with trainees' cultural backgrounds or supervisees' previous experiences of being negatively judged due to their culturally influenced communication styles) in a way that feels appropriate could help create a foundation of trust and connection.

On a broader level, clinical courses seem best positioned to implement changes to improve the overall cross-cultural supervision practice with international trainees. Participants emphasised the value of culturally informed teaching and pastoral support, suggesting that efforts to adapt curricula and enhance staff's multicultural orientation and competence would be beneficial. When challenges arose on placement, course representatives appeared to have significant influence over the unfolding situation. Course staff sensitivity, awareness and skill could, therefore, translate into both trainees and supervisors feeling more supported and understood and becoming more understanding of each other.

Another area for improvement is supervisor training and placement organising. Implementing multicultural orientation principles in this domain could enhance supervisors' cultural comfort and humility. As participants emphasised the need for genuineness and avoiding tokenism, supervisor training should attend to supervisors' blind spots and offer opportunities for reflection in addition to practical strategies. Echoing Zhou (2021), the findings suggest that supervisors may benefit from knowing that international trainees appreciate their curiosity and opportunities to educate them about their idiosyncratic experiences, especially when supervisors clearly show cultural humility and affirm their strengths.

Conclusion

This is the first comprehensive study exploring supervision with international clinical psychology trainees in the UK. Along with expanding primarily US-based research into another geographical area, it makes a unique contribution by integrating supervisor and

supervisee viewpoints. The constructed model outlines an iterative process through which participants engaged in cross-cultural supervision relationships. The findings suggest that both supervisors and trainees may experience growth as they encounter challenges and successes and continue to adapt their approach, with wider support playing a potentially significant role in facilitating this process.

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Section C: Appendices of supporting materials

Appendix A: Qualitative Assessment (Six Studies)

CASP criteria	Ninomiya (2012)	Ho (2021)	Sangganjanavanich & Black (2009)	Rasheed (2015)	Kiteki et al. (2022)	Jin et al. (2022)
Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research? Consider: • *What was the goal of the research* • *Why it was thought important* • *Its relevance*	The aim is stated clearly. The study focuses on exploring Asian foreign-born therapists' experiences with European-American supervisors to address gaps in research around cross-cultural supervision with this group and the dominance of Eurocentric ideas in training and supervision.	The aim is stated clearly. The need to explore the experiences of non-native English-speaking international student (NNESIS) trainees in supervision is explained by drawing attention to the paucity of empirical research with this particular group and limitations of current supervision models and theories.	The aim of the study is clearly stated and the need for research is explained based on the limited knowledge about supervisors' multicultural awareness and practices. The authors also highlight the need to understand and explain effective and ineffective multicultural supervision, give voice to international counsellors-in-training, and provide recommendations.	The aim is stated several times; however, there is some variation across these statements. The author highlights gaps in current literature on supervision needs of international trainees, especially those intending to practise in their home countries.	The aim of the study is clearly stated. The authors explain the importance and relevance of the research in terms of growing internationalisation of counselling programmes and the need to improve international trainees' supervision experiences. The need for more qualitative studies into lived experiences and with more diverse samples is also highlighted.	The aim of the study is clearly stated. The article notes increasing diversity, the potential impact of supervision on client outcomes and gaps in the existing literature regarding supervision experiences of international trainees to establish its relevance and importance.
Is a qualitative methodology appropriate? Consider: • *If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research* • *Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal*	The study seeks to explore participants' (Asian foreign-born therapists') subjective experiences, which aligns with the objectives of qualitative research.	The study seeks to explore participants' (international trainees') subjective experiences, which aligns with the objectives of qualitative research.	The study seeks to explore participants' (international counsellors-in-training) subjective experiences, making qualitative research an appropriate choice.	The study seeks to explore participants' (international trainees') subjective experiences, which aligns with the objectives of qualitative research.	The study seeks to explore participants' (international counselling trainees) subjective experiences, making qualitative research an appropriate choice.	The study seeks to explore participants' (international counselling and psychology trainees') subjective experiences, making qualitative research an appropriate choice.

Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research? Consider: *If the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)*	A qualitative study design with a phenomenological orientation was chosen due to the exploratory nature of the study, specifically seeking to understand the meaning that participants gave to their experiences.	The researcher chose a qualitative study design employing narrative inquiry for its ability to capture and analyse rich context-dependent stories of international students in clinical supervision.	The researcher chose a qualitative design using phenomenological approach in order to explore the in-depth experience of international students.	A qualitative study design was chosen to explore participants' lived-experience, taking into account their cultural contexts. It is stated that the use of an ethnographic methodological framework with a phenomenological perspective allowed the researcher to capture the essence of trainees' experiences from their own perspective and gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.	Not enough information is provided to determine this. Qualitative design using reflexive thematic approach seems suitable to address the research questions; however, explicit justification is not provided.	Not enough information is provided to determine this. Partial justification for using a qualitative design and phenomenological approach to data analysis is given, connecting it to the research aim. Some benefits of using survey as opposed to other methods are described (e.g., more time for reflection) but not explained in detail.
Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research? Consider: • *If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected* • *If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study* • *If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g.*	The recruitment strategy seems appropriate. The researcher employed purposeful criterion sampling in line with phenomenological research principles. Inclusion criteria were explained. The process involved advertising on the APA listserv (advertisement included in the appendix) and	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is somewhat unclear. It involved purposive sampling across Canada and the Northeast Corridor in the United States. Participants were recruited through word of mouth, online forums, newsletters and recruitment flyers targeting	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. It employed purposive sampling to recruit international counsellors-in-training, providing reasons for their selection and describing the sample. However, the study lacks information about how these individuals were contacted or who	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. Purposeful snowball sampling was employed, contacting training staff and international counsellors-in-training via email. The author lists inclusion criteria, such as participants' geographic origin and age range, without explaining them, and does not mention if	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. The article mentions purposeful and snowball sampling and explains that participants were recruited via email. However, it lacks specific details about the number of respondents, criteria for participant selection and whether there were any individuals who declined to participate.	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. The authors' description of using purposive sampling through professional networks, social media and psychology organisations lacks more specific detail. The article provides participant inclusion criteria without explaining them. It is

why some people chose not to take part)	utilising personal and professional networks. Participants were contacted via email and phone. Out of 10 individuals who expressed interest, seven took part, with reasons for non-participation explained.	international student associations in universities. Pre-interview phone conversations were conducted to explain the study's purpose and eligibility, but reasons for non-participation are not discussed.	declined to participate.	anyone declined to participate.		noted that 13 individuals initially agreed to participate, but three did not complete all the questions and were subsequently excluded; however, possible reasons for their drop-out are not explained.
Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue? Consider: • *If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research* • *If the setting for the data collection was justified* • *If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)* • *If the researcher has justified the methods chosen* • *If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)*	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, conducted face-to-face (3) and over Skype (4). The author cites logistics as the reason for using Skype. However, there is no information on where face-to-face interviews took place. Interviews were audio-recorded and questions are included in the appendix. Data saturation is not discussed.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data were collected via interviews, using Skype but no specific justification for this choice is given. The interviews were audiotaped. Interview guide is provided in the appendix. Although data saturation is not explicitly mentioned, the author describes assessing new information by writing summaries after each transcript during the analysis process.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data collection involved individual interviews (interview questions provided in the appendix). However, the article does not provide information about the interview setting and data recording method. Field notes were employed for data triangulation, but data saturation is not discussed.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data were collected by conducting a focus group and individual interviews (over Skype and in person). The author does not explain the reason for interviewing remotely or specify where in-person interviews took place. The rationale for combining focus groups with individual interviews is given, and questions for both are included. The focus group was videotaped, while interviews were audiotaped. The researcher also recorded behavioural	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data collection via interviews is not adequately explained. The article states that interviews were conducted using a semi-structured online protocol, but does not give details on the platform used and does not discuss data saturation.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data collection involved an open-ended online survey (questions included in the appendix). However, the article does not explain the choice of using a survey over other methods like interviews and does not discuss theoretical saturation.

• *If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why* • *If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)* • *If the researcher has discussed saturation of data*				observations. The author claimed data saturation after the third interview but did not explain further.		
Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered? Consider: • *If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location* • *How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design*	This appears to have been adequately considered. The author does not explicitly state if she knew any of the study participants beforehand, but includes a reflection on the interview process, describing participants' and her own emotional reactions, notes that the interview location and time were decided collaboratively and gives a detailed account of her background and experience, outlining specific assumptions as well as their potential impact.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Relationships with study participants and responses to events during the research process are not considered. While the researcher mentions efforts to reflect on personal biases through journaling and peer-debriefing, specific assumptions and their influence on the research process is not explained. The researcher's positionality in relation to participants is noted, but not sufficiently explored.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The authors do not explain if they had any pre-existing relationships with study participants or how participants might have perceived and related to the research team. The article does not discuss the researchers' influence on the research process, including the formulation of questions and data collection. There is also no information about the research team's responses to events during the study.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The author does not explain if he had any pre-existing relationships with study participants or how participants might have perceived and related to the research team. The researcher mentions the use of a reflective journal, provides questions for self-reflection and describes some preconceptions that stem from his personal experience as an international trainee. However, the author does not explain their influence on the research process or discuss his responses to events during the study.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. There is no specific information on the research team members' relationships with study participants and reactions to events during the study. The article mentions that journaling and reflexive discussions were used to implement bracketing and provides some information on the author' backgrounds and biases, but does not sufficiently discuss their potential influence on the research process. No information is provided on how the team responded to events during the study.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. No specific information is given in terms of relationships between the research team and study participants. The article mentions the team's reflection on their backgrounds and biases, but does not discuss the potential impact of specific assumptions or the team's responses to events during the research process.

Have ethical issues been taken into consideration? Consider: • *If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained* • *If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)* • *If approval has been sought from the ethics committee*	The study was approved by the California Institute of Integral Studies. Phone calls were arranged with those who expressed interest in taking part. Following this prospective participants received an introduction letter, informed consent form, bill of rights, and demographic questionnaire. Participants were informed about mental health support availability in case of distress, although the author mentions that no participants exhibited such distress as a result of taking part.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The author states that ethics approval was obtained from McGill University and that participants engaged in a pre-interview phone conversation, signed a consent form and completed a demographic questionnaire. However, the author does not explain how informed consent was obtained, especially considering that interviews were conducted over Skype, and does not discuss any potential effects on the participants and how they were managed.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The article mentions informed consent (not provided in the appendix) but does not say anything about ethics approval, or ethical issues that may have arisen during or after the study.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The study received ethics approval from Duquesne University. The author explains how the research was introduced to participants, with details on confidentiality and consent, and includes a consent form in the appendix. However, the possible impacts on the study participants and how they were addressed are not mentioned.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The ethics approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the university of the first author. The article mentions that participants completed informed consent forms online, but does not include any additional information or the form itself. There is no information on how the study's effects on the participants were handled.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The ethics approval was received from the university's Institutional Review Board. Although the article mentions that participants were provided with a brief description of the study and signed informed consent form online, it does not further discuss ethical issues, including how the potential impact on the study participants was managed.
Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous? Consider: • *If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process* • *If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the*	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The steps of the analysis process are explained clearly in terms of theories and methods but lack specific examples to	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. While the researcher mentions efforts to reflect on their biases through journaling and peer-debriefing, the specific	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The article provides some information about the analysis process but does not explain how categories/themes were derived. The	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. While the analysis is explained to some extent, including the mention of specific theories, it lacks transparency due to the absence of specific	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The overall analysis process is described clearly. However, specific examples to illustrate code/theme development are not provided. The authors	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The article describes the analysis process involving four team members coding data independently and reviewing

categories/themes were derived from the data • *Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process* • *If sufficient data are presented to support the findings* • *To what extent contradictory data are taken into account* • *Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation*	illustrate code/theme development. The assessment and management of contradictory data is not discussed. The strength of the study is that it presents ample data with individual interview descriptions and quotes from all participants, and the researcher's role is thoroughly explained.	assumptions are not explicitly stated, leaving uncertainty about the extent to which they had been taken into account. The steps in analysis process are clearly outlined, but examples to illustrate code/theme development are not provided. The assessment and management of contradictory data is not discussed.	discussion on contradictory data and the researcher's role in data analysis could have been more thorough (e.g., the article mentions conducting a negative case analysis but does not provide specific examples).	examples illustrating the generation of codes/themes and "integrative interpretations". The assessment and management of contradictory data is not discussed. The researcher does not critically assess the impact of his experiences and biases on data analysis and selection.	mention that some themes were discarded for lack of supporting data but do not provide more detail. The researchers' role in data analysis and interpretation is not adequately discussed. Sufficient quotes are presented to support the findings.	together, with the use of an external auditor for credibility. However, it lacks specific examples to illustrate code/theme development, does not address the assessment and management of contradictory data and provides limited discussion on the researchers' bias and potential influence.
Is there a clear statement of findings? Consider: • *If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments* • *If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)* • *If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question*	The findings are stated clearly and discussed in relation to original research questions. The discussion of the evidence for and against the researcher's arguments appears balanced. The author recognises potential limitations in interpreting the results. To enhance credibility, the researcher employed several strategies,	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated clearly and discussed in relation to the research questions. However, limitations that may explain the results are listed without a thorough discussion, leaving gaps in the discussion of evidence against the researcher's arguments. The researcher used peer debriefing (analytic	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated clearly and discussed in relation to the original research questions. However, the discussion does not address evidence against researcher's arguments. The study's credibility was enhanced through member-checking (sharing transcripts and themes with participants), data triangulation and	The author does not provide a clear summary of the study findings, and while some links are made with existing literature, the discussion lacks depth and detail. The study had one overarching research question and seven subsidiary questions, which are left unaddressed in the discussion. Credibility is briefly discussed, but there is a lack of information to	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated explicitly and discussed in relation to the original research question, but a more in-depth discussion of the evidence against the researchers' arguments and other measures to enhance credibility (in addition to peer debriefing and external auditing) would have been beneficial.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated explicitly and discussed in relation to the original research question. However, the article does not discuss the evidence against the researcher's arguments. Some strategies to enhance credibility are mentioned (e.g., more than one coder, external

	including respondent validation (sharing transcripts and themes with participants) and data triangulation (integrating observations with interviews).	triangulation) and sent interview summaries to participants for feedback (member checking), but additional techniques may have been needed to ensure credibility.	having more than one analyst.	substantiate the author's claims. The researcher mentions attempts to ensure trustworthiness through self-reflection and respondent validation but does not specify the number of respondents or their feedback.		auditor) but additional measures may have been needed (e.g., respondent validation).
How valuable is the research? Consider: • *If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature* • *If they identify new areas where research is necessary* • *If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other* ways the research may be used	The study offers a valuable contribution by extending existing research and introducing novel insights. The author discusses findings that corroborate previous research, such as the impact of acculturation and language ability, while also presenting unique contributions, such as the impact of agency staff and institutional culture on supervisory relationships. Recommendations are made for supervisees, supervisors and training sites, with an attempt to consider	The study makes a valuable contribution to existing literature and offers practical recommendations. It provides a more comprehensive understanding of trainees' experiences in supervision (e.g., by highlighting that their needs supervision needs change depending on their cultural identities, prior supervision identities, client population and work setting). The author discusses the implications of the research findings for supervision, training, and program	The research adds value to current knowledge by highlighting the unique needs of international counsellors-in-training in clinical supervision (e.g., recognition of their acculturation level). The authors also offer practical recommendations for supervisors and educators and make suggestions for future research such as further exploration into the acculturation experience of international counsellors-in-training and identifying training methods that	The study appears to make valuable contributions, although these could have been discussed more extensively, especially in relation to existing literature. The author emphasises that the findings reveal the need for specific training for supervisors and highlights the limitations of Western supervision models in evaluating the development of this trainee group. Recommendations for training programmes and supervisors are provided. Potential avenues for future research include exploring the	The article discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge, particularly in the context of improving the supervision (e.g., the importance of mutual learning that takes place in the supervisory dyad). The researchers also offer recommendations for supervisors and training programmes. Potential avenues for future research include exploring the experiences of supervisees form more individualistic countries and comparing different types of clinical supervision (with faculty vs site supervisors).	The article discusses the contribution of the study to existing knowledge, particularly in understanding the challenges faced by international supervisees (e.g., the effects of "regressive supervisory dyads"). Authors provide practical recommendations for supervisors and training programmes and identify some areas where further research is needed such as supervisory matching and intersectionality.

	their applicability to more diverse populations. Future research suggestions include investigating the relationship between trainees' cultural backgrounds and difficulties in skill-development and examining potential mismatches in theoretical orientation between supervisors and supervisees.	administration, and makes suggestions for future research such as exploring the supervision triad and intersectionality.	could be effectively used with this group.	experiences of European-American supervisors, comparing supervisors from minority and majority groups and investigating trainees' experiences of practising counselling upon return to their home countries.

Appendix B: Quality Assessment (Five Studies)

CASP criteria	Pendse (2017)	Garrison et al. (2022)	Chimbanda (2021)	Jin et al. (2023)	Killian (2001)
Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research? Consider: • *What was the goal of the research* • *Why it was thought important* • *Its relevance*	The aim of the study is clearly stated. Its relevance and importance is established by referencing previous research, indicating that international trainees experience discriminatory events in clinical work and supervision, which warrants further investigation into how supervisors address such events and their impact on supervisees' development.	The aim is stated clearly. The authors highlight the need to understand international trainee counsellors' experiences in the context of native-speakerism in order to improve their clinical training and supervision.	The aim is stated clearly. The author explains the study's importance and relevance in terms of addressing the gap in research related to clinical supervisors' experiences when working with international counsellors-in-training, in order to promote the development of multicultural competence and cross-cultural strategies in counselling education and supervision.	The aim is stated clearly. The authors highlight the need to address challenges and enhance current supervision practices, grounded in models and theories that fail to take cultural aspects into account.	While the article does not explicitly state its research aims, the focus seems to be on exploring participants' experiences in cross-cultural interactions within supervisory relationships in the context of family therapy training. The author highlights the increasing cultural diversity among the professionals working in this field and a lack of research on the impact of contextual variables on supervisory and training experiences.
Is a qualitative methodology appropriate? Consider: • *if the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research* • *Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal*	The study seeks to explore participants' (international trainees' in counselling and related programmes) subjective experiences, making qualitative research an appropriate choice.	The study seeks to interpret and illuminate the subjective experiences of trainees in clinical settings by using concept mapping (mixed-method design), which aligns with the objectives of qualitative research.	The study seeks to explore participants' (clinical supervisors') subjective experiences, which aligns with the objectives of qualitative research.	The study seeks to explore participants' (clinical supervisors') subjective experiences, making qualitative research an appropriate choice.	Qualitative methodology seems appropriate given the nature of the implicit research goal (to explore cross-cultural interactions and subjective experiences of participants).
Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research? Consider:	The article lacks a clear explanation for choosing a mixed-method design, but it justifies the use of the Consensual Qualitative	The authors provide some justification for using mixed-methodology (concept mapping), highlighting its	The researcher chose a qualitative design using phenomenological approach as it was suitable for exploring clinical	Not enough information is provided to determine this. Given the nature of the research question, the design may be suitable,	The article lacks clarity regarding the research design and method selection. While it mentions phenomenology, it does not

• *If the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use)*	Research-Modified (CQR-modified). The authors highlight its suitability for researching underexplored phenomena, data triangulation and bottom-up analysis. While this indirectly suggests why a mixed-method design was chosen over a purely quantitative approach, the article could benefit from a more explicit justification.	participatory nature, suitability for change-oriented and practical research and previous successful application with this population. However, the rationale for selecting this method over a purely qualitative approach is not provided.	supervisors' perceptions of their experiences and cross-cultural interactions.	but the authors do not explain their decision or specify the methodological orientation. While the research procedure appears similar to the previous study by Jin et al. (2022), the article does not explicitly mention the use of a phenomenological approach. However, some justification is provided for using a survey.	explicitly state whether the author employed this approach or the rationale behind this choice.
Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research? Consider: • *If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected* • *If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study* • *If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)*	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. While some aspects of the recruitment process are explained, such as reaching out to student and professional groups via email, using Qualtrics online survey platform, and conducting a power analysis to determine the required number of participants (70), there is no explanation for why some respondents did not complete the surveys. The study mentions possible survey fatigue in the limitations section but does not directly connect it to incomplete responses. Additionally, the eligibility criteria are provided in the appendix, without	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. It involved contacting APA-accredited counselling psychology programmes and using the SCP International Section listserv, resulting in 20 eligible participants. Although eligibility criteria were provided, the reasons for participant selection and one participant's withdrawal before the interview are not discussed.	The recruitment strategy, which used a purposeful sampling and snowball method to target participants with relevant experience, appears suitable for the research aims. Participants were recruited through professional contacts, universities and the Counselor Education and Supervision Network Listserv. Participant selection criteria were provided and justified, although reasons for potential non-participation were not discussed.	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. The sample included 10 clinical supervisors with cross-cultural experience, recruited through professional networks, social media and psychology organisation lists. However, the article does not explain recruitments strategy in sufficient detail. The reasons for participant selection or any refusals are not discussed. Out of 13 respondents three were excluded due to incomplete surveys. This mirrors the previous study lead by the same authors	The appropriateness of the recruitment strategy is unclear. While the sample is described as trainees enrolled in masters and doctoral MFT programmes, the specific selection criteria are not explicitly stated. The author fails to provide any details about the recruitment process, including how participants were approached and selected.

	giving a more detailed explanation.			(Jin et al., 2022) with trainee participants which raises questions .	
Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue? Consider: • *If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research* • *If the setting for the data collection was justified* • *If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)* • *If the researcher has justified the methods chosen* • *If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)* • *If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why* • *If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)* • *If the researcher has discussed saturation of data*	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. An online survey was used for data collection, but the article but does explain why it was chosen other methods like interviews. It appears that practical considerations, such as convenience and the need for a larger sample size for quantitative analysis, may have influenced these decisions, but they are not explicitly stated. The author explains the process of determining data saturation.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The authors explain that initial interviews informed the development of an online survey used as the main data collection method, but do not provide sufficient detail on this. The setting of the interviews is not specified and although the article mentions that the interview questionnaire covered demographics and open-ended questions about participants' experiences with English language in clinical settings and supervisors' actions, it does not include the actual questions.	The description of the data collection process is somewhat incomplete. The study utilised semi-structured individual interviews conducted via Zoom Pro, with an explicit justification for this choice lacking. Participants received questions beforehand (available in the appendix). The researcher's claim of achieving data saturation after the seventh interview lacks sufficient explanation.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data collection involved an open-ended online survey (questions included in the appendix). However, the article does not explain the choice of using a survey over other methods like interviews and does not discuss theoretical saturation.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, which were audio-recorded. The author provides interview questions and notes that two out of 12 interviews were conducted over the phone but does not explain this further. Data saturation is not discussed.
Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. No specific details about the relationships between	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The authors do not discuss their relationship	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Some positive elements include the	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The authors do not explain if they had any	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. There is no information about the researcher's pre-

Consider: • *If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location* • *How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design*	participants and members of the research team are given. The article provides some information about the researcher's background and highlights the team's engagement in self-reflection, including recognising relevant past experiences. However, there is no information on specific assumptions and their influence on the research process. The team's responses to events during the study are also not discussed.	to the participants or any responses to events during the study. The article acknowledges the researchers' positionality, alignment with multicultural and anti-oppressive paradigms and mentions team discussions to enhance reflexivity. However, the paper does not sufficiently explain the researchers' influence on the research process.	acknowledgment of biases and assumptions stemming from the researcher's past negative experiences with supervisors as an international trainee, the use of reflective journaling and the recognition of possible implications of interviewing participants with whom the author had a pre-existing relationship. However, there is a lack of discussion of how the researcher's biases might have influenced the formulation of interview questions and data collection.	pre-existing relationships with study participants or how participants might have perceived and related to the research team. The article states that the team engaged in reflexivity to examine their own backgrounds and potential biases. However, there is a lack of information regarding specific assumptions held by the team and their potential influence. No information is provided on how the team responded to events during the study.	existing relationships with study participants and responses to events during the study. Although the author acknowledges his social locations and personal characteristics, which may have had an impact on his interactions with participants, he does not sufficiently examine potential his bias or its influence at different research stages.
Have ethical issues been taken into consideration? Consider: • *If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained* • *If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)*	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The authors explain that information around ethical issues, including confidentiality was accessed by participant as part of online survey (consent form included in the appendix). However, the paper does not provide any information regarding the ethics approval and fails to discuss the management of any potential effects on participants.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The article states that the study was approved by the researcher's institution. A discussion on ethical considerations briefly mentions the informed consent process and participant compensation of $25 but does not address the study's potential impact on the participants.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The author states that participants received a study description, ethics approval details, and consent documents; however, these are not provided and it remains unclear how the research was explained to potential participants or what ethical issues were raised in the process.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The ethics approval was received from the university's Institutional Review Board. While the article mentions that participants were provided with a brief description of the study and signed informed consent form online it does not provide any other information on ethical issues.	Ethical issues do not appear to have been sufficiently addressed by the researcher. The article does not provide information on how the research was explained to participants or mention informed consent. The ethics approval is not mentioned and the article does not discuss issues raised by the study such as potential effects on the participants and how they were handled.

• *If approval has been sought from the ethics committee*					
Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous? Consider: • *If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process* • *If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data* • *Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process* • *If sufficient data are presented to support the findings* • *To what extent contradictory data are taken into account* • *Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation*	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The analysis is described in some detail, including different steps and team members' input in the analysis process. Examples to illustrate code and theme development are provided. The author explains that quotes were chosen by selecting particularly descriptive responses. However, the discussion on team members' reflexivity lacks detail. The extent to which contradictory data was considered is unclear. The author mentions that sub-categories were developed when a category reflected two different perspectives on a particular issue. However, negative case analysis is not mentioned.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. While the article mentions various data analysis techniques such as concept mapping, multidimensional scaling, and cluster analysis, it lacks clarity regarding how core statements or categories/themes were derived from the interview data, providing only two quotes as examples. Additionally, a comprehensive description of how each method was applied is missing. The assessment and management of contradictory data is not discussed.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The researcher outlines the analysis process, including coding and theme identification, but lacks specific examples to illustrate code/theme development. A reflective journal was used to address the researcher's bias and sufficient data (quotes from all participants) were presented to support the findings. However, there is a lack of information on contradictory data and how it was addressed.	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The article describes the analysis process involving four team members coding data independently and reaching agreement through review, with the use of an external auditor for credibility. However, it lacks specific examples to illustrate code/theme development, does not address the assessment and management of contradictory data, and provides a limited discussion on the researchers' bias and potential influence.	The article lacks detailed information about the data analysis process. While it mentions the use of constant comparison and references Strauss and Corbin, associated with Grounded Theory, it does not explain the specific approach used or provide coding process examples. The selection of data for analysis is not explained, and there is insufficient data presented to support the findings. The article also lacks discussion on contradictory data and the researcher's role and potential biases in the analysis.
Is there a clear statement of findings? Consider: • *If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher's arguments* • *If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings*	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated explicitly and discussed in relation to the original research question. Although some limitations are mentioned, the discussion lacks detail to sufficiently	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated explicitly, presented as clusters related to trainees' experiences and helpful or hindering supervisory events. The evidence both	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. Although the findings are stated explicitly and linked to the original research question, the author does not discuss the stated limitations in sufficient detail, resulting	Insufficient details are provided to determine this. The findings are stated explicitly and discussed in relation to the original research question. However, the article does sufficiently address the evidence	The article lacks a clear statement of the study findings. The author does not provide a sufficient discussion of evidence for and against the researcher's arguments and does not mention any strategies to enhance credibility. There is

(e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst) • *If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question*	explain how they might have influenced the findings and address evidence against researcher's arguments. Some attempts to enhance credibility are mentioned (more than one analyst, group reflection); however, additional measures may have been needed.	for and against the researcher's arguments is discussed with reasonable detail. However, there are some limitations in terms of credibility. The article does not mention respondent validation and triangulation appears limited, with one researcher extracting the statements and the team reviewing them.	in a limited examination of the evidence against the researcher's arguments. The researcher used respondent validation as the main method to ensure credibility. However, this could have been enhanced by employing other techniques (e.g., data or investigator triangulation).	against the researcher's arguments. Some strategies to enhance credibility are mentioned (e.g., more than one coder, external auditor) but additional measures may have been needed (e.g., respondent validation).	also no clear link between the findings and the research question which was not made explicit from the beginning.
How valuable is the research? Consider: • *If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature* • *If they identify new areas where research is necessary* • *If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other* ways the research may be used	The authors note that this is the first study investigating discriminatory events involving supervisors and interventions used by supervisors to address them. It offers recommendations for supervisors and outlines suggestions for future research such as involving supervisor participants and examining differences between supervisor from different backgrounds (e.g., international and domestic). The authors also discuss how research findings can be applied beyond supervision in terms of identifying and addressing challenging events.	The article highlights the study's unique contribution to the understanding of linguistic minority trainees' experiences in supervision. The authors explain implications for practice, training and advocacy, emphasising the need for cultural humility and a strengths-based approach in supervision. Using intersectionality to explore linguistic minority identities and including both supervisors' and supervisees' perspectives are suggested for future research.	The research makes a valuable contribution by contributing to existing knowledge and offering recommendations. The researcher identifies parallel processes between supervisors and supervisees and provides insights into supervisors' struggles underexplored in prior studies. The author makes recommendations for training institutions and future research directions (e.g., exploring supervision in other courses and conducting observations of real-life supervision sessions).	The article discusses the contribution of the study to existing knowledge, especially in relation to social justice perspective in supervision and using strengths-based approaches. The authors provide some practical recommendations for supervisors and training programmes. Some suggestions for future research are proposed but not discussed in much detail (e.g., intersectionality or exploring supervisory-dyads).	The study appears to make valuable contributions, although these could have been discussed in more detail, especially in relation to existing literature. In the discussion section, the author focuses on current practices and provides a list of practical recommendations for training programmes, supervisors and supervisees (e.g., sensitising questions). However, no suggestions for future research are included.

Appendix C: Trainee Focus Group Schedule

1. What is your experience of cross-cultural supervision on clinical placements during training? How would you describe it?

2. Could you think of an event related to supervision and your cultural diversity that has stood out to you? Could you describe it? What was the meaning of this event?

    PROMPT: This could be something you or your supervisor said or did or something that you felt or thought about internally.

3. What conversations about your cultural background have you had with your clinical supervisors?

4. What was your experience of these conversations? How would you describe them?

5. Who initiated these discussions and what cultural factors did they revolve around?

6. What do you think has enabled you and your supervisors to engage in conversations about your cultural background? Was there anything you felt you couldn't talk about?

    OR: What do you think has prevented you and your supervisors from engaging in such conversations?

7. What impact do you feel these conversations have had or would have had on you as a trainee clinical psychologist?

Appendix D: Supervisor Focus Group Schedule

1. What is your experience of cross-cultural supervision with clinical psychology trainees who come from another country and whose first language is not English? How would you describe it?

2. Could you think of an event related to supervision and your supervisee's cultural diversity that has stood out to you? Could you describe it? What was the meaning of this event?

> PROMPT: This could be something you or your supervisee said or did or something that you felt or thought about internally.

3. What conversations about supervisees' cultural background have you had with them as part of supervision?

4. What was your experience of these conversations? How would you describe them?

5. Who initiated these discussions and what cultural factors did they revolve around?

6. What do you think has enabled you and your supervisees to engage in conversations about their cultural background? Was there anything you felt you couldn't talk about?

> OR: What do you think has prevented you and your supervisees from engaging in such conversations?

7. What impact do you feel these conversations have had or would have had on your supervisees?

Appendix E: Provisional Trainee Interview Schedule

1. From your perspective, how important do you feel it was to consider your ethnicity, nationality or language in clinical supervision?

2. How much were these aspects of your cultural background addressed in supervision?

   If they were addressed:

   a. How did you and your supervisor go about raising them? What took priority?

   b. How meaningful did these conversations feel to you?

   If not addressed:

   c. What, if anything, do you think was missed by not considering these aspects of your cultural background in supervision?

3. If you were to work with a new supervisor, what, if anything, would you be doing differently in terms of how you approach supervision?

4. If you were to make changes, what benefits would you expect to see as a result of this?

5. What worries or concerns, if any, would you have about making changes in how you approach cross-cultural supervision?

Appendix F: Provisional Supervisor Interview Schedule

1. From your perspective, how important do you feel it was to consider your supervisee's ethnicity, nationality or language in clinical supervision?

2. How much were these aspects of your supervisee's cultural background addressed in supervision?

    If they were addressed:

    a. How did you and your supervisee go about raising them? What took priority?

    b. How meaningful do you think these conversations felt to the supervisee?

    If not addressed:

    a. What, if anything, do you think was missed by not considering these aspects of trainee's cultural background in supervision?

3. If you were to supervise another trainee from a different country, what, if anything, would you be doing differently in terms of how you approach supervision?

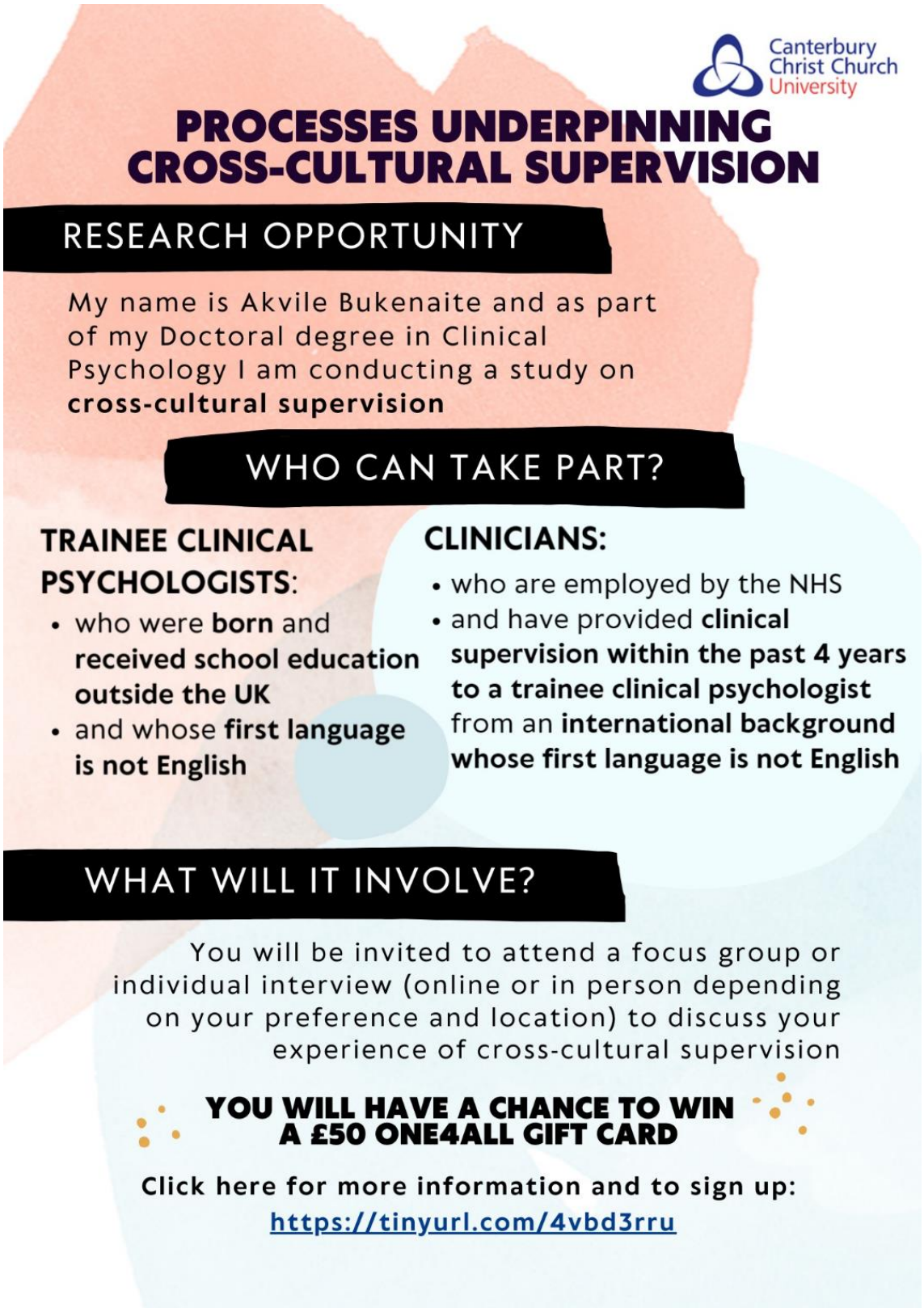
4. If you were to make changes, what benefits would you expect to see as a result of this?

5. What worries or concerns, if any, would you have about making changes in how you approach cross-cultural supervision?

Appendix G: Study Poster

Version 3

05 11 2023



Appendix H: Participant Information Sheet

Version 6

05 11 2023

Participant information sheet

Cross-cultural supervision with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds whose first language is not English

Hello, my name is Akvile Bukenaite and I am a trainee clinical psychologist at Canterbury Christ Church University. I would like to invite you to take part in a research study which aims to explore processes underlying cross-cultural supervision from the perspective of trainee clinical psychologists and their supervisors. This project is being supervised by Dr Sue Holttum, Senior Lecturer at the Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology, Canterbury Christ Church University. Before you make your decision, it is important that you understand why this research project is being carried out and what it involves.

Background

Over the recent years there has been a growing interest in the issues related to diversity and difference within psychology profession. There is also an increasing recognition that these factors are relevant to training and supervision. Trainees from international backgrounds who speak English as a second or additional language face unique challenges along the way to becoming clinical psychologists in the UK. This study focuses on exploring how these challenges manifest in clinical supervision in addition to any other processes that might take place. Given that supervision is a relationship-based activity, it feels important to investigate it from both supervisors' and supervisees' perspective.

Who can take part?

- Clinicians who are employed by the NHS and have provided clinical supervision within the past four years to a clinical psychology trainee who comes from an international background and whose first language is not English
- Trainee clinical psychologists who were born and received school education outside of the UK and whose first language is not English

What will taking part in the study entail?

You will be asked to attend a focus group, which will be held online. The study will involve two separate focus groups for trainees and supervising clinicians. The focus group will last up to 1.5 hours. After the focus group, you may be invited to take part in an individual interview to discuss your experience of cross-cultural supervision in more detail. This may take place online or in person depending on your preference and geographical considerations.

Do I have to take part?

No, your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to take part, you have a right to withdraw at any point during the focus group and interview, or up until one week after the focus group or interview has taken place. If you choose to withdraw, the information you shared during the focus will be deleted from the transcript together with any other data you have provided.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Participants may find it difficult or distressing to discuss some of their experiences of cross-cultural supervision. I will take care to conduct focus groups and interviews sensitively and considerately and provide an opportunity for a debrief. If a need for additional support is identified, I will discuss with you possible options to access help. This could be through Equality, Diversity and Inclusion representatives or other assistance at your university or employing trust.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Findings from this study will help inform our understanding of cross-cultural supervision with trainees from international backgrounds who speak English as a second or additional language. Some participants may find it beneficial to discuss their experiences of supervision and to think about the support they receive from supervisors or provide to supervisees. As a study participant you will enter a prize draw where you will have a chance to win a £50 voucher.

Will my data be kept confidential?

Yes, confidentiality of the data will be ensured. The focus group will be audio-recorded and the audio file will be stored on a password protected device. The information gathered will be typed up, taking care to remove any personal information so that it remains anonymous. For interviews and focus groups held online, MS Teams transcription feature will be used to create a first draft transcript. Once transcribed, the audio recording will be deleted and the transcript will be stored on a password protected device. My supervisor Dr Sue Holttum will only have access to the anonymised transcript. Anonymised data will be stored securely on Canterbury Christ Church University premises for 10 years after the study has finished in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University's own data protection requirements.

Are there any exceptions to confidentiality?

There may be some rare situations in which I might need to share information with other people. This would be in case you disclosed anything that causes concern about your safety or the safety of others. I will speak to you first to let you know that these concerns would be discussed with Dr Sue Holttum, who is supervising this research project.

What will happen with the data from this study?

Findings from this study will be written up as a formal report that I will submit to Canterbury Christ Church University as part of my training to become a clinical psychologist. The findings may also be published in an academic journal and shared with other mental health professionals. Written reports will contain quotes from the interviews, however they will be anonymised with all identifiable information removed. You can opt-in to receive a summary of findings, which will be emailed to you after the study has finished. This summary will not include any quotes but provide key ideas about processes within cross-cultural supervision based on the analysis of focus group and interview data. It will be reflective of both supervisors' and supervisees' accounts.

What if there is a problem?

If you have concerns about any aspect of this study, please contact me in the first instance. You can do this via email (ab1628@cantebury.ac.uk) or by calling Salomons research 24-hour voicemail phone number 01227 927070. When leaving a voice message please explain that it is for Akvile Bukenaite and provide your contact number.

If you feel that your concerns remain unaddressed and you wish to submit a formal complaint, you can do this by contacting Dr Fergal Jones, Research Director, Salomons Institute of Applied Psychology (fergal.jones@canterbury.ac.uk), tel: 01227 927110.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by the Salomons Ethics Panel at the Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology, Canterbury Christ Church University.

If you are unsure about taking part in the study or have any questions,
please contact Akvile Bukenaite on ab1628@canterbury.ac.uk

Appendix I: Participant Consent Form

Version 3

12 02 2023

Consent form

Cross-cultural supervision with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds whose first language is not English

If you would like to take part in the study, please read the following statements and tick the boxes to indicate your consent.

☐ I confirm that I have read and understood participant information sheet.

☐ I understand that taking part is voluntary.

☐ I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any point up until 7 days after the focus group/individual interview has taken place.

☐ I understand that the focus group/individual interview will be recorded, and that the transcript of the recording will be completely anonymised.

☐ I understand that any responses I give will remain confidential and that the only exception to this is if the researcher (Akvile Bukenaite) is concerned about the safety of me or somebody else as a result of information disclosed.

☐ I understand that anonymised data may be seen by the researcher's supervisor.

☐ I understand that anonymised data will be securely stored for 10 years in line with data protection rules.

☐ I agree to take part in the above study.

☐ I give my permission for anonymised data and quotes to be used in research that may be published.

Name of participant	Signature	Date

Researcher	Signature	Date

Appendix J: Demographic Survey

Which of the following applies to you?

a. I am a trainee clinical psychologist in the UK
b. I provide clinical supervision to trainee clinical psychologists in the UK

Questions for trainees:

Is your first language English?

a. Yes
b. No

What is your first language? (can be more than one)

What country or territory are you from? This may be an autonomous region, special administrative region or any other territory if applicable. Please indicate if you were born and grew up in different countries.

Did you complete your entire school education outside the UK?

a. Yes
b. No

Which year of training are you in?

How long have you lived in the UK?

a. Less than 2 years
b. 2 to 5 years
c. 6 to 10 years
d. Over 10 years

What is your funding status on the course?

a. NHS-funded
b. Self-funded

Questions for supervisors:

Are you employed by the NHS?

Have you supervised a trainee clinical psychologist from an international background whose first language is not English within the past four years?

a. No
b. Yes - supervised in the past four years
c. Yes – currently supervising

What is your professional role?

Questions for both:

How old are you?

Where in the UK do you live?

a. North East
b. North West
c. Yorkshire and The Humber
d. East Midlands
e. West Midlands
f. East of England
g. London
h. South East
i. South West
j. Wales
k. Scotland

What is your gender?

What is your ethnicity?

What is your nationality?

Do you have any disabilities?

a. Yes
b. No
c. Prefer not to say

Please provide your email address so I can invite you to a focus group/interview

Please also indicate if you are okay to attend online (via MS Teams) and if there are particular times or days that work best for you

Appendix K: Interview Process Description

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Appendix L: Ethics Approval

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Appendix M: Participant Debrief Form

Participant debrief form

Thank you for taking part in the focus group/interview. As the study aims to explore processes underpinning cross-cultural supervision it is understandable that our conversation may have touched on some difficult experiences or caused you discomfort.

A debrief is an opportunity to address any concerns you may have following your participation in the focus group/interview and to explore options for additional support if needed. I can also be contacted later on if you find yourself experiencing distress as a result of taking part in this study.

If you are a trainee clinical psychologist and require support in relation to challenging experiences whilst on training, you may find it helpful to speak to your course tutor or contact Equality, Diversity and Inclusion representatives at your university or employing trust.

If you are a supervisor and require support in relation to difficult experiences at your workplace, you can seek assistance from your employing trust, for example, by contacting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion representatives or utilising local employee assistant programmes that offer free counselling and expert help.

For all NHS staff in England, free and confidential support is available via the NHS helpline (**0300 131 7000),** which is open between 7 am and 11 pm every day. Staff can also text **FRONTLINE to 85258** for support 24 hours a day.

If you feel you need further professional help, you might find it useful to reach out to a mental health professional (please see the links below) or seek advice from your GP.

- To find a registered psychologist in the UK: http://www.bps.org.uk/psychology-public/find-psychologist/find-psychologist
- To find registered counsellors and psychotherapists in the UK: https://www.bacp.co.uk/search/Therapists https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/find-a-therapist/

Appendix N: Positioning Statement

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Appendix O: Reflective Diary

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Appendix P: Excerpt From a Focus Group Transcript with Initial Codes and Memos

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Appendix Q: Excerpt From a Trainee Interview Transcript with Initial Codes and Memos

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Appendix R: Excerpt From a Supervisor Interview Transcript with Initial Codes and Memos

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Appendix S: Examples of Memos and Diagrams from Later Stages of Data Analysis

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Appendix T: Summary for the Participants

Canterbury Christ Church University

Cross-cultural supervision with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds: A grounded theory

Thank you for taking part in the study exploring cross-cultural supervision with international trainees who speak English as a second or additional language. In total, 11 trainees and five supervisors were interviewed and I am very grateful for the time you have given to this research.

Your contributions through focus groups and interviews have informed the development of a model outlining important processes of cross-cultural supervision with international trainees. Below is a brief summary of this model. It is worth noting that, given the diverse perspectives shared, some aspects of these findings may resonate with your experiences more closely than others.

Cross-cultural supervisory relationship: mutual growth through trial and error

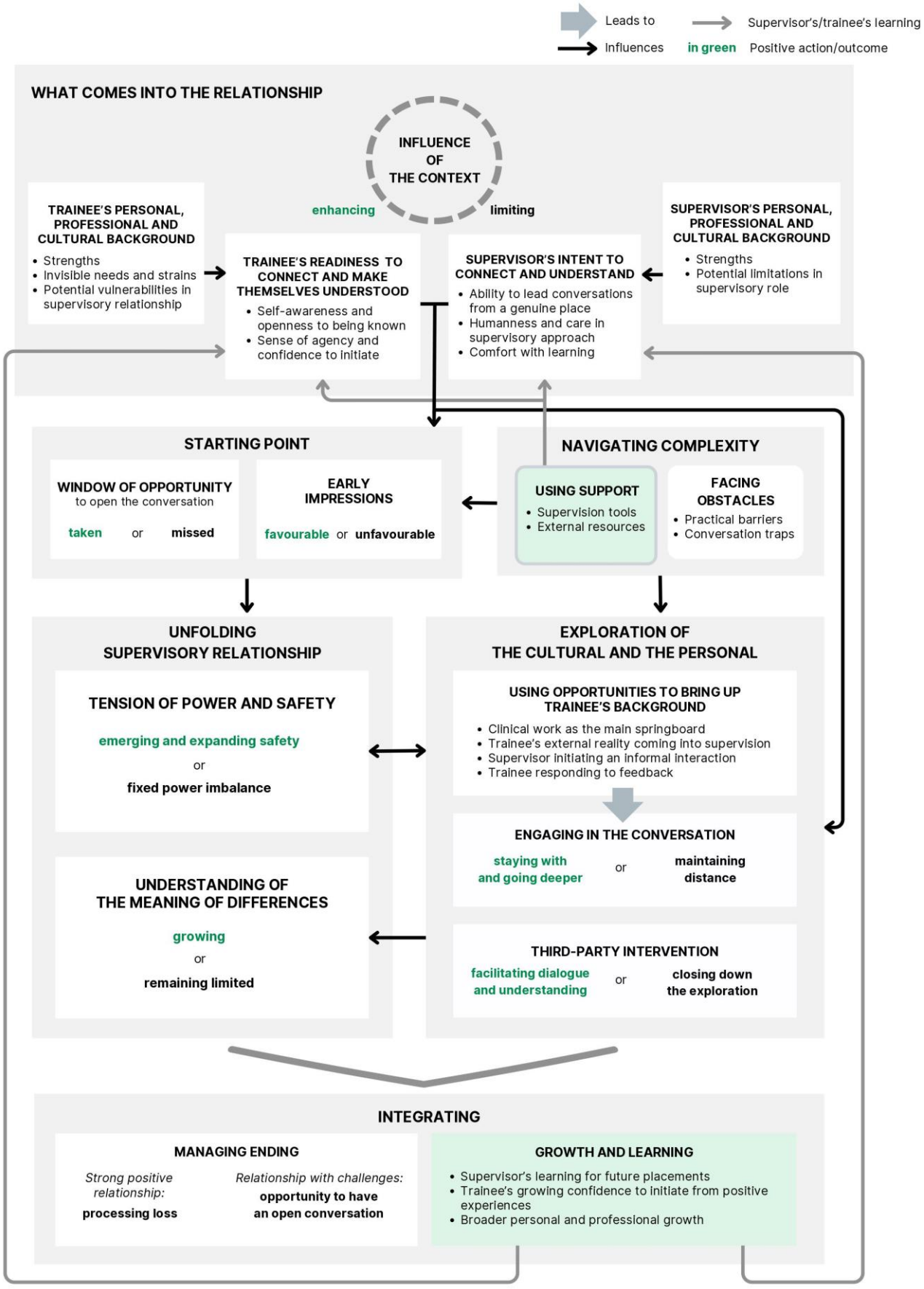
The model captures how, over time and over multiple supervisory relationships, both supervisors and trainees may experience growth as they encounter challenges and successes and continue to adapt their approach.

Based on your accounts, the overall supervision process appeared to be influenced by what came into supervision, including the trainee's and supervisor's backgrounds and the influence of the wider context. The trainee's readiness to connect and make themselves understood, along with the supervisor's intent to connect and understand, shaped the starting point of the relationship and its unfolding. While there were many opportunities for exploration, clinical work served as the main springboard. Meaningful engagement in such conversations was reported when supervisors and trainees stayed with the topic and went deeper. In some cases, when challenges occurred in the supervisory relationship, the trainee's background came up in the context of a third-party intervention involving a course representative. These interventions were seen as helpful when they facilitated dialogue and understanding.

Trainees' development flourished through meaningful exploration, growing understanding and increasing safety as they discovered what worked well in supervision and felt more confident to initiate conversations on subsequent placements. Furthermore, these experiences facilitated broader personal and professional growth, empowering trainees in clinical work and future supervisory roles. Growth, especially in cultural self-awareness, also came from challenging experiences. In such instances, leaning on external support was felt to be particularly valuable, as it helped trainees align with their wish for a more positive experience and contributed to their readiness to connect.

Cross-cultural supervision was also a learning process for supervisors, presenting unexpected challenges they had to find a way to navigate through. Building safety and engaging in meaningful exploration of differences required work and intentionality on the supervisors' part. Achieving success in these endeavours was experienced as rewarding and facilitated both personal and professional growth. Similarly to trainees, difficult experiences also provided valuable lessons to supervisors, leading to greater awareness and informing their approach with future supervisees.

Model of Cross-Cultural Supervision Process



Appendix U: Summary for the Ethics Panel

Cross-cultural supervision with trainee clinical psychologists from international backgrounds: A grounded theory

The importance of salient differences and cultural humility has been increasingly recognised not only in therapeutic work but also in clinical supervision. While cross-cultural supervision with international trainees has received some attention from researchers in the United States, the topic remains largely unexplored in the United Kingdom, especially in the context of clinical psychology training.

This study used a grounded theory approach to examine processes underpinning clinical supervision with trainees from international backgrounds who speak English as a second or additional language. Three focus groups and seven individual interviews were conducted with 16 participants (11 trainees and five supervisors).

The constructed model encompasses six major categories ("what comes into the supervisory relationship", "starting point", "unfolding supervisory relationship", "exploration of the cultural and the personal", "navigating complexity", and "integrating"), outlining an iterative process through which participants engaged in supervisory relationships. The findings suggest that both supervisors and trainees may experience growth as they encounter challenges and successes and continue to adapt their approach, with wider support playing a potentially significant role in facilitating this process.

This study is the first to thoroughly examine supervision with international trainees in the United Kingdom, expanding primarily US-based research into another geographical area. Furthermore, by taking into account both supervisors' and trainees' viewpoints, it makes a distinct contribution to the existing knowledge base, offering support to broad theoretical concepts applied within the field of supervision and specific developments that emphasise a

cultural perspective. The findings are considered in relation to the generic model of psychotherapy supervision (GMPS) and principles of multicultural orientation.

Based on the current findings, clinical courses seem best placed to implement changes to improve cross-cultural supervision practice with international trainees. This could be achieved by incorporating multicultural orientation and competence perspective into their teaching, supervisor training and direct interventions on placement with individual trainees and supervisors.

Given the limitations of this study, such as a predominantly European sample and fewer participants in the supervisor group, there is a clear need for further evidence from the supervisors' perspective and research involving participants from diverse backgrounds. Future studies should also consider including course staff who oversee or provide support to international trainees to further illuminate their role in clinical supervision and the overall training process of this specific population.