

SELF-RATINGS OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY
BY CONSULTING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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SELF-RATINGS OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY
BY CONSULTING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT
SELF-RATINGS OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY
BY CONSULTING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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The purpose of this study was to investigate how consulting school psychologists rate themselves with regard to being multiculturally competent. Using a non-experimental, causal-comparative research design this study consisted of a survey of 131 consulting school psychologists across the United States and how they rate their multicultural competencies using the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI). Participants of the study rated themselves as being multiculturally competent in the areas of multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural skills. However, they reported some challenges in the area of multicultural relationships. The majority of the respondents were of European/European American descent (88%) and they reported

that they had limited opportunity to work with minority students. The implications of this study suggest that not only is recruitment and retention of minority students in graduate programs necessary but it is also necessary for graduate students to have practical experiences working with minority students and interacting with minority peers to help improve multicultural competence, specifically, multicultural relationships. Additionally, on-going training in the area of multicultural competency needs to be the focus of practicing school psychologists regardless of gender or age.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Consulting school psychologists must be able to work with children from diverse cultures. The United States population is changing with the growth of diverse ethnic and cultural groups. This trend will influence the makeup of the school population, and consulting school psychologists will have to know how to work with such a more diverse group of students in order to maintain and/or improve academic achievement. As it stands today, many consulting school psychologists do not have the knowledge, awareness, or the skills to work with students from diverse cultural groups. They have little training from the universities in the area of multiculturalism and can not rely on the professional journals for research-based multicultural practices because there has been so little published. Additionally, while there may be a variety of proven consultation methods in the literature, few practitioners have published empirically-based findings of their application to culturally diverse populations. There also have not been any published studies of self perceptions of school psychologists' multicultural competency. The focus of this study is to determine how school psychologists rate themselves with regard to multicultural consultation competence.

Rationale

Miranda (2002) stated that the rapidly changing ethnic and cultural demographics of the United States have increased the need to establish a knowledge base for cultural diversity. Based on reports from the United States Census Bureau of 1998, Miranda reported that 19.8% of elementary and high school students had at least one foreign-born parent. Among students enrolled in elementary and high schools, 63.8% were Caucasian, 17.8% were non-Hispanic African American, 4.1% were Asian and Pacific Islander, and 14.3% were Hispanic. She contended that while the school-age population is becoming more diverse, the school psychology profession continues to be primarily rooted in Caucasian (European-American) culture. Based on a poll conducted in 2000, approximately 5.5% of school psychologists are people of color (Miranda, 2002).

Historically, the need for school psychologists to become culturally competent has not been reflected in the literature. This may be changing, albeit very slowly. From 1975 through 1990, about 9% of the articles in *Psychology in the Schools*, *Journal of School Psychology* and *School Psychology Review* reflected multicultural content. From 1990 to 1999, 10.8% of published articles in these journals focused on multicultural content (Miranda, 2002).

Additionally, Ingraham and Meyers (2000) indicated that the literature does not provide adequate conceptual and applied models for guiding research and practice concerning school-based consultation with differing cultural populations, even though practicing school psychologists often consult with diverse cultural groups. School psychologists often have to rely on other professional models that were not designed for

school psychologists. Ingraham and Meyers suggest that the literature lacks a comprehensive presentation of issues related to providing consultation in multicultural schools.

Significance of Study

In response to Ingraham and Meyers' proposal, this study complements existing multicultural consultation literature by examining and measuring the results of school psychologists' self-reports of competency in multicultural consultation. As a result of this study, practicing school psychologists and researchers may be able to identify areas of cultural competency that may need improvement via training programs and/or professional development.

Research Questions

1. How do consulting school psychologists self-report their multicultural competency?
2. Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to their age, with younger school psychologists having higher scores for cultural competence?
3. Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to the number of years they have been in practice, with school psychologists with fewer years of experience having higher scores for cultural competence?

4. Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to their ethnicity, with school psychologists who reported minority ethnicity having higher scores for cultural competence?

5. Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence between male and female consulting school psychologists, with female school psychologists having higher scores for cultural competence than male school psychologists?

6. Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to the amount of time they spend in consultation, with school psychologists who spend more than 50% of their time consulting having higher scores for cultural competence?

Definition of Terms

Consultation — Consultation is defined by Dougherty (2000) as a general goal to solve problems. The term, problem, does not necessarily infer that something is wrong, but could mean that something needs attention. Consultation, according to Dougherty (2000), involves a consultant, a consultee and a client system. The consultant delivers direct service to a consultee, who in turn delivers direct service to a client system. The consultant provides assistance to the consultee that can positively affect the consultee's work with the client system. It is also the goal to improve not only the consultee, but also the consultee's client system.

Culture — As defined by Ingraham and Meyers (2000), culture broadly includes an organized set of thoughts, beliefs and norms for interaction and communication among people, which may influence cognitions, behaviors and perceptions. It may be influenced by a combination of race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, age, gender, educational attainment, sexual orientation, spirituality, professional role, level of acculturation, and/or his or her frame of reference. Cultural differences may exist among individuals, communities, institutions, and/or professions.

Diversity — Diversity refers to individual differences (e.g., age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability or disability and other characteristics) that people may prefer to self-define (Arredondo & Toperek, 1996).

Multiculturalism — When one speaks of multiculturalism, he or she is referring to the background and experiences of individuals or groups whose characteristics differ significantly from that reflected by the mainstream culture in society (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002).

Multicultural Competence — Multicultural competence is defined by Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992) as being aware of one's assumptions, values and biases; understanding the worldview of culturally diverse clients; and developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques (skills).

Multicultural Consultation — Multicultural consultation involves raising cultural issues and making adjustments in the traditional consultation processes to be culturally sensitive to a member of the triad--consultant, consultee, client (Tarver, Behring & Ingraham, 1998).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Diversity in School Psychology Training

Many projections of growth within the general population suggest that ethnic/cultural minorities will increase affecting a variety of areas, including the school student population. However, this trend is not reflected in the school psychology profession. Instead the percentage of Americans of Caucasian descent continues to dominate the field.

According to the United States Bureau of the Census (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002), the United States population is expected to increase to approximately 335 million people by the year 2025. The Census Bureau projected that 61% of the total growth during this period is expected to come from Hispanic and Asian groups (forming 24% of the entire population), which reflects a decline in the percentage of Caucasian Americans.

These predictions are important to practicing school psychologists. They will need to understand the effects of their knowledge of diversity and revamp their multicultural competence when working with students and their families. The imbalance of Caucasian Americans working with minority students can be problematic if there is not an understanding of who these students are and their belief systems. This imbalance was proven by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) which

conducted a study based on a survey of the NASP membership from 2003. With a 69% response rate, NASP found that respondents reported their ethnicity as: White/Caucasian (91%); Hispanic/Latino (1.7%); Chicano/Mexican-American (0.9%); Black/African-American (2.4%); Asian-American/Pacific Islander (1.1%); American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.6%) and other ethnic groups (3.2%). The NASP study also noted that while 26–61% of the population in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, South Carolina and Washington D.C. were African American, less than 5% of school psychologists in these states were African American. While 25-42% of the general population in Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas were Hispanic, less than 2% of school psychologists were members of this ethnic group.

These data suggest that while the general population has become increasingly diverse, school psychologists have continued to be primarily Caucasian. As trends in the student population tend to reflect trends in the general population, then school psychologists will have to improve their ability to serve culturally diverse students and their families (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002).

To address the changing student population and their needs, school psychologists will need to expand their view of diversity to include more than just traditional cultural differences based on race and ethnic identity. In addition, the influence of geographic location, age, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation and specific family traditions are cultural differences that will need to be acknowledged (Bradley-Johnson & Dean, 2000). Students do not live in a bubble. Their behaviors are influenced by everything around them including opportunities afforded to them or lack thereof.

Students' family traditions and belief systems can affect how they view school, and what may be a successful student or high academic achiever may vary across cultures. This writer's experience as a school psychologist has shown that some students of Hispanic descent often leave school for a few months to go back to their native country to help their families in farm work. They return later in the year and struggle to catch up on missed school work and have difficulty adjusting back into the school climate. Through preservice education and professional development programs, school psychologists can become apprised of the needs of multicultural groups and their practices and respond accordingly.

For example, this writer's experiences at the graduate and professional levels as a school psychologist have provided many training opportunities to adequately service multicultural school populations. Graduate programs whose goals and objectives include improved multicultural competency not only include it in the curriculum, practicum and internships, but it is demonstrated throughout the population of the staff and students. There is a focus on recruitment and retention of minority students. However, on the other hand this writer has had experiences where multicultural competency was expected to be gained with one class or one chapter in a book.

To date, education in diversity has become part of graduate school curricula in the form of one class on multiculturalism. But, too often this course is limited to "chapter cultures" (e.g., one chapter on African Americans, one chapter on Native Americans, etc.) and may be taught by an individual who lacks substantial professional background and experience in cultural diversity (Davis-Russell as cited in Kramer & Epps, 1991;

Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). The coursework lacks the importance of understanding one's own culture first before attempting to understand multiculturalism (Bradley & Johnson, 2000; Davis & Russell, 1991; Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). Graduate students read about cultural issues, without any real-life experiences and exposure to students from different ethnic and cultural groups. One cannot adequately serve a multicultural population without practical experience.

Upon graduation this not only becomes a challenge for the consulting school psychologist but also could be a disservice to those students who need help. In other words, a lack of understanding and skill can negatively impact a student's academic success by increasing the lack of exposure and participation in the general education curriculum. For example, if the school psychologist is unfamiliar with a student's background or culture, the psychologist may consider the ethnic or minority student eligible for services as student who is cognitively impaired due to inexperience to certain life experiences. In turn, these students may be removed from the general education curriculum putting them in a situation where they fall further and further behind. One only needs to look at the disproportion of minority students receiving special education services across the nation because of social/cultural influences and because the psychologist is unfamiliar with these influences to steer the student in the right direction. In some cases this widens the achievement gap and attaches a negative stigma to that particular student.

To deal with this issue, Kramer and Epps (1991), suggest that a commitment should be made to incorporate cultural and ethnic minority issues into graduate curricula

and to recruit traditionally underrepresented groups to school psychology. Special consideration should be given to potential graduate students from historically underrepresented populations, including those from minority ethnic groups, those from families at a low socioeconomic status, and persons from rural areas. Not only can these graduate students from underrepresented populations provide insight to their colleagues, but also upon graduation they may have a new knowledge base and skill level to service students within the same cultural group and work with Caucasian students in the school system. In other words, “real-life” meets academia and vice versa.

The importance of school psychologists being able to work with diverse cultures was identified by Rogers et al (1999) and Frisby (1999). The authors identified professional issues, which if ignored, could lead to inappropriate referrals for services, mis-assessment of needs and issues, ineffective interventions and therapeutic approaches, and erroneous research results. They recommend more research and discussion in the area multiculturalism.

Diversity as Reflected in the School Psychology Literature

Consistent with the lack of growth in ethnic/cultural minorities in the field of school psychology, and despite the Census Bureau projections, limited published research appears in the professional journals. This is problematic because school psychologists rely on their professional journals to remain competent and current with suggested best practices.

In a review of the *School Psychology Review*, Shapiro (1995) examined his editorship of that journal. He reflected upon several of his goals as editor, one of which

included giving sufficient attention to the issue of multiculturalism in the schools. His mission, he said, was to emphasize the importance of developing a knowledge base in the area of diversity. Shapiro (1995) described a content analysis of the journal using the taxonomy for research articles appearing in school psychology journals. Each published article was placed in one of eight categories. These categories are: role and function/professional issue, cultural and linguistic diversity, consultation/intervention, other educational/psychological interventions, assessment, legal and ethical, research/evaluation methods, and psychological theory. The articles were also categorized as being empirical vs. nonempirical as well as by the primary affiliation of the corresponding author. The number of published articles in the area of cultural and linguistic diversity was small. Despite the fact that some attention was paid to multiculturalism in the schools, it was not apparent from the review that that topic was just as significant as some of the other issues published in the journal during his tenure as editor.

In 1992, Wiese-Rogers conducted an investigation of multicultural themes in the school psychology literature from 1975 to 1990. Their research results indicated that 9% of the articles in three major journals (*Psychology in the Schools*, *Journal of School Psychology* and *School Psychology Review*) reflected multicultural content. They did not find any studies that dealt with the impact of minority issues on the range of roles such as consultants and program developers which school psychologists participated in on a daily basis in schools.

In 2002, Miranda and Gutter conducted a study of all articles published in the *Journal of School Psychology*, *Psychology in Schools* and *School Psychology Review* to determine if they contained information on culturally diverse populations, topics or issues. Their purpose was to determine if things had improved since the first analysis of multicultural content by Wiese-Rogers in 1992.

They defined a culturally diverse article as any investigation in which persons from diverse racial/ethnic, linguistic or cultural groups within the United States were the main focus. They also included socioeconomic status and sexual orientation as part of the definition. Categorical classification included empirical vs. nonempirical, minority status, topical content, population studied, geographic area and setting. The articles were reviewed by a faculty member with expertise in the area of cultural diversity and two master's level students interested in the area of diversity.

Results of this study yielded 140 (10.6%) articles out of 1,311 that dealt with cultural diversity (representing an increase of 2% from the original study by Wiese-Rogers). The authors pointed out that 22% of the articles were special topic issues (which accounted for a large amount of the change in percentage) and that *School Psychology Review* had jumped from 5% of its articles addressing diversity and school psychology to 12%. They also noted that there was a difference when the decade (1992–2002) was divided in half with the majority of the articles dealing with diversity being published from 1995 to 1999 (65%).

During their review of these journals Miranda and Gutter found that while the number of minority participants had increased (African American 43%; Latinos 23%;

Asian Americans 3%; Native American 5%) many of the articles only focused on the relationship between these minority participants and socioeconomic status (SES), 25% of the articles. They only found one article related to sexual orientation in all journal articles reviewed.

Professional journals are oftentimes the source of best practices and current research. However, as diversity continues to increase, the lack of information in professional journals is indeed behind the times and not reflective of what is currently occurring in American society or the schools (Miranda & Gutter, 2002; Shapiro, 1995). The dearth of literature regarding diversity in school psychology stifles the professional growth and competency of school psychologists in that they have little knowledge and experience working with culturally diverse populations. They will need to continue to look at other disciplines to supplement their knowledge base in the area of diversity. Increased literature in the school psychology field can enhance the professional's commitment to serve diverse populations (Miranda & Gutter, 2002). Therefore, the combination of the lack of inconsistent training in graduate and professional programs as well as the mediocre presence of multiculturalism in the school psychology literature can present problems for the school psychologist as a consultant.

Ingraham and Meyers (2000) write, as consultants in a school system, school psychologists must work with diverse groups of people who identify with different cultures. "However", they state, "the literature does not provide adequate conceptual and applied models for guiding research and practice (p. 315)." Ingraham and Meyers explain that the actual application of consultation approaches in culturally diverse school

settings has yet to be published and that empirically based research is just beginning to emerge. How then, are school psychologists expected to effectively administer assessments, write reports, read/interpret results and make recommendations through consultation with students, parents, teachers and the Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT) as a consultant if the training and literature on multiculturalism is lacking? It will be up to these practitioners to continually report their experiences and findings to the professional journals to keep the psychology community apprised of the latest trends.

Consultation and School Psychology

Consultation is a major function of the school psychologist's job. But in order to adequately do that job, a school psychologist must understand the definition of consultation, as well as its many aspects. This section will examine the term consultation, identify the roles of a consultant and define the strategies of the consultation process.

Consultation Models Defined

Three main models of consultation have been identified in the literature: Mental Health Consultation, Behavioral Consultation and Organizational Consultation (Atkin-Little, Little & Delgatti, 2004; Dougherty, 2000; Frohle & Rominger, 1993; Gresham & Kendall, 1987). Which model a psychologist follows depends on the theoretical framework used in his/her practice (Atkin-Little, Little & Delgatti, 2004; Meyers, 1005; Bramlett and Murphy, 1998; Wilczynski, Mandel, & Fusilier, & Pryzwansky, 2000; Gutkin, 1999).

Beginning with the Mental Health Model, which is an integral part of school-based models (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998), consultation is defined as the process of interaction between two professional people — the consultant, who is a specialist — and the consultee, who invokes his/her help in regard to a current work problem with which the latter is having some difficulty, and which he/she has decided is within the former's area of specialized competence. Further, Meyer and Meyers (1998) added indirect and direct service to the consultee to the definition. This model is now redefined as consultee-centered (Knotek & Sandoval, 2003).

This more recent definition of Mental Health Consultation involves a non-hierarchical helping role relationship between a consultant and consultee who seeks professional help with a work problem involving a third party (client), such as a breakdown in the consultee-client relationship. The consultant helps the consultee bring clarity to the problem by considering multiple views: well-being, development, intrapersonal and interpersonal and organizational effectiveness appropriate to the consultee's work setting (Knotek & Sandoval, 2003). The goal is to jointly develop a new way of thinking about the problem so that the consultee's skill set is expanded and the professional relationship between the consultee and client is restored and improved.

A second model of consultation is Behavioral. It involves four stages. They are: problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation and plan evaluation. Its emphasis is on direct observation and assessment of behavior, and problems are viewed with an emphasis on environmental factors such as antecedents and consequences of problem behavior as well as functional relations between behavior and environment

(Atkin-Little, Little & Delligatti, 2004; Bramlett & Murphy, 1998; Meyers, 2002; Meyers, 1995).

Meanwhile, Behavioral Consultation has yielded another model called Conjoint Behavior Consultation (CBC). This is a systematic form in which parents and teachers work together to address the academic social or behavioral needs of students where both parties are accountable/responsible for outcomes. In this model home-school collaborations are important (Sheridan & Steck, 1995).

Lastly, Organization Consultation uses reflexive and self-analytic methods to apply behavioral science concepts and techniques to improve the interpersonal and group procedures used by administrators, teachers, students and parents in order to reach students' educational objectives (Akin-Little, Little & Delligatti, 2004). The focus is on the process of social interactions and whether or not schools are able to change with times while at the same time maintaining effective educational programs.

The three consultation models are built on relationship and interactions. Could these be problematic for the school psychologist with limited exposure to diverse cultures? Yes, perhaps some models are more appropriate or effective with a particular cultural group than others. Here knowledge of not only the types of models is key but the role of consulting school psychologist is also.

Consultation Roles in School Psychology

What is a school psychologist's role as a consultant? Dougherty (2000) describes it as a categorization of roles. These include, advocate, expert, trainer/educator, fact finder and process specialist. The advocate attempts to persuade the consultee to do

something that the consultant feels is highly necessary. Advocacy is often combined with outreach in order to promote services to those who need them.

The expert is the most common role taken according to Gallessich, Long, and Jennings (1986). The consultee wants to tap into the knowledge of the consultant, so the consultant can provide guidance on request. Gallessich et al. warn that consultants need to be aware of the dependence that could form between themselves and the consultees. This could result in the consultee's lack of improvement in the area of problem solving because they may be so reliant on someone else to think for them.

In the case of the trainer/educator role two different viewpoints of the trainer/educator role exist. On the one hand it is viewed as not being true consultation because of the amount of pre-planning time involved in workshops. However, on the other hand the trainer/educator role is a distinct approach to consultation itself (Conoley & Conoley, 1992; Lippitt & Lippitt, 1992). These points of view have emerged because of an attempt to compare education to consultation when instead it should be understood that consultants consistently train and educate. In other words the trainer/educator teaches strategies to the consultee that may help resolve a problem.

Another role of the consultant is to be a fact finder. According to Lippitt and Lippitt (1986), a fact-finding consultant gathers information, analyzes it and feeds it back to the consultee. This is usually done to clarify a problem.

Lastly, a process specialist focuses more on how to consult rather than the content (Dougherty, 2000). For example, the consultant focuses on the problem-solving process itself, and how those steps are accomplished. Heavily linked to the consultant is the type

of strategies one chooses to follow. Gutkin (1999) lists four types of strategies: collaborative-directive, collaborative-nondirective, coercive-directive, and coercive-nondirective. How did these strategies come about? How do they contribute to the consultation research?

Consultation Research

Historically, there has been the belief that consultation automatically means collaboration, regardless of which model was followed. Several assumptions support this idea. First, school psychologists were not the sole possessors of information. Secondly, remedial interventions designed by school psychologists would more than likely be carried out by someone else in the sense of Miller's (1969) suggestion that we should, "give psychology away" The third assumption was that there was an increasing emphasis on preventive rather than remedial approaches based on the fact that there was a growth in the number of children and adults experiencing psychological dysfunction. In order to focus on prevention, psychologists would have to move out of the hospitals and treatment offices and into community agencies and schools. Lastly, it was determined that school psychologists could not make much happen in the class without the active support of teachers, in a sense getting them to understand and appreciate the value of the treatment plans (Gutkin, 1999). In the 1990's, a debate arose when Witt wrote that more empirical research needed to be conducted in the area of the collaboration concept, but according to Gutkin (1999) stated that indeed, several earlier studies provided the foundation for such needed research. Gutkin clarified the necessity for empirical research suggested by Witt, by linking and tracing the collaboration concept to several earlier studies.

These studies suggested that consultants controlled the dyadic relationship across all stages of consultation. For example, Behavioral Consultation is exemplified by a hierarchical relationship between participants, and it challenged the whole notion of collaboration by indicating that consultants made more dominating statements during the course of the consultation process (Erchul, 1987). However, Gutkin countered this notion by offering alternative explanations to Erchul's findings primarily related to the fact that although consultants reportedly had more statements that appeared dominating this was not their primary mode of interaction. He also challenged the idea that dominance assumes noncollaboration.

Other studies suggested that consultation relationships may have been cooperative but not collaborative because the consultants controlled the nature and the course of the relationship (Erchul & Chewning, 1990; Witt, Erchul, McKee, Pardue, & Wickstrom, 1991). Additional explanations suggest there is nothing inherently noncollaborative about consultants asking questions and requesting more information including the fact that higher levels of topic determination in a consultant vs. consultee situation does not mean there is a noncollaborative interaction (Gutkin, 1999). In other words, just because the consultant may lead or guide the discussion with the consultee by asking questions, this does not mean that the relationship is noncollaborative.

These groundbreaking studies led to numerous investigations that appeared to take consultation full circle with respect to collaboration vs. directive/prescriptive/expert (giving instruction or direction without compromise and being all knowing) throughout the 1990's. In other words consultation was deemed collaborative in the beginning and

after much debate and some research, it still is. These studies pointed out that patterns between consultants and consultees were collaborative or reciprocal, but did not result in an agreed-upon definition of the word collaboration (Erchul, Hughes, Meyers, Hickman & Braden, 1995; Graham, 1998; Erchul, Sheridan, Ryan, Grisson, Killough & Mettler, in press). Gutkin (1999) also concluded that the distinction between collaborative and directive consultation is false. He states that the opposite of “collaborative is “coercive” not “directive” and the opposite of “directive” is “not directive” not “collaborative”. In other words, one can conclude that based on these studies, consultants can be both directive and collaborative at the same time.

Strategies of School Psychology Consultation

Stemming from the collaboration debate, four strategies of school psychology consultation were proposed by Gutkin in 1999. These include: collaborative-directive, collaborative-nondirective, coercive-directive and coercive-nondirective. The first strategy “collaborative-directive,” involves a highly prescriptive consultant who is open to consultee input during the process. If disagreements arise, resolution would be sought using shared decision-making between the consultant and consultee with the understanding and acceptance by the consultant, that the consultee has the right to reject those ideas after joint discussion (Gutkin, 1999).

The second, collaborative-nondirective, helps consultees develop their own solutions for solving problems while the consultant relinquishes directiveness and control over the sessions. This is beneficial in school districts where teachers can tap into

resources they have at their disposal. Additionally, it respects the consultee's position regarding the problem issues.

The third proposed strategy from Gutkin, (1999) is the coercive-directive model. In this model, a consultant is directive and relies on his/her own judgment for selecting treatment options. If necessary, the consultant will override consultee objections, such as a pediatrician urging a parent to use a certain medical treatment.

Lastly, is the coercive-nondirective consultation strategy. It refers to whether decision making is shared or unilateral. The consultant unilaterally decides to be nondirective and will not budge despite requests from the consultees. No benefits have been identified to date, and there is no research on this particular strategy (Gutkin, 1999).

Although these strategies have been proposed as alternative ways to putting the collaboration vs. directive/prescriptive debate to rest, much research is still needed with regard to some of the benefits, superiority, dependence on specifics of presenting the situation and the interaction among consultant, consultee, client and problem characteristics. In addition, the question should be asked: How does culture impact these consulting relationships and outcomes (Gutkin, 1999)?

While questions remain about Gutkin's proposed strategies, another strategy for school psychology consultation has been identified and found to be helpful. In this scenario, parents and teachers work together to address the academic, social and behavioral needs of an individual for whom both parties bear some responsibility. This model is called Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (Sheridan & Steck, 1995). Advantages of such consultation include shared information among individuals (such as conditions

and behaviors across significant settings like home and school). Interventions can be monitored by all parties for possible side effects. There is the potential for effective communication, constructive partnerships and productive relationships between home and school (Sheridan & Kratochwill as cited in Sheridan & Steck, 1995).

What can we conclude about strategies and what influence on the school psychology practice will it have? School psychologists are called upon to not only to evaluate students but also to consult. They will be called upon more and more to consult with diverse cultures as projected by the United States Census. Their roles and strategies are not only dependent upon the existing problem(s) but awareness, knowledge and skill when working with multiculturalism. Do school psychologists know what it means to be multiculturally competent consultants? We know that there is a gap in the literature, inadequate training programs which focus on multiculturalism and the consultation literature is inconsistent in defining strategies for school psychologists. We know that while the face of America is changing so are the faces of the schools. How will this mesh with the consulting role of school psychologists? Following is a review the literature in the area of multicultural considerations in school psychology, review the history of multicultural competence and its theories and finally the relationship of multicultural consultation with school psychologists.

Multicultural Considerations in School Psychology

In order to execute the role of a consulting school psychologist in multicultural situations, a school psychologist must be culturally competent. According to the

literature, in order to work effectively with diversity in schools “... psychologists will need to develop competence in the skills and knowledge bases related to these areas and be able to integrate them in a manner that guides cross-cultural interactions” (Ortiz & Flanagan, p. 2). This begins with a basic understanding of the word culture and an awareness of culture, knowledge and skills.

Defining Culture

Culture, broadly defined, includes an organized set of thoughts, beliefs and norms for interaction and communication, all of which may influence cognitions, behaviors, and perceptions. It may be influenced by a combination of race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, age, educational attainment, sexual orientation, gender, spirituality, professional role, level of acculturation, and/or theoretical framework. In addition, culture is a set of values, beliefs and attitudes that are unique to a given group of individuals and expressed in communal ways (Ingraham, 2000; Ingraham & Meyers, 2000; Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002).

NASP has adopted the National Center for Cultural Competence of Georgetown University’s definition of culture which states that culture is an “integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, language practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group, and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations” (National Association of School Psychologists, 2003, p. 1). Additionally, cultural differences may occur between communities, institutions or professions and there also may be a culture within a culture (sub-culture).

For example, school is a culture unto itself. To understand this, one may ask someone outside of the school environment what is meant by IEP, IDEA, LD, ED and MR. Only those affiliated with the school culture will understand these acronyms. The school is a culture unto itself “because schools have rules, expectations and norms for all sorts of functioning including behavior, language, attitudes, etc.” (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002, p. 331) just like an ethnic or societal culture. With the definition of culture established, one can move to the complex topic of multiculturalism and learn why it is an important component of a school psychologist’s knowledge base.

The Emergence of Multicultural Competency

To trace the emergence of multicultural competency in school psychologists one must review the history of school psychology. The profession of school psychology was born out of the counseling/clinical psychology profession. School psychological services emerged from the activities of Lightner Witmer at the psychological clinic that he founded at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896. Witmer, considered the father of clinical and school psychology, coined the phrase clinical psychology and started the first psychological clinic in his community (Fagan & Wise, 2000, p. 29).

Another historical figure relevant to school psychology is G. Stanley Hall (founder of the American Psychological Association in 1892). Hall was responsible for the first clinical facility operated in the schools (Fagan & Wise, 2000, p. 29). He used an approach in which procedures and methods took a general view, while Witmer made attempts to understand the individual (Fagan & Wise, 2000, p.28). Professionals who

followed Hall and Witmer bridged the gap between the two ideas to bring about the profession of school psychology (Fagan & Wise, 2000, p. 29). Due to the fact that counseling/clinical psychology is the basis of school psychology, the lack of literature in school psychology journals, causes one to rely heavily on counseling/clinical psychology research.

Based upon reports from psychologists who are currently in practice, Robinson and Morris (2000) and Manese, Wu and Nepomuceno (2001) described multicultural counseling from a historical context and with a look at current training. Robinson and Morris (2000) reasoned that the American Psychological Association (APA) was founded by 26 Caucasian men, thereby marking the birth of an organization that ultimately would have a long history of exclusion regarding racial/ethnic minority concerns. This concept of exclusion was labeled as a “well-utilized method” which ignores racial/ethnic minority concerns (such as inadequate minority representation on APA committees, central offices and among African American graduate students). These actions are believed by Robinson and Morris (2000) to have been fostered by the attitudes of the early leaders.

In the 1960's, some APA members attempted to raise awareness of racial/ethnic minority concerns within the organization (Robinson & Morris, 2000). These attempts included attracting minorities into the field, increasing the representation of African American psychologists in key governance positions and desegregating all elements of the APA. Other attempts included eliminating racist themes and research from APA journals and establishing a program where racial/ethnic minority concerns could be discussed (Williams, 1974). It is not a coincidence that these were the times of the Civil

Rights Movement when equality for all people was a focus and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed.

Building on the APA's work, the academies/universities created the role of "race psychologist." The race psychologist was responsible for administering intelligence tests to African Americans and using the data to "prove" the genetic inferiority of the entire African American race (Guthrie, 1976; Tripp, 1994). Based on this, Lewis Terman, one of the early authors of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test, gained national recognition, or perhaps notoriety, for his role in the movement to segregate educational institutions by race. This laid the foundation for the notion of group differences related to intelligence (Suzuki & Valencia as cited in Robinson & Morris, 2000).

By the 1970s there appears to have been heightened awareness among mental health professionals regarding the strong relationship between racism and the mental health system (Robinson & Morris, 2000). During this time the term, "minority counseling," was replaced with "cross-cultural counseling" and "multicultural counseling" (Robinson & Morris, 2000). Published articles and research projects described how psychology practices failed to meet the needs of racial/ethnic minority clients in general.

Despite the attention given to the change in terminology described above, practices did not change, and in the 1980's, the theory arose that counseling was a service for Caucasians, conducted by Caucasians and based on the Caucasian culture (Greene, 1986; Ivey, 1987; Pedersen & Marsella, 1982; Sue et al., 1982; Sue & Zane, 1987). Owing to this Caucasian-leaning practice, the treatment of minority clients resulted in

much faulty assessment and conclusions and misdiagnosis. These practices also have a strong impact on what has occurred in the field of school psychology regarding the overrepresentation of minority students in special education (Salvia & Yseldyke, 2001). As a result, inappropriate treatment for racial/ethnic minority clients emerged from research results and theories based on Caucasian middle-class values (Robinson & Morris, 2000).

Ultimately this method of practice resulted in assignment of more severe diagnoses for racial/ethnic minorities. Client services for African American clients disproportionately included interventions such as involuntary committal to inpatient facilities, assignment to less experienced or less qualified professionals and therapy consisting of minimal client-therapist contact (Robinson & Morris, 2000).

In response to the discrepancy between treatment recommendations for Caucasians and those for ethnic/minority groups, psychological organizations determined that multicultural competency was required for school psychologists working in a multicultural environment. The first wave of change came in the 1980's when identifiable competencies with respect to multicultural counseling were brought to the forefront (Robinson & Morris, 2000). The first formal description of multicultural counseling competency was developed by the Education and Training Committee of the APA's Division of Counseling Psychology (Division 17) in 1982. It said that multicultural counseling competency was comprised of three broad dimensions: attitudes/beliefs (awareness), knowledge and skills. Because the committee proposed that it was necessary to gain competence in all three areas in order to practice competently, it was determined

that training curricula should include separate courses on racial/ethnic minority concerns, that educational institutions, infuse racial/ethnic minority issues into existing curricula and that practica and internship sites should offer opportunities for training experiences with racial/ethnic minorities.

The theory was later expanded by Sue, Arrendondo and McDavis (1992) and Banks (1993) described three broad counselor characteristics that are critical to multicultural competency: becoming aware of one's own assumptions, values and biases; understanding the worldview of culturally diverse clients; and developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques.

In addition, in order to practice in a multicultural environment, counselors must recognize the relationship between the worldview of both counselor/client and the historical and current experiences of racism and oppression in the United States (Parham, 1986; Sabnani, Ponterotto & Bordovsky, 1991). Secondly, counselors need to acknowledge that counseling does not occur independently from events in society. Therefore, counselors must see that historical and current events not only influence personal lives but professional lives as well (Sue et al., 1992).

A culturally skilled counselor is aware of his/her own assumptions about human behavior, values and biases. Essentially, he/she understands that his/her own worldview may impact his/her counseling and work with racial/ethnic minorities. Such a counselor tries to understand the worldview of his/her culturally different client without negative judgments. It is critical that the counselor have an open mind and not impress his or her

own worldview on the client's. However, if the client has a different worldview, then the counselor must respect it.

At the same time, a culturally-skilled counselor must move from being culturally aware in general to being aware and sensitive to his/her own cultural heritage while valuing and respecting differences. Culturally skilled counselors are more accommodating of these differences. While counseling others, counselors seek to understand themselves as racial and cultural beings. He/she must also be aware of how his/her own cultural background and experiences, attitudes, values and biases influence psychological processes while recognizing weaknesses in his/her competencies (Sue et al. 1992).

As a counselor, he/she has a specific knowledge about his/her own racial and cultural heritage and how it personally and professionally affects his/her biases and definition of normality-abnormality and the process of counseling. For example, a culturally skilled counselor knows and understands how oppression, racism, discrimination and stereotyping affect them personally and in their work. He/she also is knowledgeable about his/her social impact upon others and communication style differences and how these may clash with or facilitate the counseling process with minority clients. With this knowledge, he/she will be able to anticipate the impact it may have on others (Sue et al., 1992). Aware of these assumptions, values and biases, described above, a competent counselor will seek out educational, consultative and training experiences to enhance his/her understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally different populations.

The second set of characteristics described by Sue et al (1992) includes understanding the worldview of the culturally different client. Culturally-skilled counselors in this area are aware of their own negative emotional reactions toward other racial and ethnic groups that may prove detrimental to their clients in counseling. Although they don't verbalize it, they are mentally contrasting their own beliefs and attitudes mentally against their culturally different clients. They are also aware of their own stereotyping (Sue et al, 1992).

The culturally-skilled counselor is knowledgeable about the particular culturally different client that he/she is working with regarding life experiences, cultural heritage, and historical background of their culturally different clients (Sue et al., 1992). At the same time, he/she is cognizant of knowledge of how culture and ethnicity can play a role in personality formation and the sociopolitical influences that affect the lives of racial and ethnic minorities such as immigration issues, poverty, racism, stereotyping, and powerlessness (Sue et al., 1992). For example, how does an African American school psychologist function in a rural, predominately Caucasian school district or urban, mainly low SES and African American school district? The school psychologist must be able to subjugate his/her own beliefs, values and stereotypes to be able to fairly and objectively work with a client.

To keep current on these issues, counselors must constantly and consistently review the literature on the latest findings regarding mental health and mental disorder in various ethnic and racial groups (Sue et al., 1992). Because counselors interact with minority individuals outside the counseling setting, their perspective of minorities is more

than an academic or helping experience (Sue et al., 1992). But what if the literature is sparse as is the case for school psychology? How can one be expected to improve his/her multicultural competency? The school psychologist must rise to the challenge and look outside of academics, perhaps into his/her personal or professional life, to gain the necessary background information to be able to treat effectively.

The final set of counselor characteristics required for multicultural competency involves developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques (Sue et al., 1992). To do this, culturally competent counselors must respect their clients' religious and/or spiritual beliefs and values about physical and mental functioning. They also must respect indigenous helping practices in addition to minority community, intrinsic, help-giving networks (Sue et al., 1992).

What the authors suggest, then, is that, counselors have knowledge and understanding of generic characteristics of counseling therapy, but it may not match the cultural values of various minority groups. Sue et al. (1992) indicate that these counselors are aware of their potential bias in assessment while keeping in mind the cultural and linguistic characteristics of their clients as they interpret findings and use procedures. Culturally competent counselors will be familiar with institutional barriers, minority family structures, values and beliefs. Lastly, they will be aware of relevant discriminatory practices on the social level that may be affecting the psychological welfare of the population being served (Sue et al., 1992).

When serving a particular population, culturally competent counselors participate in a variety of verbal and nonverbal helping responses to help clients determine whether a

“problem” is due to racism or bias so that clients do not inappropriately blame themselves (“institutional intervention”). To better serve their clients, such a professional will seek consultation with traditional healers or religious/spiritual leaders and practitioners, paying attention to and working to eliminate biases, prejudices and discriminatory practice, and taking responsibility in educating their clients to the processes of psychological intervention (goals, expectations, legal rights and counselor’s orientation (Sue et al., 1992). Furthermore, Sue et al. (1992) indicate that culturally competent counselors have training and expertise in the use of traditional assessments and testing instruments (understanding the technical aspects of the instruments as well as their cultural limitations). The competencies were intended to represent what was considered to be very important criteria for counselor practice in working with racial and ethnic minorities and in fact has undergone revision.

A revised version of the competencies was issued by Arredondo and Toperek in 1996. In their work, they noted a distinction between the terms “multicultural” and “diversity”. They stated that multiculturalism focuses on ethnicity, race and culture. Diversity, on the other hand, refers to other individuals and differences including age, gender, sexual orientation, religion physical ability or disability and other characteristics by which people define themselves.

The Personal Dimensions of Identity model was used to help update the competencies. The model has three dimensions (A, B, C) and its purpose is to reveal the complexity of the total person. Dimension A is a list of characteristics of all people. These include: race, gender, culture, ethnicity, age, and language. Dimension C puts

humans beings in historical, political, sociocultural and economic contexts to define who they are, their values and beliefs. This suggests that sociopolitical, global and environmental forms affect a person's culture and life experience.

Dimension B, discussed last because it represents the consequences of A and C, reflects possible shared experiences that might not be observable if the counselor focuses only on Dimension A (Arredondo & Toperek, 1996). The Personal Identity Dimensions suggest that although all humans fit into categories, the combinations of these categories are what make humans unique (Arredondo & Toperek, 1996).

With regard to Multicultural Counseling Competency, a counselor who considers only Dimension A and B without Dimension C could hinder the counseling relationship because the counselor is missing the context that helps define a client. At the same time perceived "sameness" (gender or race) may not be the most important point. It is up to the client to define this. By utilizing the Personal Dimensions of Identity model culturally competent counselors can determine the range of human potentiality every person possesses because the counselor can now see the total package, the whole person (Arredondo & Toperek, 1996).

The updating of the Multicultural Counseling Competencies moves the profession of counseling closer to ensuring that the counselor training programs and practices are multicultural at the core. This is true not only for counselors, but also for school psychologists. These revisions emphasize the importance of looking at the total person while possessing the knowledge, awareness and skill necessary to consult with

multicultural competence but within the context of a school, which by the way may have its own sub-culture.

Multicultural Competency and School Psychology

These attempts to define multicultural competency have led to the development of guidelines by both the APA and NASP. In 2003, the APA published the *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Psychology*. These guidelines recommend that psychologists should be prepared to facilitate culturally-informed organizational development of policies and practices, play various roles, such as change agent, advocate and consultant, and understand the principles and practices of multiculturalism. In order to help organizations such as schools, mental health facilities and justice systems move toward a more multicultural focus, the consultant must consider not only person-focused implications but systems-focused implications as well (Sue & Constantine, 2005). Failure to develop a balance between the perspectives can lead to a false attribution of the problem and an ineffective and inaccurate treatment plan, which could be potentially harmful to the client.

A culturally competent consulting psychologist questions exactly who is the client: Is it the person? The organization? Psychologists understand that organizations are microcosms of the wider society. They also know that organizations are powerful entities that inevitably resist change and have many ways to force compliance among members, clients or workers. With this knowledge consultants are critical to help institutions move from monoculturalism to multiculturalism (Sue & Constantine, 2005).

Consultants must also be able to identify how organizations vary in their awareness of how racial, cultural, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender issues affect the experiences of their clients or workers. Knowing this allows consultants to assess how an institution is related to diversity, foresee obstacles to organizational change, identify where systems intervention is required and develop a strategic plan to implement needed changes. In other words they must be able to develop new rules, regulations, policies, practices, and structures that enhance multiculturalism and allow for equal access and opportunity often by taking non-traditional positions.

In order to help the organization become multicultural, a consultant must be multicultural in his/her outlook. APA lists six guidelines to which a counselor should adhere to be a culturally competent psychologist. The guidelines which appeared in the APA Multicultural Guidelines published in 2003 are:

1. Psychologists are encouraged to recognize that, as cultural beings, they may hold attitudes and beliefs that can detrimentally influence their perceptions of and interactions with individuals who are ethnically and racially different from themselves.
2. Psychologists are encouraged to recognize the importance of multicultural sensitivity/responsiveness to, knowledge of, and understanding about ethnically and racially different individuals.
3. As educators, psychologists are encouraged to employ the constructs of multiculturalism and diversity in psychological education.

4. Culturally sensitive psychological researchers are encouraged to recognize the importance of conducting culture-centered and ethical psychological research among persons from ethnic, linguistic and racial minority backgrounds.
5. Psychologists are encouraged to apply culturally appropriate skills in clinical and other applied psychological practices.
6. Psychologists are encouraged to use organizational change processes to support culturally informed organizational development and practices (Sue & Constantine, 2005, chap. 1).

These guidelines suggest and provide a framework for school psychologists to become more responsive to the diverse needs of multicultural students in individual and group counseling, assessment, consultation and organizational change (Kindaichi & Constantine, 2005).

On the heels of APA, the school psychology literature has begun to focus on multicultural competency. Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Isaacs (NASP, 2003) define cultural competencies as “an asset of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professions and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations”. NASP goes further by operationally defining cultural competence based on Davis (1997). It is operationalized to “the integration and transformation of knowledge about individual and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services yielding better outcomes”.

Meanwhile Lopez (NASP, 2003) went a step further. She identified six domains of Culturally Competent Service Delivery based on Rogers et al. (1999). These domains include legal and ethical issues; school culture; educational policy and institutional advocacy; psychoeducational assessment; academic, therapeutic and consultative interventions; working with interpreters; and research.

According to Lopez, with regard to legal and ethical issues, school psychologists should be familiar with local, state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to culturally and linguistically diverse children and youth. They should be advocates for public policy that eliminate disparities among diverse youth. Ethically, they must recognize their limitations and seek educational, consultative and training experiences to act effectively in these areas.

The second domain of culturally competent service delivery includes school culture, educational policy and institutional advocacy. Lopez (NASP, 2003) indicated that school psychologists should demonstrate knowledge of and advocate for aspects of organizational culture and values that promote achievement and mental health and reduce risk of inappropriate services for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Individual referrals should be examined within the context of institutional and systemic patterns affecting diverse learners, and leadership should be provided to change the system. Lastly, culturally competent school psychologists should have skills to educate the school and community about issues which affect the learning, development, and well-being of children from diverse backgrounds (NASP, 2003).

School psychologists also should be culturally competent in the area of psychoeducational assessment. Lopez defines two competencies. They are:

1. Knowledge of and skills in assessing diverse students, including consideration of variables such as environment, social issues, language development, second language acquisition, acculturation, education history, quality of educational program, SES and racism.
2. Understanding that normed tests may not be a valid measure for English Language Learners due to inappropriateness of norms, scores reflecting English proficiency, product as opposed to process orientation, fairness of content, and differences in educational background, acculturation and economic situation.

Therefore Lopez (NASP, 2003) recommends that school psychologists should have knowledge of recommended systemic practices for working with interpreters, knowledge of multicultural education (such as English Language Learning Programs and school culture/culture of staff and students) knowledge of research related to culture and language issues and ability to conduct such research. A school psychologist should be aware of how one's his/her value system and identity impacts the formulation of research questions, the selection of research methods, the development of research design and interpretations made of the results.

In addition to Lopez, NASP (2003), based on a monograph by Cross, Dennis, Isaacs, and Bazron in 1989, described provisions of culturally competent services in the school setting. NASP noted that culturally competent educators and related services

personnel are indeed aware and respectful of the importance of the values, beliefs, traditions, customs and parenting styles of the families they serve. The monograph also states that they should also be aware of the impact of their own culture on their interactions with others and take all of these factors into account when planning and delivering services to children and their families in the schools (Arredondo & Toperek, 1996; Sue et al., 1992).

These provisions fall within the policy-making, administrative and the service delivery levels. At the policy-making level, competent policymakers will support the inclusion of cultural competence on provider licensure exam. They will support research on cultural competence, a certification examination and the development of culturally appropriate assessment instruments for psychological tests and interview guides. Additionally, they will appoint and recruit multiethnic and multiracial staff so as to allow a voice from all groups of people within the community.

Further, competent administrators will include cultural competence requirements in staff job descriptions and discuss the importance of cultural awareness and competency with potential employees. The administrators will ensure that all staff participate in routinely scheduled cultural competency training and in-services and that a building's appearance is accessible and respectful of different cultural groups.

Educators and related services personnel who are culturally competent are described by NASP (2003) as those who understand the different expectations people may have about the way services are offered and are aware of how different groups respect and interpret the various ways people communicate (Sue et al., 1992). It should

be noted that this is an abbreviated description of the provision of culturally competent services in the school setting.

According to Robinson and Morris (2000), Criterion II of APA's accreditation states all accredited academic programs and internship sites should make a commitment to include diversity among faculty, students, training and field experiences. Also, doctoral students should acquire knowledge and skills important to understanding and working with clients from ethically and racially different backgrounds. Domain D of this same document mandates systemic infusion of diversity concerns within programs desiring APA accreditation. Yet, despite the existence of guidelines for multicultural competency in some professional domains such as the NASP Standards for Training and Field Placement Program in School Psychology Domain 2.5 (2000), which indicates:

School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities and disabilities and of the potential influence of biological, social, cultural, ethnic, experiential, socioeconomic, gender-related, and linguistic factors in development and learning.

School psychologists demonstrate the sensitivity and skills needed to work with individuals of diverse characteristics and to implement strategies selected and/or adapted based on individual characteristics, strengths, and needs (p. 16), they are not present in practice guidelines for the field of school psychology.

According to Robinson and Morris (2000), universities are not fully committed to making multiculturalism the core of their academic programs for school psychologists, yielding graduate students who are unprepared for practice.

Proof of this deficiency was shown by Robinson and Morris (2000) who state that multicultural training is not yet a part of all training experiences. They cite a 1990–91 survey which indicated that only 66% (n = 41) of APA accredited counseling psychology programs offered practica in community settings which serve racial/ethnic minorities. They also cite a 1995 survey of both APA and non-APA approved schools of which 35% offered practica sites that provided opportunities to serve racial/ethnic minority clients. The authors conclude that because of these low numbers, there is still much work to be done in the area of multicultural competency training.

Meanwhile, Manese, Wu and Nepomuceno (2001) attempted to describe the characteristics of effective training for the development of multicultural counseling competency. An analysis of current research indicates there is no research supported consensus as to how best to train counselors for working in multicultural practices. The authors purposefully evaluated the effectiveness of pre-doctoral internship training on developing multicultural counseling competency. The evaluated internship training was described as “an integrative or infused multicultural training program.” In other words the interns subjected to multicultural experiences in the clients they served and the people they worked with. Results indicated that this type of scenario was beneficial in building multicultural competency.

Multicultural Consultation and School Psychology

How then, does acquiring the competencies affect the practice of consultation? If school psychologists are not multiculturally competent then consultation can be difficult

and unsuccessful. A multicultural competent school psychologist is able to determine the appropriate consultation model and strategy to effectively problem-solve based on knowledge of the consultee's and client's cultural background. In other words, a multicultural school psychologist is able to apply different consultation models and strategies in multicultural situations. Looking at behavioral consultation in multicultural situations or when one or more clients represent diversity, Sheridan (2000), wrote that in practice, behavioral and conjoint (home and school) consultation is recommended for its structure and organized approach to problem solving. However, elements of this structure may appear counterproductive to participants from diverse backgrounds whose orientations toward values, such as social relationships, achievement, activity, and time are different. In other words behavioral and conjoint consultation rely heavily on data-based decision making however, people of different cultural backgrounds may not see this as a priority and have different views of the problems identified therefore, shifting the focus of the consultation process.

Sheridan (2000) identifies areas in the behavioral consultation model that a consulting school psychologist should be aware of which may not appeal to the consultee of non-Caucasian American culture. These areas include: specificity, directness, and clearly defining problems, even though, over time, shown to be effective approaches in the literature. She suggests that more empirically-based studies be conducted utilizing conjoint and behavioral consultation in multicultural situations.

The lack of research involving multicultural consultation is not just limited to the behavioral consultation model. Behring, Cabello, Kushida, and Murguia (2000) examined

the use of current consultation methods with Caucasian, African American, Asian American and Latino consultants and students in interviews of cases in which the consultant and student were from same or different cultural backgrounds. This was a qualitative research design which utilized a structured interview of 28 beginning consultants (23 females and five males; two first generation Chinese immigrants; one second generation Chinese; one second generation Filipino; four second generations of Mexican descent, and all African American and Caucasian consultants were third generation or greater). These consultants were linked to 28 students who ranged in age from 3 to 15 years of age. There were a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and 20 fell within low-income ranges. Behring et al. (2000) found that all consultants from all cultural backgrounds reported using modifications with teachers and parents for all cultural groups except the Caucasian- group. Their results strongly suggest that modifications to current consultation approaches must be used when working with non-Caucasian students and families.

Studies by both Sheridan (2000) and Behring et al (2000) are consistent with Arredondo and Toperek (1996) who posit that men of European background have held, and continue to hold economic, political and educational power. This is important, Sheridan writes, because they have been “the yardstick by which individuals of other cultural groups and women have been measured.”

In sum, a review of the literature has shown that in order execute the role of a consulting school psychologist in multicultural situations one must be culturally competent, as noted in both the counseling literature as well as the school psychology

literature. Key components of competency include awareness, skills and knowledge. Additionally, while there may be a variety of proven consultation methods in the literature, few have published empirically-based findings of their application to culturally diverse populations, there has been no published study of perceptions of school psychologists' multicultural competency.

III. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The methods used to collect the data needed to address the research questions are presented in this section. Topics included in this discussion are: restatement of the problem, research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures and data analysis.

Research Design

A non-experimental, causal-comparative research design was used in this study. According to Borg and Gall (1983), this type of research design is used to explore causal relationships among independent variables that cannot be manipulated. Causal-comparative research designs are used to compare different groups on a dependent variable. In the present study, perceptions of multicultural competence were compared among school psychologists relative to specific independent variables (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, etc.). The primary disadvantage of this type of research design is the lack of control that the researcher has over the dependent variable (multicultural competence).

Participants

The population for this study was comprised of school psychologists who were members of NASP at the time of the study. This association currently has approximately 15,000 members in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The sample included 500 school psychologists who were selected at random from the NASP membership lists. Those selected had master's (N = 55), education specialist (N = 44) or doctoral degrees (N = 31).

Responses were sought from at least 125 participants to provide a power of .68 with an effect size of .25 and 3 levels of an independent variable (Borenstein, Rothstein, Cohen, & SPSS, 2001). A response rate of 25% is considered minimal and any additional responses would increase the power of the study to detect true differences among the groups.

Instrumentation

The Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI; Roysircar-Sodowsky, 1994) was used to explore the cultural competence of school psychologists. Permission to use the inventory was obtained from Dr. Gargi Roysircar-Sodowsky, the author of the scale, to use the MCI for this study. The MCI includes 43 statements measuring multicultural counseling competency, using four subscales: Multicultural Counseling Skills (14 items); Multicultural Awareness (10 items); Multicultural Counseling Knowledge (11 items); and Multicultural Counseling Relationship items (8 items).

The original MCI was developed to operationalize proposed constructs of multicultural counseling competencies (Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994). Prior to its development several scales were used to measure cultural competency to varying degrees (i.e., Cross-Cultural Competency Inventory-Revised, The Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge Skills Survey and the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale-Form B). The expectation of the newly developed scale is that a difference would exist in the extent to which the items measured the competencies of multicultural competence, knowledge awareness, and skill (Ponterotto, 1994; Sodowsky, et. al, 1994).

Scoring

Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which the items in the MCI describe their work as counselors, psychologists or trainees using a 4-point Likert-type scale. The ratings include: inaccurate (1), somewhat inaccurate (2), somewhat accurate (3) and accurate (4). The scale could be completed in approximately 15 to 25 minutes.

The numerical values assigned to the responses will be compiled to obtain a total score for each subscale. The total was divided by the number of items on the subscale to obtain mean scores for each participant on the four subscales. The use of a mean score allows comparisons across the four subscales and provides scores that reflect the original unit of measurement.

Reliability and Validity

Two studies were conducted by Sodowsky et al (1994) to establish reliability and validity of the instrument. The first study included 88 counseling psychology students, 45 school psychology students and 30 clinical psychology students enrolled in an APA-

approved program in a Midwestern state. Participants also included 174 members of the same state's psychological association, 556 members of the American Counselor's Association and 51 members of the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development. A total of 604 surveys were completed and returned for a response rate of 64%.

The initial scale included 87 self-report items measuring perceptions on competencies associated with multiculturalism and general counseling. The participants used a 4-point Likert-type scale to rate the accuracy of the statement as it applied to their experiences. Twenty-two items were reverse worded to minimize a response set effect. A "do not know" option was included to reduce the number of items on the survey. A criterion was established that if more than 20% of the respondents checked the "do not know" option, the item was eliminated from the survey. As a result, this item was dropped from the survey.

A principal-axis factor analysis was used to investigate the dimensionality of multicultural competence. Responses of "don't know" were coded as missing data and for each pair of items the correlation was based on the responses of all respondents for whom both item sets were answered (Sodowsky et al., 1994). The resulting factor outcome was rotated using an oblique procedure. Item factor loadings of at least .30 were considered important. Items that did not have loadings at this level, as well as those that loaded on more than one factor were dropped. Subscales were formed on the basis of the items with salient loadings, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients calculated on each of the subscales and the full scale to determine internal consistency.

In addition, 14 master's and doctoral students enrolled in a multicultural competency course were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the names assigned by the test constructors to the derived subscale through factor analysis. They were also asked if they thought that the test items adequately covered the content domain of multicultural competency.

The findings of the factor analysis produced 10 factors with *eigenvalues* greater than 1.00. The 10 factors accounted for 52.6% of the variance in multicultural competence. Using the scree test, "an approximate solution of four factors was indicated" (Sodowsky et al. 1994, p. 140). The factor analysis was repeated using an oblique factor solution, forcing four, three, two, and one factor. The four-factor outcome accounted for 36.1% of the total variance and was found to be interpretable. When compared to the other analyses, the four-factor outcome was considered to be the most robust, with factors loading uniformly higher than the others. Table 1 presents the items on each factor, a brief explanation of what the factor measures, and the alpha coefficient supporting the internal consistency of the factor.

Table 1

Subscales Measuring Cultural Competency

Subscale	Description	α
Multicultural Counseling Skills	Measures five multicultural counseling skills: self-reported success in retaining minority clients, recognition of and recovery from cultural mistakes, use of nontraditional methods of assessment, counselor self-monitoring, and tailoring structured versus unstructured therapy to needs of minority clients.	.83
Multicultural Awareness	Measures proactive multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness, extensive multicultural interactions and life experiences, broad-based cultural understanding, advocacy within institutions, enjoyment of multiculturalism and an increase in minority caseload.	.83
Multicultural Counseling Relationship	Measures counselor's interactional process with the minority client (e.g., counselor's trustworthiness, comfort level, stereotypes of the minority client, and worldview)	.65
Multicultural Counseling Knowledge	Measures culturally relevant conceptualization and treatment strategies, cultural information and multicultural counseling research.	.79
Total Scale		.88

The internal consistency reliabilities for the four subscales and the total scale indicated adequate to good internal consistency as a measure of reliability. The factor

correlation matrix suggested moderate correlations ranging from .18 to .41 (Sodowsky et al., 1994).

The second study conducted in the development of the Multicultural Counseling Inventory focused on validity. The authors conducted a confirmatory factor analysis in order to test whether the MCI has a higher order, more general multicultural counseling factor. This was an attempt to address at the instrument's development stage regarding the issue of whether the MCI is unitary, multidimensional or is influenced by a higher order factor. This study was concerned with whether the MCI had four factors and whether these factors could be generalized to another sample.

A total of 445 MCI surveys were sent to a random sample of counselors affiliated with university counseling centers throughout the United States with a 73% response rate. The sample consisted of 196 women and 124 men. The participants' ages ranged from 25 to 45 years. There were 30 Asian Americans, 46 African Americans, 25 Hispanics and 219 Caucasian Americans. Some 65% held doctorate degrees while 35% held master's degrees.

Subjects' data with no responses missing were analyzed (N = 300). The relationship between the factor structures from Study 1 and Study 2 indicated coefficients of factor congruence of .87 for multicultural skills, .80 for multicultural awareness and .75 for multicultural counseling knowledge. The internal consistency reliabilities were .81 for multicultural counseling skills, .80 for multicultural awareness, .67 for multicultural counseling relationship, .80 for multicultural counseling knowledge, and .86 for the full scale. The authors found via exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory

factor analysis that aside from the factors of multicultural competency identified by Sue in 1982 (awareness, knowledge, and skills), that there is a fourth factor, the multicultural relationship. They are unclear as to whether the responses on the MCI are driven by a general higher order factor rather than by four specific factors. Further research is still needed (Ponterotto, 1994; Sadowsky et al., 1994). Sadowsky (1996) indicated that in a study with 604 participants there were significantly higher scores on the multicultural awareness and multicultural relationship scale for people who had spent more than 50% of their time doing multicultural work. Limitations of the studies included social desirability and the possibility of a respondent's unwillingness to face up to his/her limitations or lack of insight into him- or herself.

The MCI has since been utilized in other studies which focused on training outcomes, self awareness of one's own assumptions, values and biases and concurrent validity with the White Racial Identity Scale (Roysircar, 2003a; Roysircar, 2003b; Roysircar, Gard, Hubbell, & Ortega, in press). These studies were conducted to address the development and validity of the MCI (Buros, 1996). A further study is investigating the MCI's relationship with predictors. Packages were sent to 300 randomly selected subjects from APA-approved schools: staff psychologists, counselors, pre-doctoral interns and graduate practicum students. Packages included a demographic sheet that had questions on the subject's MCI experiences, multicultural life experiences, racial and ethnic self-designation, geographic location and items on cultural political correctness. The packets also included a measure of a sense of social inadequacy or low social self-esteem that consisted of the revised Janis-Field Scale, the Social Desirability Scale, the

Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge Skills Scale, a measure of racist orientation towards African Americans, a measure of rigidity, a measure of intolerance for ambiguity and the MCI.

Early results suggest that certain demographics mattered related to skill awareness and relationship, however, there was no difference in the area of knowledge. American racial and ethnic minorities and international subjects reported significantly higher scores than their Caucasian colleagues in the areas of awareness, knowledge, skill and relationship. No effects were reported for educational degrees, professional experience or gender. The MCI and the Multicultural Awareness Knowledge-Skills Survey showed moderately high correlation –.68 convergent validity (Sodowsky et al., 1994).

According to Ponterotto (1994), four studies were conducted to establish psychometric properties. The first study involved 604 psychology students, counselors, and psychologists in the Midwest. Study 2 involved 220 university center counselors dispersed nationally. Study 3 queried 43 counseling graduate students and Study 4 invited 38 counseling graduate students in the Midwest to participate. Seven percent of the variance of the MCI was accounted for with social desirability and cultural political correctness did not account for any of the variance. This indicates that social desirability and cultural political correctness are not strong predictors of the MCI (Sodowsky, 1996) Results have also suggested that the MCI and multicultural life experiences may be related to multicultural counseling competencies as measured by the MCI.

Demographic Information

The participants also completed a form which asked about their age, ethnicity, gender, years of practice and time spent doing consultation.

Data Collection Procedures

NASP's director of membership services was contacted via phone for a list of randomly selected school psychologists who are full members. This request was then followed by a written request via an e-mail. Permission was granted and the list was forwarded via e-mail by the director to the researcher for this study. The director of membership services divided the national total, 15,000, by the amount of names requested, 500, resulting in 30 names. The database selected one name for every 30 records.

A phone request was made to the author of the MCI, Dr. Gargi Roysircar-Sodowsky for permission to use the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI). Permission was granted contingent upon a signed contract, available on-line, from the researcher and the committee chair. The contract was then printed and mailed with \$100 to be used to complete the dissertation (which also permitted the use of copies).

Once copies of the MCI and demographic pages were made, participants were assigned an identification number and the survey was mailed along with a written letter describing the nature of the study. Participants were provided a self-addressed stamped envelope in order to return the survey to the researcher. A three-week turn around was requested, and for those who had not responded, a reminder postcard was sent after one month. Once all surveys were received the data was then analyzed based upon

independent variables and their relationship to the dependent variable (multicultural competency). Surveys and name lists are stored in a locked file cabinet and will be shredded after five years.

Data Analysis Procedures

The mean score and standard deviations of all items and factors were identified. The statistical procedures used to analyze the data include a t-test in order to identify the relationship between demographic variables and the total score. An analysis of the variance (ANOVA) was also conducted to determine the relationships between and within groups. Additional descriptive statistics were completed to describe the group's compositions and individual responses such as percentages of ethnicity of the group, average years of practice, number of males and females who responded to the survey, multicultural competency training, average numbers of years worked in current school district, ethnic majority of the population served and average amount of time spent as a consulting school psychologists.

IV. RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents results of the data analyses that were used to describe the sample and address the research questions developed for this study. The chapter is divided into two sections. The purpose of the study was to examine and measure results of school psychologists' self-reports of competency in multicultural consultation. The first section provides a description of the sample using frequency distributions. The second section uses inferential statistical analyses to address the six research questions developed for the study.

A total of 500 surveys were distributed to school psychologists. Of this number, 131 were completed and returned for a response rate of 26.2%.

Description of the Sample

The participants completed a short demographic survey. The responses to the questions on this section of the questionnaire were summarized using frequency distributions. Results of the analysis for personal characteristics (i.e., gender, age ethnicity, and highest degree earned) of the participants are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency Distributions—Personal Characteristics of the Participants

Personal Characteristics (N=131)	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	50	38.5
Female	80	61.5
Missing 1		
Age		
25 to 30	3	2.3
31 to 40	17	13.2
41 to 50	26	21.7
Over 50	81	62.8
Missing 2		
Ethnicity		
African American	3	2.3
European American/European	114	88.3
Hispanic American	2	1.6
Asian American/Asian	1	.8
Native American	2	1.6
Other	7	5.4
Highest Degree Earned		
Master of Arts/Master of Science	55	42.3
Doctor of Philosophy	31	23.8
Other	44	33.9
Missing 1		

The majority of participants were female ($n = 80$, 61.5%) and were over 50 years of age ($n = 81$, 62.8%). Three (2.3%) participants reported their ages were between 25 and 30 years. The largest group of participants ($n = 114$, 88.3%) indicated their ethnicity was European American/European. A masters degree was reported by 55 (42.3%) of the participants, with 31 (23.8%) indicating their highest degree was doctorate. Forty-four

(33.9%) reported “other” as their highest degree, but did not provide a response to this question.

The participants were asked to indicate their professional characteristics on the survey. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 3.

Table 3

Frequency Distributions—Professional Characteristics of the Participants

Professional Characteristics (N = 131)	Frequency	Percent
Years as a school psychologist		
0-5 years	2	1.5
6 to 10 years	22	16.9
11 to 20 years	20	15.4
More than 20 years	86	66.2
Missing 1		
Years worked as a school psychologist in present district		
0 to 5 years	18	14.0
6 to 10 years	28	21.7
11 to 15 years	11	8.5
16 to 20 years	26	20.2
More than 20 years	46	35.8
Missing 2		

(table continues)

Table 3 (*continued*)

Professional Characteristics (N = 131)	Frequency	Percent
Time Spent as a Consulting School Psychologist		
Less than 25%	44	34.6
25 to 50%	46	36.3
50 to 75%	16	12.6
75% or higher	21	16.5
Missing 4		
Ethnic Majority of School Population		
African American	28	21.9
European American	82	64.1
Hispanic American	11	8.6
Asian/Pacific Islander American	1	.8
Native American	3	2.3
Other	3	2.3
Missing 3		

The majority of participants had worked as school psychologists for more than 20 years ($n = 86$: 66.2%) with the largest group ($n = 46$: 35.8%) reporting they had worked in their present district for more than 20 years. Most of the school psychologists ($n = 106$: 81.5%) had received training regarding multicultural competency. The participants reported that either they spent less than 25% of their time ($n = 44$: 34.6%) or 25 to 50% of their time ($n = 46$: 36.3%) as a consulting school psychologist. The ethnic majority of the school populations served by the responding school psychologists was generally European American ($n = 82$: 64.1%).

Research Questions

Six research questions were developed for the present study. Each of these questions was addressed using inferential statistical analysis, with all decisions on the statistically significant of the findings made using an alpha level of .05.

Research Question 1: How do consulting school psychologists self-report their multicultural competency?

The frequencies of the school psychologists' responses are located on Table 4. The mean scores on the four subscales, multicultural skills, multicultural awareness, multicultural relationships and multicultural knowledge, measured on the Multicultural Inventory (MCI) for educators, student teachers, school teachers are presented in Table 5.

Table 4

Frequency Distribution, Mean and Standard Deviations of Questionnaire Items

Question	Very Inaccurate	Somewhat Inaccurate	Somewhat Accurate	Very Accurate	N	Missing	Total	M	SD
1	54	47	25	4	130	1	131	1.84	.843
2	76	35	18	1	130	1	131	1.57	.757
3	11	34	45	39	129	2	131	2.87	.947
4	24	35	48	21	128	3	131	2.52	.980
5	50	48	25	5	128	3	131	1.88	.857
6	58	46	22	5	131	0	131	1.80	.854
7	4	14	63	48	129	4	131	3.20	.754

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Question	Very Inaccurate	Somewhat Inaccurate	Somewhat Accurate	Very Accurate	N	Missing	Total	M	SD
8	6	7	56	59	128	3	131	3.31	.781
9	3	8	56	61	128	3	131	3.37	.708
10	2	2	49	77	130	1	131	3.55	.611
11	21	47	55	6	129	2	131	2.36	.808
12	3	23	73	29	128	3	131	3.00	.710
13	2	10	77	41	130	1	131	3.21	.643
14	1	8	64	56	129	2	131	3.36	.635
15	22	38	53	18	131	0	131	2.51	.931
16	1	6	81	40	128	3	131	3.25	.575
17	9	29	65	24	127	4	131	2.82	.821
18	81	35	10	4	130	1	131	1.52	.770
19	1	14	75	35	125	6	131	3.15	.636
20	2	21	41	63	127	4	131	3.30	.800
21	2	10	58	59	129	2	131	3.36	.692
22	0	1	46	83	130	1	131	3.63	.500
23	0	6	35	90	131	0	131	3.64	.569
24	6	21	71	31	129	2	131	2.98	.770
25	41	40	37	10	128	3	131	2.12	.956
26	21	44	43	23	131	0	131	2.52	.964
27	40	28	36	26	130	1	131	2.37	1.122
28	1	13	55	62	131	0	131	3.36	.691
29	31	40	32	26	129	2	131	2.41	1.065
30	19	29	59	21	128	3	131	2.64	.928
31	22	36	47	25	130	1	131	2.58	.987
32	14	30	56	28	128	1	131	2.77	.918

Table 5

t-Tests for One-Sample: Cultural Competence

Subscale	Number	M	SD
Multicultural skills	131	3.16	.38
Multicultural awareness	131	2.64	.61
Multicultural relationships	131	2.13	.47
Multicultural knowledge	130	3.22	.44

The mean scores for the four subscales measuring cultural competence indicate that on a continuum of a Likert-type scale (1–4) consulting school psychologists perceive themselves as having multicultural knowledge ($M = 3.22$, $SD = .44$) and multicultural skills ($M = 3.16$, $SD = .38$). The mean scores of the respondents in the areas of multicultural awareness and multicultural relationships suggest that on the same continuum the school psychologists rated themselves lower in these areas with multicultural relationships being the lowest ($M = 2.13$, $SD = .47$ and $M = 2.64$, $SD = .61$ respectively).

Research question 2: Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to their age, with younger school psychologists having higher scores for cultural competence?

The responding school psychologists were divided into two groups, those who were from 25 to 50 years of age and those who were over 50 years of age. The age grouping was used as the independent variable in t-tests for two independent samples.

The mean scores for the four subscales measuring cultural competence were used as the dependent samples. Table 6 presents results of this analysis.

Table 6

t-Tests for Two Independent Samples: Cultural Competence by Age

Subscale	25 to 50 Years			Over 50 Years			DF	t-Value	Sig of t
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD			
Multicultural skills	48	3.12	.37	81	3.19	.39	.127	-.92	.358
Multicultural awareness	48	2.54	.60	81	2.70	.62	127	-1.39	.167
Multicultural relationships	48	2.22	.48	81	2.08	4.49	127	1.64	.104
Multicultural knowledge	48	3.21	.44	80	3.24	.44	127	-.30	.763

The results of the comparisons of cultural competence between school psychologists who were 25 to 50 years of age and those who were over 50 years of age were not statistically significant. Based on these findings, it does not appear that cultural competence differs by the age of the school psychologist

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to the number of years they have been in practice, with school psychologists with fewer years of experience having higher scores for cultural competence?

The mean scores of the four subscales measuring cultural competence were used as the dependent variables in a t-test for independent samples. The number of years that the school psychologists had been working in their field was used as the independent variables in this analysis. The participants were divided into two groups: those with 0 to 20 years of experience and those with more than 20 years of experiences. Table 7 presents results of this analysis.

Table 7

t-Tests for Two Independent Samples: Cultural Competence by Years as a School Psychologist

Subscale	1 to 20 Years			Over 20 Years			DF	t-Value	Sig of t
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD			
Multicultural skills	44	3.08	.38	86	3.20	.38	128	-1.69	.094
Multicultural awareness	44	2.55	.54	86	2.68	.65	128	-1.15	.252
Multicultural relationships	44	2.28	.44	86	2.06	.46	128	2.61	.010
Multicultural knowledge	44	3.19	.43	86	3.24	.44	127	-.63	.530

One statistically significant outcome was obtained for the comparison of cultural competence by the length of time the school psychologists had been in their professional field. The comparison of multicultural relationships between psychologists who had 20

years or less in their fields ($M = 2.28$, $SD = .44$) had significantly higher perceptions of their self perceived competence in multicultural relationships than psychologists who had been in their fields for 20 or more years ($M = 2.06$, $SD = .46$), $t(128) = 2.61$, $p = .010$. The three remaining subscales, multicultural skills, multicultural awareness, and multicultural knowledge did not differ between the two groups relative to the length of time they had worked as school psychologists.

Research Question 4: Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to their ethnicity, with school psychologists who reported minority ethnicity having higher scores for cultural competence?

The majority of the participants in the study reported their ethnicity as European American/European ($n = 114$: 88.4%). Because of the lack of diversity, analysis comparing cultural competency was not completed.

Research Question 5: Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence between male and female consulting school psychologists, with female school psychologists having higher scores for cultural competence than male school psychologists?

The gender of the participants was used as the independent variable in a t-test for two independent samples, with the mean scores for the four subscales measuring cultural competence used as the dependent variables. Table 8 presents results of this analysis.

Table 8

t-Tests for Two Independent Samples: Cultural Competence by Gender

Subscale	Male			Female			DF	t- Value	Sig of t
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD			
Multicultural skills	50	3.14	.40	80	3.17	.37	128	-.50	.615
Multicultural awareness	50	2.59	.52	80	2.66	.67	128	-.62	.539
Multicultural relationships	50	2.20	.49	80	2.09	.44	128	1.33	.185
Multicultural knowledge	50	3.24	.44	79	3.22	.44	127	.29	.774

The results of the comparisons of cultural competency between male and female participants were not statistically significant. These findings indicate that perceptions of cultural competency did not differ between the male and female psychologists.

Research Question 6: Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to the amount of time they spend in consultation, with school psychologists who spend more than 50% of their time consulting having higher scores for cultural competence?

The school psychologists' time spent as a consulting psychologist was used as the independent variable in a one-way analysis of variance. The dependent variables were the mean scores for the four subscales measuring cultural competency. Table 9 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 9

One-way Analysis of Variance: Cultural Competence by Percentage of Time Spent as a Consulting School Psychologist

	N	M	SD	DF	F Ratio	Sig of F
Multicultural skills						
Less than 25%	44	2.99 _a	.36	3,123	4.44	.005
25 to 50%	46	3.26 _a	.37			
51 to 75%	16	3.19	.46			
Over 75%	21	3.24	.34			
Multicultural awareness						
Less than 25%	44	2.42 _a	.56	3,123	3.44	.019
25 to 50%	46	2.79 _a	.69			
51 to 75%	16	2.58	.57			
Over 75%	21	2.78	.48			
Multicultural relationships						
Less than 25%	44	2.23	.50	3,123	.94	.425
25 to 50%	46	2.08	.44			
51 to 75%	16	2.11	.53			
Over 75%	21	2.07	.44			
Multicultural knowledge						
Less than 25%	44	3.09	.44	3,123	2.36	.075
25 to 50%	46	3.31	.43			
51 to 75%	16	3.21	.48			
Over 75%	21	3.31	.38			

Note: Means in a cell sharing subscripts are statistically significant at an alpha level of .05.

A statistically significant difference was found for self perceived/reported competence in multicultural skills among school psychologists who spent different amounts of time as a consulting psychologist, $F(3,123) = 4.44, p, .005$. To determine which of the groups were contributing to the statistically significant results, Scheffe' a posteriori tests were used to compare all possible comparison among the four groups. School psychologists who spent 25 to 50% of their time as a consulting psychologist ($M = 3.26, SD = .37$) had significantly higher scores for competence in multicultural skills than school psychologists who spent less than 25% of their time as a consulting psychologist ($M = 2.99, SD = .36$). The remaining comparisons for multicultural skills were not statistically significant.

The comparison between the time that school psychologists spent consulting and their self reported competence in multicultural awareness was statistically significant, $F(3,123) = 3.44, p = .019$. This result indicated a statistically significant difference based on the time the school psychologists had spent in consultations. Scheffe' a posteriori tests were used to compare all possible comparisons among the four groups. School psychologists who spent 25 to 50% of their time as a consulting psychologist ($M = 2.79, SD = .69$) had significantly higher scores for multicultural awareness than school psychologists who spent less than 25% of their time as a consulting psychologist ($M = 2.99, SD = .36$). The remaining comparisons for multicultural awareness were not statistically significant. The comparisons for multicultural relationships and multicultural knowledge provided no evidence of statistically significant differences among the four groups.

V. DISCUSSION

Participation in the study was limited to school psychologists, the majority of whom were female and most of them were over 50 years of age. The school psychologists who participated in this study indicated that they had a masters' degree or higher, and most had practiced in the profession for more than 20 years, and responses to the study were somewhat comparable with regard to the time spent consulting (between less than 25% and 25% to 50%).

The responding school psychologists consisted mostly of people of European/European American descent. Additionally, many of them reported working with a majority of Caucasian students, even though they had received training in the area of multicultural competency. These responses continue to cause concern for the ever-changing school population and the lack of diversity among practicing and consulting school psychologists.

Regarding specific research questions in the study, overall, school psychologists perceived themselves as multiculturally competent related to multicultural skill, multicultural awareness, and multicultural knowledge on a continuum of one to four (one being very inaccurate and four being very accurate). However, school psychologists tended to rate themselves more negative in the area of multicultural relationships. School psychologists reported poor multicultural relationships by responding to remarks such as:

“I perceive that my race causes the students to mistrust me”, “I have feeling of overcompensation, oversolicitation, and guilt that I do not have when working with majority students” and “I am confident that my conceptualization of student problems does not consist of stereotypes and biases.” In other words, these items dealt with the interactional processes between school psychologists and their multicultural clients.

Research questions were also focused on the differences in the self-reports of school psychologists who were male and female as well as from those who were between the ages of 25 and 50 years of age and those older than 50. Their responses suggested that there was not a statistical difference between the groups and how multiculturally competent they were. In other words, self-reported multicultural competence did not differ by the age or gender of the respondents.

Meanwhile, school psychologists who reported that they had practiced school psychology for 20 years or less rated themselves more multiculturally competent in the area of multicultural relationships than those with more than 20 years experience. Albeit slow, this may be attributable to the changing school psychology training programs that are beginning to incorporate practicum and internship experiences with minority students as well as discussions in class of real life experiences. The discussions may foster multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill development more than just reading chapters dedicated to certain cultural groups. The creation of these programs recognize that academia needs to meet the real world and vice versa. It should be noted that some of the participants with 20 years or less experience as a school psychologists are also in the group of school psychologists who reported their ages as greater than 50. This group has

benefited from the slow changes in school psychology training in which some graduate programs may have taken education in diversity from “chapter cultures”, where graduate students learn about other cultures in ethnicities by reading one chapter in a book (Davis-Russell as cited in Kramer & Epps, 1991; Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002), to understanding the importance of one’s own culture first before attempting to understand another.

One of the research questions could not be analyzed based on the data reported by the participants in the study, “Is there a significant difference in perceptions of cultural competence among consulting school psychologists relative to their ethnicity, with school psychologists who reported minority ethnicity having higher scores for cultural competence?” Because 88% of the respondents reported their ethnicity as European/European American there was a lack of diversity among their responses, the analysis comparing cultural competency between other ethnic groups was not completed. This data supports the previous reports of the lack of diversity among school psychologists (Miranda, 2002). Additionally, it supports the idea that recruitment and retention of minorities is necessary by colleges and universities with training programs in the field of school psychology, to provide diversity among school psychologists.

Lastly, the participants of the study who reported spending 25% to 50% of their day consulting had significantly higher ratings on the MCI than those school psychologists who spent less than 25% of their day consulting in the area of multicultural skills and multicultural awareness. Multicultural skills items were concerned with retaining minority clients, recognizing and recovering from cultural mistakes, use of nontraditional methods of assessment, counselor self-monitoring, and tailoring structured

versus unstructured methods to needs of minority clients. Multicultural awareness items measured multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness, extensive multicultural interactions and life experience, broad-based cultural understanding advocacy within institutions, enjoyment of multiculturalism and an increase in minority caseload. Therefore, the data suggest that the more time spent consulting the higher school psychologists rated themselves in the area of multicultural skills and multicultural awareness and that perhaps the more time spent consulting the more multiculturally competent.

There was not a statistically significant difference between the time spent consulting by the school psychologists and their multicultural relationship and multicultural knowledge. The school psychologists also reported being knowledgeable in the area of multiculturalism despite the amount of time spent in consultation. They responded to such items as: “I include such issues as age, sex roles and socioeconomic status in my understanding of different minority cultures.” and “I manifest an outlook on life that is best described as world-minded or pluralistic. They said they felt that they were in tune with changing practices, views, and interests and applied the sociopolitical history of the students’ respective minority groups to understand them better. However, it should be noted that on a continuum described earlier, school psychologists rated themselves on average one point lower in the area of multicultural relationship than multicultural knowledge. This is consistent with previous comparisons in the study where school psychologists tended to rate themselves on average the lowest in the area of multicultural relationships than the other areas of multicultural competency (multicultural

skills, multicultural knowledge, multicultural awareness). Again, this may be a result of their reported limited opportunity to work with minority students resulting in fewer multicultural relationships.

In sum, school psychologists reported being multiculturally competent, but tended to rate themselves lower in the area of multicultural relationships possibly due to the limited opportunity to work with minority students (keeping in mind that the responding school psychologists were European/European American descent). Responses on the multicultural skills or multicultural awareness subscales varied dependent upon time spent consulting.

The responses of the participants of this study support and imply that ongoing training needs to be conducted in the area of multicultural competency and its importance be stressed in the school psychology literature. Additionally, training institutions need to continue to emphasize multicultural competency not only in the curriculum, but also through retention and recruitment of minority students and discussion of “real-life” experiences to help meet the needs of the increasingly diverse school populations.

This study provides information as to how school psychologists rate themselves in areas of multicultural competency based on certain independent variables. However, it raises the question about would a more ethnically diverse group of school psychologists rate themselves significantly higher than those European/European American descent? Because of the limited amount of ethnic diversity in this study, future studies in the profession may need to be done.

This study did not address whether or not if the use of identified consultation models could influence the way school psychologists would rate themselves as being multiculturally competent, more specifically in the area of multicultural relationships. Therefore, future studies with this focus are needed.

Limitations

This study is subject to the following limitations:

1. That participants will respond honestly to the survey items, and that they have the ability to remember accurately and make discriminations about their work in the format presented to them by the survey.
2. That there is limited available literature specifically related to school psychologists and multicultural consultation resulting in the researcher's reliance on counseling literature
3. That the study is limited to school psychologists and results may not be generalized to other mental health professionals in schools or psychologists in other types of practice
4. The researcher was aware of the existence of uncontrolled extraneous variables that could affect the outcomes of the study. For example, in a study of multicultural competence, news stories regarding specific ethnic groups could influence responses to the survey. The researcher was aware of these variables in developing conclusions based on the findings.

5. Although the response rate was sufficient for statistical analyses, this study was still based on a 26.2% response rate, similar to NASP demographics, however, because response was so small future studies would need focus on gaining more participation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
APPROVAL LETTER FROM AUBURN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

Auburn University

Auburn University, Alabama 36849



Office of Human Subjects Research
307 Sanford Hall

Telephone: 334-844-5966
Fax: 334-844-4391
hsubjec@auburn.edu

April 17, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Ashara McKee-Williams
School Psychology

PROTOCOL TITLE: "Self-Report of Multicultural Consultation Competency of School Psychologists"

IRB AUTHORIZATION: #06-035 MR 0603

The referenced protocol was approved "Minimum Risk" at the IRB Meeting on March 13, 2006. Please reference the IRB authorization number in any correspondence regarding your project.

Please remember that any anticipated change in the approved procedures must be submitted to and approved by the IRB prior to implementation of the planned activity. Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others requires immediate suspension of the activity and an immediate written report of the occurrence to the IRB.

If you will be unable to file a Final Report on your project before March 12, 2007, you must submit a request for an extension of approval to the IRB no later than February 28, 2007. If your IRB authorization expires and/or you have not received written notice that a request for an extension has been approved prior to March 12, 2007, you must suspend the project immediately and contact the Office of Human Subjects Research.

A Final Report will be required to close your IRB project file. Finally, you are reminded that consent forms must be retained at least three years after completion of your study.

If you have any questions concerning IRB procedures or this Board action, please contact the OHSR at 844-5966.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Peter W. Grandjean.

Peter W. Grandjean, Chair
Institutional Review Board for the Use of
Human Subjects in Research

cc: Holly Stadler
Joseph Buckhalt

Auburn University

Auburn University, Alabama 36849-5222

Department of Counselor Education,
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INFORMATION SHEET a Research Study Entitled Self-Report of Multicultural Consultation Competency of School Psychologists

You are invited to participate in a research study with the purpose of investigating how consulting school psychologists rate themselves with regard to being multiculturally competent. This study is being conducted by Ashara McKee-Williams, Doctoral Candidate enrolled in Auburn University's School Psychology Program, under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Buckhalt, Program Director for School Psychology at Auburn University. This study will show how school psychologists rate themselves with regard to multicultural competency and highlight the needed skills to be emphasized in training programs around the country. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a member of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

If you decide to participate, please take a few minutes of your time to complete the attached survey and mail it back in the self-addressed stamped envelope no later than _____ . The data from the survey will then be analyzed.

Date

Precautions have been taken so that the information contained in the survey will be collected confidentially and analyzed anonymously. You have been assigned a number and the list with identifying information will be stored in a locked file cabinet with access only available to this researcher and faculty advisor. The list and data will be shredded after 5 years.

The expectation is that you will benefit from completing this survey by gaining an awareness of your skill level in the area of multicultural competency and possibly identify areas in need of professional development. Additionally, this study will complement existing multicultural consultation literature by examining and measuring the results of school psychologists' self-reports of competency in multicultural consultation. As a result of this study, practicing school psychologists and researchers may be able to identify areas of cultural competency that may need improvement via training programs. It is not promised you that you will receive any or all of the benefits described.

Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Information collected through your participation may be used to fulfill an educational requirement for the doctoral program at Auburn University in the area of School Psychology, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting. You may withdraw from participation at any time, without penalty.

Page 1 of 2

<http://www.auburn.edu/coun>
A LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITY

HUMAN SUBJECTS
OFFICE OF RESEARCH
PROJECT #06-235.112.003
APPROVED

APPENDIX B
MULTICULTURAL INVENTORY

Multicultural Inventory (MCI)

Gargi Roysircar-Sodowsky, PhD

The following statements cover school psychologists' practices in multicultural education. Indicate how accurately each statement describes you as a school psychologist when working in a multicultural consultation situation. Give rating that you actually believe to be true rather than those that you wish were true.

The scale ranges from 1 (very inaccurate) to 4 (very accurate). The scale indicates the following:

1-very inaccurate 2-somewhat inaccurate 3-somewhat accurate 4-very accurate

When working with minority students...

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I perceive that my race causes the students to mistrust me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. | I have feelings of overcompensations, oversolicitation, and guilt that I do not have when working with majority students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. | I am confident that my conceptualization of student problems does not consist of stereotypes and biases. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. | I emphasize the effects of prejudice, discrimination, and social inequities in my role as a consulting school psychologist. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. | I find that differences between my world views or value assumptions and those of the students impede the consultation process. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. | I have difficulties communicating with students who use perceptual, reasoning, or decision-making style that is different from mine. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. | I include such issues as age, sex roles, and socioeconomic status in my understanding of different minority cultures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. | I form effective learning relationships with minority students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. | I manifest an outlook on life that is best described as "world-minded" or pluralistic. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. | I examine my own cultural biases. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. | I tend to compare minority student behaviors with those of dominant group members. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

	1-very inaccurate	2-somewhat inaccurate	3-somewhat accurate	4-very accurate	
12.	I keep in mind research findings about minority students' preferences in learning.	1	2	3	4
13.	I am in tune with changing practices, views, and interests.	1	2	3	4
14.	I consider the range of behaviors, values, and individual differences within a minority group.	1	2	3	4
15.	I have experienced that low achievement is related to race/ethnicity or to cultural factors in minority groups.	1	2	3	4
16.	I monitor and correct my defensiveness (e.g., anxiety, denial, minimizing, overconfidence).	1	2	3	4
17.	I apply the sociopolitical history of the students' respective minority groups to understand them better.	1	2	3	4
18.	I experience discomfort because of their different physical appearance, color, dress, or socioeconomic status.	1	2	3	4
19.	I am able to quickly recognize and recover from cultural mistakes or misunderstandings.	1	2	3	4
29.	I use several methods of assessment (including free response questions, observations, and varied sources of information and excluding standardized tests).	1	2	3	4
21.	I have experience at solving problems in unfamiliar settings.	1	2	3	4
22.	I understand my own philosophical preferences.	1	2	3	4
23.	I understand the individuality of a student.	1	2	3	4
24.	I have a working knowledge of certain cultures (including African American, Native American, Hispanic, Asian American, new Third World Immigrants, and international students).	1	2	3	4
25.	When working with international students or immigrants, I have knowledge of legalities of visa, passport, green card, and naturalization.	1	2	3	4
26.	My professional or collegial interactions with minority individuals are extensive.	1	2	3	4

	1-very inaccurate	2-somewhat inaccurate	3-somewhat accurate	4-very accurate	
27.	I am familiar with language other than English.	1	2	3	4
28.	I enjoy multicultural interactions as much as interactions with people of my own culture.	1	2	3	4
29.	I am involved in advocacy efforts against institutional barriers for minority students (e.g., lack of bilingual staff, multiculturally skilled personnel).	1	2	3	4
30.	I am familiar with nonstandard English.	1	2	3	4
31.	My life experiences with minority individuals are extensive (e.g., via ethnically integrated neighborhoods, marriage, and friendship).	1	2	3	4
32.	In order to be able to work with minority students, I frequently seek consultation with multicultural experts and attend multicultural workshops or training sessions.	1	2	3	4

©1994 Gargi Roysicar-Sodowsky, Antioch New England Graduate School, 40 Avon Street, Keene, NH 03431

Please answer the following questions as they apply to you. There are no right or wrong answers and all responses will be confidential.

1. What is your gender?

- 1. male
- 2. female

2. How many years have you been a school psychologist?

- 1. 0-5
- 2. 5-10
- 3. 10-20
- 4. more than 20

3. What is your ethnicity?

- 1. African American or African
- 2. European American and European
- 3. Hispanic American
- 4. Asian American or Asian
- 5. Native American
- 6. Other _____
- Multiple Areas in Origin (check appropriate spaces)

4. What is your age?
1. 25-30
 2. 30-40
 3. 40-50
 4. over 50
5. Have you had any training related to multicultural competency?
1. Yes
 2. No
6. How many years have you worked as a school psychologists in your district?
1. 0-5
 2. 6-10
 3. 11-15
 4. 16-20
 5. 21 or higher
7. What is the ethnic majority of the population you serve?
1. African American
 2. Caucasian
 3. Hispanic American
 4. Asian/Pacific Islander American
 5. Native American
 6. Other _____
8. How much time do you spend as a consulting school psychologist?
1. Less than 25%
 2. 25%-50%
 3. 50%-75%
 4. 75% or higher
9. Highest Degree earned:
- Ph.D.
 - B.A./B.S. (Bachelors)
 - MA/M.S. (Masters)
 - Other (specify) _____
10. What was the year of your highest degree earned? _____

Comments: Please use the following space to provide any additional comments about multicultural practice.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study!

APPENDIX C
INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET
a Research Study Entitled
Self-Report of Multicultural Consultation Competency of School Psychologists

You are invited to participate in a research study with the purpose of investigating how consulting school psychologists rate themselves with regard to being multiculturally competent. This study is being conducted by Ashara McKee-Williams, Doctoral Candidate enrolled in Auburn University's School Psychology Program, under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Buckhalt, Program Director for School Psychology at Auburn University. This study will show how school psychologists rate themselves with regard to multicultural competency and highlight the needed skills to be emphasized in training programs around the country. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a member of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

If you decide to participate, please take a few minutes of your time to complete the attached survey and mail it back in the self-addressed stamped envelope no later than _____.

Date

Precautions have been taken so that the information contained in the survey will be collected confidentially and analyzed anonymously. You have been assigned a number and the list with identifying information will be stored in a locked file cabinet with access only available to this researcher and faculty advisor. The list and data will be shredded after 5 years.

The expectation is that you will benefit from completing this survey by gaining an awareness of your skill level in the area of multicultural competency and possibly identify areas in need of professional development. Additionally, this study will complement existing multicultural consultation literature by examining and measuring the results of school psychologists' self-reports of competency in multicultural consultation. As a result of this study, practicing school psychologists and researchers may be able to identify areas of cultural competency that may need improvement via training programs. It is not promised you that you will receive any or all of the benefits described.

Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Information collected through your participation may be used to fulfill an educational requirement for the doctoral program at Auburn University in the area of School Psychology, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting. You may withdraw from participation at any time, without penalty.

