

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF THE
 MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCES
 OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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The changing population of public schools demands that school psychologists have the ability to work with diverse students, parents, and teachers. The current project used qualitative methods to explore the experiences of school psychologists working in racially/ethnically diverse schools. Interviews with ten school psychologists and surveys from eight staff members who worked with these psychologists were analyzed using grounded theory methodology. A theory was developed that explains how psychologists manage racial/ethnic differences in the diverse school context. Results indicate that psychologists' efforts focused on bridging cultural differences in the communication styles, beliefs, and behaviors of students, parents, and school staff members. The techniques psychologists used to bridge gaps involved reliance on

particular characteristics and strategies. Knowledge, self awareness, cultural empathy, and multicultural interest were the key characteristics psychologists relied on when working in multicultural situations. Related to these characteristics were the main strategies of relationship building, information gathering, and information sharing. Variables that impacted how psychologists responded in diverse settings included multicultural training experiences, life experiences, and issues related to the school systems within which the psychologists worked.

A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF THE MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCES
OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Statement of Purpose and Research Questions.....	8
Definition of Terms.....	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	10
Models of Multicultural Competence in Counseling Psychology.....	12
Multicultural Competence in School Psychology.....	22
Summary of Literature Review: Implications for the Present Study.....	43
Chapter 3: Methods	45
Participants.....	46
Data Collection.....	51
Data Analysis.....	56
Trustworthiness.....	61
Chapter 4: Results.....	66
Diverse School Context.....	68
Psychologist Characteristics.....	76
Psychologist Strategies.....	83
Impacting Variables.....	97
Core Category: Bridging Cultural Gaps.....	104
Overview of the Emergent Theory.....	107
Conclusion.....	111
Chapter 5: Discussion.....	113
Research Question 1.....	114
Research Question 2.....	127
Limitations of the Study.....	130
Conclusions and Project Implications.....	135
Appendix A: Multicultural Competency Model (D. W. Sue et al. 1982).....	140
Appendix B: Major Multicultural Competencies (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997).....	141
Appendix C: Recommendations for Multicultural Competence (Rogers et al. 1999).....	143
Appendix D: Critical Cross-Cultural Competencies (Rogers and Lopez, 2001).....	147
Appendix E: Essential Cross-Cultural Competencies (Lopez and Rogers, 2002).....	150
Appendix F: Psychological Supervisor/Coordinator Letter.....	155
Appendix G: Nomination Form	156

Appendix H: Informed Consent for Psychologists.....	157
Appendix I: Informed Consent for Survey Respondents.....	158
Appendix J: School Staff Informant Survey.....	159
Appendix K: Construct, Main Category, Category, and Concepts List.....	160
Appendix L: Auditor Inquiry Letter.....	174
References.....	175

Chapter 1

Introduction

Over the past several decades, multicultural issues in the delivery of psychological services have received increased attention in the literature and have been labeled the “fourth force” in psychology (Pedersen, 1990). One reason for the emergence of culture as a “hot topic” in psychology is the increasing gap between the number of diverse clients in our society and the number of professionals qualified to serve these populations (Pedersen, 2002; D.W. Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992).

Researchers contend that while the demographics of the United States have become more diverse over the last fifty years, the field of psychology has not changed at a commensurate rate (Ivey, 1995; Pedersen, 2002; D. W. Sue et al., 1982). Scholars involved in the multicultural movement assert that psychology in the United States historically has been a profession stoked in the values of Western culture. In particular, traditional theories and practices in psychology were founded in White, middle class values. It has been only relatively recently that scholars in psychology have come to realize that these theories and practices are not appropriate for all clients. D.W. Sue et al. (1982) state that there is a “growing awareness that the human service professions, including counseling and clinical psychology, have failed to meet the particular needs of ethnic minorities” (p. 48). Recognizing the need for training to guide psychologists in providing culturally appropriate services to diverse clients, there is now an emphasis in the literature to train psychologists to be multiculturally competent.

Cultural and Situational Variables in the Schools

Similarly, over the last several decades movements in the field of education have emphasized the importance of culture when programming for the success of all students (Banks, 1994). Miranda (2002) states, “culture can be thought of as a blueprint, which guides people through everyday life” (p. 354). Values, beliefs and ways of responding are largely determined by cultural variables. Thus, scholars contend that variables like minority group membership, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and language proficiency affect students’ educational experiences (Canino & Spurlock, 2000; GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998).

GoPaul-McNicol and Thomas-Presswood (1998) assert, “cultural conflict is one of the main problems faced by culturally and linguistically diverse children in US schools” (p.36). Scholars examining multicultural issues in education explain that the cultural system that pervades the public school system is often discrepant from the cultural systems of students who represent minority populations (Canino & Spurlock, 2000; GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998). As discussed by Banks (1994), school systems have historically been characterized as espousing a White, middle class value system. He states that clashes between the culture of the schools and that of diverse students “negatively affect the student of color because he or she may find the school culture alien, hostile, and self-defeating” (Banks, 1994, p. 46). Researchers explain that the “mismatch between a child’s native culture and that of the schools may have profound impact upon this child’s communication, motivation and performance” (GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998, p. 38). Minority status in the U.S.

influences the way children learn, their attitudes towards education, and the opportunities for emotional and academic development they are afforded.

Culture and the Roles of School Psychologists

In *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice II*, Ysseldyke et al. (1997) identify multicultural competence as one of the four essential elements of school psychology competence. The authors state that school psychologists “must be aware of, appreciate, and work with individuals and groups with a variety of strengths and needs from a variety of racial, cultural, ethnic, experiential, and linguistic backgrounds” (p.15). Research demonstrates that assessor, counselor, and consultant are common roles that school psychologists perform (Curtis, Walker, Hunley, Sawyer & Baker, 1999; Hosp & Reschly, 2002; Huebner, 1993). The Blueprint emphasizes the importance of considering diversity when engaging in all of the roles school psychologists perform. Thus, it is important that school psychologists become competent in providing multicultural assessment, consultation, and counseling services.

Miranda (2002) states that the area of assessment has received the most attention in the literature on multicultural issues in school psychology. This is also the activity that consumes the largest portion of school psychologists’ time (Hosp & Reschly, 2002; Huebner, 1993). Psycho-educational assessment involves collecting data with the purpose of specifying and verifying problems and making decisions about a child. Several assumptions are implicit in the assessment process (GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998). First, it is assumed that the examiner is competent in administering the instrument and establishing rapport. Additionally, however, it is assumed that the instrument has appropriate norms for the examinee and that the

examiner possesses an understanding of the nonverbal language and cultural beliefs and practices of the examinee. It is assumed that the examinee understands the expectations of the testing situation and that the instrument accurately represents the examinee's level of functioning.

Scholars, however, find that “when evaluating individuals with non-Eurocentric cultural influences, many of these assumptions are violated, and they compromise, if not invalidate, the findings and the decision-making process” (GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998, p. 46). Many practitioners do not understand the impact of discrepancies between the culture upon which most standardized tests are based and the cultures of diverse students. Despite being the most researched and theorized area in regard to multicultural issues in school psychology, there is a lack of literature to guide practitioners as to the multicultural competencies needed to perform assessments of culturally and linguistically different students (Canino & Spurlock, 2000; GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998; Miranda, 2002).

In addition to assessment activities, school psychologists spend a considerable amount of time providing consultation to staff and parents and engaging in individual and group counseling (Curtis et al, 1999; Hosp & Reschly, 2002; Huebner, 1993). In regard to the provision of counseling services, scholars in the fields of school psychology and counseling psychology emphasize the importance of recognizing that traditional psychology theories addressing pathology are founded in a value system that is discrepant from that of many minority students and often neglect the impact of cultural variables on development (Canino & Spurlock, 2000; GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998). For example, Western treatment approaches focus on

disclosure and the examination of interpersonal, emotional and intrapsychic conflicts; these practices are not appropriate for all students. GoPaul-McNicol and Thomas-Presswood (1998) state, the “lack of understanding of cultural and racial issues in the therapeutic process is a significant factor in the effectiveness of the delivery of mental health services” (p. 51). Ridley, Mendoza, Kanitz, Angermeir and Zenk (1994) assert that high underutilization rates for counseling services and early termination rates are partially due to experiences with counselors who are not competent in providing services to minority populations. When working with culturally and linguistically diverse students, practitioners must display multicultural counseling competence. Research involving middle school children demonstrate that students think about how cultural and ethnic variables affect their lives (Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Tatum, 1997). Thus, when counseling these children, practitioners must be prepared to address the impact of culture. However, few works exist outlining the multicultural counseling competencies needed by psychologists working in the school.

While little research has explored multicultural consultation in schools, the research that does exist supports the importance of having multicultural competence when working with diverse clients and consultees (Ingraham, 2000). After reviewing some of the work done in this area, Ingraham states that ratings of effectiveness in consultation are more related to exhibiting multicultural sensitivity and responding than they are based on similar racial/ethnic group membership between consultee and consultant. The author states, “It appears that it is not the race of the consultant but the attentiveness and responsiveness of the consultation to racial issues brought up in the

session that determines ratings of consultant effectiveness and multicultural sensitivity” (Ingraham, 2000, p. 322).

When consulting with teachers and parents, school psychologists must be cognizant of the impact of cultural differences on the consultation relationship. Scholars state, “teachers from White, middle class society may assume that certain behaviors or norms of communicating are universal and hold similar meaning for every student” (GoPaul-McNicol & Thomas-Presswood, 1998, p. 120). When providing consultation, psychologists must confront this assumption and educate consultees about the impact of culture on learning. Similarly, when working with parents, psychologists must be aware of differences in parental expectations, values, and beliefs about education. They must also be mindful that discontinuity in values between psychologist and parent, and teacher and parent, may interfere with the development of a working relationship and increase the likelihood of interpersonal conflict.

Multicultural Competence

The multicultural movement in psychology and education has resulted in increased attention to the importance of multicultural competence for school psychologists (Miranda, 2002). However, despite wide-spread affirmation of the importance of multiculturalism in education and psychology, research suggests that multicultural competence in school psychology is not receiving sufficient attention in the literature (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). In contrast, the counseling psychology field has been in the forefront of psychology specialties in terms of dedication to engaging in multicultural research and theorizing (Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997). Many of the models of multicultural competence that are used to guide clinical

and school psychology have arisen from work that began in the counseling field. A prime example of a counseling psychology piece that has been influential in school psychology is the framework of multicultural competence developed by D. W. Sue et al. (1982) (Miranda, 2002; Rogers, 1998). The influence of this framework, which proposes that multicultural competence is composed of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills, is evidenced in definitions of multicultural competence proposed in school psychology literature (Miranda, 2002). Research in school psychology has also relied on the model. The only multicultural competence assessment instrument developed for school psychologists, the Multicultural School Psychology Counseling Competency Scale, is based on the competencies proposed in the D. W. Sue et al. model (Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997). Additionally, the Multicultural Counseling Inventory, an instrument based on the D. W. Sue et al. three factors, recently has been used in assessing the impact of multicultural training experiences on school psychologists' multicultural counseling competence (Mewborn, 2001; Velez, 2002).

A limitation, however, of using counseling psychology models, like the Sue et al. (1982) model, to conceptualize multicultural competence in school psychology is that these models were developed for practitioners whose primary role is counselor. While the model focuses mainly on multicultural counseling competencies, school psychologists have many roles, only one of which is counselor. Psychologists working in schools must also conduct assessments and provide consultation services for diverse school populations (Curtis et al., 1999; Hosp & Reschly, 2002; Huebner, 1993). Additionally, the D. W. Sue et al. (1982) framework was developed primarily for practitioners working with adults (Lopez & Rogers, 2001). Thus, competencies

addressing some of the special situations encountered by practitioners working with students and their families are not incorporated in this model.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

Unfortunately, few research projects have been conducted with the purpose of examining the multicultural skills needed for the range of roles school psychologists perform (Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). There is a need for research exploring what interventions psychologists in the field actually rely on when confronted with cultural differences. In the current project, grounded theory, a qualitative analysis methodology, was used to examine the experiences of school psychologists experienced at working in diverse school settings. Specific interactions explored in this project included the school psychologist' experiences assessing, counseling, and consulting on cases involving clients from racial-ethnic minority backgrounds. The use of qualitative methods allowed for an in-depth, exploratory examination of multicultural interactions. This process culminated in the development of a theory of responding that outlined the major components involved in multicultural situations, and the specific interventions used by school psychologists. The two main research questions that guided this project were as follows:

1. How do school psychologists experienced at working in diverse school contexts respond to cultural differences?
2. What factors impact school psychologists' ability to effectively provide services in diverse school contexts?

Definition of Terms

There are several key terms that are often used when discussing multicultural issues in psychology. The following definitions represent how these terms will be described for the purposes of the current study.

Culture. Culture can be defined as “the values, beliefs, and attitudes that are relatively unique to a given group of individuals and expressed in communal ways” (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002, p. 339). In this definition, culture is viewed as a framework through which actions and behaviors are filtered. While individuals from the same culture may share some tendencies, other factors including gender, socioeconomic status and level of education will also affect behaviors.

Diversity. Ortiz and Flanagan (2002) state that cultural diversity refers to “any individual or group whose background and experiences differ significantly from that reflected by the U.S. mainstream” (p. 339). While the term denotes a broad range of differences, for the purposes of this project, diversity, and diverse school context, will primarily represent racial-ethnic differences.

Minority group. Wirth (1945) defines a minority group as “a group of people who, because of physical and cultural characteristics, are singled out from others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination” (p. 347). Thus, the term does not indicate the proportion of the population a group represents (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). The current project will use the term racial/ethnic minority group to describe individuals belonging to Asian-American, African-American, Latino/a, and Native-American backgrounds.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Several scholars have provided definitions for the term multicultural competence as it relates to work in schools. Go-Paul-McNicol (1997) defines a multiculturally competent individual as one who is “competent, sensitive, and knowledgeable of the critical factors related to issues of cultural diversity, to best serve minority students” (p. 17). Lynch and Hanson (2004) state that multicultural competence involves “the ability to think, feel, and act in ways that acknowledge, respect, and build upon ethnic, socio-cultural, and linguistic diversity” (p. 43). Despite these definitions and increased theorizing as to the competencies necessary for psychologists working in diverse schools, there is little information on school psychologists’ experiences in these settings. The purpose of the current project was to further explore how school psychologists responded in diverse settings to gain a deeper understanding of the interventions used by these individuals.

While the theory proposed does not profess to explain multicultural competence, or expert responding, the following literature review addresses some of the models of multicultural competence that have been proposed in psychology. These models are reviewed to facilitate comparison of the components of competence discussed by scholars and the aspects of responding that emerged in the current project. As discussed earlier, the field of counseling psychology has been in the forefront of multicultural theorizing; this is especially the case in terms of developing models of multicultural competence (Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997). A sampling of models of multicultural counseling competence is addressed first, followed by a review of the research on

multicultural competence and training that has been conducted in the field of school psychology. However, to understand the term “multicultural competence”, one must understand the philosophy of multiculturalism. This philosophy is addressed in the next section of the literature review.

“Multiculturalism” as a Construct

D. W. Sue et al. (1998) define multiculturalism as “a philosophical and practical orientation to the study, understanding and valuing of multiple world views related to biological, cultural, ethnic, and other socio-demographic groupings (p. 6). This philosophy is further clarified by understanding alternate ideologies for considering multicultural issues in education and psychology. Banks (2001) addresses three distinct ideological perspectives on diversity in education: pluralism, assimilationism, and multiculturalism.

As discussed by Banks (2001), pluralism has a strong emphasis on embracing diversity. The author states that pluralistic scholars value the notion of ethnic identity and preserving such identity. Thus, pluralists feel that culture should be a focus in education. Pluralists support the notion that schools are settings in which students are taught to function productively in their own cultural community. Individuals embracing this perspective, however, do not acknowledge the assimilation of cultural identities that has occurred in this nation, and the facilitation of functioning in the larger society is not a major concern.

In contrast to the pluralist perspective, the assimilationist ideology views ethnicity as something that “waned or disappears under the impact of modernization” (Banks, 2001, p. 112). Assimilationists assert that ethnic attachments are

“dysfunctional” as they believe that ethnic attachments lead individuals to promote the ideals of their reference group over their individual ideals. Assimilationistic scholars contend that an emphasis on diversity does not have a place in the schools. The function of schools should be socializing students into the common culture.

Finally, the third ideological perspective offered by Banks (2001) is multiculturalism. Banks contends that this is the preferred way of conceptualizing how diversity should be addressed in education. In contrast to the modernist philosophy, which typically characterizes Western culture, the multicultural movement acknowledges the existence of multiple perspectives and belief systems (Gonzalez, 1997; D. W. Sue et al. 1998). The multicultural movement and postmodernism both adopt the view that worldviews are neither “right” nor “wrong.” Banks states that the “multicultural theorist sees neither separatism (as the pluralist does) nor total integration (as the assimilationist does) as ideal societal goals, but rather envisions an open society, in which individuals from diverse cultural, ethnic, and social-class groups have equal opportunities to function and participate” (p. 117). Thus, the multicultural theorist supports schools as settings in which students learn to appreciate and function in their own cultural communities, appreciate other cultures, and function in mainstream culture.

Models of Multicultural Competence in Counseling Psychology

Scholars in the counseling profession have conducted much of the research on multicultural issues in psychology (Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997). This review will address a sampling of the frameworks that have been developed by counseling scholars to explain the characteristics of multiculturally competent

counselors. While this review does not represent an exhaustive list of the models of multicultural sensitivity and responding that have been proposed, it does address several seminal works that have been influential in the field.

D. W. Sue et al. Conceptualization

In the early eighties D. W. Sue et al. (1982) published a position paper outlining multicultural competencies in counseling psychology which has been credited with “awaken[ing] theorists, researchers’ and practitioners’ attention to the reality that traditional Western approaches to counseling and psychotherapy minimize the unique contributions of clients and therapists’ sociodemographic and psychodemographic characteristics to the therapy process” (Helms & Richardson, 1997, p. 69). The Sue et al. conceptualizations have had widespread influence. They form the basis of many definitions of multicultural competence and the foundation for three of the four multicultural counseling assessment instruments (D’Andrea, Daniels & Heck, 1991; Ponterotto, Fuertes, & Chen, 2000; Ponterotto, Rieger, Barrett & Sparks, 1994; Sadowsky, Taffe, Gutkin & Wise, 1994).

The D. W. Sue et al. paper (1982) proposed eleven specific competencies which fall under three dimensions of cross-cultural counseling competence: beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills (See Appendix A). D. W. Sue et al. (1982) explain that the multicultural beliefs and attitudes competency dimension involves the development of multicultural awareness. Such awareness entails an understanding of how culture, worldview, and biases affect both the counselor and the client, and the interaction between the two. Multicultural knowledge is described as the understanding of cultural factors and forces that impact the counseling relationship. Such knowledge involves

understanding general characteristics of counseling, as well as having knowledge about specific cultures, and how sociopolitical systems and institutions affect clients. Finally, the multicultural skills competency dimension involves the ability to appropriately intervene when working with diverse clients. Such skill concerns the ability to accurately send and receive nonverbal and verbal messages, generate culturally appropriate interventions, and the ability to recognize and negotiate institutional barriers that may impact clients.

The Cross-cultural Counseling Competencies Committee, which was formed by the Division of Counseling Psychology's Education and Training Committee in 1980, developed the original competency list (D. W. Sue et al, 1982). However, the original Sue et al. (1982) conceptualization has been expanded upon several times (D. W. Sue et al., 1992; D. W. Sue et al., 1998). The revised list, which was published ten years after the original, was developed by the Professional Standards Committee of the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (D. W. Sue et al., 1992). In expanding the model, D. W. Sue et al. (1992) drew on conceptual research, primarily the original competency framework and the multicultural knowledge, awareness and skill competencies remained the centerpiece of the D. W. Sue et al. (1992) expansion. In their conceptualization, D. W. Sue et al. (1992) crossed the three competency dimensions with three characteristics of culturally competent counselors, (a) "counselor awareness of own assumptions, values and bias", (b) "understanding the worldview of the culturally different client", and (c) "developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques" (p. 76). Thus, the D. W. Sue et al. (1992) framework consists of 9 competency areas and lists 31 specific competencies (compared to 11 specific

competencies in the original framework). An even later work by D. W. Sue et al. (1998) explains in even greater detail the competencies that multicultural counselors need and outlines multicultural competencies needed for organizational settings.

Perceptual Schema Model of Cultural Sensitivity

The Perceptual Schema Model of cultural sensitivity proposed by Ridley et al. (1994) is one of few models of multicultural competence that is grounded in theory. This model is based on the perceptual schema theory of information processing. Briefly, the perceptual schema theory states that perceptual processes involve receiving information from the environment, then interpreting that data through attempts to integrate the information into schemata, or existing concept maps that help people make sense of their environments. Ridley et al. argue that the ability to accurately perceive and incorporate cultural data in the counseling process is a prerequisite for culturally competent responding. In their model, these authors offer five counselor factors involved in culturally sensitive responding.

The first factor in this model is labeled counselor cultural self-processing (Ridley et al., 1994). In accord with perceptual schema theory, Ridley et al. assert that the schemata that clients and counselors develop are influenced by their life experiences. They argue that common life experiences shared by individuals of the same cultural group result in the development of similar information processing systems. Consequently, people from different cultural groups have varied life experiences, resulting in variations in schemata, which can interfere with effective counseling relationships. Cultural self-processing involves the counselor's ability to examine his or her own schemata to "ferret out private agendas and actively work to

eliminate their prejudicial or stereotypic perceptions of culturally different clients” (Ridley et al., 1994, p. 131).

The second dimension of cultural sensitivity proposed by Ridley et al. (1994) is the purposive application of schemata. During the counseling process counselors collect data regarding the client’s values, beliefs, and worldviews to develop a cultural schema of the client. However, the collection of cultural information is not beneficial to the counseling process if the counselor is not skilled in using the cultural perceptual schema to guide their practice with the client. The information obtained by the counselor should be used throughout the counseling process from intake to termination, dictating the treatment goals and interventions chosen.

The ability to maintain plasticity is the third factor involved in cultural sensitivity (Ridley et al., 1994). The perceptual schema theory asserts that stereotypic thinking is the consequence of rigid use of schema. Ridley et al. state that research shows that stereotyping of minority clients is a common phenomenon in multicultural counseling situations. The author states, “cultural sensitivity hinges on maintaining plasticity in the application of cultural perceptual schemata in order to understand culturally different clients” (Ridley et al., 1994, p. 132). Thus, culturally sensitive counselors are able to flexibly incorporate client information into existing schemata and avoid stereotyping based on faulty automatic processing.

Active-selective attention is the fourth factor proposed in the Ridley et al. (1994) model. One of the tenets of the perceptual schema theory is that it is impossible for people to perceive all the stimuli that surround them. For this reason, people pay attention to those forces that are most related to their goals. The authors state that

culturally insensitive counselors often neglect to attend to the cultural information provided by diverse clients. In contrast, culturally sensitive counselors are skilled at perceiving and organizing cultural information since they view this information as being important to treating their clients.

The final factor in counselor cultural sensitivity is counselor motivation (Ridley et al., 1994). Ridley et al. (1994) state that “unless counselors are motivated to continuous self-processing, purposively applying schemata, and maintaining plasticity and active-selection attention, no amount of therapeutic skill will result in cultural sensitivity” (p. 133).

As mentioned earlier, the perceptual schema theory of cultural sensitivity is based on the theoretical assumptions of a pre-existing theory of information processing (Ridley et al, 1994). At this time specific research has not been conducted investigating all of the cognitive processes proposed to occur when working in cross-cultural counseling situations. However, Ridley et al. (1994) state “studies of cognitive schemata have shown that clinicians can bias their clinical assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and evaluation treatment responses of clients” (p. 133).

S. Sue Conceptualization

S. Sue (1998) proposes three characteristics that he contends are essential to cross-cultural competence. The author reports relying on both professional experience and research on multicultural counseling to develop this model of responding.

The first characteristic addressed by S. Sue (1998) is scientific mindedness. Scientific mindedness is described as the ability to develop and test hypotheses about the status of culturally different clients. S. Sue explains that this ability is contrasted to

using the “myth of sameness,” or the notion that dynamics are the same across different cultures. S. Sue states that while this skill is imperative in cross-cultural dyads, the ability to use existing data to form hypotheses about clients, then develop creative ways to test their hypotheses, is a skill that will be important in all counseling situations.

The second characteristic of culturally competent therapy is dynamic sizing (S. Sue, 1998). S. Sue states that this skill involves the therapist’s understanding of how to “flexibly generalize in a valid manner” (p. 444). Dynamic sizing concerns the therapist’s skill in being able to both acknowledge the role of culture in a client’s life, while avoiding stereotyping their client. Counselors skilled in dynamic sizing exhibit competence in their ability to evaluate clients in the appropriate context.

The final aspect of multicultural competence proposed by S. Sue (1998) is cultural-specific expertise. Similar to calls for multicultural knowledge by D. W. Sue et al. (1982), the culture-specific elements addressed in this model involve having knowledge of the worldview of the client and self, having specific skills in working with culturally diverse clients, and having an understanding of the influence of sociopolitical forces on the counseling relationship.

Paramount to the generation of this model was research cited by S. Sue (1998) documenting the importance of ethnic match, service match, and cognitive match in multicultural counseling dyads. Briefly, this research supports the importance of client preference for counselors from the same ethnic group. The findings reviewed suggest that match between the ethnicity of the client and counselor resulted in lower drop out rates. Findings reviewed by S. Sue also demonstrated lower drop out rates and increased time in treatment when ethnic minority clients received culture-specific rather

than mainstream services. Cognitive match, or congruence between counselor and client on issues such as the goals of treatment, how problems are conceptualized, and how problems are resolved, was also found to result in better treatment outcomes.

Common Factors Conceptualization

Fischer et al. (1998) endorse a conceptualization of multicultural competence that is based on common factors of counseling. The common factors approach to multicultural counseling asserts that common counseling factors exist across cultures. Specifically, Fischer et al. identify the therapeutic relationship, a shared worldview between counselor and client, ability to meet the client's expectations, and the implementation of interventions deemed appropriate by the counselor and the client, as elements of the counseling process that are important in all cultures. Thus, while Fischer et al. state that cross-cultural counselors must have knowledge of the client's cultural context, culture-specific counseling interventions are not emphasized. This conceptualization of what it means to be a multiculturally responsive psychologist has recently been the impetus for a new model of multicultural competence in counseling proposed by Constantine and Ladany (2001).

Constantine and Ladany (2001) propose a six dimension conceptualization of multicultural competence based on skills they feel are appropriate across cultures. The six dimensions proposed are multicultural awareness, general multicultural knowledge, multicultural self-efficacy, understanding of unique client variables, development of counseling working alliance, and multicultural counseling skill. Some of the dimensions in this model are congruent with those offered by D. W. Sue et al. (1982). For example, Constantine and Ladany state that multicultural competence involves counselor self-

awareness and general multicultural knowledge. However, the remaining components of competence introduced in this model were not addressed as specific components in the D. W. Sue et al. conceptualization.

Constantine and Ladany (2001) state that counselor multicultural self-efficacy is a component of multicultural competence. Multicultural self-efficacy refers to the “counselors’ confidence in their ability to perform a set of multicultural counseling skills and behaviors successfully” (p. 491). This dimension is related to the self-efficacy theory, which proposes that self-efficacy expectations and actual performance are related.

An understanding of unique client variables is one of the dimensions of cultural competence proposed by Constantine and Ladany (2001). The authors contend that counselors skilled in multicultural responding are able to understand how personal and situational variables converge to impact the lives of their clients. Constantine and Ladany (2001) write, “the full range of unique client variables needs to be continually recognized and conceptualized for counselors to fully understand the impact of these factors in therapeutic contexts” (p. 492). Some of the personal and situational variables that counselors must consider include cultural group memberships, values, personality traits, presenting concerns, and therapeutic expectations.

Another dimension proposed by Constantine and Ladany (2001) is an effective counseling working alliance. Citing work by Bordin (1979), Constantine and Ladany contend that a working alliance between counselor and client involves shared views about the therapeutic goals, and tasks of counseling, as well as an emotional bond between the two. In regard to cross-cultural counseling dyads, the authors state that a

working alliance is reached when the counselor and client are able to work through multicultural issues using the counseling relationship.

Finally, the last dimension of multicultural counseling competence is multicultural counseling skill (Constantine & Ladany, 2001). Multicultural counseling skill is defined as the “counselor’s ability to effectively address multicultural issues in the context of therapeutic situations” (Constantine & Ladany, 2001, p. 492). In contrast to the multicultural skill dimension proposed by D. W. Sue et al. (1982), this competency does not emphasize skill in using culture-specific interventions. Multiculturally competent therapists are able to see how culture may affect the different stages of the counseling process and how to appropriately respond to diverse clients by using common factor techniques.

Summary of Models of Multicultural Counseling Competence

Cultural competence is a widely discussed topic in the area of multicultural counseling psychology (S. Sue, 1998). However, the models of competence reviewed above demonstrate that there is no consensus on the components of multicultural counseling competence (S. Sue, 1998). While there were several factors in the conceptualizations of multicultural competence that re-emerged across models there was quite a bit of variation in the factors proposed.

Some of the factors common to several of the counseling competence models include counselor self-awareness, ability to use cultural information without stereotyping, having knowledge about clients’ worldview, and being able to effectively apply that knowledge. (See Figure 1 for a synthesis of the multicultural counseling competence factors.) One commonality between all of the models reviewed is that

implicit in the behavioral, cognitive, and perceptual dimensions of these models is the philosophy of multiculturalism. The models address an awareness of the importance of culture in affecting the attitudes and behaviors of both client and counselor. These competencies convey the importance of respect for cultural differences, differences in worldviews, and the evaluation of behaviors in the context of cultural influences.

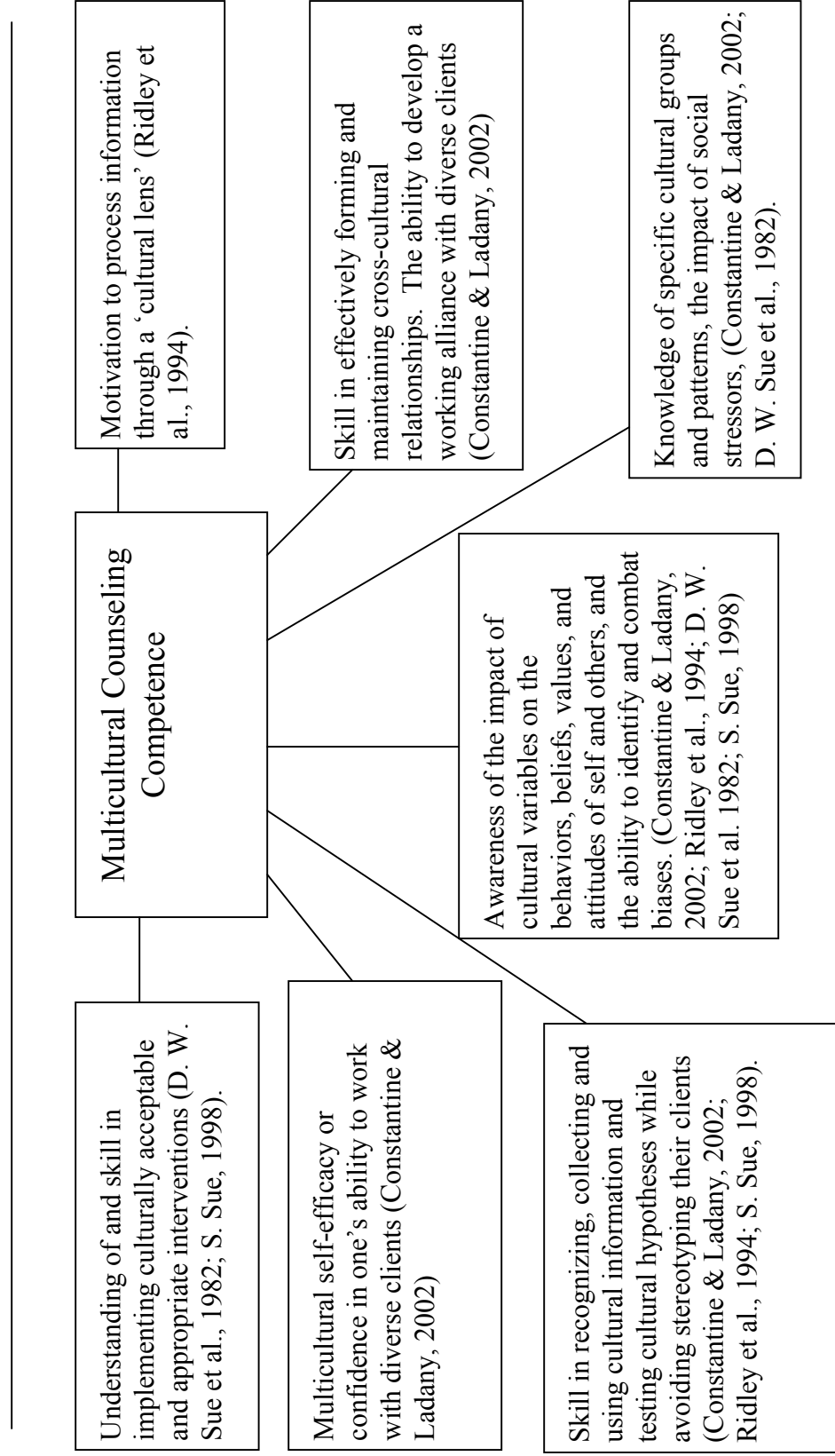
Multicultural Competence in School Psychology

Ortiz and Flanagan (2002) state, “until recently, little attention has been given to developing cross-cultural competence and understanding the manner in which cultural differences affect school psychology service delivery” (p. 349). This section of the review addresses some of the research examining the status of multicultural training and the competencies that have been proposed for psychologists working in schools.

Multicultural Training in School Psychology

One of the factors presumed to impact psychologist’s ability to work effectively with diverse populations is multicultural training. The importance of including diversity issues in training is evidenced by the inclusion of these topics in the accreditation standards for the American Psychological Association (APA) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), the main accrediting bodies for school psychology graduate programs (APA, 2002; NASP, 2000). Unfortunately, despite this recognition of the importance of multicultural training, few research projects have examined issues related to training school psychologists to be competent in providing services to diverse populations (Keim, Warring & Rau, 2002; Miranda & Gutter, 2002). At this time only a few studies have been conducted examining the status of multicultural training efforts in graduate school psychology programs. These

Figure 1. Synthesis of factors of multicultural counseling competence from selected models



studies, which are reviewed below, examined the extent to which programs have adopted the educational strategies that have been proposed to promote cultural proficiency.

Rogers, Ponterotto, Conoley and Wiese (1992) conducted a national survey of multicultural training in school psychology programs. In this study 121 program directors responded to a survey inquiring into how multicultural content and experiences were incorporated into training. While 90% of the program directors indicated that multicultural training was “essential,” results on the inclusion of multicultural educational strategies were somewhat alarming. Responses indicated that 40% of the programs did not offer a course on multicultural issues and over one fourth of the programs dedicated less than 5% of core course class time to multicultural content. In regard to exposure to minority clientele during practicum and internship experiences, approximately 70% of the program directors reported that contact with diverse clients occurred less than 25% of the time.

Data provided in a study completed about ten years after the Rogers et al. (1992) project offers a more encouraging view of the degree that multicultural content is included in school psychology graduate training experiences (Mewborn, 2001). Questionnaires completed by doctoral interns representing 64% of the APA-accredited school psychology programs indicated that 97% of programs included multicultural content in the didactic components of training either through one or more specific courses, infusing information into core courses, or both. Additionally, over 70% of interns had contact with at least two racial-ethnic minority groups different from their own during their practicum and internship experiences. The author concludes that the

“strides that school psychology programs have made in the last decade are impressive” and cites the increased attention to multicultural issues in accreditation standards as a possible impetus to this change (Mewborn, 2001, p. 64).

A second area of research involves attempts to evaluate the impact of multicultural training experiences on school psychologists. While this area of research is robust in the field of counseling psychology, school psychology scholars have conducted few studies to examine this relationship. This is in part due to the lack of instruments assessing the range of roles school psychologists perform. At this time there is no instrument that addresses multicultural competencies for the comprehensive roles of psychologists working in schools. Thus, school psychology researchers have relied on instruments designed to measure multicultural counseling competencies. For example, two projects examining doctoral school psychology interns have shown a relationship between increased self-reported multicultural counseling competence and the following training variables: the number of multicultural counseling courses taken, the degree that multicultural content was infused into core school psychology courses, exposure to diverse clients, the amount of supervision time spent discussing multicultural issues, and the implementation of multicultural research (Mewborn, 2001; Velez, 2002). While more research needs to be conducted in this area, these findings provide preliminary support for the effectiveness of multicultural training efforts.

Models of Multicultural Competence in School Psychology

This section of the literature review addresses research proposing multicultural competence frameworks that address the range of school psychology duties. Much of the literature base on multicultural responding in school psychology consists of articles

addressing specific aspects of school psychology functioning (Figueroa, Sandoval & Merino, 1984; Ortiz, 2002; Rosenfield & Esquivel, 1985; Rogers, 2000). For example, Figueroa, Sandoval and Merino (1984) and Rosenfield and Esquivel (1985) address best practices in providing services to limited English proficient students, Rogers (2000) discusses multicultural consultation competencies, and Ortiz (2002) presents information about effectively conducting nonbiased assessments. Few articles address the full range of roles school psychologists perform (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997; Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers et al., 1999; Rogers & Lopez, 2002). The first two works reviewed are conceptual, rather than data based. However, recently, there has been increased research attention to the empirical study of school psychology multicultural competencies; these two data based works also are addressed.

GoPaul-McNicol Conceptualization

GoPaul-McNicol (1997) states “it is virtually impossible to have an equal number of trained specialists who are from the variety of culturally diverse backgrounds as our student population. Therefore, it is critically important to have the graduates of school psychology training programs knowledgeable about and prepared to address the concerns of this new student body” (p. 17). This author presents a theoretical framework for training monolingual psychologists, outlining fifteen major competencies relevant for psychologists working in diverse school settings. In each major competency area, GoPaul-McNicol highlights some of the cultural conflicts that arise when providing cross-cultural services, and specific multicultural knowledges and skills are discussed. These competencies, which address a range of the roles and

functions in which school psychologists serve, are listed in Appendix B, and are addressed below.

Cross-cultural Ethical Competence. Cross-cultural ethical competence is the first area addressed by GoPaul-McNicol (1997). In discussing the rationale for including this area, the author states that the “fundamental premise underlying this position is that the treatment of culturally diverse clients by professionals who lack specialized training and expertise is unethical because this is considered delivery of mental health services outside one’s area of competence” (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997, p. 17). Specific skills and understandings are not outlined in this competence area. However, the author sets the stage for the other competencies by stating that a “profound” level of training is necessary to achieve the level of competence necessary to provide culturally sensitive, effective services to diverse students.

Cross-cultural Awareness and Therapists’ Awareness of his/her own Cultural Biases and Values. Cross-cultural awareness and therapist self-awareness are two additional areas addressed in this framework (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997). In regard to cross-cultural awareness, GoPaul-McNicol states that psychologists should be aware of the expectations about achievement, learning styles, and family roles, of different cultural groups. She asserts that competent psychologists have awareness of the impact of social stresses including immigration status and relocation, on students. In addition to this knowledge about other cultural groups, GoPaul-McNicol addresses the importance of psychologist self-awareness. In this area she contends that counselors should examine their beliefs and attitudes and how they affect their teaching and counseling relationships. She states that therapist self-awareness involves exploring

how counselors' values impact their ability to respect people who are different than themselves. Self-awareness involves the ability to identify sources of discomfort in regard to differences in cultural variables and recognize the limits of their competence. GoPaul-McNicol asserts that this exploration should be a central part of training programs.

Competence in Understanding Inter-Racial Issues. GoPaul-McNicol (1997) calls for competence in understanding inter-racial issues. The author states, "it is imperative that students in training are exposed to a psychotherapeutic model that includes race" (p. 19). Competence involves possessing an understanding of how racial issues, including oppression and racial discrimination, affect psychological and academic development, and the treatment process.

Second Language Competence. Three of the competency areas addressed by GoPaul-McNicol (1997) involve language issues: Language Competence, Competence in Knowing the Bilingual Education Curriculum, and Competence in Working with Interpreters. The author asserts that while being a bilingual psychologist is preferable as it facilitates communication with the client and his or her family, this is often not possible because of the myriad of languages spoken in schools. When language match is not possible, psychologists must rely on knowledge about working with interpreters and the language acquisition process. GoPaul-McNicol contends that psychologists must have an understanding of the impact of dialectical differences and knowledge of the conditions and programs that may hinder or facilitate the academic development of limited English students. Further, psychologists should have skill in working with

interpreters, including the ability to develop rapport with the interpreter and how to ensure accurate interpretations.

Cross-cultural Assessment Competencies. In the area of cross-cultural assessment competence, GoPaul-McNicol (1997) states that there is theoretical and empirical support for the use of a bio-ecological approach to the assessment of diverse students. The author writes that the evaluation of students comprises three dimensions of assessment: biologically programmed cognitive processes, the cultural experiences that mediate the use of these cognitive processes, and the cultural contexts that influence the development of cognitive processes. Formal and informal assessments are necessary to examine these dimensions and psychologists must be competent in determining when socio-cultural factors may be impacting assessment results.

Cross-cultural Counseling Competencies. Under the counseling competencies area GoPaul-McNicol (1997) states that “school psychologists need to be aware of the values, customs, behavioral patterns, religious/indigenous beliefs and expectancies of families from divergent cultural/linguistic/ethnic backgrounds” (p. 22). In addition to between group differences, the author addresses the importance of having an understanding of intra-group differences when providing counseling services. She states that training can assist psychologists in developing this knowledge, as well as the skill and sensitivity needed in counseling diverse students.

Cross-cultural Issues in Conflict Resolution. In the section regarding cross-cultural issues in conflict resolution GoPaul-McNicol (1997) states that conflicts in worldview may interfere with the development of the client-counselor relationship. Such conflicts may result in resistance and mistrust. Competent psychologists need

knowledge of their own worldview in order to recognize sources of potential conflict. They must also have skill in discussing with the client how worldview difference may affect the practitioner-client relationship.

Competence in Special Education Prevention. GoPaul-McNicol (1997) relies on personal experiences as a professional in the educational system when she contends that “training ought to focus on the role of school psychologist in expanding the role of special education teachers to the regular education setting” (p. 23). In the special education prevention competency area the scholar states that school psychologists should assist in the development of transitory placement programs for students with mild disabilities. Further, psychologists should have competence in working as consultants to help school personnel prevent inappropriate special education placement.

Competence in Empowering Families through Community Based Organizations. Competent psychologists are able to link students and families to community-based organizations that can provide support beyond that available from the school system (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997). Free clinics, social services, and after-school tutorial programs, are a few of the services that are often available in the community to support students with limited access to other resources. Competent psychologists have knowledge of the programs in the communities and how to access services. GoPaul-McNicol contends that when community resources are not available, psychologists must be able to assist families in forming extended family networks for support.

Competence in Pediatric and Health Psychology. Competence in pediatric and health psychology is an additional area discussed in this framework (GoPaul-McNicol,

1997). The researcher states that attention problems and emotional difficulties can result from medical conditions. To reduce misdiagnosis and inaccurate assessments, psychologists should be competent in exploring the impact of health issues on students' ability to attend and learn.

University Level Competencies. GoPaul-McNicol (1997) lists competency areas addressing consultation and supervision, research, and teaching when discussing competencies needed by faculty members in school psychology programs. In the area of cross-cultural consultation and supervision, the scholar highlights the importance of continued assessment of multicultural development by program supervisors. The author states that when providing supervision to culturally different clients, or when supervising a trainee on a case involving a culturally different client, supervisors must be cognizant that cultural differences can affect the content, process and outcome of supervision. In terms of consultation, GoPaul-McNicol does not offer any specific skills, but she does assert that school psychologists should be able to provide consultative services to families, and teachers.

In the area of cross-cultural research, GoPaul-McNicol (1997) summarizes guidelines addressed by professional organizations, and counseling psychology researchers (APA, 1993; Pedersen, 1995; Ponterotto & Casas, 1987). The author asserts that it is important to understand the worldview of participants when conducting research and to examine culture in context. Ethically, cross-cultural researchers should conduct research that is beneficial not only to them, but also benefits the population being researched.

Finally, when discussing cross-cultural teaching competence, GoPaul-McNicol (1997) states that training in the aforementioned competencies should be incorporated in a specific multicultural curriculum proposed by the author. The essential components of teaching multicultural competence in this curriculum include the assertion that multicultural content should be infused into all areas of coursework, rather than solely addressing these issues in a separate course. Further, the curriculum offered by GoPaul-McNicol calls for multicultural contact during practica and internship experiences, continued multicultural education of faculty, a commitment to multicultural research, and the use of a multicultural program consultant.

Model development. GoPaul-McNicol (1997) explains that the theoretical framework she proposes is based on a review of literature. The major competency areas were developed after reviewing the works of Barona, Santos de Barona, Flores, and Gutierrez (1990), Carney and Kahn (1984), Casas, Ponterotto and Gutierrez (1986), Cummins (1989), Figueroa, Sandavol and Merino (1984), Hills and Strozier (1992), Kiselica (1991), Lynch and Hanson (1995), McRae and Johnson (1991), Palmer, Hughes and Juarez (1991), Ponterotto and Casas (1987), Ridley (1985), Rogers, Close-Conoley, Ponterotto and Wiese (1992), Sabnani, Ponterotto, Borodovsky (1991) and D. W. Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992). These works, the content of which are not reviewed by GoPaul-McNicol in the article, consist of literature reviews, empirical research, and personal experiences, addressing multicultural competence in school psychology. GoPaul-McNicol also draws on research on multicultural issues that does not solely pertain to individuals working in schools, citing work done in counseling and other fields that discuss specific competencies that she proposes are relevant in schools.

A strength of the GoPaul-McNicol (1997) theoretical framework is that it attempts to synthesize the literature in school psychology, and related fields, to identify major areas of understanding and skill needed by individuals working with diverse students in schools. This work represents that first attempt in school psychology literature to present a comprehensive framework that addresses the range of competencies needed for psychologists working in schools. However, a shortcoming of this framework is that at this time, research has not been conducted with the purpose of validating the conceptualization.

Task Force on Cross-Cultural School Psychology Competencies Conceptualization

Members of the American Psychological Association Division 16 Task Force on Cross-Cultural School Psychology Competencies also identify areas of skill important in school psychology (Rogers, Ingraham, Bursztyn, Cajigas-Segredo, Esquivel, Hess, Nahari, & Lopez, 1999). Rogers et al. (1999) assert that the recommendations presented in their framework represent an expansion of the recommendations for service delivery offered in the APA (1993) Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services to Ethnic, Cultural, and Linguistically Diverse Populations. The Guidelines presents recommendations that address working with diverse clients. However, as discussed by Rogers et al. (1999), the Guidelines does not pay sufficient attention to many of the cross-cultural dilemmas and competencies that are relevant for professionals working in the schools. Thus, the Division 16 task force (Rogers et al., 1999) reviewed literature concerning multicultural issues in schools to develop a framework of recommendations that addresses the special skills needed to work with diverse students and families.

Rogers et al. (1999) state that “an important step in the development of cross-cultural competence is to become informed regarding the existing knowledge base of empirical findings, legal decisions, regulatory standards and codes, and professional best practices specific to work in diverse schools” (Rogers et al., 1999, p. 3). The stated objective of the task force was to synthesize the existing knowledge base, offer illustrations and applications of the knowledge base, and outline recommendations for providing services to diverse school populations. Six major competency areas are addressed in this work: (a) Legal and Ethical Issues, (b) School Culture, Educational Policy, and Institutional Advocacy, (c) Psychoeducational Assessment and Related Issues, (d) Academic, Therapeutic, and Consultative Interventions, (e) Working with Interpreters, and, (f) Research. The knowledge and skill recommendations proposed by this committee are listed in Appendix C. The six areas in which the recommendations are organized and the specific competencies addressed are discussed below.

Legal and ethical issues. Rogers et al. (1999) contend that school psychologists should be versed in the legal and ethical issues that may affect diverse populations. The authors state that “psychologists who work in the schools are informed about local, state, and federal laws and regulations as well as major court cases that pertain to all children” (Rogers et al., 1999, p. 5). An understanding of social and educational public policy and their impact on school practices are also recommended. School psychologists must be able to incorporate information from laws and policies into their practice (e.g. rulings regarding civil rights, informed consent, bilingual education, etc.). The changing demographics of the school systems also necessitate that psychologists know how to access information about immigration and citizenship laws. School

psychologists must be able to advocate the legislation and educational policy that will positively impact diverse students.

In regard to ethical issues, Rogers et al. (1999) state that school psychologists should have an intimate understanding of their professional codes of ethics. They should use the codes when confronted with ethical dilemmas that may arise when working with diverse students and families. Additionally, competent psychologists are aware of the limits of their competence, and how their own cultural values may influence their interactions with diverse populations.

School Culture, Educational Policy, and Instructional Advocacy. Rogers et al. (1999) recommend that school psychologists have knowledge of the ways in which the culture of the school system and larger society impact students and their families. Within the schools, psychologists must serve as an advocate for diverse students and their families by informing members of the system about how cultural differences may affect service delivery. Psychologists must have knowledge about the type of educational culture that promotes healthy development for diverse students, campaign for appropriate educational services and programs for diverse students, and alert parents to their rights. Additionally, part of psychologists' roles is to develop and implement in-services for staff that address intolerance and insensitivity, and to teach staff about the impact of institutional racism in the school system and society.

Psychoeducational Assessment and Related Issues. The psychoeducational assessment area addresses competence in conducting assessments that are culturally sensitive and valid for diverse students. Rogers et al. (1999) assert that school psychologists should be skilled in gathering and integrating cultural information into

assessments and reports. The importance of understanding the language acquisition process and its impact on the socio-emotional and cognitive development of students is addressed in this competency area, as is the ability to assess the students' biculturalism.

In discussing evaluation procedures, Rogers et al. (1999) state that assessments “may or may not include standardized testing” (p. 13). The authors emphasize the importance of understanding some of the pitfalls of some standardized tests, including validation and norm sampling issues. They assert that competent psychologists have skill in administering a wide range of formal and informal assessments, and adapting assessment procedures when necessary.

Academic, Therapeutic, and Consultative Interventions. The Academic, Therapeutic, and Consultative Interventions competence section addresses awareness of the ways in which cultural variables can affect academic achievement, communication styles, and the effectiveness of interventions. Rogers et al. (1999) recommend that psychologists have knowledge of the research that has been done exploring the interplay between culture and achievement, as well as an understanding of the curricular and instructional needs of diverse students.

This area also discusses competence in providing culturally appropriate therapy and consultation services. Competent psychologists must be skilled in interpreting nonverbal and verbal behaviors and are knowledgeable about how racial identity development can impact achievement and intervention. Further, these individuals have knowledge of the problem-solving process and how to use this process to identify community, school, and classroom, interventions that are effective and culturally appropriate.

Working with Interpreters. Rogers et al. (1999) acknowledge that when working with students for whom English is not their primary language, it is ideal to have a psychologist who is proficient in the language of the child. However, since this is often not possible, the authors offer recommendations for working with interpreters. Psychologists competent in working with interpreters have knowledge of the skills necessary to be a qualified interpreter and the issues that arise when working with interpreters. These individuals also have skill in conducting assessments and interviews using an interpreter, and the ability to interpret and use the data that is provided in these situations.

Research. Finally, the research competency area addresses understanding how to conduct culturally sensitive research to study minority populations (Rogers et al., 1999). Rogers et al. (1999) recommend that psychologists be skilled in using quantitative and qualitative research procedures and that they be knowledgeable about conducting program evaluations to determine the effectiveness of programs and services for diverse students. In conducting research, competent psychologists recognize the social, linguistic and cultural context in which the research takes place and they acknowledge and eliminate possible biases.

Model development. Rogers et al. (1999) do not identify any particular research that was instrumental to the development of the recommendations they propose. Review of the references cited in the article suggest that the authors reviewed literature addressing issues such as multicultural education, cross-cultural issues in special education, assessing diverse students, working with interpreters, counseling, ethics and identity development. Similar to the GoPaul-McNicol conceptualization, empirical

research has not been reported with the express purpose of validating the recommendations offered in this article.

Rogers and Lopez (2002) and Lopez and Rogers (2001) Conceptualizations

In contrast to the previously described competency projects, Rogers and Lopez (2001) and Lopez and Rogers (2002) have used data-based methods to study multicultural competencies for school psychologists. Rogers and Lopez (2002) state that “for training of school psychologists to be maximally effective, competencies must be clearly articulated and validated” (p. 116). A Delphi technique, which involves polling the opinions of a panel of experts using mailed questionnaires, is a method that has been used by these authors to delineate competencies needed for working with diverse students in schools.

Rogers and Lopez (2002). Rogers and Lopez (2002) polled school psychology practitioners, supervisors, administrators, and faculty labeled as experts, to identify critical cross-cultural competencies for school psychologists. The authors began their research by conducting an extensive literature review to identify multicultural competencies addressed in the literature. The literature review examined journal articles, book chapters, and professional standards discussing the multicultural competencies needed by school psychologists published between the years 1975 and 1995. A review of original sources in related specialties cited in the school psychology pieces was also conducted. An analysis of the content of this research resulted in the generation of a list of 185 specific multicultural competencies proposed in the literature. The researchers found that these competencies fell into knowledge or skill areas and they were coded into the following 14 competency areas: Academic Interventions,

Assessment, Consultation, Counseling, Culture, Language, Laws & Regulations, Professional Characteristics, Research, Report Writing, Theoretical Paradigms, Working with Interpreters, Working with Organizations, and Working with Parents.

In the second stage of the Rogers and Lopez (2002) project 34 expert participants (52 % of those invited to participate) rated the importance of each of the 185 competencies on a likert scale. Also, the experts were asked to add any skill or knowledge competencies that they felt were omitted from the list. Findings show that 75 additional competencies were identified by participants. In the third stage of the project, Rogers and Lopez, distributed the revised survey that included the competencies identified by the participants and asked participants to again rate the importance of each competency. Ratings were reported for the final pool of twelve expert panelists (18% of those invited to participate).

Critical competencies were determined by calculating the means, standard deviations, and range of consensus, for each specific knowledge and skill competency (Rogers & Lopez, 2001). Of the original 185 competencies identified 79 (43%) were identified as being critical, and of the 75 competencies added by participants in the first round, 23 (31%) met criterion for being critical. This resulted in the identification of 102 critical multicultural competencies for school psychologists.

Using the mean ratings for specific competencies within each competency area, Rogers and Lopez (2002) ranked the 14 major areas. Competency areas that received the highest rating in terms of importance were (a) Assessment, (b) Report Writing, and (c) Laws and Regulations. See Appendix D for area rankings and sample items for each category, Rogers and Lopez do not list all 102 critical competencies in their article).

The two specific competencies with the highest importance ratings fell under the Assessment category; the competencies were “school psychologists should have knowledge about nonbiased assessment and the process of adapting available instruments to assess linguistically and culturally diverse students” and “school psychologists should have skills in using instruments sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences”.

Lopez and Rogers (2001). In a related project that utilized slightly different methodology to generate lists of specific competencies, Lopez and Rogers (2001) also used the Delphi polling technique to have expert participants rate the importance of competencies. In this research, however, an open-ended questionnaire was sent to a new panel of expert participants. Rather than have participants rank literature-derived competencies, as was done by Rogers and Lopez (2002), Lopez and Rogers used an open-ended questionnaire and asked participants to write-in essential competencies.

In the first round of the Lopez and Rogers (2001) project a panel of experts was asked to identify essential skill and knowledge competencies under the 14 competency areas cited above in the Rogers and Lopez (2002) project. After editing for redundancy and appropriateness, Lopez and Rogers report that 25 experts (39%) identified 459 specific competencies. In the second round of this data collection process, the panel was asked to rate the importance of the competencies on a likert scale and add any competencies that they believed were omitted. A panel of 11 experts (17% of those invited to participate) completed the questionnaire and four competencies were added. In the final round, the 11 experts were again asked to rate new items and to reconsider their ratings.

Lopez and Rogers (2001) report that 89 competencies met the criteria for being labeled as essential multicultural competencies, eliminating 374 of the competencies generated by the panel (See Appendix E). The competency areas that received the highest importance ratings in this investigation were (a) Assessment, (b) Consultation, and (c) Language. Lopez and Rogers (2001) conclude that many competencies identified by the experts were congruent with those proposed in the literature. Some of the competencies identified by experts and in the literature include cross-cultural awareness, knowledge, counseling, consultation, and assessment skills. However, the Lopez and Rogers (2001) state that the competencies generated in their research “represent a wider range of professional functions and activities and focus exclusively on those most needed by school psychologists” (p. 290).

Comparison of Rogers and Lopez (2002) and Lopez and Rogers (2001). Rogers and Lopez (2001) state that their study is “unique as the first to combine a qualitative methodology with empirical procedures to identify literature-derived and expert-derived critical cross-cultural competencies that school psychologists should have” p. (129). Both the Rogers and Lopez (2002) and the Lopez and Rogers (2001) articles are great contributions to the field as they provide empirical validation for some of the specific competencies needed by school psychologists. While this research did not set out to validate the GoPaul-McNicol (1997) or Rogers et al. (1999) frameworks, the research provides support for the importance of some of the specific competencies proposed in these works.

Some of the discrepancies in findings between the Rogers and Lopez (2002) and Lopez and Rogers (2001) research projects highlight the importance of continued

research examining multicultural competence in school psychology. First, as discussed by Lopez and Rogers, each of the investigations identified unique specific competencies. For example, under the area of Report Writing, different skills and knowledge competencies were outlined in the two projects. Further, the authors report that more awareness competencies were identified in the expert-derived list compared to the literature-derived list, and the literature-derived list was more skill based. These findings suggest that more research is necessary to examine the competencies that are actually utilized by school psychologists.

Summary of Multicultural Competence in School Psychology

In reviewing the competencies proposed to guide school psychologists, one finds that there is overlap with some of the competencies addressed in the counseling psychology literature. Using the competencies proposed by D. W. Sue et al. (1982) as an example, many of the belief/attitude, knowledge, and skill competencies proposed in this model are congruent with the cognitive and behavioral aspects of multicultural responding proposed by GoPaul-McNicol (1997) and Rogers et al. (1999). After using a multicultural counseling competency assessment instrument based on the D. W. Sue et al. (1982) framework to assess school psychologists, Rogers and Ponterotto (1997) stated that the competencies involving cultural awareness and interpersonal sensitivity are relevant to both counselors and school psychologists. However, while there is some overlap between the competencies that have been proposed in these two specialties, key competencies that are critical to the provision of school psychology services are neglected in the counseling competencies literature. For example, skills necessary for working with parents, working as an internal consultant, and working with interpreters

in multicultural cases, are not thoroughly discussed in the multicultural counseling literature (Lopez & Rogers, 2001).

Summary of the Literature Review: Implications for the Present Study

This review highlights some of the gaps in the research that has been conducted on multicultural competence in psychology. The field of counseling psychology has been in the forefront in terms of theorizing about multicultural competence (Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997). The literature that has arisen from the counseling field has been influential on practices and training in the related fields of clinical and school psychology. However, there are several pitfalls to using these models of multicultural counseling competence to guide the practice and training of psychologists working in the schools. First, despite counseling psychology scholars' dedication to this topic area, the review demonstrates that there is no consensus as to what constitutes multicultural counseling competence. Further, while there is overlap between the competencies addressed in counseling competency models and the skills that are necessary for school psychologists, the competencies proposed in the field of counseling do not address the full range of duties a school psychologist performs and the counseling competence models were developed primarily for counselors working with adults, not individuals working in school settings.

Because of aforementioned issues, it is important that research be conducted to gain greater insight into the multicultural interventions needed to provide the range of duties school psychologists perform. The few works that exist in the school psychology competency literature base provide a foundation in this area. The conceptual works of GoPaul-McNicol (1997) and that of Rogers et al. (1999) address the multicultural

competencies necessary for providing a range of services in the schools. Yet, Lopez and Rogers (2001) state that a shortcoming of these works is that they were developed using methods that were neither “systematically nor scientifically grounded” (p. 274). While the work of Lopez and Rogers (2001) and Rogers and Lopez (2002) are great contributions to the literature base as they used empirical methods to identify competencies, these works do not provide a context for understanding the experiences of psychologists. Thus, questions still exist in regard to the how school psychologists manage racial-ethnic differences, the interventions school psychologists are actually using, and what factors impact multicultural interactions. At this time a qualitative interview procedure has not been used to explore the experiences of school psychologists working in diverse schools. The current project utilized a grounded theory design to generate a framework of multicultural responding in school psychology that is grounded in data collected from those experienced at working in diverse schools. Using qualitative methodology allowed for an in-depth examination of the cross-cultural interactions of school psychologists and the interventions they utilize in these interactions.

Chapter 3

Methods

Increasingly researchers in the field of multicultural psychology have been calling for the incorporation of qualitative methods (Fuertes, 2001; Morrow, Raksha & Casteneda, 2002; Ponterotto, 2002). While qualitative methods have been widely used in the fields of anthropology, sociology and nursing, the use of these methods in psychology is a relatively recent development (Morrow et al., 2002; Ponterotto, 2002). A particular qualitative methodology that has received attention in the psychology research is grounded theory (Pope-Davis, Torporek, Ortega-Villalobos, Ligiero, Brittan-Powell, Liu, Bashshur, Codrington & Liang, 2002; Richie, Fassinger, Geschmay, Johnson, Prosser, & Robinson, 1997). This methodology was used in the current study to understand the experiences of psychologists working in diverse settings.

One of the reasons that grounded theory has received increased attention is because this method emphasizes understanding the “voice” of the participant to build a theory about phenomena. Strauss and Corbin (1990), two of the researchers who have been instrumental in defining grounded theory methodology, state that theory is “discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon” (p. 23). In the current study interviews with psychologists and staff surveys were analyzed to develop a theory that explains the experiences of school psychologists working in diverse settings. This theory addresses the challenges confronted and strategies used by these psychologists, as well as factors that impact service provision in diverse settings.

Participants

A purposeful sampling technique was used to recruit participants for this project. Purposeful sampling is described as choosing “particular subjects to include because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 65). Since the purpose of the current study was to develop a theory of responding in diverse environments, participants included individuals who had been identified as experienced in providing services to diverse students, parents, and teachers in the role of school psychologist.

Ten school psychologists experienced in working in diverse school settings served as the primary participants in this study. All of the participants were females. Participants represented several racial-ethnic groups; 5 were African-American, 4 were European-American, and 1 was Latina. Eight of the participants had Specialist degrees and the other two had Doctoral degrees in school psychology. Participants reported years of experience working as school psychologists ranging from 5 to 32 years ($M=15.2$), and years of experience in schools of 50% or more racial-ethnic minority student population ranging from 5 to 25 years ($M=10.6$). One of these participants served initially as the pilot study participant. Since pilot protocol questions were included in the final protocol without significant changes, her responses were included in analysis.

Specific criteria for participation in the current project included at least five years of experience working as a school psychologist in diverse school settings. Scholars state that “the role of experience in the acquisition of expertise is pivotal because it is through experience that experts acquire an adequate knowledge base for

conceptualizing situational information in ways that permit effective conceptualization, problem solving, and action” (Martin, Slemon, Hiebert, Hallberg, & Cummings, 1989, p. 395). While the selection of five years of experience was somewhat arbitrary (as compared to 3 years or 10 years), this experience criterion has been used in previous studies examining school psychologists and their views of multicultural issues (Rogers & Lopez, 2001; Lopez & Rogers, 2002).

For the purposes of this project, diverse school settings were operationalized in terms of racial and ethnic diversity. Schools with at least 50% racial-ethnic minority populations were considered diverse. As discussed earlier, diversity is defined as any individual or group difference that is related to experiences that significantly differ from those reflected in the American mainstream (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). Thus, this definition includes a myriad of cultural variations, not just differences in racial and ethnic group membership. The decision was made to define diversity in terms of racial-ethnic groups for the current project because school systems had data on the number of racial-ethnic minority students in their schools, and data regarding other cultural variables, like sexual orientation or religion were not accessible.

Procedure for Soliciting Participants

Five Maryland metropolitan area school districts were targeted for participation. The researcher contacted school psychology coordinators of these counties via phone to request that they nominate school psychologists in their county who met participation criteria. The purpose of the project was explained to the supervisors. Coordinators were told that they would receive a letter requesting that they nominate practicing school psychologists in their county who had at least 5 years of experience working in

schools of at least 50% racial-ethnic minority student population (See Appendix F for the Supervisor Letter). A nomination form, to be completed by the coordinator and sent back to the researcher, accompanied the letter (See Appendix G). Each coordinator was asked to nominate up to three school psychologists in their county who met the study criteria.

Psychological supervisors from three counties nominated three school psychologists each. The school psychologists who were nominated were contacted via phone and their consent for participation was requested. When contacting potential participants, the nature of the research was discussed so that an informed decision about participation could be made. The participants were informed that their names were obtained through a nomination process and that their decision to participate was voluntary. All nine of the school psychologists nominated agreed to participate and an interview time and place was established.

During the initial interview, participants were asked to sign an informed consent that again outlined what was involved in participation in the project. The informed consent explained that the study was voluntary and that individuals could discontinue participation at any time. Additionally, the consent informed participants that they would receive a twenty five dollar token of appreciation at the conclusion of the interview. See Appendix H for a copy of informed consent.

Participant Profiles

Before completing the interview, participants filled out a questionnaire that inquired about demographics, work history, and multicultural training experiences. Items asked participants to report their ethnicity, educational status, and current

placement levels as well as the number of years working as a school psychologist and the number of years the psychologists worked in diverse school settings. Additionally, the questionnaire asked participants to report if multicultural issues in assessing, consulting, and counseling culturally different populations were covered during their graduate training.

Information provided on the questionnaire is reported below. Participants were asked to choose a pseudonym to protect their anonymity. Pseudonyms, rather than actual names, were used during analysis and throughout this document.

Tracy: Tracy is an African American who has been working as a school psychologist for 20 years. Currently Tracy is working in an elementary school, a middle school, and a special education center. She has had 12 years experience working in racially-ethnically diverse settings. Tracy holds a Specialist degree and reports that multicultural issues were not a focus of her graduate training.

Pearl: Pearl is a European American school psychologist who reports having over 5 years of experience working in diverse school settings in her 16 years of work in this career. Pearl holds a Specialist degree and presently works in elementary and middle school settings. Pearl stated that multicultural issues were not addressed in her training program.

Jasmin: Jasmin currently works in an elementary and middle school. She identifies as African American and has worked in diverse school settings during all of the 11 years that she has been practicing. Jasmin is a Specialist level school psychologist and expressed that multicultural issues were a focus in her graduate training program.

Lehe: Lehe is a Specialist level school psychologist who has been in the profession for 6 years. She is a European American who currently works in elementary and high school settings. Lehe reported that multicultural issues in assessment were addressed in her training program; however cultural issues in counseling and consultation were not. She has had 6 years of experience working in diverse school settings.

Ann: Ann is a European American, Specialist-level psychologist, who has been working for 5 years. Currently she is working in elementary and middle school settings. Ann has worked in diverse school settings for her entire career and reported that multicultural issues in assessment, counseling and consultation were addressed in her graduate training.

Dahlia: Dahlia is a Doctoral-level school psychologist who has been practicing for over 25 years. She currently works with elementary level students. Dahlia identifies as a Latina and shares that she lived in Puerto Rico most of her life. Dahlia reports that multicultural issues were a focus in her training program and cultural issues in assessment, counseling and consultation were covered. She has had 13 years experience working in diverse school settings.

Fleming: Fleming has had 32 years experience working as a school psychologist. She is currently placed in elementary school, middle school, and special education center settings. Fleming is an African American, Doctoral-level psychologist who has worked in racially-ethnically diverse school settings for 25 years. She reports

that multicultural issues in assessment were addressed in training, while there was little focus on cultural issues in counseling and consultation.

Bertha: Bertha is a European American school psychologist with 20 years of experience. She is a Specialist-level psychologist who is currently working in a high school placement. Bertha reports that multicultural issues in assessment, counseling, and consultation were addressed in her graduate training. She has had 17 years experience working in diverse school settings.

Landon: Landon is a European-American, Specialist-level school psychologist who has been practicing for 6 years. Landon currently works at the elementary level and has had 6 years experience working in diverse school environments. She expressed that multicultural issues were addressed in her graduate training program. Issues regarding assessment, counseling, and consultation in diverse populations were addressed.

Vivica: Vivica is the pilot study participant. She is an African American, Specialist-level school psychologist who has been practicing for 11 years. Vivica is currently working in a high school and has had 6 years experience working in diverse school environments.

Data Collection

Sources of data for the current project included psychologist interviews and staff surveys. The interviews with psychologists were used to develop the proposed theory of responding. Staff surveys were used in the triangulation process, a technique used to increase the trustworthiness of qualitative inquires. Additional information about triangulation is provided later in this chapter.

Interview and survey questions focused on gathering information about the strategies psychologists relied on when responding in diverse settings and the challenges faced in these environments. Specifically, questions inquired about situations in which the psychologist was performing assessments, consultations, and counseling with racial-ethnic minority students. A secondary focus included exploring the factors that impacted psychologists' ability to perform their duties in diverse school settings.

Interview

The primary data collection method was participant interviews. Participants completed one interview, the length of which ranged from approximately 45 to 90 minutes. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. A semi-structured format was used in the present project, allowing participants and the researcher the flexibility to expand upon the specific questions proposed on the interview protocol.

The researcher had previous experience conducting in-person and phone interviews as an undergraduate research assistant, and clinical interviews during graduate training. A pilot interview with one school psychologist was conducted to test interview questions and provide further interviewing practice. The participant for the pilot study was chosen because she was an acquaintance of the researcher; however, she did meet the study participation criterion. Conducting the pilot interview allowed the researcher to receive feedback on interviewing skills and the interview format. After the pilot interview, questions were added to the protocol; however, since no significant changes were made to the existing interview questions the pilot interview was included in final analyses.

The final interview consisted of 18 open-ended questions. Probes were also used with some questions to ensure that particular topics were covered. Interview questions and probes are listed in Table 1. These questions can be grouped into four main themes that are discussed below.

The interview began with introductory questions (Questions 1 & 2). Participants were asked non-controversial questions to put them at ease in the interview setting. These items asked about the participants' professional career and how they came to their current placement. A second group of questions solicited feedback on the participants' experiences while working in diverse settings (Questions 3-12, Question 14). Questions addressed the areas of assessment, counseling and consultation in diverse populations and focused on racial-ethnic differences. Specifically, questions asked about the challenges faced and strategies used when working in these areas. Participants were asked to think back about any obstacles related to culture that they had confronted in the school. They were also asked about the strategies and personal characteristics they had relied on or thought were part of effective service delivery.

Several interview questions were included to examine variables that impacted the psychologists' multicultural experiences (Questions 13-16). The interview inquired about the participants' experiences in regard to multicultural training. Additionally, the participants were asked to discuss any factors that facilitated or hindered their ability to effectively deliver services. They were asked to comment on the advantages and disadvantages of working in diverse environments. Finally, the interview concluded with a question addressing any topic not covered, and a question addressing the impact of cultural difference or similarity

Table 1

Interview Questions and Probes

1. Tell me about your professional career?
 - Have you always been a school psychologist?
 - What types of settings have you worked in (e.g. private, centers)?
 2. How did you come to be placed in your current setting?
 3. Would you describe yourself as having a personal interest in cultural issues in the schools?
 - If yes, how/why did this become an interest?
 4. What does multicultural competence in working in diverse school populations mean to you?
 - What cultural groups do you think of when you hear the word “multicultural”?
 - *The focus from this point on will be on your experiences with individuals from racial-ethnic minority backgrounds.
 5. Think back to instances where you conducted assessments of culturally different students. What cultural concerns arose when working with these students?
 6. What strategies do you use when assessing culturally different students?
 - What personal characteristics do you rely on?
 7. Think back to instances where you provided counseling to culturally different students. What cultural concerns arose when working with these students?
 8. What strategies do you use when counseling culturally different students?
 - What personal characteristics do you rely on?
 9. Think back to instances where you provided multicultural consultation (client or consultee is culturally different). What cultural concerns arose when working in these situations?
 10. What strategies do you use when conducting multicultural consultation?
 - Do you need additional or different strategies when consulting with racial-ethnic minority parents?
 - What personal characteristics do you rely on?
 11. Is there a particular area in which you feel most competent in regard to providing services to diverse populations?
 - Why do you feel more confident in this area?
 12. Other than those identified as characteristics and strategies you have relied on in the past, what additional personal characteristics and strategies do you feel are involved in effectively working in racial-ethnic diverse school populations?
 13. Please describe any training (graduate and post-graduate) you have received that addressed providing services to diverse populations.
 14. What processes have facilitated the development of your service provision to diverse populations?
 15. What processes hinder multicultural practice in the school?
 16. What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in a diverse setting?
 17. Do you feel that the racial similarity/difference between us affected the interview?
 18. Is there anything else not addressed in the interview that you think is important?
-

between the interviewer and interviewee (Questions 12 & 18). The researcher and interviewer is an African American female. Thus, there was racial-ethnic match with some of the participants and not others. The racial-ethnic match question was included in the interview to open a discussion on how racial match or mismatch may have impacted participants' responding.

Staff Survey

In addition to interviews, a secondary source of data was staff surveys. Staff surveys were not included in the analysis involved in generating theory. Survey data was coded separate from interview data and provided a means to validate the information from the psychologists. Participants were asked to distribute a brief survey to two school staff members with whom they worked. Participants were instructed that surveys were to be given to administrators, teachers, or other staff members who had observed them working in multicultural situations. Surveys were open-ended and asked respondents to a.) describe a specific multicultural incident where they observed the psychologist, b.) list the strategies they observed the psychologists use, and c.) list the personal characteristics psychologists relied on in these situations (See Appendix I). To increase the likelihood of truthful responding surveys were completed anonymously and not linked to the specific psychologist who distributed them. However, respondents were asked to initial and send back a consent form that explained the purpose of the survey (see Appendix J). Respondents were asked to mail the completed survey and consent form to the researcher in the pre-stamped and addressed envelope provided. Eight individuals returned the completed survey form. Because responders were anonymous the distribution of surveys returned for each psychologist participant is not

available. Respondents identified themselves as special educators, guidance counselors, pupil personnel workers, and administrators.

Data Analysis

Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe data analysis as a process of breaking down, organizing, and reassembling data to develop a different understanding of phenomena. In accord with procedures outlined by Strauss and Corbin regarding data analysis for grounded theory research, the following coding procedures were implemented in the current project: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. This section describes how data were deconstructed, and subsequently reorganized to provide an understanding of how school psychologists respond in multicultural settings.

Several individuals, in addition to the researcher, engaged in coding and interpreting the data for the current project. Two peer debriefers and one peer auditor participated in the analysis process. Characteristics of both debriefers include European American background and experience working in school settings. One of the debriefers is a practicing school psychologist while the other has had a career as a special educator and is currently in a graduate school psychology program. The peer debriefers assisted in the coding of data and provided feedback on coding categories and data interpretations. The auditor for this project is a female, Latina, Doctoral-level, school psychologist. The auditor monitored the coding and interpretation process and provided feedback. Further information about the roles of these individuals is provided later in this chapter.

Examples of coding interview data are included in this chapter to illustrate the process. Although explained as though the data analysis procedures represent distinct

phases, often this was not the case; different coding tasks began concurrently. Table 2 lists two passages from the interviews. These passages are referred to throughout this section to demonstrate the open, axial, and selective coding phases.

Table 2

Example of interview passages and coding

Passage	Concepts	Categories	Main Category	Relational Statement
We have different ways of behaving, different ways of communicating our needs and our wishes and our feelings. And you have to be particularly knowledgeable about that...Temple University was good at making us very sensitive to cultural differences.	Need understanding of between-group differences	Cultural Knowledge	Knowledge	Knowledge is developed through Multicultural Training.
And it is interesting some of the things that do happen, meaning things I have to be sensitive to, happen within a culture or language. I mean even within Caucasian group there are many differences, within the African American group...	Need understanding of within-group differences	Cultural Knowledge	Knowledge	

Open Coding

Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that the “first step in theory building is conceptualizing” (p. 103). The purpose of open coding is to begin the process of breaking data down into concepts or representations of objects and events. After

transcription, interviews and staff surveys were reviewed and broken down into phrases and sentences that represented the participants' main ideas. Transcripts and lists of main ideas were mailed to participants to ensure that the researcher had accurately captured the concepts interview participants had deemed important. (Further information about this process is discussed in the section entitled "Trustworthiness" found later in this chapter).

Review of data from interviews resulted in a list of over 300 concepts or distinct events and meaningful experiences. An example of concepts gleaned from the first quote above include, "working in diverse settings involves understanding differences between cultures" and "multicultural training impacts cultural understandings." A concept from the second quote is, "working in diverse settings involves understanding the differences that occur within cultural groups." Concepts involving the multicultural elements psychologists need to have knowledge of were grouped under the category, "Cultural Knowledge," psychologists' graduate and post graduate training experiences were categorized under "Multicultural Training." This grouping of concepts into categories, or abstract explanatory terms, represents the second step in the coding process. The goal of this coding phase was to generate a list of categories regarding the practices and perceptions of the participants. Through the process of comparing the concepts for similarities and differences a list of over 50 categories was constructed.

The next analysis step involved coding interviews using the category list generated. Each interview was coded by two individuals, the researcher and one of the peer debriefers. The debriefers first assigned categories independently, then met with the researcher to reach consensus on the categories represented in each passage. Paper

copies of interview transcripts and surveys were then cut and sorted into manila folders representing each category. With all instances of each category grouped, the number of categories endorsed by each participant was explored and non-representative categories were eliminated. A note was written for each category examining its properties and dimensions.

For example, consider the “Cultural Knowledge” category. The note for this category included information gained from the data that addressed the conditions and interactions surrounding the development of multicultural understandings and the impact of having these understandings. Additionally, the dimensions, or range of participant’s experiences was noted. While all psychologists discussed having cultural knowledge, some called for an understanding of all culture groups, others called for an understanding of the groups in the specific school setting, and still other stated that there should be knowledge of the cultures that represent a large proportion of the school. Thus, this continuum of perspectives was included in category notes.

Axial Coding

Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that the purpose of axial coding is to “begin the process of reassembling data that were fractured during open coding” (p. 124). This phase of analysis began by grouping category notes into main and subcategories. Through the process 13 main categories representing the experiences of the majority of the participants emerged.

The “Cultural Knowledge” category referred to previously was grouped into a main category labeled “Knowledge” that included all the needed areas of understanding discussed by the participants. Notes and raw data were examined to determine the

properties of this main, or more encompassing category. The “Knowledge” category included information about what type of knowledge is needed (e.g. within group differences, between-group differences, language acquisition, resources), the impact of knowledge (e.g. educate staff, provide information to parents), and how knowledge is gained (e.g. multicultural training, consultation with peers). Additionally, relational statements, or statements derived from the data denoting associations between this category and others, were developed. As portrayed in the quote at the beginning of this section, knowledge of cultural issues was impacted by multicultural training experiences during graduate school. Based on this participant’s experiences and others denoting a relationship between the development of knowledge and training experiences during graduate school and post graduate workshops, a relational statement was developed, linking the main categories of “Knowledge” and “Multicultural Training.”

Selective Coding

Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that “selective coding is the process of integrating and refining categories” (p. 142). The primary goals of this step of analysis were to develop an overarching theoretical scheme explaining how each of the categories related to each other, and to identify a core category that explained the experiences of participants.

In this step of analysis the main categories were examined for similarities and differences. Passages representing each of the main categories were sorted and reviewed with peer debriefers. This resulted in the emergence of four constructs, or overarching theoretical categories. One of the constructs that emerged was labeled “Psychologist Characteristics” and involved the main categories representing

characteristics psychologists brought to the diverse environment; the main category of “Knowledge” was included in this construct. A second construct, “Impacting Variables,” represented the factors participants named as impacting their experiences. One of the main categories included in this construct was “Multicultural Training.”

Analysis of relational statements resulted in the development of a scheme linking the constructs. For example, one of the relationships proposed in the theory involves the relationship between the development of psychologist characteristics and impacting variables. This relationship was partially based on the relational statement discussed above that stated that impacting variables such as multicultural training contributed to the development of psychologists’ characteristics, including knowledge.

A diagram and narrative describing the emergent theory was developed explaining the factors involved in psychologists work in diverse contexts. Review of this scheme helped to determine one core category that represented psychologists’ experiences. Finally, the story of each participant was reviewed to assess its fit to the theory proposed. The specific components of this theory will be shared in the next chapter of this text.

Trustworthiness

In any research study, qualitative or quantitative, the trustworthiness, or validity, of the research findings is an important concern (Creswell, 1998). In determining the trustworthiness of qualitative studies, researchers must consider the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods used. Questions asked involve the extent to which the study accurately captures the perceptions of the participants; whether other researchers would reach similar conclusions based on the data; whether the analysis

process is flexible enough to account for variations in experiences; and the degree that study elements were sufficiently described to allow for comparison to other populations and study findings. Triangulation of data, member checking, thick description, theoretical sampling, peer debriefing, and auditing were some of the techniques used to ensure trustworthiness of the present project.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a technique used to increase the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation refers to the process of comparing results from different sources, or gathered using different methods, to validate findings. In the present study, multiple participants were included and their experiences were compared for similarities and differences. The theory developed was based on the accumulation of common experiences, rather than data unique to any one participant.

Further, the convergence of information obtained through participant interviews and staff surveys was analyzed to assess the fidelity of each information source. Comparison of survey data to the theory generated through analysis of psychologists' interviews provided confirmation to the main concepts proposed in the theory. For instance, the current theory includes constructs that involve the characteristics and strategies on which psychologists rely. These findings were validated by surveys completed by staff members that noted the use of similar techniques and qualities in their observations of psychologists.

Member Checks

Maxwell (1996) states that member checking, or soliciting feedback from participants, is the "single most important way of ruling out the possibility of

misinterpretation of the meaning of what they say and the perspective they have on what is going on” (p. 94). In the current project, each psychology participant received the transcript of her interview. Additionally, participants were sent a list of the main ideas as interpreted by the researcher, organized by each interview question.

Participants were asked to review these documents to detect if the researcher accurately captured the participants' perceptions and identified main ideas the participant thoughts were important. Five participants returned the documents; these participants indicated the need for minimal or no revisions.

Thick description

Creswell (1998) states that rich, thick description of study elements allows those reading the study to decide if results can be transferred to other populations of interest. Detailed information about how the participants were recruited and the criteria for participation were outlined in this chapter. Also a demographic questionnaire was included in the project and background information about each participant's gender, racial-ethnic background, professional experience, and experience in regard to multicultural issues was reported.

After interviews, summary field notes were taken that included a review of the information provided by the participant, as well as researcher reflections regarding the convergence and divergence of the information provided in the interview in regard to previous interviews. Information about the interview setting and significant events that occurred during the interview were documented. Records also were kept throughout the data analysis and interpretation process documenting the development of the emerging theory from its initial to final draft.

Theoretical Sampling

Fassinger (2005) writes, “one of the hallmarks of the GT (grounded theory) approach is the use of theoretical sampling” (p. 162). Theoretical sampling is described as the process of continually gathering data through the analysis process with the purpose of explaining and validating emerging concepts. This process usually involves soliciting specific participants or data collection sources that will provide further information on the particular construct being examined. In the current project, theoretical sampling was not used to identify participants. However, an alternate method of theoretical sampling was employed. Fassinger (2005) states, “sampling in the theoretical sense also includes continued return to the existing data to select incidents, scenes, or events” (p. 162). The current researcher sampled specific experiences and incidents within the interview data to confirm and elaborate on emerging findings.

Peer debriefing

Researchers state that “soliciting feedback from others is an extremely useful strategy for identifying validity threats, your own biases and assumptions, and flaws in your logic and methods” (Maxwell, 1996, p. 94). Two peer debriefers were part of the current study. Peer debriefers served several roles throughout the data analysis and interpretation stages including coding data, providing feedback on interpretations, and being a sounding board for the researchers’ emerging insights and concerns. Debriefers were provided background information about the study and grounded theory methodology. After becoming familiar with the raw data, debriefers provided feedback on category lists and participated in category coding of all data during the open coding

process. In axial coding, the debriefers reviewed selected passages for the main categories and provided feedback on the emerging theory. Finally, debriefers reviewed an outline of the final draft of the theory and provided feedback on the fit between the theory proposed and the data provided by participants.

Auditing

Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that the “audit may be the single most important trustworthiness technique available to the naturalist” (p. 283). An audit entails reviewing a trail of documentation created by the researcher to ensure that qualitative methodology was adequately followed, and that the emergent theory is grounded in the data. A peer auditor was included to audit the process and product of this study. The auditor was provided with all raw and coded data, and emerging versions of codes and the theory. She also was given early versions of this chapter and the next chapter, which outlined study findings. The researcher and auditor met throughout the data analysis and interpretation process to discuss concerns and insights and to review audit trail materials. Appendix L holds a letter from the auditor attesting to the fact that she participated in the process described above.

Chapter 4

Results

In this chapter findings from the project are shared. The purpose of the current study was to develop a theory that explains how school psychologists respond in diverse school settings. Grounded theory methodology was used in this effort to analyze interview data from ten school psychologists and eight school staff members working in diverse school settings. The study explored how school psychologists managed racial-ethnic differences, and emphasis was placed on the techniques utilized and the variables that impacted the manner in which psychologists responded.

The emergent theory proposes that responding in diverse settings is best understood as an interactive relationship between the challenges encountered in the school environment, what the psychologist brings to the environment, what the psychologist does in the environment, and the factors that impact these interactions. Analysis resulted in one overarching category, entitled ‘Bridging Cultural Gaps,’ which describes how psychologists’ responded. Under this central category are four main constructs labeled “Diverse School Context,” “Psychologist Characteristics,” “Psychologist Strategies” and “Impacting Variables.” Thirteen more specific, key categories are subsumed under these constructs.

The next section of this chapter provides an in-depth examination of the five constructs that comprise the emergent theory. The section begins with an exploration of the construct labeled, “Diverse School Context.” This construct describes the central challenges that psychologists reported when working in diverse environments. Following this is a description of the psychologist component of the theory. The

personal characteristics and strategies relied on are examined in sections named, “Psychologist Characteristics” and “Psychologist Strategies”. The variables affecting the interactions of participants in diverse environments are explained under the “Impacting Variables” section. Finally, the chapter concludes with an examination of the central category, “Bridging Cultural Gaps” and a description of the emergent theory in its entirety. It may seem counterintuitive to place the explanations of how the theory fits together at the end of the chapter. However, it is suspected that this placement facilitates understanding of the proposed interrelationships between categories.

In discussing each construct, direct quotations are included to assist in illustrating the emergent theory. As discussed in the methods chapter, each participant was given a pseudonym and quotes are coded under this name. Following a format similar to Richie et al. (1997) results are discussed using particular terms to indicate the frequency of endorsement. The phrases “the majority of,” “many,” and “most” were used to discuss concepts expressed by at least 7 of the 10 psychology participants. The words “some,” “several,” and “a number of” show that 4 to 6 of the psychologists supported the concept. “A few” was used to indicate concepts expressed by 3 or fewer participants. Additionally, Table 3 provides an outline of the constructs and main categories of the theory with indication of how many participants endorsed each.

Table 3

Endorsement of Main Categories (N=10)

Main Categories	Number of participants endorsing category
Diverse School Context	
Communication Barriers	7
Families in the Diverse Context	9
Teachers in the Diverse School Context	8
Psychologist Characteristics	
Multicultural Interest	9
Knowledge	10
Self-awareness	7
Cultural Empathy	8
Psychologist Strategies	
Relationship Building	9
Information Gathering	7
Information Sharing	9
Impacting Variables	
Multicultural Training	8
Life Experiences	8
System Issues	8

Diverse School Context

While participants expressed many positive aspects of multicultural school environments, this section highlights some of the challenges encountered. Cultural mismatches or gaps are inherent to the diverse environment. Participants discussed several common areas of difference that presented challenges. Differences in communication are discussed first. Psychologists also addressed issues surrounding working with specific groups in the schools. Particular challenges encountered when working with families and school staff are discussed in separate sections.

Communication Barriers

One source of cultural mismatch that occurred in the school setting involved communication barriers. Many participants discussed the challenges presented when there was a difference between the languages of the family, psychologist, and other school staff. Communication differences led to misunderstandings, miscommunication, and failure to attempt to communicate. Situations described by the psychologists involved not only issues that arose when students and parents were not proficient in English, but also the impact of dialectal differences and the use of non-standard English.

The participants discussed the ways in which language differences impacted interactions in schools. Mismatches in primary language spoken led to difficulties understanding what students and parents were trying to convey. When discussing the assessment process, Dahlia stated, “With the African-American community I have to be aware that they have a different way of speaking English. So I have to make sure that I understand what that child is saying.” Landon addressed how communication issues affected counseling interactions with students with whom she has worked. She expressed that some students’ backgrounds did not emphasize a vocabulary to adequately prepare them to talk about their emotions.

Some participants also discussed how communication differences impacted interactions with parents. Obvious challenges arose when attempting to hold meetings with parents when the parent and school staff spoke different languages. One strategy used in some schools to combat communication barriers was to use interpreters;

however, several psychologists also discussed some of the challenges that occurred with this strategy.

There were a lot of cases that we had a translator that would work with us but sometimes when we couldn't get her they'd have an aide or teacher translate.

[Lehe]

I have issues that I am trying to address now with interpreters....I know of meetings that are being held and siblings are being the interpreters. [Jasmin]

While not all interactions with interpreters were negative, respondents did express some concern over who was being used as interpreters. Concerns involved the use of individuals not qualified to serve as interpreters because they did not have the educational or psychological expertise or vocabulary to adequately convey information to parents. Unqualified interpreters may not have an understanding of the importance of exact relay of the information provided, thus providing incorrect or misleading information to parents. Additionally, a few respondents discussed the power imbalance created by using the student or siblings to translate for parents.

Families in the Diverse Context

A second category of cultural gaps involved those between diverse families and the mainstream culture that typifies schools. Most respondents discussed how discrepancies in race, beliefs, values, behaviors, and experiences affected interactions between school staff and families. Some also addressed challenges involving differences in the level of parental understanding of the educational process, and parental involvement.

Psychologists discussed clashes between sets of values and behaviors found in the schools. Respondents addressed differences in norms regarding social interaction patterns, eye contact, how children are disciplined, and communication styles. These differences impacted the assessment, counseling, and consultations psychologists conducted in diverse settings. Several participants explained how cultural differences impacted students' responding on cognitive and socio-emotional assessments. Vivica stated that there are "verbal differences in the way some children in some cultures respond to people they view as an expert;" this may impact their responding during assessments. Psychologists asserted that some cognitive items are biased, as appropriate responses are dependent on cultural experiences and socialization. When conducting emotional assessments, Lehe discussed the "eye contact issue" and "trying to figure out whether a child is sullen" or if the lack of eye contact is related to cultural norms.

A few respondents discussed the impact of racial-ethnic group mismatch with clients. Responses indicated that racial-ethnic group similarity impacts the establishment of rapport between psychologists and families. Lehe, a European American psychologist, shared that she observed differences in her counseling interactions with students from different cultural backgrounds.

The White students tend to open up to me a little bit more. Of course there are exceptions, but I definitely see more reserved students when they [Black students] are dealing with me. They might not feel as reserved if they were dealing with somebody of their own background. [Lehe]

An additional challenge identified by psychologists working in diverse settings involved the level of parent involvement in these systems. A few of the psychologists cited lack of parent involvement as a disadvantage of working in multicultural school environments. Most of the discussion regarding parental involvement concerned attending parent-teacher, special education, and intervention meetings, and active participation in these meetings. Jasmin shared her observation of parent interactions in special education meetings; “I find sometimes that many diverse populations are hesitant or reluctant. They don’t understand that they have as much control as any of us there at the table.”

Several variables that impact parent involvement were acknowledged. As discussed above, language barriers impacted the parents’ ability to be participants in their children’s education. A parent’s comfort level in the school, and level of comfort interacting with school staff also contributed to the level of involvement. Understanding of school processes, literacy levels, and previous school experiences were noted as impacting parent’s comfort level. Environmental variables such as transportation and child-care also were discussed when explaining lack of parental involvement.

A related challenge that was identified involved cultural beliefs impacting the services parents wanted their children to receive. Several psychologists discussed the fact that parents have varying understandings and acceptances of mental illness and receiving help in this area. Some cultural norms dictate that help should be received through systems other than mental health practitioners and receiving such help has a stigma associated with it. Landon shared that she has observed this with families with whom she has worked;

I've had experiences with the Jehovah Witness religion and they have different views about therapy and counseling. Not just that religion but different religions have different thoughts and parents in general have different thoughts about therapy and how they view psychology and what you are doing to my child in there.

This disparity is further illustrated by a discussion with an administrator recounted by Jasmin where she explained that some African-American parents are hesitant to put their children on medication citing a "history of distrust" and the fall out from the Tuskegee Research Project.

Teacher in the Diverse Environment

Many respondents also discussed some of the challenges that arose when working with teachers and other school staff in the diverse school environment. The challenges discussed in this category most often emerged during consultations with teachers. Psychologists noted that there were often cultural gaps between the teachers in their schools and the populations of students served. These cultural mismatches impacted the relationships between students, parents and teachers, consequently influencing consultations with teachers. Respondents shared that their work often lead them to interact with teachers who had varying degrees of awareness regarding cultural issues, and a range of personal biases.

Many of the respondents shared that interacting with teachers with a low level of awareness of cultural issues was a challenge that they had faced. One specific area that teachers seemed to have difficulty with involved understanding the language

development of their students. Dahlia and Landon discuss some of the particular areas of concern for teachers and the difficulties they had in addressing these concerns:

Well when a child has a second language issue I find that teachers don't realize how long it takes for children to acquire the English language, especially in an educational sense-the fact that conversational language comes first before educational language. I find that you always have to go back to that and remind teachers of that and yet they still have very high expectations of how quickly they think a child should progress. [Landon]

If you can not speak English then they are either highly critical, condescending, and it is very hard for them to understand what is happening with the family. It is also very difficult for them to understand the diversity within our group.

'Why is it that some children born in the United States come to kindergarten not knowing one single word in English, and how come the very same kid by the time they are in second grade they are fluent in English and these other kids can hardly talk?' Those kind of differences are hard to explain, even theoretically, and its hard for them to understand. And then they get upset and they get into fights and it's that perspective that you have to bring up to your team continuously. [Dahlia]

In addition to the process of acquiring English as a second language, respondents expressed that teachers have difficulty understanding other cultural differences including differences in family structure, value systems, and the time

needed to adjust to a new culture. Some teachers did not take these differences into consideration when considering student performance and behaviors.

A few of the participants discussed their experiences working with teachers who expressed prejudices and stereotypical thinking against a group of students. Areas of bias discussed by participants involved racial-ethnic, language, and socioeconomic differences.

I find it difficult sometimes working through teacher bias to get to the root of the problem. Sometimes you have to talk and talk and talk to get to the root of what's going on because you have to get through some of the biases that people have or the prejudgments, the predeterminations.....I have had teachers say that 'That's how they are because...' and 'Why would you expect anything different?' or 'They are just obnoxious'. [Pearl]

With most of my teachers it's not really an issue. Every once in a while there is a teacher who puts more time and effort in helping a White student than a Black or Hispanic student. That's the kind of thing that keeps me up at night. [Ann]

As observed in these quotes working with teachers who expressed these types of biases was very difficult from a professional and personal standpoint. Lack of cultural awareness in teachers and biases against groups of students resulted in inappropriate referrals, misinterpretation of student behavior, and failure to establish rapport with parents and students.

Summary of Diverse School Context

Several common areas of challenge were identified by participants. These challenges were related to interactions between individuals with cultural differences. While acknowledging the obstacles faced in diverse environments, respondents expressed that they encountered a range of behaviors. For example, while some diverse parents had reservations about mental health services, this was certainly not the case for all minority parents. Similarly, while some teachers they worked with failed to recognize the impact of cultural variables on student behavior, others were cognizant of this association.

Psychologist Characteristics

Participants named four characteristics that they brought to the multicultural context that were instrumental to their quest to bridge cultural gaps. These professional and personal qualities involved having an interest in multicultural issues, possessing knowledge in specific areas, self-awareness, and having cultural empathy. Responses provide insight into what each characteristic involves, events that fostered the development of these qualities, and how each characteristic plays out in interactions in diverse settings.

Multicultural Interest

An interest in multicultural issues was one of the characteristics the majority of the participants described. Psychologists described their interest in multicultural issues as occurring on two levels: personal and professional. Most participants explained that they had both a professional and personal interest in multicultural issues. Tracy, a

participant who expressed that diversity was a topic she was drawn to due to her own personal life experiences and her work as a school psychologist, stated the following:

As a minority person I have always been very conscious of the fact that there are differences in terms of the experiences of Caucasian persons and African-Americans. I therefore assumed there would be differences for other cultures. So yes, I have been very interested in that and sensitive to that as an educator.

Two of the psychologists stated that their interest was better described as occurring on a professional level, or being centered around their experiences as psychologists. Pearl stated, "I have a professional interest, not necessarily a personal interest...I have a professional interest in cultural issues in the school because I think it is important for job clarification and function."

Participants cited several factors as influential to the development of multicultural issues as an interest. As demonstrated in the quote above, some expressed that working in a multicultural environment led to their interest in diversity. Landon stated that her interest "naturally progressed as something [she] needed to be current on in terms of professional development." Other participants credited life experiences, particularly experiences as a minority, as contributing to this interest. Fleming explained that how she is "approached, managed, and spoken to" as an African-American contributed to her interest in multicultural issues.

Interest in multicultural issues was manifested in numerous ways. Psychologists discussed seeking out placements in diverse environments because of their interest in multiculturalism. Several other participants shared that they decided to independently take classes to learn a language prevalent in their schools or to learn about the culture.

A few respondents expressed that interest in multicultural issues led them to want to fight injustices. Interest was cited by several psychologists as a key component in motivating them to provide culturally appropriate services.

It would be up to you as a professional to keep yourself educated. And from my perspective it would depend on your interest, your motivation, your willingness to put the effort into learning another test, and willingness to talk about it with colleagues. So it requires a lot from you. [Dahlia]

Knowledge

All participants explained that there were specific areas of knowledge and understanding that they brought to the multicultural setting that facilitated their navigation through this context. One area of understanding involved having cultural knowledge, or an understanding of the norms, beliefs and values of a group. Landon explained that when you have a significant population of a minority group in your school you need to have knowledge of their culture. Areas listed that psychologists needed to be aware of in the school setting included differences in cultural norms for interacting with others (e.g. eye contact), communication patterns, beliefs about discipline and the value of education, and reaction to treatment modalities. Participants expressed that they possess an understanding of language acquisition patterns, areas of bias in assessment, and the impact of environmental variables, such as discrimination, on minority students and parents. In addition to having knowledge of between-group differences, the psychologists asserted the importance of understanding with-in group differences. Ann explained,

Even with my books, they're about diverse therapy, they go through and try to put people in certain little ideas, such as Hispanic parents feel that the school takes care of school stuff and the parents take care of parent stuff. But you still, even then, can't say that that's how it is with all Hispanic parents. Understand some of them are very involved and do want to know what's going on in school and still get upset when they come to a meeting and say how come you didn't tell me that my kid was failing all year.

Psychologists described several interactions that assisted in the development of the understandings needed in cultural contexts. Vivica stated, "I think that the school psychologist perspective of professional consultation and working with other colleagues, asking them questions about culture, has helped me increase my multicultural competence." Consultation with other school psychologists and school staff was a strategy several participants noted as adding to their cultural understandings. Psychologists discussed consulting with administrators, teachers, and student service workers. Other ways participants gained knowledge about cultures and the impact of cultural variables involved graduate and post graduate trainings, doing visits to minority communities, doing research about specific minority groups, and asking parents and students about cultural variables.

Psychologists discussed several ways the knowledge they possessed was used in multicultural settings. Knowledge about culture was used to help the psychologists understand the range of behaviors that may have been influencing their interactions in the schools. Also, it helped participants educate others in the schools about the

variables that impact students. This use of knowledge will be discussed in further detail in the section of this chapter titled, “Information Sharing.”

Self-awareness

Self-awareness was a characteristic that many participants in the study discussed. Dahlia stated, “competency starts with having insight about where you are as a person, how much your needs and experiences affect the way that you conduct yourself professionally.” This participant, as well as many of the other women, explained how self-awareness impacted her work in diverse settings. Areas of awareness discussed included understanding how cultural variables impacted their functioning, awareness of limits of competence, and insight into personal biases.

Several participants expressed the importance of being aware of areas of strength and weakness in regard to working with diverse populations. Lehe shared that while she felt comfortable in many of her roles, counseling minority students at the high school level was an area of need for her. Similarly, there were certain situations for which the psychologists were able to determine that they did not have sufficient competence to handle effectively. Vivica explained that she had to face that she did not have enough information about issues surrounding sexual orientation to effectively deal with some of the concerns she was confronting. A few respondents also pointed out that they were aware of areas of personal bias. For example, Bertha admitted, “sometimes I think probably my biggest problem is with people who are very, very religious”.

Two of the variables named by some as playing a role in fostering self-awareness included personality style and receiving feedback from others. A few of the

psychologists shared that they felt that self reflection was congruent with their personality, while others felt feedback from others helped to spark them to look inward. Training was one of the interactions that three participants cited as being influential in assisting them in developing self-awareness in regard to cultural issues. Fleming described a training experience with an African-American professor that helped her to “understand how important other people’s culture is...and how ours should be important to us too.” Ann stated, “I didn’t realize I was prejudiced by being kind of color blind until I went to grad school and they told me that by not recognizing diversity you are being prejudiced.” Thus, training was attributed with both helping participants increase their awareness of their own culture, as well as increasing their understanding of areas of personal and professional competence and weakness.

As demonstrated in the quotes above, having an understanding of how one’s culture is influential in terms of values, beliefs, and behaviors helped in understanding the influence of cultural variables when working with others. Further, in addition to acknowledging their areas of personal and professional weakness and bias, these women attempted to avoid providing inappropriate services due to these issues. When discussing gathering information about other cultures Dahlia asserted that this information was helpful only if the psychologist was self-aware. She asked the question “Will [asking questions] make you more competent?” and answered, “It will depend on your own biases as a person and as a professional.”

Cultural Empathy

In the current project most participants described having empathy for the issues surrounding the cultural issues faced by clients. Participants indicated that having

empathy involved the ability to consider how one would react and think if facing similar cultural contexts and conflicts as the families and staff with whom they work.

A number of participants' responses involved having empathy for the plight of minority students and parents. These psychologists shared that they brought with them an awareness of how one feels when in an environment where they are not proficient in the primary language spoken, and the mainstream norms may be in conflict with the cultural norms of the family. Fleming stated that when working in diverse situations, "the main thing is just the empathy of what that parent must be going through." She gave the example of parents who bring with them ideas about "how free and loose" American children are. Fleming expressed that she had to understand how cultural beliefs about the way children should behave impacted parents and that she needed to show patience with these parents in helping them understand some of the differences they encountered.

Having experience as a minority was one of the events a few participants named as assisting in their development of empathy. Lehe, a monolingual psychologist, explained that her experiences working in a school where the majority of students and staff were Spanish speakers helped her to gain increased understanding and empathy for the plight of parents and students in an English speaking environment who are not proficient in English. She stated,

It really opened my eyes...it sort of puts you in the seat of the person who doesn't really understand everything that is going on, of feeling like the other person, not entirely understanding the culture and trying very hard to fit in. It

was a good role reversal for me so I really did gain a lot of empathy for minorities.

Responses demonstrated that having empathy enabled participants to better understand the individuals with whom they work. This understanding influenced interactions and the development of relationships. Additionally, some participants shared that their understandings led them to try to instill empathy in others.

Summary of Psychologist Characteristics

Project participants described a number of qualities that were influential to their responding in diverse contexts. Characteristics relied on included having interest in multicultural issues, knowledge of cultural issues, self-awareness, and cultural empathy. Psychologist responses shed light on several factors that contributed to the development of these characteristics. Life experiences, including experiences as a minority, experiencing discrimination, and the values one was raised with, were all contributing factors. Training experiences and interactions with staff also helped in shaping these qualities. The qualities psychologists brought to interactions impacted their ability to effectively build relationships and share information with others, a few of the strategies discussed in the next section.

Psychologist Strategies

Psychologists reported relying on three main strategies when working in diverse settings. Participants shared that they worked to build relationships with the families and school staff with whom they worked, and gather and shared information with these parties. The main goal in implementing these strategies was to bridge the cultural gaps that emerged in multicultural schools.

Relationship Building

Building relationships in the multicultural setting was one of the main strategies used by the majority of participants. Respondents worked to build relationships with families and school staff in their efforts to narrow cultural gaps and increase understandings. When working with minority families, psychologists needed to be cognizant that parents may not feel comfortable with the systems in the school or interacting with a psychologist. Students may have a difficult time negotiating contrasts between the norms of their communities and those of the schools. Teachers and other school staff are often in a position where they must consult with psychologists regarding minority students in their classrooms and issues related to culture. One way that the respondents worked against obstacles presented in these situations involved building working relationships and alliances with these groups.

Vivica expressed that when working with minority families “rapport... is the key to changing behavior.” Respondents shared several methods used to assist in the development of relationships. One common method used by a number of participants to facilitate the development of rapport was attempting to increase the comfort level in the school setting and with the school processes. In the assessment and counseling contexts this was often done by taking more time with students and parents. Several of the respondents discussed making sure they built in extra time with students prior to beginning testing for special education, asserting that they may take up to one session just talking with a student before beginning any assessments. A number of respondents also addressed spending time with parents to discuss the assessment and counseling

processes. When discussing working with some African-American families, Vivica stated the following,

I take more time to get to know the student before we deal with any issues that might be sensitive to them. I also take much more time to bond with their parents because I have found that it is much more essential that you have a family buy-in for the counseling to be effective.

Some of the psychologists also discussed modifying the way they present themselves to increase parent comfort. Pearl accommodated her dress to her environment, stating that she feels “you can’t go into a meeting looking stuffy and professional and not be intimidating to parents.” Jasmin, and a few other psychologists, discussed speaking in layperson’s terms when working with parents, and making a conscious effort not to “run big words over their heads.”

Participants attempted to establish relationships with school staff too. Jasmin shared, “I also think having a good relationship with teachers is critical because they don’t understand sometimes too.” Many of the strategies used to build relationships with families were also used when building relationships with school staff. When working with teachers several psychologists discussed how they attempted to make them feel more comfortable in an effort to build relationships. Dahlia shared that she tried to get to know teachers in a “very informal, friendly kind of way.” She stated the following;

You need to have a good sense of humor....That gives you a leeway with the team that they can trust you and they don’t see you as this strange person that you have to very careful when you talk to them. [Dahlia]

Additionally, a few psychologists shared that they attempted to increase the comfort level of teachers by not using jargon and communicating that they were interested and available to meet with them.

Another aspect of building relationships involved communicating caring for clients. Respondents did not specify particular methods used to communicate that they had an interest in the students they worked with, however a few commented about the influence of this factor on relationship development. Ann reported that although she often worked with parents from different racial-ethnic backgrounds than her own, this often did not present obstacles to relationship development. This participant shared,

Those parents, those kids, I get along with. I feel a rapport with them; it doesn't matter. They're not going to look at me and say, 'Why is this White lady telling me what to do?' They are going to look at me and say, 'This woman really cares about my kids, is an advocate for my child.' That's the kind of rapport I try to bring without even thinking about it.

Disclosure of personal information was another tactic used by a few psychologists in their attempts to bond with minority parents and students. Fleming expressed that she had been in some situations where she felt sharing the fact that she has a handicapped son and showing that she has experience "on both sides" has been to her advantage when attempting to develop a rapport with parents. Bertha also talked about some of the personal information she sometimes shared with parents and students to transcend perceived differences. Bertha, an European-American psychologist, who works in a school with a large Latino and African-American population of low

socioeconomic status, expressed that people sometimes looked at her and their first reaction was that she is from a privileged background; what she called some “Scandinavian princess thing.” However, she shared that she, in fact, is from a background of poverty, stating that her grandparents “were The Grapes of Wrath.” At times she found that sharing this piece of her background with students and families helped them to change their initial perception of her, and helped to decrease the perception of difference, thus facilitating rapport development.

The information provided by participants demonstrated that one way they worked to narrow cultural gaps was to build relationships that helped to transcend differences. Participants shared that their ability to build relationships impacted their ability to gather information and educate the people with whom they worked. Some of the characteristics that a few of the psychologists relied on when attempting to build relationships involved demonstrating a respect for clients and empathy for their situations.

Information Gathering

Gathering information was another of the main strategies used by many study respondents. Collecting information from students, parents and school staff was a common tactic used during the assessment, counseling and consultation processes. Tracy contended that in counseling interactions, “it is imperative that I had a sense of the value system and family structure.” Fleming stated, “I think any group that you are with and have to assess, you should know something, and I do it during the assessment.” Finally Pearl asserted, “When you’re talking about consultation with parents and consultation with teachers you’re still talking about a tremendous amount of

information gathering prior to that consultation taking place.” Psychologists reported that in working in multicultural settings they attempted to gain knowledge about the students, parent and teachers with whom they worked.

Acquiring knowledge about the specific cultural and environmental variables influencing students was an action engaged in by a number of the respondents. Psychologists attempted to gather information to understand the value systems, beliefs about education, community norms, living conditions, immigration status, and structure of the families with whom they worked. One psychologist also discussed gathering information about the cultural and background variables that impacted parents and teachers. Dahlia explained that she asked parents about their educational experiences, including questions about what type of school they attended. When talking with teachers she attempted to gain information about their background experiences.

Several interactions typified psychologists’ efforts in gathering cultural information. The first was simply asking questions. Several respondents explained that they asked the students they were working with to provide this information in clinical interviews and during counseling sessions. Fleming stated,

I try to get them to tell me something in the little interview I do with them. ‘Tell me something. What is it they get in trouble for at home?’ You know, that little family kind of stuff, you try to get it there. So you try to get some piece of the culture, you know, that way from the kids, and they will tell you.

Tracy shared that she begins by asking students less threatening questions to increase their comfort level.

Normally with children and young adults it is very easy for them to talk about some aspects of their life. So I start with ‘Where do you live? Who is in your family?’ Those kinds of things because it is easy for them to relate to and they start to feel comfortable and they can open up and not feel threatened. I can get a picture of the background.

Parents and teachers are other information sources for gathering this data. Ann stated, “I understand that the parent knows the child best and the teacher knows him second best...they are with the kid everyday.” Other psychologists shared that they consulted with people with experience with a particular culture when they needed to gather information on cultural variables. Tracy reported, “if I’m not clear on what someone’s concerns are, especially from a cultural perspective, I go get help...I will ask someone who has more experience.”

Some respondents also discussed their efforts to gain information about what the students they are working with could do. Gathering this type of information typically occurred in the context of assessment. Bias in assessment instruments, differential exposure to cognitive and academic stimuli, and level of comfort with examiners from different racial-ethnic backgrounds, were some of the factors that respondents named as influencing the validity of information obtained from traditional assessment methods. Several participants explained methods they used which were beyond standard procedures to gather additional information about student abilities. The majority of the respondents shared that they employed limit testing procedures, or scaffolds to determine what was needed for a student to be successful in a task, when working with language and ethnic minority students. Nonverbal assessments and curriculum-based

assessments also were used to gather more valid information about what a student could do. Lehe and Ann discussed consulting with teachers and parents to gather information about what the child could do in different settings. Lehe explained that one must “be willing to go back and get the info from those people he feels comfortable with...relying on non-standardized information.”

The information gathered by psychologists was used to determine student abilities, make choices about interventions, and educate others about the factors influencing student behavior and performance. Tracy shared that she attempted to obtain information about students’ backgrounds as it placed her in a position to assist the student in “performing successfully from his perspective and the perspective of his family.” Pearl asserted that when consulting about a child one must consider “the environment that the child is growing up in, the home conditions, the standards, the behavioral expectations, and how those things tie into what we see in school and how they tie into strategies that a teacher might use.”

The ability to effectively gather information in the diverse environment was impacted by the psychologists’ qualities and the manner in which they interacted with others. A few respondents explained the importance of being open-minded and nonjudgmental when attempting to gather information. Showing a respect for and appreciation of others’ values and beliefs positively impacted psychologists’ ability to create a situation where others provided information. Similarly, the ability to acquire information from students, parents and teachers was related to the ability to build relationships within the school.

Information Sharing

Sharing information was the final strategy the majority of psychologists in this project reported using. Information sharing involved a range of interpersonal situations in which the participants provided information or offered interventions to others in an effort to influence behavior or beliefs. It is important to point out that respondents did not provide information with the purpose of changing the cultural beliefs of a group, rather, the goal was to educate to increase cultural understandings. This section is divided into two sections representing the main groups psychologists worked to educate. The first section will describe the respondents' experiences providing information to families. The second section will address educating teachers and other school staff members.

Sharing Information with Parents. As discussed above, the diverse school context was characterized by cultural mismatches. One way that psychologists worked to lessen the impact of gaps in understandings between the White middle class values that typify schools and values and beliefs of minority parents was to offer information about the norms of the school and the processes that occur. Psychologists discussed educating parents about the special education process, the counseling process, and general parenting practices.

When discussing strategies used in the multicultural assessment process several respondents stated that one of the strategies they used was providing education to parents about the school processes. Parents were informed about their child's educational rights, the Special Education process, and disability eligibility. In the counseling arena, several psychologists stated that they had encountered minority

parents who did not have a positive view on counseling services. Parents sometimes held negative views about what it meant to receive psychological help and the efficacy of such services. Again, education was a vehicle used to straddle this obstacle. Respondents asserted that they provided parents with detailed information about what occurred in counseling to address any misconceptions. Landon explained this as follows: “making sure that when you talk to a parent that you tell them that we talk about social skills and feelings and what they can do when they’re angry or sad. And that lets them know that you’re not hypnotizing them or laying them on a couch.”

Several psychologists discussed the importance of being able to provide information about resources when consulting with parents. Often the resources recommended involved services that could not be provided by the school but would increase students’ educational opportunity and success. The range of resources discussed by respondents included opportunities for parents to learn English, outside support and counseling services, literature, and videos.

Unfortunately, while respondents felt that educating parents on processes and resources was important a few expressed that it was not a practice that occurred often enough. One participant contended, “We should be educating our parents more too. A lot of what goes on that affects kids is the lack of parent education or training.” [Ann].

Sharing Information with Students. Sharing information was also a strategy used by a few respondents when working with students. Providing information to students occurred in several contexts including group counseling, individual counseling, and informal meetings with students. Several of the psychologists discussed providing culturally related information to empower students. Tracy, an African-American

psychologist, explained, “I try to make it clear that we have our own culture and that you should be proud.” She also shared with students that discrimination is a force that they will have to deal with for the rest of their lives and gave them strategies for coping. Vivica explained how she offers information in an effort to lessen difficulties that result from differences in expected behaviors in various environments.

I counsel the kids to be more bicultural in the sense that some of the rules that they learn in their community conflict with rules of behavior in school. Rather than assessing that behavior, or judging that behavior, help them to see that there is a difference and that there is an appropriate time for their behavior at home and there is a different kind of behavior and rules and expectations at school.

While Vivica explicitly taught students about differences in expected behaviors she did not judge the student’s behavior. In the example above she showed that she was cognizant that a range of behaviors are acceptable, and even needed for survival, in different cultures and communities. However, she realized that for students to be successful in the school environment they also needed to understand these differences to make informed choices about behavior. Similarly, Dahlia explained that at times she had to give students information to help them be successful that they might not get from their parents.

Well, when you work with girls in middle school and high school there are many cultural issues. How American girls behave versus what parents of Hispanic girls want them to do and what they want to do. So you have to be very sensitive to that and you have to talk to them about it and give them information in a way that their parents may not give them.

Sharing Information with Staff. Many participants also discussed providing information to school staff. Some of the respondents expressed that educating staff was a central part of their duties. Dahlia stated, “That has been my major role, working with teams. In terms of training or educating, making them more sensitive to the specific needs of these kids because it is very difficult to understand them.” The topics of education of staff in the diverse environment differ from that of families. School staff members were educated about cultural and background variables that impacted students and parents, and interventions to use with diverse populations. The context in which teacher education occurred included in-services, teacher-psychologist consultations, and team meetings.

Most respondents stated that they educated school staff on the variables that impacted the beliefs and behaviors of students and parents from various cultures. Sharing information with staff generally occurred during the consultation and assessment contexts. Education involved helping teachers understand differences in regard to racial-ethnic groups, language acquisition, and socio-economic status. Education was sometimes centered around providing general information about minority groups, and at other times related to offering information about a specific family or child. One participant discussed providing the school staff of her elementary schools with information about “the cultural differences in children”, focusing on the “Mexican-American, Asian-American and African-American” cultures [Jasmin]. Dahlia described her interactions working with a teacher to understand the behaviors of an individual student. She stated that she began as follows:

‘With this particular child you can deal with this behavior in this way’ and then as you are talking more to her and can educate her..., ‘You know, this particular child is coming from this area’ ...and start with that... ‘And what do you think about that? and ‘How is this different from your experience?’

A few of the participants discussed educating staff on issues specific to language minority students. As discussed earlier, the language acquisition process was often misunderstood by school staff members. Landon explained that she had to talk to staff about the development of English skills in students, stating that “conversational language comes first, before educational language” and expressed that this process was often “difficult” for teachers to understand. Tracy stated that prior to initiating the special education process she attempts to get her team to consider how cultural variables may be impacting a student’s performance. She asked questions to sensitize staff members to the backgrounds of the students including, “How long has the student been in the country?” and, “How long has the family been in the country?”

Several types of interactions were involved in educating students, parents and staff. Providing information to these groups involved building individual relationships and gathering information about backgrounds. Education involved helping parents understand the processes that occur in schools and providing information to increase diverse student’s ability to be successful in an environment with norms that are sometimes in contrast to those of their upbringing. Additionally, some participants expressed that they shared information with school staff in an effort to assist them in empathizing with the students and families with whom they worked. Participants described this as “creating a balance or empathy” involving teacher’s understanding of

their students [Bertha]; or having teachers “take a walk in the other person’s shoes” [Fleming]. Lehe explained the process as follows, “giving [teachers] information, trying to put them in the student’s shoes, realizing what this must be like...opening their eyes with info and evoking empathy.” Psychologists provided teachers with information in various areas to help them come to a new understanding of their students, thus bridging the gaps created by misunderstandings and misperceptions. Vivica stated that she provided information while working at “reframing the way [the teachers] looked at certain behaviors.”

Summary of Psychologist Strategies

Psychologists reported reliance on three main strategies when working in diverse settings: relationship building, information gathering, and information sharing. Working relationships led to a context in which mutual trust and respect were fostered, thus impacting the psychologists’ credibility and ability to affect change in others. Gathering information about the background and culture of the student, family, and teachers assisted psychologists’ navigation through multicultural interactions as it resulted in the understanding of variables that may have been impacting the current situation. Participants described interactions where they educated families regarding the processes that occurred in schools and the expectations of that context. School staff members were provided information about the impact of cultural variables. This education helped each group to better understand the behaviors and beliefs of the other, thus lessening or changing the perception of difference.

Psychologists’ ability to effectively implement these strategies partially depended on the characteristics they brought to the interaction. Building relationships

in the diverse setting was contingent on the participants' ability to demonstrate a respect for differences and ability to empathize with others. An interest and respect for multicultural issues impacted respondents' ability to gather information in the school. These women needed knowledge of cultural variables to educate students, parents, and staff. Conversely, engaging in these strategies assisted in the further development of effective qualities and skills. For example, gathering information from others lead to increased knowledge and empathy, influencing future interactions.

Impacting Variables

Three main categories of factors external to the psychologists' current situations were named as impacting their experiences in diverse school contexts. Some of these variables facilitated the efforts of psychologists, while others hindered their attempts to narrow cultural gaps. One of the factors named by some participants as facilitating the development of their multicultural service provision skills involved multicultural training. Psychologists stated that contributing training experiences involved graduate training and workshops attended after graduate school. Impacting life experiences noted by the participants included experience traveling, on the job training and being a minority or experiencing discrimination. System issues were reported to be a potential contributing and hindering factor.

Multicultural Training

Graduate and post-graduate training was one of the variables named by most participants as impacting their service provision in multicultural settings. Participants reported a range of perceptions regarding the degree that multicultural issues were addressed during their graduate training and how these issues were

presented. Psychologists also varied on how, and to what degree they felt multicultural training experiences impacted them.

Some participants reported that multicultural issues were not a focus in their graduate training. Tracy expressed,

All of the information presented to me, at that time, and remember we are talking 20 years ago, was based on Caucasian influence...all of the studies, all of the references, validations for everything were based that way.

She reported feeling discouraged by her professors from asking questions about minority cultures stating, “the fact that I was bringing up other people was not a good thing.”

In contrast, Dahlia, like a number of the other psychologists, expressed that her graduate training program had a strong emphasis on diversity. She stated that the university she attended was “good at making us very sensitive to cultural differences.” Some of the experiences found most helpful involved the practice training provided in actually working with diverse students. Jasmin expressed that her graduate program provided a space where students felt they could discuss cultural issues and stated that it was a topic her professors felt comfortable discussing.

A number of respondents credited training experiences as contributing to the development of characteristics they utilized in multicultural interactions. Psychologists asserted that their training experiences increased their knowledge of cultural issues. They also stated that their training experiences helped to increase their awareness of their own culture and respect for differences.

Life Experiences

Life experiences were another factor that most psychologists asserted impacted how they responded in multicultural school environments. The experiences that were noted as influential took several forms. A number of psychologists explained how the experience of being a minority contributed to their development. Psychologists also described general life and work experiences that impacted them, including their upbringing, travel, and realizations brought about by interactions with a particular individual or group.

Several psychologists asserted that being a racial-ethnic minority in the United States impacted their development in regard to providing services to diverse populations. Specifically, respondents discussed how racism and discrimination impacted the way they view their world and interactions in the field.

While I was working in Puerto Rico I was not a minority. And because I was not a minority I was not very interested in minority issues...and it wasn't until I actually came to live in the United States that minority issues became apparent....you have to confront it...as a minority person you feel discrimination, you feel that you are treated differently, you feel the same problems that many other people that are within these groups suffer. [Dahlia]

I think a lot of it has to do with my earlier experiences as a minority in a very difficult, if not hostile environment, early on. So I am aware of how it feels to be in that position. [Tracy]

Responses also included Lehe, a European-American, who cited experiences as a minority in a particular region of the county as influential to her development. Lehe shared that at one time she worked in a region where Latinos were the majority. In this environment she was a racial and language minority.

In one school, it was seventy percent Hispanic, ...in certain meetings, had I not been there, they could have conducted the meeting entirely in Spanish...that was a really interesting situation. I had grown up in Illinois, probably ninety-seven percent White high school...going to Arizona really opened my eyes. At first I was whiter than white bread, then I immediately realized that this was the area, this is what I've got here, I need to figure out what is going on here, it's not their problem, it's my problem. [Lehe]

Other responses indicated the contribution of more general life experiences. Some of the participants recognized that their skill in providing services in diverse populations was influenced by the situations and people they encountered over the years.

Thirty years ago, stuff I do now I would have never thought I would be doing—never, no, no, no, no. So its age and all that stuff they said comes about...some of it just comes with age, where you are in your career, what you know. You know? And the confidence that comes with that. [Fleming]

I mean you can read the books and read different theories, you can discuss with colleagues in a theoretical way, but it's not until you go to the street, not until you see that 15 year old that is struggling with getting out of a gang, and you see

that kind of thing, and you feel, ‘What am I going to do to help this kid stay in school?’, those are the things that can not be taught. [Dahlia]

As observed in the quotes above, some respondents credited their life experiences with contributing to the development of some of the characteristics they relied on when working with diverse populations. Life experiences led to some of the respondents’ interest in multicultural issues. A number of respondents reported that these experiences helped to ‘open their eyes’, as Lehe phrased it, to the issues and challenges facing minority students and families in schools, thus increasing their ability to empathize with the individuals they encountered. Knowledge was another outgrowth cited. Respondents reported increased understanding of other cultures and issues such as language acquisition. Finally, as demonstrated by quotes above from Dahlia and Fleming, life experiences were recognized as contributing to general confidence and skill in dealing with difficult issues encountered in the schools.

System Issues

The majority of study respondents also named variables related to their school systems that indirectly impacted their experiences. A range of system issues were cited including caseload, administrative support, and county resources. In contrast to the last category, these factors influenced psychologists responding by impacting the duties they were able to perform and influencing the ease or difficulty with which they performed these duties, rather than by directly working on psychologists. System issues were noted to have potential negative or positive impact on psychologists’ responding.

Some of the psychologists shared that time constraints impacted their ability to respond in diverse schools. Participants expressed that much of their time was being consumed by special education testing duties. Other respondents made more general statements indicating that they were restricted by their heavy caseloads. The sentiments of respondents reflected that time constraints prohibited them from performing a range of activities they felt would be beneficial to the school. Jasmin expressed, “school psychologists are so limited in the United States that it’s just unfortunate....I think we have a lot of skills that we can contribute and it’s difficult to do that. We are spread so thin.” Some of the specific activities participants cited as being limited by time constraints included doing more group and individual counseling with students, conducting in-services with staff, and consulting with parents. In the same vein, one of the participants expressed the benefits of when time constraints were lifted. Ann stated, “that school didn’t believe in referring a lot of kids for testing so I found other ways to use my time. I feel more productive.”

An additional time constraint that indirectly impacted psychologists’ work involved the constraints placed on teachers and students by the demands of high stakes testing and keeping pace with the curriculum. Two of the psychologists explained how these variables influenced their interactions.

Sometimes the curriculum hinders your ability to address multicultural issues as far as having to move kids along at the same pace without regard to prior knowledge, second language...so I think the curriculum can hinder your ability to kind of individualize instruction for kids. [Landon]

I also feel frustrated to some degree when working with diverse cultures. The whole, “No Child Left Behind” doesn’t allow enough time for students to become acculturated before they have to pass this milestone. [Lehe]

Thus, psychologists felt that these variables played a role in their ability to effectively assist multicultural students. Because of these constraints the respondents did not have the opportunity to propose the interventions they felt would best help these students.

The human resources in the school, including the availability of individuals to do bilingual assessments, and competent administrators were also discussed. Some of the participants discussed how having access to individuals to conduct assessments of bilingual students impacted their assessment duties. In regard to administration, Ann explained that she found that poorer quality administrators tended to be placed in diverse settings. She stated, “I would be more supported if they had better principals because the principal would make sure they hired the good special educators and the good counselors.” She goes on to say that this impacted her because she found that she had to do more training when less competent people were hired. Contrarily, strong, supportive administrators were noted as facilitating participants’ work.

A final variable that positively impacted participants involved the resources available in the school system. Two participants discussed working in counties that offered the opportunity for professional development. One of the two described the county she worked in as “progressive” and stated that she is given the opportunity to attend conferences for professional development.

Summary of Impacting Variables

Three factors external to the psychologists were named as impacting their experiences in diverse school contexts. Multicultural training experiences, life experiences, and some system issues were factors that positively impacted the work of participants. Respondents reported that these variables contributed to the development of the characteristics and strategies used to bridge cultural gaps. In contrast other system issues like time constraints and poor school employees hindered psychologists' ability to effectively address cultural mismatches within the school.

Core Category: Bridging Cultural Gaps

The final construct to be discussed is the core category. The core category in grounded theory research is the centerpiece of the model, an abstraction that represents the main theme of the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Researchers assert that the core category demonstrates “analytic power” in its ability to “pull the other categories together to form an explanatory whole” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 146). In this project the core category was determined after examining the “pieces” of the puzzle about psychologist responding (Characteristics, Strategies and Impacting Variables) and asking the questions, “What is the larger picture? What is the overall goal?” The core category of the current theory, entitled “Bridging Cultural Gaps”, is discussed in this section.

The first step in responding to cultural challenges involves possessing the ability to recognize when situations may be related to differences in culture and demonstrating a respect for these differences. The word “gaps” is used in the core category title; this word represents interactions that involved parties with differing sets of values, beliefs,

and behaviors. The major focus in this project involved gaps based on racial-ethnic group membership. However, gaps in language and socioeconomic gaps also were discussed. When discussing the conflicts they confronted it is important to note that the participants conveyed that clashes and challenges were the result of “differences” between cultures, rather than “deficits” of either party. Tracy best expressed this by stating,

There is a conscious effort to make no judgment against a particular group of people based on their history and current practices. So you are coming to the table with everyone in an equal position and respected for their history and their current standards of living without drawing judgment against them because they don't meet a certain formula that may be the focus where you came from.

Thus, greater or lesser value was not placed on the beliefs of one group over the other. This appreciation and respect for the various cultural viewpoints represented in their schools was a major theme binding the experiences of participants.

The respect participants shared for cultural differences was reflected in the goals of the interactions described in diverse contexts. The term “bridging” was used to generally describe the techniques used by participants. The efforts described represented attempts to narrow perceptions of differences between cultures and minimize the impact of cultural differences. Closing gaps by decreasing the perception of difference involved collecting and distributing information to assist individuals in understanding the perspective of others. Hence, gaps were bridged by providing new cultural insights or understandings. Psychologists also made modifications to the

environment and their actions to lessen the impact of differences. Modifications, such as using interpreters, and making referrals to school-based and outside resources, were made to bridge gaps by decreasing the impact of obstacles that result from differences. Additionally, psychologists used scaffolds including teaching students the differences between appropriate behaviors in different settings, to bridge gaps in expectations and gaps created by different levels of exposure to particular information. Notably, efforts did not concentrate on changing cultural beliefs or behaviors, or encouraging acculturation to mainstream culture. This was the case for all participants except one who did express in one instance that she felt some groups were not making an effort to conform to middle class values.

In summary, the core category reflects not only the actions of participants, but also the underlying goals and philosophies that guided their responding. Participants expressed an appreciation and respect for cultural differences. These beliefs guided them to work to reduce the obstacles that are inherent to mismatches in culture, while preserving the importance of differences.

Part of the participants' experiences responding in multicultural settings involved their perceptions about the impact of diversity. Psychologists expressed that working in diverse environments was an experience they enjoyed, and many shared that their work had positively influenced them on a personal level. Some participants felt that the constant exposure to differences increased their knowledge and assisted in the development of a deeper personal understanding and empathy for cultural issues. Pearl stated, "It certainly broadens your frame of knowledge," and Lehe added "You need

different cultures in order to make things interesting and really build on the learning process.”

While most comments made by participants indicated that they enjoyed working in diverse settings, quite a number also acknowledged some of the frustrations related to their work. Working to bridge cultural gaps was at times referred to as “frustrating,” “demanding,” and “challenging.”

It can be very painful because you have to fight a lot for those kids and you have to fight a lot for them to be properly understood. You have to fight with parents for them to understand the system and to understand that they need to be a partner with the school. [Dahlia]

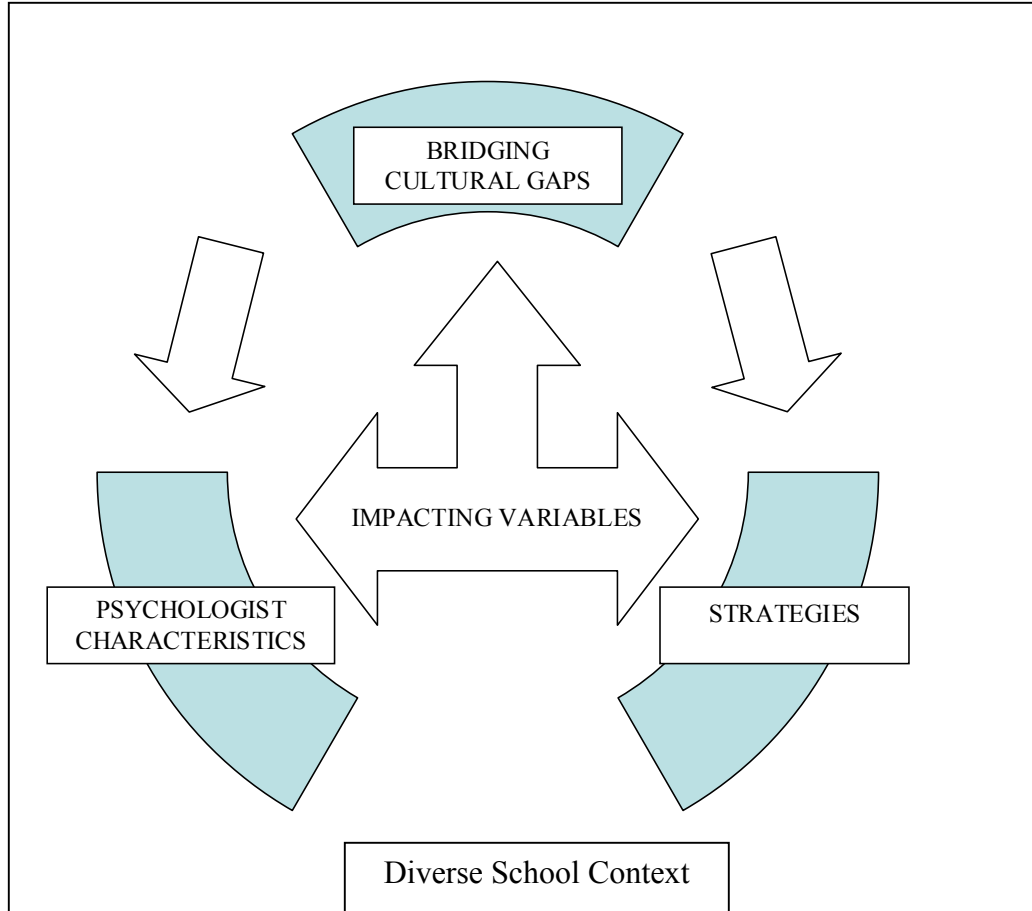
You keep hitting your head against the wall...either looking for information you can't get or working with people who are not as open to diversity as you and spinning your wheels. [Pearl]

Overview of the Emergent Theory

This chapter ends with an overview connecting all of the pieces of the puzzle explaining how school psychologists' respond in diverse contexts. As discussed in the methods section, the proposed relationships between constructs were distinguished after review of respondents' statements. The emergent theory is represented in Figure 2. The theory postulates that participants' experiences are best understood as an interaction between four variables: the challenges that arise in the diverse context, personal/professional characteristics, strategy use, and external factors that impact the psychologists' strategies and characteristics. These factors are bound together by the unifying theme of bridging cultural gaps.

Figure 2

Theory of Experienced School Psychologists' Responding in Diverse School Settings



<p>Psychologist Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multicultural Interest ● Knowledge ● Self-awareness ● Cultural Empathy 	<p>Impacting Variables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multicultural Training ● Life Experiences ● System Issues 	<p>Psychologist Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relationship Building ● Information Gathering ● Information Sharing
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As depicted by the box enclosing the diagram in Figure 2, the interactions discussed in this model occur in the context of the diverse school environment. The theory proposes that the diverse school setting creates an environment where there are many cultural mismatches. One source of cultural gaps encountered in diverse settings involves communication and language differences. Additionally, there were differences between values, beliefs and behaviors. These circumstances foster a setting with increased chance of miscommunication and misunderstandings between the psychologist, school staff, and the families, consequently impacting the manner in which psychologists interact.

The psychologists' manner of responding is represented in the core category, "Bridging Cultural Gaps." This category was placed in the uppermost figure to demonstrate its influence on the other variables. The "Bridging Cultural Gaps" construct addresses the philosophies and goals that provide a framework to guide the characteristics and strategies utilized by psychologists in diverse schools.

There are also external variables that influence psychologists' interactions in the multicultural school context. Some factors facilitate the multicultural service provision of psychologists, while others impede efforts to lessen the impact of cultural mismatches. The arrows in the center of the figure pointing to the three figures represent the "Impacting Variables" construct. The theory proposes that multicultural training, life experiences, and system issues impact how participants' respond in diverse contexts.

The construct labeled "Psychologist Characteristics" in the left figure involves the personal and professional characteristics psychologists rely on when interacting in

diverse environments. Psychologists must have an interest and understanding of the differences between and within cultures. Further qualities important in interactions in this environment include having an awareness of the impact of cultural influences on oneself and possessing the ability to use cultural empathy to understand how cultural and background variables impact others.

Impacting variables influence the characteristics psychologists rely on in three ways. Some factors influence psychologists by leading to the natural development of certain qualities. This seemed to be the case when participants shared how personality styles and status as a racial-ethnic minority progressively led to the development of an interest in multicultural issues and cultural empathy. Impacting variables also influence psychologists' characteristics by promoting conditions that led to the further development or expansion of qualities the participants already possess. The experience of working in diverse settings was often associated with increased confidence and knowledge in regard to resolving issues related to culture. Finally, some impacting variables are noted for precipitating epiphanies that impact the development of psychologist characteristics and responding. For example, a few psychologists discussed critical incidents during their graduate training that led to new understandings of cultural issues.

The right object in the figure represents the "Strategies" construct. Three main strategies are used by psychologists working in diverse settings: relationship building, information gathering, and information sharing. The characteristics psychologists rely on contribute to how effective they are in using these strategies to bridge cultural gaps. Psychologists' characteristics influence their ability to work with families and staff to

build working relationships where trust and rapport is developed, information can be gathered, and information can be shared.

Impacting variables affect the strategies psychologists used in diverse environments in two ways. These variables influence what strategies and techniques participants are comfortable using in their schools. Life experiences, and multicultural training are credited with influencing learning and confidence in regard to the specific steps participants use in multicultural interactions. Some impacting variables indirectly impact psychologist use of strategies as they influence the professionals' opportunity to use these techniques. System issues, particularly issues surrounding caseloads, indirectly influence the actions professionals take because they constrict what they have the time to do, or what they are able to practice.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current project was to understand the experiences of school psychologists working in diverse schools. Results show that psychologists' responses in diverse schools can be characterized by attempts to bridge the cultural mismatches that result from differences in communication, beliefs, and behaviors. The techniques psychologists used to bridge gaps involved reliance on particular characteristics and strategies. Participants shared that having multicultural interest, cultural empathy, and knowledge of cultural issues, as well as awareness of one's own cultural issues, assisted them with working effectively in diverse settings. The main strategies used by psychologists involved building relationships, gathering information, and sharing information. Three variables were noted to influence psychologists responding in diverse schools. Participants shared that life experiences, multicultural training

experiences and system issues impacted the characteristics and strategies they used to work with their clients.

The present chapter presented the components of the emergent theory as well as the proposed relationships between constructs. The next chapter will review the project findings in regard to the research questions that guided this study, and results will be compared to existing research in the field.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The goal of the current investigation was to use grounded theory methodology to examine the experiences of school psychologists working in diverse school settings. Analysis resulted in a model of responding that centers around the goal of psychologists' actions and addresses the challenges faced in the diverse school context, the personal/professional characteristics and strategies psychologists relied on, and the variables that impact interactions. In this chapter, the components of the model will be discussed in regard to the specific research questions that guided this project. Following the examination of research questions, the limitations of the study will be addressed, as well as the implications of study findings.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the project findings, and how the components of the emergent theory relate to research conducted in the fields of school and counseling psychology. This discussion is organized by the research questions that guided this exploration. The two research questions that guided the research were as follows:

1. How do school psychologists experienced at working in diverse school contexts respond to cultural differences?
2. What factors impact school psychologists' ability to effectively provide services in diverse school contexts?

Research Question#1: How do school psychologists experienced at working in diverse school contexts respond to cultural differences?

The main question that guided this research explored how school psychologists responded in multicultural school settings. Information provided by participants imparted insight into the goals, and philosophies that guided psychologists as they attempted to confront cultural differences. It also shed light onto the specific interventions that they felt were helpful in these settings.

Briefly, the participants encountered cultural gaps or mismatches when the language, beliefs, or values of families were in conflict with the mainstream ideals espoused by the school system. A sampling of the ways in which participants attempted to narrow the impact of differences between cultures included using interpreters, implementing alternative assessment methods, sharing information about the impact of cultural and environmental variables, and confronting misunderstandings and biases. Analysis of the cumulative responding of participants in reaction to the challenges presented by cultural gaps revealed a broad common goal integrating their experiences. Psychologists' manner of responding in diverse schools was characterized by attempts to lessen the impact of any cultural mismatches that may impact the success of students. This goal was represented in the core category of the emergent theory, which is entitled, "Bridging Cultural Gaps."

A common philosophy was central to achieving the participants' goal of bridging gaps. First, participants conveyed an awareness of the impact of culture on the values, attitudes and behaviors of the students, parents, and school staff with whom they worked as, well as the impact of their own culture. As reviewed earlier, a commonality

found in most definitions of multicultural competence involves the ability to recognize the impact of culture (Lynch & Hanson, 2004). A second aspect of many definitions of competent responding in multicultural situations involves demonstrating a respect for these differences (Lynch & Hanson, 2004). This philosophy was also embraced by study participants. When intervening in multicultural situations psychologists in the current study discussed the importance of attempting to reserve judgment of others' beliefs when making decisions, and prescribing equal value to the beliefs and behaviors of all groups.

The common goal of lessening the impact of cultural differences, and the subsumed philosophy of embracing and respecting cultural differences, guided the interventions that were utilized in diverse contexts. The next section reviews the main qualities and strategies participants deemed as helpful in their work, and discusses them in the context of previous research on components of multicultural competence in counseling and school psychology literature.

Specific Interventions

Consistent with the current model, many researchers contend that the provision of culturally competent services involves cognitive and behavioral aspects (Ridley et al., 1994; D. W. Sue et al., 1982; S. Sue, 1998). The cognitive aspects of competence are often categorized into multicultural awareness and knowledges, while the behavioral aspects involve multicultural skills. For example, D. W. Sue et al. (1982) discuss beliefs/attitude, knowledge, and skill components of competence in their theoretical work; Ridley et al. (1994) discuss the cognitive process of filtering information through a cultural lens before taking behavioral steps towards culturally appropriate

intervention. Additionally, studies involving school psychologists have identified both skill and knowledge competencies as essential to service provision in multicultural settings (Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers & Lopez, 2002).

Findings from the current project suggest that psychologists' manner of responding to diversity involved separate, but interrelated components. One component involved the personal and professional characteristics that assist in multicultural interactions. These characteristics and qualities represent the cognitions and perceptions that guided participant's responses. Many of the cognitive aspects of the emergent theory were similar to the areas of awareness and understandings discussed in other works. The second component involved the strategies or actual behavioral steps taken by respondents. Each of the categories will be described below and discussed in terms of their consistency with competencies proposed in the literature.

Knowledge. One of the characteristics participants in the current study discussed as being essential when working in multicultural settings was knowledge. Possession of cultural knowledge is a construct commonly addressed when discussing cultural competence in counseling (Constantine & Ladany, 2001; D. W. Sue et al., 1982; S. Sue, 1998). This concept was also a component of models of competence in school psychology (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997; Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers et al. 1999).

Responses addressed the importance of having an understanding of a range of cultural issues. Findings from the current study suggest that part of responding in diverse settings involves having an understanding of specific cultural variables. Counseling psychology researchers, D. W. Sue et al. (1998) and Constantine and

Ladany (2001), state that multicultural competence involves understanding cultural patterns and how cultural beliefs and environmental factors like racism impact clients in the counseling situation. Researchers in the field of school psychology, and findings from the current project add that psychologists need to understand language acquisition issues and how cultural variables impact assessment, and consultation interactions (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997; Rogers et al., 1999). Lopez and Rogers (2001) identified knowledge of specific cultural groups, how culture impacts students, and language issues, as essential competencies in their study of school psychologists.

While responses in the current project revolved around having knowledge of specific cultural groups, the importance of possessing an understanding of the differences that occur within cultural groups also emerged. This is consistent with the calls by S. Sue (1998) for dynamic sizing abilities, and by Ridley et al. (1994) for counselor plasticity. An aspect of both of these concepts involves the ability to validly generalize about cultural issues while acknowledging within group and individual differences.

Self-awareness. Practitioner's self-awareness is an additional concept prevalent in multicultural counseling and school psychology literature (Constantine & Ladany, 2001; GoPaul-McNicol, 1997; Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Ridley et al., 1994; Rogers et al., 1999; D. W. Sue et al., 1982). One aspect of self-awareness that emerged in the current project involved having an understanding of the impact of one's culture. Similarly, participants discussed having an understanding of their areas of bias. These understandings included an awareness of how these variables impact interactions and a desire to eliminate harmful effects.

These aspects of self-awareness are also part of the conceptualizations of competence offered in several of the studies reviewed (Constantine & Ladany, 2001; GoPaul-McNicol, 1997; Ridley et al., 1994; Rogers et al., 1999; D. W. Sue et al. 1982). Ridley et al. (1994) contend that “counselor cultural self-processing” is essential to the ability to provide culturally sensitive services, as counselors who lack awareness may “ignore, distort, or underemphasize incoming cultural information to the detriment of the client” (p. 131). An investigation by Lopez and Rogers (2001) found that school psychologists rated having an understanding of one’s own culture, and skill in recognizing the limits of one’s competence, as essential multicultural competencies.

Psychologists in this project also discussed having an understanding of their areas of strength and weakness in regard to providing services to diverse populations. This aspect of self-awareness was discussed by D. W. Sue et al. (1982) and GoPaul-McNicol (1997) in their conceptualizations of what it means to be a self-aware practitioner. GoPaul-McNicol asserts that training should be a vehicle for students to gain awareness of the impact of culture and bias and the limits of their competence.

Multicultural Interest. The present investigation suggests that cultural interest was another characteristic helpful in navigating multicultural interactions. Participants described multicultural interest as impacting how they viewed their work in schools. Review of multicultural and school psychology competence models suggest that multicultural interest is not a common factor identified in conceptualizations. Aspects of this characteristic, however, are incorporated in some models.

Ridley et al. (1994) discuss multicultural motivation in their theory. Multicultural motivation, as proposed by Ridley et al. involves the therapists’

motivation to gather and process information and use this information to influence interactions. These researchers state that multicultural motivation can be internally derived, because of their personal interest in multicultural issues, or externally derived.

Similar to the concept of multicultural motivation, the multicultural interest category that emerged in the current project seems to be an impetus to the actions of participants. Psychologists shared that their interest in multicultural issues motivated them to provide culturally appropriate services, led them to seek placements in diverse environments, and take language and culture classes. Some of the respondents shared that interest in multicultural issues occurred on a professional level as a result of their placement in diverse environments, others reported their interest as occurring on a professional and a personal level.

Cultural Empathy. Cultural empathy represents one of the constructs that was essential to participants' experiences, but was not prevalent in the multicultural counseling and school psychology competence models reviewed. A more extensive review of research however, finds that the relationship between empathy and multicultural counseling competence has been addressed by some scholars (Chung & Bemak, 2002; Constantine, 2001; Ridley & Udipi, 2002). For example, studies examining the contribution of empathy found that school counselors' self-reported empathy ratings accounted for significant variance in self-reports of multicultural counseling competence (Constantine, 2001).

Other researchers have explored the distinction between empathy and cultural empathy. Ridley and Udipi (2002) state that "cultural empathy is a special case of empathy:" they go on to define cultural empathy as the "learned ability of counselors to

understand accurately the self experiences of clients from other cultures” (p. 318). This definition is congruent with the experiences reported by participants. Participants in the current project described the ability to have empathy for clients from different cultures as a characteristic that they relied on in diverse settings. Participants discussed the importance of being able to relay that they related to the concerns and perspective of clients facing different cultural contexts and conflicts. The participants also discussed attempting to instill cultural empathy in other staff members by providing information about the experiences of individual students or families.

Relationship Building. Building relationships was one of the strategies used by psychologists in diverse settings that emerged as central to assessment, counseling, and consultation interactions. Participant’s discussed working to build alliances with students, parents, and teachers. Respondents shared that they took measures to increase clients’ comfort by spending time with them and modifying the way they presented themselves to build rapport.

The importance of building rapport with clients is a strategy often discussed in general counseling competency literature, as well as work addressing multicultural competence (Fischer, Jome & Atkinson, 1998). Fischer et al. (1998) and Constantine and Ladany (2001) discuss the importance of relationship in their common factors models of responding in multicultural counseling dyads. They contend that the therapeutic relationship is one in which trust is built, and both individuals are comfortable discussing cultural issues. A competency addressing relationship building was added to the last revision of the D. W. Sue et al. (1982) conceptualization of multicultural counseling competence (D. W. Sue et al., 1998). Specifically, the

competency called for skill in altering relationship building strategies depending on client characteristics. This is congruent with project participants' contentions about tailoring their interactions to increase the comfort of diverse families.

Theoretical and research-based work in the area of school psychology also addresses multicultural relationship development. School psychology literature asserts the importance of not only building relationships with the target client, but other individuals that influence this client, including their teachers and parents. Rogers et al. (1999) address the importance of relationships with diverse families and point out the need of relationship building to effectively share information. These authors call for culturally sensitive verbal and nonverbal communication skills when working with students, parents, and school staff. The Lopez and Rogers (2001) investigation on critical competences for school psychologist found that when working with diverse populations, psychologists must have skill in developing rapport and culturally appropriate relationships with diverse clients, and the ability to demonstrate sensitivity to the cultural differences of staff members when consulting.

Information Gathering. Gathering information was a second strategy commonly used by participants in diverse schools. Psychologists discussed gathering information from students, parents and teachers. Information about the variables that impacted these individuals was used to assist in conducting assessments, counseling, and consultations. Information gathering was addressed in several of the models of multicultural counseling reviewed (Constantine & Ladany, 2001; Ridley et al. 1994; S. Sue, 1998), as well as conceptualizations in school psychology literature (GoPaul-

McNicol, 1997; Rogers et al., 1999). However, models often did not address this action as a specific competency, rather it was a component of other competencies.

Participants in the current project worked to gather information about cultural groups and the specific variables impacting their clients. Similarly, S. Sue (1998) discussed the importance of having skill in collecting information about the client to test hypotheses about the salience of cultural influences within his concept of scientific mindedness. Ridley et al. (1994) assert that part of culturally sensitive responding involves being able to gather information about cultural factors and effectively apply that information in counseling. Constantine and Ladany (2001) discuss the importance of having an understanding of “unique client variables” or the specific cultural group membership, background, and personality traits impacting the client; thus, counselors must work to collect this information. While these models focus on gathering information about the client in counseling dyads, the present theory of responding suggests that psychologists attempt to gather information not only about the student they are directly working with, but in some cases the parents and teachers involved. For example, respondents expressed that understanding the experiences of parents and teachers was essential to consulting with these parties in their efforts to help students.

Participants also discussed collecting information about student’s abilities. They expressed concern over using standardized testing procedures when working with some students and discussed the use of non-traditional techniques for collecting information to understand what students can do. Research-based and theoretical work in the field of school psychology also addressed the importance of school psychologists having competence in using non traditional assessment methods (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997;

Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Rogers et al., 1999; Rogers & Lopez, 2002). Consistent with study participants, these researchers discussed the importance of relying on both formal and informal assessment techniques to gather valid information about the functioning of diverse students. In an investigation of essential cross-cultural competencies that examined fourteen areas of school psychology functioning, Rogers and Lopez (2002) found that the area of assessment was among the highest in terms of the number of specific competencies rated as critical. Lopez and Rogers (2001) also documented the importance school psychologists placed on having competence in conducting nonbiased assessments, adapting available instruments for diverse clients, and being aware of and using culturally sensitive instruments.

Information Sharing. Participants in the study shared that educating or offering information to clients was one of the techniques they relied on when working in diverse settings. Respondents discussed informing diverse families and school personnel. This type of education represents one intervention that occurred more commonly in the school psychology literature, and was not prevalent in works addressing multicultural counseling competence.

Participants shared that they educated diverse students and parents about their rights, the processes that occur in schools, and available resources. The ability to work with parents and educate them on these issues is also discussed by Rogers et al. (1999) who state that psychologists must be able to work with parents and members of the community to facilitate an understanding of the cultural factors important to children's development and success in school. The Gopaul-McNicol (1997) conceptualization proposes that psychologists must be knowledgeable about resources so that they can

refer parents. They also assert that psychologists should be in a position to provide guidance to parents regarding the planning and implementation of special education services for their children.

Additionally, the psychologists in this project discussed educating school staff about the cultural factors that impact students. Rogers et al. (1999) discuss the role of psychologists in promoting an understanding of cultural issues, respect for differences, and equal treatment in school systems. These authors state that psychologists perform this duty by educating school staff about cultural issues and patterns impacting students.

Summary. In conclusion, seven main techniques were identified as assisting in interactions in multicultural contexts. Many of the characteristics and strategies discussed in the current model have been proposed in previous conceptualizations of multicultural competence in counseling and school psychology literature. The current findings provide further research support for some of the components offered in these theories. In particular, the current project findings support the importance of cultural knowledge, and psychologist awareness of their own culture, areas of competence, and biases. Results also provide evidence supporting the utilization of skills to build relationships, and gather and share information in cross-cultural school contexts.

Review of the strategies used by participants suggests that their responses can be summarized by a reliance on core skills, rather than approaches that were developed uniquely for specific populations. For example, building relationships is a strategy that should be used when working with any client. What did differ in the application of these skills when working with diverse, rather than majority clients, involved the goals framing psychologists' actions, and the psychologist characteristics that helped them

process information in the context of culture. When working with diverse clients respondents used their understandings of cultural issues to gather and impart information, and build relationships with the goal of bridging gaps between the culture of the specific client and other party.

Some important areas of divergence between the current findings and existing models of multicultural competence were also noted. For example, some concepts that emerged in existing models were not included in the current theory. When comparing this research to conceptualizations of competence in counseling, one finds that one of the concepts that was not explicitly addressed in the current model was racial identity development. Knowledge of theories of racial identity development and the ability to rely on those theories to understand oneself and clients, were included in several seminal frameworks of multicultural counseling competence (Holcomb-McCoy, 2000; Sue et al., 1982; Sue et al. 1992; Sue et al., 1998). In contrast to theoretical work in the area of school psychology, some of the areas of skill that did not emerge in the current project involved multicultural research skills, and social advocacy competencies (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997; Rogers et al., 1999).

Several hypotheses are offered to explain the absence of these concepts in the current work. First, the interview used in the project focused on the roles of school psychologists as they engaged in direct provision of services in diverse contexts. The skills necessary in other roles, such as conducting and consuming research, and promoting organizational change were not a focus. The failure of the current model to explicitly promote reliance on specific theories prevalent in multicultural literature may also be indicative of the level of competence represented by study participants. As

mentioned earlier, the multicultural competence of the current project was not assessed and these were not individuals who had been identified as experts in the field. Thus, it is possible that the lack of emphasis of constructs representing specific theoretical frameworks, such as ethnic validity, or racial identity, may be the result of a lower level of competence or knowledge in the project sample.

Conversely, multicultural interest and cultural empathy, were two characteristics that emerged in this project but are not commonplace in multicultural counseling models. Information provided by participants demonstrates that these characteristics were central to psychologists' experiences. One hypothesis for the emergence of these concepts in the current project and their absence in other research, involves the methodology used in this study. The use of in-person interviews allowed for an in-depth investigation into the aspects of multicultural interactions. This technique permitted deep examination of the very basic aspects of responding, capturing experiences and components which may be overlooked when using other methods. Future research attempting to formulate theories of expert responding in multicultural situations may consider further examination of the contribution of multicultural interest and cultural empathy.

Finally, the current findings highlight some of the differences in the competencies offered in multicultural counseling research and the abilities needed for interactions as a psychologist in a diverse school setting. School psychology researchers contend that multicultural counseling competency conceptualizations have limited utility because the differing roles and goals of school and counseling psychologists. Models of multicultural counseling competence were designed as a

framework for counselors working with adult clients, in private practice settings (Lopez & Rogers, 2001). The varied roles of school psychologists involve interactions with children and adults, and often the context of service provision is broader than the target client-counselor counseling dyad. The current study emphasizes the importance for school psychologists of possessing and using techniques to effectively work with the target client or student, as well as others that influence the success of this client, including parents and school staff. These findings provide further impetus to continue to conduct research on the competencies needed by school psychologists, rather than generalizing from findings in related fields.

Research Question #2. What factors impact school psychologists' ability to effectively provide services in diverse school contexts?

The second research question addressed the variables that impacted psychologists' experiences responding in diverse settings. Similar to theories outlining other areas of development, the current theory proposes indirect and direct influences on behavior which occur within different systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Participants discussed a reciprocal interaction with the diverse environments in which they worked and more direct influences related their training, jobs, and general life experiences. These variables impacted the characteristics respondents brought to their settings, or influenced the strategies they used.

One variable that impacted participants' interactions in diverse schools involved their multicultural training. Training included experiences in graduate school and post-graduate workshops and conferences. While some of the training experiences recounted were negative, others described how direct experience with minority populations,

classes, and interactions with professors, positively influenced their cultural development. Specifically, participants shared that their training assisted their development of cultural knowledge, awareness of their own culture, and respect for differences.

A number of research projects also demonstrate the relationship between multicultural training and the development of the skills and sensitivities needed to work with diverse populations (Diaz-Lazaro, 2001; Heppner & O'Brien, 1994; Mewborn, 2001; Velez, 2002). As reviewed previously, researchers found a positive relationship between some multicultural training experiences and the self-reported multicultural counseling competence of school psychology interns (Mewborn, 2001; Velez, 2002). Qualitative research examining multicultural experiences in training suggests that some of the specific training experiences noted by trainees as impacting their development included direct contact with diverse populations during training, including guest speakers from different cultural groups (Diaz-Lazaro, 2001; Heppner & O'Brien, 1994).

A second category of variables that impacted psychologists' interactions in diverse schools was labeled "Life experiences". A number of circumstances fell under this category. Participants shared the impact of their upbringing, experiences traveling, work experiences, and general interactions with diverse people. Research has been conducted exploring the contribution of some of the life experiences discussed by participants. A study of nursing students found a relationship between general work experience and the development of multicultural skill and knowledge. Consistent with participants' claims that their direct experience working with diverse clients impacted their development, research has found higher levels of competence for counselors who

reported experience working in populations with diverse clientele (Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994). Further, there is some research to suggest that contact with diverse individuals does not have to occur in the context of the psychologist-client relationship for multicultural learning and development to occur (Diaz-Lazaro, 2001; Mio, 1989). Diaz-Lazaro (2001) found evidence of a relationship between cross-cultural contacts prior to graduate training and higher self-reported multicultural counseling awareness.

Racial-ethnic minority status also was credited with positively impacting the development of characteristics respondents relied on in multicultural situations. Similarly, Pope-Davis and Ottavi (1994) found that counselors from racial-ethnic minority groups had higher self-report ratings of multicultural competence, than European-American counselors. One of the hypotheses offered by the authors to explain this difference suggests that minority counselors' sociopolitical history and common background with their clients result in feeling better prepared to work with diverse populations. Findings from the current project suggest that having experience as minority in a situation may also help to foster similar perceptions in European-American psychologists, as a few respondents discussed the impact of their experiences of being immersed in a different culture in work situations and in different regions.

Finally, psychologists named factors related to the school system they worked for as influencing their interactions in their schools. Unfortunately, minimal research has been conducted examining the relationship between school factors and school psychologists' implementation of multicultural skills in the schools. Factors such as having bilingual assessment resources and opportunities for professional development

were system issues named that positively influenced the provision of services. Time constraints related to assessment duties and heavy caseloads limited the strategies used by participants. The impact of time constraints was briefly mentioned by Haney and Evans (1999). In studying school psychologists' use of non-traditional assessment methods these authors found that many of the respondents that reported knowledge of these techniques expressed that they did not use them because of time constraints.

Limitations of the Study

The current project is significant as it provides insight into how psychologists manage cultural differences in diverse school contexts, and the factors that influence their approach. However, several limitations should be considered when examining the findings from this project.

Failure to assess participants' level of multicultural competence presented a potential limitation of the current study. As discussed earlier, at this time a comprehensive instrument to assess multicultural school psychology competences has not been developed. However, several factors suggest that the sample possessed a greater level of multicultural competence than typical. A purposeful sampling technique was used to recruit school psychologists who had experience working in diverse settings. Each of the participants was nominated by the county psychology coordinator as an individual experienced as working in diverse schools. It is suspected that coordinators would choose to nominate psychologists who were effective in their duties. Additionally, many of the psychologists discussed choosing to be in a diverse school setting, indicating a significant interest and dedication to diversity issues.

Since in person interviews were conducted, participants were drawn only from counties in the Maryland metropolitan areas that were convenient to the researcher. Research in the field of school psychology indicates that there are regional differences in the roles psychologists perform (Hosp & Reschly, 2002). Thus, when transferring these findings to other groups of psychologists their roles should be considered. When generalizing these findings to other groups of psychologists also keep in mind that all participants were women and the perceptions of men in the field may differ. However, with the exception of gender differences, a strength of the current study involved the diversity of the sample. Three racial-ethnic groups were represented and participants reported a range in the number of years they had been working as psychologists, their experience in diverse schools, the degrees attained, and the degree to which multicultural issues were addressed in training.

The transferability of findings from the current project to other populations also is impacted by the failure to include detailed information about the schools in which the psychologists worked. Information about specific school demographics including representation of specific ethnic groups, immigrant populations, and persons from different socio-economic status groups, was not collected.

Research by several scholars highlights some of the specific challenges and distinct circumstances students from different minority populations encounter in schools. Gopaul-McNicol and Thomas-Presswood (1998) lay out some of the unique factors that impact the education of immigrant children. These authors state that families that recently immigrated to the United States sometimes experience “culture shock” after being immersed in an environment with different values, beliefs and

behaviors than their home country. Practitioners working with immigrant families must have knowledge of the current socioeconomic, social, educational, and employment status as well as the status prior to immigration as both will influence the families' transition. Additionally, it is important to understand that there are different reasons that families may migrate. Some may come to the United States voluntarily to pursue economic and educational opportunities, while other immigrants may be fleeing their home countries because of religious or political persecution; these variables too will impact the student's adjustment.

Further, Ogbu (1991) discusses some of the specific factors that impact non-immigrant minority students in schools. He describes the plight of "involuntary minorities" or "people who were brought into their present society through, conquest, or colonization" (Ogbu, 1991, p. 9). In the United States these groups include some African Americans, Chicanos, and Native Americans. Ogbu states that when working with students and families from these groups it is important to have a sense of the historical factors impacting these populations, including how these people were incorporated into the dominant society and the adaptive responses of the group to discrimination by the dominant society.

Thus, it is suspected that the special circumstances surrounding the experiences of different minority groups may impact the specific characteristics and strategies on which psychologists most rely. Future research examining the experiences of psychologists working in diverse schools should explore how demographic differences impact the way practitioners respond in different settings.

Additional limitations involve the impact of the study methods on the findings. The psychologists' interviews focused on gaining information about the challenges they faced when working with minority populations and consequently resulted in a theory of responding with little emphasis on many of the positive aspects psychologists encounter. While several of the respondents recounted positive experiences with parents and staff members in diverse settings these experiences were not captured in the theory. Further, since the interview targeted psychologists' experiences as assessor, consultant, and counselor, the aspects involved with other potential roles were not explored. Missing from the theory was information about the challenges, characteristics, and strategies involved in being an advocate for minority students and families in diverse populations. Also absent from the theory was information about the more personal experiences the psychologists had in the school, including facing discriminatory views expressed by other psychologists and experiences of biases in the profession. While such experiences were noted by some respondents, the full impact of these variables is unclear because it was not a focus on the interview, thus was not addressed by all participants.

Researcher bias effects presented another potential limitation. In the current study the researcher conducted all interviews with participants. Further, she was the primary person involved in protocol development and guided the interpretation process. Thus, there is the possibility that researcher biases influenced the proposed theory. However, several strategies were implemented to reduce researcher bias. As discussed in the methods section, participants were sent transcripts of their interviews and interview main ideas to ensure accurate interpretation. Two peer debriefers assisted in

the coding and interpretation phases and a peer auditor reviewed all study information to audit the study methods and product.

The fact that the researcher conducted all interviews may have had an additional impact on results. Some find the topic of racial-ethnic differences to be a difficult issue to discuss. This topic may be deemed even more difficult to discuss with an individual from a different racial-ethnic group. There was a racial-ethnic mismatch between the researcher and six of the participants. An item on the interview addressed participant's perception of the impact that either racial-ethnic similarity or difference with the interviewer had on the interview. Although participants who experienced a racial-ethnic mismatch with the researcher indicated that this difference did not impact their responding in the interview, this may have impacted the psychologist's ability to express her true sentiments. For example, it is suspected that the researcher's minority group membership impacted non-minority participants' comfort in openly discussing the difficulties they faced when working with minority families. Additionally, shared minority status seemed to have also impacted the researcher-participant relationship. Several of the minority participants would shift into a "motherly" or mentor role with the researcher. They provided this novice school psychologist with advice on working with minorities and various other topics. These psychologists' desire to protect the "new minority psychologist" may have impacted their willingness to share some of the obstacles they encountered in the work setting because of their minority status. For example, while all of the minority participants discussed experiencing discrimination, only two discussed discrimination in the context of their work environments.

Conclusion and Project Implications

The present project represents the first attempt to develop a theory of responding in multicultural school environments using interview methodology. The emergent theory proposes that school psychologists' responses to diversity by taking actions to facilitate students' success by working with the student, parent, and school personnel to identify cultural mismatches and eliminate any detrimental impact on students by bridging these gaps. The techniques used by psychologists consist of characteristics that sensitize psychologists to cultural issues and core skills that facilitate interactions.

Personal and professional characteristics relied on by the psychologists included interest in cultural issues, self-awareness, cultural empathy, and knowledge of cultural issue. Some of the main steps psychologists took involved working to build relationships, and gather and impart knowledge to school staff and families. Participants shared that their training in regard to multicultural issues, specific life experiences, and issues surrounding the school system they worked for, impacted the actions taken in diverse settings.

This research expands previous work in the area of multicultural school psychology. It provides a research-based framework to explain school psychologists' goals and functioning in diverse school settings. It also provides evidence to support some of the conceptualizations regarding the characteristics and skills involved in working with diverse populations. The proposed theory has implications for those training school psychologists and those currently practicing in the field. While the current results advance the multicultural school psychology knowledge base, several areas of research are needed to further advance the field.

Implications for Future Research

Findings from this project suggest pathways for future research. First, researchers may consider using interview methodology to explore the experiences of a larger, more representative group of school psychologists. As discussed in the limitations section, participants in the current project were all drawn from a small geographical region. Research suggests that school psychologists working in different regions of the country have varied roles, and consequently they may have different experiences providing services to diverse populations (Hosp & Reschly, 2002). Future work may also aim to include men in the sample and increase the representation from different cultural groups.

While the current project focused on the participants' experiences managing racial-ethnic diversity, there is also a need to explore responding to other cultural differences encountered in schools. Projects may target gaining an understanding of how school psychologists respond to differences in religion, sexual orientation, and physical ability. Although this was not the focus of this project, the fact that challenges related to these differences were noted by participants demonstrates that this is an area worthy of future attention.

A third research suggestion regards perspective. The primary data source for the current project involved school psychologists. Even the secondary source of staff surveys concentrated on what was observed in the psychologist. Future research may want to explore interactions in multicultural settings, placing more emphasis on the perspective of clients. This area of research recently has been explored by Pope-Davis et al. (2002) as they conducted interviews with clients involved in multicultural

counseling dyads. Research in school psychology could examine interactions from the perspective of students, parents, and school staff in diverse schools as they work with psychologists.

Finally, the current project offered a broad picture of the school psychologist functioning while providing assessment, counseling and consultation services.

Researchers may want to use similar methodology to take a more detailed, in-depth look at the challenges, strategies, and intervening variables that are at work when engaging in each of these roles. Interviews could be conducted that focused only on assessment, counseling, or consultation services in diverse environments.

Implications for Training and Practice

Rogers and Lopez (2002) state, “without a clearer understanding of the cross-cultural competencies that school psychologists should have, trainers will not be able to fulfill the spirit of the training standards and will be limited in their ability to design relevant and appropriate curricular and training experiences” (p. 134). The proposed theory represents an important step in the development of a knowledge base on the multicultural competencies needed by school psychologists by providing a picture of the typical responding of psychologists experienced in working in diverse contexts. Findings from this project suggest that the overall goal of psychologists experienced in working in diverse settings is bridging the gaps in culture encountered in the school setting. This information can provide guidance to trainers as they can develop training modalities to assist students develop skills in making modifications to their approach to achieve this goal. This information can also be of use to practitioners who are looking for guidance in terms of their multicultural service provision.

In addition to providing an overarching goal to guide training and practice, findings provide insight into the specific strategies and qualities that should be cultivated by trainers and those in practice who are looking to increase their skills. Examination of the specific categories and concepts discussed by participants provides a blueprint of characteristics and strategies on which experienced psychologists relied in diverse schools.

For example, as seen in Appendix K specific strategies including speaking in layperson's terms and accommodating your dress are listed under the "Relationship Building" main category. This data could serve as the foundation for training modules aimed to increase the multicultural service provision of graduate students and practitioners looking to increase their skills. Additionally, these findings can help individuals working in environments with a high minority population identify needed areas of education and outreach for the staff and families with whom they work. Data suggests that teachers in diverse settings need education about the impact of cultural and situational factors on interactions with families and student performance. Minority parents would benefit from increased information about their child's rights, the special education process, and guidance as to their active participation in their child's education. Thus, project findings can serve as a blueprint for training psychologists as well as a resource for identifying possible services for schools, staff, and families.

Results demonstrate the importance of graduate training and workshops as vehicles for developing these areas of awareness and intervention for psychologists. In particular, training experiences that include direct contact with diverse individuals seem to be perceived as especially beneficial. Practitioners may choose to seek out

immersion experiences and consultation with knowledgeable peers to facilitate their development of cultural understandings and awareness. While individual school psychologists often do not have direct control over the system issues that impact responding, they can encourage policy makers to consider the role of these factors as stressors or facilitators in the effective provision of services to an increasingly diverse population.

Appendix A

D. W. Sue et al. (1982) Multicultural Counseling Competency Model

Beliefs and Attitudes (Awareness)

1. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist is one who has moved from being culturally unaware to being aware and sensitive to his/her own cultural heritage and to valuing and respecting differences.
2. A culturally skilled counseling psychologist is aware of his/her own values and biases and how they may affect minority clients.
3. A culturally skilled counseling psychologist is one who is comfortable with differences that exist between the counselor and client in terms of race and beliefs.
4. A culturally skilled counseling psychologist is sensitive to circumstances (personal biases, stage of ethnic identity, sociopolitical influences, etc) which may dictate referral of the minority client to a member of his/her own race.

Knowledges

1. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist will have a good understanding of the sociopolitical system's operation in the United States with respect to its treatment of minorities.
2. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist must possess specific knowledge and information about the particular group he/she is working with.
3. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist must have a clear and explicit knowledge and understanding of the generic characteristics of counseling and therapy.
4. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist is aware of institutional barriers which prevent minorities from using mental health practices.

Skills

1. At the skills level, the culturally skilled counseling psychologist must be able to generate a wide variety of verbal and nonverbal responses.
2. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist must be able to send and receive both verbal and nonverbal messages accurately and "appropriately".
3. The culturally skilled counseling psychologist is able to exercise institutional intervention skills on behalf of his/her client when appropriate.

Taken from: Sue, D. W., Bernier, J. E., Durran, A., Feinberg, L., Pedersen, P., Smith, E.J., & Vasquez-Nuttall, E. (1982). Position paper: Cross-cultural counseling competencies. *The Counseling Psychologist, 10*, 45-52.

Appendix B

Major Multicultural Competencies for Working with Culturally Diverse Children (GoPaul-McNicol, 1997)

1. Cross-cultural ethical competence
The treatment of culturally diverse students by professionals who lack the specialized training and expertise is unethical.
2. Awareness of the therapist's own values and bias
Knowledge regarding their own racial heritage and how it professionally affect the therapeutic process.
Knowledge of how oppression and discrimination personally affect them and their work.
3. Cross-cultural awareness
Acquiring awareness of the variations of different cultural groups with respect to motivational/learning styles, family roles, and impact of migration and location.
4. Competence in understanding inter-racial issues
Issues such as whether the counselor should wait for the student to introduce questions of race.
What are some ways that racial factors may influence the course of treatment.
5. Language competencies
Learn to work with bilingual students either through the use of interpreters or by learning a second language.
6. Acquiring competency in the ability to work with interpreters
Knowledge of interpretation procedures-establishing rapport with the interpreters.
Respecting the authority of the interpreter.
Knowing the kinds of information that tend to get lost during the interpretation procedure.
Recognizing the importance of securing accurate translation.
7. Cross-cultural assessment competencies
Can use assessment instruments appropriately with groups that the tests were not standardized.
Can articulate the limitations of the instrument with various groups.
8. Cross-cultural counseling competencies
Respect the indigenous helping beliefs and practices.
Aware of the institutional impediments that hinder the use of counseling services.
9. Cross-cultural issues in conflict resolution
It is necessary for the counselor to help the client to identify the ways in which conflicts affect therapy.
10. Competence in special education
11. Competencies in knowing bilingual education curriculum

- Knowing what constitutes a bilingual instructional program.
12. Cross-cultural consultation competencies
They are not adverse to seeking consultation with religious healers.
Consult with heads of organization that focus on providing services to individuals of different cultural groups.
 13. Cross-cultural research competencies
Familiarize themselves with relevant research regarding the mental health of various ethnic and racial groups.
Identify research that are conducted by respected professionals and viewed as credible by community members.
 14. Competence in empowering families through community based organizations
 15. Competence in pediatric/health psychology

Taken from: Gopaul-McNicol, S. (1997). A theoretical framework for training monolingual school psychologists to work with multilingual/multicultural children: An exploration of the major competencies. *Psychology in the Schools, 34*, 17-29.

Appendix C

Recommendations for Multicultural Competence for School Psychologists (Rogers et al., 1999)

Legal and Ethical Issues

Psychologists working in schools...

1. inform their professional practices through knowledge of legal precedents that influence service delivery to racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse students.
2. are informed about the various ways that laws protect individual and civil rights, including rights regarding access to educational and related services, confidentiality, informed consent, due process, and native language communications.
3. are knowledgeable about information sources regarding immigration laws, and laws regarding residency, citizenship and migrant families.
4. are cognizant of major legislation and litigation regarding bilingual education and English as a second language programs, are familiar with the ways that bilingual education and ESL programs are implemented in the schools, and are aware of the effectiveness of different models of bilingual education and ESL programs.
5. advocate for public policy and educational law that best serves the needs of racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse youth.
6. work to institutionalize educational policies and practices known to positively impact student growth
7. are guided by their professional training and code of ethics to deliver the best available service to individuals and groups.
8. are aware of the unique ethical challenges and complex ethical issues faced when delivering services to racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse individuals in the schools.
9. consider their ethical code, as well as relevant legal precedents, and other professionally relevant regulatory standards as guides to their professional conduct with diverse students
10. When asked to participate in unethical behaviors or activities, psychologists take action to uphold their ethical standards.
11. are aware of their own cultural values and biases, and have the ability to recognize the limits of their own multicultural competence and expertise and how these may be detrimental to a culturally diverse individual.
12. seek out educational, consultative, and training experiences to improve their understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally diverse populations.

School Culture, Educational Policy, and Institutional Advocacy

Psychologists working in schools...

13. take a proactive stance to enhance the level and quality of services provided to all individuals.
14. work toward increasing institutional understanding and acceptance of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals, and promote tolerance and respect for difference based on culture, race, ethnicity, and language.
15. inform families of their rights and the expectations of institutions serving their children
16. develop and implement intervention plans to address intolerance and/or racism within the institutions in which they work
17. examine individual referrals within the context of institutional and systemic patterns associated with the racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse populations who are part of the school community.
18. rule out systemic factors as causal influences in the student's situation before proceeding with individually focused psychoeducational evaluation, intervention, or other form of psychological service.
19. develop interventions to address the systemic factors responsible for referral patterns with inappropriately identify students of racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse populations as the unit of analysis, target of services, or focus of diagnosis.
20. develop interventions to address the systemic factors associated with the educational success of culturally and linguistically diverse learners.
21. advocate for students and inform parents of possible options and resources when parents are unfamiliar with options available within the U.S. educational system.
22. educate school staff and personnel about cultural and linguistic factors significant in the development and success of children from diverse backgrounds.
23. work to build relationships with families and educate parents and members of the community about cultural and linguistic factors significant in the development and success of children from diverse backgrounds.

Psychoeducational Assessment and Related Issues

Psychologists working in schools...

24. acknowledge that assessment is a comprehensive process of gathering information about students with considers the impact of context, is tied to effective intervention and may of may not include standardized instruments.
25. consider cultural sources of information about students and search for culture specific confirming data.
26. acknowledge the impact of second language/culture acquisition on the cognitive and socio-emotional development of individuals.
27. have expertise in conducting informal and formal language assessments and in differentiating a language disorder from second language acquisition developmental stages.

28. have expertise in assessing the student's biculturalism and are supportive thereof.
29. incorporate cultural and linguistic information in written reports
30. understand the limitations and pitfalls associated with the prescribed use of standardized instruments not normed nor validated with the population being served.
31. are well-versed in the psychometric properties of all instruments that they use.
32. are able to adapt existing assessment tools when necessary and report all deviations from standardization procedures.
33. make a continuous effort to consider how the historical and cultural context of any given assessment instrument affects item content and test structure and potentially, test performance.
34. are informed about the availability of translated versions of assessment instruments and are knowledgeable about the norm groups used during the test development of these instruments.
35. acknowledge that translated testing is of questionable validity.

Academic, Therapeutic, and Consultative Interventions

Psychologists working in schools...

36. are knowledgeable about research regarding the impact of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic factors on the academic achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students.
37. understand the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse children in terms of curriculum and instruction.
38. understand the role that language plays in the educational and psychosocial development of linguistically and ethnically diverse groups.
39. develop expertise in multicultural counseling, including the ability to discern the influence of culture on social-emotional status, show flexibility in adapting to the individual's learning style, and awareness of different levels of acculturation
40. demonstrate an awareness of an individual's worldviews and sociopolitical experiences including the negative effects of racism, oppression, and stereotyping.
41. consider the involvement of trained bilingual interpreters, community consultants, extended family members, and other paraprofessionals as resources in counseling intervention.
42. implement culturally sensitive approaches that are acceptable to and have demonstrate effectiveness with culturally diverse children and their families.
43. are knowledgeable about racial and ethnic identity development in children and adolescents.
44. demonstrate culturally sensitive verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
45. are skilled in problem identification, problem solving, and in developing plans for intervening that are acceptable to the consultee and students and reflect the student's beliefs and value system.

46. have knowledge of minority family structures, hierarchies, values, and beliefs.
47. create strong community networks with culturally knowledgeable practitioners, including indigenous care-givers, for consultation and referral.
48. have an understanding of the relocation and migration process and its effect of the social-emotional adjustment of children and families.
49. have an understanding of the process of acquiring a second culture and its impact on the development and adjustment of children and their families.
50. have an understanding of the impact of poverty on the physical and mental health of children and their families.
51. are aware of differential responses to medical interventions based on ethnicity and their effects on behavior and adjustment.
52. have an understanding of the specific coping skills and support systems available to culturally diverse children and families.

Working with Interpreters

Psychologists working in schools...

53. seek the services of interpreters only when necessary and when other alternatives have been sought out but are not available.
54. have knowledge of the skills needed by qualified interpreters.
55. are aware of the problems inherent in the process of translation.
56. have knowledge of the psychological impact of using interpreters during assessment and intervention activities.
57. have knowledge and skills in interviewing and assessing individuals through interpreters.
58. examine data obtained through interpreters with extreme caution and acknowledge the limitations of such data.

Research

Psychologists working in schools...

59. are informed about quantitative and qualitative research techniques and are skilled in conducting research designed to provide the most meaningful outcomes.
60. consider the social, linguistic, and cultural context in which research takes place.
61. work to eliminate bias when conducting research.
62. insure that the informed consent of all research participants is secured and has been elicited in the language the family is most comfortable with.
63. are skilled in program evaluation to determine the appropriateness and adequacy of instructional programs and specifically aimed at racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse youngsters.

Taken from: Rogers, M. R., Ingraham, C. L., Burszytyn, A., Cajigas-Segredo, N., Esquivel, G., Hess, R., Nahari, S. G., & Lopez, E. C. (1999). Providing psychological services to racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse individuals in the schools: recommendations for practice. *School Psychology International*, 20, 243-264.

Appendix D

The Most Important to Least Important Categories of Critical Cross-Cultural School Psychology Competencies, and Sample Items for each Category (Rogers and Lopez, 2002)

Assessment (ranked 1)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

1. nonbiased assessment and the process of adapting available instruments to assess LCD students
2. alternative assessment methods (e.g., dynamic, ecological).

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills in:

3. using instruments sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences
4. using assessment results to formulate recommendations that facilitate language acquisition.

Report Writing (ranked 2)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

5. the importance of integrating cultural and language background of the family and child, language proficiency, and learning style information into the report.

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills in:

6. incorporating information about family origins, family composition, parental attitudes about education and handicapping conditions, and level of acculturation into report (if relevant)
7. reporting the use of translations during assessment
8. reporting the use of an interpreter during the assessment process and describing the scope of the interpreters involvement in the assessment.

Laws and Regulations (ranked 3)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skill about:

9. applying laws and regulations to protect LCD children from sources of bias and discrimination
10. interpreting legal and regulatory decisions that are relevant to LCD children and their families.

Working with Interpreters (ranked 4)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

11. the dynamics of the translation procedure
12. the competencies needed by interpreters (e.g., language skills, knowledge of intercultural communication, translation techniques, professional conduct, school relevant knowledge).

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills in:

13. assessing students through interpreters
14. interpreting information obtained through interpreters
15. speaking directly to parents, not the interpreter.

Working with Parents (ranked 5)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

16. differences in family structures across cultures (e.g., extended families)
17. differences in authority, hierarchies, communication patterns, belief systems, values, and gender roles.
18. the attitudes of culturally diverse parents towards different forms of interventions and types of interventions
19. the attitudes that culturally diverse parents have toward educational institutions and teachers

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills about:

20. implementing home-school collaboration programs and interventions.

Theoretical Paradigms (ranked 6)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

21. the strengths and limitations of the major theoretical paradigms that operate in school psychology and the appropriateness of their applications to LCD individuals/groups.

Counseling (ranked 7)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

22. differences that exist between counselor and client that can impact the counseling relationship.

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills about:

23. recognizing that helping styles and methods may be culture-bound
24. assessing acculturation of the client and responding to the client's self-presentation rather than the counselor's inferred identity of the client.

Professional Characteristics (ranked 8)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

25. the client's culture, cultural context, values, worldview and social norms

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills about:

26. viewing clinical information within a contextual perspective (i.e., depression among gay populations).
27. engaging in ongoing efforts to reduce and eliminate biased beliefs and behaviors.

Consultation (ranked 9)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

28. cultural and linguistic factors that can influence the input, process, and outcome of consultation

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skill about:

29. working with LCD parents, children, and school staff
30. using a variety of data collection techniques for problem identification and clarification, and planning and implementing interventions that are culturally and linguistically sensitive
31. recognizing prejudice and prevalent obstacles that may affect consultation (e.g., racism, sexism).

Culture (ranked 10)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

- 32. the cultural context of the client
- 33. the interaction of the culture and assessment

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills about:

- 34. assessing the norms of the cultural group that they work with and modifying behavior to become culturally congruent when appropriate
- 35. working with all the cultural groups served.

Academic Interventions (ranked 11)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

- 36. the most successful instructional strategies used with LCD students
- 37. the factors linked to high dropout rates among diverse students and techniques aimed at retention
- 38. second language acquisition and its impact on acquisition of academic skills.

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skill about:

- 39. making curriculum and classroom management recommendations that are culturally relevant.

Research Methods (ranked 12)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

- 40. the need to consider sociocultural variables and perspectives that impact data analysis and interpretation.

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skill about:

- 41. translating traditional theoretical paradigms into relevant and sensitive research that benefits LCD populations

Working with Organizations (ranked 13)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skill about:

- 42. applying institutional intervention skills and working to eliminate biases, prejudices, and discriminatory practices.

Language (ranked 14)

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have knowledge about:

- 43. second language acquisition process.

Cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have skills about:

- 44. using culturally sensitive verbal and nonverbal communication styles when communicating with LCD children and their families
- 45. the use of translators

Taken from: Rogers, M. R., & Lopez, E. C. (2002). Identifying critical cross-cultural school psychology competencies. *Journal of School Psychology, 40*, 115-141

Appendix E

Essential Cross-Cultural School Psychology Competencies (Lopez and Rogers, 2001)

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding assessment

1. Knowledge of cross-cultural variables influencing performance, assessment results, and interpretation
2. Knowledge of the limitations and biases of standardized tests and other available measures
3. Skill in interpreting assessment results in the context of the client's cultural background
4. An awareness of the cross-cultural factors that affect performance and interpretation
5. An awareness that variations in administration have an effect on scores
6. Knowledge of research on assessing CLD children
7. Skill in using multi-source, multi-level, and multi-strategy assessment
8. Skill in using appropriate, culturally sensitive assessment resources
9. An ability to assess whether a test is used in a discriminatory manner
10. Knowledge of instruments used in the assessment process
11. Knowledge of the factors that affect language assessment scores (e.g. bilingual parents)
12. Knowledge of the major influence of language variables in assessment (i.e. being sure we are assessing actual deficits as opposed to mere language differences or lack of vocabulary or language skill).

The competencies that cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding consultation are:

13. Skill in working with others (e.g., patience, good judgment)
14. Skill in demonstration sensitivity towards the cultural of school personnel involved in consultation
15. Skill in responding flexibly with a range of possible solutions that reflect sensitivity to cross-cultural issues
16. Knowledge of the culturally related factors that may affect accurate assessment of the "problem" in the problem-solving sequence

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding counseling are:

17. An awareness of the cultural factors that might influence counseling
18. Knowledge of norms, values, and attitudes of different cultural groups (e.g., gender roles, interpersonal interactions)
19. Skill in working with clients with culturally different backgrounds
20. Knowledge of acculturation process
21. An awareness of cultural differences in metaphors and symbols
22. An ability to recognize cultural differences in perception, acceptability, and limitations of counseling

23. Willingness to learn about different cultural beliefs as they pertain to the education of children
24. An awareness of self and own culture
25. Sensitivity to cultural mores, especially gender issues and role expectations
26. Knowledge that different clinical (i.e., diagnostic) information may be gained from clients when they use their first and second language and both types of information may be valuable
27. An understanding of culturally based verbal and nonverbal cues
28. Skill in establishing rapport with culturally diverse students and parents
29. An ability to allow for difficulties in linguistically diverse students experience (i.e., “listen though” accents, allow more “processing time” for them to respond to questions)

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding culture are:

30. An understanding of cultural differences of groups within the United States
31. Knowledge about a specific cultural groups’ attitudes toward disabilities or expectations
32. An awareness of what is considered important about education by the members of a cultural group
33. Knowledge of how culture determines values and behaviors
34. An understanding and appreciation of cultural differences
35. Knowledge of the impact of culture on learning and behavior
36. An understanding of the pervasive impact of culture on individual and group behavior
37. An understanding to the need to retain one’s cultural identity
38. Respect for other cultures and peoples
39. An appreciation for the strengths brought to the American culture by peoples from diverse cultural backgrounds
40. Sensitivity to verbal and non-verbal cues that differ across cultures
41. Knowledge of survival skills and life demands that accompany the culturally different child
42. An awareness that tolerance for diversity and acceptance of differences need to be modeled all the time

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding language are:

43. Knowledge of the first and second language acquisition process
44. Knowledge of information about variables in normal language development across language and cultures
45. Knowledge that these children may have conceptual gaps in all languages
46. Knowledge of language dominance and language proficiency
47. Knowledge of factors that influence the second language acquisition process (e.g., exposure to language, languages used at home, first language skills)
48. Skill in using verbal and nonverbal communication that demonstrates respect for culturally different individuals
49. An awareness of the unique learning problems experienced by bilinguals
50. Knowledge of how language influences the child’s ability to learn

51. Knowledge base about the culturally different child regarding language acquisition (i.e., how long does it take to develop mastery over a secondary language; based upon what age; what of academic performance in terms of comprehension in native language and in secondary language; what does the research say about “bilingual instruction” [instruction in native language versus dominant language]; and what does research say about best education practice?)

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologists should have regarding laws and regulations:

52. An awareness that assessment or eligibility issues may be seriously impacted by cross-cultural issues (e.g., a child may not be placed in special education just because of linguistic or cultural differences)
53. An awareness of and knowledge about rules and regulations as presented in IDEA and PL94-142 for assessment of children whose first language is other than English
54. Knowledge that school districts placing LEP (i.e., limited English-proficient) children into special education are aware of law cases that recognize that the way standardized psychological test are used can be discriminatory
55. Knowledge of the need to have an interpreter at all parent meetings as indicated by state and federal law
56. An awareness of you own ethical standards and assume others have comparable ones

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding professional characteristics are:

57. skill in modeling tolerance
58. Same skills as those a well-trained, competent school psychologist might have:
(a) strong sense of responsibility for a job well done for clients, patients, students, community; and (b) interest in intellectual or cultural or artistic manifestations of different cultures
59. Respect and appreciation for the socioeconomic and cultural background of the child and his or her family
60. An ability to communicate and demonstrate an understanding of the culture in question
61. Sensitivity to culturally and linguistically diverse populations
62. Demonstrate personal qualities reflecting the absence of overt and covert hostility to various culturally different groups
63. Skill in behaving in a professionally appropriate and culturally synchronous manner
64. An Ability to engage in continued professional development in this area
65. An ability to advocate for clients
66. Skill in recognizing the limits of their own knowledge and skills so that they can seek consultation or referral to other professionals, as needed
67. Demonstration of a willingness to work with culturally diverse groups
68. Have a sense of values, strengths, and limitations of one’s own culture
69. Awareness that you need to distinguish between cultural practices that may be harmful and those that are culturally different

70. An ability to establish a professional and comfortable relationship with client in a way that respects and is congruent with the child's culture

71. Knowledge of when to refer the assessment to someone with more experience with that culture

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding report writing:

72. Skill in writing reports in language culturally diverse individuals will understand (i.e., parents and children)

73. Skill in writing reports that include descriptions of (a) language or languages spoken, and (b) other relevant cultural characteristics such as reasons for immigration, years since immigration, effect of immigration experience, religious practices, adjustment to new culture, support systems, level of acculturation

74. Skill in interpreting results when cultural or language factors are an issue

75. An understanding of the culture of the child the school psychologist is writing about

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding research are:

76. Working knowledge of the limits involved in generalizing from samples to populations and from sample to sample

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have regarding theoretical paradigms are:

77. Knowledge of how our own (i.e., psychologists) theoretical paradigms are influenced by our cultural backgrounds

78. An awareness that poverty plays more of a role in a child's functioning than does membership in a particular minority group

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have when working with interpreters are:

79. Skill in interviewing for discerning interpreters' (a) level of experience with school-based and special education situations; (b) extent of language skill in both languages; (c) extent of cultural understanding of both cultures; and (d) familiarity with the local and ethical conventions surrounding assessment

80. Skill in finding an interpreter who speaks as closely as possible the language or dialect of the test taker

81. Knowledge of the problems associated with using family members as interpreters

82. Knowledge of special concerns related to confidentiality when using interpreters

83. Skill in clearly communicating expectations about respective roles...(it is best to be bilingual yourself)

84. Knowledge of methods and limitations of translation

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have when working with organizations are:

85. An awareness of and sensitivity to the diversity of employees in an organization and in the constituents which they serve. These diversities imply difference in values, interests, and goals in life.

The competencies that a cross-culturally skilled school psychologist should have when working with parents are:

86. An awareness of roles parents play in child's country of origin
87. An understanding of differences in child rearing practices due to cultural differences
88. Respect of other values that clash with dominant culture
89. An awareness of the value placed in education by the client or by the parents of the client

Taken from: Lopez, E. C., & Rogers, M. R. (2001). Conceptualizing cross-cultural school psychology competencies. *School Psychology Quarterly, 16*, 270-302.

Appendix F

Psychological Supervisor/Coordinator Letter

Dear Coordinator of Psychological Services:

Hello! I am a doctoral student in the school psychology program at the University of Maryland, writing to request your help with my dissertation project. In this research, which is being supervised by Dr. William Strein from the University of Maryland, I will be exploring multicultural experiences in school psychology.

I am interested in interviewing practicing school psychologists in your and neighboring counties about their experiences working in multicultural environments. However, I need your help in identifying potential participants for this project. I am looking to interview one to three practicing school psychologists from your county who you would identify as having experience working in diverse school populations.

I am requesting that you identify up to three individuals that meet the following criteria: (a) works as a practicing school psychologist (not counselor or social worker), and (b) has at least 5 years experience working in a school with at least 50% racial-ethnic minority student population. Please use the enclosed nomination form to identify psychologists in your county.

Upon receiving the names of nominated individuals I will use professional organization contact information lists to locate phone numbers for these individuals. Nominated individuals will be informed that they were identified by the Psychological Services Coordinator in their county and that participation in the project is completely voluntary. All participants who complete the interview will receive a \$25 dollar token of appreciation.

I hope that you will be able to help me in this project. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at the information below.

Thank you in advance,

Kenya Mewborn
School Psychology Graduate Student
University of Maryland
301-352-7840
kmewborn@wam.umd.edu

Appendix G

Nomination Form

Nomination of School Psychologists Experienced in Working in Diverse Settings

Please use this form to nominate school psychologists working in your county who are experienced in working in diverse schools. It would be appreciated if you would nominate up to three individuals who have had at least 5 years of experience working as a school psychologist in a school with at least 50% racial-ethnic minority group representation in the student body.

Completed forms should be sent to the address below in the enclosed envelope.

Kenya Mewborn
16517 Governor Bridge Road, #205
Bowie, MD 20716

Name of the person filling out the nomination form: _____

County _____

Name of Nominee 1: _____

Name of Nominee 2: _____

Name of Nominee 3: _____

Appendix H

Informed Consent for School Psychologists

Project Title: A Grounded Theory Study of the Multicultural Experiences of School Psychologists

Investigator: Kenya Mewborn, School Psychology Program, University of Maryland, College Park

I state that I am over 18 years of age and wish to participate in a program of research being conducted by Kenya Mewborn in the School Psychology Program at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of individuals identified as experienced in working with diverse school populations. The procedures for the project involve participation in one 60 minute interview and a brief follow-up interview with the investigator at a location of the participant's choosing. I understand that interviews will be taped and transcribed and that I will have the opportunity to review and modify interview responses.

I also understand that I am being asked to distribute a brief survey that addresses multicultural interactions in which I was involved to two school staff members of my choice with whom I have worked. Survey respondents will remain anonymous to the researcher and their responses will not be linked to individual school psychology participants. I will not be able to view individual survey results.

Some may find it uncomfortable to discuss the topic of cultural diversity. I understand that the study is not designed to help me personally, but to help the investigator learn more about multicultural responding and sensitivity in school psychology. Participation in this project is voluntary and that I am free to discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

All information collected in this study is confidential. I understand that the data I provide will be grouped with data others provide for reporting and presentation. I will be assigned a pseudonym and my real name will not be used in discussing data and results.

I understand that I may contact Kenya Mewborn to ask questions or express concerns at the contact information listed below:

Kenya Mewborn
301-352-7840
kmewborn@wam.umd.edu

Name of Participant _____

Signature of Subject & Date _____

Appendix I

Informed Consent for Survey Respondents

Project Title: A Grounded Theory Study of the Multicultural Experiences of School Psychologists

Investigator: Kenya Mewborn, School Psychology Program, University of Maryland, College Park

I state that I am over 18 years of age and wish to participate in a program of research being conducted by Kenya Mewborn in the School Psychology Program at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The purpose of this research is to explore the professional experiences of school psychologists identified as experienced in working with diverse school populations. I understand that I am being asked to complete the enclosed survey regarding my school psychologist's interactions in a multicultural case. All information collected in this study is confidential. I understand that the data I provide will be grouped with data others provide for reporting and presentation. I understand that my name will not be collected, thus will not be used to identify me in reporting findings from this project.

By initially this page and the survey and returning the completed survey in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope, I am consenting to participate in this project. I understand that I may contact Kenya Mewborn to ask questions or express concerns at the contact information listed below:

Kenya Mewborn
301-352-7840
kmewborn@wam.umd.edu

Informant Initials _____

Date _____

Appendix J

School Staff Informant Survey

Position in the School (e.g. teacher) _____

Please answer the following questions in the space provided. Answers should reflect experiences with the school psychologist who gave you this survey.

1. Please briefly describe an incident where your school psychologist handled a case that was challenging because of cultural mismatch between a student, parent, teacher or administrator.

2. What strategies did you observe your school psychologist use in this situation?

3. What personal characteristics or qualities do you feel assisted your school psychologist in his/her handling of this situation?

Please initial here _____

Thank You!

Appendix K

Constructs, Main Categories, Categories, and Concepts

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
Diverse School Context	Communication Barriers	Communication barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communication pattern differences - second language issues - non Standard English issues - dialectal differences - miscommunication - student does not have verbal background for counseling - language barriers with students - language barriers with parents
Diverse School Context	Communication Barriers	Interpreters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unqualified interpreters - use of interpreters - qualified interpreters - interpreter misinterpretation - power dynamic involved with interpreter - use of family member as interpreter
Diverse School Context	Families in the Diverse Context	Parent involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parental detachment from education -parent involvement is high - meetings in parent's setting - parent language impact involvement - parent experience with discrimination - parent input is important - parent low/no literacy - parent's negative school experience - parental confidence - parental expectations - parents as equal participants in meetings - parents intimidated by school meetings - poor parent involvement - sense on entitlement - translated documents - trouble getting to the school because of transportation - trouble getting to school because of child care - parent uncomfortable coming to the school

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
Diverse School Context	Families in the Diverse Context	Views on psychology/pathology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stigma of seeing psychologist - does not want child to see psychologist - parent does not understand what psychologist does - parent does not understand disorders
Diverse School Context	Families in the Diverse School Context	Parents understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parent does not understand the special education process - parent does not understand their child's educational rights - parent does not understand they are equal partner
Diverse School Context	Teachers in Diverse Context	Lack of staff understanding of language acquisition process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - insensitivity to language issues - misunderstanding of language acquisition - inappropriate referral of students with language issues to special education - teacher does not understand how long language development takes - teacher does not understand conversational vs. academic language development - teacher does not understand the diversity within groups of language minority students
Diverse School Context	Teachers in Diverse Context	Disproportionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff desire to provide special education as support for child - minorities referred for special education more than other groups - higher proportion of minorities in special education - premature decisions about student disability status - inappropriate referrals due to situational factors impacting student - inappropriate referrals due to language differences - inappropriate referrals due to cultural differences
Diverse School Context	Teachers in the Diverse Context	Staff awareness of cultural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of cultural understanding leads to inappropriate referrals - neglect impact of culture/environmental variables

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff resist diversity issues - teacher level of multicultural training - teacher sensitivity to different family structures, values - teacher understanding of time needed to adjust to new culture - team does not look at the impact of cultural issues - impact of teacher background/environmental factors - teacher has understanding of cultural issues
Diverse School Context	Teachers in the Diverse Context	Insensitive/biased/prejudiced staff members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impact of staff bias - insensitive teachers and administrators - teacher racial biases - teacher language biases - teacher acts of discrimination - most teachers are not bias
Psychologist Characteristics	Multicultural Interest	Interest in Multicultural Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expressed multicultural interest in job interview - multicultural interest grew gradually - had multicultural interest prior to graduate school - more comfortable in diverse environment - multicultural interest leads to motivation to stay up to date on culture issues - diverse placement preferred - requested current placement - taking classes in language/culture - interest involves particular culture working with - professional interest is narrower than personal interest - work in diverse setting lead to multicultural interest
Psychologist Characteristics	Knowledge	Cultural Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consult research to learn about culture - differentiating impact of cultural variables

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - level of cohesion of different groups - differences within cultural groups - knowledge differences between cultural groups - consult multicultural books - recent immigrants vs. other minorities - understand differences in social interaction patterns - understand differences in family structure - knowledge of culturally accepted interventions - training impacts knowledge development - consultation with staff impacts knowledge development - consultation with colleagues helps to learn about cultures - stereotyping - being about to see when culture is a factor
Psychologist Strategies	Knowledge	Recognize bias in instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impact of prior knowledge/exposure on student performance - cultural bias in instruments
Psychologist Characteristics	Knowledge	Knowledge of Language Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowledge of language acquisition process - knowledge of resources - conversation vs. academic language development - knowledge of various interventions
Psychologist Characteristics	Self-awareness	Self awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accept feedback and suggestions - awareness of own biases - getting honest feedback - personality impacts awareness - training impacts awareness of own cultural beliefs - understand how own culture impacts beliefs and interactions - personal philosophy on cultural issues - understand limits of competence
Psychologist Characteristics	Cultural Empathy	Empathy in the professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional shows empathy for parent situation

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional shows empathy for student situation - ability to put self in other's shoes includes understanding from different set of expectations, beliefs, values - experience as minority impacts empathy - empathy for language issues - empathy for conflicts in beliefs/values with dominant culture - ability to understand role reversal
Psychologist Characteristics		Personal/Professional characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nonjudgmental - open minded - withdraw assumptions - be available - be professional - encouraging - flexibility - friendly - good listener - honesty - intolerant of unfair people - non-threatening - organized - patience - ability to refocus to important issues - resourcefulness - sense of humor - willingness to change mind - ability to build working relationship
Psychologist Strategies	Relationship Building	Build Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - answer questions about own culture - develop common goals with families - connecting with kids - develop rapport with student before beginning testing - psychologist disclosure of personal information - don't be condescending when others don't understand cultural issues - learn to build relationship despite racial differences - relationships help transcend differences - don't presume to be expert

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide emotional support for staff - be available to staff - juggle roles (depending on what parental expectations are for professional) - learn words in student's language - make yourself 'human' to team - meet child at their level - have a sense of humor - do not use jargon with staff - recognize nonverbal cues - open dialogue about culture - develop rapport - relate student's issues to own background
Psychologist Strategies	Relationship Building	Be advocate for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advocate for child's best interest - communicating that you are advocate lessens impact of racial mismatch - communicate that you care about child
Psychologist Strategies	Relationship Building	Make family feel comfortable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accommodate your dress - does not use jargon with parent - display multicultural posters - make parent feel comfortable - meetings in parent's setting - encourage parent to bring a friend/family to meeting for support - begin minority parent support group at school - let parents express frustrations - take more time with parent/student - working with parents to develop plan/goals
Psychologist Strategies	Gathering Information	Collect info on student and variables that impact student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask parent questions - ask student questions - behavioral expectations - consult with staff to gain information - begin with benign/non threatening questions - conduct comprehensive interview - gather information on family structure - gather information about home

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			environment - conduct home visits - knowledge of student's community - gather information on parental expectations, value, experiences - gather information on family's religion
Psychologist Strategies	Information Gathering	Valid/ less biased assessments	- alternative assessments - curriculum based assessment - interactions in assessment - interpreting results - nonverbal assessment instruments - query answers - testing the limits procedures - valid assessments
Psychologist Strategies	Information Gathering	Consider range of variables on behavior	- consideration of various reasons for behaviors - focus on more than student characteristics - consider range of variables when interpreting results - look at whole picture when looking to explain behaviors
Psychologist Characteristics	Information Gathering	Consultation with colleagues	- hearing about other cases - going to other psychologists to discuss case - going to staff member to discuss case - working with staff member to increase understanding of culture - interest leads to desire to advocate for minorities - minority status impacts interest - personal interest in multicultural issues - professional interest in multicultural occurring in your school - consultation with staff who is member of cultural group -consultation with staff who has knowledge of cultural group
Psychologist Strategies	Information Gathering	Discuss cultural/bias issues with staff	- conduct observation of what occurs in classroom - confront people on cultural issues

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff defensiveness about race - psychologist does not bring up cultural issues - indirectly address cultural issues
Psychologist Strategies	Information Gathering	Team/teacher characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask teachers about their experiences/background - impact of teacher background/experiences/skill level - team readiness to effectively address cultural issues - varying levels of awareness of staff members/colleagues - working with people who are aware
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Educate parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - educate parents - parent education should occur more - provide information on parent's rights - explain what you are doing with the student during assessment - explain what you are doing with the student during counseling - explain disabilities - explain parent role in special education process - give information in alternate forms - provide information about school resources - provide information about outside resources
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Culture driven strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of practices more approved of by different cultures - learn words in student's language - teach students that certain behaviors are appropriate in certain contexts - give student information in a way different than their parents - use of touch with some minority students - encourage students to take pride in their race - teach student to cope with discrimination
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Common Factors Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use same strategies as with non minority students

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Educate staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - educate staff - give staff resources for general instruction - educate staff on language development - educate staff on cultural factors that impact family - provide staff with information about issues impacting specific student - educate staff on situational factors that impact students - provide staff with information about interventions/strategies
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Educate about language acquisition process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of conversational vs. academic language - language acquisition can look like other conditions
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Reframe picture of student/behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - break down teacher talk - reframe teacher view on child
Impacting Variables	System Issues	Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - outside resources to supplement student services - gathering/translating resources for parents - funding for professional development - staff cultural sensitivity training - county resources - teach parents English
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Help instill cultural empathy in others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - instill empathy in others - help to put teachers in family's shoes in regard to impact of situational variables - help to put teachers in family's shoes in regard to impact of language/cultural issues
Impacting Variables	Multicultural Training	Graduate Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impact of training/workshops - training helped increase respect for differences - training can't teach all you need to know - graduate training was helpful - multicultural content was included in graduate experiences - examination of multicultural issues

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> was encouraged in training - graduate training did not impact multicultural development - multicultural content was not included in graduate experiences - examination of multicultural issues was discouraged during training - multicultural content was not focus of program, but was included - information presented in training was from dominant group perspective - direct contact with minority clients included in training - training did not include direct contact with minority clients - training leads to cultural understanding - training leads to self awareness
Psychologist Strategies	Information Sharing	Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop interventions - teacher lack of follow through on interventions - pre-referral interventions - interventions appropriate for culture
Impacting Variables	Multicultural Training	Attended workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - post graduate workshops were helpful - post graduate workshops were not helpful - workshops are redundant
Impacting Variables	Life experiences	Experience as minority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professional experiences discrimination - experience as majority group member - experience as racial ethnic minority group member - discrimination in work setting - discrimination in graduate training
Impacting Variables	Life experiences	Sensitivity/acceptance is inherent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competence is partly personality - cultural sensitivity is part of personality
Impacting Variables	Life Experiences	Life experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - experience as “numerical minority” in work setting - experience as “numerical minority” in region - experience as “numerical minority”

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lead to empathy - travel impacts understanding - upbringing impacts sensitivity
Impacting Variables	Life Experiences	Job experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - experience on job leads to increased confidence - does things now, would not do before with experience - job experiences involves contact with diverse groups
Impacting Variables	System Issues	System issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - people in upper levels afraid to speak up about diversity issues - county financial resources - county supports diversity issues - funding for professional development - bilingual assessment resources - differential services based on cultural variables (low income group, poorer services) - emphasis on curriculum impacts minority students - emphasis on test scores impacts minority students - fear of being sued influence county decisions - lack of needed support - minority recruitment of staff - minority recruitment of psychologists - negative impact of system - progressive county - system perspective on cultural issues
Impacting Variables	System Issues	Bilingual Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referral system for bilingual assessments - system changes in bilingual assessment procedures - engage interpreter in bilingual assessments - engage ESOL in bilingual assessments
Impacting Variables	System Issues	Time Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - heavy caseload limits activities psychologists can perform - increase range of activity when does not have to do much testing

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time constraints are influenced by amount of testing - does not do counseling because of time constraints - does less consultation because of time constraints
Bridging		Bridging Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acknowledge cultural gaps - impact of cultural similarities - impact of cultural differences - acknowledge biases - acknowledge discrimination - awareness of language issues - don't overemphasize cultural differences - awareness of impact of cultural variables on students
Bridging		Respect differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acknowledge cultural differences - no culture is "right"; all are equal - awareness of when cultural factors are impacting interaction - don't let your values cloud interaction - respect viewpoint of others - acknowledge contextual appropriateness of behavior - do not judge cultural beliefs, values differ than your own
Bridging		Impact of cultural variables on student and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clashes between expectations/values of parent and child -clashes between expectations/values of family and school - contextual appropriateness of behaviors - situational variables that impact child's performance - cultural variables that impact child's performance - impact of race vs. SES - impact of language acquisition - parental expectations about education - differential impact of different cultural variables - daily culture of students

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impact of financial issues - impact of language barriers - impact of school staff cultural understandings - impact of parent views on education - impact of parent literacy - impact of parent level of comfort in school
Bridging		“Multicultural competence”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being a minority doesn’t make you multiculturally competent - cultural development is ongoing - competence is rare - cultural issues constantly changing
Bridging		“Multicultural”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - multicultural means racial ethnic groups - multicultural means more than racial-ethnic groups - term multicultural is confusing - experiences impact definition of multicultural - impact of world on def of multicultural
Bridging		Impact of work in diversity on professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - constant fight - cultural shock - diversity is positive - expanded sense of diversity - feels appreciated - frustration - helps to have group to discuss feelings with - working in diverse environment is learning experience - make a difference in diverse settings - overwhelmed in diverse setting - personal growth occurs in diversity - professional growth in diversity - work in diverse setting results in reduced prejudice - struggling with feelings about diversity - work harder in diverse setting
Bridging		Macro level impact of diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - changing societal norms - diversity has negative features - failure to conform to norms

Constructs	Main Categories	Categories	Concepts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">- homogeneity is not realistic- increase in diversity- increase of minority psychologists

Appendix L

Inquiry Audit Letter

Dissertation Committee:

I served as Inquiry Auditor for Kenya Mewborn's dissertation research. My role was two fold: to examine the process and evaluate the product of her grounded theory research.

I was responsible for increasing the dependability and confirmability of this study. I examined the raw data, coding categories, coded materials, drafts of the theory, and an early draft of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this text, to verify Ms. Mewborn's use of grounded theory procedures. The audit process involved analyzing the development of the main constructs and relationships proposed in the theory to ensure that they evolved from the actual data provided by participants.

I feel that Kenya Mewborn was very successful in her endeavor to appropriately code the extensive amount of data collected. In addition, Ms. Mewborn achieved a verifiable emerging theory supported by the raw data she collected.

Sincerely,

Elsa Velez, Ph.D.
Inquiry Auditor

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