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Development and Validation of the Constructivist Supervisor Scale

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The purpose of this research was to develop an instrument for assessing constructivist counselor supervision practices. In an exploratory mode, we also tested supervisee preferences regarding constructivist supervision. Items consistent with constructivist supervision were developed based on a thorough review of the literature and rated by experts in constructivist supervision. Counselors currently receiving supervision ($n = 308$, 81% female) responded to these items, indicating the extent to which their current or most recent supervisor adhered to these constructivist practices during supervision. Principal components analysis results revealed three main components of constructivist supervision practice: warm and nondirective relationship, past and present experiences, and acceptance of various styles. Preliminary evidence for internal consistency, test–retest reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity of the scale items are reported. Participants also indicated the degree to which they preferred their supervisors' constructivist practices. The final version of the constructivist supervisor scale, consisting of 29 items, may be used in future research focused on supervision processes as well as in practice to assess the degree to which these core constructivist methods are used during supervision.

Clinical supervision is an active and skillful process aimed at assisting in the growth and development of therapists-in-training as well as seasoned practitioners. Distinct from psychotherapy, clinical supervision seeks to help therapists understand their role with clients, work through case conceptualization, and identify and evaluate intervention strategies. As the field of clinical supervision continues to evolve, so have the theories supervisors use to conceptualize clinical supervision practice. Early models of supervision were based largely on individual theories of psychotherapy (e.g., psychoanalytic supervision; Binder & Strupp, 1997), whereas later

approaches were developed based on models of supervisee development (e.g., integrated developmental model supervision; Stoltenberg, McNeil, & Delworth, 1998) or supervisor roles (e.g., discrimination model; Bernard, 1979). Recently, however, new models of supervision are emerging that attempt to integrate salient elements from diverse theoretical and developmental approaches.

Some of the most promising of the new, integrative approaches to clinical supervision are heavily influenced by constructivist ideas of human growth, change, and development; examples of these approaches include narrative supervision (Parry & Doan, 1994), reflective supervision (Neufeldt, 1999), and constructive supervision (Guiffrida, 2015a, 2015b; Neimeyer, Woodward, Pickover, & Smigelsky, 2015). Although each of these constructivist approaches has unique elements, they share a common distrust in objective, knowable realities that can be generalized and, instead, place a priority on understanding and validating supervisees' perceptions of reality. As a result, the perspective of the supervisee becomes the primary lens through which client sessions are viewed. Instead of relying on the supervisor's expertise, the supervisee's knowledge and past personal and professional experiences are used to frame discussions about the effectiveness of counseling sessions. Because a constructivist approach to supervision includes listening to the supervisee, giving the supervisee space to explore his or her beliefs and values, and allowing the supervisee to take the initiative, we expect that constructivist supervisors will be experienced as autonomy-supportive by their supervisees. Supervisees learn about counseling by actively engaging their thoughts, experiences, and feelings about counseling sessions, instead of passively relying on their supervisor's knowledge and advice to guide their practice. Applied to counselor supervision, the theory of constructivism suggests that supervisees come to their supervision sessions with legitimate answers, styles, and strategies for working with clients, and better understand their work with clients through interactions with their supervisor. When supervisors approach the supervision process through a constructivist framework, supervisees are encouraged to reflect on their personal experiences, think comprehensively about their work with clients, and view counseling as a discipline that requires constant adaptability and self-actualization.

Although constructivism offers promise to the field of clinical supervision, research is needed to more fully understand the processes and impact of constructivist supervision practice. To begin, research has not clearly isolated the supervisor behaviors that are consistent with constructivism. Because of the multidimensional nature of constructivist approaches, it is likely that supervisors will embody and employ constructivist characteristics in unique ways. Additionally, assessment of supervision is necessary in order to determine the extent to which supervisors adhere to behaviors consistent with constructivist practice. In a recent review of supervision literature, Bernard and Luke (2015) identified only one article in the last 10 years related to evaluation of supervision practices. To date, there are no assessment instruments to evaluate the supervision process when supervision is guided by a constructivist framework. The scale developed in the current study is intended to aid in the goal of conducting such research.

Specifically, the purpose of this study was to develop a scale that could be used to assess the extent to which supervisors adhere to constructivist practice during supervision. This instrument can be used in future research seeking to examine constructivist supervision processes and outcomes in both supervisees and clients.

METHOD

Stage 1: Item Development

Category and item development. We began by conducting a thorough review of the literature to identify themes most consistent with constructivist supervision. In addition to reviewing constructivist supervision literature , we also reviewed salient literature related to the practice of constructivist psychotherapy, including work from George Kelly (1955), Michael Mahoney (1991, 2004, 2006), and Robert Neimeyer (1995, 2005, 2009). To develop this instrument, we had to first identify and isolate supervisor behaviors that are most associated with constructivist practice. We began by surveying a number of supervisors with expertise in constructivism to develop an initial pool of items that represented elements of constructivist supervision. This initial pool of items ($n = 62$) represented the following five themes of constructivist approaches: (a) the need for a supportive and nonjudgmental relationship with one's supervisor; (b) reliance on past and present experiences to guide new learning; (c) using supervision to facilitate supervisee learning in a nondirective way (e.g., versus teaching or counseling the supervisee); (d) reliance on supervisees' self-awareness, insight, and ability to transfer knowledge; and (e) acceptance of various styles and approaches to counseling. Consistent with item development theory (Crocker & Algina, 2008), multiple items related to each of the identified themes were generated.

Item refinement. These initial items were sent to nine experienced outside reviewers for their rating and comment. Each reviewer had earned at least a master's degree, had a minimum of 7 years of supervisory experience, and self-identified as using constructivist approaches in clinical supervision. Reviewers read each of the 62 items and were asked to rate the degree to which each item reflected a constructivist value or principle on a 4-point scale (0 = not constructivist, 1 = somewhat constructivist, 2 = moderately constructivist, and 3 = thoroughly constructivist). Reviewers also had the opportunity to write comments or suggestions in a text box under each statement. As a result of this review, 32 out of 61 items received a score of 2 (moderately constructivist) or 3 (completely constructivist) by at least eight out of the nine reviewers (88.0% rater agreement). No concerns or suggestions about any of these items were offered. In contrast, the 29 items that were less consistently rated as constructivist tended to elicit comments such as, "I consider this statement to be reflective of good supervision, not specifically constructivist supervision" or, "Not uniquely constructivist." After using expert feedback to clarify and reduce the number of items, 32 items comprised the constructivist supervisor scale (CSS; Appendix A), administered and evaluated below.

Stage 2: Administration of the Instrument to Counselor Supervisees

Participants. Counseling supervisees registered on three listservs (COUNSGRADS, CESNET-L, and NARACES) or enrolled in one counseling graduate program at a research university located in the northeastern United States were invited to participate in this study. Overall, 308 participants completed all or most of the items and could be included in the study analyses. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 66 years ($M = 36.94$, $SD = 10.34$), with 65.3% between 24 and 38 years. Most participants (81.0%, $n = 293$) were female. Approximately 78.0% of the sample self-identified as white (non-Hispanic), 6.0% identified as black or African American, 4.7% as Hispanic or

Latino, and 2.6% as Asian or Pacific Islander. Another 8.7% of the sample select "other" as their racial/ethnic identification. Demographic data were also collected about the participants' highest degree attained. A majority of the sample had attained a master's degree (57.2%), an additional 25.5% had attained a doctorate, and approximately 9.0% indicated a bachelor's degree as their highest degree. Supervisees were also asked for the number of years of supervision experience their supervisor had: 16.8% reported 0–4 years, 26.8% reported 5–9 years, 22.8% reported 10–14 years, 12.9% reported 15–19 years, and 15.5% reported their supervisor had more than 20 years of experience. When asked, "Where did you receive the supervision you were thinking about as you completed this survey?" 33.6% of participants chose a college setting, 16.8% selected community agency, 15.0% chose mental health clinic, 10.8% chose K–12 school system, 5.2% selected substance abuse facility, and 1.8% chose hospital. The remaining 16.0% of the sample chose "other" and specified their supervision location (e.g., eating disorder clinic, hospice, private practice, residential facility). Participants most often indicated they were thinking about their employment site supervisor while completing this assessment (28.6%). Internship site supervisor (21.8%) and university supervisor (21.3%) were a close second and third, respectively. Only 12.1% ($n = 46$) of participants were thinking about their practicum site supervisor while completing this assessment.

Measures

The primary focus of the study was to examine relationships among the items that would comprise the CSS. These items were designed to be completed by a supervisee to rate the extent to which a supervisor engaged in constructivist supervision practice. Each of the 32 items begins with the phrase, "My supervisor . . . " followed by sentence stems related to each of the five categories. Sample items that correspond with the five previously identified themes include the following:

1. "My supervisor is nonjudgmental."
2. "My supervisor encourages me to use my own past experiences to guide my understanding of a client's experience."
3. "My supervisor encourages me to talk through client cases in supervision instead of telling me what to do."
4. "My supervisor wants me to use my personal experiences to inform my work with clients."
5. "My supervisor is supportive of my counseling style, even if it's different from his or her style."

In order to be consistent with scales used to assess supervisor behaviors or characteristics (Efstation et al., 1990; Stenack & Dye, 1982; Worthington & Roehlke, 1979), scale respondents (i.e., supervisees) were asked to rate the extent to which each statement described their most recent supervisor in their most recent supervision experience on a 4-point scale. Specific instructions were, "Think about your counselor supervisor. If you have more than one counselor supervisor, please pick one and think about your experience with him or her throughout this assessment." Respondents then rated the degree to which each practice described his or her supervisor's actual behavior. This rating was made on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = does not describe, 2 = somewhat describes, 3 = very accurately describes, 4 = completely describes).

In order to assess the construct validity of the proposed CSS, we included two additional measures. The first was the supervisory styles inventory (SSI; Friedlander & Ward, 1984), which

was used to assess discriminant validity. The SSI consists of 25 one-word items describing supervisory styles and 8 filler items. There are three subscales: attractive (e.g., friendly, supportive), interpersonally sensitive (e.g., perceptive, reflective), and task-oriented (e.g., goal-oriented, concrete*).* Respondents rate how well each term describes their current supervisor's style on a Likert-type scale from 1 (not very) to 7 (very). Responses to each item within each subscale are summed within each subscale so that higher scores reflect more of that style. For the purposes of testing the scale's discriminant validity, items associated with the task-oriented subscale were used. Adjectives on the task-oriented subscale include "structured," "goal-oriented," "explicit," and "concrete," which are characteristics not commonly associated with constructivist supervisors. The SSI has been found to be a valid and reliable instrument for indicating the extent to which the supervisor reflects a particular style (Friedlander & Ward, 1984). Evidence for the validity of the SSI has been reported by multiple authors (Efstation et al., 1990; Friedlander & Ward, 1984; Usher & Borders, 1993).

The second way in which we assessed the construct validity of the CSS was to draw relevant items from the perceived autonomy support scale (Williams & Deci, 2001) to assess convergent validity of the proposed scale items. This scale, which is devised from a self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000b) perspective, assesses how autonomy supportive versus controlling a person perceives his or her partner to be. Specifically, we used six items from this scale that had been previously adapted by Lynch (2004) to study relationships between partners. For the current study, we adapted questions about partners to reflect the relationship between supervisors and supervisees in counseling. More specifically, respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they perceive their supervisor to be autonomy- supportive, a characteristic that should be consistent with constructivist supervision. Representative statements included, "I believe my supervisor is very understanding of me" and, "My counselor supervisor listens to my thoughts and ideas." Ratings are made on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Responses to scores are averaged such that higher scores reflect greater perceived autonomy support in the respondent's relationship with his or her supervisor.

Finally, we asked about various demographic items, including supervisees' age, gender, counseling specialization, ethnicity, current year in their educational/training program, student status (doctoral student, master's student, intern, or practicum student), site of supervision, years of supervision, and years of clinical experience. These demographic criteria were selected based on a review of similar supervision assessments (Chang, Dew, & Glinka, 2012; Horvath & Greenberg, 1989; Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff, 2001) to assess whether the diversity of supervisees and their supervision contexts had been captured. This demographic information helped us better understand the participant sample and aided in understanding possible associations with perceived or preferred constructivist supervisor characteristics.

Participants and Procedures

Options for survey administration (both online and by postal mail) were thoroughly considered for this research. Survey research via regular mail typically generates equal or higher response rates compared with internet delivery; however, many researchers are moving toward online administration of their assessments because of the ease of distribution, data management, and cost effectiveness (Joinson, Woodley, & Reips, 2007; Pan, 2010). Because supervisees from multiple and varied geographic locations were to be surveyed, online survey administration was

the primary administration method used here. The items were administered via SurveyMonkey, an online survey platform, and sent electronically, as a link, to counseling supervisees registered on three listservs: COUNSGRADS, CESNET-L, and NARACES. These listservs include counselor supervisees from various geographic regions and in various levels of training or practice. The topics discussed on these listservs include counselor supervision, so participants were likely to have an understanding of and interest in the practice of counselor supervision.

COUNSGRADS is a listserv endorsed by the American Counseling Association for graduate students in counselor education (Counsgrads, n. d.). It has between 1000 and 1500 members at any given time; between 40 and 50 messages are sent on a typical day. The Counselor Education and Supervision Network listserv (CESNET-L) originated in November 1994 as a professional listserv for counselors, counselor educators, and supervisors to provide an open forum for discussion of issues and sharing of resources related to the profession. As of April 2009 there were more than 1300 members on the CESNET-L. Finally, although the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (NARACES) organization does not have an active listserv, we were granted access to the organization's email distribution list, which was composed of 313 members: 169 of these members were listed as professionals, 1 member was retired, and 143 were students. Because a majority of the members identify as supervisors and the instrument was intended for completion by supervisees, the email sent to this group asked members who identify as supervisors to forward the survey link to their supervisees. Finally, master's and doctoral-level counseling students at a research university located in the northeastern United States who had previously received counselor supervision were sampled. Participants from the latter group completed the measures in hard copy and were invited to retake the CSS two weeks later to allow for an evaluation of test–retest reliability. A sample of 13 students completed the retest.

All supervisees who completed the scale, both those who completed the assessment online and those who completed the hard copy, had the opportunity to enter a raffle to win a 16GB Apple iPad 2, one of two 16GB Kindle Fire HDs, or one of four $25 Amazon gift cards. Supervisees who were willing to participate in the test–retest process had an additional opportunity to enter a raffle for a $25 Amazon gift card.

RESULTS

Because our interest was both to reduce the number of items needed in the final version of the scale and to gain an initial sense of the underlying structure of the scale, following Meyers and colleagues (2013), in an exploratory mode we used a principal components analysis (PCA) of the items on the CSS. In addition, because we anticipated, based on our review of the literature prior to scale development, that components would be conceptually related to one another, an oblique rotation (Promax) was added to the PCA for the purpose of redistributing the variance across the factors (Meyers et al., 2013). Items that continued to load onto more than one component (greater than .40), even after a rotation was used, were removed from the scale. Appropriate descriptive labels were created for each component that emerged. Second, we present descriptive data regarding settings in which supervisors provided supervision to the respondents. Third, we present preliminary evidence for additional psychometric properties (i.e., reliability and validity) of the CSS. Finally, we present findings regarding supervisee preference for the characteristics associated with constructivist supervision.

Scale Structure: Principal Components

Of the 380 participants who completed the CSS, 266 did not have any missing data. Little's MCAR test (Meyers et al., 2013) suggested that data were missing completely at random (Little's MCAR test: $\chi 2$ [7258] $= 7414.932$, $p = .097$). This result suggested that the missing values could be ignored because they were not likely to bias the results (Meyers et al., 2013). Listwise deletion would have resulted in excessive sample size reduction (114 participants); thus, pairwise deletion was used. Using the final sample ($n = 380$), an unrotated principal components analysis (PCA) revealed that 61.4% of the variance was accounted for by four factors (Table 2). This was judged to be in accordance with the recommendations of Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), who suggested that the final solution should account for at least 50% of the variance.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .96, above the recommended value of .70 (Meyers et al., 2013), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi 2$ [496] $= 7652.91$, $p < .05$). The communalities were all above .40, further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items. Items that loaded onto the components were then examined to determine the conceptual and statistical feasibility of each component. Prior to doing so, an oblique rotation was performed to maximize simple structure. An oblique rotation was chosen for this solution because at least two of the factors were moderately correlated ($r = .44$, $r = -.62$, $p < .05$).

Component 1 explained approximately 46.4% of the variance. As shown in Table 3, this component included 13 items that each reflected the supervisee's perception of a supportive and nonjudgmental relationship with a supervisor (which we have labeled a "warm and nondirective relationship"). Component 2 accounted for 7.2% of the variance and included 7 items that reflected the supervisor's encouragement for the supervisee to use past and present experiences to guide new learning ("past and present experiences"). Component 3 accounted for 4.4% of the variance and included 9 items related to the supervisor's acceptance of various styles and approaches to counseling ("acceptance of various styles"). Upon reviewing item loadings, the fourth component (3.5% of the variance) was excluded because two of the three items had loadings smaller than .40, and Meyers et al. (2013) suggests that such items should be removed given that they do not load strongly on any one factor. Without the fourth factor, the remaining three factors still accounted for 57.9% of the total variance. The PCA was rerun after having deleted these three items. Results yielded no notable changes to the three components.

Internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency reliability of each subscale. Meyers et al. (2013) suggested that an alpha of .70 represents acceptable reliability, .80 is very good reliability, and .90 is excellent reliability. In this study, Cronbach's alpha exceeded .80 for each of the three subscales: warm and nondirective relationship ($\alpha = .93$), past and present experiences ($\alpha = .89$), and acceptance of various styles ($\alpha = .91$). These results demonstrated adequate internal consistency for the measure's subscales. Correlations between each of the subscales and the overall CSS are presented in Table 3.

Test–retest reliability. A small sample of respondents ($n = 13$) participated in both the test and retest process. Composite scores from the Time 1 and Time 2 administrations were highly correlated ($r = .84$, $p < .01$), as were scores from each of the PCA-derived subscales: warm and nondirective relationship subscale ($r = .70$, $p < .01$), past and present experience ($r = .92$, $p < .01$), and acceptance of various styles ($r = .65$, $p < .01$).

TABLE 1
CSS Items by Themes Identified in the Literature

Item	Original theme	Subscale
Supervisor asks for my thoughts regarding my client cases	C	1
Supervisor encourages me to talk through client cases in supervision	C	1
Supervisor values my thoughts regarding my client cases	C	1
Supervisor is nonjudgmental	A	1
Supervisor gives me time necessary to talk through client cases	C	1
Supervisor supports my need to feel competent	A	1
Supervisor has confidence in my abilities to come up with my own answers	C	1
Supervisor makes me feel comfortable processing my client sessions	A	1
Supervisor provides me autonomy to talk about issues that concern me	C	1
Supervisor would tell me if concerned I was not being ethical as a counselor	C	1
Supervisor helps to build my confidence by asking me facilitative questions	C	1
Supervisor helps me explore my approach by asking thoughtful questions	C	1
Supervisor is transparent with me about what he or she is thinking	C	1
Supervisor wants me to use my personal experiences to inform my work with clients	D	2
Supervisor encourages me to use personal experiences to inform my role as a counselor	D	2
Supervisor would agree that my personal experiences affect who I am as a counselor	B	2
Supervisor and I openly discuss how my past experiences have shaped who I am as a counselor	B	2
Supervisor believes my past and present experiences in life are valuable	B	2
Supervisor asks me if I have experienced a situation similar to what my client is experiencing	B	2
Supervisor encourages me to talk through personal experiences that may be affecting my work with a client	B	2
Supervisor is open to theoretical orientations different than his or her own	E	3
Supervisor encourages me to try new counseling techniques with my clients	E	3
Supervisor is supportive of my counseling style, even if it is different than his or her style	E	3
Supervisor is supportive of my trying a new technique with my client	E	3
Supervisor helps me feel comfortable developing my own approach to counseling	E	3
Supervisor encourages me to develop my own counseling style	E	3
Supervisor supports me incorporating different theoretical approaches into my work with clients	E	3
Supervisor encourages me to think for myself instead of looking to him or her for answers	D	3
Supervisor tells me that he or she learns from me	E	3
My supervisor is helping me develop my self-awareness skills	D	4
My supervisor encourages me to stop the tape frequently to discuss issues of interest to me	C	4
My supervisor is interested in hearing why I chose a specific intervention	C	4

Note. Themes identified in the literature: (A) the need for a supportive and nonjudgmental relationship with one's supervisor; (B) reliance on past and present experiences to guide new learning; (C) using supervision to facilitate supervisee learning in a nondirective way, rather than using it to teach or counsel the supervisee; (D) reliance on supervisees' self-awareness, insight, and ability to transfer knowledge; (E) acceptance of various styles and approaches to counseling.

Subscale: (1) warm and nondirective relationship, (2) past and present experience, (3) acceptance of various styles. Items in subscale (4) were discarded.

TABLE 2
Total Variance Explained by the PCA

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadingsa
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	14.838	46.367	46.367	14.838	46.367	46.367	12.792
2	2.298	7.180	53.547	2.298	7.180	53.547	12.038
3	1.404	4.386	57.934	1.404	4.386	57.934	8.837
4	1.117	3.489	61.423	1.117	3.489	61.423	5.785

Convergent validity. Composite scores on the CSS were highly correlated with both the interpersonally sensitive ($r = .71$, $p < .01$) and attractive ($r = .73$, $p < .01$) supervisor styles assessed by the SSI. In other words, supervisor characteristics such as friendly, flexible, trusting, warm, intuitive, invested, perceptive, and creative were consistent with constructivist counselor supervision practices. Furthermore, comparing the autonomy supportive relationships scale with the CSS revealed that scores on these different measures were highly correlated ($r = .72$, $p < .01$). In other words, as we expected, experiencing supervisor support for supervisees' autonomy was perceived by supervisees to be consistent with constructivist counselor supervision practices.

Discriminant validity. The discriminant validity of the CSS was tested by correlating the task-oriented subscale scores (10 items) from the SSI with scores on the CSS. Adjectives on the task-oriented subscale include structured, goal-oriented, explicit, and concrete, which are characteristics not commonly associated with constructivist supervisors. The result for this test of validity was $r = .30$, $p < .01$ indicating that, as expected, the adjectives associated with a task-oriented supervisor were not as highly correlated with items on the CSS, suggesting that the CSS taps into a different aspect of supervision from that measured by the task-oriented subscale of the SSI.

Supervisee Preference for Constructivist Supervision

In an exploratory mode, we also reviewed supervisees' preference for the constructivist characteristics reflected in the three subscales (warm and nondirective relationship, past and present experience, and acceptance of various styles) by averaging the mean preference scores across each subscale. Supervisees were asked to indicate the degree to which they "preferred" each of the constructivist supervisor characteristics on a Likert-type scale in which 1 = does not describe my preference, 2 = somewhat described my preference, 3 = very accurately described my preference, 4 = completely described my preference. Twenty of the 32 constructivist supervisor characteristics had a mean score greater than or equal to 3.5 out of 4.0. These results indicated that supervisees had a strong preference for supervisor characteristics associated with developing a warm and nondirective relationship. Although supervisees showed preference for characteristics associated with a warm and nondirective relationship, it is also important to note that supervisees showed some preference for the other subscale characteristics as well: past and present experiences (1.43 out of 4.0) and acceptance of various styles (2.0 out of 4.0). In order to compare mean preference scores for the content areas represented by the three subscales, a paired-samples

TABLE 3
Pattern Matrices of Principal Components Analysis—Rotated Solution

	Component			
Subscale 1 (Warm & Nondirective Relationship)	1	2	3	4
Supervisor asks for my thoughts regarding my client cases	**.824**	.074	−.005	−.073
Supervisor encourages me to talk through client cases in supervision	**.809**	.115	.098	−.021
Supervisor values my thoughts regarding my client cases	**.735**	−.047	−.207	−.083
Supervisor is nonjudgmental	**.671**	−.010	−.080	.039
Supervisor gives me time necessary to talk through client cases	**.611**	.026	−.159	.021
Supervisor supports my need to feel competent	**.605**	.037	−.112	.094
Supervisor has confidence in my abilities to come up with my own answers	**.601**	−.019	−.306	−.089
Supervisor makes me feel comfortable processing my client sessions	**.599**	.007	−.189	.055
Supervisor provides me autonomy to talk about issues that concern me	**.589**	.039	−.285	−.126
Supervisor would tell me if concerned I was not being ethical as a counselor	**.549**	−.015	.076	.297
Supervisor helps to build my confidence by asking me facilitative questions	**.542**	.015	−.267	.233
Supervisor helps me explore my approach by asking thoughtful questions	**.522**	.075	−.111	.363
Supervisor is transparent with me about what he or she is thinking	**.499**	.245	−.004	−.015

	Component			
Subscale 2 (Past and Present Experience)	1	2	3	4
Supervisor wants me to use my personal experiences to inform my work with clients	−.080	**.801**	−.075	.002
Supervisor encourages me to use personal experiences to inform my role as a counselor	−.133	**.738**	−.254	.093
Supervisor would agree that my personal experiences affect who I am as a counselor	.266	**.720**	.042	−.276
Supervisor and I openly discuss how my past experiences have shaped who I am as a counselor	.039	**.699**	−.085	.214
Supervisor believes my past and present experiences in life are valuable	.411	**.639**	.029	−.233
Supervisor asks me if I have experienced a situation similar to what my client is experiencing	.012	**.622**	.052	.287
Supervisor encourages me to talk through personal experiences that may be affecting my work with a client	.214	**.539**	−.056	.180

	Component			
Subscale 3 (Acceptance of Various Styles)	1	2	3	4
Supervisor is open to theoretical orientations different than his or her own	.117	−.037	**−.799**	−.002
Supervisor encourages me to try new counseling techniques with my clients	−.130	.146	**−.787**	−.045
Supervisor is supportive of my counseling style, even if it is different than his or her style	.248	−.119	**−.757**	−.023
Supervisor is supportive of my trying a new technique with my client	.069	.060	**−.747**	−.133
Supervisor helps me feel comfortable developing my own approach to counseling	.338	−.046	**−.665**	.011
Supervisor encourages me to develop my own counseling style	.203	.036	**−.651**	−.021
Supervisor supports me incorporating different theoretical approaches into my work with clients	.002	.057	**−.591**	.249
Supervisor encourages me to think for myself instead of looking to him or her for answers	.209	.084	**−.521**	.052
Supervisor tells me that he or she learns from me	−.028	.357	**−.443**	−.004

Notes. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization (rotation converged in 14 iterations).

t-test was performed on the subscale scores (computed by averaging across items, respectively). There was a significant difference in the scores for warm and nondirective relationships ($M =$ 3.63, $SD = .36$) compared to past and present experiences ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .60$), $t(388) = 22.69$, $p < .01$. The difference between warm and nondirective relationships and acceptance of various styles ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .45$) was also significant, $t(371) = 10.35$, $p < .01$, as was the difference between past and present experiences and acceptance of various styles, $t(371) = -16.33$, $p < .01$. Of the three categories, participants on the whole expressed the greatest preference for warm and nondirective relationships in their contacts with their supervisor.

A bivariate correlation was then used to examine the association between supervisees' preference for constructivist supervisor characteristics and what they were actually experiencing in their supervision sessions. In order to examine the association between supervisees' preferences for constructivist supervisor characteristics and whether or not they noticed this characteristic in a recent supervision session, scores for "preference" and "actual experience," respectively, were computed by averaging across items in each respective subscale. Bivariate correlations revealed that supervisees' preference for constructivist supervisor characteristics and what they said they were actually receiving in supervision were strongly correlated, $r = .53$, $p < .01$. These results suggest that supervisees who experienced more constructivist characteristics when with their supervisor were more likely to prefer a constructivist approach.

DISCUSSION

The final version of the CSS consisted of 29 statements, each representing characteristics of constructivist supervisors. The scale can be further subdivided into three psychometrically distinct subscales: warm and nondirective relationship, past and present experiences, and acceptance of various styles. Tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and test–retest reliability were all in the anticipated direction and provide preliminary psychometric evidence for the utility of this new instrument.

Each of the items that comprise the warm and nondirective relationship subscale highlights the value that constructivist methods place on establishing an open and nonjudgmental relationship between supervisor and supervisee. As shown by the items that loaded onto this component, the constructivist supervisor partners with the supervisee and facilitates the supervision session, as opposed to directing it. Items from two of the original constructivist themes identified in the literature ("need for a supportive and nonjudgmental relationship with one's supervisor" and "using supervision to facilitate supervisee learning in a nondirective way, rather than using it to teach or counsel the supervisee themes") were represented in this subscale. These items suggest that constructivist supervisors value the supervisees' thoughts regarding their work with clients and provide the time necessary for supervisees to work through client cases. These items also suggest that the constructivist relationship itself is often nondirective; instead, the supervisee–supervisor relationship takes form organically, based on the supervisee's needs, goals, and hopes for the session. The importance of a warm supervisory relationship is consistent with much of the supervision literature (Cheon et al., 2009; Efstation et al., 1990; Lehrman-Waterman & Ladany, 2001). New, however, is the finding that nondirective practices covary with warmth. That is, the fact that warmth and nondirectiveness load onto the same component suggests that supervisees tend to experience these supervisory characteristics as complimentary. This

finding suggests supervisor nondirectiveness is a potential ingredient for facilitating supportive supervisor/supervisee relationships.

Another important component of constructivist supervision is the supervisor's use of the supervisee's past and present experiences to guide new learning. The items that loaded onto this component represent a supervisor who believes the supervisee's past and present experiences, both personal and professional, affect who the supervisee is as a counselor. This type of supervisor encourages supervisees to use these experiences to inform their work with clients. This component consists of two themes originally uncovered during the literature review: (a) reliance on past and present experiences to guide new learning and (b) reliance on supervisees' self-awareness, insight, and ability to transfer knowledge. In practice, these themes appear integrated. Supervisees must use their self-awareness, insight, and abilities to transfer knowledge when recalling past and present experiences. It is not simply that supervisees have past and present experiences that is important. Instead, it is promoting supervisees' emerging ability to transfer their learning from these experiences into their current client sessions that defines constructivist supervision.

The third component associated with constructivist supervision relates to the supervisor's nonjudgmental acceptance of various counseling styles. This component includes items that represent supervisors who are open to theoretical orientations different from their own. The items that loaded onto this component suggest that constructivist supervisors allow supervisees to establish their own voice and counseling style; they encourage supervisees to think for themselves instead of providing answers—which more often reflect the supervisor's theoretical mindset rather than the supervisees'. Being a constructivist supervisor often means withholding advice so supervisees can explore and establish their own way of working with a client.

The items that comprise these three components are listed in Table 1. This table also includes the original theme each item was thought to represent alongside the actual subscale it loaded onto. Although only three components were discovered to be associated with constructivist approaches to counselor supervision, it is important to note that items from each of the original themes are represented within the three components. The original themes include the following: (a) the need for a supportive and nonjudgmental relationship with one's supervisor; (b) reliance on past and present experiences to guide new learning; (c) using supervision to facilitate supervisee learning in a nondirective way (e.g., versus teaching or counseling the supervisee); (d) reliance on supervisees' self-awareness, insight, and ability to transfer knowledge; and (e) acceptance of various styles and approaches to counseling.

The results also indicated that supervisees preferred supervisor characteristics associated with constructivist supervision practices, including supervisors who provide warm and nondirective relationships; who encourage them to use past and present experiences in understanding their clients; and who allow them to explore various styles and theoretical orientations, even if they are different from those of the supervisors. The results also suggest that supervisees who experienced more constructivist characteristics when with their supervisor were more likely to prefer a constructivist approach. These results suggest potential strengths of constructivist approaches to supervision and that the process may, potentially, be self-replicating: It is possible that counselors in training, as future supervisors, will themselves embody the supervisory style they experienced firsthand.

Constructivist approaches to counselor supervision may have immediate and long-term benefits to supervisees. Constructivist supervision approaches appear to encourage supervisees to reflect on their work with clients, explore the assumptions behind their beliefs and actions in their work,

broaden their personal and professional understandings of client problems, increase autonomous decision making and self-reliance, and reinforce skill accrual. However, more research is needed to explore these and other potential benefits as well as limitations to constructivist approaches to supervision.

Limitations and Conclusions

Although the present study provides evidence that the CSS is a psychometrically sound, valid, and reliable instrument for assessing whether a supervisor uses constructivist approaches to counselor supervision, it is not without limitations. The study is limited to supervisees' observation of their supervisors' characteristics during a specific (albeit self-identified) supervision session. Although supervisees received the following prompt, "Think about your counselor supervisor. If you have more than one counselor supervisor, please pick one and think about your experience with him or her throughout this assessment," it is still possible that supervisees' reflections of their experiences were weighted toward the totality of their experience with supervision as opposed to one specific session. This could have led to inconsistency in how participants answered the items. It is impossible to know whether supervisees thought about their experience with one supervisor throughout the duration of the assessment or whether their responses were reflective of a combination of supervision experiences.

Although participants were instructed to think about their relationship with their supervisor, the current scale offers no way of discerning whether respondents are thinking about supervision of their own clinical cases or about their experience supervising another clinician's cases (supervision of supervision) when answering these items. Future uses of the CSS should consider including a demographic question that asks respondents to distinguish the type of supervision session they were thinking about when answering the scale items, so extended uses of this scale can be examined.

The target audience for this research was counseling supervisees. Future research should seek to understand the validity of the CSS with supervisors and supervisees from other helping professions, including psychology and social work. Additionally, adherence to constructivist principles (e.g. warm and nondirective relationship) may also be preferred in training relationships outside of the counseling profession, such as education or athletics. Further administration of the CSS in disciplines outside of counseling is also encouraged, as are explorations of its cross-cultural applicability. Future administrations of the CSS should also explore measurement invariance across various demographic criteria (race, age, gender, level of education, years practicing, etc.) as well as across cultural and national groupings. Significant differences across groups should be noted. This research will aid in confirming the generalizability as well as the cross-cultural applicability of the measure.

The sample size ($n = 13$) of students who completed the second administration of the CSS (retest) is also small and not representative of the population. Researchers interested in testing the reliability of the CSS in the future should aim to replicate this measure in an independent and larger sample.

Although much has been written about constructivist approaches to supervision, and a scale has been previously developed to assess supervisee development from a constructivist framework (Guiffrida, 2015a), this is the first study to provide empirical evidence about the supervisor

practices that most align with constructivist supervision. The results, therefore, provide an important step in defining and understanding constructivist approaches to supervision. Researchers interested in studying the effects of these different types of supervision practices on supervision development or client outcomes may use this new measure toward these ends.

Supervisors who are interested in using constructivist approaches are encouraged to use the CSS to determine whether they are, in fact, implementing constructivist methods, thereby demonstrating an important aspect of constructivist supervision: respect for and valuing of the supervisee's experience and perceptions. The CSS also can be used to initiate discussion between the supervisor and supervisee about what is and is not working within their supervisory relationship. Asking the supervisee to rate how constructivist a supervisor is on a scale from 1 (not at all constructivist) to 4 (completely constructivist) will provide the opportunity for supervisors and supervisees to determine whether there are areas within the supervision session that are disagreeable or need attention. Because establishing a warm, trusting working relationship with a supervisor is a key component to constructivist supervision, it is advantageous to use the scale as a tool to initiate and build the supervisory relationship in a kind of growth-promoting feedback loop, in which growth refers both to the professional development of the counselor trainee and to the supervisory relationship itself.

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APPENDIX A

Constructivist Supervisor Scale

Erin M. Halligan-Avery (2015)

Think about your counselor supervisor. If you have more than one counselor supervisor, please pick one and think of your experience with him or her throughout this assessment.

Please rate how accurately each statement describes your *preference* for that supervisor characteristic, where: **1** = does not describe my preference, **2** = somewhat describes my preference, **3** = very accurately describes my preference, and **4** = completely describes my preference.

Also, please rate how *accurately* each statement describes your supervisor on a scale of 1 to 4, where **1** = does not describe my supervisor, **2** = somewhat describes my supervisor, **3** = very accurately describes my supervisor, and **4** = completely describes my supervisor.

Supervisor Characteristic	*1 = does not describe my preference* *2 = somewhat describes my preference* *3 = very accurately describes my preference* *4 = completely describes my preference*	*1 = does not describe my supervisor* *2 = somewhat describes my supervisor* *3 = very accurately describes my supervisor* *4 = completely describes my supervisor*
1. My supervisor asks for my thoughts regarding my client cases.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
2. My supervisor is open to theoretical orientations different than his or her own.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
3. My supervisor helps build my confidence by asking me facilitative questions.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
4. My supervisor would agree that my personal experiences affect who I am as a counselor.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
5. My supervisor encourages me to try new counseling techniques with my clients.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
6. My supervisor encourages me to talk through client cases in supervision.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
7. My supervisor is supportive of my counseling style, even if it is different than his or her style.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
8. My supervisor encourages me to use my personal experiences to inform my role as a counselor.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
9. My supervisor supports my need to feel competent.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
10. My supervisor helps me feel comfortable developing my own approach to counseling.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
11. My supervisor encourages me to talk through personal experiences that may be affecting my work with a client.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
12. My supervisor encourages me to develop my own counseling style.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
13. My supervisor provides me autonomy to talk about issues that concern me.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
14. My supervisor supports me incorporating different theoretical approaches into my work with clients.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

(*Continued*)

Supervisor Characteristic	1 = does not describe my preference 2 = somewhat describes my preference 3 = very accurately describes my preference 4 = completely describes my preference	1 = does not describe my supervisor 2 = somewhat describes my supervisor 3 = very accurately describes my supervisor 4 = completely describes my supervisor
15. My supervisor helps me explore my approach by asking thoughtful questions.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
16. My supervisor and I openly discuss how my past experiences have shaped who I am as a counselor.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
17. My supervisor values my thoughts regarding my client cases.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
18. My supervisor encourages me to think for myself instead of looking to him or her for answers.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
19. My supervisor tells me that he or she learns from me.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
20. My supervisor believes my past and present experiences in life are valuable.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
21. My supervisor is nonjudgmental.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
22. My supervisor gives me the time necessary to talk through client cases.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
23. My supervisor would tell me if he or she was concerned I was not being ethical as a counselor.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
24. My supervisor asks me if I have experienced a situation similar to what my client is experiencing.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
25. My supervisor is supportive of my trying a new technique with my client.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
26. My supervisor makes me feel comfortable processing my client sessions.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
27. My supervisor is transparent with me about what he or she is thinking.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
28. My supervisor wants me to use my personal experiences to inform my work with clients.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
29. My supervisor has confidence in my abilities to come up with my own answers.	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

Scoring instructions:
Warm and nondirective relationship subscale: 1, 3, 6, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29.
Past and present experiences subscale: 4, 8, 11, 16, 20, 24, 28.
Acceptance of various styles subscale: 2, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 18, 19, 25.