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THE SPACE TO THINK CRITICALLY: HOW SUPERVISION CAN SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE IN SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

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Abstract

Developing sustainable and effective practice within organisations requires practitioners to navigate oppressive social structures to promote inclusivity. Supervision can be an effective mechanism to achieve this outcome. Bourdieu's theoretical concepts, *habitus*, *field* and *capital* provide a critical framework for understanding social relations at both organisational and community levels in practice and supervision. Drawing on research findings, this chapter applies a Bourdieusian framework to a study of supervision within community social services in Aotearoa New Zealand. Within the current neoliberal climate, supervision can provide a creative space to stimulate critical reflection, promote social justice and support professional sustainability within the workplace.

Introduction

Creating and maintaining sustainable organisations that are inclusive and adaptable for service users remain a challenge to health and social welfare professionals in the current neoliberal environment. Sustainability is multifaceted, with points of tension at systemic, organisational and environmental levels that require professionals to consider the impact of organisations on the broad social and physical environment and how resources are developed and renewed (Clegg et al. 2008). Moreover, sustainability requires the preservation of core values and principles. In Canada, Barter (2012: 241) argued that, ‘given contemporary social and political climates, and knowing the challenges being expressed about and within the profession, there is reason for concern for professional sustainability’, linking the concept of professional sustainability to the preservation of values of inclusion and social justice for individuals and communities in social work. Thus, sustainable services are those which address consumers’ complex social needs and concerns with those values in the foreground, requiring critical thinking and an integrated response in practice (Schmitz et al. 2012). In addition, at organisational levels, social service organisations need to nurture staff to ensure retention and continuing commitment. Employers and managers must foster commitment to innovation and inclusionary practice in the workplace as part of a workforce sustainability strategy. A study conducted in Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and Canada found that commitment to the agency ‘mission’, along with support from supervisors remained ‘centrally important to workers’ identity and willingness to remain employed in social care’ (Baines et al. 2014: 433). The ability to reflect critically holds an important place in challenging contradictory systems that oppress people in society, to support disadvantaged groups and promote human rights and social justice. In this chapter, we argue that critical reflection in supervision can support sustainable practice for workers in social services. Concepts drawn from Bourdieu’s social theory support a critical examination of the supervision space, and the impact of wider, structural issues. We explore how to align

supervision to current demands on the workforce. By way of illustration, we draw on a small qualitative study regarding the supervision of social workers in community-based child welfare organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Supervision in the organisational context of human services

Essentially, supervision is a professional working relationship between the supervisee, supervisor and the organisation (Davys and Beddoe 2010). The practice of supervision has, over 100 years, developed across a range of helping professions including counselling, social work, nursing, midwifery and psychology, often reflecting the underpinning theoretical orientations of those professions (Beddoe and Davys 2016). Developmental models used in counselling and psychology have described the process of supervisors and supervisees moving through organic stages of professional development (Hawkins and Shohet 2012). Experiential learning has become central in self-evaluation and improvement of practice in supervision. Underpinning experiential learning has been the application of cyclical reflective structures in supervision practice, such as the reflective learning model (Davys and Beddoe 2010). Momentum has gathered regarding the importance of critical reflection in ensuring social justice is addressed in professional practice (Asakura and Maurer 2018; Fook and Gardner 2007). Critical reflection in supervision provides the space to explore diverse perspectives and encompasses the professional, organisational, administrative and cultural contexts of the work undertaken with service users (Beddoe and Egan 2009). The exploration of broader and contextual perspectives in supervision then provides a strategic and action focus, as a foundation to support critical practice (Noble et al. 2016). As a space for critical reflection to occur, supervision needs to be transformational so that changes in thinking and behaviour occur in practice (Davys and Beddoe 2010).

The quality of critical discussions in supervision has been increasingly influenced by the local and global context of where practice takes place. Neoliberal preoccupations with maintaining efficiency, fiscal restraint and scrutiny of practice have shifted the focus of supervision towards risk management, meeting pre-arranged targets with service users and support for organisational agendas (Beddoe 2010). Baines et al. (2014: 438) note that critical management perspectives suggest that supervisors can make a significant contribution to mediating the impact of management for both consumers of services and for human services staff by employing ‘organisational and discretionary power to challenge and destabilise the overarching dominance of New Public Management (NPM) ... This critical management literature views these practices as forms of resistance.’ Together, supervisors and supervisees need to proactively explore how supervision can be improved and be part of developing an environment within organisations that ensures worker wellbeing, ongoing learning, and sustainability.

To promote professional sustainability, critical conversations related to oppression and social justice require ongoing scrutiny in supervision alongside individual practice, relationships with others, the organisation and the political environment (Noble et al. 2016; Rankine et al. 2018). The challenge for supervision practice is to develop a wider systemic approach (Lambley 2018), explore diversity and co-construction of knowledge (Hair and O’Donoghue 2009), and critical practice (Noble et al. 2016).

The current human services environment requires practitioners in different disciplines to think more critically and creatively about the present use of supervision. An examination of supervision has led to the development of alternative supervision approaches to promote anti-

oppressive practice, such as strengths-based approaches (Engelbrecht 2010), cross-cultural supervision (Tsui et al. 2014) and indigenous models of supervision (Eruera 2012). Utilising alternative methods including arts and creative approaches in supervision has supported deeper understanding of the emotions associated with the practice experience practice (Hafford-Letchfield and Huss 2018; Markos et al. 2008).

Enriching the supervision experience in new and creative ways provides practitioners with the opportunity to understand the wider macro areas influencing their practice, re-position associated challenges and the feelings of working in what can be a corrosive environment. Understanding that environment and its impacts on the sustainability of social service practice is enhanced by drawing on the work of Bourdieu, whose conceptual framework provides perspective and clarity to an examination of where supervision 'sits' in the contemporary social services environment.

Bourdieu's concepts and understanding the social services environment

Bourdieu's conceptual framework of field, capital and habitus, often referred to as his 'conceptual arsenal' (Garrett 2007a; Houston 2002) has been noted as particularly pertinent to understanding practice across a range of health and social welfare disciplines through analysis of societal structures and power relations (Garrett 2007a; Gill et al. 2014; Houston 2002; Taket et al. 2009). Bourdieu has described how dominant structures reproduce and maintain inequality but also provide potential opportunities for change. We briefly define Bourdieu's terms here.

Habitus refers to the identity of individuals and encompasses the day-to-day habitual practices and meaning of the social world around them (Bourdieu 1989). *Habitus* is seen by some as a *product* of the social world but as a *reproducer* of the social world for others (Houston 2002). The structures within an individual's *habitus* provide socialisation that leads to either privileges or disadvantages. In addition, Houston (2002) has stated that there is also margin for innovation and improvisation with such structures, which is an important consideration in exploring sustainability in social services work.

Field is the structured social space occupied by the individual or institution in society (Bourdieu et al. 1999). The occupants of a field are defined by the dominance and subordination that exists between their positions. Fields are dependent on sets of rules and discourses that govern relationships with others (Garrett 2007a). This discourse can change and evolve with an individual's position over time. Fields can also be used to define broader, unequal, social constructs where there is competition for knowledge, skills and resources.

Capital is Bourdieu's third interrelated concept and can take different forms: economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital (Garrett 2013). Beddoe (2013) has also employed the construct of 'professional capital' to represent the qualifications and attributes related to the status of professions in complex social fields. The different forms of capital create hierarchies within society which 'makes it possible to keep undesirable persons and things at a distance' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 127).

Bourdieu refers to *doxa*, which are the taken-for-granted assumptions, hidden agendas and traditions that operate within society, culture and education (Garrett 2007a). *Doxa*, when identified and unpacked, help explain how oppression by a ruling class or dominant force

such as patriarchy or colonisation is maintained within society. This unequal distribution of capital, Bourdieu argues, can be confronted through the process of practitioners scrutinising their personal and social environments (Bourdieu 2001). This scrutiny provides the basis for challenging oppression and developing inclusion and sustainability. Bourdieu has referred to public services such as social work and education as ‘agents of the state’ under neoliberalism (Bourdieu et al. 1999). The oppression that marginalised groups experience requires social welfare professionals to critically consider their position. Bourdieu highlighted the contradiction that social services workers are simultaneously part of administering welfare for the state while paradoxically opposing systems that oppress marginalised groups. In this chapter, Bourdieu’s concepts are used to assist with re-defining critical reflection within supervision. This process supports sustainability in the workforce through the development of critical reflection of practice in supervision.

Supervision in community child welfare: an Aotearoa New Zealand case study

A critical realist epistemology (Baines 2017) influenced the qualitative study drawn upon here, where diverse participant perspectives were captured highlighting the impact of oppressive structures as well as the development of social justice strategies in practice (Rankine 2017). In this approach, we understand that participants construct their understandings of the social world of human services practice within the realities of societies and driven by measurable injustice and inequality.

The study explored supervisory dyads’ use of supervision within the current context of different community-based, non-government child welfare organisations across Auckland, the largest multicultural city in Aotearoa New Zealand (Rankine 2017; Rankine et al. 2018).

Social workers were chosen as study participants, as their profession is associated with supporting and promoting the well-being of diverse populations in an environment dominated by organisational and government agendas (Gray and Webb 2013). A thinking-aloud process of recording supervision sessions, transcribing and examining transcribed material was developed to aid the critical reflection, analysis and review of supervision practice by supervisors and supervisees (Maidment and Cooper 2002; Rankine and Thompson 2015).

Participant data were gathered from two separate, audio-recorded and transcribed sessions including a supervision session between each supervisor and supervisee, and a follow-up session with the researcher several weeks later. To assist with anonymity in the study, participants chose pseudonyms to use. Rankine completed an initial content analysis of the supervision session where content was grouped into themes to assist the facilitation of the follow-up session. Both members of each dyad participated in the follow-up meeting and had copies of the transcript. The findings from the dyads' follow-up session revealed the current themes that occupied the supervisory space for both parties. This included self-awareness, navigating professional relationships, organisational pressures to meet targets and uncertainties within the current professional environment (Rankine 2017). The application of Bourdieusian concepts to these themes presents the realities and further possibilities for developing sustainable and inclusive practice for the practitioners involved. Examples from the data follow.

The application of Bourdieu's concepts to supervision practice

The application of the concepts, habitus, field and capital, to the themes identified in the study signals a sustainable approach for practitioners within community-based child welfare

organisations and their use of supervision. Supervision can contribute to enabling practitioners to sustain their core values and deepen insight into their day-to-day practice; appreciate the complexity of professional relationships within and outside the organisation; and strengthen professional identity weakened in managerialised workplaces while highlighting opportunities to create change and inclusion.

Habitus

How individuals identify who they are and make sense of their daily practices are central to habitus (Bourdieu et al. 1999). Safe, supportive supervision provides the necessary container to regulate and assess well-being, make connections and critically reflect. Participants, such as Susan, commented on supervision being the place to discuss personal experiences and the impact this may have on professional work:

I've had a pretty tough year with my mum passing away ... so I need to talk about [in supervision] those things and not just think that it's separate from my work ... it's important for my safety and my client's safety... You'd be silly to think that your personal life doesn't impinge on your work life. (Susan)

Houston (2002) reminds us that habitus provides a framework to adapt, innovate and improvise. Supervision enables the practitioner to adapt and adjust to the social services environment while holding firm to the values that first attracted them to this sector (Baines et al. 2014). Jessica acknowledged how the supervision habitus was a continually emerging process (supervision is seen as lifelong in social work practice, rather than as a professional

development tool as in education and internships) and an integration of professional and personal values for her supervisee over time:

What I've noticed with Grace, that you [are using] supervision for ... the personal journey [and] the professional journey. So it's about that integration ... of ideas and values and life philosophy with the work. You carry your consciousness ... this is a steep learning time for you. (Jessica)

Habitus provides understanding of an individual's 'place' and the positioning of 'others' (Bourdieu 1989). In complex environments, where various practitioners operate, a clear understanding of professional roles, boundaries and values is essential. Supervision provides clarity of roles, guidelines and associated codes of practice conduct for the supervisee operating in an organisation. Analysis of the participant data concurred – through critical discussions in supervision, the supervisee was able to examine perspectives and develop professional confidence:

I'm really clear about where I stand on this and where it needs to go ... To express without being judged around what I'm thinking. (Jackie)

It just gave me the opportunity to put the whole thing in perspective, see myself as a person in the middle of something complex with many interactions. And that I did not have to hold it all, it could be put into [perspective]. (Grace)

Through a Bourdieusian lens, an exploration of habitus involves specific rituals and practices in order to perform appropriately in an environment. The supervisor's enquiry into the supervisee's emotions in supervision allows for non-judgemental ownership of feelings, and resolution in complicated and emotionally draining work (Davys and Beddoe 2010). Jock highlighted the purpose of supervision to 'park' emotions, critically examine situations and 'rejuvenate':

It's a human thing that we get ... emotionally attached to people we're trying to help and support, and for me, supervision is the vehicle to actually help us contain, cope and park our emotions when we get attached. We do want the best for the families [in community child welfare] ... I think [supervision] is a really good vehicle to think things through in a positive, safe way ... that's where you can rejuvenate yourself and get a fresh start. (Jock)

Supervision that fosters critical reflection enables the supervisee to address the mission and values of the agency, illuminate strengths, build resilience and come up with their own solutions:

[I]t was like trying to find a way of helping Grace to think about what other strengths and resources she's got ... to get in touch with those. And that needed to be something that she came up with – not me telling her how I thought she could've handled it. (Jessica)

Field

Bourdieu's concept of field enables the practitioner to understand the structured space of relationships in social services practice within potentially corrosive and damaging workplaces. Within the supervisory space, the influences of organisational and professional forces permeate the discourses and agendas and structure how knowledge is produced in the session. The interaction and relationship the practitioner has with others, such as their supervisor, consumers of services, colleagues and other professionals, are all important areas that require critical consideration for effective and sustainable practice.

In order for practitioners to feel rejuvenated in their work, the supervision session itself needs to contribute as a positive socialising process that supports professional well-being and development. Analysis of the supervisory dyads' data highlighted key skills required by the supervisor to assist with an effective relationship:

I believe that my relationship with Debbie is sufficiently honest enough – if Debbie thought there's a complete lack of connection here she would ask a question that would lead into a conversation about that. Trust in a relationship [and] certainly a connection [are important]. (Jane)

I think we have a good, open, honest relationship ... if I have something I'm concerned about I can talk to Jock about it ... I always feel that I've been listened to and that's really important that I'm supported. (Susan)

The organisational and professional 'fields of forces' (Bourdieu et al. 1999) demonstrate opposing tensions in the supervisory relationship. In the study, this relationship was highlighted by the commitment to external supervision (supervisor external to the

organisation) by some community child welfare agencies for social workers to maintain professional obligations:

The fact that Jessica [external supervisor] is outside the organisation, I take this time – it's all about me. Whereas in the organisation, it's about the cases and how the cases are moving... So there's a different focus. (Grace)

Internal supervision relationships tend to focus on administration, completion of tasks, tight timeframes and external targets that do not necessarily reflect service users' needs, and with little focus on critical reflection on practice (Beddoe 2011). In such arrangements, the supervisee has learnt to feed back information as a mechanism to measure compliance. In this way, dominant neoliberal discourses are maintained, reproduced and unchallenged within organisations (Garrett 2007b). The lack of opportunity for critical exploration and a sense of powerlessness within internal supervision left Yvonne considering with her supervisee what could change:

Quite often I find ... that supervisees want the answer from me. 'Tell me' ... then I just continue to enable them to be powerless. How can I give you the feeling that you actually do have power in that organisation? (Yvonne)

An important aspect of Bourdieu's work is the importance of amplifying discourses of disadvantaged groups (Bourdieu et al. 1999) – a core value of professional disciplines in social services. Critical supervision, exploring the 'field of forces' that Bourdieu would argue are present in this sector, provides the practitioner the opportunity to analyse their relationships with service users within an understanding of power and structure. The

participants in the study for example, emphasised the importance of supervision being child focused when other dominant agendas prevailed:

It's really ... what's going to benefit that child ... I really felt that [the family] are focusing on the adult issue rather than the child and that was one of my goals – to discuss this with my supervisor [and] find a way to bring the focus back on the child rather than themselves. (Jackie)

When community-based organisations are dominated by managerial targets, practitioners struggle to explore creative solutions to issues experienced by service users (Connolly and Cashmore 2009). The space to critically reflect in supervision offers the supervisee a chance to view different perspectives and find alternatives, as this dyad's commentary attests:

Jock [supervisor] has given me different ideas ... when I'm talking about the grandmother that I'm working with and the problems that she's having. Jock's looking at it from a different perspective [and] angle. (Susan)

[Supervision] allows us to think about the skills that Susan has employed and it's a really positive piece of work ... a task-centred, cooperative working partnership ... you are standing alongside her and helping her come to informed choices. (Jock)

Actors in the field of social services are rendered unequal by dimensions of power and dominant beliefs (Bourdieu 1989). A Bourdieusian analysis of differing professional fields highlights the power imbalances internal and external to the organisation. Critical

examination of the internal relationships within the organisation includes staff operating within teams where hierarchies and power dynamics may privilege some and disadvantage others. Analysis of the supervisory dyads' data stressed the prominence of power struggles within community-based child welfare services:

I think it's a challenge to work with a big team of different professions.

There's decisions that are made at a hierarchical level, higher up, and they're making the decisions without talking to you ... I think our communication could be stronger ... but they've already made up their mind in leadership so they do what they want ... nothing changes. (Tracey)

Similarly, professional interactions outside the organisation can create conflict and miscommunication. The child welfare system, from a Bourdieusian perspective, exemplifies a complex system comprising a number of agencies and professionals where there is a dominant discourse controlled by a risk-averse state (Featherstone et al. 2018). Within supervision, conversations reflecting disillusionment are common, as illustrated by Alice who described some working relationships with professionals in statutory child protection as 'banging my head up against a wall':

My concerns were how it was managed from the external agencies. I ... spoke to [name of agency] and ... when it comes to dealing with suicidal comments I expect a response that makes you feel like the concerns are being heard and that you are putting everything in place that you possibly can. (Alice)

When working within complex and competing fields, Bourdieu's theorisations encourage the practitioner to 'correspond to the multiplicity of co-existing, and sometimes directly competing points of view' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 3). The supervisor has a key role in enhancing this unique position and the potential for working alongside others. Supervision becomes an essential process for critical reflection of the supervisee's navigation of multiple, complex systems so that practice remains effective and sustainable within community organisations.

I do come back to relationship being one of the things that is the very foundation of the work. So if I don't have that relationship then the work cannot be done... I see that [supervision] is one of the unique places where I can be allowed to [critically reflect on relationships] completely safely. My understanding of supervision is there has to be that trust that this is the place to do that. (Grace)

Capital

Bourdieu has described capital as the influence an individual or group has over others and how this can be measured over time relative to economic, cultural, social and professional influence (Garrett 2013). Beddoe (2013) has previously described signs of weak professional capital as including invisibility in the public discourse of professionalism; a lack of recognition for its contributions to the public institutions; a weak or disputed knowledge claim; and a passive role in institutions rather than taking leadership. Demonstrating features of weak professional capital threatens the sustainability of practice in community service organisations that aim to support disadvantaged groups.

In this study, struggles for greater professional capital were intensified by managerial discourses on professional practice (Rankine 2017). Constant changes to service delivery in community-based child welfare work, restructuring of personnel and reduced funding by the state were central to the challenges raised in supervision:

We have a really high turnover of staff. How can you build a solid team when your team's always changing? ... that's just something that I have to consider if I want to stay here or not. (Tracey)

It is a theme that runs through a lot of supervision work at the moment because of the broader context [in] which we are operating ... and the fact that ... the goalposts have been changed ... [resulting in] negative deficit talk about resourcing, not enough staff ... and downsizing. (Debbie)

An unequal distribution of capital, according to Bourdieu, maintains doxa (taken-for-granted assumptions) and disadvantages individuals and groups within society (Bourdieu et al. 1999). The levels of oppression are also apparent in how professionals operate with inadequate resources, skill bases and social connections. For many social workers in the study, operating in community-based child welfare led to a persistent mind-set of disempowerment. This was an important topic in Debbie and Jane's supervision:

[Some staff's] thinking is poisonous and we've got these young, energetic grads that are coming through with enthusiasm, lots of wonderful vibrant ideas

... and then they catch on to that train of ... 'We don't have enough' deficit type ... negativity. (Jane)

That is the external impact it's having on the cultures of teams generally ... I think that you work very hard to establish an organisational culture [that is positive]. But the challenge is how you get those staff holding the hope and ... vision. (Debbie)

The concept of capital assists with a closer inspection of existing structures and colonising processes that impact on professional practises and supervision. Moreover, choices can be explored that enhance professional capital, identity and work undertaken with others.

Bourdieu's theorisations align with principles of critical reflection in that an exploration of the wider environment of society provides the opportunity to strategise and critically examine the impact of capital influencing institutions (Bourdieu 2001). Supervision provides the space for the practitioner to critically explore alternatives to practice within institutions.

The study found an overall lack of critical analysis within supervision of connections between organisational functioning and external forces. However, the importance of having reflective time in supervision to discuss wider factors impacting on work, other than administrative matters alone, created a shift in thinking for some participants. Kath acknowledged the busyness of her job prevented her from examining her practice and the value of participating in the study and its process had made her evaluate practice in more detail:

I think having the opportunity to talk about [the use of critical reflection in supervision] is really great. To even think about all that is really different to last time... in my work, it is so crisis driven, it is really difficult to step out of that and reflect in a really healthy way. (Kath)

Bourdieu reminds professionals of the importance of multiple voices often concealed by dominant discourses in practice (Bourdieu 2001). The unpacking of culture, connection and narratives in the supervisory relationship allows for the recognition of different ways of inclusive working. From an Aotearoa New Zealand perspective, Ohaki and Rangi, as one supervisory dyad in the study, provided an example of this:

It's the sense of being able to connect with my ahua [character], my wairua [spirit] and Ohaki has that strong sense. She's happy to let me finish just whatever that looks like. I don't feel I've just got to cut off ... It really affirms for me that there is a place for Māori doing supervision together because I have a Pākehā [European] internal supervisor and ... it's a very different feel ... a whole lot of stuff gets unsaid. (Rangi)

Implications for sustainable practice

For organisations to be sustainable now and in the future, health and social care professionals require stronger opportunities for critical reflection on the wider environment and its impact both on service consumers and social services work itself (Baines et al. 2014). Commonly not recognised within texts related to helping professions (Garrett 2013) is the significance of Bourdieu's critical theorising of contemporary socio-cultural and socio-political issues. Good

supervision, and effective interprofessional and inter-agency relationships can foster greater connection between individuals, groups and their environment, and ultimately stronger social services. These organisations, in turn, can enhance their contribution to social inclusion within communities (Gill et al. 2014).

Supervision provides the ideal space for professionals within health and social care settings to critically reflect on the context of the work, to become strategic, purposeful and transformative in their practice whilst resisting the tendency to devalue and remove professional knowledge and practice wisdom from services (Noble et al. 2016). Applying Bourdieu's critical concepts to the study of supervisory dyads working in community child welfare settings in Auckland, New Zealand, illustrated how sustainable and more effective forms of practice can evolve and be operationalised within a reflective supervisory space. *Habitus* provides greater self-examination and insight of thoughts, feelings and communication. This includes a closer inspection of a practitioner's taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs and how these are challenged when working in a particular organisation with different norms and rules. *Field* permits the practitioner to develop a more comprehensive appreciation of systemic relationships. In doing so, a professional can view power imbalances within and outside of organisations and how dominant discourses are inadvertently played out within professional relationships. *Capital* allows the practitioner to see the tenuous political nature of professional work, the ongoing power struggles to promote professionalism within a managerial climate, as well as the opportunities to promote inclusive and alternative practices. Furthermore, the themes from the study also illuminated a need for the ongoing development of critical reflection by the supervisee and supervisor of their habitus, interrelationship with other fields, and the impact of dominant discourses on professional practice.

To develop sustainability in practice, practitioners and organisations need to continually make visible and strengthen social justice strategies. Supervision can often be influenced by a neoliberal discourse and requires ongoing examination over how existing supervision frameworks inculcate social justice principles and cultural identity (Beddoe 2015). In a Bourdieusian sense, supervisors and supervisees who can reflexively scrutinise their own habitus have the potential to challenge existing doxa and practices (Garrett 2013). Strategies for critical practice have become more prevalent within the supervision literature emphasising the need to examine the wider socio-political, socio-cultural and structural factors influencing practice (Noble et al. 2016; Rankine 2017). However, practitioners, supervisees, supervisors and managers operating in organisations have much to do in promoting interdisciplinary and co-ordinated conversations around sustainability and critical reflection in practice (Schmitz et al. 2012). Practitioners need to be pro-active within organisations in developing critical reflection and more sustainable practice. Supervisors can hone their skills in facilitating critical reflection within supervision while supervisees need to have a willingness to explore the value of critical reflection in sessions. Managers need to understand these organisational practices and support the significance of critical conversations held in supervision towards sustainability, social inclusion and learning for the organisation in policy and service design. Each has a connected and distributed role to ensure the development of supervision models that are context-responsive, to critically examine the wider environment and ultimately, promote social justice and the human rights of consumers of services in practice.

Conclusion

Crucial to sustainable, renewable and socially inclusive services is the practitioner's ability to develop critical reflection and social justice strategies in health and social care organisations. To do so, practitioners require spaces such as supervision to re-invigorate their passion, and integrate and re-shape professional practice within organisations. The hope for a sustainable future necessitates a collaborative and more informed approach in organisations where the impact of socio-cultural and socio-political factors on practice and people can be critically examined and alternatives implemented.

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