

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS OF TENNESSEE SCHOOL COUNSELORS:
AN EXPLORATION OF PERCEPTIONS OF MULTICULTURAL
COUNSELING COMPETENCE REGARDING RACIALLY
AND/OR ETHNICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the researcher explored self-reported multicultural counseling competence of licensed and practicing Tennessee school counselors. The researcher used the multicultural counseling competence and training survey-revised (MCCTS-R) to identify school counselors' self-reported multicultural counseling competence. Participants in this study were employed in various levels of school settings across the State of Tennessee. Participants reported working in each region of the state: east, middle, and west. The response rate of 8.25% represented 280 participants, and, as a result, was a limitation of this study. The multicultural counseling competency of the school counselors as identified by the MCCTS-R served as the dependent variable. The independent variables included the demographic factors such as school community setting, school level, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accreditation status of school counselor education programs, and membership in a professional counseling organization. Comparative and descriptive statistics were used to evaluate participants' responses to the survey.

Results of this study were analyzed and indicated that there were no significant differences between multicultural counseling competence (MCC) and school community setting, school level, and CACREP accredited school counselor education programs compared to non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs. However, results indicated a significant difference between school counselors who have membership in a professional counseling organization compared to those who do not.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Jackie and Sherry, I love you with every fiber in my being. You are the primary source of my drive and inspiration for all that I have accomplished in my educational studies and life, in general. Words cannot begin to express how grateful I am for your love and support throughout this process. Thank you for the sacrifices you made to get me where I am today. Your examples of hard work, determination, and pressing toward the mark have not gone unnoticed nor unappreciated.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACA, American Counseling Association

AMCD, Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development

ANOVA, Analysis of Variance

ASCA, American School Counselor Association

CACREP, Council for the Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs

CBT, Cognitive Behavior Therapy

CDC, Center for Disease Control and Prevention

CEP, Counselor Education Program

CT, Cognitive Therapy

IRB, Institutional Review Board

MCC, Multicultural Counseling Competence

MCCSA, Multicultural Counseling Competencies Self-Assessment

MCCTS, Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey

MCCTS-R, Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised

MSJCC, Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies

MCT, Theory of Multicultural Counseling and Therapy

PDP, Professional Development Point

PK- or K-12, Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten through twelfth-grade schools

SDR, Socially Desirable Responses

SPSS, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TDOE, Tennessee Department of Education

US, United States

URL, Uniform Resource Locator

UTC, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Currently, the United States (US) is experiencing rapid growth of the percentage of racially diverse youth compared to previous generations that have been made up of predominately white youth (Frey, 2014). This growth can be attributed to the number of children born to parents in interracial relationships and the rise in immigration of families originating from 16 different countries (Urban & Orbe, 2010). A significant change in the demographics of students in US schools has occurred over the last several decades. The growth of the percentage of racial and ethnic populations in the US has led researchers to project that students of color will soon become the majority of the student body population (Fracasso & Busch-Rossnagel, 1992; Hodgkinson, 1985; Lee, 1995; President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, 1996; Yeh & Arora, 2003).

Projections of students of color becoming the majority of the US student body population were made by Hodgkinson (1985) and Lee (1995). The duo predicted that by 2020 students from diverse ethnic, cultural, and/or linguistic backgrounds will be the majority in US public schools. By the year 2030, Hispanic and Latino students age five to 18 years old were predicted to comprise 25% of the total school population (Fracasso & Busch-Rossnagel, 1992; President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, 1996). Moreover, projections are that 60% of US school-age children will be people of color by the year 2050 (Hodgkinson, 1985; Yeh & Arora, 2003).

Sue et al. (1982) published the Position Paper: Cross-cultural Counseling Competencies, now referred to as the Multicultural Counseling Competencies Framework that discussed certain groups of clients. These clients were primarily African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanics and Latinos. Sue et al. (1982) noted that specific multicultural counseling approaches are needed to work with such populations. The multicultural counseling competencies framework serves as “a foundation for all counselors to use as they focus on both the cultural make-up of the counselor and client and how culture impacts daily living in a growing diverse society” (Ahmed, Wilson, Henriksen, & Jones, 2011, p. 17).

The Sue et al. (1982) paper was quite timely in that a significant challenge facing school counselors in the US school system is how they might acquire the necessary skills and training to address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds (Hobson & Kanitz, 1996; House & Martin, 1998; Lewis & Hayes, 1991). Accredited school counseling training programs are required to include multicultural and diversity components in their curricula; for example, multicultural competencies for counseling students and counseling practitioners have been adopted by the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2003). Moreover, a requirement by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2015) requires that any counselor education program (CEP) documents where these standards were covered in the curriculum for entry-level counseling graduates. Additionally, under CACREP’s Social and Cultural Diversity Standard, a counselor education program must document where its curriculum addresses the following:

- a. multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally,
- b. theories and models of multicultural counseling, cultural identity development, and social justice and advocacy,
- c. multicultural counseling competencies, the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual’s views of others,

- d. the effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients,
- e. help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients,
- f. the impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldviews,
- g. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination received. (CACREP, 2015, p. 9)

This common core curricular area addition will help prepare all students with the development of a professional counselor identity and mastery of the knowledge and skills to practice counseling effectively (CACREP, 2015).

When counseling minorities, the cultural diversity of the counselor is also important (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Per Yeh and Arora (2003), a lack of ethnic diversity among professionals exists in the school counseling field. A clear majority of school counselors at 70% identify as Anglo-White and have a European background (McCarthy, Kerne, Calfa, Lambert, & Guzman, 2010). According to Mathai (2002), the racial and ethnic backgrounds of school counselors are similar to those of other educators, such as teachers and school psychologists. Approximately 85% of teachers are White and nearly 95% of school psychologists are also White (Curtis, Grier, Abshier, Sutton, & Hunley, 2002).

Recent membership demographics from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Member Directory reflected 81% of its members as being White (ASCA, 2018). These proportions may be important because research by Pope-Davis and Ottavi (1994) and Vinson and Neimeyer (2003) found that racial/ethnic minority counselors, such as African American, Asian American, and Hispanic, self-reported more competence in multicultural counseling than their White counselor counterparts. Consequently, Gruman, Marston, and Koon (2013) conducted a study and found that the relationship between multicultural counseling competency self-reports and actual multicultural competence performance were not a good predictor of actual performance. Also, found in the study, people of color had higher self-reports of multicultural

counseling competence (MCC) than their White counterparts despite their actual performance on vignettes yielding results of no significant difference. On one vignette, White counselors performed better than people of color, thus questioning the validity of self-reports. Thus, other issues of credibility of self-reporting include accuracy (Sedikides & Strube, 1995) and consistency seeking, self-enhancement, and self-presentation (Robins & John, 1997; Swann, Chang-Schneider, & McClarty, 2007).

All professional school counselors should be culturally responsive in their prevention and intervention services through the delivery of comprehensive school counseling programs (Lee, 2001). This is in spite of the lack of ethnic diversity among professional school counselors (Curtis et al., 2002; Mathai, 2002) and whether the cultural diverseness of professional school counselors is an important factor when delivering counseling services to minorities. Therefore, the need exists for school counselors to promote cultural diversity in school counseling prevention and intervention activities as well as ensuring that they are aware of cultural differences in ethnic and racial populations. To ensure that all students, regardless of differences between culture, heritage, and ethnicity or race, are treated equitably and appropriately, it is crucial that professional school counselors address the needs of culturally diverse students from the students' worldviews or "the way in which people perceive their relationship to nature, institutions, other people, and things" (Sue, 1978, p. 458).

Conceptual Framework

In their early work, Position Paper: Cross-cultural Counseling Competencies, Sue et al. (1982) published a tridimensional model of multicultural competencies that identified the competencies for counselors in the following three categories: (a) beliefs and attitudes, (b) knowledge, and (c) skills. This model was revised in a later work, Multicultural Counseling

Competencies and Standards: A Call to the Profession, to include (a) the counselor's awareness of his or her own assumptions, values, and biases; (b) an understanding of culturally different client's worldview; and (c) the development of appropriate intervention strategies and techniques to be used when counseling the culturally different client (Sue et al., 1992). Further operationalized by Arredondo et al. (1996), the model had become the foundation for counselors to use as they focus on the culturally significant factors that influence daily living for their clients. More recently, the multicultural counseling competencies (Sue et al., 1992) were revised as the multicultural and social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC) (see Appendix A) by Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, and McCullough (2015).

The MSJCC is a framework for counselors to implement multicultural and social justice competencies into the counseling field, focusing on theories, practices, and research (Ratts et al., 2015). The authors' conceptual framework of the MSJCC serves as a "visual map of the relationship between the constructs and competencies being articulated within the MSJCC" (Ratts et al., 2015, p. 3). The MSJCC contains developmental domains that reflect various layers that lead to multicultural and social justice competence. These layers include (a) counselor self-awareness, (b) client worldview, (c) counseling relationship, and (d) counseling and advocacy interventions. Incorporated within the first three MSJCC developmental domains are the following aspirational competencies: attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, skills, and action (AKSA). A socioecological model that provides a multilevel framework for individual counseling and social justice advocacy for counselors was incorporated within the fourth developmental domain (Ratts et al., 2015).

Professional school counselors should be aware that displaying cultural insensitivities can result in hindering the growth of a student, thus resulting in cultural oppression rather than

liberation (Constantine, 2007). To understand what is culturally significant to the student, the counselor should possess and use a repertoire of skills to tailor interventions for each student. Doing so may enable the counselor to ensure the optimal development of that individual. Therefore, counselors should strive to adhere to, at a minimum, the multicultural counseling competencies (MCC) as delineated by the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development (Arredondo et al., 1996) and more recently revised as the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (Ratts et al., 2015).

To aid in compliance with multicultural counseling competencies, Day-Vines et al. (2007) proposed broaching as a tool. By being multiculturally aware, school counselors can use multicultural counseling skills, such as broaching, to initiate discussion and respond to sociocultural and sociopolitical factors as part of the counseling relationship (Day-Vines et al., 2007). In a study by Bayne and Branco (2018) of the broaching behaviors of eight professional counselors of color, four themes resulted. The themes were (1) intentionality, (2) consideration of impacts on clients' experiences, (3) influence of counselors' discomfort when using broaching, and (4) broaching skills and practices. Also, in this study, participants described their experiences of the impact of broaching in the counseling relationship. The impact of broaching included increasing awareness and understanding of the client along with increasing the client's comfort level, enhancing the counseling relationship, and helping the client's during the counseling process (Bayne & Branco, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

The theory of multicultural counseling and therapy (MCT) (Sue, Ivey, & Pedersen, 2007) is considered a metatheory of counseling and psychotherapy that exists within a cultural context

(Ivey, Ivey, & Simek-Morgan, 1997). Rather than being employed as a single theory, MCT is used in conjunction with established psychotherapeutic theories (Ivey, 1995) and focuses on the cultural and sociopolitical impacts on people's daily lives as well as recognizing the differences among and within cultural groups. The theory is a major paradigm shift from traditional Eurocentric (Sue et al., 2007) or Western counseling perspective and approaches to a more holistic and integrative approach to counseling focusing on the cultural diversity of clients. Given that groups and individuals differ from one another, blindly applying counseling techniques to every situation and with every population is seemingly unreasonable (Sue & Sue, 2015). The counseling relationship requires different approaches that are congruent with the client's life experiences (Choudhuri, Santiago-Rivera, & Garrett, 2012; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014).

An example of a counseling approach or technique that is culture-specific involves being nondirective and nonconfrontational when communicating with individuals of Asian descent. Sue and Sue (1973) stated that the use of directive and confrontational counseling techniques could be perceived by individuals in traditional Asian culture as being disrespectful, rude, and insensitive. Another culture-specific counseling technique involves the communication style of many individuals in the Black or African American culture. A White counselor may notice that a Black client may not always make eye contact to communicate (Smith, 1981). Blacks may not use body language such as the head nod or verbal language such as uh-huh to indicate that they are listening (Kochman, 1981; Smith, 1981). On the other hand, a Black individual's physical proximity to whomever is speaking is an indication that he or she is listening (Sue, 1990). Additionally, Fracasso and Busch-Rossnagel (1992) and Preciado and Henry (1997) suggested that, in regard to education, recognizing the significance of family culture within the Hispanic/Latino community could be the initial step in communicating with the family. One

example of communicating with the family would be to provide documents and reading materials that are translated in Spanish for those who cannot read English (Gopaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998).

A review of the MCT theory (Sue et al., 2007) incorporated a postmodern philosophy of social constructionism (Vygotsky, 1938) as a basis for multi- or cross-cultural counseling. Social constructionism involves reality as a socially constructed worldview that exists due to the effects of social and interpersonal factors (Gergen, 1985). Within social-systems, individuals are influenced by their society or interactions with others, culture, and historical past, present, and future. To ensure counselors focus on the needs of the students, who are molded by cultural and social influences, MCT theory also encompasses a participant-focused methodology. This methodology encourages counseling professionals to have knowledge of the student's worldview in counseling research, theory, and practice, and to understand the sociopolitical systems and institutional barriers affecting the student (D'Andrea & Heckman, 2008).

A comprehensive understanding of MCT theory is directed toward individual's cultural context as the foundation from which an individual learns and his or her identity is developed. The understanding of MCT theory refers to all individual learning and identity and is defined within a broad and inclusive cultural context that not only recognizes families and cultures, but also noted the significance of culture and communities (Sue & Sue, 2013). From this cultural context or focused culture-centered approach are six propositions of MCT theory (Sue, Ivey, & Pedersen, 1996):

1. MCT is a metatheoretical approach to counseling and psychotherapy.
2. MCT recognizes that the identities of both the counselor and client are rooted in multiple levels of experiences and contexts.

3. A significant determinant of both counselor and client attitudes toward self and dominant and subordinate relationship groups is cultural identity development.
4. Consistency of modalities and goals with the life experiences and cultural values of the client enhances MCT.
5. Multiple helping roles of culturally different groups are essential.
6. The involvement of the continual development of cultural sensitivities affects MCT counselor competence.

Statement of the Problem

The growing number of ethnic, racial, linguistic, and/or culturally diverse students may pose a challenge for the professional school counselor. For example, according to Aud, Fox, and KewalRamani (2010), there was an increase in population between 2000 and 2007 of individuals in the US who were born outside of the continental 50 states and the District of Columbia. This group grew from 12% of the US population in 2000 to 14% in 2007. More recently, the percentage of Hispanic children, ages 0-17, has grown substantially with an increase from 9% in 1980 to 25% in 2016 and in 2020, less than half of all children were projected to be non-Hispanic Whites (Federal Interagency Forum on Children and Family Statistics, 2017).

Due to the increase of diversity within Kindergarten through 12th grades' (K-12) student bodies, a significant challenge school counselors may face is effectively addressing all students' needs (Hobson & Kanitz, 1996; House & Martin, 1998; Lewis & Hayes, 1991). Likewise, Holcomb-McCoy (2004) noted that a major challenge of school counselors lies in their ability and readiness to address those needs. A concern in addressing those needs is that most counseling theories and interventions that are commonly used in schools have not been tested

among diverse student populations (Ivey, 1993; Sue et al., 1996). Researchers such as Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1993); Lee and Richardson (1991); Locke (1992) noted that using traditional counseling methods with people of diverse backgrounds including culture, ethnicity, and race results in frequent outcomes that are inappropriate, harmful, and ineffective. Additionally, traditional counseling approaches were monocultural and lack attention to the experiences of minority groups (Diller, 2007; McLeod, 2003; Sue, 2001; Vera & Speight, 2003). Thus, professional school counselors should have a working knowledge of counseling principles that are appropriate for their culturally diverse student body to include, but not limited to, those with ethnic and racial backgrounds (ASCA, 2012).

Holcomb-McCoy (2001) also emphasized that “one of the major challenges facing the field of school counseling today is the preparation of school counselors who are able to address the needs of an increasingly diverse student population” (p. 195). Additionally, Lee (2001) posited that “among the issues facing contemporary school counselors, addressing the developmental needs of the growing number of students from culturally diverse backgrounds, is, perhaps, the most challenging” (p. 257). Lee’s statement was reiterated by Trolley (2011), who noted that counselors face the task of being able to assist all students in every area of development: academic, career, and personal-social. Thus, it is essential that professional school counselors be adequately trained to work with students from various cultural backgrounds.

The developmental process of cultural competence involves a long-term commitment (Vennapoosa, 2012). The commitment is an ongoing acquisition of knowledge, the expansion of an advanced skill set, and continued self-evaluation (Diller, 2007) to be better prepared to provide culturally responsive counseling. School counselors can provide culturally responsive counseling by practicing advising and counseling that are specific to students’ cultures, ensuring

all students' rights are respected, and improving their own cultural competence, to name a few (Dahir & Stone, 2012). Hence, it is essential that school counselors demonstrate culturally responsive behavior in their comprehensive school counseling programs by encouraging positive self-concepts and implementing prevention and intervention strategies to achieve academic success for the culturally diverse (Lee, 2001; Park-Taylor, Walsh, & Ventura, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

In this study, the researcher intended to investigate the self-reported multicultural counseling competence of licensed, practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee. Additionally, the researcher intended to examine school counselors' professional characteristics. The examination of school counselors' professional characteristics was to determine whether differences in MCC among school counselors exist between school community settings, school levels, CACREP or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs, and membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations. Given this study, school counselor education programs and professional counseling organizations could offer additional training in multicultural initiatives. In a like manner, school counselors and counseling organizations can advocate for and provide multicultural professional development opportunities on local, state, and national levels.

Research Questions

1. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban)?

2. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; other)?
3. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by CACREP accredited school counselor education programs or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs?
4. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations?

Alternative and Null Hypotheses

*H*₁: The level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban) will be significant.

*H*₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee as measured by the MCCTS-R as differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban).

*H*₂: The level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; other) will be significantly different.

*H*₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee as measured by the MCCTS-R as differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; other).

*H*₃: The level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by CACREP accredited school counselor education programs or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs will be significantly different.

*H*₀₃: There is no statistically significant difference in the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, as differentiated by CACREP accredited school counselor education programs or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs.

*H*₄: The level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations.

*H*₀₄: There is no statistically significant difference in the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, as differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations.

Significance of the Study

With the influx of racially diverse US students (Frey, 2014), professional school counselors are mandated to be ethically responsible in addressing the needs of culturally diverse

students as well as students' families, teachers, and school administrators (ASCA, 2016). Therefore, the results of this study provided insight to school counselors about how culturally aware they are regarding themselves and the students to whom they provide services. Additionally, this study attempted to identify the preservice training in multiculturalism or multicultural counseling that school counselors received. The CEPs and school counselor organizations could use the data to provide professional development for school counselors to help these individuals continually grow in multicultural counseling competence. The results of the study were anticipated to provide helpful information concerning the integration of multicultural counseling practices regarding the academic, personal/social, and career development needs of students.

Terms and Definitions

African American or Black – A term used to identify people with origins of any Black racial group of Africa (CDC, 2014).

Asian American – A term promoted by Sue (1999) that implies commonalities among people who live on the continent of Asia, divided among many countries as different as Afghanistan, China, India, Syria, and Japan.

Client – “A person who the professional advice or services of another” (Merriam-Webster, 2013, para. 2a.). Also, used interchangeably with student for this study.

Cultural Self-awareness – To recognize one's cultural influences, including professional work cultural influences, upon values, beliefs, and judgments (Winkelman, 2005).

Culturally Competent (Skilled) Counselor – A counselor who is defined as being accurately aware of culturally learned assumptions by themselves and their clients. The

culturally competent counselor is able to comprehend relevant facts and information about a client's culture and provide skillful intervention and foster positive change through the counseling process (Pedersen, 2002).

Culture – The way of life of a given group of individuals that includes values, beliefs, and attitudes shared by the group (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002).

Diversity – “Any individual or group whose background and experiences differ significantly from that reflected by the U.S. mainstream” (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002, p. 339). The differences in age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, or disability and other characteristics used by individuals to self-define (Arredondo et al., 1996).

Empathy – The counselor’s ability to communicate a sense of caring and understanding of students’ experiences (Egan, 1994).

Ethnicity – The heritage passed generationally among people of the same country of origin, history, and language (Helms, 1990).

Ethnocultural Empathy – Empathy directed toward people who are racially and/or ethnically different from oneself (Wang et al., 2003).

Helping Relationship – “A relationship in which at least one of the parties has the intent of promoting the growth, development, maturity, improved functioning, improved coping with life of the other. The other, in this sense, may be one individual or group” (Rogers, 1958, p. 27).

Hispanic – People who have a heritage from Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean islands (Nieto & Bode, 2012, p. 178). For this study, the term Hispanic will be used interchangeably with the term Latino.

Marginalize – “To relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group” (Merriam-Webster, 2013, para. 1).

Middle Eastern American – Descendants of Asian and North African countries located in the Middle East. The countries include Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Somalia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen (Soheilian & Inman, 2009).

Multicultural Awareness – The awareness counselors possess about their own worldview and cultural biases (Sue et al., 1992).

Multicultural Counseling – Any counseling relationship in which at least two participants have different cultural backgrounds, values, and lifestyles (Sue et al., 1982).

Multicultural Counseling Competence – Counselors’ awareness, knowledge, and skill counselors possess and use when working with culturally diverse clients (Sue et al., 1992).

Multicultural Knowledge – The knowledge counselors possess about the worldviews of culturally diverse clients (Sue et al., 1992).

Multicultural Skills – The skills counselors possess to effectively work with the culturally diverse (Sue et al., 1992).

Multicultural Terminology – The concepts and definitions of terms related to race and culture (Johnson, 1990).

Multiculturalism – “The broad scope of dimensions of race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, class status, education, religious/spiritual orientation, and other cultural dimensions” (ACA, 2003, p. 379).

Multiracial – People who have origins in two or more racial categories defined by the federal government (CDC, 2014).

Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native – People with a heritage in any

original group of North and South America (including Central America) who also maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment to the original group (CDC, 2014).

Oppression – Systematical subjection, from structures of domination and subordination and ideologies of superiority and inferiority, of individuals to political, economic, cultural, or social degradation because they belong to a social group (Charlton, 1998).

People or Students of Color – The sociological reference to African American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American groups in the United States (Sue et al., 1992).

Prejudice – The negative attitude toward individuals or groups (Ponterotto, Utsey, & Pedersen, 2006).

Privilege – The receiving of benefits from another cultural group’s oppression (Croteau, Talbot, Lance, & Evans, 2002; McIntosh, 1988).

Professional Development – The processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so they might, in turn, improve the learning of students (Guskey, 2000).

Race – A group in which individuals who share distinctive physical characteristics, such as skin color or hair type, and the generalizations and stereotypes are categorized (Cooper & Leong, 2008).

Rural – The geographical areas located outside metropolitan statistical areas (NCES, 1996).

School Urbanicity – A geographical area that is either rural, suburban, or urban (NCES, 1996).

Social Desirability – The tendency of individuals to profess that they always have positive social and personal interactions with minorities. Most often, individuals also declare

their favorability of multicultural diversity in educational and governmental policies (Sodowsky, Kuo-Jackson, Richardson, & Corey, 1998).

Social Justice – How advantages and disadvantages are distributed to individuals within society (Miller, 1999). Social Justice is considered the fifth force in psychology (Ratts, D’Andrea, & Arredondo, 2004).

Stereotype – Ideas about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors of certain groups and group members (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996).

Suburban – Geographical areas located within the area surrounding a central city within the metropolitan statistical areas (NCES, 1996).

Urban – Geographical areas located in central cities of metropolitan statistical areas (NCES, 1996).

White – Having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa (CDC, 2014). Also, used interchangeably with Caucasian and European American.

Assumptions of the Study

Several assumptions existed for this study. The researcher assumed that all participants responded truthfully to the survey without providing socially desirable responses (SDR). Socially desirable responding is when participants using surveys to collect self-reports may not provide truthful answers, but instead provide favorable responses (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). In this study, socially desirable responding is the likeliness of participants to declare that they always have positive social and personal interactions with individuals labeled as minorities. This declaration of positive social and personal interactions with minorities may cause individuals to appear more culturally competent than they are. For that reason, participants were encouraged to

volunteer and truthfully share their own views and were reassured that there were neither right answers nor wrong answers. Also, the assumption existed that all school counselors have a basic understanding of multicultural counseling and participated in multicultural counseling training during their CEP and as practicing counselors. The researcher also assumed that all practicing school counselors have participated in and used training to deliver services to culturally diverse students.

Delimitations of the Study

This study investigated the multicultural counseling competence of professional school counselors practicing in all Tennessee schools. The school counselor must have earned at least a master's degree in school counseling and be certified by the State of Tennessee as a school counselor. The school counselor must also have an email address listed in the Tennessee Department of Education school counselor listserv. Additionally, school counselors were required to be currently practicing counseling within the realm of pre-Kindergarten through 12th grades.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation can be defined as potential weaknesses in a study that can assist readers in determining the extent to which results can or cannot be generalized to other populations and situations (Creswell, 2002). This study investigated a specific subset of practicing Tennessee school counselors' perceptions of multicultural counseling competence when counseling or providing services for students of various racial and/or ethnic heritages. The size, generalizability, reliability, and validity of the results of this study should not be perceived as a

representation of the larger population of practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee or across the US. The instrument used for this study allowed school counselors to self-report their perceived multicultural counseling competence, which also posed a limitation. Issues with self-reports include accuracy (Sedikides & Strube, 1995), consistency seeking, self-enhancement, and self-presentation (Robins & John, 1997; Swann et al., 2007).

Due to the potential of this study to be emotionally charged and controversial, the fact that participants may provide socially desirable answers to appear more competent than they are was also a limitation. Another limitation of this study was connected to participants' understanding of the concept of multicultural counseling competence and the application of the paradigm to the school counseling discipline and practices. Some school counselors may have never worked with culturally diverse students, thus also posing a limitation. Also, a limitation of this study was participants' accuracy in reporting their participation in multicultural professional development activities and the CACREP accreditation status of their school counselor education program. Another limiting factor could have been that school counselors who work in the same county as the researcher or who personally know the researcher may have presented themselves as being more multiculturally competent than those without affiliation to the researcher. One other limitation was based on the electronic delivery of the survey. Some counselors may have limited access to the internet and experience discomfort with computer and internet use. Additionally, there is unknown accuracy of the State of Tennessee's email database listing for currently licensed and practicing school counselors.

Summary

The changing demographics of the United States and the increase of culturally (i.e., ethnicity and racially) diverse people, especially in the pre-Kindergarten (PK)-12 school systems, have established a need for professional school counselors to be able to address the needs of diverse student bodies (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004). Births from interracial relationships and the rise in immigration (Urban & Orbe, 2010) of children and their families to the US have changed the appearance of many American communities and schools. To become multiculturally competent in counseling practices, a significant challenge school counselors face is adequate preparation to effectively address those needs (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001). While receiving training in multicultural counseling via a graduate school counseling program is important, developing cultural competence is a developmental process (Diller, 2007) comprised of “continuous knowledge acquisition, advanced skill development, and ongoing self-evaluation” (Dodson, 2013, p. 26).

Culturally responsive counseling can be provided by school counselors via advising and using counseling techniques and interventions that are specific to students’ cultures. Doing so ensures all students’ rights are respected, and the school counselors' own cultural competence is improved (Dahir & Stone, 2012). Therefore, it is essential that school counselors demonstrate culturally responsive behavior in the implementation of their school counseling programs for the culturally diverse student population to achieve success (Lee, 2001; Park-Taylor et al., 2007).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides literature relevant to the multicultural counseling competence of school counselors who work with ethnically and/or racially diverse students. The researcher examined literature that pertains to the school counseling profession. Literature focused on (a) the evolution of school counseling as a profession, (b) characteristics of the multicultural competent school counselor, (c) multicultural counseling competencies, (d) empathy, (e) multicultural competence and school counselor education, and (f) multicultural competence and school counselor professional development.

The Evolution of School Counseling as a Profession

The school counseling profession in the US emerged in the late 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century as the vocational guidance movement (Baumen et al., 2003). In response to political and socioeconomic consequences of the Industrial Revolution (Sarkees-Wircenski & Scott, 2003), counseling was established as a humanitarian effort to improve the lives of individuals and communities who were adversely affected by the Industrial Revolution (Aubrey, 1982). During the vocational guidance movement, individuals and communities faced

educational, economic, and social issues and were assisted in the areas of legal reform, child and adult welfare, educational and vocational domains, postsecondary vocational transition, and individual-occupation matches (Blocker, 2000).

Often alluded to as the founder of the guidance movement, Frank Parsons in 1908 (as cited in Lambie & Williamson, 2004) established the Vocational Bureau in Boston, Massachusetts. One of the bureau's purposes was "to aid young people in choosing an occupation, preparing themselves for it, finding an opening in it, and building up a career of efficiency and success" (Parsons, 1909, p. 3). Parsons (1909) worked with young individuals helping them with self-discovery and obtaining information about careers relevant to their interests. According to Hartung and Blustein (2002), the practice of vocational guidance that Parsons envisioned was based on logical decision-making and justification. The rationale and reasoning of the practice of vocational guidance were based on the core values of social activism and political responsibility (Hartung & Blustein, 2002).

Although Parsons (1909) (as cited in Aubrey, 1977; Brewer, 1942) worked with young individuals by providing vocational guidance services; the first systematized guidance program was established in the public schools by Jesse B. Davis, a superintendent of the Grand Rapids, Michigan, school system. In 1907, Davis (as cited in Aubrey, 1977) suggested that students receive a weekly guidance lesson focused on building character, moral consciousness, and ethical behavior as a means of choosing careers. Therefore, having laid the foundation for career counseling and school counseling (Pope, 2009).

In 1957, the launch of the Russian Sputnik space satellite led to widespread fear and a desire for educational and social reform of the American people. The sense of immediacy for America to act on educational and social reform resulted in the redefining of middle and high

school counseling (Wittmer, 2000). The redefinition of school counseling can be partially identified with the passage of federal legislation, specifically, the National Defense Act of 1958. The National Defense Act of 1958 was in direct response to the launch of Sputnik. The other federal legislation, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, was in response to fight the War on Poverty to provide equal, quality educational access (Beesley, 2004; Gysbers & Henderson, 2001; Paisley & Borders, 1995; Wittmer, 2000). With the passage of federal legislation, funding became available to increase the number of appropriately trained school counseling professionals and develop the knowledge and skills of those who were already working in the profession (Baker, 2000).

Historically, multicultural counseling has its roots in social justice during the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s (Jackson, 1995). However, it was not until 1965 that the American Personnel and Guidance Association established the Human Rights Commission to address the issue of diversity and multicultural counseling (Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 1995) and advocate for the needs of the culturally diverse. The creation of the division, formerly known as the Association of non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance in 1969, the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), chartered in 1972 with a name change to AMCD in 1985, also addressed issues of diversity and multiculturalism in counseling to improve cultural, ethnic, and racial sensitivity as well as provide an understanding in an effort to promote and sustain personal growth (ACA, 2015; AMCD, n.d.).

Characteristics of the Multicultural Competent School Counselor

The field of counseling has evolved to comprise classical psychology-based clinical approaches such as psychodynamic, humanistic, and behavioral approaches. Most recently, counseling includes multiculturalism, which is considered to be the fourth force or fourth dimension of psychology (Ivey et al., 1997; Pedersen, 1991b, 1999) to address the changes in the US population. Along with the changes in the general counseling field, school counselors must also respect the necessity and ethics of integrating multiculturalism into their counseling practices. School counselors must also respect the urgency to pursue multicultural counseling competence.

School counselors are compelled to respect students' cultural differences and access to comprehensive services designed to affirm those differences. The mandate was outlined in the American School Counselor Association Ethical Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 2016). Holcomb-McCoy (2001) asserted that being able to respond to the needs of a diverse student body is a major challenge of school counselors and that school counseling professionals, as with their colleagues in the general counseling field, must develop multicultural competence. Given that the professional school counselor interacts with students, parents, school leaders, and the community, a checklist of 51 multicultural competencies for school counselors was proposed by Holcomb-McCoy (2004). The checklist allows school counselors to work with culturally diverse students in the following nine areas (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004):

- Competencies 1 through 8: Multicultural Counseling
- Competencies 9 through 13: Multicultural Consultation
- Competencies 14 through 22: Understanding Racism and Student Resistance
- Competencies 23 through 25: Understanding Racial Identity Development

- Competencies 26 through 31: Multicultural Assessment
- Competencies 32 through 35: Multicultural Family Counseling
- Competencies 36 through 43: Social Advocacy
- Competencies 44 through 46: Developing School-Family-Community Partnerships
- Competencies 47 through 51: Understanding Interpersonal Interactions

While this checklist is not all-inclusive, developing mastery in these areas may help expand the professional school counselor's multicultural counseling proficiency, thus enabling him or her to better support and provide services to the culturally diverse.

Related literature has described multicultural counseling competence as including awareness, knowledge, and skills that are needed in a counseling relationship for effective work with diverse clients (Sue, 2001; Sue et al., 1992; Worthington, Soth-McNett, & Moreno, 2007) and specifically for this study, diverse students. It is the presumption that acquiring awareness, knowledge, and skills to provide effective counseling to individuals of diverse backgrounds is what makes a counselor multiculturally competent (Pedersen & Ivey, 1993). Moreover, Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) discovered that multicultural terminology (e.g., I can define prejudice.) is also an important factor for the multicultural competence of school counselors.

Multicultural Counseling Competencies

Multicultural Awareness

For the culturally competent school counselor, multicultural competence begins with the counselor developing awareness, a self-awareness, which allows the counselor to identify any

factors that would challenge the delivery of effective counseling. Gaining awareness is an ongoing process that must be actively pursued. Therefore, a counselor who is culturally competent is “one who is actively in the process of becoming aware of his or her own assumptions about human behavior, values, biases, preconceived notions, personal limitations, and so forth” (Sue et al., 1992, p. 75). Having the insight to determine if the counselor is imposing his or her own personal beliefs and values on students is self-awareness.

Per the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, it is imperative that school counselors are careful to avoid imposing their personal beliefs, personal worldview, or values on students or other stakeholders when supporting student development and referring students (ASCA, 2016).

The American Counseling Association (2014) added that all counselors “gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, dispositions, and skills pertinent to being a culturally competent counselor in working with a diverse client population” (p. 8). Baruth and Manning (2000) also stressed the importance of counselor cultural self-awareness. The authors noted that culturally competent counselors should be aware of their own cultural characteristics and how their backgrounds may influence counseling decisions. They also noted that culturally competent counselors should also understand their ability to determine differences in race and beliefs between themselves and the client (Baruth & Manning, 2000). Pedersen and Connerley (2005) added that without forming stereotypes, having a general understanding of another group, in terms of its characteristics and functionality, is multicultural awareness. Dodson (2013) noted that

Counselors should be encouraged to directly challenge their views on race and ethnicity, and to consider how their views are shaped through their own experiences. With these considerations in place, they can be prepared to consider how race and ethnicity may be influencing their students. (p. 26)

Once awareness has been achieved, the culturally competent school counselor possesses an understanding or gains multicultural knowledge of his/her own behaviors as well as those of the students they serve. As school counselors move beyond gaining multicultural awareness, then they can begin to develop multicultural knowledge.

Multicultural Knowledge

When counselors purposefully seek an understanding or have knowledge of others' culture and how their culture and social identification mold their worldviews is known as Multicultural Knowledge. Worldview is influenced by the culture of an individual and includes his or her family structure, history, values, and beliefs. What could also be of utmost importance is counselors' knowledge and understanding of how society may enact unfair treatment upon individuals of diverse groups to include discrimination, institutional barriers, oppression, and sociopolitical contexts (Sodowsky, Kuo-Jackson, & Loya, 1997).

A hindrance to understanding differences in others and providing effective counseling stems from the inability of school counselors to understand their students' worldviews. An individual's worldview shapes his or her reality, normality of daily living, and any issues that could arise. Therefore, the culturally competent school counselor actively attempts to understand culturally different clients from their perspectives without negatively judging them (Sue et al., 1992). Pedersen (1991b) stressed that understanding the client's worldview promotes meaningful growth that is personal to the client rather than the counselor.

Knowing a student's worldview and understanding how the student's perceptions shape his or her decisions and behaviors can guide counselors toward developing the necessary competencies to work effectively with students of diverse racial and ethnic

backgrounds (Constantine, 2002; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Yeh & Arora, 2003). Ivey, Ivey, and Zalaquett (2013) stressed that “all of us need to develop knowledge about various cultural groups, their history, and their present concerns” (p. 41) to work effectively with diverse individuals.

Several aspects of multicultural knowledge include the counselor’s knowledge about the US sociopolitical system, and institutional barriers imposed upon diverse communities and various cultural groups (Sue & Sue, 2008). Thus, for school counselors to develop multicultural skills, they must connect their awareness and knowledge of specific cultures to develop a repertoire of culturally sensitive and appropriate techniques and interventions. Building on awareness and knowledge, the culturally competent school counselor is likely able to develop and use the appropriate skills and theories to bring about change and effectively work with a diverse student body.

Multicultural Skills

School counselors should be aware of various theories, skills, and techniques they can use when counseling students from diverse backgrounds and also possess the knowledge and ability to use various counseling techniques and therapies (Constantine, 2001; Fusick & Bordeau, 2004). Ivey et al. (2013) recognized that traditional counseling theories and methods might be “inappropriate and/or ineffective” (p. 43) for the diverse student’s needs. Since traditional approaches to counseling are developed in Euro-American context (Sue et al., 2007), the professional school counselor should address students’ culture, values, and life experiences that would allow minority students to respond better to culture-specific counseling approaches (Pedrotti, Edwards, & Lopez, 2008).

However, using traditional counseling theories and approaches such as cognitive behavior therapy may complement the use of MCT during a counseling session. Cognitive therapy (CT) or cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) was developed by psychiatrist Aaron Beck (Beck Institute, 2016). The goal of CBT is to change patterns of underlying beliefs about oneself, worldview, and other people, resulting in long term change (Beck Institute, 2016).

Hays (2009) discussed how CBT and MCT could be implemented and complement each other in counseling and therapy based on her prior work (Hays, 1995). Both CBT and MCT share assumptions that, according to (Hays, 1995), facilitate their integration. Hays (2009) outlined the following assumptions:

- Both use unique interventions tailored to address the needs and strengths of the individual.
- Empowerment is important. CBT empowers through teaching specific skills that individuals can adopt. MCT empowers through cultural identity as a source of strength.
- CBT focuses on easily articulated and assessed conscious processes. This approach is acceptable for English as a second language speakers (ESLs) or individuals “who do not share the same cultural assumptions that underlie the European American concept of the unconscious” (Hays, 2009, p. 355).
- In CBT, assessment is integrated throughout therapy. Boyd-Franklin (2003) (as cited in Hays, 2009) stated such action communicates respect for clients’ viewpoints regarding their progress and respect is viewed as a central part of culturally responsive practice.
- Both focus on natural strengths and supports used to promote change; and
- Behavioral components of CBT emphasize the impact of the environment on behavior, which complements the cultural influences of MCT.

School counselors may need exposure to real-life opportunities that foster an understanding of different cultures that allow them to practice and integrate multicultural counseling skills that are appropriate for meeting the needs of their culturally diverse students. According to Heppner and O'Brien (1994), counselors develop multicultural counseling skills by integrating opportunities of real-life experience, rather than in a classroom learning environment,

where multicultural awareness and knowledge are developed. For this reason, engaging in practical experiences, such as conducting counseling interventions in the student's own language, if other than English, have been found to be twice as effective as an intervention than if conducted in English (Griner & Smith, 2006). Doing so could help counselors examine any potential barriers that could hinder the access of services and/or development of students (ACA, 2014).

Holcomb-McCoy (2005) proposed that counselors who provide nonjudgmental and culturally appropriate services for diverse student populations and their families could make a significant difference in minority student achievement. An example of a culturally appropriate intervention strategy would be to communicate with the parents and families of a Hispanic/Latino student, who do not communicate effectively in English, by providing documents in Spanish (Gopaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998). Additionally, providing documents in Spanish for Hispanic/Latino students and families could combat the underutilization and unused services by communicating with them regarding the availability and access of services (Gopaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998).

Multicultural Terminology

A study by Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999), led the duo to conduct a principal component analysis on the multicultural counseling competence training survey (MCCTS). Five components, Multicultural Knowledge, Multicultural Awareness, Definitions of Terms, Knowledge of Racial Identity Development Theories, and Multicultural Skills resulted from the analysis. In 2001, the instrument was revised to measure school counselors' perceived multicultural counseling competence (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). Therefore, the

instrument needed to reflect the language used by school counselors. Therefore, experienced school counselors of ethnically diverse backgrounds and experiences were surveyed (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004).

The school counselors determined the changes to be “consistent with school counselors' experiences and relevant to the school setting” (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004, p. 156). An example of a change to the survey is the term student was used instead of the term client. As a result of the changes, the Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) study examined 209 school counselors with ASCA membership looking at their perceived multicultural counseling competence. The instrument used in the study was the MCCTS- R and three factors of Multicultural Knowledge, Multicultural Awareness, and Multicultural Terminology emerged. Results from the study indicated that participants were competent in all three domains with scores slightly lower in the awareness and terminology domains compared to the knowledge domain. Yet being competent in Multicultural Terminology, as a practicing school counselor, requires the acquisition of language for appropriate use within multicultural counseling is important to the development of multicultural competence of the school counselor.

Holcomb-McCoy (n.d.) developed a three-credit-hour, multidimensional graduate course relevant to multiculturalism pertinent to school counseling. In the course's evaluation article, *Multicultural Training for School Counselors: A Course Description*, the course begins with an extensive dialog of multicultural terminology (Holcomb-McCoy, n.d.). Terms and definitions that were discussed in the course included “culture, discrimination, race, racism, racial identity, ethnicity, multiculturalism, classism, sexism, and oppression” (Holcomb-McCoy, n.d., p. 12). As part of the course, students were encouraged to provide their own definitions and compare their definitions with other students' definitions, and definitions found in scholarly

journals, books, and research (Holcomb-McCoy, n.d.). The reasoning of Holcomb-McCoy (n.d.) is supported by Pedersen (1991a) in that the careless use of language in which describing construct has been part of the confusion in multicultural counseling.

According to Holcomb-McCoy (n.d.), certain terms are often misused. An example of a term that is often misused is the race. Race typically implies genetic or biological characteristics that distinguish one group from another. However, with the categorization of race-based distinctions, more differences are found within racial groups instead of between them (Ponterotto & Pedersen, 1993). Race is at times used erroneously to mean racial identity (Holcomb-McCoy, n.d.). Racial identity is defined as “a sense of group or collective identity based on one’s perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with one particular racial group” (Helms, 1993, p. 3).

Empathy

The term empathy was first used in 1909 and is referred to as an instinctive ability to understand and share others’ feelings (Titchener, 1909). Empathy was conceptualized by Carl Rogers (1961) as the counselor having the emotional ability to enter the client’s world. More so, “Empathy is often defined as understanding another person’s experience by imagining oneself in that other person’s situation: One understands the other person’s experience as if it were being experienced by the self, but without the self actually experiencing it” (Hodges & Myers, 2007, p. 296). The worldview of the client should be understood and communicated to the client by the counselor (Rogers, 1961).

Empathy is a central tenet in a successful helping relationship (Orlinsky, Ronnestad, & Willutsky, 2004). For counselors to have an accurate understanding of the issues and concerns

that may arise based on a student's racial and ethnic makeup, empathy is needed. An empathic school counselor has the ability to communicate how he or she cares about and understands the student's life experiences (Egan, 1994). According to Wang et al. (2003), conflicts, discrimination, and intolerance can be reduced by empathy while tolerance, respect, and understanding between individuals with similar and differing ethnic and cultural backgrounds can be increased by empathy. The concept of empathy relative to an individual's ethnic and cultural backgrounds is ethnocultural empathy.

Ethnocultural empathy involves ethnic and cultural aspects related to empathy (Wang et al., 2003). Consequently, the term ethnocultural empathy was drawn from theories of general and cultural empathy with attempts to operationalize the terminology (Wang et al., 2003). The researchers identified several facets of ethnocultural empathy that distinguishes it from general empathy, to include:

- The necessity to consider other individuals' cultural contexts. In other words, an individual should be understood in the context of his or her experiences and not as an individual independent of his or her cultural context.
- The necessity to restrict one's own subjective perceptions (e.g., prejudices) against ethnic and culturally diverse individuals and groups.
- The necessity of recognizing that ethnocultural empathy relies on practical experiences with other cultures. Essentially, if an individual has not had contact with people from different cultures, that individual would have difficulty feeling or sharing with others' perspectives (Wang et al., 2003).

Multicultural Competence and School Counselor Education

The nation has changed considerably regarding the ethnic or racial minority population. As of July 1, 2017, the US Hispanic population constituted 18.1% of the nation's total population at 58.9 million. The Hispanic population is the largest ethnic or racial minority in the US (U. S.

Census Bureau, 2018). Considering the change in the US demographic structure, school counselors may need more training and skills for serving a culturally diverse student body.

Zalaquett, Foley, Tillotson, Dinsmore, and Hof (2008) noted that several CEPs used traditional counselor training and education models that “fail[ed] to consider the impact of multicultural factors such as a person’s age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, and gender in the education process” (p. 324). Dodson (2013) noted that being ill-prepared to meet the needs of multiracial, multilingual, and multicultural diverse students is a major challenge faced by school counselors. Therefore, CEPs need to determine how to effectively respond to the challenge and responsibly cultivate cultural competence by focusing on skill development (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007).

CEPs may implement training modalities that allow therapeutic rapport to be established between the counselor and individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds. Cultural immersion is an example of such training modality where an individual has direct contact with another individual or group’s culture. The cultural immersion experience has been contended to increase counselor trainees’ knowledge, skills, and awareness (Alexander, Kruczek, & Ponterotto, 2005; Goodman & West-Olatunji, 2009). Therefore, to enhance multicultural counseling competence in counselor trainees, CEPs could examine the Kelly and Gayles (2010) study and offer opportunities for graduate students to interact with and dialog about cultural differences. The pair noted that doing so is key to preparing professionals for entry-level positions that are multiculturally demanding (Kelly & Gayles, 2010).

An Infusion of Multicultural Issues and Diversity

To ensure all school counselors, specifically alumni of CACREP accredited counseling programs, are able to meet the needs of a diverse population, CEPs must integrate multicultural diversity competency training into all counseling courses (CACREP, 2009). Additionally, all counselor trainees should have understood the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends within a multicultural society (CACREP, 2009). CACREP Standards address how the professional counselor should be able to understand the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends within a multicultural society by using research to address “multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally [and] theories and models of multicultural counseling, identity development, and social justice and advocacy,” (CACREP, 2015, p. 9), to name a few. For counselor trainees to gain this understanding, the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics provides guidelines outlining the role of the counselor educator in the development of professional multicultural counselors. According to the ACA Code of Ethics, the counselor educators are to infuse multiculturalism and diversity material into all courses and workshops for professional counselor development (ACA, 2014).

More so, according to section F.11.c. of the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, “counselor educators actively infuse multicultural/diversity competency in their training and supervision practices. They actively train students to gain awareness, knowledge, and skills in the competencies of multicultural practice” (ACA, 2014, p. 15). Without having multicultural and/or diversity competency implemented into CEP training and supervision practices, trainees may not develop the necessary skills to practice ethically. Thus, school counselors with or without minimal multicultural counseling training may not be equipped with the knowledge and skill to effectively work with the culturally diverse (Hobson & Kanitz, 1996).

CACREP (2015) specifically addressed multicultural diversity in school counseling and outlines the need for counseling trainees to be taught strategies needed to identify and eliminate “barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination, [and] the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual’s views of others,” (p. 10), to name a few. Stadler, Suh, Cobia, Middleton, and Carney (2006) suggested that diversity, as a core value, be incorporated into school counselor education program policies, increased recruitment of diverse students and student interaction, and the continual updating of multicultural goals. Two studies (Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Sadowsky et al., 1998) found that training variables such as counselors’ academic coursework, workshop attendance, and multicultural supervision were significantly related to counselors’ competence when working with diverse populations.

Multicultural Training Approaches

Various training approaches exist that counselor education programs can use to prepare counselor trainees to deal with related to multicultural and diversity issues. Such training approaches include cultural immersion activities, clinical internships, and service learning. These training approaches could provide counselor trainees with opportunities that allow them to explore and experience the diverse lifestyles and cultures of others. According to Dickson, Argus-Calvo, and Tafoya (2010), incorporating multifaceted training approaches that foster multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills is vital to counselor education training. Vereen, Hill, and McNeal (2008) advocated that counselor education programs exercise an array of practical and clinical instructional methods to include, but not limited to, experiential (De Ricco

& Sciarra, 2005; Kim & Lyons, 2003; Platt, 2012; Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010) and didactic models (Abreu, 2001; Kim & Lyons, 2003).

These practices, including cultural immersion programs, cross-cultural interviews, role playing, studying a second language, and service learning, are purported to increase trainees' multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. Researchers have found that students who have exposure to various multicultural experiences inside and outside the classroom demonstrate increased multicultural competence (Roysircar, Gard, Hubbell, & Ortega, 2005; Sodowsky et al., 1998). For example, in a study of a mentoring program in which counseling students enrolled in a multicultural course, Roysircar et al. (2005) found that multicultural awareness was developed when they mentored students in an English as a second language course.

One practice included faculty establishing a multicultural training environment and using various pedagogical strategies (Buckley & Foldy, 2010; Nixon et al., 2010) such as the internship, coursework, and supervision (Coleman, 2006) that could be ideal for student learning. Serving as role models for their students, faculty can provide their students with a safe and supportive classroom learning environment allowing for open dialogue of diversity issues where students can discuss their experiences, fears, and questions (Rothschild, 2003). Fostering this learning experience for counselor trainees to openly discuss diversity or multicultural issues in the classroom could help develop multicultural competence among the trainees.

Dickson and Jepsen (2007) found that counselor trainees perceived the cultural environment of their counselor education program to be a significant predictor of multicultural competence. If students believed that their professors and classmates were genuinely interested in multicultural issues then the classroom's cultural environment would be a greater predictor of

multicultural competence rather than students simply taking a course in multiculturalism (Sweeney, 2009) for a mandatory graduation and/or accreditation requirement.

Another training approach, experiential learning, has been proposed to connect multicultural counseling theory with practical application (Heppner & O'Brien, 1994). The experiential learning activity can also increase the trainee's multicultural awareness (Villalba & Redmond, 2008) and allows participants to experience the effects a culture through the involvement of others (Pedersen, 2000). One experiential learning activity is multicultural or cultural immersion (CI) experience. Pope-Davis and Coleman (1997) described the cultural immersion experience as a "direct, prolonged, *in vivo* contact with a culture different from that of the counselor trainee" (p. 232) where cultural understanding is gained (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Toporek, Ortega-Villalobos, & Pope-Davis, 2004) along with an increase in knowledge of groups' cultural worldviews (Pope-Davis, Breaux, & Liu, 1997).

Fawcett, Briggs, Maycock, and Stine (2010) studied graduate-level students engaged in a Guatemala travel study course where the participants showed significant differences on pre- and post-tests using the multicultural counseling competencies self-assessment (MCCSA) developed by Arredondo et al. (1996). According to Fawcett et al. (2010), multicultural immersion experiences require day-to-day contact over an extended period typically such as weeks, months, or semesters. During the extended time of the multicultural immersion experience, counseling students are believed to gain an increased awareness of their own biases, values, and worldview (Alexander et al., 2005; Goodman & West-Olatunji, 2009; Ribeiro, 2004).

Hipolito-Delgado, Cook, Avrus, and Bonham (2011) explored the Multicultural Action Project (MAP), also a cultural immersion activity. The MAP serves as an avenue by which counselor trainees' multicultural competence could be enhanced via the three levels of

involvement: observation, information seeking, and action. Students are required to attend meetings or lectures or engage in similar passive learning activities. Next, students are to be more active in seeking information regarding the community in which they are engaged. Such information-seeking behaviors include interviewing or consulting community resource centers.

The third level of involvement requires students' volunteerism in communities. The volunteer service should be targeted or sponsored by the community itself. While immersed in the other cultural communities outside their own, students are required to individually record in a weekly journal exercise their experiences on cognitive and emotional levels (Hipolito-Delgado et al., 2011). Doing so allows trainees to become more culturally aware of their own biases and prejudices, thus allowing trainees to refrain from imposing their own personal biases and prejudices on their clients.

Service learning is another experiential learning approach used to develop multicultural competence for counselors. Service learning can be described as the process of integrating active community assistance into classroom learning (Kronick, 2007) and can directly expose the counselor trainee to individuals of diverse backgrounds while increasing multicultural counseling competence (Burnett, Hamel, & Long, 2004). Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, and Bryant (2007) called for the implementation of service learning in the counselor education program citing that counselor trainees may be enticed to enact change once societal inequities have been made obvious to them. Students would be able to gain knowledge about "the power dynamics behind the structural and institutional inequities that have been created around categories, such as gender, race/ethnicity, class, disability, age, and sexual orientation" (Prentice, 2007, p. 266) through service learning projects.

A six-week campus-based study conducted by Chao, Olson, Spaventa, and Smith (2010) matched international students one-to-one with counselor trainees or university administrators. The service-learning project goal was created to explore the effects of the project on counseling trainees, international students, and university administrators. Each week participants kept extensive notes of their involvement in the project, which after six weeks, were used by the research team to identify common themes found throughout the journals. After the study, the counselor trainees identified three themes: privilege, emotional feeling, and advocacy of social justice. What the three major themes revealed among the counselor trainees is that they never realized the privileges they had compared to those of the international students. Also, the trainees were deeply moved after learning the extent to which international students may have to use limited resources. An example was that an international student with a family of seven lived in a two-bedroom and one-bathroom apartment. The advocacy of social justice emerged after the trainees noticed the need for social change citing that they observed individual and systemic stereotyping and discrimination (Chao et al., 2010).

Vera and Speight (2003) stated that at the heart of multiculturalism is social justice in that what accounts for the inequitable experiences of marginalized people such as people of color, women, gay, lesbian, bisexual people, and others in the US is the existence of institutionalized racism, sexism, and homophobia. Thus, the insight of social inequities learned from the service learning project compelled several counselors trainees to integrate their learning from the project into their counseling experiences (Chao et al., 2010). According to Boyle-Baise (2002), service learning offers students the opportunity to view others' worldviews through a "multicultural education" (p. 5). Therefore, service learning could be viewed as an effective pedagogical approach for developing multicultural competence for school counselor trainees.

Multicultural Competence and School Counselor Professional Development

Professionals, such as “doctors, lawyers, educators, accountants, engineers, and people in a wide variety of professions and businesses participate in professional development to learn and apply new knowledge and skills that will improve their performance on the job” (Mizell, 2010, p. 3). Quality professional development activities need to be available to the professional school counselor. It is important for the school counselor to stay abreast of current and emerging counseling models and strategies for the learning, development, and implementation of skills. Since the same level of accountability in public K-12 schools for educators is also encountered by the school counselor (Rhyne-Winkler & Wooten, 1996), school counselors also need systematic professional development opportunities.

School counselors are not required to engage in professional development activities led by the Tennessee Department of Education to maintain their licensure. Instead, school counselors, as all Tennessee educators, must earn professional development points (PDPs) to advance or renew the professional school services personnel license. For example, according to Tennessee State Board of Education Policy 5.502, if an educator seeks to advance from the practitioner to the professional license using PDPs, 30 PDPs must be accrued during the term of the current license (Tennessee State Board of Education, 2018). For the renewal of the professional license, educators must accrue 60 PDPs during the term of the license. All PDPs must be approved by the director of schools, charter school leaders, or management organization (Tennessee State Board of Education, 2018).

Role of Professional Development

Professional development refers to learning experiences that are used across various career disciplines and fields that, where individuals learn new skills and strategies, the gained knowledge can then be applied to his or her professional practice to improve performance. Professional development is often viewed as a “formal process such as a conference, seminar, or workshop; collaborative learning among members of a work team; or a course at a college or university” (Mizell, 2010, p. 5). Professional development is often known by other names such as “staff development, inservice, training, professional learning, or continuing education” (Mizell, 2010, p. 5). However, not all professional development activities are conducted in a formal context. Other professional development activities are conducted informally. Professional development activities conducted in informal contexts include: “discussions among work colleagues, independent reading and research, observations of a colleague’s work, or other learning from a peer” (Mizell, 2010, p. 5). Regardless of the context in which professional development is experienced, the purpose of professional development is to enhance the school counselor’s professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve students’ learning (Guskey, 2000).

Professional development must also be continual if desired results are to be produced. Over a few years, regular experiences for professional development may yield systematic growth and development (Champion, 2003). School counselors cannot expect to learn and implement counseling techniques, interventions, and skills if professional development is a one-shot approach. According to Speck (1996), an important characteristic of best practice is that professional development takes time and must be conducted over several years, about four to seven years or longer in some cases, for significant change in educational practices to occur.

Consequently, as a professional, it is the school counselor's responsibility to continually pursue multicultural counseling competence to enact change as a counseling practitioner with a diverse student body.

Professional Responsibility

It is also important that multicultural competent professional school counselors commit to ethical standards in their counseling practices. School counselors have the professional responsibility of governing themselves per the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors and the ACA Code of Ethics. Both documents illustrate counseling ethical responsibilities for counselors to adhere to in their practices. By providing ethically sound practices that are culturally responsive, counselors could be viewed as developing competence in working with individuals from diverse backgrounds. It is important that counselors understand that multicultural counseling competency is required for all counselors regardless of their specialties and that by working with a diverse population, counselors gain knowledge, awareness, skills, sensitivity, and dispositions to develop into culturally competent counselors (ACA, 2014).

Professionals who do not have training or competence in working with culturally diverse clients are practicing unethically and potentially harmful to their clients (Sue et al., 1992). Arredondo and Toporek (2004) agree that mental health practitioners' own unchecked assumptions and perceptions may comprise ethical counseling practices. The ACA Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014) further noted that counselors avoid causing harm within the counseling relationship. To avoid causing harm, counselors should avoid imposing their personal values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors on their clients. Doing so will result in respecting the diversity of their clients. To continue to emphasize the importance of counselors implementing

multicultural competence counseling as adhering to ethical standards, Casas, Ponterotto, and Gutierrez (1986) stressed that untrained or incompetent counselors are unethical if working with culturally diverse individuals.

Therefore, access to professional development activities that focus on multicultural counseling and/or diversity issues is important for school counselors to develop cultural competence in their counseling practices. The ACA 2014 Code of Ethics urges the professional responsibility of counselors by their engagement in continuing education. By doing so,

counselors recognize the need for continuing education to acquire and maintain a reasonable level of awareness of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity. They take steps to maintain competence in the skills they use, are open to new procedures, and keep current with the diverse populations and specific populations with whom they work. (ACA, 2014, p. 9)

Additionally, the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors (ASCA, 2016) called for the professional competence of school counselors through participation in and providing professional development and continuing education opportunities.

However, before a professional school counselor, particularly one who is licensed in the State of Tennessee, can practice, the counselor should pass the Praxis II: Professional School Counselor exam (Educational Testing Service, 2015) that contains questions addressing the potential impact on diverse student populations (e.g., cultural and linguistic differences) on academic and social outcomes, regarding the use of culturally appropriate interventions, and understanding the necessity of self-awareness regarding personal biases and limitations that could affect the counseling relationship (Educational Testing Service, 2013).

Professional school counselors should actively seek professional development and/or continuing education opportunities to be ethically compliant under ASCA standards and competencies (ASCA, 2019). Thus, school counselors are to make a yearly plan for professional development and opportunities relevant to professional standards and competencies and also

personal growth (ASCA, 2019) and commit to active participation in local, state, and national associations that promote the development and improvement of the counseling discipline. (ACA, 2014). School counselors are charged with maintaining awareness and knowledge of current issues, trends, theories, and research, and so on to continue growth in multicultural counseling competence. Awareness and understanding could occur because of participation in various multicultural activities, events, and training and implementing interventions and strategies appropriate for each student. These activities should reflect cultural differences in students' values, beliefs, and practices (Constantine, 2001).

Summary

The literature reviewed for this study was reflective of a culturally or multiculturally competent school counselor with specific traits including the counselor possessing multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and empathy. Also, the school counselor's professional responsibility is to adhere to ethical standards by developing multicultural competence that begins in a school counselor education program and continues via professional development. Professional development activities should specifically address multiculturalism and/or multicultural counseling that guide counselors toward an understanding of students' cultural differences in the counseling relationship. School counselors should also stay abreast of the latest multicultural counseling theories and methods.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology the researcher used to investigate the self-reported perceptions of multicultural counseling competence of practicing school counselors. The participants included licensed, practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee in the east, middle, and west regions. Relationships between school counselor characteristics were examined to determine if there were any differences in multicultural counseling competence among school counselors. The following characteristics were examined to determine the MCC among practicing and licensed school counselors in the State of Tennessee:

- school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban),
- school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; other),
- CACREP accreditation status of school counselor education program, and
- membership in professional counseling organizations.

Also, included in this chapter are descriptions of the following: (a) participants, (b) overview of the research design, (c) research questions, (d) instrumentation, (e) assessment of instrument reliability and validity, (f) data collection procedures, (g) incentives, and (h) data analysis.

Participants

The participants targeted for this study were licensed and practicing school counselors employed in Pre-K or K through 12 schools in Tennessee. Participants were solicited from the Tennessee Department of Education school counselor member directory. This directory is a public document and was available from the Tennessee Department of Education Office of Research and Policy. Individuals who were currently practicing school counselors had earned at least a master's degree and possessed a State of Tennessee teaching license endorsed in school counseling were eligible to participate.

Overview of the Research Design

This study employed a nonexperimental quantitative research design that was both descriptive and comparative (Singh, 2007). The researcher investigated personal and professional background information of school counselors collected from the school counselor demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire was attached to the MCCTS-R and was used to identify counselors' self-reports of multicultural counseling training as well as to investigate the self-reported perceptions of school counselors' multicultural counseling competence. All data from the questionnaire and MCCTS-R were electronically administered by and collected using the Qualtrics software platform. These data were then exported into and tabulated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25. Parametric and nonparametric tests were conducted to investigate Tennessee professional school counselors' multicultural counseling competence as measured by the MCCTS-R regarding multiple variables. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the subjects. This procedure was used to address the following research questions:

1. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban)?
2. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; other)?
3. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by CACREP accredited school counselor education programs or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs?
4. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by counselor membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations?

Instrumentation

School Counselor Demographic Questionnaire

The researcher created the school counselor demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) that was used as the first part of the survey. The questionnaire was designed to collect data from 14 questions related to school counselors' personal and professional backgrounds. School counselor characteristics solicited from the questionnaire are included in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 School Counselor Questionnaire Characteristics

Characteristics
Race
Ethnicity
Gender
Age range
Region of employment
School classification
School community setting
School level
Years of counseling experience
Tennessee school counseling endorsement/license
Highest school counseling degree
Accreditation status of school counselor program degree
Membership in professional counseling organization
Participation in multicultural professional development activities

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey- Revised

Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999) developed the original MCCTS structured on the AMCD multicultural competencies (Arredondo et al., 1996) to assess perceived multicultural competence and training of professional counselors in their entry-level graduate counseling programs. The MCCTS is a self-report instrument containing 61 items measured on a Likert scale (1 = not competent, 2 = somewhat competent, 3 = competent, and 4 = extremely competent) with 32 behavioral statements assessing knowledge, awareness, and skills. Expert raters and 17 professional counselors piloted the instrument. Content validity was determined by pilot group members' assessments of clarity of each item and by the comprehensiveness of the survey. After several revisions of the initial survey, the survey items were divided into six parts consisting of:

- (1) multicultural counseling curriculum in entry-level graduate program;
- (2) faculty and students in entry-level program;
- (3) multicultural clinical experiences in entry-level

program; (4) post-graduate multicultural training and experience; (5) demographic information; and (6) self-assessment of multicultural counseling competence and training. (Holcomb-McCoy, 2000, p. 88)

Participants were asked in sections, one through four, to provide information regarding their multicultural counseling training experiences (i.e., entry-level and post-graduate). Demographic information including age, gender, ethnicity, highest degree graduation year, and graduate counseling degree program accreditation status were included in section five. The 32 behaviorally-based statements derived from the AMCD's Operationalized Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Explanatory Statements were included in section six (Holcomb-McCoy, 2000).

The study by Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999) was conducted to determine counselors' self-perceptions of multicultural competence and pre- and in-service professional training. A principal component factor analysis of the MCCTS from a sample of 151 counselors resulted in five multicultural competence factors and their internal consistencies: (a) Multicultural Knowledge ($\alpha = .92$), (b) Multicultural Awareness ($\alpha = .92$), (c) Definition of Terms ($\alpha = .79$), (d) Knowledge of Racial Identity Development Theories ($\alpha = .66$), and (e) Multicultural Skill ($\alpha = .91$) (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). The analysis explained a 63% variance of competence items. The small number of items included on the Racial Identity subscale may have resulted in a lower reliability estimate for the subscale (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004).

To specifically address school counselors Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) revised the MCCTS. Under this revision, the MCCTS-R was developed and is an instrument for school counselors developed to assess self-perceived multicultural competence (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). The MCCTS-R contains a 32-item self-report scale in contrast to

the original survey of a 61-item self-report scale. The self-report scale measures three subscales. The three subscales of the MCCTS-R include four items that address multicultural awareness, 19 items that address multicultural knowledge, and four items that address multicultural terminology. Representative items for each of these categories can be seen in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 MCCTS-R Subscales and Item Examples

Subscales	Item Examples
Multicultural Awareness	“I am able to discuss how my culture has influenced the way I think.”
Multicultural Knowledge	“I can discuss family counseling from a cultural/ethnic perspective.”
Multicultural Terminology	“I can define prejudice.”

Assessment of Instrument Reliability and Validity

To identify the multicultural counseling competence components of the MCCTS-R, a principal component analysis for the items in the MCCTS was used and revealed three factors essential to multicultural competence. These three factors contrast with the five factors that were revealed from the original study using the MCCTS. The three factors were Multicultural Terminology, Multicultural Knowledge, and Multicultural Awareness. The factor analysis differs from the tridimensional model (Sue et al., 1982) that was used in creating the MCCTS for the original study in that Multicultural Skills did not result from the analysis. However, Multicultural Terminology was determined to be a factor. To test the construct validity of the MCCTS-R, Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) used a maximum likelihood factor analysis with a direct oblimin rotation procedure. The direct oblimin rotation is a factor analysis procedure used to rotate factors for a better fit of the data. Specifically, the direct oblimin rotation is to be used if factors that can be correlated is sought (Statistics Solutions, 2019). The

analysis indicated Multicultural Knowledge, Multicultural Awareness, and Multicultural Terminology as factors with a 55.11% variance of MCC.

The researcher's intent was to conduct a pilot study using school counselor trainees before inviting professional school counselors to participate in the approved study. According to Polit, Beck, and Hungler (2001), a pilot study is a smaller scaled test or trial run conducted to prepare for a major study. A pilot study is also a pre-test of a specific research instrument (Baker, 1994). Additionally, the pilot study is used to enhance data integrity through the development of consistent practices (Leon, Davis, & Kraemer, 2011). The researcher was not allowed to conduct a pilot study because of the lack of responses from school counselor trainees.

Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) reported internal consistencies for each subscale: Multicultural Terminology ($\alpha = .97$), Multicultural Knowledge ($\alpha = .95$), and Multicultural Awareness ($\alpha = .85$). When examining the results of this study, the researcher performed Cronbach's alpha and found similar internal consistencies of MCCTS-R subscales to those reported in the Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) study. The internal consistencies found in this study for each subscale were: Multicultural Terminology ($\alpha = .95$), Multicultural Knowledge ($\alpha = .95$), and Multicultural Awareness ($\alpha = .85$).

Data Collection Procedures

The first step to data collection was to seek permission to use the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey- Revised (MCCTS-R). The researcher obtained permission from the developer (C.C. Holcomb-McCoy, personal communication, March 4, 2014; see Appendix C). Secondly, the researcher obtained a list of public nonconfidential email addresses of school counselors in the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) school

counselor listserv. The researcher secured permission from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the current study (see Appendix D).

Following the IRB approval of the study, the researcher sent an email to the addresses listed in the TDOE school counselor listserv inviting individuals to participate in the study via an online survey. The online survey was created in and delivered by Qualtrics, an electronic survey system.

The researcher sent out a series of three emails during the data collection timeframe. The first email in the series was the Letter of Invitation (see Appendix E). The Letter of Invitation included a synopsis of the purpose of the study, details of the instrument, primary researcher and supervising faculty member names and contact information, a link to the survey, time requirement to complete the survey, information regarding an incentive to complete the survey, and assurance of confidentiality of their responses throughout the study. Also, included were instructions to access the Qualtrics survey and a uniform resource locator (URL) that led directly to the survey. Following the completion of the informed consent (see Appendix F), access was immediately granted. If the participant did not consent to participate, he or she could click disagree and was directed to a thank you message at the end of the survey.

The second email reminder (see Appendix G) was sent one week after the letter of invitation and contained survey instructions and an optional URL address to access the survey. The intent was to create a user-friendly experience as suggested by Dillman (2000) and Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009) by providing easy access to the survey. The final email reminder (see Appendix H) was sent 14 days after the second email reminder and reminded potential respondents to complete the survey. This email also addressed the importance of potential respondent's participation is to the success of the study (Dillman, 2000).

Incentives

The researcher's intent was to use a monetary incentive to increase survey participation. Research by Singer, Van Hoewyk, Gebler, Raghunathan, and McGonagle (1999) and Trussell and Lavrakas (2004) show that incentives can increase the rate of survey responses. As response rates decline, the use of incentives to motivate a sample population to participate in surveys has increased (Cantor, O'Hare, & O'Connor, 2008; Kulka, Eyerman, & McNeeley, 2005; Singer, Van Hoewyk, & Maher, 2000).

The researcher decided to make a monetary donation on behalf of charitable organizations benefiting children in Tennessee instead of giving a monetary incentive to the participants. The researcher donated \$1.00 for every completed and usable survey, for a total of up to \$300.00. The participants could select where the funds were to be donated. The agencies were required to be organizations that advocate for or assist children up to age 18 years old. The researcher identified the top three choices and donated one-third of the monetary incentive to each of the identified organizations.

Data Analysis

As noted, the questionnaire and survey data were collected using Qualtrics. Qualtrics is a web-based survey tool used to gather survey results. Demographic questionnaire data were used to present the characteristics of the school counselors regarding their race, ethnicity, gender, age group, region, school setting, school level, school classification, years of counseling experience, highest counseling degree, counseling degree program accreditation, membership in a professional counseling organization, and frequency of participation multicultural counseling activities. The MCCTS-R measured school counselors' self-reported MCC.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine if there was a main effect and/or an interaction between school setting (Research Question 1) on school counselors' self-reported MCC, as measured by the MCCTS-R. A Kruskal-Wallis h test was used to evaluate the relationship between MCC and the school levels at which school counselors practice counseling (Research Question 2). A Mann-Whitney u test was conducted to examine the relationship between school counselors' self-reported MCC, as measured by the MCCTS-R, whose school counseling graduate degrees were accredited by a CACREP accredited program versus a non-CACREP accredited program (Research Question 3). An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the relationship between school counselors' self-reported MCC, as measured by the MCCTS-R, with membership versus nonmembership in professional counseling organizations (Research Question 4).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate Tennessee's professional school counselors' self-reported multicultural counseling competence as measured by the MCCTS-R. Professional school counselors who are licensed in the State of Tennessee and subscribed to the TDOE school counselor listserv were selected for this study. Data were collected electronically using Qualtrics to allow participants to submit responses to the online demographic questionnaire and the MCCTS-R. Data were descriptive, comparative, and inferential in nature. The researcher applied statistical methods to include parametric tests such as one-way ANOVA, and an independent samples *t*-test, and nonparametric tests such as the Kruskal-Wallis H test, and Mann-Whitney u test, and tests for homogeneity such as the Levene's test to analyze collected survey data. The following chapter describes the results of the analyses for this study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine self-reported multicultural counseling competence of Tennessee licensed and practicing school counselors using the MCCTS-R. Data analyses included an examination of demographic factors. Internal consistency for Multicultural Terminology, Multicultural Knowledge, and Multicultural Awareness scales on the MCCTS-R were measured. Four research questions were examined to identify whether a correlation between MCC and school counselor characteristics exists.

Population and Sample

The survey used for this study was sent to 3,855 email addresses of individuals on the TDOE's school counselor listserv. The email invited school counselors to participate in the study. A total of 461 email addresses were returned indicating invalid email accounts. According to the TDOE's School Counselor Coordinator (L. S. Bagwell, personal communication, December 17, 2015; see Appendix I), not all email addresses contained in the school counselor email directory belonged to currently practicing school counselors. Several recipients emailed the researcher to let her know that they were not school counselors and/or not currently practicing Tennessee school counselors. Of the total presumed 3,394 valid email addresses, 487 (14.3%) surveys were begun by respondents. Of those 487 surveys, 321 (65.9%) were completed. Only one participant who accessed the survey declined to complete the survey.

Another seven surveys were removed because the participants were not currently practicing school counselors. There were 16 surveys removed because the participants were not licensed or did not have an endorsement as a Tennessee school counselor. An additional 17 participants declined to answer or it was unsure if they had a Tennessee school counselor license or endorsement; thus, their responses were removed. The usable sample group ($N = 280$) resulted in an 87.2% response rate of the 321 surveys that were successfully completed. However, the overall response rate of the sample group ($N = 280$) compared to the 3,394 email addresses that received an invitation to participate yielded an 8.25% response rate.

Of the 280 participants, responses to the demographic questionnaire were summarized using frequency distributions and/or descriptive statistics. The racial characteristics of the sample group ($N = 280$) were: 35 (12.5%) African American or Black; four (1.4%) Asian or Pacific Islander; 237 (84.6%) Caucasian, White, or European American; and 4 (1.4%) Bi- or Multi-racial. There were 288 (99.3%) respondents who described themselves as non-Hispanic or non-Latino and two (.7%) described themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Of the 280 respondents, 260 (92.9%) respondents were female outnumbering the 20 (7.1%) male respondents. The most common age range for this study was 41-55 ($n = 137$, 48.9%) years old. The next largest group was 26-40 years old ($n = 109$, 38.9%). Other age groups were described as 25 years or younger ($n = 1$, .4%) and 33 (11.8%) 56 years old or older ($n = 3$, 11.8%). See Table 4.1 for results.

Table 4.1 Frequency Distributions: Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Age Group

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Race		
African American or Black	35	12.5
Alaskan or Native American	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	4	1.4
Caucasian, White, or European American	237	84.6
Bi- or Multiracial	4	1.4
Total	280	100
Ethnicity		
Hispanic or Latino	2	.7
Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino	278	99.3
Total	280	100
Gender		
Female	260	92.9
Male	20	7.1
Total	280	100
Age Group		
25 or younger	1	.4
26-40	109	38.9
41-55	137	48.9
56 or older	33	11.8
Total	280	100

Participants of this study were surveyed from the three Tennessee regions: east, middle, and west. There were 129 (46.1%) participants who described themselves as practicing school counselors in middle Tennessee. There were 103 (36.8%) participants who described themselves as working in the eastern region. Lastly, 48 (17.1%) school counselor participants described themselves as west Tennessee school counselors (see Table 4.2)

Table 4.2 Participant Demographic Information: Practicing Region

Variable	Frequency	Percent
East	103	36.8
Middle	129	46.1
West	48	17.1
Total	280	100

School classifications were also self-reported by participants in this study. In Table 4.3, school counselors identified themselves as working in a charter, magnet, private, public, or other school classifications. Participants were instructed to select one classification that best described the type of school at which they worked. Of the school classifications, 259 (92.5%) school counselors reported working in a public school. Other participants reported working in the following school classifications: one (.4%) charter, seven (2.5%) magnet, six (2.1%) private, and seven (2.5%) other.

Table 4.3 Frequency Distributions: School Classifications

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Charter	1	.4
Magnet	7	2.5
Parochial	0	0
Private	6	2.1
Public	259	92.5
Other	7	2.5
Total	280	100

The school counseling experiences varied from less than five years to 20 or more years. There were 95 (33.9%) participants who reported having five to 10 years of school counseling experience. Other years of school counseling experience were also reported. Participants reported the following: 34 (12.1%) with less than five years, 64 (22.9%) with 11-15 years, 49 (17.5%) with 16-20 years, and 38 (13.6%) 20 years or more. Table 4.4 presents the range of years of school counseling experience.

Table 4.4 Participant Demographic Information: Years of School Counseling Experience

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	34	12.1
5-10 years	95	33.9
11-15 years	64	22.9
16-20 years	49	17.5
20 years or more	38	13.6
Total	280	100

Regarding the highest school counseling degree earned, 218 (77.9%) participants reported having a master’s degree. There were 51 (18.2%) participants who indicated that they received an Education Specialist degree in school counseling. There were 11 (3.9%) participants who reported that they earned a doctoral degree in school counseling. See Table 4.5 for these results.

Table 4.5 Frequency Distributions: Highest School Counseling Degree

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Masters	218	77.9
Education Specialist	51	18.2
Doctorate	11	3.9
Total	280	100

There were 156 (55.7%) school counselors reported having a membership in at least one professional counseling organization. In contrast, 124 (44.3%) participants reported not having a professional counseling organization membership. Table 4.6 presents school counselors' memberships in professional counseling organizations such as ASCA.

Table 4.6 Participant Demographic Information: Professional Counseling Organization Membership

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Yes	156	55.7
No	124	44.3
Total	280	100

Of school counselors' responses to their participation in multicultural counseling activities, 150 (53.6%) participants reported that they seldom participate or an average of less than once per month. Another 53 (18.9%) participants reported that they do not participate in multicultural counseling activities. Occasional participation or an average of once or twice per month was reported by 56 (20%) participants and regular participation or an average of more than twice per month was reported by 21 (7.5%) participants. Table 4.7 presents these results.

Table 4.7 Frequency Distributions: Multicultural Counseling Activity Participation

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Do Not Participate	53	18.9
Seldom Participate (average of < once per month)	150	53.6
Occasionally Participate (average of once or twice per month)	56	20
Regularly Participate (average of > twice per month)	21	7.5
Total	280	100

Results

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban)?

Participants in this study were surveyed to determine the school community setting in which they practice. School counselors identified themselves as working in (a) rural, (b) suburban, and (c) urban communities. The most frequently reported school community setting was rural with 137 participants that represented a 48.9% response rate. The second most frequently reported school community setting was suburban with 89 participants that represented a 31.8% response rate. Lastly, 54 participants reported their school community setting was urban and represented a 19.3% response rate. See Table 4.8 for these results.

Table 4.8 Descriptive Statistics: School Community Setting

Descriptive Statistics				
Variable	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Rural	137	48.9	2.974	.4420
Suburban	89	31.8	2.947	.4432
Urban	54	19.3	2.929	.4664
Total	280	100	2.957	.4459

A one-way ANOVA was chosen to determine if school counselors' MCC were differentiated at the school community setting in which school counselors practiced. The independent variable was the school setting containing three levels: (a) rural, (b) suburban, and (c) urban. The dependent variable was the MCC score as measured by the MCCTS-R. Prior to conducting the ANOVA, a test for homogeneity of variance was used to determine whether the assumptions of the ANOVA, a parametric test, were met. Levene's test value was greater than 0.05 and the homogeneity of variance was assumed ($F = .268, p = .765$). The ANOVA results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences of MCC for school counselors who worked in rural, suburban, or urban school community settings [$F(2, 277) = .225, p = .799$]. The null hypothesis was retained. Table 4.9 presents the ANOVA results.

Table 4.9 ANOVA Results: School Community Setting

Groups	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Between Groups	.090	2	.045	.225	.799
Within Groups	55.397	277	.200		
Total	55.488	279			

* $p < .05$

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; and other)?

Participants in this study were surveyed to determine the school level at which they practice. School counselors identified themselves as working at (a) primary, (b) elementary, (c) middle, (d) high, and (e) other school levels. There were 108 (38.6%) participants who identified themselves as working in a high school setting. Other participants reported working in the following school levels: eight (2.9%) primary, 19 (6.8%) elementary, 50 (17.9%) middle, and 95 (33.9%) other. Table 4.10 presents these results.

Table 4.10 Descriptive Statistics: School Level

Variable	Descriptive Statistics	
	Mean	SD
Primary (PreK or K-2)	3.025	.560
Elementary (3-5)	2.989	.488
Middle (6-8)	2.873	.425
High (9-12)	2.960	.432
Other	2.984	.456
Total	2.957	.445

Prior to conducting an ANOVA, a test for homogeneity of variance was used to determine whether the assumptions were met. The Levene's test was conducted and showed that the variances in population were not equal ($F = 3.465, p < 0.001$). Since the assumptions were not met for the ANOVA, the Kruskal-Wallis H test, a nonparametric test, was conducted instead to determine if school counselors' MCC was differentiated at the school levels at which school counselors practice counseling. The independent variable was the school level, with five categories: (a) primary (Pre-K or K-2), (b) elementary (3-5), (c) middle (6-8), (d) high (9-12), and (e) other. The dependent variable was the MCC level as measured by the MCCTS-R.

The results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in perceived MCC level among participants regarding the school level, ($\chi^2 (4) = 2.50, p = .644$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. The Kruskal-Wallis H test results can be found in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Kruskal-Wallis H test Results: School Level

	MCC
Kruskal-Wallis	2.502
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.644

Research Question 3

Research Question 3: Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by CACREP accredited school counselor education programs or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs?

There were 175 (62.5%) participants reported that their school counselor education program was CACREP accredited while 38 (13.6%) participants reported that their school counselor education program was not CACREP accredited. Another 67 (23.9%) participants reported their uncertainty regarding the CACREP accreditation status of their graduate-level school counselor education program. The CACREP accreditation status of participants' graduate-level school counselor education program can be found in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 Descriptive Statistics: Counseling Program CACREP Accreditation

Variable	Frequency	Descriptive Statistics		
		Percentage	Mean	SD
Yes	175	62.5	3.001	.414
No	38	13.6	2.918	.535
Unsure	67	23.9	2.846	.4555
Total	280	100		

Prior to conducting an independent samples *t*-test, a test for homogeneity of variance was used to determine whether the assumptions were met. The Levene's test was conducted and showed that the variances in population were not equal ($F = 4.54, p = .034$). Therefore, the assumptions for the independent samples *t*-test were not met. The Mann-Whitney *u* test, a nonparametric test, was conducted instead. The *u* value indicated that self-reported MCC of

participants was not statistically significantly different for participants whose graduate school counselor education programs were CACREP accredited than for participants whose school counselor education programs were not CACREP accredited, $u = 2883.00$, $p = .199$, $r = -0.08$. Results of participants who were uncertain of their school counseling degree accreditation were excluded from the Mann-Whitney u test calculation. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations?

The research question attempted to identify the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations. Frequencies were run to identify the membership status of the licensed and practicing school counselor in professional counseling organizations. A comparison was sought between MCC among school counselors who have membership in a professional counseling organization and those who are not affiliated with a professional counseling organization. Levene's test was conducted before the t -test to determine if equal variances could be assumed ($F = .128$, $p = .721$). The test was determined that variances are approximately equal. The MCC total score was used as the dependent variable and membership status in a professional counseling organization as the independent variable. The independent variable had two levels: (a) yes and (b) no. There were 156 (55.7%) participants who were affiliated with at least one professional counseling

organization. There were 124 (44.3%) participants who were not affiliated with a professional counseling organization. Table 4.13 presents the results.

Table 4.13 Descriptive Statistics: Counseling Organization Membership

Variable	Descriptive Statistics			
	Frequency	Percent	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Yes	156	55.7	3.01	.44
No	124	44.3	2.88	.45
Total	280	100		

The *t*-test was conducted to determine MCC for school counselors with membership versus nonmembership in a professional counseling organization. Results from the *t*-test indicated that MCC for school counselors with a professional counseling organization membership ($M = 3.01, SD = .44$) and participants who are not affiliated with a professional counseling organization ($M = 2.88, SD = .45$) conditions; ($t(278) = 2.27, p = .024$) was statistically significantly different. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. These results can be found in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Independent Samples *t*-test Results: Counseling Organization Membership

	<i>t</i> -test for Equality of Means						
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.27	278	.024	1.21	.053	.0159	.2258
Equal variances not assumed	2.27	261.41	.024	1.21	.053	.0162	.2261

Summary

This study investigated the self-reported MCC level of licensed professional school counselors who are practicing school counseling in Tennessee. The analyses of participant responses regarding the present study suggested that there was not a statistically significant difference of perceived MCC (i.e., Multicultural Terminology, Multicultural Knowledge, and Multicultural Awareness), as measured by the MCCTS-R, among participants and demographic variables: school community setting, school level, and CACREP accreditation status of graduate school counseling degree program. Conversely, there was a significant finding of a higher level of perceived MCC of school counselors with membership status in a professional counseling organization compared to those who do not have membership in a professional counseling organization. The implications of these results will be discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study explored the self-reported MCC of currently licensed and practicing professional school counselors employed in the State of Tennessee. Four research questions guided this study. Three of the four null hypotheses were retained because of a lack of statistical difference in the level of perceived MCC among school counselors' school community setting, school level, and CACREP accredited school counselor education programs. The fourth null hypothesis was rejected because of a statistical significance for MCC and membership status in a professional counseling organization. This chapter includes the (a) purpose of the study, (b) statement of the problem, (c) review of methodology, (d) limitations, (e) findings, (f) implications, (g) recommendations for future research, and (h) summary.

Purpose of the Study

A major challenge K-12 schools may face is the increase of diversity within student bodies and how to effectively address students' needs (Hobson & Kanitz, 1996; House & Martin, 1998; Lewis & Hayes, 1991). Professional school counselors should be familiar with counseling principles that are appropriate for culturally diverse students (ASCA, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the self-reported multicultural counseling competence of licensed, practicing school counselors employed in the State of Tennessee using the MCCTS-R. Four research questions were examined to determine a relationship between the level of self-

perceived MCC and professional school counselor characteristics. The professional characteristics included the following: (a) school settings (i.e., rural, suburban, urban); (b) grade levels (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K], elementary [3-5], middle [6-8], high [9-12], and other); (c) CACREP accreditation status of school counselor education programs; and (d) membership status in professional counseling organizations.

Statement of the Problem

According to Pedersen and Ivey (1993), there is a presumption that acquiring awareness, knowledge, and skills to provide effective counsel to individuals of diverse backgrounds is what makes a counselor multiculturally competent. Additionally, Multicultural Terminology (e.g., I can define prejudice.) is also an important factor for the multicultural competence of school counselors (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). There is a mandate for professional school counselors to respect students' cultural differences and provide access to comprehensive services designed to affirm those differences. The ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors outlined this requirement for school counselors (ASCA, 2016). The ability to respond to the needs of a diverse student body is a major challenge of school counselors (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001). Given this requirement, "Professional school counselors have tremendous challenges and also terrific opportunities presented to them by the increasing diversity in our schools and communities" (Grothaus, 2012, p. 37).

Trolley (2011) stated that counselors face the challenge of being able to meet the needs of every student in three areas of development: (a) academic, (b) career, and (d) personal-social. Therefore, there is an essential need for professional school counselors to be properly trained to work with students of various cultural backgrounds. The developmental process of cultural competence involves a long-term commitment (Vennapoosa, 2012) of ongoing learning of

knowledge, the expansion of an advanced skill set, and continued self-evaluation (Diller, 2007). School counselors can provide culturally responsive counseling by using advisement and counseling practices that are specific to students' cultures, respecting all students' rights, and improving their own cultural competence (Dahir & Stone, 2012).

However, if the school counselor lacks multicultural counseling competence, then students of diverse backgrounds are not receiving multiculturally appropriate counseling (Holcomb-McCoy & Mitchell, 2005). Therefore, it is essential that school counselors demonstrate culturally responsive behavior in the delivery of comprehensive school counseling programs. Doing so, school counselors encourage positive self-concepts and implement prevention and intervention strategies to achieve academic success for their culturally diverse students (Lee, 2001; Park-Taylor et al., 2007). If school counselors are not providing multiculturally appropriate counseling, then they are practicing unethically and lack MCC that could delay a student's academic performance (Airen, 2009; ASCA, 2019).

Review of Methodology

The researcher used a quantitative research design that included descriptive and comparative data. This study measured the self-reported MCC of licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee and whether a relationship existed among school counselor demographics. The instrument used for this study was the multicultural counseling competence training and survey-revised (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004).

This study was designed to investigate four research questions:

1. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban)?
2. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; other)?
3. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by CACREP accredited school counselor education programs or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs?
4. Is the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations?

Access was provided by a hyperlink that directed participants to the survey in Qualtrics. Results from the survey were exported into SPSS for analysis. The researcher collected data for each of the three MCC factors: Multicultural Awareness, Multicultural Knowledge, and Multicultural Terminology. Based on the specific research questions, data such as means, frequency, ANOVA, Kruskal-Wallis h test, Mann-Whitney u test, and *t*-test statistics were calculated based on specific research questions.

Limitations

It is important to consider the final limitations of this study that were not addressed in Chapter I. The first of such limitations was the sample size. Nonoperational email addresses may have limited potential participation and contributed to the small sample size. Several emails were returned to the researcher as undeliverable. Also, the sample size may have been small because nonresponse bias may play a role leading to a low response rate. When a participant is unable or unwilling to participate in the study, nonresponse bias occurs (Couper, 2000).

According to Shih and Fan (2008), “Response rate is important in survey research, because low response rate has the potential of introducing nonresponse bias, and thus resulting in misleading information about the issues covered in a survey” (p. 36). Another concern that may have contributed to nonresponse bias could be that the topic was irrelevant or uninteresting to the participant (Groves, Cialdini, & Couper, 1992). The over-surveying of the US population could also be a factor associated with nonresponse bias (Groves et al., 1992). Steeh (1981) cited “overexposure to the survey process” (p.53) or survey fatigue was connected to the decline in response rate for email surveys (Muñoz-Leiva, Sánchez-Fernández, Ríos, & Ibáñez-Zapata, 2010).

Another limitation is that the instrument used for this study focused more on race and ethnicity instead of other factors that are multicultural and/or diversity related. Diversity is not always limited to race and ethnicity (Arredondo et al., 1996; Locke, 1990). According to Arredondo et al. (1996) and Weinrach and Thomas (2002), other diversity-related factors include gender, age, sexual identity, religion, and other demographical information that holistically describe an individual.

Findings

MCC and School Community Setting

Research Question 1 was designed to determine whether the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school community setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban). All school counselors, regardless of their school's community setting or school urbanicity, are expected to possess MCC. Results from this study indicated that no statistically significant differences in perceived MCC among school counselors employed in rural, suburban, or urban school community settings. A consideration from the results of school counselors practicing in rural, suburban or urban schools is the expectation that all school counselors have adhered to the guidelines set forth in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) that multicultural counseling competency is required across all counseling specialties.

Conversely, Robles-Piña (2002) noted that a positive relationship between urban school counselors and their perceived MCC exists. In contrast, with respect to rural school counselors, a lower perception of MCC was reported (Robinson & Bradley, 2005). Research also suggested that school counselors who practice in rural communities often face challenges such as integrating into the community (Breen & Drew, 2012) and ongoing supervision and consultation (Barth, Wildfire, & Green, 2006; Herlihy & Corey, 2006). Despite a lack of resources and diversity (Breen & Drew, 2012), this study suggested no statistically differences in perceived MCC among school counselors' practicing locations exist.

MCC and School Level

Research Question 2 was designed to examine the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by school level (i.e., primary [Pre-K or K-2]; elementary [3-5]; middle [6-8]; high [9-12]; and other). The other category captured school levels that did not coincide with the actual grade levels listed by the researcher. Results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference of MCC between the school levels at which school counselors practice counseling. School counselors practicing at any school level should have multicultural counseling competence. In fact, there is the expectation that all school counselors demonstrate knowledge of and respect differences of students' cultural, social, and environmental factors (ASCA, 2019).

Another consideration from the self-perceived MCC results of school counselors practicing at any school level is the expectation that all school counselors have adhered to the guidelines set forth in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) regarding gaining skills relative to be a culturally competent counselor in working with a diverse clientele. These guidelines are part of the foundational professional values of the counseling field. Honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the dignity, potential, worth, and uniqueness of individuals within their social and cultural contexts are included in these core professional values (ACA, 2014).

MCC and CACREP School Counselor Education Program

Research Question 3 was designed to examine whether the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the

MCCTS-R, differentiated by school counselor education programs accredited by CACREP as compared to non-CACREP accredited school counselor education programs. To determine school counselors' perception of MCC, participants were asked to identify their education background as receiving their preservice training from a CACREP or non-CACREP accredited school counselor education program. Categories for this research question included yes, not, and unsure, although the unsure category was eliminated from the analysis.

This study suggested that MCC for school counselors of CACREP accredited school counselor education programs did not significantly differ from the MCC of graduates of non-CACREP accredited programs. The 2009 CACREP Standards mandated that CACREP accredited entry level school counseling preparation programs require a minimum of 48 semester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours (CACREP, 2009). However, beginning July 1, 2020, counseling specialties, including school counseling programs, will require a minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours (CACREP, 2015). CACREP accredited programs must incorporate eight common core areas into their curricula. One area is social and cultural diversity. This common core area, along with the other seven, must be documented in counselor education program curricula and cover multicultural counseling theories and models, multicultural counseling competencies, and help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients, to name a few (CACREP, 2015).

Conversely, non-CACREP accredited school counseling master's degree programs do not require these same standards for program completion. Despite, the required social and cultural diversity common core area in CACREP accredited counselor education programs, the results of this study were akin to the Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999); Dodson (2013); and Barden, Sherrell, and Matthews (2017) studies. These studies also found that there were no statistically

significant differences in MCC between graduates from CACREP accredited programs and graduates from non-CACREP accredited programs. A consideration is that there are 257 Master's level school counseling programs that are CACREP accredited, 20 Master's level school counseling programs that are in the CACREP accreditation process, and another 52 previously CACREP accredited school counseling programs with two programs outside the US (CACREP, 2020). Participants in this study who selected that they did not attend a CACREP accredited program could have completed their school counseling training from a program that was in the process of CACREP accreditation, had been previously accredited, or was CACREP accredited, but participants were unaware; therefore, having completed programs that aligned with CACREP standards.

MCC and Professional Counseling Organization Membership

Research Question 4 was designed to examine the level of perceived MCC among licensed and practicing school counselors in the State of Tennessee, as measured by the MCCTS-R, differentiated by membership or nonmembership in professional counseling organizations. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Therefore, school counselors who continue to learn about the advancement in the profession and improve their counseling skills join professional counseling organizations may influence school counselors' perceived MCC.

This finding could be significant in that school counselors who are members of professional counseling organizations may participate in activities that help them improve their interactions with culturally diverse students and their families. Thus, school counselors may perceive themselves as being more multiculturally competent than their counterparts who are not

members of a professional counseling organization. In contrast, there are mixed results on the relationship between MCC and this specific school counselor demographic. For example, Mayorga, Furgerson, Cook, and Wardle (2012) included in their study's discussion that professional counseling organizations could emphasize current, effective training that focuses on multiculturalism and diversity issues in the school setting at their respective annual conferences.

This finding could also be significant in that school counselors with professional counseling organization memberships were older. Most of this study's participants were at least 41 years old ($n = 170$). This population may have experienced more growth in and learning of multicultural and diversity issues in the school counseling field. Another consideration is that most participants ($n = 151$) reported having more than 10 years of school counseling experience that typically comes with age.

Implications for School Counselor Education Programs

The results of this study have implications for school counselor education programs specifically CACREP accredited programs, who must address the standards related to the eight common core areas in their curricular experience (CACREP, 2015). With the increase in cultural and ethnic diversity across the nation, it is critical for school counselor education programs to incorporate social and cultural diversity into their curricular offerings. Counselor education program objectives must "reflect current knowledge and projected needs concerning counseling practice in a multicultural and pluralistic society" (CACREP, 2015, p. 10). ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies mirror this statement by requiring school counselors to ensure school counseling curricula are culturally responsive and instruction is student-centered (ASCA, 2019).

The difference in MCC among school counselors' membership in professional counseling programs as opposed to their counterparts who are not affiliated with a professional counseling organization could also be correlated with CACREP accreditation standards for counselor education programs. According to the CACREP standards, core counselor education program, at a minimum, will provide documentation concerning counseling organization memberships and active participation in ACA, any of its divisions and/or branches, and other counseling organizations such as ASCA (CACREP, 2015). Also, students will intently identify with their respective counseling profession by participating in professional organizations for career and personal growth and school counselor education programs will document where professional organizations, preparation, and school counseling credentials standards are covered in their curricula (CACREP, 2015).

Recommendations for Future Research

The sample for this study was primarily Caucasian or White (84.6%). This percentage is similar to the 81% percent of White professional school counselors who are members of ASCA (2018). For future research, a recommendation is to conduct a study of a larger, more ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse sample to ensure the representation of minority groups and/or subgroups. This recommendation mirrors the recommendation of Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004) for a larger and more ethnically diverse sample. Studies by Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999); Pope-Davis, Reynolds, Dings, and Nielson (1995); and Sodowsky et al. (1998) found a positive correlation between MCC and people of color in that racial/ethnic counselors reported a higher level of perceived MCC compared to their White counterparts. This correlation could be a result of people of color having experiences that lead to a greater level of

MCC (Pope-Davis et al., 1995). Doing so could shed light on the level of self-perceived MCC of participants who identify as ethnically, racially, and/or culturally diverse. Efforts to recruit individuals to pursue a career in school counseling may assist in conducting such research.

Qualitative data could have been useful and a great contribution to this study. The researcher did not use a qualitative instrument such as the integrating multicultural diversity questionnaire (IMDQ) (Packer, Jay, & Evans, 2007), although it may have helped the researcher understand the effectiveness of participants' multicultural training experiences to answer Research Questions 3 and 4 concerning preservice training received in their school counselor education programs and inservice training received as a result of having membership in professional counseling organizations. According to Packer-Williams, Jay, and Evans (2010), the IMDQ is an 11 open-ended questions instrument used to assess:

(1) the influences on school counselors decision-making to integrate multicultural diversity into their daily practices, (2) the impact of multicultural diversity training on their ability to integrate multicultural diversity practices, (3) the most common multicultural diversity techniques and activities used by school counselors, and (4) the challenges experienced and/or anticipated by school counselors in their attempts to integrate multicultural diversity practices. (p. 11)

The use of IMDQ could have been used to explore contextual factors that influenced a school counselor's decision to incorporate multicultural diversity in his or her school counseling practice.

A follow-up study using qualitative measures would "add culturally specific and contextually rich data" (Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, p. iv). One other recommendation is to test for social desirability along with the use of MCCTS-R, which would have been beneficial to this study. The MCCTS-R is a self-report measure. As reported in Chapter I, self-report measures are prone to response bias. Such response bias is social desirability that is the tendency for participants to respond to assessment items they believe are

expected of them from the researcher and will increase their status (McBride & Hays, 2012); therefore, participants in the study may have given socially desirable answers because school counselors should be multiculturally competent. A social desirability scale would have helped to control higher reported scores. The Marlowe-Crowne social desirability scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) has been used in various studies to help reduce social desirability.

Another recommendation for future research would be to use a mail survey or a mixed-mode strategy to collect data (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002; Schaefer & Dillman, 1998). A higher response rate to surveys has been found by the use of mail surveys compared to web surveys (Kwak & Radler, 2002) especially with school teachers, medical doctors, and general consumers as compared to college students (Shih & Fan, 2008). The response rate for this survey was low at 8.25% and identified as a limitation. Shih and Fan (2008) also found that follow-up reminders were less effective for web surveys compared to traditional mailed surveys. The mixed-mode strategy includes mail and email components that yielded moderately higher responses although mail surveys were more effective than web surveys (Converse, Wolfe, Huang, & Oswald, 2008). The researcher chose the distribution of the survey via email for various reasons. These reasons include cost efficiency, reduction of survey implementation time, and ease of data entry (Dillman, 2000).

One other recommendation would be to extend this study to school counselors nationwide. The scope of the study was limited to school counselors who are licensed and currently practice in the State of Tennessee. Therefore, excluding other school counselors who are employed in other states. In doing so, the research could provide the school counseling field with generalized results by comparing Tennessee school counselors to other states' school counselors.

Summary

School counselors are typically the primary contacts in the school setting when student issues arise. Students, teachers, building administrators, and other staff often consult with the school counselor first regarding students' personal and social concerns as well as their academic and college and career concerns. They are ethically mandated to provide a comprehensive school counseling program that affirms and supports culturally diverse students (ASCA, 2016). This dissertation examined the multicultural counseling competence of licensed and practicing professional school counselors in the State of Tennessee.

The intent of this research was to determine what relationship, if any, exists between school counselors' self-reported MCC and their school community setting, school level, graduate school counselor education program (i.e., CACREP accredited vs. non-CACREP accredited), and membership in a professional counseling organization existed. The significant finding of this study was that there was a difference of MCC, as measured by the MCCTS-R, among school counselors and their membership in a professional counseling organization versus those who do not have membership in a professional counseling organization. This finding is akin to the ethical standards outlined in the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors and the ACA Code of Ethics. According to the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, school counselors should maintain membership in a professional school counseling association to stay abreast of updates in research and professional competence in school counseling issues by utilizing current interventions and practices (ASCA, 2016). Per the ACA Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014), counselors are to actively participate in professional development and improvement of counseling via local, state, and national associations.

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APPENDIX A

AMCD MULTICULTURAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNSELING COMPETENCIES

AMCD Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies

I. Counselor Self-Awareness

Privileged and marginalized counselors develop self-awareness, so that they may explore their attitudes and beliefs, develop knowledge, skills, and action relative to their self-awareness and worldview.

1. *Attitudes and beliefs*: Privileged and marginalized counselors are aware of their social identities, social group statuses, power, privilege, oppression, strengths, limitations, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and biases.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Acknowledge their assumptions, worldviews, values, beliefs, and biases as members of privileged and marginalized groups.
- Acknowledge their privileged and marginalized status in society.
- Acknowledge their privileged and marginalized status influences their worldview.
- Acknowledge their privileged and marginalized status provides advantages and disadvantages in society.
- Acknowledge openness to learning about their cultural background as well as their privileged and marginalized status.

2. *Knowledge*: Privileged and marginalized counselors possess an understanding of their social identities, social group statuses, power, privilege, oppression, strengths, limitations, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and biases.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Develop knowledge of resources to become aware of their assumptions, worldviews, values, beliefs, biases, and privileged and marginalized status.
- Develop knowledge about the history and events that shape their privileged and marginalized status.
- Develop knowledge of theories that explain how their privileged and marginalized status influences their experiences and worldview.
- Develop knowledge of how their privileged and marginalized status leads to advantages and disadvantages in society.

3. *Skills*: Privileged and marginalized counselors possess skills that enrich their understanding of their social identities, social group statuses, power, privilege, oppression, limitations, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and biases.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Acquire reflective and critical thinking skills to gain insight into their assumptions, worldviews, values, beliefs, biases, and privileged and marginalized status.
- Acquire communication skills to explain how their privileged and marginalized status influences their worldview and experiences.

- Acquire application skills to interpret knowledge of their privileged and marginalized status in personal and professional settings.
- Acquire analytical skills to compare and contrast their privileged and marginalized status and experiences to others.
- Acquire evaluation skills to assess the degree to which their privileged and marginalized status influences their personal and professional experiences.

4. *Action*: Privileged and marginalized counselors take action to increase self-awareness of their social identities, social group statuses, power, privilege, oppression, strengths, limitations, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and biases.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Take action to learn about their assumptions, worldviews, values, beliefs, biases, and culture as a member of a privileged and marginalized group.
- Take action to seek out professional development opportunities to learn more about themselves as a member of a privileged or marginalized group.
- Take action to immerse themselves in their community to learn about how power, privilege, and oppression influence their privileged and marginalized experiences.
- Take action to learn about how their communication style is influenced by their privileged and marginalized status.

II. Client Worldview

Privileged and marginalized counselors are aware, knowledgeable, skilled, and action-oriented in understanding clients' worldview.

1. Attitudes and beliefs: Privileged and marginalized counselors are aware of clients' worldview, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Acknowledge a need to possess a curiosity for privileged and marginalized clients' history, worldview, cultural background, values, beliefs, biases, and experiences.
- Acknowledge that identity development influences the worldviews and lived experiences of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acknowledge their strengths and limitations in working with clients from privileged and marginalized groups.
- Acknowledge that learning about privileged and marginalized clients may sometimes be an uncomfortable or unfamiliar experience.
- Acknowledge that learning about clients' privileged and marginalized status is a lifelong endeavor.
- Acknowledge the importance of reflecting on the attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and biases they hold about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acknowledge that there are within-group differences and between group similarities and differences among privileged and marginalized clients.

- Acknowledge clients' communication style is influenced by their privileged and marginalized status.

2. *Knowledge*: Privileged and marginalized counselors possess knowledge of clients' worldview, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Develop knowledge of historical events and current issues that shape the worldview, cultural background, values, beliefs, biases, and experiences of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of how stereotypes, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of multicultural and social justice theories, identity development models, and research pertaining to the worldview, culture, and life experiences of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of their strengths and limitations in working with clients from privileged and marginalized groups.
- Develop knowledge of how to work through the discomfort that comes with learning about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop a lifelong plan to acquire knowledge of clients' privileged and marginalized status.
- Develop knowledge of the attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and biases they hold about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of the individual, group, and universal dimensions of human existence of their privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of the communication style of their privileged and marginalized client (e.g., high context vs. low context communication, eye contact, orientation to time and space, etc.).

3. *Skills*: Privileged and marginalized counselors possess skills that enrich their understanding of clients' worldview, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Acquire culturally responsive evaluation skills to analyze how historical events and current issues shape the worldview, cultural background, values, beliefs, biases, and experiences of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire culturally responsive critical thinking skills to gain insight into how stereotypes, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire culturally responsive application skills to apply knowledge of multicultural and social justice theories, identity development models, and research to one's work with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire culturally responsive assessment skills to identify limitations and strengths when working with privileged and marginalized clients.

- Acquire culturally responsive reflection skills needed to work through the discomfort that comes with learning about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire culturally responsive conceptualization skills to explain how clients' privileged and marginalized status influence their culture, worldview, experiences, and presenting problem.
- Acquire culturally responsive analytical skills to interpret the attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and biases they hold about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire culturally responsive conceptualization skills to identify the individual, group, and universal dimensions of human existence of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire culturally responsive cross-cultural communication skills to interact with privileged and marginalized clients.

4. *Action*: Privileged and marginalized counselors take action to increase self-awareness of clients' worldview, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Take action by seeking out formal and informal opportunities to engage in discourse about historical events and current issues that shape the worldview, cultural background, values, beliefs, biases, and experiences of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by attending professional development trainings to learn how stereotypes, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by applying multicultural and social justice theories, identity development models, and research to one's work with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by assessing one's limitations and strengths when working with privileged and marginalized clients on a consistent basis.
- Take action by immersing oneself in the communities in which privileged and marginalized clients reside to work through the discomfort that comes with learning about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by using language to explain how clients' privileged and marginalized status influence their culture, worldview, experiences, and presenting problem.
- Take action by pursuing culturally responsive counseling to explore the attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and biases they hold about privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by collaborating with clients to identify the individual, group, and universal dimensions of human existence that shape the identities of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by consistently demonstrating cross-cultural communication skills required to effectively interact with privileged and marginalized clients.

III. Counseling Relationship

Privileged and marginalized counselors are aware, knowledgeable, skilled, and action-oriented in understanding how client and counselor privileged and marginalized statuses influence the counseling relationship.

1. *Attitudes and beliefs*: Privileged and marginalized counselors are aware of how client and counselor worldviews, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Acknowledge that the worldviews, values, beliefs and biases held by privileged and marginalized counselors and clients will positively or negatively influence the counseling relationship.
- Acknowledge that counselor and client identity development shapes the counseling relationship to varying degrees for privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acknowledge that the privileged and marginalized status of counselors and clients will influence the counseling relationship to varying degrees.
- Acknowledge that culture, stereotypes, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship with privileged and marginalized group clients.
- Acknowledge that the counseling relationship may extend beyond the traditional office setting and into the community.
- Acknowledge that cross-cultural communication is key to connecting with privileged and marginalized clients.

2. *Knowledge*: Privileged and marginalized counselors possess knowledge of how client and counselor worldviews, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Develop knowledge of the worldviews, values, beliefs and biases held by privileged and marginalized counselors and clients and its influence on the counseling relationship.
- Develop knowledge of identity development theories and how they influence the counseling relationship with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of theories explaining how counselor and clients' privileged and marginalized statuses influence the counseling relationship.
- Develop knowledge of how culture, stereotypes, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression strengthen and hinder the counseling relationship with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of when to use individual counseling and when to use systems advocacy with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Develop knowledge of cross-cultural communication theories when working with privileged and marginalized clients.

3. *Skills*: Privileged and marginalized counselors possess skills to engage in discussions with clients about how client and counselor worldviews, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Acquire assessment skills to determine how the worldviews, values, beliefs, and biases held by privileged and marginalized counselors and clients influence the counseling relationship.
- Acquire analytical skills to identify how the identity development of counselors and clients influence the counseling relationship.
- Acquire application skills to apply knowledge of theories explaining how counselor and clients' privileged and marginalized statuses influence the counseling relationship.
- Acquire assessment skills regarding how culture, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire evaluation skills to determine when individual counseling or systems advocacy is needed with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Acquire cross-cultural communication skills to connect with privileged and marginalized clients.

4. *Action*: Privileged and marginalized counselors take action to increase their understanding of how client and counselor worldviews, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Take action by initiating conversations to determine how the worldviews, values, beliefs and biases held by privileged and marginalized counselors and clients influence the counseling relationship.
- Take action by collaborating with clients to identify the ways that privileged and marginalized counselor and client identity development influence the counseling relationship.
- Take action by exploring how counselor and clients' privileged and marginalized statuses influence the counseling relationship.
- Take action by inviting conversations about how culture, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence the counseling relationship with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by collaborating with clients to determine whether individual counseling or systems advocacy is needed with privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take action by using cross-communication skills to connect with privileged and marginalized clients.

IV. Counseling and Advocacy Interventions

Privileged and marginalized counselors intervene with, and on behalf, of clients at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, public policy, and international/global levels.

A. Intrapersonal: The individual characteristics of a person such as knowledge, attitudes, behavior, self-concept, skills, and developmental history.

Intrapersonal Interventions: Privileged and marginalized counselors address the intrapersonal processes that impact privileged and marginalized clients.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Employ empowerment-based theories to address internalized privilege experienced by privileged clients and internalized oppression experienced by marginalized clients.
- Assist privileged and marginalized clients develop critical consciousness by understanding their situation in context of living in an oppressive society.
- Assist privileged and marginalized clients in unlearning their privilege and oppression.
- Assess the degree to which historical events, current issues, and power, privilege and oppression contribute to the presenting problems expressed by privileged and marginalized clients.
- Work in communities to better understand the attitudes, beliefs, prejudices, and biases held by privileged and marginalized clients.
- Assist privileged and marginalized clients with developing self-advocacy skills that promote multiculturalism and social justice.
- Employ quantitative and qualitative research to highlight inequities present in current counseling literature and practices in order to advocate for systemic changes to the profession.

B. Interpersonal: The interpersonal processes and/or groups that provide individuals with identity and support (i.e. family, friends, and peers).

Interpersonal Interventions: Privileged and marginalized counselors address the interpersonal processes that affect privileged and marginalized clients.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Employs advocacy to address the historical events and persons that shape and influence privileged and marginalized client's developmental history.
- Examines the relationships privileged and marginalized clients have with family, friends, and peers that may be sources of support or non-support.
- Assist privileged and marginalized clients understand that the relationships they have with others may be influenced by their privileged and marginalized status.
- Assist privileged and marginalized clients with fostering relationships with family, friends, and peers from the same privileged and marginalized group.
- Reach out to collaborate with family, friends, and peers who will be a source of support for privileged and marginalized clients.
- Assist privileged and marginalized clients in developing communication skills to discuss issues of power, privilege, and oppression with family, friends, peers, and colleagues.
- Employ evidenced-based interventions that align with the cultural background and worldview of privileged and marginalized clients.

C. Institutional: Represents the social institutions in society such as schools, churches, community organizations.

Institutional Interventions: Privileged and marginalized counselors address inequities at the institutional level.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Explore with privileged and marginalized clients the extent to which social institutions are supportive.
- Connect privileged and marginalized clients with supportive individuals within social institutions (e.g., schools, businesses, church, etc.) who are able to help alter inequities influencing marginalized clients.
- Collaborate with social institutions to address issues of power, privilege, and oppression impacting privilege and marginalized clients.
- Employ social advocacy to remove systemic barriers experienced by marginalized clients within social institutions.
- Employ social advocacy to remove systemic barriers that promote privilege that benefit privileged clients.
- Balance individual counseling with systems level social advocacy to address inequities that social institutions create that impede on human growth and development.
- Conduct multicultural and social justice based research to highlight the inequities that social institutions have on marginalized clients and that benefit privileged clients.

D. Community: The community as a whole represents the spoken and unspoken norms, value, and regulations that are embedded in society. The norms, values, and regulations of a community may either be empowering or oppressive to human growth and development.

Community Interventions: Privileged and marginalized address community norms, values, and regulations that impede on the development of individuals, groups, and communities.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Take initiative to explore with privileged and marginalized clients regarding how community norms, values, and regulations embedded in society that hinder and contribute to their growth and development.
- Conduct qualitative and quantitative research to evaluate the degree to which community norms, values, and regulations influence privileged and marginalized clients.
- Employ social advocacy to address community norms, values, and regulations embedded in society that hinder the growth and development of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Utilize the norms, values and regulations of the marginalized client to shape the community norms, values, and regulations of the privileged client.

E. Public Policy: Public policy reflects the local, state, and federal laws and policies that regulate or influence client human growth and development.

Public Policy Interventions: Privileged and marginalized counselors address public policy issues that impede on client development with, and on behalf of clients.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Initiate discussions with privileged and marginalized clients regarding how they shape and are shaped by local, state, and federal laws and policies.

- Conduct research to examine how local, state, and federal laws and policies contribute to or hinder the growth and development of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Engage in social action to alter the local, state, and federal laws and policies that benefit privileged clients at the expense of marginalized clients.
- Employ social advocacy to ensure that local, state, and federal laws and policies are equitable toward privileged and marginalized clients.
- Employ social advocacy outside the office setting to address local, state, and federal laws and policies that hinder equitable access to employment, healthcare, and education for privileged and marginalized clients.
- Assist with creating local, state, and federal laws and policies that promote multiculturalism and social justice.
- Seek out opportunities to collaborate with privileged and marginalized clients to shape local, state, and federal laws and policies.

F. International and Global Affairs: International and global concerns reflect the events, affairs, and policies that influence psychological health and well-being.

International and Global Affairs Interventions: Privileged and marginalized counselors address international and global events, affairs and policies that impede on client development with, and on behalf of, clients.

Multicultural and social justice competent counselors:

- Stay current on international and world politics and events.
- Seek out professional development to learn about how privileged and marginalized clients influence, and are influenced by, international and global affairs.
- Acquire knowledgeable of historical and current international and global affairs that are supportive and unsupportive of privileged and marginalized clients.
- Learn about the global politics, policies, laws, and theories that influence privileged and marginalized clients.
- Utilize technology to interact and collaborate with international and global leaders on issues influencing privileged and marginalized clients.
- Take initiative to address international and global affairs to promote multicultural and social justice issues.
- Utilize research to examine how international and global affairs impact privileged and marginalized clients.

APPENDIX B
SCHOOL COUNSELOR DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

School Counseling Demographic Questionnaire

Directions: Please answer the following questions, completely and honestly, by choosing a response that accurately reflects your answer. If at any time, you wish to skip a question, you may do so without penalty. Your answers to the questions on this demographic questionnaire are confidential. Thank you.

1. Please indicate your race by choosing the appropriate description.
 - African American or Black
 - Alaskan or Native American
 - Asian or Pacific Islander
 - Caucasian/White or European American
 - Bi- or Multiracial

2. What is your ethnicity?
 - Latino or Hispanic
 - Non-Latino or Non-Hispanic

3. Please select the gender you most identify with.
 - Female
 - Male

4. Please select your appropriate age range.
 - 25 or younger
 - 26-40
 - 41-55
 - 56 or older

5. In what region of Tennessee are you a practicing school counselor?
 - East
 - Middle
 - West
 - Not currently practicing

6. Which school level best describes where you practice?
 - Primary (Pre-K or K-2)
 - Elementary (3-5)
 - Middle (6-8)
 - High (9-12)
 - Other – Please indicate school level and grades (e.g., Elementary PreK or K-8; Intermediate 5-6; Junior High 7-8; High 7-12; 9th Grade Academy, etc.). _____

7. Which school setting best describes where you practice?
- Charter
 - Magnet
 - Parochial
 - Private
 - Public
 - Other – Please list. _____
8. What is your school's community setting?
- Rural
 - Suburban
 - Urban
9. How many years of school counseling experience do you have?
- Less than 5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - 11-15 years
 - 16-20 years
 - 20 years or more
10. Do you have Pre-K or K through 12th grade Tennessee school counseling endorsement or license?
- Yes (If yes, do you have a Permit, Practicing, or a Professional license? Please list type of license.) _____
 - No
11. What is your highest level of *school counseling* degree attainment?
- Master's
 - Education Specialist
 - Doctorate
12. At the time of your graduate school counseling training, was the institution where you received your school counseling degree accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP)?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure

13. Do you have a membership in any professional counseling organization? (For example: American Counselor Association, Tennessee Counseling Association, American School Counselor Association, Tennessee School Counselor Association, Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development, etc.).

- Yes (If yes, please list. You may use an acronym) _____
- No

14. How many professional development activities (e.g., university offered courses, reading, professional learning communities, counselor supervised meetings, local, state or national conferences, etc.) related to multiculturalism/multicultural counseling do you participate in monthly (on an average)?

- Do Not Participate
- Seldom Participate (average of < once per month)
- Occasionally Participate (average of once or twice per month)
- Regularly Participate (average of > twice per month)

APPENDIX C
PERMISSION TO USE INSTRUMENT

Permission to use Instrument

From: Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy <cholcomb@jhu.edu>
To: Jacquelyn Scruggs <wdn684@utc.mocs.edu>
Date: Tue, Mar 4, 2014 at 12:06 AM
Subject: RE: Request to use MCCTS-R

Hello Jacquelyn,

You have my permission to use the MCCTS-R for your dissertations studies. Good luck on your research!

CHM
Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Ph.D.
Vice Dean, Academic Affairs
Professor of Counseling and Human Development

School of Education
Johns Hopkins University
2800 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-516-7820
410-516-6697 (fax)

From: Jacquelyn Scruggs <wdn684@utc.mocs.edu>
To: Holcomb-McCoy <cholcomb@jhu.edu>
Date: Fri, Feb 28, 2014 at 11:02 AM
Subject: Request to use MCCTS-R

Dear Dr. Holcomb,

I am requesting permission to use the MCCTS-R as one of the instruments in my dissertation study. I am a school counselor and doctoral candidate in the Learning and Leadership program at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. My focus is on cultural responsiveness of Tennessee school counselors. I am interested in exploring school counselors' multicultural counseling competence, sufficiency of multicultural counseling training, and participation in multicultural professional development activities.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at the e-mail address above or at .com. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jacquelyn Scruggs

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPLICATION APPROVAL

Institutional Review Board Application Approval



Institutional Review Board
Dept. 4915
615 McCallie Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37403-2598
Phone: (423) 425-5867
Fax: (423) 425-4052
instrb@utc.edu
<http://www.utc.edu/irb>

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jacquelyn Scruggs
Dr. Valerie Rutledge **IRB # 17-098**

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity
Dr. Amy Doolittle, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: 6/16/2017

SUBJECT: IRB #17-098: Cultural Responsiveness of Tennessee School Counselors: An Exploration of Perceptions of Multicultural Counseling Competence Regarding Racially and/or Ethnically Diverse Students

The IRB Committee Chair has reviewed and approved your application and assigned you the IRB number listed above. You must include the following approval statement on research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project # 17-098.

Since your project has been deemed exempt, there is no further action needed on this proposal unless there is a significant change in the project that would require a new review. Changes that affect risk to human subjects would necessitate a new application to the IRB committee immediately.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email instrb@utc.edu

Best wishes for a successful research project.

APPENDIX E
LETTER OF INVITATION

Letter of Invitation

Dear Professional School Counselor:

Hello, my name is Jacquelyn Scruggs. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and a practicing Tennessee professional school counselor with 11 years of experience. You are invited to participate in my research study that will examine the multicultural counseling competence of Tennessee school counselors. The demographic questions and survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. All collected data will be anonymous and confidential.

If you are interested in participating in my research study, please follow this link to the survey:
\${1://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
\${1://SurveyURL}

For additional information regarding the study, you may e-mail me at jacquelyn-scruggs@mocs.utc.edu or Dr. Valerie Rutledge at valerie-rutledge@utc.edu.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Scruggs
Doctoral Candidate
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
208-B Hunter Hall, Dept. 2242
615 McCallie Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
\${1://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}

APPENDIX F
CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

Dear Professional School Counselor:

I am a doctoral candidate from the College of Health Education and Professional Studies at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. I am also a practicing professional school counselor with 11 years of experience. I am conducting research to investigate the self-reported multicultural counseling competence of school counselors in the State of Tennessee and examine school counselors' professional characteristics to determine whether differences in multicultural counseling competence among school counselors exist.

I have received your email address from the Tennessee Department of Education and/or a public source to collect data. I am requesting your participation in my study which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, doing so will not affect your employment or performance evaluation. If at any time you discontinue the survey, your results will be discarded. The questionnaire and survey are anonymous. The results of the study may be published, but your name and/or email address will not be known.

The risks of the study are minimal and may include boredom if you are not familiar with the literature on multicultural counseling competence. The potential benefits of this study are that the school counseling community will benefit from school counselors' perception of their multicultural counseling competence and whether program and/or professional development practices can incorporate data gained from this study.

Should you have any concerns or questions about this research study, please contact me, Jacquelyn Scruggs via email at jacquelyn-scruggs@mocs.utc.edu. Furthermore, you may contact Dr. Valerie Rutledge via email at valerie-rutledge@utc.edu or telephone at (423) 425-5374.

This research was approved by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Institutional Review Board (IRB # 17-098). If you have any questions about your rights as a human subject or feel that you have been placed at risk, you may contact Dr. Amy Doolittle, the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board at (423) 425-5563. Additional contact information is available online at www.utc.edu/irb.

For every completed, usable survey, I will donate \$1.00, up to \$300.00, to a charity of your choosing. The agencies must be organizations that advocate for or assist children up to age 18 years old. I will identify the top three choices and donate, up to one-third of \$300.00, to each of the top three organizations.

You must be 18 years or older to participate. Return of this survey is your consent to participate. Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate in this research project.

Sincerely,
Jacquelyn Scruggs
jacquelyn-scruggs@mocs.utc.edu

Dr. Valerie Rutledge
valerie-rutledge@utc.edu
215 Hunter Hall
615 McCallie Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37403

I have read this consent form and understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this research study. I voluntarily and freely consent to participate. By clicking agree below and completing and submitting this anonymous online survey, I am consenting to be a participant in this research study. Agree Disagree

APPENDIX G
FIRST EMAIL REMINDER

First Email Reminder

Dear Fellow School Counselor:

You were sent an email on October 2, 2017, requesting your participation in my research study that will examine the multicultural counseling competence of Tennessee school counselors. Your contact information was obtained from the Tennessee School Counselors Listserv and/or a public source.

You are welcome to contact me at jacquelyn-scruggs@mocs.utc.edu or Dr. Valerie Rutledge at valerie-rutledge@utc.edu or (423) 425-5374 with questions or concerns regarding this study. Any questions concerning UTC IRB policies, procedures, or your rights as a human subject should be directed to Dr. Amy Doolittle, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, at (423) 425-5563. Additional information is available online at www.utc.edu/irb.

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to donate up to \$300.00 to charities of your choosing for every complete and usable survey. The agencies must be organizations in Tennessee and advocate for or assist children up to age 18 years old. I will identify the top three choices and donate, up to one-third of \$300.00, to each of the top three organizations. Please be sure to include your charity's city.

If you agree to complete and submit the anonymous survey online, please follow this link to the survey [\\${1://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#) or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
[\\${1://SurveyURL}](#).

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Scruggs
Doctoral Candidate
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
208-B Hunter Hall, Dept. 2242
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[\\${1://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

APPENDIX H
FINAL EMAIL REMINDER

Final Email Reminder

Dear Fellow School Counselor:

This email serves as a final reminder that if you have not already participated in the survey that I am requesting your participation in the data collection process. My proposed data collection period is October 2, 2017 through October 27, 2017. Your participation is vital to the completion and success of this study.

As a school counselor, I understand how hectic this time of year can be for you. I am asking for approximately 10-15 minutes of your time to complete the Qualtrics-created survey and a demographics questionnaire about your school counseling training and current professional experience.

If I can use your completed survey, I will donate up to \$300.00, to charities of your choosing. The agencies must be organizations in Tennessee that advocate for or assist children up to age 18 years old. I will identify the top three choices and donate, up to one-third of \$300.00, to each of the organizations. Please include your charity's city.

If you agree to complete and submit the anonymous survey online, please follow this link to the survey [\\${1://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#) or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
[\\${1://SurveyURL}](#).

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Scruggs
Doctoral Candidate
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
208-B Hunter Hall, Dept. 2242
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[\\${1://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

APPENDIX I
PERSONAL COMMUNICATION WITH TDOE COORDINATOR
OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

Personal Communication with TDOE Coordinator of School Counseling



Jacquelyn Scruggs <wdn684@mocs.utc.edu>

Education Research Request

Leigh Bagwell <Leigh.Bagwell@tn.gov>
To: "wdn684@mocs.utc.edu" <wdn684@mocs.utc.edu>
Cc: Education Research <Education.Research@tn.gov>

Thu, Dec 17, 2015 at 3:31 PM

Jacquelyn,

I received your request for information regarding the number of practicing school counselors in Tennessee. I wish that I could give you those numbers. Unfortunately, at this time we don't have that information. We have discussed the need for that information and are trying to identify the best way to gather that data.

With regard to the new school counselor newsletter, right now we have over 4000 individuals subscribed. However, many of those subscriptions include professionals other than school counselors. Additionally, not all subscriptions indicate the job title of the person. We are going to be cleaning up that data moving forward.

There are 764 subscribers who self-reported as a school counselor. There are another 1100 that do not have a job title in their profile.

Please let me know if I can do anything else to assist you.

Thanks,

~Leigh



Leigh Bagwell, Ed.S. | Coordinator of School Counseling

Office of Student Readiness and Early Postsecondary
Division of College, Career and Technical Education
Andrew Johnson Tower, 11th Floor
710 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37243
(615) 244-4034

(615) 418-4527

Leigh.Bagwell@tn.gov

tn.gov/education

School Counselor Connection – [Click here to subscribe](#)

VITA

Jacquelyn Anita Scruggs was born in Athens, Tennessee, in McMinn County. She attended the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology with minors in Africana Studies and Sociology. Upon completion of her bachelor's degree, Jacquelyn earned a Master of Education degree in School Counseling also from UTC. During her graduate studies, Jacquelyn joined the US Army. Upon graduating with her master's degree, she completed Basic Combat Training and subsequently Advanced Individualized Training. Jacquelyn served five years on active duty having been stationed overseas and stateside. She also deployed to Iraq and became an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran. She also served two years in the U.S. Army Reserve.

After her service in the military, Jacquelyn became employed as a professional school counselor in the McMinn County School System at Central High School of McMinn County in Englewood, Tennessee. While employed as a school counselor, she was awarded a fellowship from Tennessee Technological University (TTU) in Cookeville, Tennessee. Subsequently, she earned a Specialist in Education degree in Instructional Leadership. Jacquelyn was promoted to the position of Guidance Director at Central High School of McMinn County in 2010.