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Multicultural Competency in Online Counseling Courses: Before and After a Multicultural Counseling Course

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Walden University

College of Counselor Education & Supervision

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Sheryl Attilee

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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Multicultural Competency in Online Counseling Courses: Before and After a
Multicultural Counseling Course

by

Sheryl Attilee, MA

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

The importance of multicultural counseling training received much attention for decades, however, studies on effective training focused on multicultural counseling training in a face-to-face environment with minimal focus on online training environments. These studies found that face-to-face interactions had the most impact on multicultural training. Therefore, the current study was an evaluation of online master's counseling students' and graduates' multicultural attitudes to determine the effectiveness of online multicultural training using Banks' transformative approach. The research questions focused on the significant difference in participants' recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE). A quantitative survey design was used with a convenience sample of 129 students enrolled in online counselor education programs to measure their multicultural attitude changes before and after a multicultural counseling course. Results were analyzed using MANCOVA with group designs and interpreted using a one-tailed F -test to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the multicultural attitude scores of students before and after completing an online multicultural counseling course. The results indicated a statistically significant difference in Knowledge scores ($F(1, 112) = 59.23, p < .001$) and Care scores ($F(1, 112) = 73.57, p < .001$) from before as compared to after taking the course. Ultimately, the results established the effectiveness and reputation of online counselor education programs and multicultural counseling training.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Jevon. This process was hard for me as well as for you. I know that you probably would not understand the magnitude of what it took for me to get this far and accomplish this vision from my vision board but know that I did it for you. There were a lot of times we prayed for the process to be over and we kept our faith. Know that you can conquer anything you set your vision and voice to with faith.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my family, friends, cohort members, and colleagues who have listened to me countless nights of venting. Your prayers and support will not go unnoticed. I can not say that I would not do it again because through it all I learned my strengths and weaknesses. Late nights, going to work, cooking dinner, feeding the pets and opening my laptop to write was my life for a long time and now I want to pay it forward. Thank you, God, for seeing me through it all.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Multicultural education and training is an area that receives much attention in the counseling profession. In a helping profession, cultural competency is important to help change the lives of clients and provide appropriate care (Dickson & Jespen, 2007). With the current demographics of the United States becoming more diverse at a rapid rate, the need for training counselors to become culturally competent is essential (Ancis, 1998; Basbay, 2014). Basbay (2014) argued that it is imperative to train students to keep pace with the increasing growth of diverse cultures. In responding to this demand, evaluation of effective training is needed (Basbay, 2014). Malott, Paone, Maddux, and Rothman (2010) developed teaching strategies that have been effective in training and producing competent, helping professionals. They indicated that interaction, roleplaying, and learning from diverse peers are strategies that can increase cross-cultural awareness (D'Andrea et al., 1991; Malott et al., 2010).

However, counselor education literature has not addressed multicultural educational strategies and the multicultural attitudes of counseling students in an online educational environment. These strategies should be explored as they relate to online environments. Literature on multicultural education in distance education is relatively recent, but only a limited number of articles discussed multicultural attitudes. The current growth of diversity in both distance education and the nation make it necessary to address this gap in the literature.

Online universities require students to complete a multicultural course to ensure multicultural competency. The educational strategies that were devised to ensure effective multicultural training required some face-to-face interaction. Since then, there has been little research on strategies for online multicultural training. Therefore, distance and online multicultural training should be evaluated to address the gap in the literature relating to how effective multicultural training is accomplished. The Counselor Education and Supervision (CES) field currently have inadequate information on how online counselor education meets the needs of face-to-face interaction in online multicultural counseling courses. Consequently, exploring an online environment in which face-to-face engagement is limited should be the next step in evaluating multicultural competency (Ancis, 1998; Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011).

Evaluating the attitudes instead of the knowledge of online students in counselor education programs before and after completing a multicultural training course may provide information that addresses the gap in the literature. According to Banks (1995), counseling students' attitudes were changed in social activism, emotional ties and cultural sensitivity increased during interaction with other students from different backgrounds, thus promoting cultural democracy and cultural empowerment. Banks (1999) stated that "knowledge alone does not create empathic, caring commitment to humane and democratic change" (p. 180). Therefore, measuring attitudes related to cultural diversity, diversity issues, and personal biases can identify the effectiveness of cultural training.

The study is introduced with a summary of the background of multicultural training environments and the challenges using online multicultural training. Following

this background, an in-depth view of the problem is discussed, and evidence that the problem is relevant to counselor educators and clients is summarized. Further, the section explains several gaps in research concerning online multicultural education. The chapter includes the purpose of the study, defines the independent and dependent variables used, and introduces the research questions and theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the study. Following this, the nature of the study is considered, including its rationale and research methodology. The chapter includes brief operational definitions of terms used in the study. This is followed by a discussion of assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and weaknesses in the study. The chapter concludes with a concise explanation of the significance of the study.

Background

In April 1991, the need for a multicultural perspective in the Counseling profession was outlined (Sue, Arredondo and McDavis, 1992).. The ACA professional standards suggest that counseling professionals consider culture when working with diverse individuals (ACA, 2005) and develop an understanding of the role diversity plays in an individual's experiences (Miranda, 2008). Due to the importance of multicultural competency to the field, Enger, Lajimodiere, 2011; Pieterse, Evans, Risner-Butner, Collins, and Mason, 2009; Roysircar, Dobbins, and Malloy, 2010 all have studied the relationship between multicultural training and counselor competence . The increasingly diverse population in the U.S. requires that competent counselors possess multicultural competency (Sue et al., 1992). With the increase in diversity and the growing need for culturally competent counselors, the multicultural competency movement began and

focused on counselors and institutions promoting minority mental health by ensuring counselors were multiculturally competent (D'Andrea et al., 1991). This development occurred due to the counseling professions need to increase multicultural competency, knowledge, and skills (Sue et al., 1992). The movement increased the relevance of diversity in mental health practices by noting the ineffectiveness of counseling approaches with ethnic minority populations (Sue et al, 1992). D'Andrea and Heckman (2008) suggested that the multicultural movement revolutionized best practices in the counseling profession by creating competent researchers, counselor educators, trainees, and practitioners. According to Coleman (2006), multicultural education and training received immense attention from university counseling programs after the movement began with development of the multicultural competencies. Therefore, it demonstrated the commitment of universities and colleges to developing strategies to deliver multicultural course curricula (D'Andrea & Heckman, 2008). It is not enough to discuss the commitment of universities without considering their history of creating multicultural training and competency.

Sue et al. (1992) established a multicultural counseling competency (MCC) model that provided a theoretical framework to conduct multicultural training. After the development of the MCC model and the ground rules for competency, the American Counseling Association (ACA), American Psychological Association (APA), and Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) all provided formalized criteria for multicultural counseling and training. The counseling profession regarded multicultural counseling as one of its ethical foundations (Chao,

2012). According to the ACA (2005), it is the responsibility of counselors to ensure they are culturally competent.

Before the dramatic rise of online education, counselor education included multicultural training in traditional classroom settings (Schroeder, Plata, Fullwood, Price, & Dyer Sennette, 2013). However, the combination of a more diverse population and the increase of online education programs is challenging educators to create multicultural training for an emerging group of diverse students (Ancis, 1998; Schroeder et al., 2013; Schroeder & Terras, 2015). The U.S. Department of Education (2009) questioned online and distance education programs' capacity to deliver training in nontraditional formats. In response to this critique, web-based programs now include computer conferencing, telephonic conference calls, Blackboard discussions, and Internet chats as nontraditional formats used to deliver course material (Mehrotra & McGahey, 2012). Ancis (1998) discussed the challenges of interaction related to interactive televised instruction and other approaches designed to encourage dialogue and self-exploration among students. Referring to distance and online multicultural education, Ancis believed that the lack of face-to-face interaction between students prevented them from receiving effectively structured training.

Ancis (1998) said that face-to-face multicultural counseling courses typically employed experiential exercises, in vivo interactions with diverse students, and in-class discussions to facilitate multicultural competency. Due to these strategies, Ancis believed that physical separation is not conducive to an active learning environment for multicultural training. Instead, she promoted strategies such as open expression, trust,

student-instructor and student-student interaction, and sharing multicultural experiences as methods to facilitate active learning in a multicultural course.

Dickson and Jepsen (2007) said that shared multicultural experiences supported multicultural competency. In addition to shared experiences, counselor educators use exposure strategies such as roleplaying, ethnic minority guest speakers, lectures on cultural diversity and experiential exercises to deliver multicultural training (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007). Multiple educational strategies can be used to promote competency (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Dickson, Jepsen, & Barbee, 2008). However, according to Malotte et al. (2010), these methods are limited in an online environment because of the lack of direct contact.

Benhoff and Gibbons (2011) stated that counselor educators found it difficult to train and evaluate their students on counseling techniques when they could not see each other. The authors suggested simple technologies that could simulate face-to-face classroom experiences. For example, LinguaMOO is the name of an interactive synchronous learning platform used to simulate face-to-face classrooms. Each student goes online to the classroom at the same time for 2 hours and can see and informally chat with each other and the instructor. Additionally, the combination of asynchronous and synchronous elements also supported an effective learning experience according to the authors. Using Blackboard discussion responses and real time chat together promoted a relaxing and engaging learning environment.

Sue and Sue (2008) suggested that variables such as race, ethnicity, and gender may impact multicultural competency and should also be explored in online training

courses covering multiculturalism. Abrams and Gibson (2007) noted that, “71% of White social work students enrolled in a diversity class reported that White privilege acted as a barrier to learning about oppression” (p. 148). In addition, Chao (2013) found that White school counselors had lower multicultural competency scores compared to school counselors of color. Dickson and Jepsen (2007) and Dickson et al. (2008) reported that ethnic minorities score higher on a multicultural awareness scale compared to their White counterparts. In addition, Lee and Khawaja (2013) stated that the experience of working with diverse clients may positively impact counselors’ multicultural competency, knowledge, and skills. As these predictors were associated with higher scores on the awareness scale, they should be considered as well for effects on multicultural attitude changes. All these external factors may affect change in multicultural attitudes besides multicultural training, and thus affect scores in this study.

A study comparing students’ recollections of their multicultural attitudes before and after an online multicultural counseling course may provide relevant information to the profession. The absence of this information, along with limited literature related to online education, is a problem for the profession and stakeholders. Filling this gap is important, as it is not known if online counseling students are achieving multicultural competency. This study accomplished several purposes by providing relevant information concerning online education generally, evaluating the ability of multicultural training to affect a change in the attitudes of students in online counselor education programs, and suggesting strategies for delivering training in multicultural counseling courses.

Problem Statement

Counselor educators designed pedagogical strategies to enhance multicultural competency training in the classroom (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007). However, I found very little literature that discussed the multicultural attitudes of online learners in counselor education programs. Munroe and Pearson (2006) asserted that an assessment of multicultural attitudes could evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural training, thus producing multicultural competency. According to Dickson et al. (2008), counseling students reported positive changes in cognitive biases and increased sensitivity to members of other cultural groups because of effective training in a face-to-face setting. Munroe and Pearson (2006) said that measuring attitudes towards cultural diversity, diversity issues, and one's own biases can demonstrate the effectiveness of cultural training. Students interacting and engaging with diverse students and faculty in counselor education programs contributed instructionally to their multicultural competency (Chao, 2012; Chao, Okazaki, & Hong, 2011; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007).

Enhancing multicultural competency training is relevant for counselor education and supervision because they can produce culturally competent counselors. This is needed as the nation becomes more diverse. Many online adult students within the United States participate from overseas. Future counselor educators need to become familiar with diverse student populations. Although there has been an expansion in online education, the U. S. Department of Education (DOE, 2009) reported online education as being less effective than face-to-face environments, based upon faculty's ability to observe student engagement and response to instruction.

Examining multicultural training in online counselor education programs through a multicultural counseling course may provide counselor educators the necessary information for training more confident and multiculturally-competent counselors. The counseling profession needs to know more about the effectiveness of online multicultural training with limited face-to-face interactions to determine the impact of that training on multicultural attitudes. Additionally, exploring multicultural attitudes and determining the relationships between ethnic identities, age, and gender is necessary.

Purpose of the Study

Munroe and Pearson (2006) stated that assessing multicultural attitudes can lead to identifying issues with the delivery of pedagogical content. Therefore, I measured multicultural attitudes (the dependent variable), which are defined later in this chapter. Students' recollections of their multicultural attitudes before exposure to a multicultural counseling course during their training program were measured and compared to those attitudes after completing the course (the independent variable). The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of online multicultural training from an online university with limited face-to-face interactions to determine the impact of that training on multicultural attitudes. I evaluated online training by using the Multicultural Attitude Scale and Questionnaire (MASQUE) which is a self-reported multicultural attitude measurement scale that determines students' knowledge, care, and act domains scores after multicultural training developed by Munroe and Pearson (2006). I also examined other variables that may impact multicultural attitudes, such as ethnicity, gender, and age.

I explored these variables to make sure the variable of interest (the independent variable) caused the outcome (the dependent variable), with no other outside influences.

Research Question and Hypothesis

In this quantitative study, I explored the effectiveness of online multicultural training in counselor education programs. I compared online counselor education students' multicultural attitudes before and after they took a multicultural counseling course. Additionally, I examined how other variables may contribute to changes in multicultural attitudes such as ethnicity, gender, age, clinical experience, and previous multicultural training.

The study relied heavily on students' perceptions and recollections of changes in multicultural attitudes before and after exposure to the multicultural counseling course curriculum in an online environment. Analyzing master's level counselor education students' changes in multicultural attitudes before and after exposure to the multicultural counseling course provided information regarding the impact of such a course on multicultural attitudes in an online environment. The results of this study could influence curricula, pedagogical strategies in virtual learning spaces, and educators' understanding the development of students' multicultural competency in such environments. The purpose of the study was to evaluate whether online graduate level counselor education students receive effective multicultural training based on the data collected.

The MASQUE is a self-reported multicultural attitude measurement scale that determines students' knowledge, care, and act domains scores after multicultural training (Munroe & Pearson, 2006; see Appendix A). According to Munroe and Pearson (2006),

“Multicultural attitudes are based on the factors of presumed knowledge (know) and beliefs, the emotional ties associated with such knowledge (Care) and beliefs, and the behavioral actions (Act) displayed owing to both” (p, 820). Determining the multicultural attitudes of online master’s level counselor education students before and after an online multicultural counseling course is useful in determining the ability of online multicultural training to develop cultural competency among the counselor education students.

The research question for this study is: Is there is a significant difference in participants’ recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE)? The null and alternative hypotheses related to the research question are:

H₀: There is no significant difference in terms of three multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) of students as measured by the MASQUE before and after an online multicultural counseling course after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age as measured by a demographic questionnaire.

H₁: There is a significant difference in terms of three multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) of students as measured by the MASQUE before and after an online multicultural counseling course after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age as measured by a demographic questionnaire.

Theoretical Framework

This study was a quantitative examination of the applicability of Banks' transformative approach to online multicultural education in a counseling program. The transformative approach informs pedagogical needs in online multicultural education in counselor education programs (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). Banks' premise was to adopt know, care, and act constructs in diversity training through multicultural pedagogical strategies (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). The know domain measures knowledge and beliefs about diverse cultures to include one's own culture, the care domain measures sensitivity towards that knowledge and the act domain measure the actions of advocacy (Munroe & Pearson, 2006).

According to CACREP (2009), students must understand how living in American society affects counseling clients from diverse cultures. More specifically, "students must have an understanding of the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs and understandings of an individual's view" (CACREP, 2016, p. 56). CACREP standard promotes know, care, and act constructs in counselor education programs curricula. Multicultural courses that are measured by CACREP standards must apply the same know, care and act constructs for multicultural competency (CACREP, 2009). According to Banks (2006), multicultural curricula should allow students to view the world through the perspective of cultural diversity. This approach served as a guide to examining the multicultural attitudes of students in counselor education programs and illuminated outcomes in the pedagogy of online counselor education courses (Banks, 2006).

Nature of the Study

Quantitative Method

The research method for this study was a quantitative approach that evaluated the multicultural attitudes of counselor education students enrolled in a master's level counselor education program to determine the effectiveness of an online multicultural course training. A survey research design, using a convenience sample with snowball sampling, was guided by Banks' transformative approach. I used a survey research design with repeated measures. This approach allows participants to respond to survey questions by reflecting on their multicultural attitudes before and repeated the survey after an online multicultural course. Additionally, the use of snowball sampling assisted in gaining maximum participants. I chose QuestionPro to host the survey, and I exported data into SPSS for analysis.

Methodology

A survey research design was appropriate for this study. According to Creswell (2009), a survey design offers a quantitative explanation of attitudes, which was part of this study. I used repeated measures and a retrospective design to measure online graduate counselor education students' attitudes before and after a multicultural counseling course. The statistical test to examine the research questions was a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) to assess if mean differences existed for the dependent variables.

The target population for this research study were master's students enrolled in online education programs, or recent graduates of online master's counselor education

programs. I recruited the sample for this study by using the ACA Connect forum, the ACA Listserv, and the Walden University Participant Pool. Participants who are counselor education students or counselor education graduates from an online master's counselor education program and took an online multicultural course within the last year were eligible to participate. Potential participants who met the criteria were prompted to participate in the study and instructed to go to a provided link which included an informed consent form and the survey. Students who agreed to participate in the study agreed with the informed consent process to proceed to the survey.

Definitions

The following section provides concise definitions of terms used in the current study.

Adult learners: Schroeder and Terras (2015) classified adult learners as graduate learners who are 24 years old or older and have commitments and responsibilities other than education.

CACREP: An organization committed to facilitating advancement in the field of counseling, primarily by overseeing and granting accreditation to individual counselor education programs (CACREP, 2009).

Ethnic identity: A social group who declares the same norms, behaviors, attitude, values and beliefs as others in a group (Chao, 2012). In addition, Chao (2012) stated that the social group has a common view of cultural practices that lets group members identify with one another.

Ethnic minority: Ethnic minority refers to a person within a given community that has distinct national or cultural traditions that differ from the majority population (Merino & Tileagă, 2011).

Face-to-face education: A learning environment that enables learners to interact with one another by being physically present in the classroom with their facilitators (Maloney et al., 2011). The students in this environment do not interact primarily by using technology (Maloney et al., 2011). This environment is also known as a traditional classroom or a brick-and-mortar school (Maloney et al., 2011).

Multicultural attitudes: According to Munroe and Pearson (2007), “multicultural attitudes are based on the factors of presumed knowledge and beliefs, the emotional ties associated with such knowledge and beliefs, and the behavioral actions displayed to owing to both” (p. 820). According to Banks (1995), to know is (a sense of beliefs, perceived facts, thoughts, and knowledge about an object). To care is the effective emotion felt towards an object via positive or negative evaluation. To act is the behavioral course of action towards the object.

Multicultural competence: Jones, Sander, and Booker (2013) defined multicultural competence as an individual’s beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and skills of multicultural differences. Self-awareness regarding personal identities and cultural norms, as well as sensitivity to other cultural differences comprise beliefs and attitudes involving multicultural differences. An individual’s willingness to learn about other cultures and become sensitive to cultural differences as they relate to counseling practices

and interventions constitute the knowledge and skills aspects of multicultural competence.

Multicultural competency movement: According to D'Andrea et al. (1991), the multicultural competency movement was established in 1991 to advocate for counseling competency within institutions, and for the psychology and counseling professions to meet the needs of a rapidly growing diverse population.

Multicultural counseling course: Multicultural counseling courses are based on a multicultural training curriculum designed to allow counseling students to become aware of other cultures and their own in order to provide effective therapeutic counseling services to culturally diverse groups (CACREP, 2009).

Multicultural education: According to CACREP (2009), multicultural education involves teaching students about cultural differences, issues, and concerns through coursework, workshops, and multicultural seminars.

Online education: Commonly called distance education, this is a distance learning environment in which courses are offered primarily via the Internet, and in which students are physically separated (Horzum, 2015; Kaymak & Horzum, 2013). It can be defined as “gaining knowledge and skills through synchronous and asynchronous learning applications which are written, communicated, active, supported and managed with the use of internet technology” (Kayman & Horzum, 2013, p. 1792).

Pedagogy: Pedagogy is the methodology and practice of teaching, and especially relates to the theory of an academic subject (Ayers & Smith, 2006).

Assumptions

I developed this study after a thorough review of the literature concerning multicultural training in an online environment. My assumptions were also drawn from discussions concerning multicultural competence and online education, together with my experiences in an online university. Criticisms of online education were a basis for some assumptions related to this study and served as a motivation for doing this research.

My first assumption was about the interaction between students in online educational environments. I assumed that students do not engage in meaningful conversations without being required to do so, thus placing a limitation on cultural learning since they are not sharing their cultural experiences. I also assumed that the ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and religion of students are unknown in an online environment, unless students voluntarily share such information. This information aids in cultural awareness.

It was also my assumption that factors such as ethnicity, gender, and age can impact multicultural competency and multicultural attitudes. Another assumption was that one multicultural class would impact multicultural attitudes. Lastly, as the use of online education has increased dramatically, it was my assumption that it provided access for working individuals, those in rural areas, and individuals with disabilities, all of which increases the diversity of the learning environment.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to multicultural competency in online counselor education courses before and after a multicultural counseling course. In order

to enhance the precision of the study's findings, I excluded all students enrolled in face-to-face settings. Face-to-face classes are those traditional classes presented in a brick and mortar environment (Maloney et al., 2011). I decided not to use these students in order to focus on the effectiveness of online training.

I also excluded doctoral students from this study. These students may have more multicultural experience outside the classroom due to post graduate requirements such as residencies, internships and conferences thus influencing their multicultural attitudes (Lee & Khawaja, 2013). Using students enrolled in an online multicultural course is necessary in order to measure multicultural attitudes before and after exposure to the multicultural counseling course. My decision to have students recall their attitudes before and after this course assisted me in assessing the effectiveness of the online instructional environment.

Limitations

Several limitations existed in this study. First, the sample was a small sample size. A larger sample size would be more representative of the population. Additionally, I used data from 130 master's level counselor education students and graduates enrolled in online universities who have taken a multicultural training course. This implied that the sample may not have been an accurate representation of all students because I excluded other degree programs such as doctoral and bachelor's programs. Lastly, the study relied heavily on student self-report and recollections of their multicultural attitudes before and after a multicultural counseling course. Self-reported data is a limitation to this study because it cannot be verified. Therefore, I must take the participants'

responses as truth. Participants may have exaggerated or had selective memory when responding to survey questions and is considered a limitation.

Significance

There are many counseling students enrolled in online education programs. Therefore, the next step in ensuring that they are multiculturally competent could be answered with the results of this study. After a thorough review of the literature, I found almost no recent research concerning multicultural training in online education. Ponterotto et al. (2012) suggested multicultural training efforts should be explored to ensure quality and effectiveness of the training.

The findings of this study may contribute empirical evidence to the counselor education literature regarding the relationship between students' multicultural attitudes and participation in multicultural training for online learners. The current study could support professional practice in the counselor education field by identifying barriers faced by online adult learners and challenges counselor educators have in engaging online adult learners in conversations on multicultural subjects.

Hockridge (2013) proposed that identifying barriers and challenges faced by counselor educators may support counselor best practices. Kaymak and Horzum (2013) reported adult learners enrolled in distance education may feel isolated and alienated from their classmates and instructors, leading to difficulty interacting and engaging in multicultural conversations. My study may provide information on these barriers and add to the topic of online multicultural training by enhancing what is known about pedagogical strategies for online environments.

The results of the study can also generate discussions in the counselor education and supervision profession about how best to obtain the optimum environment for effective training. More specifically, the study results may aid in enhancing the way students interact and engage in an online classroom and therefore provide a more conducive forum that promotes competency. Interacting and learning about diverse students' cultural experiences may promote cultural competency.

Summary

The counseling field's need to embrace multicultural education and training has received significant attention from universities. In this chapter, I noted several crucial guidelines concerning the effectiveness of online multicultural training. I provided an introduction and background of the study, the theoretical framework, a comprehensive description of the nature of the study, contributions of the research, an outline of the research questions, a definition of key terms used, scope and delimitations, and study assumptions and limitations. Chapter 2 includes a detailed review of literature related to the topic. A historical perspective of multicultural competency begins the chapter and includes the most recent literature on multicultural training and the challenges of online education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This review of the literature highlights the need for research on the effectiveness of online multicultural training in counselor education programs. The counseling profession values multicultural training and multicultural competency. However, a lack of up-to-date discussion exists regarding the effectiveness of online multicultural education and the multicultural attitudes of online counseling students (Schroeder et al., 2013).

Diversity in the United States is increasing daily, and 30% of the population is an ethnic minority (Jones et al., 2013). Because of this, the APA and the ACA set ethical guidelines for multicultural competency. A working definition of multicultural competency was necessary for this study. Multicultural competency has three components: beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Jones et al., 2013; Newell et al., 2010; Sue et al., 1992). Beliefs and attitudes refer to the capability of an individual to identify and understand his or her personal beliefs and attitudes as they relate to cultures other than his or her own (Jones et al., 2013). The knowledge component is the ability to learn and understand about other cultural groups (Jones et al., 2013). Last, the skill component involves implementing culturally sensitive practices, such as assessments, counseling, interventions, consultation, and advocacy and action (Jones et al., 2013).

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural training in online higher education by revealing any changes in the multicultural attitudes of online counselor education students after completing an online multicultural

counseling course. Major sections of this chapter include a description of the literature search strategy, discussion of the theoretical foundation of the study, and discussion of multicultural training in counselor education. The chapter also includes an overview of the issues surrounding multicultural competency and an analysis of studies relevant to multicultural counseling training and online delivery of multicultural counseling training.

Literature Search Strategy

I conducted a thorough search of the literature using Thoreau to access a educational and psychological databases, including PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, ERIC, Education Source, Academic Search Complete, ACM digital library, Mental Measurements Yearbook, SAGE Premier, SAGE Research Methods Online, and EBSCOHost. Additionally, I searched ProQuest to locate dissertations relevant to the present study. These search tools and databases allowed access to peer-reviewed articles and books to aid in obtaining relevant information. Most peer-reviewed articles and background information was published between 2013 and 2018. However, for foundational studies and theoretical material, it was necessary to go beyond the 5-year window.

To gather the most applicable data on the subject, I used the following key terms: *multicultural training, cross-cultural training, multicultural education, cross-cultural education, multiculturalism, diversity, online multicultural education, traditional multicultural education, face-to-face diversity training, culture, minority counseling, cultural issues, and diversity counseling*. After gathering all the articles, I carefully reviewed articles and selected those that were most relevant to the present study and as

current as possible because of the lack of updated literature on the subject. A thorough review of the literature assisted in the analysis of methods, limitations, and the significance of the studies and helped to refine research implications.

Theoretical Foundation

Banks' transformative approach theory served as the theoretical foundation for the study because the approach can help to guide pedagogical strategies for multicultural training. Banks (1995) hypothesized that allowing students to learn through the cultural experience of others can help open their minds for social action and advocacy. The transformative approach to learning enables students to think critically about their assumptions regarding race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, class, and physical ability and freely discuss these assumptions in an educational environment (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011).

Banks (1995) said that mainstream or conventional learning is often viewed by teachers as being neutral, objective, and not promoting basic inherent values in humans. However, according to Banks (2001), knowledge is not neutral because knowledge cannot be separated from human interests and values. Mainstream learning, however, does not allow teachers to focus on the connections between learning and values. Consequently, Banks argued that because knowledge is not neutral, it is important to understand how knowledge can promote human values and take a transformative approach to knowledge to produce positive social change. Encouraging learners to reflect on and discuss multicultural perspectives can help teachers to facilitate conversations and

student's understanding about diverse individual's places in the world relative to larger cultural communities.

The transformative approach calls for a classroom discourse that accommodates multiple cultural issues (Banks, 1999; Banks & Banks, 1995). Such discourse may emphasize the examination of issues pertaining to power and oppression and the experiences of people from oppressed backgrounds (Banks & Banks, 1995). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and transgendered individuals face violence and discrimination and also qualify as an oppressed population (Becker, Cortina, Tsai, & Eccles 2014; Galupo, Henise, & Davis, 2014). Additionally, disenfranchised immigrants whose fate is detention, deportation or discriminated are included in this group because it is important to examine their experiences and address the sociopolitical issues that affect their lives (Carwright & Manderson, 2011). Understanding the experiences of the prevailing social treatment of immigrants in addition to the attitudes of the original residents is important for social growth as counseling students can learn from their social struggles in order to advocate (Carwright & Manderson, 2011). Another area for multicultural study includes the interactions of people throughout the world (Erdal, Oeppen, 2013). Such emphases can help students understand their positions in the global ecosystem and the interrelations among diverse groups of people (Banks, 1995).

The classroom reflects the diversity of larger demographic shifts in the United States (Collins & Arthur, 2010a). These shifts necessitate pedagogical changes in multicultural training for counselors and others in the helping professions (Banks, 1995). Researchers used Banks' transformative theory to address issues in contemporary

multicultural training courses. Eurocentric perspectives largely have been represented in mainstream approaches to education because the majority culture (White Americans) made up the majority of students in schools when these approaches were created (Sarrai et al., 2015). In the 21st century, the number of ethnic and racial minorities in schools is increasing at a rate of 21.7% every decade (Sarrai et al., 2015). Immigration rates of 26% indicate that the trend of diversity will not decrease (Davis, 2016). The situation of increasing diversity calls for counselor educators to use a transformative approach to teach and deconstruct what students have learned from the mainstream approach (Sarrai et al., 2015).

Banks' transformative approach theory can help practitioners address and understand the uneasiness of discussions on cultural issues. Transformative teaching is an approach that encourages increased understanding of complex and multiple issues of diversity in the classroom through reflection and conversation (Ancis & Marshall, 2010). The transformative approach purports to provide teachers with better tools for handling minority relationships in the classroom (Florian, 2015). The rules established by Banks' transformative approach to education may be the solution to issues that both private and public educators face.

Rationale for Using Transformative Approach

The assumption in this study was that personal transformation by means of interacting, engaging, and undergoing appropriate processing of diverse cultural perspectives in multicultural education will lead to an increased understanding of multicultural competency and, thus, change cultural attitudes. The change or

transformation of cultural attitudes is at the core of Banks' (1995) transformative approach theory. The counselor education sector requires the development of counselor educators who are competent and can engage students from diverse backgrounds (Basbay, 2014). For educational institutions to meet the demand, educators and administrators have developed counselor education programs concerned with the training and subsequent implementation of pedagogies to help manage classroom diversity (Basbay, 2014). The counseling profession and CACREP's priority is to understand and address concerns for the training of counselors to become culturally competent (CACREP, 2013).

The transformative approach was the most suitable for the study to examine the multicultural attitudes of online students (Banks, 1995, 2002). I sought to determine if a change exists in multicultural attitudes of online master's-level counseling students after exposure to a multicultural counseling course curriculum. Counselor education programs may use Banks' transformative approach to facilitate critical thinking in counseling. Students can focus on their personal beliefs and interact with other students with the goal of better understanding one another, which students may be able to apply later with their clients (Banks, 2002). Additionally, according to Gayton (2009), online students are unique in that their environment allows for a different style of interaction. Having students analyze their multicultural attitudes through a transformative lens and evaluating the students' multicultural competence through the use of the MASQUE (Munroe & Pearson, 2006) addressed the following research question: Is there a significant difference in participants' recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an

online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE)?

Multicultural attitudes develop after interaction with diverse individuals (Dickson & Shumway, 2011). Multicultural counselor education programs focus on the importance of race and culture, as well as the influences of these factors in counseling relationships (Dickson & Shumway, 2011). The programs may also incorporate other issues related to racial and cultural differences, such as gender, class, sexuality issues, and physical disabilities (Dickson & Shumway, 2011). Because of the focus on race and culture, multicultural training programs often stress three issues relevant to the creation of an ideal learning environment (Dickson et al., 2008). The first area crucial to the development of multicultural competence is awareness of personal definitions (Dickson et al., 2008), and this aspect focuses on the assumptions of biases and values that people may be holding towards a certain group in society. The second aspect calls for a presence of requisite understanding of the client's view towards the world (Dickson et al., 2008). The final aspect includes an emphasis on counseling skills required for working with clients from different backgrounds (Dickson et al., 2008).

An important part of teaching is to ensure that the counselor and client understand the influences of their perceptions, values, relationships, and behaviors in the outcomes of the counseling relationship (Epstein, 2010). According to Epstein (2010), the best counseling session starts with an understanding of the client. Racial identity of

individuals and the influence that it has on the classroom experience is deemed to be critical for the development of culturally conscious counselors (Eunhyun, 2011).

Application of the Transformative Approach

Researchers have studied the transformative approach and applied it to many settings involving multicultural training (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011; Munroe & Pearson, 2006). Researchers have also utilized Banks' transformative approach along with the Munroe Multicultural Attitudes Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE) in empirical studies related to multicultural training (Munroe & Pearson, 2006; Schroeder et al., 2013). In 2011, Enger and Lajimodiere conducted a mixed-methods study of 18 doctoral students in a required general education online diversity course. The purpose of their study was to examine students' attitudes using Banks' transformative approach to learning diversity (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011). The MASQUE was used to conduct a pre- and posttest to measure students' attitudes before and after a doctoral-level multicultural training course (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011). Enger and Lajimodiere discovered that two items on the MASQUE demonstrated significant differences between the pretest and posttest including: "I am knowledgeable regarding differences among economic classes," and "I react positively to cultural differences" (p. 177). In the qualitative component of the study, students admitted realizing that they were privileged growing up (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011). Students also shared their indirect experiences of discrimination and their feelings regarding those experiences. The transformative approach to learning furnished students the opportunity to view other perspectives as well as their own (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011). Additionally, transformative approach theory provided students

ways to interpret events, issues, and concepts of human life locally and globally. The theory aided students in developing a vision to promote a democratic community (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011).

More than 13 years ago, Ukpokodu (2003) proposed the use of the transformative approach for a teacher education course in which preservice teachers learned about social justice, privilege, equity, and freedom. According to Ukpokodu, “citizenship education embodies the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to transform and impact society” (p. 19). Ukpokodu (2003) argued that for preservice teachers to make informed decisions concerning their students’ education and learning abilities, they must gain knowledge of social history through a transformative approach to learning. Consequently, preservice teachers can come to a critical understanding of culture by learning about the experiences and exploring cultures outside of their own (Ukpokodu, 2003).

Munroe and Pearson (2006) developed a multicultural attitude scale based on Banks’ transformative approach to multicultural education. In their study, the researchers sampled 422 students in various higher education institutions (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). Munroe and Pearson used the multicultural attitude scale that corresponded to Banks’ know, care, and act domains. For example, the researchers worded the 22 items of the scale to correspond to knowledge by using words such as “know or understand” (Munroe & Pearson, 2006, p. 824). The care domain included words such as “care or sensitive” (Munroe & Pearson, 2006, p. 824). Last, the act domain included words such as “act or react” (Munroe & Pearson, 2006, p. 824). The scale reflected positive and negative attitudes with responses to a modified Likert-type scale. The study demonstrated

significant differences in gender, age, and courses completed but not for ethnicity for the omnibus multivariate tests (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). Statistically, the results indicated that “female participants, older participants, and those who completed more multicultural courses had more favorable attitudes across the three scores” (Munroe & Pearson, 2006, p. 829). The know, care, and act domains were key dependent variables that were used in this study. The theoretical discussion includes further discussion of these variables.

Criticisms of the Multicultural Transformative Approach

Though the transformative approach encourages engagement and change (Banks, 2002), critics of the approach exist (Hoggan, 2016). According to Hoggan (2016), despite the popularity of transformative learning, some critics believe that it is not sufficient for adult education. Previously, Mezirow (2013) stated critics suggested adults are less likely to participate in discourse while expressing harsh experiences. The tension caused by expressing harsh and oppressive experiences is real in the classroom (Taylor & Cranton, 2012). For example, according to Sevig and Etzkorn, (2001), one major challenge of using the multicultural transformative approach in the classroom is the work it takes to devoid the classroom of tensions experienced by minority students because of oppression. Students reported that a multicultural curriculum led to tensions between minority students and White students leading to adverse effects in the classroom (Daniel, 2011; Dickson, Argus-Calvo, & Tafoya, 2010). However, most classroom leaders maintain ground rules so that all voices can be heard without judgment or tension (Quaye, 2012; Velliotis, 2008). The major foci in the classroom environment should be the commitment

to dignity and respect of people and the responsibility of engaging in respectful discourse (Velliotis, 2008).

Another criticism is that the transformative approach emphasizes individual rather than social change (Hoggan, 2016). Hoggan (2016) stated that the theory focused more on individual change. Learning begins with an individual's interest in social issues, which may lead to social change. According to McMichael (2016), an individual's experiences can be a catalyst for social change.

According to Watson (2014), researchers also critiqued the transformational setting in which both students and teachers had authority in the classroom. It is impossible to ignore the power of a teacher who is the guide for students when teaching multicultural issues (Mohsenin, 2010). More specifically, teachers inherit a hierarchical or leadership role in the classroom by providing insight into the role of culture in society (Mohsenin, 2010). However, Banks countered this critique by stating that the classroom engagement between teachers and students is and should be parallel, whereby there are both challenges and opportunities for the development of transformation and growth for students (Mohsenin, 2010; Sevig & Etzkorn, 2016). According to Pieterse et al. (2009), the discussion of oppression is a reality for both teachers and students as they reveal their experiences. The parallel relationship contributes to the knowledge and the development of a certain degree of understanding through open engagement (Pieterse et al., 2009). Sue and Zane (2009) stated that openness in the classroom presents possibilities for student growth as multicultural learners.

Other Major Theoretical Propositions

The majority of theoretical views on the study of cultural competence involve an exploration of world views and pull from identity development theories (Ancis & Marshal, 2010). Theories such as sociocultural theory, social identity theory, and relational cultural theory focus on various dimensions, including time, activity, people, or the nature of relationships and social interactions (Ancis & Marshall, 2010). These theoretical models emphasized how different cultural groups focus on the past, present, and future according to the tenets of these dimensions. For example, researchers have widely used the sociocultural theory to explain and guide an understanding of social interaction as it relates to cultural learning (Ahn & Marginson, 2013). The sociocultural theory proposes that learning is on social-historical elements that evolve constantly. Vygotsky, the developer of sociocultural theory, views the theory of learning within a “relationship between subject and society” (Ahn & Marginson, 2013, p. 146). Vygotsky suggested that human behavior changes through interaction within and through the environment (Ahn & Marginson, 2013).

Social identity theory also informs education and cultural identity (Pecukonis, 2014). The theory proposes that social group affiliation relates to self-concept and social identity. More specifically, group membership holds value with who people are and their self-worth. According to this theory, social identity is derived from the interactions and experiences within various groups with whom an individual identifies (Pecukonis, 2014). This theory does not indicate how behaviors can change because of these interactions and experiences, thus influencing social change (Pecukonis, 2014).

Relational-cultural theory conceptualizes culture through connections and relationships (Comstock et al., 2008; Duffey & Somody, 2011; Frey, 2013). Relational-cultural theory involves use of various models, paradigms, and concepts in the development of counseling (Comstock et al., 2008; Frey, 2013). The theory focuses on women, marginalized men, and people of color. The key tenants of this model address relational experiences and emphasize a counselor's relational, social justice, and multicultural competencies (Comstock et al., 2008). According to Frey (2013), the relational-cultural theory assumes that a shared connection, sensitivity in a relationship, and the differentiation and growth of self develops through shared experiences.

Many individuals have heritages affected in one way or another by liberating and oppressive reactions (Frey, 2013). The understanding of the histories of these individuals is instrumental in uncovering biases drawn from history or stereotypes (Frey, 2013). Historical and current experiences of marginalized groups shared through a theoretical model supports students' learning and guides multicultural training (Roysircar et al., 2010). The theoretical models enable individuals to understand their identities in a better manner and allow individuals to understand the magnitude of the sociopolitical environment on personal and collective lives of parties in question (Roysircar et al., 2010). Although the theories mentioned in this section produce a range of insight, they were not appropriate for the current study because I sought to analyze attitude changes towards culture. The previously mentioned frameworks do not pertain to multicultural attitudes.

Multicultural Attitudes, Competencies, and Training

In the study, I assessed the attitudes of online master's-level counseling students after taking a multicultural counseling course and their memories of their attitudes before taking the course to evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural training. Research has indicated that multicultural training is positively related to multicultural competence, counseling knowledge, and skill sets (Chao et al., 2011). It is necessary to establish best practices for multicultural training in all educational environments to ensure competency because researchers have revealed the association of multicultural training and multicultural attitudes with multicultural competency in counseling (Chao, 2012; Chao & Nath, 2011). For example, Baumgartner and Johnson-Bailey (2008) described their personal experiences as adult educators in a multicultural course classroom and noted that students tended to become uncomfortable during discussions of racism, sexism, and stereotypes. Observing and engaging silent students were techniques used to ensure participation as well as foster self-awareness (Baumgartner & Johnson-Bailey, 2008).

Baumgartner and Johnson-Bailey (2008) noted that all counselors needed cultural competence to influence views of clients and provide the requisite care. Educators with counseling backgrounds have developed pedagogical strategies aimed at enhancing multicultural competency in counselor training, which produce changes in multicultural attitudes (Eriksson & Abernethy, 2014). Cross-cultural awareness increases through strategies, such as interaction, discussions on cultural issues, and learning from peers with diverse backgrounds (Quaye, 2012). Mitcham, Greenidge and Smith (2013)

proposed exposing students to cross cultural group discussions with the hope that empathic listening will help transform the student's perspective of the world.

Munroe and Pearson (2006) argued that an assessment of multicultural attitudes can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural training. According to Dickson et al. (2008), master's-level counseling students reported changes in biases and increased sensitivity to members of other cultural groups as a result of sufficient training. The researchers concluded that to change counseling students' attitudes concerning cultural issues and prejudices, exposure strategies must be used. Strategies, such as guest speakers of a different race or ethnicity, class discussions, and role play, may challenge students to gain a different perspective of varying cultures (Dickson et al., 2008).

According to Chao (2012), multicultural courses have been added to counseling programs to influence cultural competency and multicultural attitude changes. The course curricula included activities, such as role play, conversations with ethnic minority peers to learn about other cultures, and consideration of marginalized populations' ideas (Chao & Nath, 2011). When students are exposed to cultural events and learn cultural practices, they develop an understanding of factors that inform the behavior displayed by different cultures, which allows for the development of positive multicultural attitudes (Chao, 2012).

Previous researchers found multicultural competence was developed in part by a culturally supportive classroom environment (Dickson et al., 2008; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007). According to Dickson et al. (2008), a cultural atmosphere must be present in the learning environment to aid in multicultural training. Dickson et al. conducted a study

using a survey given to 516 students enrolled in counselor education programs in the United States. The researchers used the Quick Discrimination Index, which is a 30-item Likert-type scale for a self-report assessment of attitudes (Dickson et al., 2008).

Additionally, the MCSDS was used to capture students' reactions to cultural and minority issues. The findings suggested that students' positive attitudes toward issues of race were highly influenced by cultural ambiance in the classroom (Dickson et al., 2008).

According to Dickson et al., multicultural ambiance is defined as a classroom with students of diverse cultural backgrounds that provide the opportunity to engage and interact in meaningful ways.

Multicultural Training, Gender, and Ethnicity

According to Chao (2012), ethnic identity refers to the set of shared ideas, behaviors, values, and attitudes in a social group that determines the identity of one person. Ethnic identity is not synonymous with racial identity because race pertains to outward appearance (skin color), whereas ethnicity refers to an individual's practices and conventions (Chao, 2012). Ethnicity in multicultural training also includes an exploration of the role of ethnicity in an individual's life. The final perception of ethnicity in training is the acquisition and continued maintenance of cultural identities in individuals (Dickson et al., 2010).

Chao and Nath (2011) focused on the role of personal background of counselors regarding racial and ethnic identities, gender roles, and training background on counselor competence through the lens of critical race theory. The authors selected 313 participants, and of those, 139 were full-time counselors and 170 were interns or in

practicum (Chao & Nath, 2011). The researchers hypothesized that “counselors’ ethnic identities would be positively associated with multicultural training,” thus implementing a multicultural attitude change (Chao & Nath, 2011, p. 53). The results of the study confirmed the authors’ hypothesis, indicating that gender, ethnic identity, and training were positively associated with multicultural competency (Chao & Nath, 2011). The study supported this hypothesis as the researchers found a positive correlation between multicultural training, gender roles, and ethnicity. Respondents who were more involved in multicultural group training had a higher level of multicultural competency regardless of their individual training (Chao & Nath, 2011). Additionally, other factors, such as racial and ethnic identity, gender, and previous multicultural training, may influence multicultural attitudes (Chao, 2013).

Consequently, Alalshaikh (2015), discussed how learning is influenced by culture. Alalshaikh suggested that instruction should be designed so that individuals with different cultural backgrounds can learn effectively. Instructors should have skills to develop a culturally sensitive learning environment (Alalshaikh, 2015). Alalshaikh further noted cultural influences should be considered when developing instructional approaches to avoid conflicts, such as unintentional discrimination because of the lack of understanding of various cultures. Learners are now “demanding a culturally adaptive learning experience that allow full development of the individual” (Alalshaikh, 2015, p. 69).

Online Versus Face-to-Face Educational Environments

Online education has been constantly expanding (Flanagan, 2012). Online educational enrollment has increased by 17% from 2007 to 2008 (Flanagan, 2012). With the increase of diverse populations and an increase in the use of online technology, counselors need to be competent in both computer technology and multicultural counseling (Shroeder et al., 2013; Schroeder & Terras, 2015). Although counselor educators have designed many pedagogical strategies to enhance multicultural competency training in the classroom, a small amount of literature pertains to the multicultural attitudes of online learners in counselor education programs. Because of the expanding reach of online education, examining the attitudes of online students in counselor education programs before and after completing a multicultural training course may provide information to address this gap in the literature. Therefore, it was necessary to review literature on online learning and address how online learning may have implications for counseling students' multicultural attitudes.

Flanagan (2012) explored the effect of the online education environment versus the face-to-face environment in students enrolled in an undergraduate business statistics course. The researcher examined how gender affected the differences in performance between online and face-to-face courses. The research hypotheses Flanagan reported were, (a) there was a significant decrease in average student scores in online courses as compared to face-to-face courses; and (b) there was a significant difference in how male and female students performed in online and face-to-face courses. Flanagan analyzed grades from three face-to-face courses and five online courses using a one-factor

ANOVA. The results of the study indicated that students performed better in the face-to-face environment, $F(1, 233) = 4.6023$ $p = .032968$, and that no significant difference existed in gender regarding online versus face-to-face courses, $F(1, 144) = .812056$, $p = .369028$ (Flanagan, 2012).

Flanagan (2012) further reported that the challenge for online courses is the interaction and getting students involved in conversation and discussion. The author also noted interaction created positive attitudes towards coursework. Gaytan (2009) claimed many researchers have reported the perceptions of faculty and students of online education; however, the researcher discussed the perceptions of deans, vice presidents of academic affairs, and administrators' perception of online education. The researcher conducted a qualitative, grounded theory study to develop a theory for education leaders to use in their development of an online education environment (Gaytan, 2009). The findings suggested academic advisors valued online instruction and will continue to support it; however, 88% believed online instruction was not high quality compared to face-to-face instruction because of the lack of interaction between students and faculty (Gaytan, 2009).

Increasingly, adult learners have sought online platforms for continuing education (Hockridge 2013). Despite the growth of online education, supporters of traditional education have met online education with increased resistance, arguing that face-to-face instruction is the best option for quality education delivery (Mehorotra & McGahey, 2012). Mehorotra and McGahey (2012) noted teachers in face-to-face environments were able to gauge the reactions and responses of students to instruction and measure students'

levels of understanding. Additionally, research indicated that interacting face-to-face and engaging in intense discussions provided permeable training environments for multicultural training (Quaye, 2012).

According to critics, online educational environments lack necessary strategies and face challenges in meeting best practices supported by research; therefore, online education should be evaluated for effectiveness (Flanagan, 2012; Hockridge, 2013). Stakeholders have offered various strategies for effective online education, but these discussions do not cover multicultural education (Maloney, 2012; Mehrotra & McGahey, 2012; Motte, 2013). Further investigation should be conducted on the topic if there is any chance for development of an approach to online multicultural training (Sargent, Gautreau, & Stang, 2014). The literature on distance learning is outdated by 5 years, and in extreme instances, more than 20 years. Using outdated literature to understand current issues with online counseling and distant learning has a high propensity of misleading the user because little discussion exists regarding the changes that have occurred since the period.

The studies previously mentioned indicated significant differences in the way education influences its recipients depending on the mode of instruction. Gayton (2009) conducted a qualitative study to examine the perceptions of deans, vice presidents for academic affairs, and distance education administrators concerning online instruction. The author interviewed academic administrators and administrators of online instruction from eight institutions in the southeastern United States (Gayton, 2009). According to Gayton, although 88% of academic administrators were in favor of online education, they

preferred the face-to-face learning environment because of the high quality of instruction from the interaction. Consequently, the interaction in the face-to-face instruction was also cited as reasons that students selected the face-to-face mode of education as opposed to the online mode of education (Gaytan, 2009). The traditional face-to-face approach to education was cited to be the best since there was immediate feedback (Gaytan, 2009). The administrators of online instruction indicated they would continue supporting the online mode of education for other purposes even though they acknowledged that the online mode of education was not as effective as the conventional approach (Gaytan, 2009). The administrators of online instruction noted they were not experienced in delivering online instruction, causing skepticism (Gaytan, 2009).

Likewise, in a study on learning efficacy in online and face-to-face instruction, Smith et al. (2015) questioned the appropriateness of learning clinical skills in online counseling courses. The researchers also noted a lack of faculty who were prepared to teach counselors online. Therefore, Smith et al. investigated two variables, efficiency of learning and levels of learning in online and face-to-face counseling courses. A total of 54 master's-level graduate students enrolled in Introduction to Marriage and Family Counseling and in Developmental Issues in Human Personality and Development courses participated in the study (Smith et al., 2015). The researchers created an instrument consisting of Likert-type questions measuring counseling students' perceptions of "(a) efficiency of learning, (b) level of learning, (c) course objectives attained, and (d) general course ratings" (Smith et al., 2015, p. 50). Students' perceptions of efficiency of learning related to how long it took them to learn the course material. Moreover, levels of learning

were measured by the students' perception of the course. Smith et al.'s course objectives and course ratings were measured by a Likert-type scale focusing on the students' perception of objectives they understood and how they rated the overall course. The researchers found that students enrolled in online courses had higher perceived efficiency learning levels, $F(1, 54) = 12.01, p = .001, \eta^2 = .19$ than did students enrolled in face-to-face courses (Smith et al., 2015). Furthermore, both modalities (face-to-face and online) were found to be effective in terms of learning levels, $F(1, 54) = .29, p = .59, \eta^2 = .01$ and were consistent with previous studies (Smith et al., 2015). More precisely, students perceived online instruction to be significantly better than face-to-face instruction (Smith et al., 2015). Dell, Low, and Wilker (2010) compared face-to-face and online educational environments as they related to student achievement. They stated there was a growing concern in the education field about the quality of student performance in online classes compared to those in face-to-face settings. The authors argued that there was a lack of focus on pedagogical methods, assignments, and assessments. Therefore, they conducted a study to compare the quality of students' performance in online and face-to-face human growth and development classes in a counseling education program. Dell et al. (2010) compared four assignments, "(1) a short story analysis, (2) a journal article analysis, (3) an observation of learning through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and (4) a final examination question on an explanation of self-efficacy" (p. 3). Two independent raters conducted a blind review of all assignments using the requirements and rubric. The results confirmed that there were no differences in the quality of work in online and face-to-face platforms for the undergraduate students. However, there were differences

with the graduate students. More specifically, the null hypothesis was rejected for analysis of the short story ($p = .007$) and the final exam explanation of self-efficacy ($p = .037$). The authors concluded that the results were close to the alpha level (.05) and they could not generalize the results.

Issues in Online Education

Distance or online education is becoming increasingly prevalent. However, challenges remain for faculty to establish interaction and engagement in online classes to improve learning outcomes (Huss, Sela, & Eastep, 2015). Because researchers have assessed the adequacy of face-to-face multicultural competency development, there is also a need to assess online instruction through attitude changes, which is linked to competency (Chao & Nath, 2011; Jones et al., 2013).

Huss et al. (2015) investigated if online teacher preparation programs were implementing quality interaction. The authors interviewed seven higher education online faculty. This qualitative study focused on two major categories: interaction between student and teacher, and interaction between students with one another (Huss et al., 2015). Huss et al. discovered that discussions in online classes can become motivated by a grade rather than sharing information and experiences. Another noted issue involved students' perceptions and how perceptions affect the learning environment. According to Huss et al., students perceived that those students who did not post or had a slow response to posts did not desire to connect with the group, thus producing a rigid environment.

Watson (2012) examined the correlation between students' online counseling courses and self-efficacy. According to Watson, counselor educators were questioning the appropriateness of basic relationship-building skills in online learning in the counseling education curriculum. Watson noted a lack of empirical literature on the efficiency of the use of technology in counseling education. The purpose of the study was, "to measure the effectiveness of various delivery methods such as face-to-face, online and hybrid" by examining counseling students' self-efficacy (Watson, 2012, p. 144). Consequently, the author used the self-efficacy theory in this quantitative study to compare the counseling self-efficacy of students in traditional face-to-face courses to those in online courses. In a review of counseling education literature, Watson determined a link to training strategies, such as academic coursework, assigned readings, and hands-on experiences in internships that led to students' improved self-efficacy. The author then hypothesized that students enrolled in face-to-face courses would have higher self-efficacy than those in online courses. The 373 randomly selected graduate student participants completed the Counseling Self Estimate Inventory (COSE), which consisted of 37 self-report items. The participants had to rate themselves on how they anticipated their future performance as a counselor (Watson, 2012).

The results of Watson's (2012) study showed a significant difference in COSE scores: $F(1, 370) = 4.61, p = .03, \eta^2 = .02$. More specifically, students who were enrolled in online courses reported higher counseling self-efficacy ratings than those in face-to-face courses. Watson's findings do not align with the research of Mallot et al. (2010), however, who found face-to-face instruction rendered quality instructional strategies

involving reading assignments, lectures, and role-playing that led to effective multicultural training. Lectures and role-playing activities may be more suited for face-to-face classroom settings than online environments.

Noting challenges in providing quality counseling training via distance education platforms, Meyer (2015) examined online counseling training and self-efficacy. The purpose of Meyer's study was to examine the change in self-perception of counseling skills and to examine the differences in distance education and on-campus education platforms. Meyer surveyed 39 first-year graduate students enrolled in a rehabilitation counseling techniques course and collected data from two on-campus classes and one distance education class. Meyer used the COSE to measure counselor self-efficacy in a pretest-posttest design. The results of the study revealed no significant differences in self-efficacy between on-campus classes and distance education classes, Wilks's Lambda = 0.32, $F(5, 33) = 13.94$, $p = .00$, partial eta squared = .68; Meyer, 2015. However, both groups reported increased levels of self-efficacy. Meyer's findings partially supported those of Watson (2012) and Mallot et al. (2010). Additionally, Meyer's findings indicated that distance education delivery methods can render quality counseling training.

Another challenge with online education is that counselor education has reached international scope as students from other countries are accessing counseling education programs in the United States through online courses (Sells, Tan, Brogan, Dahlen & Stupart, 2012). For example, Sells et al. (2012) observed that the integration of international students in online counseling courses highlights not only the need for multicultural sensitivity in such courses, but also the need for courses to have a

multicultural orientation. In a theoretical study, Sells et al. sought to understand the effectiveness of preparing international counselors via distance education.

The purpose of Sells et al.'s (2012) study was to consider how online education in a doctoral-level counseling program could promote multicultural and international perspectives. Participants consisted of five faculty, alumni, and advanced students from Regent University's doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision who answered a series of questions concerning their learning experiences, observations, insights, perspectives, and views of distant education. The researchers found participants appreciated the opportunity to build relationships with international students and diverse instructors. One participant stated:

When I return to my home environment after residency and have to engage with each other online, it is with real people I have met who are like me, though different in race, ethnicity, language, culture, traditions and religious experiences.

(Sells et al., 2012, p. 47)

Additionally, international participants noted they were amazed at how eager U.S. students wanted to learn about their culture and country (Sells et al., 2012). Sells et al. stated that participants reported they have learned from students and instructors alike in their online counselor education classroom.

After analyzing the answers, Sells et al. (2012) concluded the study by posing four forward-looking questions for counseling educators concerning online courses: How can counseling educators advance counselor training through distance learning?, How can multicultural perspectives in counseling be furthered by distance learning?, How can

counseling educators aid in the development of multicultural perspectives in counseling students through distance learning? , and Which components of online education should administrators and educators in traditional programs consider adopting and adapting to help globalize counselor training? Sells et al. argued that these questions can help guide future research on online learning and help to enhance multicultural perspectives because distance learning does not automatically ensure the development of multicultural perspectives in counseling students. Examining the difference in multicultural attitudes in students before to after completing an online multicultural counseling course might provide information to help answer these questions.

Social Interaction in Online Education

It is important to conceptualize the school or the learning environment as a social system (Chao et al., 2011). This approach is mainly applicable in the physical classroom because of the higher degree of interaction between parties (Brunet, 2011; Miville et al., 2009); however, online classrooms can also be used in the development of the best training that has maximum interactions possible. Zhou and Xu (2015) identified numerous modes of ensuring interaction. The authors reported a high level of interaction in distance learning classes. Zhou and Xu discussed three forms of interaction in distance education, including interaction between student and teachers, interaction between students, and interaction with course content. The authors stated students and teachers had a precise plan and purpose in the interactive process (Zhou & Xu, 2015). For example, students and teachers kept a harmonious structure, wherein the teacher was no longer considered the leader. In this instance, the interaction became more flexible and

the student took on the role of teacher by sharing ideas and experiences (Zhou & Xu, 2015).

Additionally, Anderson, Upton, Dron, Malone, and Poelhuber (2015) reported a case study in which 249 undergraduate students were told to interact via a discussion blog. The researchers found that the students were in favor of the interaction and appreciated the freedom and flexibility to discuss prompted topics (Anderson et al., 2015). Similarly, Brunet (2011) posited that video conferencing and audio-conferencing text and graphics would allow for interaction in distance education. Brunet suggested social integration should be the “main idea in distance education due to its impact on learning” (p. 39). Despite the author’s position, Brunet noted setbacks to social interaction in distance education. First, social interaction is taken for granted (Brunet, 2011). In this case, teachers fail to stimulate students’ interests, thus failing to foster productive and useful interactions. The second setback Brunet listed is focusing social interaction to cognitive processes, therefore restricting students from speaking freely and openly and preventing them from learning from each other’s experiences. The research questions I developed for the current study were based on Banks’ transformative approach, which hinges on social interaction to determine the effectiveness of the long-distance mode of instruction as it relates to multicultural training (Banks, 2002).

Students also perceived social interaction to be important in their learning as it relates to distance education (Shu-Hui Hsieh & Smith, 2008). Shu-Hui Hsieh and Smith (2008) conducted a study examining students’ perceptions of course-related interaction in a distance education program. The authors noted a report from a previous study in which

students reported the disadvantage of distance education was the lack of personal interaction. Essentially, the students believed social interaction was more intimate than just mere interaction (Shu-Hui Hsieh, & Smith, 2008). In other words, intimate interaction was important to their growth in the course and the lack of it would decrease the quality of learning. The study results indicated that interactions with student-student, student-teacher, and student-content, as well as gender, were contributors to students' satisfaction in their distance learning environment (Shu-Hui Hsieh, & Smith, 2008).

Likewise, Palmer and McBride (2012) stated interaction was important to student and faculty satisfaction in a Master of Counseling distance education course. Palmer and McBride in their overview of literature reported student interaction with instructors resulted in a higher level of perceived learning in a counselor education program. The authors also reported a study of 74 surveyed distance counselor education students who valued their interactions with their instructors more than with their peers (Palmer & McBride, 2012). In addition to student-instructor interactions, the researchers noted student-student interactions in online education eliminated the feeling of isolation and provided a sense of belonging that ultimately enhanced scholarly outcomes. In addition, Aragon (2003) predicted that the social environment in an online learning platform was expected to be "the next big thing" in the transformative approach in online counseling. I also adopted the transformative approach to learning for the current study.

Classroom Activities

The practical activities undertaken in the classroom enable counseling students to demonstrate the identity models in real life by creating activities that enable students to

understand personal, relational, and collective experiences of all students (Velliotis, 2008). Activities, such as pair share and student cultural presentations, allow students to get to know one another, share struggles, cultural traditions, and discuss values and cultural norms (Velliotis, 2008). Eriksson and Abernethy (2014) identified ways to obtain high levels of interaction in distance education by creating activities suggested by Velliotis (2008). The authors suggested implementing a classroom activity in which students reviewed a list of social categories, such as gender, age, race, and ethnicity and reported if the social category was privileged or oppressed (Eriksson & Abernethy, 2014). This activity promoted open discussion in which students and the teacher learned from others' experiences. Eriksson and Abernethy also suggested in addition to standard course readings, implementing articles on White privilege, current events, everyday situations, and videos reflecting on experiences of the oppressed will promote personal discussions in the classroom (Eriksson & Abernethy, 2014). The researchers discovered that the goal is to see others' perspective of these activities to learn about multiple identities. The authors added that students need to engage each other in small groups in the examination of numerous aspects of their identity and the effect of such aspects on their sense of self (Dickson & Shumway, 2011; Eriksson & Abernethy, 2014).

Adult Learners and Online Learning

Because the target population for this research study included recent graduates of an online master's counselor education program, it was necessary to consider participants as adult learners. According to Goddu (2012), an adult learner's cognition is grounded in her or his experiences and is applicable to age and gender, as well as cultural, economic,

racial, and social backgrounds. Various models of adult learning have progressed since Piaget's 1972 foundational model that focused on children yet contributed to adult learning through four age-related stages of cognitive development (Goddu, 2012). Later, Perry (1981) expanded on this model by developing a hierarchical and sequential order to the stages of cognition (Goddu, 2012).

According to Goddu (2012), dialectical thinking and reasoning distinguish adult learners from other educational groups. Additionally, Cornelius, Gordon, and Ackland (2011) established that adult learners mostly favored a blended online setting that emphasizes "personal participation in setting their learning outcomes based on their real-world needs, self-direction of their learning resources and pathways, and establishment of an active learning community" (p. 381). More than 5 years ago, Hill, Song, and West (2009) reported that adult learners desired interaction and social participation in the learning environment. Additionally, Cornelius et al. (2011) pointed out that adult learners in online programs are diverse and bring with them all their experiences of cultural, educational, professional, and personal stories to the learning community. While keeping this in mind, multicultural competency is at the forefront of the counseling arena (Sue & Zane, 2009).

Renfro-Michel, O'Halloran, and Delaney (2010) conducted a quantitative study utilizing a conceptual framework of adult learning to understand the needs of adult learners and differentiated learning styles in counselor education program classrooms. Specifically, the researchers investigated the effectiveness of hybrid instruction with two classes of a group counseling course in which one class of 14 participants was given

solely face-to-face instruction and the other class of 10 participants was given a combination of online and face-to-face instruction (Renfro-Michel et al., 2010). The researchers hypothesized that online and hybrid course environments were more likely to meet the needs of adult learners than face-to-face courses were. Additionally, Renfro-Michel et al. proposed that online and hybrid course environments afforded instructors the ability to implement a variety of instructional techniques as compared to traditional face-to-face instruction. In Renfro-Michel et al.'s study, online and hybrid course environments consisted of video podcasts and Second Life experiences, which is a virtual reality world. The purpose of the study was to understand the positive influence that online tools had on adult learners by comparing the learning outcomes of both traditional face-to-face instruction and hybrid sections consisting of both face-to-face and online components (Renfro-Michel et al., 2010).

Renfro-Michel et al. (2010) used a pretest-posttest design as dependent variables with an instrument consisting of a 34-question quiz pertaining to the information from course textbooks and a 16-item demographic survey. The results indicated no significant difference between the groups. On the total pretest, "there was no significant difference in scores for students in the traditional section of the class $\{M = 17.07, SD = 3.29\}$ and those in the hybrid section, $M = 17.00, SD = 2.63; t(22) = .057, p = .955$ " (Renfro-Michel et al., 2010, p. 21). Consequently, on the total posttest, "there was a significant difference in scores for students in the traditional section of the class $\{M = 16.43, SD = 3.18\}$ and those in the hybrid section, $M = 20.00, SD = 3.57; t(21) = -2.507, p = .020$ " (Renfro-Michel et al., 2010, p. 21).

In conclusion, according to Renfro-Michel et al. (2010), the results showed correlations existed between the hybrid learning environment and improved student learning. Likewise, I sought to find a correlation between an online learning environment in a multicultural counseling course and improved multicultural attitude. Renfro-Michel et al. noted that online learning environments can help meet the needs of adult learners. Additionally, the idea that instructors have the opportunity to use various teaching strategies in an online environment was an assumption of the present study.

Summary

This chapter provided a comprehensive literature review of previous studies connected to the research topic. This literature review helped to support the need for continued research on the effectiveness of an online education multicultural training in counseling program. As noted in this review, few researchers have provided strategies for presenting online education in this area. Additionally, a lack of discussion exists regarding the multicultural attitudes of online counseling students as it relates to training effectiveness, which was the gap I addressed in this study. Major sections of this chapter included a literature search strategy, discussion of the theoretical foundation of the study, and discussion of multicultural training in counselor education through an overview of the issues surrounding multicultural attitudes and competency. The chapter also included analysis of studies relevant to multicultural counseling training and online delivery of multicultural counseling training. Additionally, in this review, I discussed face-to-face training and online training strategies in multicultural education.

The literature review included research on (a) effective pedagogy in multicultural training, (b) multicultural attitudes, (c) evaluations of cultural competency of face-to-face multicultural training, (d) evaluations of cultural competency of online multicultural training, and (e) students' experiences in online and face-to-face multicultural training. Critical race theory, multicultural theory, and constructivist theory were among the frameworks considered for this study. However, I deemed Banks' (1999) transformative approach appropriate for the study. Chapter 3 will include detailed description of the research methodology used for the study. Chapter 3 will also include sections on the research design and rationale, instrumentation, data analysis, and threats to validity.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the effectiveness of exposure to an online multicultural training course on online counselor education students. The chapter includes the description of the research design and a thorough rationale for selecting the specific design suitable to answer the research question. The chapter also includes an extensive explanation of study methods, including a definition of the target population, sampling and sampling procedures, recruiting participants, data collection methods, and a detailed description of the instrument used. Additionally, the data analysis plan and internal and external validity threats are discussed. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

I used a quantitative survey research design for this study. Within the quantitative research design, a survey research method supports the exploration of the effectiveness of multicultural training in an online environment. I evaluated and compared students' responses to their recollection of multicultural attitudes before and after taking a multicultural course. The research question I sought to answer was: Is there a significant difference in participants' recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE)?

A research design is a procedural plan adopted by the researcher to answer research questions objectively, accurately, validly, and economically (Woodbury, 2002). More specifically, a design choice should allow the ability to test groups simultaneously, which saves time and is more economical (Woodbury, 2002). In general, a research design plays two key roles: It aids in identifying and developing logical arrangements and procedures required to undertake a study and contributes to the quality (i.e., objectivity, validity, and accuracy) of the underlying procedures.

Research designs fall into two groups: quantitative and qualitative research paradigms (Hall, 2008). Qualitative research aims to gather an in-depth understanding of behaviors and the keys that govern such behaviors (Hall, 2008; Mahoney & Goertz, 2006). Frequently, qualitative methods investigate the how and why aspects of decision making, and not just where, what, and when (Mahoney & Goertz, 2006). Quantitative research is the systematic investigation of social phenomena using mathematical, statistical, or computational techniques (Mahoney & Goertz, 2006).

According to Munroe and Pearson (2006), “Multicultural attitudes are based on the factors of presumed knowledge and beliefs, the emotional ties associated with such knowledge and beliefs, and the behavioral actions displayed owing to both” (p. 820). Using statistical methods in determining multicultural attitude changes can provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of online multicultural courses as they relate to knowledge, beliefs, and emotional ties. Quantitative research seeks to provide fundamental relationships between quantitative data (Mahoney & Goertz).

Quantitative research reduces collected data to a numerical format. In quantitative research, the researcher usually knows in advance the elements needed. In this case, an increase of multicultural attitudes scores via quantitative results is required. I explain the steps for collecting data according to this design. Despite its associated strengths, quantitative design decontextualizes human behavior in a manner that removes or shifts an event from its real-world setting (Mahoney & Goertz, 2006). Nonetheless, a quantitative approach can provide information about a real-world setting to provide data for further exploration (Mahoney & Goertz, 2006).

I used a survey methodology in this study, which offers a quantitative explanation of attitudes. A survey methodology provides a study of a sample of individuals from the targeted population using data collection techniques such as a questionnaire. The aim is to make statistical inferences regarding the population. I conducted a survey that focuses on the recollected multicultural attitudes in an online counselor education course before and after the course to examine changes in those attitudes. As survey research relies upon a sample, the success of the research significantly depends on the representativeness of the sample with respect to the target population (Creswell, 2009). Despite its advantages, survey methodology has its challenges (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2012). Survey methodology has challenges such as rising costs, designing surveys so the respondent can understand it, and assessing the accuracy of the data. The researcher's need to evaluate and pilot questions, check data files for internal consistency and accuracy, select the approach for posing questions, and collect responses are part of the survey process.

Methodology

This section details the population of the study, sampling and sampling procedures, and the recruiting process. It also explains how data were collected, the instrument, and operationalizing constructs. Finally, this section includes an explanation of the data analysis.

Population

In this study, my target population comprised students and graduates from both CACREP and non-CACREP certified master's counselor education programs. These students enrolled in an online university and completed the multicultural counseling training course. The research question for this study was: Is there a significant difference in participants' recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE)?

Since counselor education students receive multicultural training in counselor education programs (CACREP, 2010) doctoral students may have already had multicultural experiences via a multicultural course in a master's program, clinical experience, or continuing education courses, thus having greater multicultural sensitivity due to exposure. Therefore, master's level students provided a better opportunity for analyzing the benefits of an online multicultural counseling training course. Next, I explain my recruiting, sampling, and data collecting procedures.

Sampling

In this study, I focused only on students in online universities that have been enrolled in a counselor education program. Thus, a non-probability sampling method—more specifically a convenience sampling design with a snowball technique for recruitment—was used. According to Creswell (2009), the non-probability sampling method provides a cost-effective approach and increases ease of administration. As opposed to probability sampling, non-probability sampling targets individuals (Levy & Lemeshow, 2008). In non-probability sampling, the researcher provides subjective judgment regarding samples selection as opposed to random selection.

According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008), the convenience sampling design is one of three sampling designs for non-probability sampling. The others are purposive and quota sampling. Convenience sampling allows for ease of access and reduces the time of collecting data. Unlike non-probability sampling, probability sampling enables the population to have an equal probability of inclusion in the sample and establishes more accuracy (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The justification for using non-probability sampling for this study included time, financial limitations, and practicality. Non-probability sampling was sufficient for me as a doctoral student, as I am limited on time and funds to conduct this study. Moreover, non-probability sampling was warranted because I could not obtain the tool used for probability sampling. In addition to convenience sampling, I planned to use a non-probability sampling snowball technique in which participants had the option to forward the link for the study to those who met the criteria and may be eligible to participate.

The eligible sample consisted of students enrolled in online counseling degree programs who have taken a multicultural training course within the last two years. I included participants previously or currently enrolled in a multicultural counseling course in a university compared their attitudes before and after the course. I also included both CACREP and non-CACREP accredited counselor education programs in this sample to further explore differences. In online CACREP-accredited programs, enrolled students must meet core requirements, which include a multicultural counseling course (Capella University, n.d.; Walden University, n.d.). According to CACREP (2013), counselor education programs must provide a social and cultural diversity course having robust multicultural content. Additionally, students enrolled in a multicultural counseling course explore their own culture while embracing differences between cultures (Capella University; Walden University). Multicultural counseling courses seek to increase sensitivity, awareness, knowledge, and skills in multicultural counseling (CACREP; Walden University, 2013).

I reviewed the literature to determine the appropriate number of participants for this study. Five of the studies conducted on this topic used a qualitative approach (Ayers & Smith, 2006; Basbay, 2014), and the studies using a quantitative approach did not justify their number of participants (Castillo, 2007; Chao, 2012; Chao & Nath, 2011). I used the GPower 3.0 analysis calculator, provided by Bruin (2006), with an anticipated alpha level of .05, a desired statistical power level of .80, and a desired effect size of $\eta^2 = .05$, based on Cohen's eta-squared standard of .01 for a small effect, .06 for a medium effect, and .14 for a large effect (Morris & Fritz, 2013).

Using these three criteria resulted in the minimum required sample size for a one-tailed directional hypothesis to be 261 participants and five predictors. According to Bradley and Brand (2013), an alpha level of $p \geq .05$ indicates a significant difference between two groups. The rationale for the sample size relates to the ability to find significance while using minimum power to detect statistical significance (Bradley & Brand, 2013; Morris & Fritz, 2013). The effect size and statistical power chosen anticipated a reduced risk of Type 1 or Type 2 errors (Bradley & Brand, 2013; Morris & Fritz, 2013).

Sampling Procedure

The sample for this study was recruited through Walden University's participant pool, the ACA Connect Forum, and ACA Listserv. The participant pool is an online research participation system that allows Walden University's students, faculty, and staff to register and participate in research studies (Walden, 2015). Students who are registered in the participant pool received an announcement from the university research center introducing various studies that are available for participation. Those students who agreed to participate logged-in to the participant pool and read the study's information and purpose, along with the required criteria to participate.

The ACA Connect Forum is a community forum discussing interests, issues, and current events related to the profession (ACA Connect, 2016). I received permission to access the forum and distribute research surveys via membership representatives. As a member of the forum, I provided a link for this study in the community forum for those who are interested in participating and meet the study's criteria for participation. I also

used the ACA Listserv in the same manner. A link to the survey was provided and distributed to members interested in participating via email.

The ACA Counseling Grads Listserv is a mailing list of individuals who are graduates or current students that share common interests and want to stay abreast of current topics in the profession (ACA Community, 2016; APA, 2009). It offers an opportunity for members to interact and share information. The requirements to distribute a research survey to the listserv is to be a member of the listserv and share to the group's subscribers (ACA Community). Those subscribers who wish to participate and meet the study's criteria may go to the link provided in the email. Criteria for the study was explained in the email to allow participants to determine if they qualify and an opportunity to forward the link to others who may qualify. I established a deadline to complete the survey within 6 weeks. I sent a reminder to the forum weekly to ensure participation and completion.

Survey instructions asked participants to read and agree to the informed consent by clicking the next button to participate in the study (see Appendix A). A sample of 261 participants were recruited for this study. I planned an oversample of 25% to account for participant surveys that have omissions, incomplete responses, or do not meet all the study's criteria (Bradley & Brand, 2013).

Data were collected using QuestionPro, a web-based survey software tool used to receive, monitor, and organize responses. The program collected responses organized by each question and exported data to an Excel spreadsheet, which was imported into a statistical analysis program. The software also assisted with maintaining confidentiality,

which was essential in this study. QuestioPro has a respondent anonymity assurance program in which only the survey creator has access to data. Access to potential respondents was password protected. In this way, only certain individuals were able to take the survey.

Respondents' data were keyed into the survey by using the owner's username and password. QuestionPro had extensive checks so that access to individual data and all computation requests require confirming the correct username and password (QuestionPro, 2016). After participants completed the survey, data were imported into SPSS.

Instrument

The study used the Munroe Multicultural Attitudes Scale (MASQUE), created in 2004. I received permission to use the instrument from Munroe via email (see Appendix C). Using MASQUE was considered the most effective approach for the current study because the instrument focused on multicultural training and multicultural attitudes (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). MASQUE also provided a highly relevant assessment for the current study because the instrument was designed according to the conceptual framework of Banks' transformative approach (Munroe & Pearson, 2006).

The questionnaire includes 18 modified Likert-type scale items that corresponded to Banks' (1995) know, care, and act domains, which were the constructs of multicultural attitudes (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). These scale items were presented in two columns: one for reflected responses before a multicultural course and one for reflected responses after the course. The Likert-type scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly

agree). Additionally, the scale referred to a psychometric scale often employed in research that uses questionnaires, surveys, or statements (Bowling & Ebrahim, 2005). Likert-type scales universally apply to scaling responses (Blankenship, 2009; Bowling & Ebrahim, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Kothari, 2005; Mann & Lacke, 2010) and assumes equal distances between responses (Blankenship, 2009).

The MASQUE survey for this study also included additional demographic questions to gain a better picture of the population, analyze other constructs, and took approximately 15 minutes to complete. For this study, the demographic questions were age, race, religion, military status, gender, country of origin, current state of residence, and previous multicultural training (see Appendix). These questions were added to consider whether ethnicity and gender affected responses.

I based responses on Axinn, Links, and Groves' (2011) survey investigation. Axinn et al. investigated how to improve survey design to encompass best responses. The team noted that selecting the appropriate demographic options for a survey could give better responses. They used the *National Survey of Family Growth* to provide common responses to demographic questions. In addition to the appropriate demographic responses, Axinn et al. suggested utilizing manual responses to demographic questions such as religion, country of residence, and state of residence.

I included ethnicity and gender in the multivariate analysis. Demographic data were included in the descriptive analysis. I added ethnicity and gender to the multivariate analysis as these demographic items may impact multicultural attitudes (Chao, 2013). Chao (2013) suggested that ethnicity has a high impact on multicultural competency and

multicultural attitudes. For instance, Chao found that ethnic minority counselors and women had higher scores on the know and act domains, which is also explored in this study. All demographic questions provided a way to generalize the sample.

It was important to use an instrument that provided reliable and valid scores (Creswell, 2009). Munroe and Pearson (2006) used the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Short Form C) with the MASQUE to provide further evidence of validity by determining the authenticity of responses. Munroe and Pearson used the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to determine the correlation between MASQUE and MCSDS scores. The correlation was significant ($r = .16, p < .05$). Although the correlation was statistically significant, it was low, which may have indicated that participants' responses were authentic.

Munroe and Pearson (2006) also established content validity by conducting a review of MASQUE items by academic experts. The experts examined the questionnaire to determine the appropriateness of the know, care, and act items. Additionally, a field test was conducted with 15 participants to evaluate internal consistency; this test resulted in a Cronbach's alpha of .72. Therefore, the reliability of the MASQUE was acceptable. Munroe and Pearson also performed an exploratory factor analysis of 28 items, which ultimately resulted in an 18-item final version. The results of the exploratory factor analysis supported the constructs of the know, care, and act domains. The variances were 16.89% for the first factor, 15.33% for the second, and 14.44% for the third. Ultimately, the results of the factor analysis enabled the three constructs to emerge with a few complex items that had suggested revisions. The correlations between the domains were

also further evidence of validity. The correlation between the know and care factors were $r = .50$; care and act, $r = .59$; and act and know, $r = .53$. The validity of MASQUE was supported by other studies (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011; Schroeder et al., 2013).

Operationalizing Constructs

Banks defined multicultural attitudes as the behavior involved in the know, care, and act domains (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). The dependent variable (multicultural attitudes) is achieved in an atmosphere of transformation within an effective learning environment (Munroe & Pearson, 2006). According to Banks (1995), the change of attitudes through interaction and engagement follow knowledge, caring, and then acting. Munroe and Pearson (2006) defined the domains of the transformative approach as follows:

Know: A sense of beliefs, perceived facts, thoughts, and knowledge about an object.

Care: Effective emotion felt towards an object via positive or negative evaluation.

Act: Behavioral course of action towards the object (p. 821).

Each construct was represented and scored within the MASQUE using the Likert-type six-point scale. For example, a statement in the care domain would read, "I care about respecting diverse cultural values." The participant would rate this statement ranging from 1 to 6. More specifically, the know and care domains have 10 items each, which means the scores can range from 10 to 60. The act domain has eight items, and scores can range from 8 to 48. Scores can sum for each subscale, giving a total score

range of 18 to 168. High scores on each subscale and composite scale indicate positive multicultural attitudes. Subscale scores were used in the analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

This study was a quantitative study. Additionally, I used SPSS to analyze the data (Green & Salkind, 2010). The following is the research question, and null and alternative hypotheses for the study.

Research Question

RQ: Is there a significant difference in participants' recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE)?

H₀: There is no significant difference in terms of three multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) of students as measured by the MASQUE before and after an online multicultural counseling course after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age as measured by a demographic questionnaire.

H₁: There is a significant difference in terms of three multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) of students as measured by the MASQUE before and after an online multicultural counseling course after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age as measured by a demographic questionnaire.

I computed subscale scores for the know, care, and act domains in order to answer the research question for all participants. Next, the research question was addressed by using a MANCOVA within group designs (Rutherford, 2011). The analysis was used to

determine if there was a significant difference between participants who recalled their multicultural attitudes before and after a multicultural counseling course (Rutherford, 2011). Using a MANCOVA is typical when comparing measurements with multiple variable (Bruin, 2006), and results were interpreted using a one-tailed *F*-test with the corresponding effect size. In this case, the three subscales were compared separately to visualize differences in domains.

Data Cleaning

The process of cleaning data in a quantitative study is important (Elliot & Hawthorne, 2005). For example, missing data could distort an analysis as it would not provide an accurate view compared to a complete dataset. Strategies for managing missing data include (a) listwise deletion, (b) pairwise deletion, (c) mean substitution, or (d) dummy variable adjustment (Elliot & Hawthorne, 2005). Mean substitution, which I used in this study, has the advantage of allowing no lost cases. However, it replaces the data with the mean score of the other cases, which does not add any new information (Peugh & Enders, 2004). According to Elliot and Hawthorne (2005), researchers frequently utilize listwise deletion, but this choice reduces statistical power. Researchers commonly use both listwise and pairwise deletion methods to eliminate cases that would disadvantage a study. Each technique either reduces statistical power or reduces the sample size for a small sample (Marsh, 1998; Peugh & Enders, 2004).

Threats to Validity

According to Klenke (2008), research validity takes two forms—internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to the ability to infer causation, and this often

occurs in non-experimental studies and tends to establish a fundamental relationship between observed data, as opposed to simulated relationships (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). In the current study, I used a survey to assist in answering the research question. A survey is valid if it answers what it is intended to answer (Creswell, 2009). I sought to determine if multicultural attitudes change in students in online counselor education programs after a multicultural counseling course. The use of the MASQUE is valid in that it aides in assessing changes in multicultural attitude which are suitable for this study (Munroe & Pearson, 2006).

I considered threats to internal validity in this study. Threats to validity include testing, history, statistical regression, selection, experimentation, and maturation (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). One threat to note concerning the current study was testing (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). Participants may have a high level of cultural awareness before enrolling in the multicultural counseling course, allowing them to have a high rating for multicultural awareness.

Conversely, external validity entails the extent to which a study's results can be generalized to a population (Yin, 2003). The target population for this study is master's level counselor education graduates and counselor education students from online universities. This limited sample was a threat to validity because it had limited ability to generalize the results to other online programs such as counseling psychology and social work.

Ethical Procedures

Ethics are essential when conducting any research (Walden University, 2010). Research ethics consist of applying principles of ethics to a variety of research topics, especially scientific research, and should dictate the design and implementation of research (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2009; Ruppert, 2004). Ethical issues most often addressed include the use of human and animal subjects, and an array of academic issues such as fraud, plagiarism, and compliance with regulations affecting social research (Barnbaum & Bynon, 2001; Buchanan, 2004; Murphy, 2003; Oliver, 2010). It is also true that research ethics may vary between educational communities, with each having slightly different guidelines (Buchanan, 2004). According to many research publications, key research ethical issues include authorship, ethical standards, review process, and honesty (Barnbaum & Bynon, 2001; Buchanan, 2004; Murphy, 2003; Oliver, 2010).

There was no concern regarding potential mistreatment of human participants in this study. This study limited interaction between researcher and participant to electronic professional contact. Additionally, no ethical concerns existed concerning recruitment, data collection, processes, and intervention activities. Before conducting this study, every participant was required to read and understand the provisions of the research ethics and consent form, which helped to minimize potential problems the respondents have during the study (Mertens & Ginsberdg, 2009). Moreover, each research participant electronically signed a required form declaring that they agreed to operate within ethical guidelines, which emphasize research integrity, anonymity, and non-violation of the institution's rights. The consent form detailed how to withdraw from the study and

explained that each participant could withdraw at any time without negative consequences. Participation did not influence success in the degree program.

Before conducting the study, I sought permission and cooperation from the Dean of Institutional Research and approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Demographic information was the only confidential information obtained in this study. The secure website stored confidential data with account codes that are password protected. I protected the identities of participants. Lastly, I followed Walden University's requirement to maintain data for five years and then destroy it properly.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the effectiveness of multicultural training in online higher education by analyzing any change in the multicultural attitudes of online counselor education students following a multicultural counseling course that is a component of an online counseling program. This chapter included a description of the research design of this study and provided the rationale for selecting the specific design to answer the research question. The chapter also included an explanation of the study's methodology, the definition of the target population, sampling procedures, recruitment, data collection methods, and a detailed description of the instrument used. Chapter 4 includes details about data collection, treatment, intervention, and results.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

This quantitative study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of online multicultural training from an online university with limited face-to-face interaction to determine the impact of that training on multicultural attitudes. This chapter begins with a description of the data collection process including the time frame for data collection, discrepancies in data collection, and descriptive and demographic characteristics. Next, the chapter will present the results of the study in which I will report descriptive statistics, evaluate statistical assumptions, report statistical analysis findings, and include tables and figures to illustrate results. Lastly, the chapter will end with a summary of answers to the research questions sought in this study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

My research question was as follows:

RQ: Is there a significant difference in participants' recalled multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) before an online multicultural counseling course as compared to recalled multicultural attitude scores after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE)?

H₀: There is no significant difference in terms of three multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) of students as measured by the MASQUE before and after an online multicultural counseling course after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age as measured by a demographic questionnaire.

H₁: There is a significant difference in terms of three multicultural attitude scores (know, care, and act) of students as measured by the MASQUE before and after an online multicultural counseling course after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age as measured by a demographic questionnaire.

Data Collection

As described in Chapter 3, in this convenience sampling design, participants took the MASQUE and reflected on their attitudes before and after an online multicultural course. Upon approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (0352269), the survey was open for 3 months and extended for 1 extra month to attempt to gain maximum participation. The survey was open from October 2017 to February 2018.

Recruitment and Response Rates

I recruited participants from the ACA Community Connect, which comprised of several group forums and listservs. I distributed the invitation to five communities (Call for Study Participants, Distance Learning in Counseling Education, Association for Multicultural Development, Teaching Community, and Practice Community) totaling 3,748 members. I sent an email invitation to participate to the groups in which participants could elect to complete the survey. Additionally, I recruited through three counseling forums on LinkedIn (Counseling Professional, Therapist Linked, and Mental Health Networking) which totaled 2,300 members. I posted the survey invitation to each forum, affording members the opportunity to participate. 4 four weeks, I reposted a reminder to each group forum and listserv of the availability to participate. After 6 weeks

of data collection, 56 surveys were completed. I posted a final invitation after 12 weeks of availability of the survey.

Description of the Sample

Counseling students currently or previously enrolled in an online multicultural counseling course were the sampling frame for this study. Three hundred and eighteen participants viewed the study and 138 responded to the survey. However, 130 were usable and met the required inclusion criteria that were discussed in Chapter 3. I will also discuss the demographics of the participants later in this chapter.

Preliminary Screening Procedures

Checking for Univariate Normality

Mean composites were created for the study variables. Per Kline (2011), a variable is normally distributed if the skewness index (i.e., skewness statistic/standard error) is less than three and the kurtosis index (i.e., kurtosis statistic/standard error) is less than 20. As displayed in Table 1, all the variables were not distributed normally. Accordingly, they were transformed using a natural log function; because these transformed variables were then distributed normally or were less skewed, they were used in subsequent procedures (although, for ease of interpretation, all descriptive statistics are reported using the original metric). According to Tabacknick and Fidell (2007), a natural log function should be used to transform data when a distribution is negatively skewed.

Table 1

Skewness and Kurtosis Indices for the Study Measures (N = 130)

Measure	Original Variable				Transformed Variable			
	Skewness		Kurtosis		Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Index	Statistic	Index	Statistic	Index	Statistic	Index
Before								
Knowledge	-1.48	-6.96	4.04	9.57	.37	1.74	-.59	-1.40
Care	-1.03	-4.83	1.85	4.39	.05	.25	-.69	-1.64
After								
Knowledge	-2.71	-	11.24	26.66	1.08	5.09	1.17	2.78
Care	-2.09	12.75	7.02	16.64	.75	3.55	.27	.64
		-9.84						

Note. SE for skewness statistic = .21. SE for kurtosis statistic = .42.

Screening for Outliers

To detect univariate outliers, the variables were standardized. Cases whose standardized values exceeded the absolute value of 3.29 were deemed to be outliers. One case met this criterion (the respondent's after Knowledge z -score was -3.88 and after Care z -score was -3.51) and thus was deleted from the data set.

Descriptive Statistics

Description of the Sample

Demographics. The findings in Table 2 reveal that the majority of respondents were female (68.6%), between 26 and 40 years old (72.1%) and had a master's degree (69.7%). Blacks/African Americans were the most represented group (28.7%) followed by Whites/Caucasians (25.6%). More than half of the respondents were Christians of all denominations (55.8%). The majority had no military status (82.9%).

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages for the Demographic Variables (N = 129)

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	37	31.4
Female	81	68.6
Age (in years) group		
25 or younger	16	12.4
26 to 40	52	40.3
41 to 55	41	31.8
56 or older	20	15.5
Ethnicity		
Arabic	4	3.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	18	14.0
Black/African American	37	28.7
White/Caucasian	33	25.6
Hispanic	18	14.0
Latino	5	3.9
Other	10	7.8
Would rather not say	4	3.1
Education		
Less than four-year college	10	7.8
Bachelors	29	22.5
Graduate degree	90	69.7

(table continues)

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Religion		
No religion	10	7.8
Roman Catholic	19	14.7
Protestant	19	14.7
Christian	34	26.4
Jewish	5	3.9
Muslim	5	3.9
Seventh-Day Adventist	6	4.7
Other	31	24.0
Military status		
No military status	107	82.9
Retired	9	7.0
Reservist	7	5.4
National Guard	4	3.1
Other	2	1.6

Course-related variables. As shown in Table 3, most respondents had taken a course on multicultural counseling (87.6%). Half of the sample took the course online (49.6%), and 40% took the course both in face-to-face and online formats. The largest percentage of respondents (41.9%) took between two and three courses/workshops. Respondents varied in terms of years of experience as a clinician (see Table 3). About a third indicated that they had a moderate amount (34.1%) and a lot (34.1%) of interaction with a variety of diverse populations. The majority indicated that their training program was accredited by CACREP (59.7%).

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages for the Course and Experience Variables (N = 129)

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Took multicultural counseling course		
Yes	113	87.6
No	16	12.4
Mode of training		
Online	64	49.6
Face-to-face (traditional)	13	10.1
Both online and face-to-face	51	39.5
Other	1	.8
Number of courses/workshops taken		
0	21	16.3
1	37	28.7
2 to 3	54	41.9
4 or more	16	12.4
Other	1	.8
Number of years clinical experience		
Less than 1	21	16.3
1 to 3	35	27.1
4 to 6	50	38.8
7 to 9	14	10.9
10 or more	9	7.0
Exposure to variety of diverse populations		
None at all	1	.8
A little	17	13.2
A moderate amount	44	34.1
A lot	44	34.1
A great deal	23	17.8
Program attended CACREP accredited		
Yes	77	59.7
No	25	19.4
Maybe	18	14.0
Not sure	9	7.0

Description of the Study Variables

The descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha for the study measures are summarized in Table 4. Per Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), a measure is moderately reliable if its alpha is .70 or higher. Given this criterion, the before and after Knowledge and Care subscales were reliable. The third subscale, Act (before and after) consisted of three survey items; both before and after alphas were very low (even after checking whether the items needed to be reverse-scored). Specifically, the before Act was very low at .22 and the after Act was also very low at .23. Because Cronbach's alpha for both the before and after Act measures were unacceptable, the before and after Act subscales were not included in subsequent procedures. Although important to the study, it was imperative to discard the use of the Act domain subscale as it would render the study unreliable. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), reliability is detrimental to the construct of the scale and the study, therefore deleting this subscale was necessary and is considered a limitation of this study and will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The highest possible score for each of the subscales was six. The mean before Knowledge score was 5.24 ($SD = .69$) while the mean after Knowledge score was 5.51 ($SD = .59$). The mean before Care score was 4.96 ($SD = .76$) while the mean after Care score was 5.35 ($SD = .64$).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables (N = 129)

Variable	α	Range	M	SD
Before				
Knowledge	.82	3.43 to 6.00	5.24	.69
Care	.80	2.67 to 6.00	4.96	.76
After				
Knowledge	.77	2.86 to 6.00	5.51	.59
Care	.75	2.67 to 6.00	5.35	.64

Testing the Change in Multicultural Attitudes after Taking A Multicultural Course

It was hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in the multicultural attitude scores of students from before to after taking an online multicultural counseling course, after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age. To test this hypothesis, several mixed ANOVA procedures were conducted. The within-subjects variable was time (i.e., before vs. after) and the between-subjects variables were ethnicity, gender, and age.

Change in Knowledge Scores

The findings in Table 5 reveal that, after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age, Knowledge scores increased significantly after respondents took an online multicultural counseling course, $F(1, 112) = 59.23, p < .001$. The mean Knowledge score prior to taking the course was 5.24 ($SD = .69$) while the mean after Knowledge score was 5.51 ($SD = .59$). Interestingly, the change in Knowledge scores differed across ethnicity,

$F(1, 112) = 2.80, p = .043$. Seven post-hoc interaction tests were conducted to determine which groups were contributing to the significant interaction; alpha was adjusted (i.e., $.05/7$) and interaction terms were evaluated at $.007$. Given this criterion, the only interaction effect close to significant was that between Black and White respondents, $F(1, 56) = 7.28, p = .009$. As depicted in Figure 1, the improvement in Knowledge scores was steeper for White respondents than it was for Black respondents.

Table 5

Mixed-ANOVA Results for Knowledge Scores Prior to and After Taking the Multicultural Counseling Course (N = 129)

Source	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Partial η^2
Between-subjects				
Gender	1	1.03	1.49	.013
Age	1	1.51	2.18	.019
Ethnicity	3	3.41	4.91 **	.116
Error	112	.69		
Within-subjects				
Time	1	4.64	59.23 ***	.346
Time x gender	1	.08	1.02	.009
Time x age	1	.00	.05	.000
Time x ethnicity	3	.22	2.80 *	.070
Error	112	.08		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

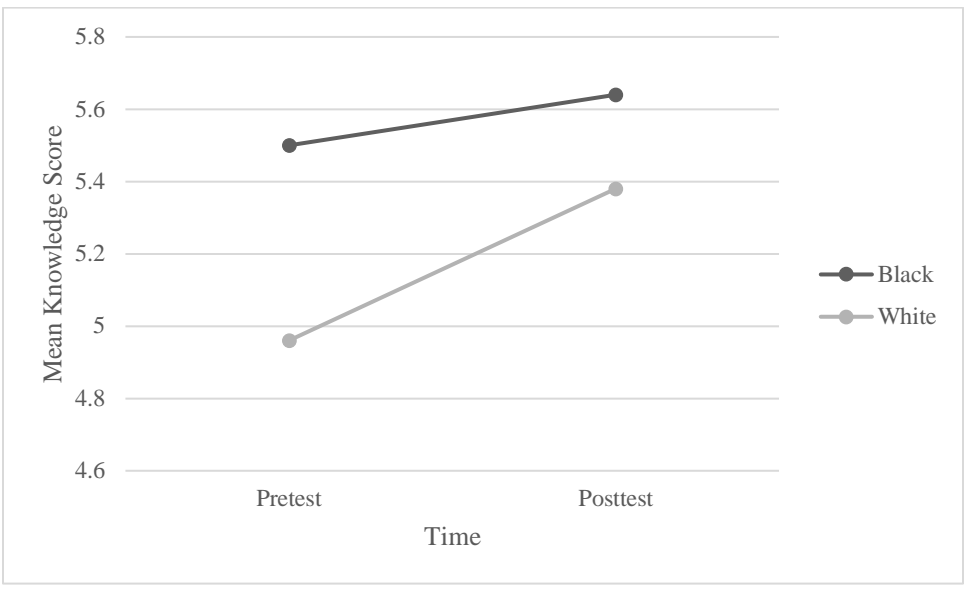


Figure 1. Knowledge scores prior to and after taking the multicultural counseling course.

Change in Care Scores

The findings in Table 6 show that, after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and age, Care scores increased significantly after respondents took an online multicultural counseling course, $F(1, 112) = 73.57, p < .001$. The mean Care score prior to taking the course 4.96 ($SD = .76$) while the mean after Care score was 5.35 ($SD = .64$).

Table 6

Mixed-ANOVA Results for Care Scores Prior to and After Taking the Multicultural Counseling Course (N = 129)

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	Partial η^2
Between-subjects				
Gender	1	.88	1.14	.010
Age	1	.01	.01	.000
Ethnicity	3	5.79	7.50 **	.167
Error	112	.77		
Within-subjects				
Time	1	6.81	73.57 ***	.396
Time x gender	1	.01	.12	.001
Time x age	1	.29	3.11	.027
Time x ethnicity	3	.14	1.53	.039
Error	112	.09		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the data analysis method, the results of the study and a discussion of the findings have been offered. Altogether, the findings provide support for the hypothesis that multicultural attitudes would change after taking a course in multicultural counseling: knowledge and care scores increased significantly after taking the course. Each of the subscale scores changed over time (before and after the course). Therefore, the null hypothesis, that there is no significant difference in recalled multicultural attitude scores of students before and after an online multicultural counseling course as measured by the MASQUE was rejected. In the next chapter, I

discuss the significance of the findings, limitations to the study and implication for future research on multicultural counseling training in an online environment.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Multicultural competency in counseling is one of the underpinnings of the counseling field. Therefore, the effectiveness of multicultural counselor education is significant for a counseling student or counselor educator's competency. While researchers demonstrated the effectiveness of face-to-face multicultural counseling courses, in the current study I explored the effectiveness of online multicultural counseling courses using Banks' transformative approach. This chapter explains the results of the research for this study.

I discuss the findings to present a better understanding of the effectiveness of online multicultural counseling training. The results of the study suggested significant increases in recalled multicultural awareness after an online multicultural counseling course were evident. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was supported, and I discuss it further in this chapter.

I begin with an interpretation of the findings within the framework of Banks' transformative approach, followed by a comparison of previous findings in peer-reviewed literature, as described in Chapter 2. Next, I describe the limitations of the study and propose recommendations for future research studies. Finally, I describe implications for social change in the profession of counseling and counseling education.

Interpretation of Findings

The research question for this study was answered using the MASQUE. Information from respondents ($n = 129$) provided a foundation for analysis using SPSS. I

explored the differences between recalled multicultural attitudes before and after a multicultural counseling course, and controlled for ethnicity, age, and gender. I hypothesized that there is a significant difference in recalled multicultural attitude scores of participants before and after an online multicultural counseling course. Participants who completed an online multicultural counseling course changed their attitudes afterwards. Few demographic variables were statistically significant predictors of the change in multicultural attitudes. However, ethnicity and time (i.e., before and after) were significant predictors of multicultural attitude change.

The results indicated a significant difference in knowledge and care after taking the course. However, the Act domain score was deleted from the study, as its results were unreliable. Specifically, the before Act was low at .22 and the after Act was low at .23. In this instance, the Cronbach's alpha was below the desired threshold of .70. I reverse scored these items in SPSS, which resulted in a negative Cronbach's alpha. In an attempt to resolve this issue, I deleted the lowest of the three items for the Act domain, resulting in .22 and .23 respectively. This issue is considered a limitation to this study and will be further discussed in a later section, along with recommendations for future studies. The mean knowledge domain score before taking the course was 5.24, while the mean afterward was 5.51. Additionally, the mean care domain score before taking the course was 4.96; afterward, it was 5.35.

To explain these results, it can be said that participants found online multicultural training engaging and having an impact on their views of diversity and culture despite the lack of physical proximity. Likewise, Shu-Hui Hsieh and Smith (2008) suggested that

online computer science students found interaction with other students and the professor influenced their growth in their online course. The current study's result should be taken with caution since 41.3% of respondents (41.9%) had between two and three multicultural courses/workshops (see Table 3). This large percentage could already have had a significant positive change in attitude due to their previous multicultural training in venues such as multicultural workshops, conferences, and continuing education courses. Chao (2013) reported that previous multicultural training might have a positive impact on multicultural attitudes as the exposure to diverse cultural experiences may benefit in this positive change.

Another factor is that 40% ($n = 129$) took the course both online and face-to-face (see Table 3). This factor could have influenced the outcome of this study. Nevertheless, 49.6% took the course online only, which could indicate that students receive interaction and engagement regarding cultural issues that produce multicultural attitude changes in an online environment. As mentioned before, Banks (1995) stated that these positive changes in multicultural attitudes are derived from interaction and engagement causing the learner to know, care and act. Quayle (2012) stated that cross-cultural awareness is produced through interaction and discussions on multicultural issues. Therefore, it may be evident that online faculty can engage online students in productive cultural conversations.

The study also showed greater improvement in knowledge scores for White respondents than Black respondents (see Figure 1). Chao and Nath (2011) stated that counselors' ethnic identities positively associated with a change in multicultural attitudes.

In this case, learners are experiencing a culturally adaptive understanding of a diverse individual's culture that allowed complete exposure of individuals' lives and cultural experiences (Alalshaikh, 2015). It could be that White respondents demonstrated significant growth in knowledge and care after a multicultural counseling course because they were more enlightened or had more to learn about cultural differences and social issues after exposure to a diverse student population while black respondents had little room to grow. Dickson and Shumway (2011) reported that interacting with a diverse population promoted multicultural attitude change. Additionally, Banks' transformative approach supports that conversation and self-reflection increases knowledge and changes in multicultural attitudes, and ultimately produce social action (Ancis & Marshall, 2010).

Another finding of note is that 59% of the respondents indicated that they attended a CACREP program (see Table 3). It is important to note that CACREP accreditation require schools to incorporate a multicultural training course and have a curriculum that is vigorous and engaging (CACREP, 2013). In addition, CACREP counseling programs integrate multicultural content in all their courses (CACREP, 2013).

Limitations

This study provided valuable data and information for future research; however, there are limitations. This study used self-reported measures using the MASQUE; there is a possibility that respondents answered in a socially desirable manner, which is the first limitation to note. Borders (1989) stated that self-reported responses might not reflect reality. The act domain consisted of three items. It is possible that respondents answered these questions to anticipate their actions in the future after taking the multicultural

course. Also, respondents may be affected by the current climate in the media concerning women and racism, thus responding in a socially desirable way. I could not control for socially desirable responses. It was necessary to delete the Act domain from the study to ensure reliability. This deletion is therefore the main limitation to this study. One other limitation is that the study relied on participants' memories before and after they took the course. Relying on participants to reflect on the past may present biased and inaccurate information. Finally, the data is not normally distributed. I provide recommendations for future studies based on these limitations.

Recommendations and Implications for Social Change

The findings for this study indicate that online multicultural counseling training could be effective in changing multicultural attitudes and presenting ideas for future research, as well as having implications for the counselor education and supervision field. Future large-scale studies involving comparisons of traditional face-to-face multicultural counseling training may be necessary to provide a better picture of the effectiveness of online multicultural courses. More specifically, implementing a control group (traditional/face-to-face) and an experimental group (online) could allow for a comparison of the two modes of training to determine the level of effectiveness.

Furthermore, a future study should recruit participants who have recently taken the online multicultural counseling course to gain accurate data instead of depending on recalled memory. Their recollections of their multicultural attitudes before and after a course could be inaccurate. More research is needed using the MASQUE to validate the act domain items. Although Munroe and Pearson (2006) addressed this limitation by

using the MCSDS, participants in this current study may have responded in a socially desirable manner given the current climate (Marlowe & Crowne, 1960). Additionally, the MASQUE has not been utilized in many studies and we should employ it in future studies on this subject.

I also recommend that future researchers studying this topic consider the CACREP variable to determine the rigor and intensity of multicultural counseling training in an online environment. Reviewing the course syllabi and content to include the instructors experience in teaching multicultural coursework should be considered. CACREP standards may impact the training curriculum and faculty's pedagogy. Lastly, I recommend that researchers also focus on strategies that faculty use online to engage students in discussions of cultural differences. As noted earlier, strategies have been presented for face-to-face environments, but are lacking in an online environment.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study have implications for positive social change. First, these results should change the view of online counselor education as it implies that online counseling students are receiving credible training in online multicultural counseling courses. As previously noted, researchers indicated that online multicultural training was not effective if not presented face-to-face (Enger & Lajimodiere, 2011; Flanagan, 2012; Motte, 2013). Dissemination of the results of this study could initiate further research on this topic to provide an abundance of empirical evidence to this credibility. The results of this study align with Banks' Transformative Approach utilizing multicultural attitude change as a gauge in social change. In fact, the results of this study indicate that

approaching this investigation using the measurement of multicultural attitudes is beneficial to the evaluation of the efficiency of the courses. Therefore, measuring multicultural attitudes to determine the effectiveness of multicultural training may be used as a likely theory. The current study implies that changing multicultural attitudes can produce social actions. Banks (1995) stated that once we change our multicultural attitudes through learning from others, we begin to be advocates in the community.

Since results indicated 59% of participants attended a CACREP program (see table 3), this implies that CACREP programs produce rigorous course standards and culturally competent counselors. As the largest accrediting counseling agency in the United States, CACREP directs institutions to support a curriculum that provides knowledge of concerns and trends among diverse groups and an understanding of their attitudes, beliefs, and culture (Smith & Okene, 2016).

Lastly, this study provided current research on online multicultural counseling education since there was a lack of updated literature on this topic. These current results also add to the counselor education literature on the relationship between students' multicultural attitudes and their participation in online multicultural training. One goal of multicultural training is to explore cultural identities and cultural differences to become more aware of your own (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013). Online students should be allowed to express themselves and initiate discussions concerning cultural differences like that of face-to-face students. This study implies that online students are engaging and interacting with diverse students. Creating an online program that allows for counselor educators and students to explore ethnic identity and ethnic awareness could assist in

helping future clients. Therefore, knowledge of strategies to use in an online multicultural course will aid in the challenges counselor educators may face engaging students in an online multicultural counseling course.

Conclusion

My purpose in doing this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural training in online higher education by revealing any change in the multicultural attitudes of students. I used Banks' (1995) transformative approach as my theoretical foundation, which assumes that multicultural training should be designed to produce a change in multicultural attitudes and thereby produce a change in society. The results indicated that there were statistically significant changes in multicultural attitudes among participants in an online multicultural counseling course in the know and care domains. More studies need to be conducted using the MASQUE to gain an accurate snapshot of the act domain. Nevertheless, online multicultural counseling courses are effective in training and engaging counseling students.

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Appendix A: The Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire

The Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire

Instructions: Please reflect on your multicultural attitude before and after your multicultural training course and rate how strongly you disagree or agree with each of the following statements by circling the appropriate number. (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=disagree somewhat; 4=agree somewhat; 5=agree; 6 = strongly agree)

Likert Scale (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree)

BEFORE MULTICULTURAL TRAINING	AFTER MULTICULTURAL TRAINING
<p>1) I REALIZE THAT RACISM EXISTS.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 4=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>1) I REALIZE THAT RACISM EXISTS.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 4=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>2) I KNOW THAT SOCIAL BARRIERS EXIST.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 4=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>2) I KNOW THAT SOCIAL BARRIERS EXIST.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 4=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>

3) I UNDERSTAND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

DIFFER.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;

3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE

SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY

AGREE

4) I UNDERSTAND SEXUAL

PREFERENCES MAY DIFFER.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;

3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE

SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY

AGREE

5) I UNDERSTAND THAT GENDER-BASED

INEQUITIES EXIST.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;

3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE

SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY

AGREE

6) I ACCEPT THE FACT THAT

LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

ARE SPOKEN.

3) I UNDERSTAND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

DIFFER.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;

3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE

SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY

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5) I UNDERSTAND THAT GENDER-BASED

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1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;

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AGREE

6) I ACCEPT THE FACT THAT

LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH

ARE SPOKEN.

**1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE**

**7) I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE
OF OTHER CULTURES ACT
DIFFERENTLY.**

**1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE**

**8) I AM SENSITIVE TO RESPECTING
RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.**

**1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE**

**9) I AM SENSITIVE TO DIFFERING
EXPRESSIONS OF ETHNICITY.**

**1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE**

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
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7) I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE
OF OTHER CULTURES ACT
DIFFERENTLY.

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3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE

8) I AM SENSITIVE TO RESPECTING
RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE

9) I AM SENSITIVE TO DIFFERING
EXPRESSIONS OF ETHNICITY.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE

<p>SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>10) I AM EMOTIONALLY CONCERNED ABOUT RACIAL INEQUALITY.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>10) I AM EMOTIONALLY CONCERNED ABOUT RACIAL INEQUALITY.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>11) I AM SENSITIVE TOWARD PEOPLE OF EVERY FINANCIAL STATUS.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>11) I AM SENSITIVE TOWARD PEOPLE OF EVERY FINANCIAL STATUS.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>12) I AM NOT SENSITIVE TO LANGUAGE USES OTHER THAN ENGLISH.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>12) I AM NOT SENSITIVE TO LANGUAGE USES OTHER THAN ENGLISH.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>

<p>13) A PERSON'S SOCIAL STATUS DOES NOT AFFECT HOW I CARE ABOUT PEOPLE.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>13) A PERSON'S SOCIAL STATUS DOES NOT AFFECT HOW I CARE ABOUT PEOPLE.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>14) I DO NOT ACT TO STOP RACISM.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>14) I DO NOT ACT TO STOP RACISM.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>15) I ACTIVELY CHALLENGE GENDER INEQUITIES.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>	<p>15) I ACTIVELY CHALLENGE GENDER INEQUITIES.</p> <p>1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE; 3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY AGREE</p>
<p>16) I DO NOT ACTIVELY RESPOND TO CONTEST RELIGIOUS PREJUDICE.</p>	<p>16) I DO NOT ACTIVELY RESPOND TO CONTEST RELIGIOUS PREJUDICE.</p>

**1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE**

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2=DISAGREE;
3=DISAGREE SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE
SOMEWHAT; 5=AGREE; 6 = STRONGLY
AGREE

19) What is your age?

25 and under

26-40

41-55

56 or older

20) What is your ethnicity?

Arabic

Asian/Pacific Islander

Black/African American

White/Caucasian

Hispanic

Indigenous or Aboriginal

Latino

Other

Would rather not say.

21. What state do you currently reside in?

22. What is your country of origin?

23. What religion do you identify with?

24. What is your military status?

Retired

Active Duty

Reservist

National Guard

25. Have you taken a multicultural course before?

Yes

No

26. Which of the following mode of multicultural training did you receive?

- Online course
- Traditional/Face-to-Face
- Both Online and Face-to-Face

27. Please indicate your years of clinical experience:

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 3 years
- 3 - 6 years
- 6 - 9 years
- 10+ years

28. Please indicate the extent of training you have received on multicultural populations.

Training can be in the form of a classroom lecture, a conference presentation, workshop, webinar etc.

- 1 class/webinar/workshop
- 2-3 classes/webinars/workshops
- 4+ classes/webinars/workshops
- None

29. How would you describe your level of interaction with various diverse populations?

- A great deal
- A lot

- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

30. Did you attend a CACREP accredited program?

Yes

No

31. What educational level have you completed?

Bachelors

Masters

Doctoral

Appendix B: Email Request for MASQUE Permission

Sheryl Attilee request for MASQUE Permission

Inbox

x

Sheryl Attilee sheryl.attilee@waldenu.edu

To: Arnold Munroe, Lucy Pearson

August 10, 2014

Permissions Editor: Arnold Munroe

I am a doctoral student with Walden University writing my dissertation tentatively titled Multicultural Attitudes in Online Counseling Courses: Before and After a Multicultural Counseling Course under the direction of my dissertation committee chaired by Dr. Carolyn L. Pearson.

I would like your permission to reproduce and use the Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE) along with additional demographic questions included. I would like to print and use your survey under the following conditions:

- I will use this survey only for my research and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
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Sincerely,

Sheryl Attilee

Doctoral Candidate



arnold munroe <amunroe@hotmail.com>

8/16/

14

to me, Lucy

Greetings,

Yes, you have permission to use the MASQUE and as mentioned please do cite-credit accordingly. Added, please inform me of your results and of any associated publications relative to the instruments use. Moreover, please share your raw data set, thus I am able to meta/cross analyze; for future consideration. Thank you ahead and apologies for the late reply as I'm currently out of country.

Regards, Dr. Arnold Munroe (retired)

Sent on a Sprint Samsung Galaxy Note® 3
