Supervision Utilizing Expressive Art Activities: A Road to Group Cohesion and Professional Learning

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Abstract

This paper shares research outcomes in which Master's practicum students participated in supervision utilizing art activities. To explore in-depth experiences of the participants and make sense of their perceptions on art activity-based supervision, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was chosen as analysis for this study. Semi-structured interviews with the participants were performed and collected as data. As results, two constructs—facilitating group cohesion and professional learning—and five themes corresponding to each construct were identified. In discussion, the power of visualization through art activities, the opportunity to reflect through expressive arts and its influences, and group cohesion facilitated by supervision using art tasks are argued. Limitations and suggestions for future study and conclusion of this study are included.

Clinical supervision for supervisees is provided to fulfill two major roles: to ensure client welfare and to advance supervisees' professional development (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). The first goal is particularly attended by state regulatory boards. Supervision is deemed as a regulated activity to ensure competency of mental health professionals to protect the public (Bernard & Goodyear, 2019). The latter goal is the focus of the dominant literature in clinical supervision as Carroll (2010) suggested that the core purpose of supervision is supervisees' learning. Carroll articulated benefits that supervisees could gain from supervision: theories, skills, professional wisdom, competencies, self-awareness, sensitivity to ethical issues, presentation of knowledge, use of intuition, and professional mindset.

The authors would focus on the second goal in clinical supervision, exploring the perspectives of supervisees when expressive art activities were invited in their supervision. The use of creativity in supervision has been acknowledged since the 1980s due to benefits that expressive arts could bring into supervision settings, which will be detailed below. Also, the use of expressive arts in supervision have been used for the concerns over traditional supervision: excessive emphasis on verbal exchange during supervision (Davis et al., 2018). Counseling is an intimate form of learning, and genuine encounters between counselor and client (Corey, 2017), and its process can involve conscious and unconscious discourse between the two parties. Using creativity and art-assisted supervision not only fits the dual process of verbal and nonverbal but promotes supervisees' experiences beyond words and logics (Wood & Pignatelli, 2019).

The growing interest and publications in the use of art in supervision is encouraging as it suggests scholarly effort to explore strategies and methods to maximize supervisees' development and supervision outcomes. However, the majority of literature has focused on articulating the process of incorporating expressive arts in supervision and its benefits with case studies and

vignettes, rather examining supervision using creative arts through scientific ways. For example, searching through Academic Search Complete, PsycInfo, and Worldcat within the window between 1960 and 2021 resulted in less than 10 research-designed articles out of over two hundred of publications with the topic of supervision and expressive arts. To establish legitimacy and provide evidence of this alternative way of supervision, more intentional effort to demonstrate its effectiveness through research designs is called for.

In this paper, the authors share a research project of art-assisted supervision through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, which was implemented as an effort to examine the applicability and the effectiveness of art activities in a supervision setting. Additionally, the authors distribute the outcomes of this study and its validity through articulation of practicum students and suggest a potential supervision format to supervisors and counselor educators.

Supervision Using Art Activities

A search of the literature, such as Academic Search Complete, PsycInfo, and Worldcat reveals that scholarly endeavors to bring the attention of art activities into supervisory contexts started in the 1980s. Stephens (1984) pioneered a non-traditional approach, combining verbal and musical components to group supervision. Wilson et al. (1984) also attempted an experiment of art-based supervision for their practicum students. Since those forays into innovative supervision modalities, there has been an increase in researchers affiliating different expressive arts in supervision settings, ranging from visual arts, sandtray, mandalas, psychodrama, music, writing, and storytelling to dance and movement, has been made.

Benefits of Supervision with Expressive Arts

Researchers have provided rationales for incorporating expressive arts into supervision settings. First, supervision combined with expressive arts contributes to a balanced learning

between emotional and intellectual areas for supervisees. As Davis et al. (2018) pointed, cognitive and linguistic aspects have prevailed in supervision articles that led to a tendency for development of the left hemisphere of the brain for concrete tasks such as diagnosis and treatment planning (Jackson et al., 2008). As a result, supervision trainings are more likely to overemphasize the attainment of specific techniques (Laughlin, 2000) as they leave out the focus of the development of capacities for intuition and insight-gaining (Clarkson & Leigh, 1992). However, exercising expressive arts activates the channel to the right hemisphere of the brain and promotes intuition, emotional sensitivity, and insight (Carnes-Holt et al., 2014). The use of creative approaches in supervision can help supervisees develop both analytic and intuitive dimensions (Wilkins, 1995), which meets the needs for integrating verbal and nonverbal functions (Clarkson & Leigh, 1992).

Second, supervision integrating expressive arts promotes self-awareness and insight into supervisees as well as their clients (Bowman, 2003; Gladding, 2005; Lahad, 2000; Markos et al., 2007; Purswell & Stulmaker, 2015; Stark et al., 2011). Arts used in supervision tap unconscious realms of supervisees, liberating them to explore their inner space. This switch from external attention to the internal world allows supervisees to explore self-confrontation and self-expression (Jackson et al., 2008). The transition to inner world exploration is possible because the symbolism expressed through art mediums activate a safe environment for supervisees (Fish, 2008). This safe atmosphere enables supervisees to feel free expressing themselves (Graham et al., 2014; Jackson et al., 2008; Markos et al., 2007). Under this nurturing and protective condition, supervisees encounter their surfacing issues and their inward feelings through externally visualized art tasks and come to reflect their experiences. This reflection allows supervisees to gain insight into how these issues affect their counseling relationships (Bowman, 2003; Lahad, 2000; Liberatia & Agbisit, 2017; Neswald-McCalip et al., 2003; Purswell & Stulmaker, 2015). Importantly,

increasing self-understanding and self-awareness facilitate the resolution of supervisees' struggles affecting counseling relationships (Lett, 1995) with improved case conceptualization, which ultimately has to do with client care (Stark et al., 2011).

Third, the use of art medium in supervision furthers supervisees' professional learning. It is shown that first-hand experiences through expressive activities, such as art therapy, poetry, and psychodrama, enhance supervisees' empathy toward their clients and increase understanding of others' perspectives (Bowman, 2003; Gass & Gillis, 2010; Lahad, 2000; McNichols & Witt, 2018; Stark et al., 2011). Considering empathy has a positive correlation to creativity (Carlozzi et al., 1995), benefits from creative supervision should not be underestimated since empathy is connected to counselor effectiveness (Jackson, 1986). By engaging themselves in art tasks, supervisees come to better comprehend advantages of art tasks and are eventually more inclined to use arts for their counseling sessions. Bowman's study demonstrated this propensity between the experiences of art-medium during supervision and applicability of art tasks to counseling practice. In this study, some participants who had never utilized arts for their counseling sessions found that an art medium has therapeutic effects, reporting their intention to bring art intervention for their clients. Through their own experiences, they develop "a clear sense of what it might be like to be a client who was asked to engage in the same exercise" (Neswald-McCalip et al., 2003, p. 225), realizing benefits of art tasks.

Other Research Trends

Some studies were performed to provide practical guidance for supervisors and to offer a conceptual framework in explaining the potentiality of art-employed supervision. Wilson et al. (1984) tested art-based supervision with their practicum students in a graduate art therapy program to identify specific skills for successful supervision. Out of the study, they recommended that

supervisors be aware of parallel processes between their own experiences with their supervisee and those of the supervisee with their client. Liberatia and Agbisitb's (2017) attempted to conceptualize how experiential learning through art-based supervision could occur. To explain this process, they introduced the art practice model that was initially suggested by Deaver and Shiflett (2011). The model illustrates a circular process presenting interactions among creation of imagery, generation of knowledge, and stimulation of thought. Deaver and Shiflett described how this circular process could lead to supervisees' experiential learning: the visualization of art medium facilitates supervisees to look at their case from multiple perspectives, and active reflection through the visualized art medium enables supervisees to transform art activities to meaningful and constructive learning. In review of studies of supervision in conjunction with arts, it was concluded that this topic started off with the purpose of offering practical guidance to supervisors. Then, it gradually delved into queries to explain the dynamics that contributed to supervisee's growth through the supervision utilizing art medium. Currently, the research was developed to a point addressing a conceptual framework explaining its operation.

Purpose of Study

Supervision models incorporating expressive art activities are continuously evolving to ensure supervisees' learning and growth. Constant attention in research to art-assisted supervision demonstrates the value of expressive arts and its benefits for supervisees. However, as addressed above, to establish the use of art in supervision as a valid and credible supervision model, data-supportive approach is needed. This study is intended to provide empirical research data for the supervision approach of integrating arts to examine its practicality and its influence on the professional development of counselor trainees. This study draws in-depth narratives of the supervisees in this project regarding their experiences and perceptions when supervision using

expressive arts is combined during their practicum. The authors intended to examine the supervisees' perceptions of how this supervision modality may facilitate their learning and growth. They constructed the following research questions to understand practicum students' experiences and their perceptions of the influence of using arts on their developmental processes: (a) how do supervisees perceive the influence of the supervision using expressive arts on their professional development?; and (b) how do supervisees perceive the influence of the supervision using expressive arts on group supervision process? The authors define art-assisted supervision as the one including expressive art modalities such as painting, architecture, sculpture, literature, music, performing, and cinema arts.

Method

Answering research inquiries necessitates the in-depth exploration of subjective experiences of participants (Gaffney, 2020) in relation to the phenomenon of group supervision utilizing art activities. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was chosen as the method aligned with research aims. IPA endeavors to obtain a detailed examination of participants' experiences and thus a profound understanding of their perception on events (Smith, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008). The purpose of IPA is to explore individuals' experiences in-depth and understand how they make sense of their lived experiences such as "what is it like to be experiencing this or that for this particular person" (Eatough & Smith, 2008, p. 181). Aligned with the purpose in IPA, we intended to gain rich data by probing deeper into phenomenological experiences and perceptions of the supervisees when a non-traditional type of supervision was employed in a traditional group supervision setting. Specifically, we examined how the participants understood and identified the impact of art-used supervision on their professional development and group supervision process.

IPA studies are usually comprised of a single case or a small number of participants and often have a homogenous sample (Gaffney, 2020), which justifies the small size of participants in the same supervision group. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Interview questions were constructed to delve into the supervisees' experiences on when group supervision invited art tasks. Art activities employed in this project were an instructional game, candle meditation, visual analogy, writing, drawing, and sandtray.

Participant Eligibility and Recruitment

Before this research project was implemented, the primary author sent emails for participant-recruitment to a group of practicum students at a CACREP-accredited Midwest university, detailing the entire research process and its purposes. Through the email, the potential participants were informed that the primary author, independent from the course, was the one who would conduct this research, and the second author, the instructor of their practicum, would design supervision using expressive arts. They were also aware that the second author would not participate in this project until the completion of their grading to assure confidentiality and anonymous data analysis. Three supervisees were recruited out of this process. This study was approved from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the university where the research was held and followed ethical standards according to the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014) *Code of Ethics*.

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary method of collecting data was the combination of focused-group and individual interviews contingent on the availability and preference of the supervisees. To grasp holistic perceptions and experiences of supervisees, semi-structured interviews were conducted intentionally throughout the semester in the beginning (third week), middle (eighth week), and

final (fourteenth week) phases of the academic semester calendar. Interviews lasted 45-90 minutes, and for data retrieval and analysis, interviews were recorded with electronic devices. The primary author solely connected all the interviews either focused-group or individual. Four individual and two focused interviews were gathered through the semester when this research project was performed. She transcribed all the recordings. Pseudonyms were assigned to all supervisees.

The data analyses comprised two cycles of coding, following Saldana (2013). First, the primary author started from open coding. This open coding was based on content, description, and process of all resources. For example, phrases such as, "Allow the members to be vulnerable," "It's o.k. to be wrong," "I get it now," "It push me outside of my warehouse," "When I see you being confident but then see you struggle," and "We were in the same page…it definitely bring us more on some different levels" were coded from the transcripts. These codes explored participants' actions and emotions (process coding), intra-and interpersonal experiences (emotion coding and narrative coding), values, attitudes, and beliefs representing their perspectives (values coding) in response to their experiences in supervision process.

The goal of second cycle of coding is advancing the codes from the first cycle to categories and conceptual organizations (Saldana, 2013). For this process, the primary author utilized pattern and axial coding and theoretical coding. Grounded in many codes that she developed in the first open coding, grouping those codes into a small number of sets, themes, or constructs was attempted. Pattern coding is a way of grouping, linking data fragments through coding to particular topics or themes. This linking process led her to create categories. Then she developed over-arching patterns or themes beyond codes and categories. For example, ten themes (see the table 1) including acceptance of and support for differences, connection at a personal level, the power of visualization, and increasing toolbox were determined through linking process from the first cycle codes. The

primary author also tried axial coding, which determines which codes are the dominant ones and which ones are less significant. Axial coding provides a hierarchy of the categories where a category specifies subcategories with properties of the category (Charmaz, 2010). Through axial coding, she identified which codes or patterns need more attention considering research questions and areas emphasized by the participants. The five themes corresponding two constructs in the table 1 were arrayed according to the levels of dominancy. Then, theoretical coding was employed to integrate themes and constructs developed in the pattern coding to find primary themes of the research. In this study, two constructs of facilitating group cohesion and professional learning were organized. All of those coding processes simultaneously involved constant comparison of data.

Efforts for Validity

The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is concerned with whether researchers seek in-depth lived experiences of participants and see data through their lens. Even though findings are from the participants' account, researcher's role in research development is acknowledged as they engage in interpreting the participants' understanding of their experiences through their own conceptions (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). To minimize potential bias in the data analyses and to increase reliability, the primary author invited the other author to do a peer debriefing after the gradings of the participants were officially submitted to avoid a conflict of interests. Peer debriefing is a process in which a peer takes part from reviewing transcripts and developing themes and categories in the data to auditing results (Spall, 1998). In qualitative research, peer debriefing is a powerful way of enhancing trustworthiness of findings (Smith, 2009). The peer debriefer of this project extensively attended all the steps of data analysis in order for the primary to manage threats to trustworthiness. The primary author also practiced reflexivity, in which she kept researcher identity memos throughout the data analysis processes. The researcher

identity memo is suggested by Maxwell (2005) as a way of becoming aware of prior concepts and beliefs of researcher and their effects on research. The primary author constantly engaged in this reflective process through researcher identity memos to monitor the potential impact of her bias on the data analysis processes.

Findings

Ten major themes emerged from six interviews and were clustered into two superordinate constructs of facilitating group cohesion and professional learning. Facilitating group cohesion was explained with five themes through: (a) equalizing all the group members; (b) acceptance of and support for differences; (c) sharing vulnerability; (d) connection at a personal level; and (e) experiencing universality. The other construct of professional learning was also formulated based on five themes: (a) increasing awareness; (b) the power of visualization helping better understanding clients; (c) a better communication tool; (d) witnessing growth; and (e) increasing toolbox. Table 1 exhibits the major constructs and themes to each construct.

Table 1. *Constructs and Themes*

Construct 1 Facilitating Group Cohesion	Construct 2 Professional Learning
Equalizing All the Group Members	Increasing awareness
Acceptance of and Support for Differences	The power of visualization
Sharing vulnerability	A better communication tool
Connection at a personal level	Witnessing growth
Experiencing universality	Increasing toolbox

Construct 1 Group Cohesion: By Equalizing All the Group Members

The supervisees commented on how expressive art activities contributed to linking every member on the same page regardless of their positions. Amy said:

> [I have] seen her [doctoral student as a co-supervisor] be silly, and goofy, and like playing games together, that was really cool. So, I thought that really helped everybody kind of get out of there, take their front down, and be able to be, you know, normal like friends... especially when Charlie [instructor] played with us... It was fun...it was an equal setting...He [the supervisor] was participating…The whole group cohesion thing was huge.

I think it did connect us with Charlie and Chu [co-supervisor] a little bit because they weren't our level. [However], when we did the game, when we did the meditation, put them [together]...we are more able to discuss things and more literal sense.

Amy thought activities, such as an instructional game and meditation, played an encouragement for every group member including instructors to be involved to discuss and share their experiences at the same level. She believed the experience of being equal contributed to group cohesion.

Construct 1 Group Cohesion: Through Acceptance of and Support for Being Different

When supervisees shared what they meant through their art tasks, they realized how they were not only similar but different. Interestingly, this recognition of differences among group members served as a catalyst to group cohesion. Jane supported this idea with her reflection:

It [art activity] kind of helped us to become aware of one another as far as like our similarity but our differences...[Art activities] bring us closer in more like cohesive as a group because we all recognize like, "Yes, we are doing similar things because we're all practicum together, we're all stressed out, we're all seeing clients here." But, at the same time, like, we're all each time doing our own thing. At the same time, we were handling, approaching potentially different ways...almost like be grateful of differences we all possess.

Jane remembered how art tasks revealed differences in the common denominators among the group members such as being in stress during their practicum. When the members shared their own experiences through expressive arts, Jane realized how each member differently approached and processed the common parts. She valued the differences, which manifested her acceptance and support for being different. Amy also briefly added, "There's a lot of support for the differences that all we have, there's a lot of learning from each other." Appreciation of differences in-group members contributed to making the group cohesive.

Construct 1 Group Cohesion: Through Sharing Vulnerability

Another power of supervision with expressive art is that it channeled moments of sharing vulnerability of group members. From one focused interview, Amy and Jane respectively commented:

> I had no idea what to do in the situation. And I think me staying that kind of vulnerability probably did cultivate a little more intimacy in the group...I think that created a level of comfort with the group because like seeing a person [myself] who is generally, relatively self-assured and has a high level of self-efficacy… [but] acknowledging that in fact I had no freaking idea of what to do with that moment.

> Yeah, we were like definitely, bounce off each other, cause a lot of us like…despite like almost ridiculousness, you know, some of our thoughts, whatever, like 'Someone in the room like had at least, you know, crossed their mind, as well as anything.'

Amy thought her acknowledgement of vulnerability in not knowing what to do at a certain moment with her client propagated members' connection in the group. Jane also knew that even with her perceived ridiculous thoughts or feeling, there would be someone who experienced the same thing as her. The experience that other members are like me seemed to promote a sense of "us."

Construct 1 Group Cohesion: Through Connection at Personal Level

Expressive arts enabled group members to share personal things. With one activity asking members to answer three given questions, Jane shared:

> It kinda helps us grow and get to know each other better because there were certain things with questions that were asked that you could've gone like more personal. Um, some people like mentioned their family, their relationships, or…I know in my answers I mentioned like heart ache. So, it's like even though it was just three questions that we answered, we just kinda gave answers of two or three sentences for each one, there was so vulnerability in that.

Through sharing answers to the questions, supervisees naturally became open to how they chose a certain response, which sometimes conveyed vulnerable and personal information. Jane thought this shared sensitive information within the practicum group bridged to the members' growth and connection by letting them know one another better.

Construct 1 Group Cohesion: Through Experiencing Universality

Meeting actual clients and providing professional counseling service as a counselor is exciting, but at the same time it is challenging to practicum students. A drawing activity allowed the supervisees to express their struggles during their practicum journey. It also created an opportunity to recognize how other members similarly experienced difficulties and vulnerability. Amy voiced:

> Even though somebody like Marine who I see as somebody who, it's funny to me because I see her, she's a mother, you know, she's married, she has a lot of experiences. I'm like, and when I see her struggle, I'm like, 'Really? Marine? How can you be struggling?' Because...hat's also my perception of who she is. Even too, like same her like. Even if I put her on the pedestal and see her struggle, 'I don't know what to do.' It definitely takes away some of that outside life experience and brings us all together counselors. I'm in the same practicum…We were on the same page even though we were in different words or paragraphs.

Amy talked about one member who seemed experienced and had no issues with sessions, but surprisingly turned out that she also struggled. Art activities naturally permitted the practicum members to confide their innermost challenges, which served Jane to feel like everyone was "on the same page;" a sense of universality.

Construct 2 Professional Learning Facilitated through Art Activities: Increasing Awareness

Supervision assisted by art activities fulfilled the primary purpose of the practicum: professional growth as mental health professionals. The supervisees commented how this supervision increased sensitivity between them and their clients. Jane mentioned,

> It [art activity] just kinda bring[s] like more self-awareness to those around me as well as maybe heighten[s] interact[tions] with my clients. So, just mostly like a professional kind of way that [it] is impacting me.

Similarly, Amy added how a group sandtray activity reminded her of the importance of the relationship with clients that should be first set in counseling.

We were working on our relationship. Before even we saw clients, before we even had things out, before even we trusted each other to get feedback. I think it [the sandtray activity] kind of made me realize how important the relationship is with our clients...in turn, it kind of reminded me, like, that relationship piece is so important.

As such, the supervisees perceived art tasks promoted their self-awareness of interactions and relationships between themselves and their clients.

Construct 2 Professional Learning Facilitated through Art Activities: Power of Visualization Helping Better Understanding Clients

Visualization through expressive arts was a strong tool, enhancing the level of understanding of supervisees' clients. Amy said:

There are things I could pinpoint and pull out, that were creating that shell that was important. So, I drew that shell and me, trying to pull me into it. And um, just him [client] kind of like, it was one arm putting into like what was going on, like our stories or whatever. And one arm reaching to me, like he wanted me to come in, but he also was kinda, distracting me, little by little, I guess... [the drawing] made me aware that stories of the client were telling... [it] helped me realize like where he was in relation to the story…in relation to me.

Through a drawing, Amy symbolically depicted a situation presenting where the client was positioned and how she approached her client. The picture left her with a clearer understanding of her client and her perception of the client. She was able to conceptualize the case in a holistic perspective, bringing her awareness that she could not comprehend before.

Construct 2 Professional Learning Facilitated through Art Activities: A better Communication Tool

Supervisees experienced how discussions via art activities facilitated understanding of different perspectives. Interestingly, they said comprehending differences through art medium was easier than just verbal communication. For example, Kristy attested,

That is very obvious with our group, especially, because I'm CBT [and], Marine is person-centered. There are a lot of situations in which she and I are, like we don't, we can't be on the same page necessarily. We try to get the same book, but I don't think we are on the

same page. And I think that [drawing] activity was a really good one because I could see exactly how she was looking at it and exactly like what her thought process was behind, how she was kind of interacting with that client.

Kristy acknowledged how one member differed from her in terms of theoretical orientations and counseling styles. However, through a painting activity, she came to understand the member's approach to counseling. Jane also added how drawing would aid deciphering the meaning of her message when the other does not grasp:

Well, if you didn't understand what I would be saying, like verbally, through this drawing, you could understand it better.

Supervisees agreed visualization through art served as another communication tool that facilitated understanding of differences.

Construct 2 Professional Learning Facilitated through Art Activities: Witnessing Growth

Art activities for supervision can even turn into a visual history for supervisees, showing their growth throughout the practicum. Through sandtray activity, which was performed both in the beginning and at the end of practicum, all the participants acknowledged how the visual presentation through sandtray helped them realize their growth. Jane shared:

The sandtray that we did last week was kind of like, 'Where we are at now? And what we've learned? How we've grown? And how we feel about now like moving forward everything?' So that was kind of cool just to see how people have a sort of moved along and progressed. And just remind myself too personally, just like trying to figure it out 'Where I was at?' and trying to express in a differently, rather than you know just vocally.

Comparing the first and the last sandtray scenes respectively put Jane in retrospect how she was in a different place at the end of the practicum. Similarly, Amy mentioned:

The first one looked so much more messy and scary, kind of. And the last one was, [the] color seemed brighter like, it just was weird, it's just different...I think like the confidence too...My confidence is a way more than before...[I] remember how silly it [the first sandtray] was, we were so scared [about meeting a real client].

Amy also observed how her first sandtray, which portrayed apprehension and anxiety for the practicum, was transformed into one manifesting her confidence. As such, visual representations through creative arts nudged the practicum supervisees to not only introspect the process of their practicum journey but serve as visual evidence for their growth.

Construct 2 Professional Learning Facilitated through Art Activities: Increasing Toolbox

Art activities practiced during supervision were valuable references for the members' future practice in counseling. Experiencing these first-hand experiences of expressive art through their own cases led supervisees to understanding of its potential merits and gaining ideas for their own practice. Amy said:

> I feel like I could do that [sandtray] with the client because I've done that with myself, cause we practiced it with ourselves, cause I've seen the way that Charlie's [instructor] facilitated these activities. And even if you did like art drawings instead of sandtray, you could be like, 'Oh, that's the way he facilitated his conversation…I kinda have some a little bit confidence, 'Oh, I know how to utilize, how approach, how to process it…group supervision kinda give those ideas.

By having direct experiences of applying these different art tasks to herself and watching how the practicum instructor implement expressive art tasks, Amy learned how these activities could be effective tools for her clients.

Discussion

The current study sought to explore in-depth experiences of the practicum students during their practicum, when expressive arts were incorporated within their group supervision to illuminate where and how this type of supervision was beneficial for them. The findings of this project support introducing art activities to supervision settings to promote supervisees' professional growth and group cohesion. Outcomes can be aligned with existing literature. First, the authors have found the visualization through art activities to be a powerful medium for supervisees' professional growth. The supervisees of this project commented how visual display

of their symbolism through art tasks heightened their awareness of their approaches to their clients and underlying dynamics between the two. At the same time the visual display encouraged their self-expression and understanding of peers' perceptions on cases that could differ from their own interpretation. These outcomes are consistent with studies illuminating that how this supervision contributes to enhancing empathy of supervisees toward their clients, increasing insight into themselves and their clients, and enhancing case conceptualization (Deaver & Shiflett, 2011; Gladding, 2005; Guiffrida et al., 2007; Lahad, 2000; Markos et al., 2007; McNichols & Witt, 2018; Newsome et al., 2005; Stark et al., 2011). In addition, from this project, the authors found that the visualization through art products stimulated genuine and meaningful discussions among the supervisees because the products conveyed the supervisees' emotions along with their client's dilemmas. Visualized arts elicited different perceptions toward supervisees themselves and their clients, through which the supervisees could increase self-awareness of supervisees, deepen their empathy toward their client, and attain a new understanding of therapeutic dynamics between the two parties that ultimately led to enhanced case conceptualization (Gass & Gillis, 2010; McNichols & Witt, 2018; Purswell & Stulmaker, 2015; Stark et al., 2011).

The power of visualization through art activities is also supported through Liberatia and Agbisitb's (2017) study. According to Liberatia and Agbisitb, visualization allows supervisees to look at the therapeutic dynamics between them and their client, discern a power difference, identify how each party has different feelings and experiences during the counseling process, and eventually realize therapeutic relationship and its growth. Here, a question asking that how the visualization at art-assisted supervision might have functioned to bring forth supervisees' growth can arise. This question can be conceptually answered through a psychological distance created by visualization. Art as a medium creates a therapeutic distance between supervisees themselves and

art symbolism, this approach explains how the practicum students gained awareness through visualized art tasks (Hawkins & Shohet, 2000). The distance enables supervisees to observe their experiences in a tangibly way and safely communicate their subjective experiences that words could not precisely translate (Clarkson & Leigh, 1992; Fish, 2008; Purswell & Stulmaker, 2015; Stark et al., 2011). The results of powerful impact of visualization on supervisees' learning and growth strongly suggests that counselor educators and clinical supervisors should consider bringing visual-oriented art activities, even at a minimal level for their supervisees so that the supervisees experience multi-facets in understanding their cases and deeper insight into themselves and their clients.

Counselor Educators and clinical supervisors should note the opportunity to reflect through expressive arts and its influences. Most of the supervisees mentioned how meditating on their art product and understanding its meaning rather than their case itself turned out to be helping them perceive their case in a holistic perspective with increasing awareness of it and themselves. Attainments from reflection can be analyzed with several steps. While creating and reflecting on their art products, the supervisees are able to slow down their constant intellectual processing to find an answer to their cases and reflect on what was happening between themselves and their clients. This pausing moment is relaxing (Bowman, 2003) while sparking introspection of supervisees through displayed arts (Liberatia & Agbisitb, 2017). Through the reflecting process, supervisees become aware of discrepancies between their original understanding of their client and a new perception of the client through displayed arts. The awareness of this incongruence allows supervisees opportunities to amend their focus and intervention of their cases that is consistent between their intellectual and intuitive dimensions (Stark et al., 2011). Also, art medium deepens supervisees' level of contemplation, inviting them to a higher level of reflection on, awareness of,

and meaningful discussion to themselves, their experiences, and issues (McNichols & Witt, 2018). Interestingly, attainment from reflection through expressive art tasks even applies to observing group members. Although observing members are not the first person who would process expressions via art medium, they are vicariously involved in the reflecting moment, experiencing it as if were their own (Wilkins, 1995). As such, the power of reflection enables the transformation from the act of performing art activities to supervisees' awareness and insightful discussion into their clients (Carroll, 2010; Liberatia & Agbisitb, 2017).

Group cohesion is another aspect to note as outgrowth from art-assisted supervision. Through their art tasks, the supervisees shared moments of challenges, difficulties, achievements, and successes (Bowman, 2003). Sharing those moments even to vulnerable experiences created a sense of comradery throughout their practicum journey, letting the group members feel accepted and even connected on a personal level. Many researchers have validated peer support and connection to be one of supervisees' positive experiences from art-based supervision (Bowman, 2003; Fish, 2008; Graham et al., 2014; Hinkle, 2008; Neswald-McCalip et al., 2003; Newsome et al., 2005). However, group cohesion has not been as spotlighted as other direct outcomes from supervisees, such as feeling competent about counseling skills and enhancing case conceptualization. It was treated as secondary in existing studies rather than placing its value. This might be because group cohesion seems to play a medium role in deriving supervision effectiveness, not being directly related to supervisees' professional growths. The effectiveness of art-utilized supervision is subjected to trust levels among group members (Fish, 2008), and group cohesion is crucial to effective group supervision (Newsome et al., 2005). Given that "all of the group members are part of one another's learning," (Melnick & Fall, 2008, p. 56) more attention needs to be given to group cohesion to maximize benefits from this type of supervision.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Study

The findings of this research are emerging themes from a research project of supervision in utilizing expressive arts. There are several aspects to mention for this study that served as limitations and suggestions for future studies. First, inclusion of more members would have enhanced this study. This study sought for in-depth narratives and accounts of the three participants to grasp their experiences when art tasks were invited during their practicum. Even though the obtained data was thorough in delivering the participant's perspectives, more participants might have provided multi-aspects of perceptions in art-assisted supervision.

Second, supervisees may vary the level of receptiveness in employing art tasks in their group supervision context. Prior to this study, the three supervisees held different opinions on integrating art activities in their practicum journey: one participant passionately embraced this supervision; another was neutral; and the other's stance was not excited about experiencing art medium as a supervision tool. In dealing with supervisees who are less receptive in art-assisted supervision, Stark et al. (2011) recommended that sufficient explanation of rationales of employing art-assisted supervision and its benefits should be fully provided to them. Also, to foster the openness of supervisees, supervisor should create a safe supervision atmosphere (Burgin, 2018). Intern students may bear a different reaction in introducing expressive art tasks to their supervision. According to McNichols and Witt (2018), practicum students were willing to engage in poetry-based supervision while intern students were hesitant about being involved with the same process. This result suggests supervisors take different strategies in inviting art medium between practicum and internship classes.

Third, supervisor's understanding into art-based supervision and their confidence in this modality is necessary (Burgin, 2018). Supervisors should carry faith and confidence in

effectiveness of supervision using different art activities while being aware of concerns that this non-traditional supervision may generate. This recognition would lead them to choosing appropriate art tasks aimed to facilitate and promote supervisees' growth and group cohesion (Newsome et al., 2005). In addition, supervisors should be intentional and knowledgeable about different modes of art tasks and their impact on supervisees and the whole supervision process as considering developmental levels of their supervisees and needs. As intentionality and sensitivity are emphasized in counseling practice (Ivey et al., 2018), supervisors' practice in supervision follows the same principle.

Fourth, ethical issues can be taken into consideration. During supervision, personal issues and impasses of supervisees can be projected through expressive arts, tangling their supervision topics and personal areas for help. Expression of those experiences through art is often evocative for strong emotions (Rosen & Atkins, 2014). Supervisors should be aware of the potential boundary crossing between personal and professional issues of supervisees and draw a delicate boundary between the two (Newsome et al., 2005). Also, supervisors should determine to the level of processing through supervisees' art experiences by attending to group trust and by considering supervisees' developmental levels between entry or advanced, and complexity of difficulties supervisees experience (Guiffrida et al., 2007; Hinkle, 2008). For example, Hinkle discouraged supervisors to implement experiential activities that may provoke severe issues and supervisee's emotional vulnerability, which would hinder conducive discussion during supervision. In addition, supervisors should encourage supervisees to seek counseling if they are triggered by an expressive art supervision activity that might interfere with their ability to provide services to their clients.

Finally, consistent utilization of art activities could have been enhanced. Art activities were constantly implemented until the twelfth week of the term. Unfortunately, an accident that

happened to the practicum instructor prevented the practicum group members from experiencing different art tasks. The supervisees of this project expressed a wish for more introduction of art activities and regular operation of them toward the end of their practicum. We believe that a more intentional installation of expressive art tasks might have brought stronger perceptional impact on the effectiveness of art utilizing supervision.

Conclusion

Based on the research conducted throughout this study, it appears to be beneficial to integrate art-mediums in supervision process. The participants of this research project perceived art-mediums in supervision promoted group cohesion and connection among the group members and facilitated their professional growth and advancement by learning therapeutically different usages of expressive arts. With these results, the current study has contributed to the existing body of knowledge of how supervisees experience and recognize supervision integrating creative art-mediums.

Bringing art activities to supervision settings should not be a random choice, nor out of curiosity from traditional supervision format. It should be an intentional approach to maximize supervisees' learning, growth, and maturity. The current research project along with the existing literature consistently presents the power of expressive art in supervision and its benefits to supervisees. However, more consistent research on supervision in conjunction with the expressive art medium is needed to evoke significant attention of supervisors, and to motivate them to employ supervision with art tasks. Through more evidence with data, the meaning and value of supervision modality incorporating art activities could be supported, challenged, and eventually advanced. The authors hope that there is a more active research attempt to establish a credibility and validity in supervision using expressive arts.

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