

Multicultural Competence for Counseling Students Experiencing Cultural Immersion

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## **Abstract**

A number of studies have examined how counselor educators can facilitate counselor development of multicultural competence within the context of graduate counseling programs (e.g., Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sadowsky et al., 1998). Much less research has focused on counselor development occurring in students' personal lives, yet some evidence has shown that students report the impact of extracurricular experiences on counselor development (Coleman, 2006; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Many qualitative studies have demonstrated positive effects of cultural immersion experiences, yet much less research in this area has utilized the quantitative measures related to cultural awareness. Few studies have also examined the effects of living among a different culture instead of visiting a different culture short term. After a thorough review of the literature on cultural immersion experiences, this study was designed to fill the gap that presently exists in quantitative findings exploring differences in multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation, which is an awareness and accepting attitude for those who come from diverse backgrounds. The sample for the study consisted of students experiencing cultural immersion by means of relocation for their graduate training program. Additional analysis examined how universal-diverse orientation and duration of graduate training predicted multicultural competence scores. The results were not significant showing any differences in either multicultural competence or universal-diverse orientation scores based on cultural immersion. Similarly, no differences were found for either of these variables based on

amount of multicultural training either. One finding that was statistically significant was a strong, positive correlation, as well as predictive ability, between universal-diverse orientation and multicultural knowledge and awareness. Implications of the findings could be applicable to clinicians and counselor education programs. By fostering more universal-diverse orientation, counselor educators could work towards increasing multicultural competence as well. This study was found to have some limitations, primarily a small sample size for quantitative analysis. These results do have implications for future research to continue studying multicultural competence, universal-diverse orientation, and cultural immersion.

*Keywords:* multicultural competence, universal-diverse orientation, immersion, counseling

# Multicultural Competence for Counseling Students Experiencing Cultural Immersion

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## **General Audience Abstract**

Much research has examined how people who train mental health professionals can facilitate counselor development of multicultural competence, an awareness for cultural differences and an ability to work with people from many cultural backgrounds. Much less research has focused on counselor development occurring in students' personal lives, yet some evidence has shown that students report the impact of events in their personal lives on counselor development. Many studies have demonstrated positive effects of cultural immersion experiences, in which participants immerse themselves in a different culture for a time period. A few studies have also examined the effects of living among a different culture instead of visiting a different culture short term. After a thorough review of the literature on cultural immersion experiences, this study was designed to research how living among a diverse culture could result in differences in multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation, which is an awareness and accepting attitude for those who come from diverse backgrounds. The study focused on students who moved to live in a different culture as part of their graduate training program in a counseling related field. The researcher also explored the relationship between universal-diverse orientation and multicultural competence scores. The results were not significant showing any differences in either multicultural competence or universal-diverse orientation scores based on whether or not participants had experienced cultural immersion. Similarly, no differences were found based on amount of multicultural training either. One finding that was significant was a strong relationship between universal-diverse orientation and multicultural knowledge and awareness.

Implications of the findings could be applicable to counselors and counselor education programs. By fostering more universal-diverse orientation, counselor educators could work towards increasing multicultural competence as well. This study was found to have some limitations, primarily having few participants take the study's survey. These results do have implications for future research to continue studying multicultural competence, universal-diverse orientation, and cultural immersion.

*Keywords:* multicultural competence, universal-diverse orientation, immersion, counseling

## Contents

Abstract .....	ii
General Audience Abstract .....	iv
CHAPTER ONE: .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Context for the Study .....	4
Counselor Professional Development .....	4
Multicultural Development .....	7
Statement of the Problem .....	8
Extracurricular Experiences .....	8
Cultural Immersion.....	10
Purpose of the Study .....	13
Measures of Multiculturalism.....	15
Significance of the Study .....	17
Delimitation.....	18
Chapter One Summary .....	19
CHAPTER TWO .....	21
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	21
Introduction .....	21
Context for the Study .....	23
Extracurricular Development .....	23
Cultural Immersion Experiences .....	33
Statement of the Problem .....	39
Quantitative Studies of Cultural Immersion.....	39
Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness .....	46
Universal-Diverse Orientation.....	52
Chapter Two Summary .....	62
CHAPTER THREE .....	66
METHODOLOGY .....	66
Research Design .....	66
Research Question One .....	67
Research Question Two.....	68
Research Question Three.....	68
Research Question Four .....	68
Research Question Five.....	68
Sample.....	69
Instruments .....	71
Demographics and Background Questionnaire .....	71
Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness .....	71
Universal-Diverse Orientation.....	73
Reliability and Validity .....	74
Variable Selection .....	76
Procedure.....	77

Data Analysis .....	78
Cleaning Data .....	79
Recoding Data .....	79
Analyzing the Data .....	79
Summary .....	88
CHAPTER FOUR.....	90
RESULTS .....	90
Research Question One .....	90
Question Two .....	91
Research Question Three.....	91
Research Question Four .....	91
Research Question Five.....	92
Cleaning Data .....	92
Instruments .....	93
Description of Participants .....	95
Findings.....	99
Research Question One .....	101
Research Question Two.....	104
Research Question Three.....	108
Research Question Four .....	109
Research Question Five.....	110
Summary .....	116
CHAPTER FIVE .....	118
DISCUSSION.....	118
Overview of the Study.....	118
Research Questions .....	119
Research Question One .....	119
Research Question Two.....	121
Research Question Three.....	121
Research Question Four .....	125
Research Question Five.....	126
Implications .....	129
Limitations .....	131
Future Research.....	135
Conclusions .....	137
References.....	140
APPENDIX A: CONTACT WITH STAKEHOLDERS .....	153
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENTS .....	163
APPENDIX C: SURVEY .....	165

## List of Tables

Table 1: Studies of Cultural Immersion.....	34
Table 2: MCKAS Subscales and Items.....	72
Table 3: M-GUDS-S Subscales and Items.....	74
Table 4: Descriptive Statistics .....	93
Table 5: Immersion.....	96
Table 6: Type of program .....	97
Table 7: Descriptive Statistics .....	97
Table 8: Present Residence .....	97
Table 9: Gender.....	98
Table 10: Sexual Orientation .....	98
Table 11: Race/ethnicity .....	99
Table 12: Correlations.....	100
Table 13: Group Statistics.....	101
Table 14: Independent Samples Test .....	101
Table 15: Group Statistics.....	102
Table 16: Independent Samples Test .....	102
Table 17: Group Statistics.....	103
Table 18: Independent Samples Test .....	103
Table 19: Group Statistics.....	104
Table 20: Independent Samples Test .....	104
Table 21: Group Statistics.....	105
Table 22: Independent Samples Test .....	105
Table 23: Group Statistics.....	106
Table 24: Independent Samples Test .....	107
Table 25: Group Statistics.....	107
Table 26: Group Statistics.....	109
Table 27: Independent Samples Test .....	109
Table 28: Group Statistics.....	110
Table 29: Independent Samples Test .....	110
Table 30: Correlations.....	111
Table 31: Model Summary .....	112
Table 32: ANOVA <sup>a</sup> .....	112
Table 33: Coefficients <sup>a</sup> .....	113
Table 34: Model Summary .....	113
Table 35: ANOVA <sup>a</sup> .....	113
Table 36: Coefficients <sup>a</sup> .....	114
Table 37: Model Summary .....	114
Table 38: ANOVA <sup>a</sup> .....	114
Table 39: Coefficients <sup>a</sup> .....	114
Table 40: Model Summary .....	115
Table 41: ANOVA <sup>a</sup> .....	115
Table 42: Coefficients <sup>a</sup> .....	115



## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Greater understanding of the relationship between cultural immersion and multiculturalism is necessary to respond to the growing needs of a diverse clientele. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs Standards (CACREP, 2016) outline the need for training in multicultural competence for those entering the mental health field. Yet, despite a large body of literature linking multicultural coursework to the manner in which counselors work with clients (Sue & Sue, 2013), much less research has focused on how counseling students' personal experiences affect multicultural development. Considerable qualitative research has produced evidence that culturally immersive experiences are linked with increased self-perceived multicultural competence for counseling students (e.g., Alexander, Kruczek, & Ponterotto, 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Choi, VanVoorhis, & Ellenwood, 2015; Cunningham, Caldwell, & Geltner, 2011; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005). Despite this largely studied construct, the quantitative research about cultural immersion is much sparser (Barden, Shannonhouse, & Mobley, 2015; Fawcett, Briggs, Maycock, & Stine, 2010), and few studies examine participants' experiences living long-term in a culturally distinct location.

This study was designed primarily to examine differences in multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation between counselors who experienced cultural immersion, by means of geographic relocation, and those who did not relocate. Additional analysis examined factors that predict counselor multicultural knowledge and awareness. This study was designed to help fill the gap in the literature on quantitatively measured effects of cultural immersion experiences and provide important insight into one possible mechanism for developing multicultural competence.

Counselor development of multicultural competence is an important aspect that counselor educators can emphasize as a growth process for their students. According to the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs Standards (CACREP, 2016), one of the eight core areas for foundational knowledge is social and cultural diversity. This highlights the importance of students' understanding of factors such as cultural identity development and multicultural counseling competencies within their coursework. Most of the research on development of multicultural competence has focused on how coursework can facilitate growth in this area.

Multicultural exposure (Weatherford & Spokane, 2013) and multicultural training (Chun-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sadowsky et al., 1998) have both demonstrated positive relationships to higher levels of multicultural competence, yet little of this research has focused on the association between students' personal experiences with diversity and professional development. According to Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003), counseling students' personal as well as professional experiences contribute to the learning and development process. When calling for more multicultural standards, Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) even stated that, "Culturally skilled counselors become actively involved with minority individuals outside the counseling setting (community events, social and political functions, celebrations, friendships, neighborhood groups, and so forth) so that their perspective of minorities is more than an academic or helping exercise" (p. 485). This area of study could be expanded to facilitate students' cultural experiences in their personal lives in order to promote cultural development and awareness in more facets than just their graduate programs. A number of researchers have supported the use of experiential learning to gaining cultural awareness outside of the classroom environment

(Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Canfield, Low & Hovestadt, 2009; Coleman, 2006; Kim & Lyons, 2003).

Some studies have demonstrated a link between extracurricular experiences and counselor development (Coleman, 2006; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003), but this research is limited in number. Cultural immersion experiences in particular have qualitatively been linked with counselor cultural awareness (e.g., Alexander et al., 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Choi et al., 2015; Cunningham et al., 2011; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005), yet these experiences are not afforded to all counselors in training. Many of the studies about development taking place outside the scope of the typical graduate education have been qualitative in nature. This leaves a literature gap in quantitative studies related to cultural immersion that could utilize one of the quantitative measures for multicultural counseling competence currently available (Dunn, Smith, & Montoya, 2006; Hays, 2008). Additionally, the majority of cultural immersion studies have utilized short-term study abroad while more research is needed to document the effects of living long term in a culturally distinct region.

Numerous scales are presently available to measure concepts related to multicultural competence, yet use of these measures is noticeably absent in the literature about cultural immersion (Barden et al., 2015). In reviewing this literature, Barden and Cashwell (2013) requested that, “given that the majority of research on cultural immersion experiences has been qualitative, more mixed methods and/or quantitative research designs are needed” (p. 294-295). Clearly, more research is needed to show whether and how students’ experiences of cultural immersion affect counselors’ cultural knowledge and awareness. The purpose of the present review is to examine the research on professional counselor development, cultural immersion experiences, and, central to the present study, existing measures of multicultural competence.

Importantly, the review will also uncover gaps that presently exist in the literature relating extracurricular experiences of cultural immersion to multicultural awareness. Finally, based on this literature review, the author will propose a study to expand the knowledge base in this area.

### **Context for the Study**

This section outlines counselor professional and multicultural development. Counselors progress through developmental stages that can be facilitated by factors such as additional training and clinical experiences. Much research has focused on methods that counselor educators can employ in order to facilitate counselor development through coursework and experiences taking place within the context of students' graduate training with less focus on how students' personal experiences may affect counselor development.

### **Counselor Professional Development**

Much of the research within the field of counselor education and supervision has focused on counselor development. For the purposes of this review, counselor development will focus on aspects related to cultural knowledge and awareness and how these aspects relate to cultural immersion experiences. Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) conducted an impactful study of counselor development and determined six phases that counselors progress through during their careers: the lay helper, beginning student, advanced student, novice professional, experienced professional, and finally the senior professional. Some of the themes from the Rønnestad and Skovholt study that relate to the current study focused on an integration between a counselor's personal and professional roles and the manner in which one's personal life can affect professional development. Meaningful interactions in both personal and professional life facilitated development for counselors. With time and experience, therapists rely less on external expertise and more on their own internal expertise. This development can induce

anxiety, yet most counselors learn to manage this anxiety over time (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). The purpose of the present literature review is to analyze how students' experiences of diversity outside of the classroom are related to counseling student development from the lay helper phase through the advanced student phase.

Expanding on the work of Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003), Wagner and Hill (2015) conducted a grounded theory study to analyze the process of beginning counselors developing into professionals. The study involved interviews with eight participants in their first six months of a master's level counseling program. The authors demonstrated a paradigm model that explained the growth process that counselors undergo to transition from being lay helpers to beginning students. The model depicts the cycle of learning, risk taking, and reinforcement that takes place as beginning counselors grow in their abilities. The authors explained how as students' step outside of their comfort zone and progress through this cycle, they eventually gain more trust in themselves and others to better integrate the feedback they receive.

Relatedly, Granello (2002) studied counseling students' cognitive development, and found that a small but noteworthy number of students (9.1%) were still operating in a dualistic manner (e.g., thinking in dichotomous ways) at the beginning of their graduate programs. However, the majority of the students remained in the relativistic stage throughout their graduate training marked by uncertainty yet recognition that all information can be valid instead of simply being one correct answer. Results of the cross-sectional analysis showed that students in the middle of their programs demonstrated some increased cognitive complexity but that students at the end of their programs had shown the greatest increase in cognitive complexity over the midpoint students. This was consistent with past research documenting more cognitive

development taking place after counseling students had gained the experiential component of actually working with clients (Fong, Borders, Ethington, & Pitts, 1997).

Similarly, Welfare and Borders (2010) studied cognitive complexity specific to the counseling field in order to measure counselors' cognitions about their clients. Counselors who are able to exhibit more complex cognitions are able to form a better picture of their clients. Counselors who think less complexly are at higher risk of making more dichotomous or black and white decisions about working with clients. These researchers found that experience as a counselor, a supervisor, or a counselor educator, as well as the highest counseling degree completed were all predictors to increased counselor cognitive complexity (Welfare & Borders, 2010). Among many benefits to increased cognitive complexity, more multicultural appropriateness is linked to cognitive complexity (Granello, 2010).

Steward, Jackson, Boatwright, Baden, and Sauer (1998) found that counseling students who thought in more dualistic terms were more often associated with lower levels of White racial identity development. Constantine, Juby, and Liang (2001) found that White racial identity attitudes accounted for a significant portion of variance in multicultural competence scores. Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) also displayed evidence that cross cultural life experience can be a facilitator of multicultural competence.

Each of these studies presents findings that as counseling students are exposed to coursework and field experience, they progress through stages of development (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Counselors' cognitive development can be advanced as they gain applied experience working with clients (Fong et al., 1997; Granello, 2002; Welfare & Borders, 2010) that can reduce the potentially harmful effects of black and white thinking (Steward et al., 1998; Welfare & Borders, 2010). Counselors' abilities grow as they step out of their comfort zone

(Wagner & Hill, 2015), and cross cultural exposure has been linked to increased multicultural competence (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001). These types of exposure to diverse experiences can thus be fundamental to students' development into counseling professionals.

### **Multicultural Development**

Several studies have researched the association of multicultural training and exposure to multicultural counseling competency (MCC) for counseling students. Sadowsky, Kuo-Jackson, Richardson, and Corey (1998) found that multicultural training, research, and quantity of diverse clients were associated with greater self-report MCC. Constantine (2001) found that counselors with more multicultural training also indicated greater abilities of case conceptualization for diverse clients. Dickson and Jepsen (2007) studied students' multicultural training opportunities within their counseling programs and found that the emphasis the program placed on MCC predicted each awareness, knowledge, relationship, and skills of student self-report MCC. Weatherford and Spokane (2013) found that multicultural exposure as well as the personality disposition of Openness-to-experience were both associated with greater multicultural case conceptualization ability. Openness-to-experience has also been shown to have a positive relationship to universal-diverse orientation (UDO), a mindset of recognition and support for the differences and similarities that people display (Thompson, Brossart, Carlozzi, & Miville, 2002).

In addition to educational and personality factors, aspects of identity development have also been linked to multicultural competence. Vinson and Neimeyer (2000) studied counseling psychology students just beginning their doctoral work and found that for both European Americans as well as for participants of color, higher levels of racial development correlated with increased MCC. Munley, Lidderdale, Thiagarajan, and Null (2004) also found that identity development as well as UDO both accounted for increased MCC. Neville, Spanierman, and

Doan (2006) found that color-blind racial ideology correlated negatively to both self-report and observed MCC.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This section outlines the gap in the literature that exists with studies researching extracurricular influences on multicultural development and quantitative studies of cultural immersion. There is strong evidence of the effect of multicultural training and short-term cultural immersion experiences being linked to greater cultural awareness. However, more research is needed to demonstrate how cultural immersion experiences taking place over a longer duration may result in differences in counseling student multicultural competence.

### **Extracurricular Experiences**

Much of this research on counseling student development has focused on what has taken place within the context of graduate training for student development with less emphasis on the relationship between extracurricular experiences and counselor development. However, several studies have indicated effects that experiences outside of the classroom can have for counseling students (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Regular interactions with people of different cultures have been shown to have a relationship to increased multicultural competence (Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994).

Furr and Carroll (2003) studied counseling students and the critical incidents that occurred during their training. Participants often referred to experiential learning and field experience as being significant, yet most frequently referenced factors outside of the classroom as having an influence on their development. Similarly, Coleman (2006) also studied critical incidents in counselor trainees' development and found that students' personal interactions with culturally diverse individuals was a main theme for development of multicultural competence.



Maruniakova, Rihacek, and Roubal (2017) used a qualitative approach with beginning Czech counselors in a Gestalt training orientation. The study found two main themes of a counselor's personal core and professional extension and created a model showing how the beginning counselor's personal core (such as personality traits and personal experiences) was always interacting with the counselor's professional extension.

Sue and Sue (2013) described stages of racial/cultural identity development that people experience as they gain more multicultural awareness. How people progress through these stages depends on their own identity and the experiences that they have with diversity. For as much as counseling students learn about diversity in their coursework, these and similar studies show evidence of the relationship between a person's identity development and lived experiences. For example, counseling students who attend programs in locations that expose them to more culturally immersive experiences may gain an advantage with regards to multicultural competence, as the current study explores. Therefore, with many experiences of cultural immersion taking place outside of the classroom setting, these types of encounters may result in differences in multicultural competence for students who gain this type of experience.

These studies show that the personal racial or cultural identity development, particularly through lived experiences in and out of the formal classroom environment, can have an impact on how students develop multicultural competence and develop as practicing professionals in a diverse world. Students develop into counselors through coursework as well as their own personal experiences of diversity. These studies further demonstrate the interaction between personal experiences and external factors from counselor training programs that can have an impact on counselor development. However, while an important body of research exists, several authors indicated that additional research is needed (Coleman, 2006; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Sue et

al., 1992) to determine specifically how culturally immersive experiences are related to the development of multicultural competence (Barden & Cashwell, 2013).

### **Cultural Immersion**

A number of studies have looked deeper into the effects of cultural immersion experiences in order to facilitate counselor cultural awareness. Pope-Davis, Breaux, and Liu (1997) is a frequently cited text describing cultural immersion experiences, and building on their work, Barden and Cashwell (2013) defined cultural immersion as “experiences that enable learners to have direct, prolonged, in vivo contact while immersed in a culture different than their own” (p. 288). Many qualitative studies have been conducted to examine the cultural implications of counseling students participating in immersion trips abroad, showing a strong relationship to increased multicultural competence. Studies of immersion experiences include trips to Belize (Smith-Augustine, Dowden, Wiggins, & Hall, 2014), Britain (Cunningham et al., 2011), Costa Rica (Barden et al., 2015), Guatemala (Fawcett et al., 2010), Ireland (Prosek & Michel, 2016; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004), Mexico (Wilson & Taylor, 2013), New Mexico (Ishii, Gilbride, & Stensrud, 2009), South Africa (Choi et al., 2015; Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010; West-Olatunji, Goodman, Mehta, & Templeton, 2011), and Trinidad (Alexander et al., 2005). More details about each of these studies can be seen in Table 1 in Chapter 2.

Other studies have looked at the effect of immersion by examining cultural factors that do not require traveling long distances. The work of DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) highlighted the experiences of a White woman living in a predominantly Black neighborhood and how this related to her own development of multicultural competence. Additionally, Hipolito-Delgado, Cook, Avrus, and Bonham (2013) utilized a grounded theory study to examine the cultural

immersion experiences of three counseling graduate students while working at a homeless shelter, a prison, and a nursing home.

These numerous studies of immersion through travel and other cultural factors have provided strong qualitative evidence of the link between cultural immersion and factors such as cultural awareness and multicultural competence. Several authors offer a synthesis and recommendations for conducting cultural immersion experiences (Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Canfield et al., 2009; Pope-Davis et al., 1997) and international experiences (Okech & DeVoe, 2010). Pope-Davis et al. (1997) described how to conduct a Multicultural Immersion Experience (MIE) and is one of the only textbooks to incorporate immersion as a form of multicultural training.

Pope-Davis et al. (1997) recommended a semester long MIE consisting of three phases. The first phase consists of students choosing a culturally different group from themselves, conducting a pretest assessment for multicultural competence, and then researching personal culture as well as the group the student will be joining. Phase two consists of keeping a personal journal while engaging in the MIE and not drawing too much attention to oneself during the immersion. The third phase involves students sharing their experiences with each other and each completing a posttest evaluation of multicultural competence. The use of journaling is commonly cited in the aforementioned immersion experience literature and is frequently the data used for qualitative inquiry. The use of pretest and posttest quantitative measures, however, is much rarer in the counseling student immersion literature (Barden et al., 2015; Fawcett et al., 2010).

The theoretical framework for cultural immersion is often build upon the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), which asserts that experiential learning from encounters with

diversity are more impactful than traditional classroom learning. Barden and Cashwell (2013) stated that as participants experience cultural dissonance, discomfort experienced from encountering an unfamiliar cultural environment, this facilitates their growth in multicultural awareness. One limitation to the cultural immersion literature is that most of these studies took place via short-term trips to culturally distinct regions. Only the study by DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) researched the experiences of a participant living long term in a culturally distinct location. Traveling to a location with a planned return date may have a different effect on students' cultural contact and cultural dissonance than actually living in a culturally different location. More research is needed to explore this type of in depth cultural immersion experience of residing in a culturally distinct place.

Another limitation to the previous cultural immersion research is that nearly all of these studies mentioned above that utilize cultural immersion were qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is fitting to this type of study because of the rich, descriptive data it provides. However, research utilizing quantitative measures to examine cultural immersion still remains a gap in the literature. Of the quantitative studies of cultural immersion, described below, few findings have been achieved with counseling student samples.

There are only two quantitative studies of cultural immersion for counselor trainees (Barden et al., 2015; Fawcett et al., 2010). The study conducted by Barden et al. (2015) was a quasi-experimental design comparing counselor trainees who had experienced a three week international immersion experience versus a comparison group. However, the study resulted in only one statistically significant difference between the groups, with initial cultural development stage showing a main effect on participants' self-perceived orientation to adjust to cultural differences. The study by Fawcett et al. (2010) did produce statistically significant differences in

pretest and posttest scores of multicultural competence for students engaged in an immersion trip to Guatemala. This does provide evidence of the relationship between cultural immersion and multicultural competence. However, the sample size of the Fawcett et al. study was quite small (N = 12) and comprised entirely of Caucasian students, which are limiting factors to the study's generalizability.

Some research with undergraduate student samples has shown quantitatively the effects of cultural immersion through study abroad experiences (Earnest, Rosenbusch, Wallace-Williams, & Keim, 2016; Engle & Engle, 2004; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Paige, Cohen, & Shively, 2004; Pederson, 2010). These studies did utilize pretest and posttest measures of intercultural development; however, without use of counseling student samples, the generalizability of these results may not be as applicable. The present study could not only add to the research on cultural immersion but also fill part of this gap by utilizing existing quantitative measures to study cultural immersion for counselors in particular.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness as well as universal-diverse orientation based on cultural immersion, as indicated by geographic relocation and time lived in the location of graduate training prior to starting that training. Additional analysis was designed to explore how the amount of multicultural courses may be linked with differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation. Additional regression analysis was used to explore the effects of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of training on multicultural competence. The research questions for this present study are as follows:

- RQ1a) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ1b) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ1c) Are there differences in multicultural awareness for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
- RQ2a) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2b) Are there differences in diversity of contact for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2c) Are there differences in relativistic appreciation for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2d) Are there differences in comfort with differences for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
- RQ3) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?
- RQ4) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?
- RQ5a) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores?
  - RQ5b) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge?

- RQ5c) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural awareness?

### **Measures of Multiculturalism**

The studies presented in this review reveal important insights about cultural immersion experiences for emerging professionals in the counseling field, yet most of these immersion studies have utilized qualitative methodology. Opportunities exist to extend this important body of research using the quantitative scales designed to measure multicultural competency.

Multicultural competence can be observed in different forms such as knowledge about cultural differences, personal cultural awareness, or skills for effective multicultural counseling (Sue, 2001). Competence to work with people from different cultural backgrounds can therefore be measured in several ways by a number of commonly used measures of self-report multicultural counseling competence available in the literature. Some of these include the Cross Cultural Counseling Inventory–Revised (CCCI-R; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Hernandez, 1991), Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI; Sadowsky, et al., 1994), Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, Gretchen, Utsey, Rieger, & Austin, 2002), Multicultural Awareness Knowledge Skills Survey–Counselor Edition–Revised (MAKSS-CE-R; Kim, Cartwright, Asay, & D’Andrea, 2003), California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale (CBMCS; Gamst et al., 2004), and the recently created Multicultural Counseling and Psychotherapy Test (MCPT; Gillem et al., 2016).

One promising instrument that measures multicultural competence that was also utilized for the present study is the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, et al., 2002). This instrument is designed to measure the knowledge and awareness characteristics of multicultural competence in particular. Given that the current study is about

how multicultural competence is developed in the early years of professional development, this instrument provides the necessary subscales that reflect levels of knowledge and awareness given that counseling students are still building their skillset and may not have experience serving clients. Several studies have demonstrated that interactions with clients to be an important factor in a counselor's professional development (Fong et al., 1997; Granello, 2002; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Welfare & Borders, 2010).

The MCKAS has been used in numerous studies related to multicultural awareness. Constantine and Ladany (2000) found that MCKAS scores correlated positively to other measures of multiculturalism, and that the MCKAS was one of the instruments least susceptible to social desirability. Constantine, Juby, and Liang (2001) demonstrated that the factors of previous multicultural classes taken and White racial identity attitudes accounted for a significant amount of variance on multicultural knowledge and awareness. Neville et al. (2006) found a negative correlation between color-blind racial ideology and both multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness scores. Another study by McBride and Hays (2012) found a negative relationship between MCKAS scores and ageist attitudes among counselors. Chu-Lien Chao (2012) found interaction effects of racial/ethnic identity and multicultural training on multicultural counseling knowledge. Similarly, the interaction of gender role attitudes and multicultural training had an effect on knowledge scores but not on multicultural awareness scores.

Owen, Tao, Leach, and Rodolfa (2011) emphasized the importance of a more recently developing construct of multicultural orientation (MCO) over multicultural competence. These authors refer to MCO as more of a "way of being" (p. 274), a guiding factor similar to one's theoretical orientation, while multicultural competence would be considered more of a "way of



doing” (p. 274). One such orientation related measure, as opposed to focusing on competence, is the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS; Miville et al., 1999) which “introduces a construct, universal diverse orientation (UDO), that reflects an attitude of awareness and acceptance of both the similarities and differences among people” (p. 291). These researchers followed up that study with the short form of the measure also (M-GUDS-S; Fuertes, Miville, Mohr, Sedlacek, & Gretchen, 2000), utilized for the current study. A couple of studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between M-GUDS-S scores to both multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness of the MCKAS (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004). Similarly, Tummala-Narra, Singer, Li, Esposito, and Ash (2012) utilized the M-GUDS-S to find a positive association between UDO and self-perceived cultural competence.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is important to this body of literature for several reasons including greater exploration of counseling student experiences outside of the context of graduate training, the addition of a study measuring participants’ experiences living within a distinct culture, and added quantitative evidence surrounding cultural immersion. First of all, even though some studies have shown that extracurricular experiences have been reported as influential on counselor development (Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003), few studies have focused on multicultural development in particular (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001). The present study is designed to explore how experiences outside of the context of graduate training are associated with differences in participant multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation.

Secondly, although the body of literature supporting cultural immersion experiences is considerable (e.g., Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001;

Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sodowsky et al., 1998), only one study by DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) documented a participant's experience living in a culturally distinct region. Most of the other cultural immersion studies involved trips to a diverse location for a short period of time. By sampling in such geographically and culturally distinct places, the present study is designed to add more evidence of differences that may occur while living in a culturally distinct location.

Thirdly, among the cultural immersion literature, only two studies have utilized existing quantitative measures (Barden et al., 2015; Fawcett et al., 2010), despite recommendations to use such instrumentation (Pope-Davis et al., 1997). This study utilized quantitative measures and was intended to improve upon the sampling limitations encountered in previous studies (Barden et al., 2015; Fawcett et al., 2010). Each of these three reasons supports the implementation of the present study in order to expand upon this important yet scarcely studied construct. More evidence of counseling students' lived experiences outside of the context of their graduate training could greatly expand upon current practices aimed at developing students' multicultural competence.

### **Delimitation**

One limitation of this research is the possibility of self-selection bias. It is possible that the type of participant who would select to participate in this study may also choose to respond to the survey instruments in a specific way also, potentially affecting the results of the study. Several other studies have referred to the risk of self-selection bias within this body of literature (Barden et al., 2015; Coleman, 2006; Fawcett et al., 2010; Tummala-Narra, 2012). This study's use of a comparison group may help to mediate the effects of self-selection bias by including a group who did not experience this study's definition of cultural immersion.

## Chapter One Summary

Considerable research has supported the association between multicultural training and greater multicultural competence (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sadowsky et al., 1998). However, much fewer studies have examined the link between extracurricular experiences and counselor development, but some studies have shown that participants report these experiences as influential (Coleman, 2006; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). In particular, there is strong qualitative evidence showing a link between culturally immersive experiences and cultural awareness (e.g., Alexander et al., 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Choi et al., 2015; Cunningham et al., 2011; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005). However, more research is still needed to explore counseling students' experience outside of their graduate training, particularly with regards to living in a culturally distinct location. The present study could provide a better understanding of how this type of cultural immersion may play a role in counselor development. Given the availability of measures for universal-diverse orientation and multicultural knowledge and awareness, these scales offer options for the current study in terms of examining differences that exist for those who participate in culturally immersive experiences.

This study was designed to explore the effects for clinicians in training who experienced cultural immersion by relocating to a culturally distinct region during their graduate training. This study utilized analysis to determine differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation based on cultural immersion. The study also examined differences in these variables based on amount of multicultural coursework. The final analysis was designed to examine the predictive value of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of graduate training on multicultural competence. This study is

important in expanding the body of literature pertaining to students' extracurricular development and long term cultural immersion. Findings from the study could present implications for improving counselor education practices to increase students' multicultural awareness.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

Given the limited quantitative research on cultural immersion experiences, the present study is designed to explore cultural immersion by measuring for the time lived in participants' location of graduate training and examining differences in each multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation utilizing existing quantitative measures. By sampling counselors in geographically and culturally distinct regions, analysis can explore the effects of time lived in location of graduate training program prior to starting that training, with those residing there shorter time periods indicating a cultural immersion experience. The study also examined how universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of training predict participants' levels of multicultural competence. This research is designed to explore how factors outside of traditional graduate training may be related to development of multicultural competence and provide more quantitative evidence of the effects of cultural immersion experiences. The results could also expand upon the limited findings related to cultural immersion of living in a diverse location.

Several previous studies have suggested that counseling students' personal experiences of cultural immersion are related to multicultural competence (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). In some qualitative studies, critical incidents occurring outside the scope of counselor training have been reported by participants to have an impact on counselor development (Furr & Carroll, 2003) and multicultural competence (Coleman, 2006). DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) also qualitatively

demonstrated how a cultural immersion experience of living in a culturally different neighborhood was related to the development of multicultural awareness and competence. Several quantitative studies have indicated the effects of study abroad experiences on cultural development (Engle & Engle, 2004; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Paige, Cohen, & Shively, 2004; Pederson, 2010), yet not with counseling student participants. Of the two quantitative studies of cultural immersion using counseling student samples, one did produce statistically significant increases in MCC scores after an immersion experience (Fawcett et al., 2010), but the small, homogenous sample is a limit to generalizability. The other study conducted by Barden et al. (2015) produced few statistically significant results. All of these studies will be covered in greater detail in this chapter.

The present study utilized the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, et al., 2002) and the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short (Fuertes et al., 2000), which both have been used extensively in previous research. This paragraph provides a brief overview of the use of these measures, and each of the following studies will be covered in more detail later in this chapter. Constantine and Ladany (2000) demonstrated numerous significant positive relationships to MCKAS scores and other measures of multicultural competence. Two studies have linked more multicultural training to increased MCKAS scores (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, Juby & Liang, 2001). Munley et al. (2004) found that identity development and universal-diverse orientation both predicted increased multicultural knowledge and awareness for counselors. Constantine et al. (2001) and Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) similarly found a positive relationships between UDO and self-perceived multicultural competence. Weatherford and Spokane (2013) also demonstrated evidence that both universal-diverse orientation and multicultural exposure were positively associated with

multicultural case conceptualization ability. In addition to these studies, the present study could further explore differences in multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation for students who gained a cultural immersion experience during their graduate training.

### **Context for the Study**

This section of the chapter covers the context for the present study. This will first cover literature related to counselor development taking place outside of the classroom setting. Secondly, this section will cover studies of cultural immersion for counseling students. Each of these studies presented provides a context for the present study with relevance to how the present study will explore extracurricular cultural immersion.

### **Extracurricular Development**

Evidence has shown a relationship between student development and factors external to traditional graduate training (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). In this section, several qualitative studies are described that have provided a link between counselor trainees' personal experiences and counselor development. Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) found that participants reported that both personal and professional interactions that counselors have with others affected their professional development. In a study by Furr and Carroll (2003), the most frequently reported critical incidents related to participants' counselor development were factors external to their graduate training. Similarly, Coleman (2006) studied counseling students' reported experiences that influenced development of multicultural competence and found that students' personal encounters of cultural diversity was one key theme in multicultural development. Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) quantitatively demonstrated the relationship between cross cultural contact and increased multicultural competence and qualitatively provided evidence that the cultural

immersion from a multicultural class was significant to student learning. These studies provide data supporting the link between students' personal experiences and development as a counselor, which supports the importance of the current study.

In their study of counselor professional development, Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) conducted a qualitative study interviewing 100 American counselors or therapists at various stages of their careers. These authors described how counselors encounter phases of professional development including the lay helper, beginning student, advanced student, novice professional, experienced professional, and senior professional. These authors determined that professional development is a long term process, and even though early practitioners often experience anxiety, this is overcome in most cases (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003).

A couple of the themes from Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) focused on the integration of the personal and professional self and the impact of personal experiences on counselor development. A number of participants reported that profound events in their personal lives, from a young age and also experience in adulthood, affected professional development. Even senior professionals reported that personal experiences still had an effect on their development. Participants reported that meaningful interpersonal interactions had an impact on professional development. Even though interactions with clients was most frequently reported, interpersonal experiences in counselors' personal lives were also commonly reported. Another Rønnestad and Skovholt theme was that continuous reflection is important at all levels of development. This aligned with other author recommendations for conducting cultural immersion experiences (Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Canfield et al., 2009; Okech & DeVoe, 2010; Pederson, 2010; Pope-Davis et al., 1997).



Even though the study by Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003) did not focus exclusively on multicultural development, these qualitative findings suggest a link between counselors' experience outside of the classroom and professional development. This study utilized a large sample size for qualitative inquiry and built upon previous findings by these researchers, increasing the likelihood of transferability of these findings. The present study could further explore the impact of personal experiences on counselor development.

In other related research, Furr and Carroll (2003) studied counseling students (N = 84) to find what critical incidents occurred throughout their training that related to development. The sample included students in CACREP accredited programs at multiple stages of their education. Some participants were in their first semester (n = 29), some conducting practicum (n = 14), and some working on their internship (n = 41). Most of the participants were female (83%). The majority of the participants were European American (81%) with less representation of African American (14%) and other racial/ethnic groups (5%). The researchers utilized a qualitative approach to inquire about events that had taken place since the students began their counseling program, and "A critical incident was defined as a positive or negative experience recognized by the counseling student as significant" (Furr & Carroll, 2003, p. 485).

Furr and Carroll acknowledged that many critical incidents can take place outside of the classroom. Students in the study often referenced experiential learning, field experience, and factors outside of the scope of their counseling program as influential in development. "In fact, critical incidents occurring outside of the counseling program that affected personal growth were the most frequent type of incident cited" (p. 488). Many participants in this study reported that self-development activities such as receiving counseling, active exercise, or spending a night in a homeless shelter to be influential on their development as counselors. Many incidents that

occurred outside of academic life were associated with students' personal relationships, often related to students' development of interpersonal skills. These researchers recommend further research on how personal experiences affect counselor development (Furr & Carroll, 2003).

This study by Furr and Carroll demonstrated strong evidence tying counseling student development to factors external to their counseling program, given that these were the critical incidents most often referenced by participants in the study. This study had a large sample size for a qualitative study, which could indicate better transferability of these findings. Restricted transferability of findings is a limitation of qualitative research, yet particularly in studies with small samples. One of the limitations that Furr and Carroll acknowledge in this study was that the participants were from a single cohort. Implementing similar research with a more diverse sample, as indicated in the current study, could also allow for better generalizability of the results.

Despite Furr and Carroll calling for more research in this area, this field of the literature is still lacking. More research is needed to expand upon how much of the critical incidents outside of academics are culturally immersive experiences. That study also did not relate these counselors' development to cultural competence. Using a quantitative approach could relate critical incidents, by focusing more on cultural immersion, to existing scales of MCC. The present study would also expand upon the literature showing how experiences outside of the classroom relate to counselors' development of multicultural competence.

Similar to the previous study, qualitative research by Coleman (2006) also studied critical incidents that affected counseling students' (N = 59) multicultural training. The study utilized a more racially diverse sample than much of the previous research on this topic, which had been primarily Caucasian samples. This sample included 59.3% European American participants,

23.7% African American, 6.8% Latina/o, 5.1% Asian American, and 3.4% biracial. Nearly 75% of the sample identified as women. Most of the sample consisted of doctoral level counseling psychology students (n = 47) and some master's level counseling students (n = 9). This study focused on how multicultural training was related to how counselors' work with racial/ethnic minorities in particular (Coleman, 2006).

Coleman utilized a Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ) that was developed for the purposes of the study and modeled off of previous research examples. This CIQ asked students about experiences influential to their MCC development, reactions to those experiences, reasons those events were significant, and any alterations the participants would have made to those events. Six raters sorted these responses into categories. Using the CIQ data, Coleman utilized a hierarchical cluster analysis to search for themes within the participant responses. The responses to each question were placed into subcategories based on the type of response. In terms of critical incidents, "Trainees identified various (a) experiences with colleagues from diverse cultural backgrounds in their multicultural training, (b) didactic and experiential course components, and (c) experiences with culturally diverse others in their personal lives as being three critical themes in their development as multiculturally competent counselors" (Coleman, 2006, p. 179).

Another measure used for the Coleman study was the Multicultural Environment Inventory Revised (MEI-R; Pope-Davis, Liu, Nevitt, & Toporek, 2000) to measure how students perceived that their counseling training covered multicultural issues during their program. Very few significant differences were found between the MEI-R subscales and the students' CIQ responses. Even though the training environment did not produce significant results related to critical incidents, the author did note that students who acknowledged greater programmatic

support of multiculturalism tended to exhibit more positive experiences of the critical incidents they described. Another notable difference was that “trainees of color submitted more responses that were related to the didactic course components (33%) than did their White counterparts (31%) and submitted fewer responses that were related to interacting with racially/ethnically diverse others (2%) than did their White counterparts (21%)” (p. 179-180). This demonstrated the differing experiences of counseling students based on their race/ethnicity (Coleman, 2006).

Given that one of the themes found from Coleman’s study related to students’ personal lives and the interactions they have had with people who are culturally diverse, this demonstrated more evidence that multicultural experiences taking place outside of the context of counseling training can be linked to counselor development. Because of this finding the author suggested that, “Training programs should encourage trainees to pursue opportunities for learning and growth through the established personal relationships they may have with racially/ethnically diverse others to increase their development as a multiculturally competent counselor” (p. 180). This aligned with the similar recommendation of Sue et al., (1992) that counselors should engage with minority groups more commonly in their personal lives. The current study could address this call for research by exploring how student’s personal experiences are related to counselor development.

The Coleman study improved upon some of the limitations in previous research on this topic by including a more diverse sample and asking about students’ experience through the duration of their program instead of simply one class. Coleman’s research also offered more focus on critical incidents related to multicultural encounters in particular, but the study did only inquire about the cultural factor of race/ethnicity. The Furr and Carroll (2003) study inquired about all critical incidents, not only related to cultural development.

Coleman did acknowledge that the sampling method, an email sent to numerous graduate programs, may have attracted participants who already showed an interest in multiculturalism, potentially adding a bias to the results. The author called for more random sampling in the future to address this concern. Although the sample in the Coleman study was smaller ( $N = 59$ ) than the Furr and Carroll (2003) study ( $N = 84$ ), Coleman's sample was more ethnically diverse and included a nationwide sample instead of participants from a single program. This sample may not be as representative of master's level counseling programs however, given that the majority of the sample was counseling psychology students with an average of 4.8 years of experience in their graduate training. More representation of master's level counseling students in this type of research could provide for better generalizability of these results.

Coleman (2006) does provide some quantitative findings related to counseling student critical incidents. The manner in which this researcher adapted the CIQ to measure critical incidents related to MEI-R scores, the quantitative measure of program multicultural environment, did add quantitative data to this field of study. The results of MEI-R scores did not produce any statistically significant results however.

In another study related to multicultural exposure, Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) conducted a mixed-methods study measuring the relationship between cross-cultural contact and multicultural competence. The study involved students ( $N = 15$ ) enrolled in a multicultural counseling class. The majority of the students ( $n = 12$ ) identified as White, with one African American, one Asian American, and one Native American participant. Of these students, seven were doctoral students with the remaining students ( $n = 8$ ) either pursuing a master's degree or permanent certification. This study utilized the Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey (MAKSS; D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991) and a revised version of the Multicultural

Experience Inventory (MEI; Ramirez, 1991) to measure for MCC and cross-cultural contact. Of these measures, the researchers did not receive a complete response rate for all of the participants. The researchers also utilized questions designed to gather qualitative data related to their experience of the multicultural course (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001).

The course that the participants from Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) were enrolled in included an immersion component. This immersion experience was modeled off of the MIE recommendations from Pope-Davis et al. (1997). Students were required to select a cultural group that they had limited contact with prior to the experience and interact with the group throughout the semester.

At the pretest given at the beginning of the course, the researchers examined the relationship between prior cross cultural contact and self-report multicultural competence. The analysis included each of the four MEI subscales of Composite ( $n = 8$ ), Ethnic ( $n = 14$ ), Disabilities ( $n = 9$ ), and Gay ( $n = 11$ ), which each indicating varying response rates. MEI subscales were correlated to the MAKSS total score and subscales of Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills. The results indicated strong positive correlations between the MAKSS total score and MEI subscale scores for Composite ( $r = .807, p < .01$ ), Disabilities ( $r = .889, p < .01$ ), and Gay ( $r = .775, p < .01$ ). The MAKSS Awareness subscale demonstrated similarly positive correlations to Composite ( $r = .826, p < .01$ ), Disabilities ( $r = .837, p < .01$ ), and Gay ( $r = .848, p < .01$ ) subscales of the MEI. The Skills subscale of the MAKSS also correlated positively to the Disabilities ( $r = .775, p < .01$ ) and Gay ( $r = .662, p < .05$ ) subscales of the MEI. These results indicated that more cross cultural exposure was correlated with higher levels of cultural competence. Experience with Ethnic minorities was the only subscale of the MEI that did not

present any statistically significant relationship with MAKSS scores (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001).

Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen also studied differences between the pretest and posttest scores for multicultural competence. This analysis also produced statistically significant increases ( $p < .01$ ) for the Total, Knowledge, and Skills subscales of the MAKSS but not for the Awareness subscale. These findings provide some evidence that the students' multicultural competence did improve during the semester-long course (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001).

The third aspect of the Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen study was qualitative analysis of student journals to identify aspects of the course that students found most instrumental in facilitating their learning. The students journaled in response to a question that asked what the most important aspect of the class was that week. The most frequently discussed themes were related to the cross-cultural contact part of the class as well as the addition of guest speakers used during the course (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001).

The quantitative findings from this study by Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen did demonstrate that prior cross-cultural contact did result in a relationship to increased multicultural competence. These findings may or may not be related to students' experiences outside of their graduate training, but it does provide evidence to support the current study. The only factor of that prior cross cultural experience that did not demonstrate a statistically significant relationship to self-report multicultural competence was experience with ethnic/racially diverse others, which was somewhat contradictory to the findings of Coleman (2006) in which students reported those experiences to be influential to their multicultural development.

The qualitative data from the Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen study does add additional evidence that many other studies do not have. Most of the studies about multicultural training or cultural

immersion either qualitatively describe the aspects linked to student development or simply demonstrate quantitative relationships between constructs. The mixed methods design of this study not only demonstrates relationships between cross-cultural experiences and multicultural competence, but it also describes how the student development took place. The qualitative evidence indicating that the cross-cultural contact aspect of the class was most commonly reported as the most important aspect of the class suggests that this could be a facilitator of the relationship between cultural experiences and MCC.

One of the main limitations of this study was the small sample size. Additionally, some of the measures used in this study received low response rates, further reducing the effects seen by these results. Even though the study produced significant results, the generalizability of these results is limited due to this. Additionally, without a comparison group, the significant difference reported between pretest and posttest scores may not be as strongly attributed to the effect of the course. The present study should address both of these concerns, by increasing the sample size and adding a comparison group to show a stronger link between cultural immersion and multicultural competence.

These findings in the studies mentioned in this section demonstrated how experiences outside of the context of graduate training may be related to counseling student development (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). These findings have been primarily qualitative in nature, so the present study could add quantitative data exploring how students' experiences outside of the classroom, via cultural immersion, may be related to multicultural competence. The evidence of the link between cultural immersion and multicultural competence has already been well studied qualitatively.



## **Cultural Immersion Experiences**

In line with learning taking place outside of the classroom, a large number of qualitative studies have examined the effects of cultural immersion (e.g., Alexander et al., 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Choi et al., 2015; Cunningham et al., 2011; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005), mainly focusing on counseling student development. Most of these studies have utilized trips to various locations, often internationally, in order to facilitate counselor cultural awareness. Some studies have focused on factors other than travel in order to place participants in culturally immersive experiences, such as through living in a racially different neighborhood (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005) or working in a location with a different culture than that of the participants (Hipolito-Delgado et al., 2013). The author is only aware of two quantitative studies of cultural immersion for counseling students (Fawcett et al., 2010; Barden et al., 2015) that will be covered in the next section of this chapter.

An overview of cultural immersion studies with counseling student participants can be seen in Table 1. Barden and Cashwell (2013) stated that cultural immersion is supported by the theoretical framework of the contact hypothesis from Allport (1954), who stated that experiential encounters with diversity have a greater impact than coursework, reading, or discussing topics. The presence of cultural dissonance, discomfort or confusion that arises in unfamiliar cultural environments, is vital to individuals increasing their multicultural awareness (Barden & Cashwell, 2013). Several of the immersion studies have utilized formats similar to the Multicultural Immersion Experience (MIE) recommendations of Pope-Davis et al. (1997), such as the use of pre-immersion group meetings to prepare or journaling through the immersion process. Fawcett et al. (2010) as well as Prosek and Michel (2016) specifically cited using the MIE recommendations when developing their immersion programs. Although each of the

studies of cultural immersion has produced distinct results, many have indicated similar outcomes following cultural immersion experiences including participants reporting increased empathy and awareness for personal culture and others' cultural backgrounds. For the purposes of this section, most focus will be placed on the work of DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) because of its relevance to the present study.

Study	Location/Duration	Participants	Findings
Alexander et al. (2005).	Three week immersion experience in Trinidad	School counseling students (N = 10)	Authors described the stages of this immersion experience and provided recommendations for implementing such programs.
Barden and Cashwell (2014)	Various international experiences, 10 day minimum	Counselor Education Students (N = 10)	Participants reported changes to aspects such as cultural knowledge, empathy, and personal and professional impact.
Barden et al., (2015)	A three week immersion experience in Costa Rica for the experimental group	Counselor Education students (N = 37). Experimental group (n = 19) and comparison (n = 18)	Quantitative study. Limited significant results. Initial developmental stage had an effect on self-perceived PO scores.
Choi et al. (2015)	A 14 day immersion trip to South Africa	Master's level counseling students (N = 5)	Phenomenological study with themes including sociopolitical and cultural awareness, appreciation for life, and a commitment towards change.
Cunningham et al. (2011)	Ten day trip to London over spring break	Master's level school counseling students	The authors described the activities and goals of the study abroad and implications for counseling culturally diverse clients.
DeRicco and Sciarra (2005)	Living in a racially different neighborhood	One White woman living in a predominantly African	Better understanding of aspects of personal and others' cultural

	than the participant's race/ethnicity	American neighborhood	backgrounds and improved ability to establish therapeutic relationships with clients.
Fawcett et al. (2010)	Ten day immersion experience in Guatemala using Pope-Davis et al. (1997) MIE recommendations	All Caucasian master's level counselor education students (N = 12)	Pretest posttest quantitative study. Participants reported statistically significant increases in multiple aspects of self-report multicultural counseling competence.
Hipolito-Delgado et al. (2013)	Semester long assignment to work in a homeless shelter, a prison, or a nursing home	First year counseling graduate students (N = 3), all identifying as White females	Grounded theory study that produced four themes of bias, gender, barriers, and self-awareness.
Ishii et al. (2009)	One week immersion in New Mexico to visit historic and cultural sites	All female master's level counseling participants (N = 15)	Grounded theory study with themes about cognitive, affective, and perceptual reactions, as well as increased empathy and cultural dissonance.
Jurgens and McAuliffe (2004)	Annual two week immersion experience in Ireland and Northern Ireland	Students enrolled in a multicultural course for graduate and undergraduate students in counseling and helping fields.	Data collection from focus groups has shown a link to intellectual and emotional growth as well as an expanded cultural lens.
Prosek and Michel (2016)	A ten day trip to Ireland based on the Pope-Davis et al. (1997) MIE recommendations	Master's level counseling students (N = 13) from ten different universities across the United States	Three themes emerged: cultural self-awareness, witnessing peer growth, and global connection.
Smith-Augustine et al. (2014)	Three week study abroad in Belize	Graduate counseling students (N = 5), all identified as African American females with Three in the Clinical Mental Health track and two in the School Counseling track	Themes developed from participant journals included discrimination and prejudice, cultural pride and appreciation, cultural sensitivity, and self-awareness.
Tomlinson-Clarke and Clarke (2010)	Service learning immersion experience in South Africa	Graduate course over the summer session that takes	Authors outlined the guidelines for their seven step immersion program,

		approximately 14 students from counseling, psychology, or education degrees	discuss participant reactions, and provide recommendations for conducting immersion trips.
West-Olatunji et al. (2011)	Four week immersion experience in Southern Africa	Doctoral students (n = 4) and master's level counseling students (n = 2)	Results of analyzing student journals suggested increases in student critical consciousness and cultural competence.
Wilson and Taylor (2013)	One week immersion trip to Puebla, Mexico	Female identified doctoral counselor education students (N = 6)	Phenomenological study which resulted in themes of: "Respect for Hispanic traditions; revised professional perceptions; an awareness of services abroad; and the impact of experiential learning" (p. 14).

In one such immersion study, DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) qualitatively documented the experiences of the first author (Judith) as a White woman who enrolled her daughter at a preschool in a predominantly Black neighborhood. This case described how the semester long cultural immersion experience affected Judith's cultural development and multicultural counseling competence as documented in her journaling throughout. After having had ten years of experience working with African American and other minority coworkers in social services, she did not anticipate experiencing any feelings of racism. However, within the first couple weeks of this experience, Judith recognized some fears arising that she had not been aware of beforehand. She found herself hyperaware of how her interactions within the community took place and often was conscious of how she presented herself in public, not wanting to stand out too much. By about the third week, Judith noticed herself gaining more comfort and starting to better establish relationships with other parents at the school, and her daughter was doing the

same with classmates. Judith reflected a number of times on questions that her daughter would ask about race that Judith had never thought of and would give her a new perspective and empathy of how cultural norms affected people. As Judith and her daughter were able to establish relationships in the school and community, they felt much more comfortable in their environments and gained a much greater awareness of the impact of race (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005).

When Judith later was hired as a school counselor, she acknowledged the increased understanding of how her own and others' cultural identities influence them and how these cultural aspects affect the counseling relationship. She had been able to better recognize multiple aspects of clients' identities and adapt her counseling to better foster relationships with students. Judith acknowledged that her immersion experience could never be representative of the everyday experiences of minority groups. Her experience did provide her with a much deeper understanding of her own cultural influences though, and she acknowledged a continued multicultural learning process. These authors recommend the use of cultural immersion experiences, along with journaling and class discussion, in order to facilitate the cultural awareness needed to counsel diverse populations (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005).

This study provides a unique perspective of how a daily life of cultural immersion can affect a counselor's cultural awareness. This study not only demonstrated the relationship between cultural immersion and multicultural awareness but also provided evidence that cultural immersion may actually increase multicultural counseling competence. Even though this experience was conducted as part of a class project, this cultural immersion took place almost entirely within the author's personal life. Many of the cultural immersion experiences researched that involved travel to diverse locations were arranged by the students' counseling

program. And even though Hipolito-Delgado et al., (2013) involved immersion experiences in diverse working locations, much of those experiences were related to the students' counseling practice. This study by DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) adds a much deeper representation of how cultural immersion outside the context of one's academic training can have strong implications for multicultural competence.

DeRicco and Sciarra did follow many of the recommendations of Pope-Davis et al., (1997) when arranging the immersion experience including a pre-immersion paper, journaling throughout the experience, and a personal evaluation at the end. One recommendation of Pope-Davis et al. that is missing from DeRicco and Sciarra's work was the use of a quantitative measure utilized before and after the immersion experience. Even though these authors mention quantitative measures of multicultural competence, there is no acknowledgement of their use in this publication. Having conducted this study as a pretest posttest procedure could have greatly added to the research on cultural immersion that is almost entirely qualitative. It could have also added more evidence of improvements in multicultural competence after cultural immersion.

The present study could involve several similar aspects of the DeRicco and Sciarra study. Sampling in geographically and culturally distinct locations increases the likelihood that students experience the cultural immersion of living in a different culture from their own. Much of their personal interactions will take place within the context of living in a varying culture. The present study was designed to explore the effects of time lived in a remote location, and the addition of quantitative data could expand on this field of study and the important findings of DeRicco and Sciarra.

These studies of cultural immersion have provided strong evidence of the link between cultural immersion and multicultural awareness. Most of the studies presented in table 1

involved travel as a form of cultural immersion with most of the participants reporting increased cultural awareness as a result. DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) also showed how personal experiences of living in a racially different neighborhood affected the author's cultural competence. These studies provide a strong supporting background for the present study that further explores cultural immersion through quantitative methodology.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This section covers the gap in the literature that presently exists within the cultural immersion literature. Primarily, the present study is designed to utilize quantitative data to explore cultural immersion as it relates to multicultural competence. This section focuses on the immersion literature that has utilized quantitative measures and establishes a framework for the instruments intended for use in the present study.

### **Quantitative Studies of Cultural Immersion**

The author is only aware of two quantitative studies of cultural immersion for counseling students. Fawcett et al. (2010) demonstrated statistically significant increases in cultural competence following a cultural immersion experience in Guatemala. Barden et al. (2015) found few statistically significant results from their study of cultural immersion in Costa Rica. This section will focus primarily on these two studies (Fawcett et al., 2010; Barden et al., 2015) because they are the only quantitative studies of counseling student cultural immersion and are thus particularly relevant to the current study. There are also a number of quantitative studies of undergraduate students' experiences of study abroad programs (Earnest et al., 2016; Engle & Engle, 2004; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Paige et al., 2004; Pederson, 2010), but these findings may not be generalizable to counseling student samples.

In the first quantitative study of cultural immersion to utilize a counseling student sample, Fawcett et al. (2010) studied pretest and posttest effects of an immersion experience to Guatemala. This study included a cohort comprised of all Caucasian master's level counselor education students (N = 12) on their ten day immersion trip to Guatemala. Only one student identified as male and the other 11 as female. Each of the students had completed two or more semesters of full time study. They had each taken a class on diversity and two or more courses on clinical training with several of the students (n = 5) working their practicum or internship at the time of the immersion experience. The structure of the immersion experience was framed off of the Multicultural Immersion Experience guidelines from Pope-Davis et al. (1997).

Fawcett et al. (2010) administered the Multicultural Counseling Competencies Self Assessment (MCCSA; Arredondo et al., 1996) to measure multicultural counseling competence both prior to and following the immersion experience. Fawcett et al. stated that, "Characteristics are the following categories of MCC: a) counselor awareness of own assumptions, values and biases; b) understanding the worldview of the culturally different client; c) developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques" (p. 9). Each of those three characteristics contained three sub-categories of beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills. The results indicated statistically significant improvements between pretest and posttest scores on all nine of these dimensions, indicating increases in multicultural competence for the participants following the immersion experience (Fawcett et al., 2010).

Fawcett et al. (2010) acknowledged some limitations to this study. Primarily, the small sample size was a limiting factor to generalizability. Additionally, self-selection bias may have affected the results in that the participants chose to join the cultural immersion experience and were not randomly selected. The present study could improve upon some limitations of this



study, primarily with regards to sampling. A larger and more heterogeneous sample would lead to greater generalizability than the small sample comprised of entirely Caucasian students that Fawcett et al. used.

In terms of instrumentation, the MCCSA measure that Fawcett et al. used also was comprised of dimensions including counseling skills. Even though the results indicated significant increases in skills, less than half of these students were engaged in their practicum or internship at the time of the immersion. If these participants had not seen clients at the time of the immersion experience, their self-report of counseling skills could be unreliable. The current study utilizing the MCKAS would focus more on knowledge and awareness for counseling students, which could address this possible limitation.

The study by Fawcett et al. (2010) does present compelling quantitative evidence of the effect of cultural immersion experiences. Given that all of the dimensions of the MCCSA produced significant differences from pretest to posttest does suggest a strong relationship between immersion and multicultural competence. The present study can further explore these results to potentially verify these findings. The use of a larger, more diverse sample could improve generalizability, and the addition of a comparison group not experiencing the same immersion could improve the validity of the relationship between cultural immersion and increased MCC as opposed to potential confounding effects of maturation.

In the other quantitative study seen in Table 1, Barden et al. (2015) used a pretest posttest design with quantitative data. The study utilized a quasi-experimental design to compare counseling students who participated in a study abroad versus those who took traditional coursework. The study involved a sample of 37 counseling students, 19 of which participated in a three week immersion experience in Costa Rica. This experimental group consisted primarily

of female students ( $n = 16$ ), and most identified as Caucasian ( $n = 16$ ) with two Asian-American participants and one identifying as Latino/a. Most of these participants were master's level students ( $n = 16$ ) along with several doctoral students ( $n = 3$ ). The remainder of the sample served as a comparison group, taking typical programmatic coursework. This comparison group mostly identified as female ( $n = 14$ ; male,  $n = 4$ ) and primarily identified as Caucasian ( $n = 16$ ) with two participants also identifying as African American. Data collection took place two consecutive summers that the international immersion took place (Barden et al., 2015).

In preparation for the immersion experience, participants in the experimental group met regularly for a psychoeducational group to increase cultural awareness and knowledge of Costa Rica. During the cultural immersion (CI) experience, the students stayed with local host families. "Each student participated in a variety of activities during the CI including homestays, cultural immersion tours, educational presentations, service work, and reflective processing" (Barden et al., 2015, p. 126). Each day the students took part in a reflective group process and individual journaling as well.

The measure Barden et al. (2015) used for this study was the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI; Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003), measuring stages of intercultural development. The IDI is framed off of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. This model describes six stages that people progress through during their cultural development. The first three ethnocentric stages of denial, polarization, and minimization involve individuals relying on their own culture to form their reality, typically avoiding differing cultures. The following three stages are considered ethnorelative and include acceptance, adaptation, and integration. People in these higher stages are able to appreciate cultural differences and see their own culture relative to others. "The IDI is formatted to provide participants with (a) a perceived

orientation (PO) score (self-report of one's own capability in understanding and appropriately adapting to cultural differences), (b) a more objective developmental orientation (DO) score (indicative of a participant's actual orientation toward cultural differences), and (c) an in-depth textual profile of a respondents' predominant level of intercultural competence" (Barden et al., 2015, p. 128).

Barden et al. (2015) administered the IDI to each of the participants prior to and following the immersion experience. Prior to the immersion experience, the scores between the experimental and control groups were not significantly different. The post immersion scores did not demonstrate any statistically significant differences between the groups. In terms of changes in developmental stages, initial developmental stage did demonstrate an effect on self-perceived PO scores,  $F(2, 27) = 3.94, p = .03$  (Barden et al., 2015).

The Barden et al. study is one of only two quantitative studies for counseling students' experiences of cultural immersion that the present author is aware of. This study claimed to be the only quantitative study but did not cite the prior Fawcett et al. (2010) study that was also quantitative in nature. Even though Barden et al. (2015) produced few statistically significant results, it did inform the body of literature on cultural immersion. One of the major limitations with the Barden et al. study was the small sample size. The Barden et al. sample was also quite homogenous, consisting predominantly of a female, Caucasian sample coming entirely from one program. Self-selection bias of the participants choosing to join the international experience may have also affected the results. There were differences between the two different experimental groups the first year to the second. For example, the first year included several doctoral students, yet the second cohort only consisted of master's level students. The authors acknowledged that these differences could have had an influence on the results of the study (Barden et al., 2015).

The current study could address some of the limitations that Barden et al. (2015) encountered in their study. Utilizing a larger sample, as is intended in the present study, would improve the statistical power to demonstrate differences between groups. The predominantly White, female samples from Barden et al. (2015) and Fawcett et al., (2010) are fairly representative of the counselor population, but a more diverse sample may provide for better generalizability of the results also. The intended sample would involve a more immersive experience of living in a location as opposed to simply visiting for a few weeks. In addition to Barden et al. (2015), other authors have also stated the importance of immersion experiences being long enough in duration in order for participants to respond to the effects of culture shock (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010; Ishii et al., 2009).

A number of other studies have utilized the Intercultural Development Inventory in order to quantitatively demonstrate the effects of cultural immersion in the form of study abroad experiences (Engle & Engle, 2004; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Paige et al., 2004; Pederson, 2010). However, these studies did not utilize counseling student populations, so the findings may not be generalizable to the sample of interest for the current study. Engle and Engle (2004) studied American students on either a single semester or full academic year study abroad program in France. Both groups showed higher scores of cultural sensitivity from pretest to posttest, with the year-long participants showing the greatest average improvement. In a similar study, Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004) researched students ( $N = 28$ ) who participated in a cultural immersion experience, 18 students on a seven week program to Taxco and another 10 students to Mexico City for a sixteen week program. Both groups showed improvements in cultural sensitivity with the sixteen week program participants showing significantly greater increases in

IDI scores. These studies provide further evidence that duration of cultural immersion does have an impact on student outcomes.

Pederson (2010) studied undergraduate students on a one year study abroad program in England. The study compared a control group who did not study abroad, students participating only in the study abroad, and students doing the study abroad along with a Psychology of Group Dynamics class that focused on diversity training and intercultural effectiveness. Data analysis revealed that the group taking the psychology class was the only group to show statistically significant increases in intercultural development. This demonstrated that a study abroad alone may not be sufficient without additional intercultural education to supplement the learning process. Other authors (Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Canfield et al., 2009; Pope-Davis et al., 1997) have also suggested that aspects surrounding cultural immersion, such as group interaction, reflection, and journaling, were facilitative of the development that comes from participating in immersion.

Another study by Earnest et al. (2016) also researched study abroad for psychology students (N = 104) in particular. The study utilized a pretest and posttest design implementing the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI; Kelley & Meyers, 1995) for two groups of undergraduate psychology students, those who were participating in a study abroad and students studying domestically at the same time. The study abroad group was smaller (n = 25) than the domestic group with nearly all of the participants identifying as female, 90% of the study abroad and 87% of the domestic participants. The study abroad group involved orientation sessions prior to the two week experience in Argentina which involved group activities and visits to culturally significant sites. After the posttest, the study abroad group demonstrated higher scores for emotional resilience, perceptual acuity, and cultural adjustment over the students studying

domestically. Even though this study involved undergraduate students, these results may be more generalizable to counseling student populations because the sample from Earnest et al. (2016) was psychology students in particular.

To summarize, these quantitative studies of cultural immersion have begun to fill the present gap in the literature. A number of findings have supported the relationship between study abroad experiences and cultural development with undergraduate samples (Earnest et al., 2016; Engle & Engle, 2004; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Paige et al., 2004; Pederson, 2010), so more research is needed utilizing quantitative methodology to study cultural immersion for graduate level counseling students. Fawcett et al. (2010) conducted one quantitative study of counseling student cultural immersion that demonstrated statistically significant increases in MCC scores. Even though the other quantitative study of cultural immersion did not produce much significant results (Barden et al., 2015), the limitations of that study can be used to improve the present study, which adds quantitative results to the already well documented qualitative findings about cultural immersion and multicultural competence.

### **Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness**

As seen in chapter 1, a number of multicultural competence measures have been utilized within counseling research. This section highlights studies related to cultural immersion that have utilized the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, et al., 2002) that the present study also utilized to measure multicultural competence. The MCKAS has been utilized in a number of multicultural counseling studies. Constantine and Ladany (2000) found that MCKAS scores and subscales correlated positively to numerous other measures of multicultural competence. Several studies have demonstrated relationships between multicultural training and higher MCKAS scores (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine et al.,

2001; Constantine, Juby & Liang, 2001). MCKAS scores have been found to have a negative relationship to color-blind racial ideology (Neville et al., 2006) and ageist attitudes (McBride & Hays, 2012). Munley et al. (2004) found that identity development showed a positive relationship to multicultural knowledge and awareness using the MCKAS.

One study by Neville et al. (2006) focused on the relationship between multicultural competence and color-blind racial ideology, which they defined as “in general, it can be referred to as the denial, distortion, and/or minimization of race and racism” (p. 276). This study compared color-blind racial ideology to two different forms of multicultural competence, a self-report and an observed multicultural case conceptualization. Sample A consisted of mental health workers ( $n = 79$ ) who completed the MCKAS, and sample B consisted similarly of participants ( $n = 51$ ) who completed the observed multicultural case conceptualization as a comparison group. For sample A, this study found a negative relationship between color-blind racial ideology and both multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness. This negative correlation was also confirmed by sample B, relating participants’ rated scores on a vignette measuring multicultural case conceptualization ability as related to color-blind racial ideology.

In another related inquiry to counselor attitudes, McBride and Hays (2012) studied counselors’ attitudes towards geriatric populations. The large sample ( $N = 361$ ) included counseling students and master’s and doctoral level counselors in practice. The results indicated a negative relationship between MCKAS total scores and a measure of affective and cognitive scores of ageist attitudes.

The MCKAS has demonstrated comparable results to other measures of self-report multicultural competence. For example, Constantine and Ladany (2000) conducted a study comparing four different measures of multicultural competence and the effects of social

desirability on these measures. The sample ( $N = 135$ ) included 101 women and 34 men and consisted of 44 doctoral level practitioners, 47 master's level counselors, and another 44 students who were still enrolled in their graduate training. In addition to using the MCKAS, the other measures for this study included the Cross Cultural Counseling Inventory–Revised (CCCI-R; LaFromboise et al., 1991), Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey (MAKSS; D'Andrea et al., 1991), Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI; Sadowsky, et al., 1994), and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The study also included a researcher rated multicultural case conceptualization ability that participants completed of a counseling vignette.

Results from Constantine and Ladany (2000) demonstrated significant positive correlations ( $p < .01$ ) between nearly all of the measures' total scores and subscale scores. The total score and Knowledge subscale of the MCKAS demonstrated significant positive relationships to all of the other measures of multicultural competence, including subscales, with every correlation except one being below the .01 level. Even though most of the correlations including the MCKAS Awareness subscale produced significant positive results, several of the correlations were not significant.

In the Constantine and Ladany results, several significant positive correlations were found with social desirability scores including the CCCI-R total score ( $r = .18, p < .05$ ), the MAKSS Skill subscale ( $r = .20, p < .05$ ), and the MCI Relationship subscale ( $r = .30, p < .01$ ). The Awareness subscale of the MCKAS was the only correlation to report a negative relationship to social desirability scores ( $r = -.31, p < .01$ ). The authors reported the curious nature of this finding and offered a couple potential explanations including fatigue from the survey itself or that practitioners with greater multicultural awareness may not be concerned as



much with appearing socially desirable. Given that the MCKAS Knowledge subscale did not demonstrate any significant correlation to social desirability scores, the authors posited that the MCKAS may be the measure least influenced by social desirability. Another important aspect of the Constantine and Ladany (2000) study was that “controlling for social desirability, there was no significant relationship between each of the four self-report multicultural counseling competence instruments and multicultural case conceptualization ability” (p. 162). So even though these measures demonstrated strong relationships of measuring similar constructs, their relationship to the researcher rated scores of multicultural case conceptualization ability was not significant.

In a related inquiry, Constantine, Juby, and Liang (2001) studied the influence of multicultural counseling courses, social desirability, racism, and White racial identity attitudes as predictors of multicultural competence. The study utilized a sample of Marriage and Family Therapists (N = 113) who all identified as White. The sample was evenly distributed in terms of gender with 57 men and 56 women.

In this study, although social desirability did not display a significant relationship with MCKAS Knowledge scores, social desirability was found to have a negative association with the MCKAS Awareness subscale. The implications of this could be that therapists seeking greater social approval may have less multicultural awareness or avoid consultation when faced with multicultural issues in session. The negative association between MCKAS Awareness scores and social desirability was consistent with previous research though (Constantine & Ladany, 2000).

When Constantine, Juby and Liang controlled for social desirability, more multicultural classes taken did demonstrate a positive relationship to multicultural knowledge. Multicultural

courses taken did not demonstrate any significant association with MCKAS awareness scores however. This corresponded to similar findings (Constantine et al., 2001; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001) that multicultural courses tend to demonstrate stronger relationships with multicultural counseling knowledge than awareness scores. Additionally, “After accounting for social desirability attitudes and the number of previous multicultural counseling courses taken, we found that racism and White racial identity attitudes together contributed significant variance to MFTs’ self-reported multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness” (Constantine, Juby & Liang (2001, p. 359).

This study by Constantine, Juby, and Liang (2001) did add to the literature on the relationship of factors such as previous multicultural classes taken, social desirability, and White racial identity attitudes on multicultural knowledge and awareness. This study did use a sample consisting entirely of Marriage and Family Therapists who self-identified as White. Findings may not be generalizable to other populations as a result.

In another study on the effects of multicultural training, Chu-Lien Chao (2012) also used the MCKAS. The study utilized a large sample (N = 460) of national certified counselors (NCC). The sample was comprised of 72% women and 28% men. The racial/ethnic makeup of the sample was 59% White, 16% Latino(a), 15% Black, 8% Asian American, 2% multiracial, and 0.4% Native American. Measures included the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992), measuring racial/ethnic identity awareness and commitment, the Sex-Role Egalitarianism Scale (SRES; King & King, 1993) which assesses participants views of gender roles and gender equality, and the MCKAS for self-report multicultural competence. To measure for multicultural training, the author “asked for participants’ amount of multicultural

courses, multicultural research projects, and workshops in which they participated or completed in their graduate training” (p. 37).

Chu-Lien Chao reported strong correlations for multicultural training to both multicultural knowledge and awareness ( $p < .001$ ). Higher scores of attitudes towards gender equality positively correlated to multicultural knowledge ( $p < .01$ ) and awareness ( $p < .001$ ). The MEIM, measuring racial/ethnic identity awareness, also demonstrated a positive relationship to both multicultural knowledge ( $p < .001$ ) and awareness ( $p < .01$ ). These strengths of the correlations appeared for both the White as well as for the racial/ethnic minority participants.

Chu-Lien Chao also utilized regression analysis to measure effects of racial/ethnic identity, gender role attitudes, and multicultural training on scores of multicultural knowledge and awareness. Firstly, the analysis identified the interaction between racial/ethnic identity and multicultural training that affected multicultural knowledge scores. Secondly, the interaction between gender role attitudes and multicultural training also affected participants’ self-report multicultural knowledge. Neither of these analyses were shown to affect scores of multicultural awareness however.

In summary, the MCKAS has been utilized in a number of studies related to multicultural competence and has demonstrated strong positive relationships to other instruments for self-report multicultural competence (Constantine & Ladany, 2000). Particularly relevant to the present study, greater levels of multicultural training have correlated to higher MCKAS scores (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine, Juby & Liang, 2001). The next section will cover more studies utilizing the MCKAS and other multicultural competence measures related to universal diverse orientation.

### **Universal-Diverse Orientation**

This section covers studies that have utilized the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short (Fuertes et al., 2000), which the present study used to measure universal-diverse orientation. Three studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004; Tummala-Narra et al., 2012). This provides a suggested directionality to the findings of the present study. Additionally, Weatherford and Spokane (2013) found that multicultural exposure was correlated positively to multicultural case conceptualization ability (MCCA) and several subscales measuring universal-diverse orientation.

In the first study to compare MCKAS and M-GUDS-S scores, Constantine et al. (2001) studied school counselors' perceptions of multicultural competence. The study involved a sample of 100 school counselors. The sample included 91 participants who identified as White, 4 as Black American, and 3 as Asian American. Measures included the MCKAS (Ponterotto et al., 2002), the M-GUDS-S (Fuertes et al., 2000), and demographics questions that asked about participants' experiences, particularly how many academic courses they had taken pertaining to multicultural issues.

Correlational analysis conducted by Constantine et al. revealed statistically significant positive relationships between MCKAS and M-GUDS-S total scores ( $r = .44, p < .001$ ), and most of the subscales of each measure demonstrated positive correlations to each other as well. The number of multicultural classes taken only demonstrated small positive correlations to the MCKAS total score ( $r = .22, p < .05$ ) and the Knowledge subscale ( $r = .23, p < .05$ ). The authors also conducted regression analysis which discovered that "the number of multicultural counseling courses taken was significantly and positively predictive of school counselors' self-

reported multicultural counseling knowledge” (p. 16). Previous multicultural classes taken did not significantly predict scores on the Awareness subscale though.

This study established the positive relationship between multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation. The number of multicultural courses taken did demonstrate a relationship and predictive value to multicultural counseling knowledge but not to scores for multicultural awareness. The authors postulated that this finding was a result of the manner in which academic courses tend to focus more on increasing knowledge about multicultural issues than expanding students’ awareness of Eurocentric bias. This finding is similar to results from Diaz-Lazaro and Cohen (2001) who studied pretest and posttest differences from taking a multicultural class and showed improvements in multicultural knowledge and skills but no statistically significant differences for awareness scores. Constantine, Juby, and Liang (2001) similarly found a relationship between multicultural courses taken and MCKAS Knowledge but not Awareness.

One main limitation to the generalizability of the study by Constantine et al. (2001) is the demographic makeup of the sample since 91% of the participants identified as White. The authors acknowledged this limitation and called for future research with more diverse samples. The results of this study may not be generalizable to counselors in settings other than schools either. The present study could include a more diverse sample but likely will not be comprised entirely of school counselors.

In another quantitative study, Munley et al. (2004) researched the relationships between identity development, universal-diverse orientation, and multicultural counseling competence. The study involved a sample of graduate students (N = 165) who were enrolled in counselor education or counseling psychology degrees. The sample came from a single Midwestern

university, and most of the participants identified as female (80.6%). Participants identified predominantly as White (80.6%) with 8.5% of the sample identifying as African American, 2.4% Asian or Pacific Islander, 6.1% multiracial, and only one participant identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native and one as Hispanic.

In the Munley et al. study, counselor identity development was measured by the Self-Identity Inventory (SII; Sevig, Highlen, & Adams, 2000), which was framed from the Optimal Theory Applied to Identity Development (OTAID) model (Myers et al., 1991). The OTAID involves six phases (Individuation, Dissonance, Immersion, Internalization, Integration, and Transformation) of identity development. The UDO component of the study was measured by the M-GUDS-S (Fuertes et al., 2000), and MCC was measured by the MCKAS (Ponterotto et al., 2002). Social desirability was also assessed for by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale-Short (MCSDS-S; Ballard, 1992).

Munley et al. first used correlational findings to establish relationships between variables. The earlier stages of identity development showed significant negative correlations to MCKAS scores. The first stage of Individuation was inversely related to Multicultural Counseling Knowledge ( $r = -.28, p < .001$ ) and Multicultural Counseling Awareness ( $r = -.57, p < .001$ ). The second developmental stage of Dissonance similarly related inversely but only to Multicultural Counseling Awareness ( $r = -.21, p < .01$ ). The more advanced stages of identity development were also associated with higher MCKAS scores. The fifth stage of Integration was positively associated with Multicultural Counseling Knowledge ( $r = .39, p < .001$ ) and Awareness ( $r = .26, p < .001$ ), and the final stage of Transformation showed a positive association only to MCKAS Knowledge ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ). Similarly, universal-diverse orientation scores positively associated with both Multicultural Counseling Knowledge ( $r = .33, p < .001$ ) and Awareness ( $r =$

.29,  $p < .001$ ). The researchers next used hierarchical multiple regression to further analyze the data. “After controlling for personal identity information, multicultural classes and workshop/training sessions and social desirability, identity development within the OTAID framework and universal-diverse orientation accounted for additional significant variance in MCKAS Knowledge and MCKAS Awareness” (p. 290).

The Munley et al. study provided evidence that identity development does account for part of multicultural competence. Some of the limitations that these authors acknowledged were a lack of random selection, a fairly homogenous sample, and small magnitude and effect sizes for the data analysis. This study did provide a framework for the present study by showing how identity development accounts for multicultural competence. Addressing some of those limitations, such as by adding a more diverse sample, could improve the findings. The Munley et al. results also did not create a distinction of how much identity development was related to the counselors’ training program versus external experiences. This could be a factor that is explored in the current study. Since the present study is also utilizing both the MCKAS and M-GUDS-S, a positive association between multicultural awareness and knowledge and universal-diverse orientation could be anticipated based on these previous findings (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004).

A similar study by Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) also examined the relationship between UDO and multicultural competence. The study utilized a large sample ( $N = 196$ ) of licensed mental health professionals with a range of experience from 1 year up to 52 years. Most of the participants (77%) reported having a Ph.D. in either clinical psychology or counseling psychology. “A majority of the participants were female (75%) and White (64.3%). Participants

also identified as African American (8.7%), Latino (10.7%), Asian (4.1%), Asian Indian (2.6%), Jewish (4.6%), Middle Eastern (1.0%), and biracial (4.1%)” (p. 167).

Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) utilized the M-GUDS-S (Fuertes et al., 2000), the California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale (CBMCS; Gamst et al., 2004), and a scale created for the study entitled the Clinicians’ Multicultural Practices in Psychotherapy Scale (CMPPS), which measured “self-perceived implementation of multicultural practices in psychotherapy with a specific ethnic minority client” (p. 168). Additionally, this study inquired about clinicians’ access to institutional resources that supported their multicultural competence to work with ethnic minority clients. This included information about coursework and supervision of one’s graduate program, multicultural workshops following graduate studies, and how helpful the participants found these workshops to be.

Regression analysis was utilized to determine relationships among the measures used in the study. The results indicated a positive association between UDO scores and both of the multicultural competence measures. Similarly, access to institutional resources was also associated positively with both of the multicultural competence scales. In terms of coursework and multicultural workshops, only participants’ level to which they found multicultural workshops helpful showed a positive relationship with both measures of multicultural competence. Neither of the multicultural competence scales however showed a statistically significant relationship to multicultural coursework, supervision, or post degree multicultural workshops.

The authors of this study acknowledged some of the limitations within this research. One of which was a selection bias of clinicians with interests in multicultural competence possibly being more likely to participate in the study. The authors also acknowledged that two of the



measures utilized, the checklist of institutional resources and the Clinicians' Multicultural Practices in Psychotherapy Scale, were created for the purpose of this study and would require more study to confirm reliability and validity of these scales. The current study could improve upon these limitations by utilizing measures with more supporting evidence of reliability and validity. Both the MCKAS and the M-GUDS-S have been used in numerous studies with greater supporting evidence of reliability and validity.

The Tummala-Narra et al. study is one of the few covered in this literature review that studied clinicians already in practice as opposed to a counseling student population. Several studies have provided evidence that universal-diverse orientation showed a positive relationship with measures of self-report multicultural competence, with Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) utilizing different measures of multicultural competence than Constantine et al. (2001) and Munley et al. (2004) who utilized the MCKAS. This demonstrates greater generalizability for the relationship between these constructs for counseling students as well as clinicians and provides a suggested directionality for the current study examining UDO and multicultural competence.

The Tummala-Narra mixed findings about multicultural workshops did not seem to confirm previous research linking multicultural training to cultural competence (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sadowsky et al., 1998). Even though the study showed that participants' satisfaction with workshops was associated with multicultural competence, greater graduate training, supervision, or post degree workshop attendance were not linked to multicultural competence. It is possible that this could be due to a clinician sample instead of a student sample or possibly the use of measures that had not previously been tested.

Another study conducted by Weatherford and Spokane (2013) researched personality dispositions, universal-diverse orientation, and multicultural exposure as related to multicultural case conceptualization ability (MCCA). The sample consisted of counselors in training (N = 201), who mostly identified as women (79%). The sample was mostly Caucasian (83%), followed African American participants (5.5%), Latino/a (4%), Asian American (2.5%), Multiracial (2%), Other (2%), and Native American (1.5%). The largest portion of the sample were attending Clinical Psychology programs (47%), followed by Counseling Psychology (26%), Community Counseling (9%), Marriage and Family Therapy (6.5%), Counselor Education (5.5%), School Counseling (5%), and Other (1%).

The participants completed, among other measures, the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992) to measure personality dispositions and the M-GUDS-S (Fuertes et al., 2000) to measure UDO. Multicultural case conceptualization ability was measured by a vignette developed based on previous literature. Having a rated score that was not self-report, as is used in many other studies of MCC, was designed to better assess participants' MCC and cognitive complexity. In order to measure for multicultural exposure, the researchers used the amount of multicultural courses and workshops participants had taken as well as the number of counseling hours with clients from different cultures.

Weatherford and Spokane utilized a Structural Equation Model to analyze their results. After model modification, data revealed a significant positive association between the personality disposition of Openness-to-experience to MCCA. Multicultural exposure also showed a significant positive relationship to MCCA. More specifically, multicultural coursework demonstrated a significant positive correlation to both multicultural case conceptualization etiology ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ) and treatment abilities ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ). Experience

with multicultural workshops showed a significant positive relationship only to MCCA etiology ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ). Multicultural counseling experience demonstrated a significant positive association only to MCCA treatment ability ( $r = .16, p < .05$ ). These relationships among multicultural exposure and MCCA also confirmed previous research.

With regards to universal-diverse orientation, Weatherford and Spokane (2013) did demonstrate some significant positive relationships of UDO to multicultural exposure and to MCCA. Although a number of these correlations were not statistically significant, about half of the correlations between UDO subscale scores to various aspects of multicultural exposure and MCCA did produce significant results. Specifically, the M-GUDS-S subscale of Diversity of Contact correlated positively to multicultural courses taken ( $r = .17, p < .05$ ), multicultural workshops ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ), and MCCA etiology ( $r = .17, p < .05$ ). The UDO subscale measuring Relativistic Appreciation similarly demonstrated a positive relationship to multicultural courses taken ( $r = .17, p < .05$ ), multicultural workshops ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ), and MCCA etiology ( $r = .23, p < .01$ ). And thirdly, the subscale for Comfort with Differences correlated positively to multicultural workshops ( $r = .14, p < .05$ ) and work with clients ( $r = .14, p < .05$ ) but did not demonstrate any significant relationship to either MCCA etiology or treatment ability.

In addition to these variables, several of the personality dispositions also demonstrated significant positive relationships to M-GUDS-S subscales. Most notably, Openness-to-experience correlated positively to all three subscales of Diversity of Contact ( $r = .46, p < .01$ ), Relativistic Appreciation ( $r = .28, p < .01$ ), and Comfort with Differences ( $r = .25, p < .01$ ). This demonstrates the link between being open to experience and the appreciation and comfort that come from contact with diverse individuals, as is measured by the M-GUDS-S.

This study presents a different view of MCC than many other studies that utilize self-report multicultural competence. By having participant scores rated by the researchers, this provides an external perspective of participants' abilities. Confirming much of the previous research on multicultural exposure having a relationship to MCC is important as well. This study also reported several significant findings of UDO subscales to each multicultural exposure and MCCA. Although only about half of these subscale correlations produced statistically significant results, the findings did confirm previous results of the positive relationships between UDO and MCC (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004; Tummala-Narra, 2012). Even though these relationships did not appear to be as strongly indicated by the Weatherford and Spokane results as in previous studies, it is possible that utilizing different measures of either multicultural counseling competence or multicultural case conceptualization ability could account for some differences in findings. The Weatherford and Spokane study utilized a researcher rated measure of MCCA while the other two studies were self-rated multicultural competence. The samples used for each of these studies also varied, with the Weatherford and Spokane having Clinical Psychology students as the largest portion of the sample (47%) while Munley et al. only sampled from Counseling Psychology and counseling programs. Constantine et al. (2001) focused on a school counselor sample, and Tummala-Narra (2012) utilized a sample of clinicians.

Another aspect from the Weatherford and Spokane study that could be related to the present study is that the personality disposition of Openness-to-experience showed a positive relationship to MCCA and UDO scores. These authors referenced several other studies that also had demonstrated similar findings, including the findings of Thompson et al. (2002) that showed

a positive relationship between Openness-to-experience and UDO. This could provide a further link to those who seek out multicultural experiences having more MCC.

An area that was still lacking in the Weatherford and Spokane study was the connection between counselors' personal multicultural experiences and cultural competence. This study did examine what the authors referred to as multicultural exposure, yet their definition of this construct was still limited to coursework, workshops, and counseling experience. These are aspects of a counselor's training as is, possibly with the exception of workshops. Another limit to generalizability towards counseling programs is that 73% of the participants came from either Clinical Psychology or Counseling Psychology programs. One of the limitations that Weatherford and Spokane acknowledge about their study was that the measurement of MCCA was done with a hypothetical vignette. This may not provide a complete depiction of a counselor's actual MCC experience.

To review, this section about universal-diverse orientation demonstrated the applicability of the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short (Fuertes et al., 2000) to measure participants' attitudes and behaviors related to interactions with diversity. Several studies have indicated positive correlations between M-GUDS-S scores and measures of self-report multicultural counseling competence (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004; Tummala-Narra et al., 2012). A study by Weatherford and Spokane (2013) demonstrated significant positive findings between the etiology factor of multicultural case conceptualization ability (MCCA) and two subscales of the M-GUDS-S (Diversity of Contact and Relativistic Appreciation). The study also indicated a positive relationship between multicultural exposure and MCCA (Weatherford & Spokane, 2013).

## Chapter Two Summary

With the importance of counselor development to the counselor education field, focus on development of multicultural counseling competency is a particularly relevant pursuit in the present globalized world. Many of these studies presented in this manuscript provide important information about counselor development of multicultural competence through educational opportunities and counseling experience. Studies have been able to show how counselor development takes place (Coleman, 2006; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Wagner & Hill, 2015). Graduate coursework, workshops, field experience, and more exposure to multicultural content tend to be associated with greater levels of MCC (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sadowsky et al., 1998; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013).

Despite all the evidence of multicultural development within the context of graduate training, much less research has explored how personal encounters with cultural diversity, taking place outside of the typical graduate coursework, relate to counselor development. The studies presented in Chapter 2 provide a framework for the present study, yet none of which measure the exact construct of interest. There is some evidence that events occurring external to students' counseling programs can facilitate student development (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). A number of studies have also shown that cultural immersion experiences are linked to cultural awareness (e.g., Alexander et al., 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Choi et al., 2015; Cunningham et al., 2011; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005). Additionally, identity development has been linked with increased multicultural knowledge and awareness (Munley et al., 2004), and more multicultural exposure has shown a significant association to more multicultural case conceptualization ability (Weatherford &

Spokane, 2013). These studies do demonstrate how multicultural encounters that take place outside of the typical graduate education can impact counselor development, yet the cultural immersion studies are nearly all qualitative in nature.

One major gap in the literature on cultural immersion is the limited quantitative findings available. In one of the two quantitative studies of counseling student cultural immersion, Fawcett et al. (2010) did produce multiple statistically significant differences in MCC scores following a cultural immersion experience, but the small sample size those researchers encountered could be a limiting factor to the study's generalizability. The other quantitative study of cultural immersion for counseling students produced few significant results (Barden et al., 2015), so more quantitative data is needed to understand how this construct relates to measures that are currently available. The present research could improve upon some of the limitations of those studies. By increasing the sample size, the present study could have better generalizability than the small, homogeneous samples used in these previous quantitative studies of cultural immersion (Barden et al., 2015; Fawcett et al., 2010).

Another considerable gap in the cultural immersion literature is that nearly all of the studies have researched short-term immersion experiences abroad. Only a study by DeRicco and Sciarra (2005) documented the participant's cultural immersion experience of living in a culturally distinct location. The present study is designed to not only add to the evidence pertaining to students' extracurricular experiences, but also the more intensive experience of living in a culturally distinct location as opposed to simply traveling to one short term.

Based on previous research, it is possible that greater multicultural exposure that occurs outside of the framework of counselor coursework could have a significant impact on counselor development of multicultural competence, but more research is still needed to fill this gap in the

literature. The present study would continue to fill this gap in the literature by quantitatively exploring differences in multicultural competence for students engaging in cultural immersion experiences, which could greatly expand this line of inquiry. The present study would ask participants about their geographic cultural immersion experiences and explore differences in multicultural competence by utilizing the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (Ponterotto et al., 2002) and universal-diverse orientation via the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short (Fuertes et al., 2000). Finding a relationship between multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation could confirm previous findings of the positive association between these variables too (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004; Tummala-Narra et al., 2012). The present study was also designed to further examine differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation based on the amount of multicultural training participants had undertaken. Lastly, the present study was designed to also examine the predictive value of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of graduate training on multicultural competence.

Establishing relationships with these quantitative measures for those who participate in cultural immersion experiences could expand this line of research. Correlational data and regression analysis could demonstrate relationships between UDO and multicultural competence, as well as establish some predictive value of UDO and cultural immersion. Later research could expand this line of inquiry to be more experimental, potentially utilizing more pretest and posttest measures as a result of cultural immersion. This would show resulting differences from immersion experiences to expand upon the recommendation from Pope-Davis et al. (1997) to utilize pretest and posttest measures in conjunction with cultural immersion experiences.



Implications of the findings from the current study could greatly inform how counselor educators encourage students to seek out culturally diverse experiences outside of their class time. This could better fulfill recommendations from previous researchers that counselors should engage with culturally diverse others in their personal lives to improve multicultural competence (Coleman, 2006; Sue et al., 1992). Much research has gone into how to structure multicultural coursework within counseling programs. Better understanding of extracurricular cultural factors could allow educators to facilitate cultural growth for counselors during the times they are outside of the context of their graduate training.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the research design and methods selected for the present study. The first section covers the research design and research questions. The following sections cover sampling, survey instruments used, and the procedure for implementing the study. Lastly, this section presents the compiling, cleaning, and recoding of the data as well as the specific data analysis utilized to answer each research question.

#### **Research Design**

The purpose of this study was to determine if there are differences in multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training experiencing cultural immersion. Prior research has suggested that factors outside of the traditional classroom are associated with counseling student development (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003), and a large number of studies have qualitatively linked cultural immersion experiences to increased cultural awareness (e.g., Alexander et al., 2005; Barden & Cashwell, 2013; Choi et al., 2015; Cunningham et al., 2011; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005), seen within Table 1 in Chapter 2. Few quantitative studies of cultural immersion have been conducted. Barden et al. (2015) did conduct a quasi-experimental study of cultural immersion but produced few statistically significant results. Findings by Fawcett et al. (2010) did produce statistically significant increases in multicultural competence following an immersion experience, so the current study could further explore counseling student cultural immersion.

This study was designed to investigate differences in each multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training who have engaged in a

cultural immersion experience. In particular, this study focused on cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation. The study compared clinicians in training who resided in the location of their graduate training program to students who relocated to geographically and culturally distinct locations for their graduate training.

Data for this study came from a sample of participants who were presently enrolled or had graduated from counseling or counseling related training programs. Sampling consisted of students who are studying or had graduated from training programs in the geographically remote areas of Alaska, Guam, or Hawaii to indicate relocation and immersion in a culture different from their own. Sampling in such geographically and culturally distinct regions could result in a very unique sample, different from what may be seen in any other location of the country. It is possible that people living in these regions may be exposed to more diverse experiences than other locations. This immersion experience was measured by the demographics and background questionnaire. The Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, et al., 2002) was the instrument used to measure multicultural competence, and universal-diverse orientation was measured by the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short (Fuertes et al., 2000).

This study was designed to address the following research questions:

### **Research Question One**

- RQ1a) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ1b) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?

- RQ1c) Are there differences in multicultural awareness for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?

### **Research Question Two**

- RQ2a) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2b) Are there differences in diversity of contact for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2c) Are there differences in relativistic appreciation for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2d) Are there differences in comfort with differences for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?

### **Research Question Three**

- RQ3) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?

### **Research Question Four**

- RQ4) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?

### **Research Question Five**

- RQ5a) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores?
  - RQ5b) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge?

- RQ5c) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural awareness?

To answer the first two research questions, including sub-questions for each, this study examined differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation between those who experienced cultural immersion during their graduate training, by means of geographic relocation, and participants who did not relocate. A comparison of means was used to determine if there were any statistically significant differences between these two groups, with regards to multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation. Research questions three and four intended to explore differences in participants' amount of multicultural training received that may be related to potential findings from the main two research questions. These questions were designed to similarly search for differences in multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation based on the amount of multicultural training participants had taken. The fifth research question explored the predictive value of several variables as related to the dependent variable of multicultural competence. Utilizing regression analysis to answer this question should allow for a greater explanation of any findings from the other data analysis by adding a predictive value to the relationships between these variables.

### **Sample**

Sampling protocol for this study took place on three levels: regional, institutional, and at the participant level. First, since sampling took place in geographically distinct regions, the researcher began by narrowing the sampling search to Alaska, Guam, and Hawaii. Second, at the institutional level, only accredited universities with graduate training programs in mental

health related fields would be selected. The researcher utilized an internet search to identify these programs, starting with directories from accreditation websites including the American Psychological Association (APA), Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP), Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC). Any programs that were offered online without a requirement of living in the program's location were removed from the sample since participants may not live in that location.

Finally, to be included in this study, participants had to meet two criteria related to their graduate training. First, the sample for this study would include students working towards a graduate degree in a helping profession (e.g., Counseling, Counseling Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Social Work) or those who have graduated from such programs. Selection of this type of sample would focus on the developmental process that takes place from the lay helper to advanced student phases (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Second, participants must be currently enrolled or have completed their graduate training in a geographically remote location (e.g., Alaska, Guam, or Hawaii) as this would provide a means of measuring cultural immersion.

Stakeholders at universities in these states or territory were asked to provide the survey to current students and/or program alumni via an online survey or an in person, mailed survey packet. The stakeholders can thus certify that the participants in the study met the stated criteria. The research could then examine how time lived in the location of the graduate training prior to starting that training may indicate differences multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation. The counselors who had relocated from other places indicated a cultural immersion experience.

## **Instruments**

The instrumentation for this study included three parts, a questionnaire of participant demographics and background information that was created by the researcher, a measure for multicultural competence created by Ponterotto et al. (2002), and a scale for universal-diverse orientation produced by Fuertes et al. (2000). This section describes each instrument in detail including history of use and psychometric properties.

### **Demographics and Background Questionnaire**

This study utilized researcher-created demographic and background questions in the survey (Appendix C) to determine whether participants had lived in their location of study prior to starting graduate coursework. Questions also focus on the type of graduate training each participant received, how far along each participant is in their program, or how many years post-graduation the participant was. Information from the Demographics and Background Questionnaire could be used for all of the research questions exploring various variables and both multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation. Demographic questions (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, etc.) were used to determine the diversity of the sample, and information about participants' type and level of training would be important for the study's generalizability.

### **Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness**

The Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, et al., 2002) is designed to measure self-report multicultural knowledge and awareness pertaining to participants' work counseling clients. The MCKAS was developed as a revision based on critiques made to the earlier Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCAS; Ponterotto, Sanchez, & Magids, 1991). The MCKAS is a 32 item scale with two subscales, 20 items for

Knowledge (MCKAS-K) and 12 items for Awareness (MCKAS-A). An example of a Knowledge subscale question would be, “I am aware of individual differences that exist among members within a particular ethnic group based on values, beliefs, and level of acculturation.” An example of a question on the Awareness subscale would be, “I believe that it is important to emphasize objective and rational thinking in minority clients.” Of the 32 questions, 10 are reverse scored, including the Awareness example above. Table 2 provides a list of which scale items belong to each subscale and which items are reverse scored.

Subscales	Scale Items
Knowledge Subscale	2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 31, 32
Awareness Subscale	1*, 4*, 7*, 10*, 11*, 18*, 20*, 24*, 25*, 26, 29, 30*
* Denotes reverse scored item	

The items of the MCKAS are rated on a 7 point Likert scale from 1 (*not at all true*) up to 7 (*totally true*) with a midpoint anchor of 4 (*somewhat true*). The total score for the measure ranges from 32 up to 224. Knowledge subscale scores range between 20 and 140, and the Awareness subscale scores range from 12 up to 84. The scores for the MCKAS can be totaled or averaged for reporting outcomes, with higher scores indicating greater knowledge or awareness of the participant. In the initial development study of the MCKAS, the mean score for each item of the Knowledge subscale was 4.96 and a 5.06 mean for the Awareness subscale. The creators of the MCKAS did not specify cutoff scores that may signify low, moderate, or high scores for each subscale. Most of the analysis in the current study used total scores as well as each subscale score as dependent variables in order to fully examine each factor of the instrument. Conducting analysis with subscale scores also provides a more comprehensive view of both since the Knowledge subscale includes more items and carries more weight in MCKAS total scores.



One factor to take note of when describing the MCKAS is that multiple studies that state utilization of this instrument (Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine, Juby & Liang, 2001; Constantine & Ladany, 2000) were published prior to Ponterotto et al. (2002), the MCKAS creation study. The three previous studies mentioning use of the MCKAS reference unpublished manuscripts (Ponterotto, Gretchen, Utsey, Rieger & Austin, 2000; Ponterotto, Rieger, Gretchen, Utsey & Austin, 1999) concerning suggested revisions to the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCAS; Ponterotto, Sanchez, & Magids, 1991), which was adapted to become the MCKAS. Each of the three previous studies do specify using the MCKAS in particular, yet this may be a potentially confounding variable for some of these reported psychometrics. It is possible that the MCKAS revisions were made through the mentioned unpublished manuscripts, and publishing the MCKAS creation may have just taken longer.

### **Universal-Diverse Orientation**

Miville et al. (1999) created the 45 question Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS) to measure the construct of universal-diverse orientation, “that reflects an attitude of awareness and acceptance of both the similarities and differences among people” (p. 291). The development of this scale involved a series of four studies measuring for reliability and validity. Fuertes, et al. (2000) later conducted a series of three studies to create a short form (15 item) of the M-GUDS (M-GUDS-S) that would be utilized for the present study. The M-GUDS-S demonstrated a strong, positive correlation to the original full length instrument ( $r = .77, p < .001$ ).

The M-GUDS-S consists of three subscales comprised of five questions each: Diversity of Contact, Relativistic Appreciation, and Comfort with Differences. A Diversity of Contact example is, “I am interested in learning about the many cultures that have existed in this world.”

A Relativistic Appreciation example item is, “In getting to know someone, I like knowing both how he/she differs from me and is similar to me.” One example from the Comfort with Differences subscale would be, “Getting to know someone of another race is generally an uncomfortable experience for me.” Five items of the total scale are reverse scored, including this example from the Comfort with Differences subscale. Table 3 provides a list of which M-GUDS-S items belong to each subscale and which statements are reverse scored.

Subscales	Scale Items
Diversity of Contact Subscale	1, 4, 7, 10, 13
Relativistic Appreciation Subscale	2, 5, 8, 11, 14
Comfort with Differences Subscale	3*, 6*, 9*, 12*, 15*
* Denotes reverse scored item	

The items of the M-GUDS-S are based on a 6 point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*). The total score for the scale ranges between 15 and 90. Scores for each subscale can range from 5 up to a score of 30. Higher scores on this measure are indicative of an attitude of recognition and acceptance for the similarities and differences that can concurrently be found among people. The creators of the M-GUDS-S did not specify any segments to the scoring that would indicate low, moderate, or high scores for each subscale.

### **Reliability and Validity**

The MCKAS has demonstrated acceptable internal reliability with .85 for each subscale in the initial study (Ponterotto, et al., 2002). Other studies have reported internal reliability for the total measure to be between .85 and .91, MCKAS-K coefficient alphas between .85 and .93, and a range of .75 to .86 for MCKAS-A coefficient alpha scores (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Constantine & Ladany, 2000; Kim et al., 2003; Neville et al., 2006).

Validity has been displayed in the instrument's positive correlations to other measures of multicultural competence. This included in the initial Ponterotto et al. (2002) study positive correlations ( $p < .01$ ) between the MCKAS-K subscale and the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI; Sadowsky, et al., 1994) subscales for Skill, Awareness, and Knowledge as well as between MCKAS-A and the Counseling Relationship subscale of the MCI. Constantine and Ladany (2000) reported significant positive correlations between the MCKAS and the Cross Cultural Counseling Inventory–Revised (CCCI-R; LaFromboise et al., 1991), Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey (MAKSS; D'Andrea et al., 1991), and Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI; Sadowsky, et al., 1994). Of these results, total MCKAS scores and MCKAS-K scores positively correlated to all other total and subscale scores of the other measures of multicultural competence. Although MCKAS-A scores were not all statistically significant, the subscale did demonstrate significant positive relationships to most of the other measures.

Other findings by Chu-Lien Chao (2012) reported a positive correlation between scores of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992) to both MCKAS-K ( $p < .001$ ) and MCKAS-A ( $p < .01$ ) scores. Kim et al. (2003) found strong positive correlations ( $p < .001$ ) between the MCKAS-K and the total score and subscale scores (Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills) of the Multicultural Awareness Knowledge Skills Survey–Counselor Edition–Revised. Kim et al. found positive associations between MCKAS-A scores and only the total score and Awareness subscale of the MAKSS-CE-R, no significant correlation to the Knowledge or Skills subscales.

With regards to the M-GUDS-S instrument, each of the three subscales as well as the total score demonstrated mostly acceptable internal reliability in the initial study of the scale

(Fuertes et al., 2000). The M-GUDS-S total coefficient alpha was .77 with an alpha of .82 for Diversity of Contact, .59 for Relativistic Appreciation, and .92 for Comfort with Differences. Other studies have reported coefficient alphas ranging from .73 to .81 for the M-GUDS-S total score, .74 to .80 for Diversity of Contact, .59 to .70 for Relativistic Appreciation, and .59 to .79 for the Comfort with Differences subscale (Constantine et al., 2001; Sawyerr, Straus, & Yan, 2005; Strauss & Connerley, 2003; Thompson et al., 2002; Tummala-Narra et al., 2012; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013). The low reliability scores for the Relativistic Appreciation subscale do call to question some of the internal consistency of that subscale (Helms, Henze, Sass, & Mifsud, 2006).

The M-GUDS-S has exhibited a positive correlation to measures of self-report multicultural competence. Munley et al. (2004) found positive correlations for M-GUDS-S total scores with both the Knowledge ( $r = .33, p < .001$ ) and Awareness ( $r = .29, p < .001$ ) subscales of the MCKAS. Constantine et al. (2001) also found a positive correlation between MCKAS and M-GUDS-S total scores ( $r = .44, p < .001$ ), between the M-GUDS-S and both the MCKAS Knowledge ( $r = .44, p < .001$ ) and Awareness ( $r = .20, p < .05$ ) subscales, and positive correlations between most of the other subscales of each instrument. Similarly, Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) found a positive association between the M-GUDS-S and scores on the California Brief Multicultural Counseling Scale ( $B = 0.44, \text{standard error} = 0.06, p < .001$ ). Each of these findings demonstrates that scores for multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation tend to be similar yet still remain distinctly different constructs.

### **Variable Selection**

The researcher chose to utilize the MCKAS and the M-GUDS-S because of the relevance and relationships among the constructs of multicultural counseling competence, universal-

diverse orientation, and cultural immersion. In terms of multicultural competence, the subscales of the MCKAS (Knowledge and Awareness) were most appropriate to the selected participants' developmental level from the lay helper to advanced student phases (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Although most other measures for multicultural competence include a Skills subscale, such a subscale may not be as applicable to students still developing their skillset.

The use of the M-GUDS-S to measure universal-diverse orientation was chosen to capture participants' attitudes towards diversity. Although UDO scores often are similar to scores for multicultural competence, the M-GUDS-S focuses more on how participants interact with diversity which is particularly relevant to culturally immersive experiences. Lastly, since no instrument has previously been developed to measure cultural immersion experience, the researcher chose to ask about participants who relocated to a different culture in order to measure this experience. The researcher also created questions designed to gain more information about participants' educational experiences for use in the research questions.

### **Procedure**

Following approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this study, the researcher utilized an internet search for counseling related graduate training programs (e.g., Counseling, Counseling Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Social Work) in Alaska, Guam, or Hawaii that offer on location training programs. Identifying universities in these remote locations allows the sample to meet this study's definition of cultural immersion by means of geographic relocation. An invitation to participate (Appendix A) was sent via email or phone call to stakeholders at universities that offer mental health training programs in these geographically remote regions.

The survey included the demographics and background questions, the MCKAS, and the M-GUDS-S. Sampling for this study took place in two phases. The first phase involved utilization of an online version of the survey, and the second phase consisted of survey packets sent through the mail to stakeholders at selected universities. Comparisons would later be made to determine if there were any statistically significant differences between the scores of participants who completed the electronic or physical survey. Within the recruitment invitation to participate, the stakeholders were given instructions to the survey (Appendix A). The online version of the survey included a link to the survey that stakeholders could distribute to current students or alumni of their programs. For those who distributed the survey packets that came in the mail, stakeholders were given instructions to provide the survey in a location that was convenient to them. Each mailed survey included an attached, pre-stamped envelope so that each participant could individually return the survey. Distribution of physical packets would also be counted to calculate a response rate, but a response rate for the online surveys would not be possible to calculate. After participants read the informed consent, they were allowed to fill out the survey anonymously. Through either method of data collection, the researcher had no contact with the participants, ensuring participant confidentiality. Finally, the researcher compiled both the online and physical packets of the survey for data analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis for this study involved three steps: cleaning, recoding, and analyzing the data. This section outlines each of these stages as well as detailed analysis for each of the research questions.

### **Cleaning Data**

For the first step, the researcher scored each of the surveys and compiled the data into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This included scores for each item on the MCKAS and M-GUDS-S as well as each of the numerical and categorical questions from the Demographics and Background Questionnaire. Cleaning the data involved removing any surveys in which the participants may have left most of the survey incomplete. For single survey items that may be left blank, the researcher planned to employ mean imputation to compensate for the missing data.

### **Recoding Data**

The second stage involved recoding all of the reverse ordered questions within the MCKAS and the M-GUDS-S. These reverse coded items can be seen above in Table 2 (MCKAS) and Table 3 (M-GUDS-S). Once the proper items had been recoded, the researcher then computed total scores and subscale scores for each of the measures. The researcher also numerically recoded categorical variables from the Demographics and Background Questionnaire that are needed for data analysis (e.g., type or level of graduate training program). This allowed for these variables to be entered into data analysis.

### **Analyzing the Data**

Thirdly, data analysis was conducted utilizing SPSS. The researcher first calculated response rates for the surveys that were distributed in person. Descriptive statistics, means, standard deviations, and correlations were completed in order to determine the demographic makeup for the sample, distribution of scores, and relationships between the study's variables. The researcher utilized a Pearson's  $r$  correlation to create a correlation matrix of the continuous variables in the study (MCKAS total and subscale scores, M-GUDS-S total and subscale scores,

years of graduate training completed, number of multicultural classes, and hours of multicultural workshops) to determine relationships between variables. Use of a Pearson's  $r$  correlation is appropriate for determining the strength of relationship between two continuous variables (Howell, 2011). Previous research has demonstrated a positive association between scores of multicultural competence and universal-diverse orientation (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004; Tummala-Narra, 2012). Internal reliability by use of a Chronbach's alpha was also conducted for both the MCKAS and the M-GUDS-S to check that the measures produced adequate consistency of scores.

To determine the reliability and validity of the survey instrumentation, comparisons were also made to check on potential differences between location of survey administration (Alaska, Guam, or Hawaii) and type of survey administered (electronic or physical packet). The location of survey administration was analyzed by use of a one-way analysis of Variance (ANOVA), to measure for differences in three or more categories of scores. If any statistically significant results are found, follow-up multiple comparison analysis, by use of a post hoc Tukey HSD test, would describe which variables were significantly different. The type of survey administration was analyzed with an independent samples  $t$ -test to determine if any statistically significant differences exist between two groups (Howell, 2011). If any of these variables did result in significant differences, it is possible that these findings may be a confounding variable to the main effect being studied.

In order to explore cultural immersion and answer research questions one and two, the Demographics and Background Questionnaire (Appendix C) inquires about participants' cultural immersion experiences. The first two questions ask participants to identify the locations they have resided in and where they consider their primary residence. The third question asks about



how long participants lived in the state of their graduate training prior to beginning their program, with several choices for duration of residence and an option to select relocating to that state for the purpose of starting their graduate training. Responses to this section of the survey were used to categorize the participants based on level of cultural immersion, with shorter time lived in that location indicating immersion (those who moved to the location for the purpose of their graduate training) and more time indicating participants who already resided in that state. For the independent variables for research questions three, four, and five, the Demographics and Background Questionnaire (Appendix C) was similarly utilized with questions inquiring about participants' number of multicultural coursework taken and multicultural related workshops attended.

The following paragraphs outline the data analysis that was utilized in order to answer each of the specific research questions. Research questions one and two addressed the main effect that this study was designed to explore, differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation between clinicians in training who experienced relocation cultural immersion compared to participants who already resided in the location of their graduate training. Given the large amount of data showing that more training is associated with greater multicultural competence (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Sadowsky et al., 1998), research questions three and four similarly looked for differences in MCKAS and M-GUDS-S scores with regards to participants' amount of multicultural training received. The final research question examined the effect of several variables (cultural immersion, universal-diverse orientation, and years of coursework completed) on multicultural competence. Each question and the corresponding data analysis are explained as follows:

**RQ1a) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

After the researcher had cleaned and recoded the data, analysis for this research question utilized the calculated scores for each participant's completed MCKAS (Ponterotto, et al., 2002) total instrument score. The researcher utilized a comparison of means analysis to answer this research question. An independent samples *t*-test is the appropriate statistical test to determine if statistically significant differences exist between a continuous dependent variable, MCKAS total scores, and a dichotomous, categorical independent variable (Howell, 2011), participants who were local or participants who engaged in cultural immersion for their graduate training. Each of the assumptions required for a *t*-test should be met within this data in that scores are independent of each other and the populations should have normal distribution and equal variance (Howell, 2011). The demographics and background questionnaire asked participants how long they had resided in the location of their graduate program before beginning their training, so participants who lived shorter in the location of their graduate training were considered the culturally immersed group. This analysis was used determine if there were any statistically significant differences in MCKAS total score between the two groups, and any significant findings would indicate that those who experienced the cultural immersion also demonstrated variations in multicultural competence.

**RQ1b) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

Similar to RQ1a, the researcher conducted a comparison of means with regards to participants' MCKAS Knowledge subscale scores. The researcher again utilized an independent

samples *t*-test to determine if statistically significant differences exist within the continuous dependent variable of MCKAS Knowledge scores based on the dichotomous independent variable of cultural immersion. Any statistically significant differences would indicate that those who experienced the cultural immersion also exhibited higher or lower multicultural knowledge scores.

**RQ1c) Are there differences in multicultural awareness for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

Parallel to the previous two questions, analysis to answer this question utilized participants' MCKAS Awareness subscale scores. Use of an independent samples *t*-test examined potential differences in MCKAS Awareness scores between the culturally immersed group and the local comparison group. If statistically significant results were found, this would show that the group experiencing cultural immersion also demonstrated differences in multicultural awareness.

**RQ2a) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

Similar to the analysis from RQ1, the researcher utilized the cleaned, recoded, and calculated scores for each participant's completed M-GUDS-S survey total score (Fuentes et al., 2000). The researcher utilized an independent samples *t*-test to answer this research question, which is the appropriate statistical test to determine if statistically significant differences exist within a continuous dependent variable (UDO) by use of a dichotomous, categorical independent variable (Howell, 2011), cultural immersion. The demographics and background questionnaire inquired about cultural immersion, participants who were local or participants who engaged in

cultural immersion as indicated by those who selected moving to that location more recently. Any statistically significant differences would indicate that those who experienced the cultural immersion would exhibit either significantly higher or lower universal-diverse orientation than the comparison group.

**RQ2b) Are there differences in diversity of contact for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

To add to the findings from RQ2a, analysis for this research question utilized participants' M-GUDS-S Diversity of Contact subscale scores. The researcher used an independent samples *t*-test to answer this research question, analyzing differences in Diversity of Contact scores for the independent variable of cultural immersion. Statistically significant differences would be indicative of variations in Diversity of Contact for participants who experienced cultural immersion.

**RQ2c) Are there differences in relativistic appreciation for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

To answer this research question, the researcher utilized an independent samples *t*-test to examine differences in the dependent variable of M-GUDS-S Relativistic Appreciation subscale scores between the two groups of the independent variable, the cultural immersion and comparison groups. If significant differences were to be determined in this analysis, findings would indicate that participants who experienced the cultural immersion would exhibit either significantly higher or lower Relativistic Appreciation scores.

**RQ2d) Are there differences in comfort with differences for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?**

Continuing with the trend within research question two, the researcher focused on the M-GUDS-S Comfort with Differences subscale as the dependent variable to answer this question. Use of an independent samples *t*-test could determine if statistically significant differences exist in Comfort with Differences between the culturally immersed and the comparison group. Implications of potential significant results would be that participants' Comfort with Differences were significantly different for those experiencing cultural immersion.

**RQ3) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?**

After having calculated total scores for each participant's completed MCKAS (Ponterotto, et al., 2002), the researcher utilized an independent samples *t*-test to examine differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness scores based on amount of multicultural training received. This information came from the Demographics and Background questionnaire, which utilized a question focused on the number of multicultural courses participants had taken. An independent samples *t*-test is a fitting test for the purpose of determining if statistically significant differences exist between the continuous dependent variable of MCKAS total scores and a dichotomous, categorical independent variable of the number of multicultural courses taken (Howell, 2011). Participants' scores would be dichotomized approximately in half in order to examine these potential differences. Any statistically significant differences would indicate that having more multicultural training would also demonstrate higher or lower levels of multicultural competence. These findings could be important to this study's efforts to examine factors within participants' graduate training and separate from the graduate training that may account for some variations in multicultural competence scores.

**RQ4) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?**

Utilizing the total scores for each participant's completed M-GUDS-S survey (Fuentes et al., 2000), the researcher conducted a comparison of means in order to test for differences in total universal-diverse orientation scores based off of the number of multicultural courses taken. This information came from items within the Demographics and Background questionnaire that focused on the number of multicultural courses taken. An independent samples *t*-test is an appropriate test designed to search for statistically significant differences within the continuous dependent variable of M-GUDS-S total scores based off of the dichotomous, categorical independent variable of the number of multicultural courses taken (Howell, 2011). Any statistically significant differences would indicate that the amount of multicultural courses taken could also indicate significantly higher or lower scores for universal-diverse orientation. These findings could be noteworthy in determining factors within participants' graduate training that may result in differences in their universal-diverse orientation scores.

**RQ5a) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores?**

Given the evidence supporting the relationship between multicultural training and MCC, the researcher conducted a multiple regression to determine the effect of cultural immersion, universal-diverse orientation, and duration of training experience on MCKAS total scores. The researcher chose these predictor variables in relation to the criterion variable of MCKAS scores based off of previous literature. Munley et al. (2004) utilized predictor variables of universal-diverse orientation, identity development, and multicultural training on MCKAS Knowledge and Awareness subscale scores, finding that many of these factors produced statistically significant

results. Weatherford and Spokane (2013) found significant regression paths for both openness-to-experience and multicultural exposure to multicultural case conceptualization ability.

Because of these findings, the present study also utilized similar constructs of universal-diverse orientation, duration of graduate training, and cultural immersion as predictor variables of multicultural competence.

Use of multiple regression allows for a predictive value of the continuous independent variables on the dependent variable of multicultural competence (Howell, 2011), which adds more depth of the findings over a simple correlational analysis. The demographics and background questionnaire asked about whether participants were local or relocated, indicating cultural immersion, to start their graduate training. Additionally, duration of graduate training was measured by a background question inquiring about years of coursework completed. Each of these variables was entered into a stepwise multiple regression in the following order of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and years of coursework completed as predictor variables to examine their effect on the dependent variable of MCKAS total scores. Results of these analyses could indicate the extent to which each of these variables relates to and predicts scores of multicultural competence.

**RQ5b) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge?**

To further examine details from RQ5a, this research question was answered with the use of a multiple regression with the dependent variable of MCKAS Knowledge subscale scores. The variables of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and years of coursework completed were entered into a stepwise multiple regression, in that respective order, as predictor variables to examine their effect on the dependent variable of MCKAS Knowledge scores.

Potential results of this regression would be indicative of the relationship and predicative value of each of these variables to multicultural knowledge.

**RQ5c) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural awareness?**

Continuing research question five exploration, the analysis to answer this research question utilized a multiple regression with the dependent variable of MCKAS Awareness subscale scores. The independent variables of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and years of coursework completed was entered accordingly into a stepwise multiple regression as predictor variables of the dependent variable of MCKAS Awareness scores. Any significant findings from this analysis would demonstrate the relationship and predicative value that each of these variables has on multicultural awareness.

**Summary**

This study was designed to fill the gap in the literature of quantitative studies pertaining to cultural immersion. The author is aware of only two other quantitative studies of cultural immersion for counseling students. Fawcett et al. (2010) did report statistically significant differences between pretest and posttest scores for each factor of multicultural competence studied. The main limitation of that study was a small ( $N = 12$ ), homogenous sample that participated in the immersion experience to Guatemala. The other study by Barden et al. (2015) was a quasi-experimental design comparing counseling students who experienced immersion in Costa Rica and students who simply took coursework as usual. Even though that study did not produce many statistically significant results, the present study intended to address some of the limitations that Fawcett et al. (2010) and Barden et al. (2015) encountered, such as by adding a larger, more diverse sample.



The present inquiry was designed to explore differences in multicultural competence and universal diverse orientation for clinicians in training who experienced cultural immersion, by means of geographic relocation. Participants were selected from graduate programs in geographically isolated areas to indicate those who traveled long distances for their mental health training program. The study measured for differences in scores of multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation between those who experienced this study's definition of cultural immersion and participants who did not experience the immersion. Additional comparison of means similarly examined differences in these dependent variables based on the amount of multicultural training that participants received. Regression analysis could also indicate the effect of cultural immersion, universal-diverse orientation, and years of graduate coursework on multicultural competence. Results of the study could improve the evidence, particularly the limited quantitative data, linking cultural immersion experiences to multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation. Implications for the results could affect the manner in which programs approach training methods for increasing counseling student multicultural competence.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

This study was designed to measure differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness and in universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training who experienced cultural immersion during their graduate training. The study also examined differences in multicultural competence based on amount of multicultural training and explored predictive values of several variables on multicultural competence. This chapter outlines the findings from this study, specifically related to each research question.

#### **Research Question One**

The first research question was designed to examine differences in self-report multicultural competence between participants who experienced cultural immersion and those who already resided in the location of their graduate training program. This question included three parts measuring MCKAS total scores and scores for each of the knowledge and awareness subscales.

- RQ1a) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ1b) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ1c) Are there differences in multicultural awareness for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?

## **Question Two**

The second research question explored differences in universal-diverse orientation between the cultural immersion group and the comparison group. This question included four sub-questions total, designed to measure all three of the M-GUDS-S subscales as well as the measure's total score.

- RQ2a) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation total scores for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2b) Are there differences in diversity of contact for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2c) Are there differences in relativistic appreciation for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?
  - RQ2d) Are there differences in comfort with differences for clinicians in training who experience cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation?

## **Research Question Three**

The third research question explored differences in multicultural competence for participants based on the number of multicultural courses each participant had taken.

- RQ3) Are there differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?

## **Research Question Four**

The fourth research question examined differences in universal-diverse orientation based on participants' number of multicultural courses taken.

- RQ4) Are there differences in universal-diverse orientation for clinicians in training based on amount of multicultural training?

### **Research Question Five**

The final research question measured the predictive value of several variables including universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training as related to multicultural competence. This question included three parts in order to measure the two MCKAS subscales and the measure total score too.

- RQ5a) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores?
  - RQ5b) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge?
  - RQ5c) What is the effect of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural awareness?

### **Cleaning Data**

Cleaning the data consisted of first removing the surveys in which the majority of the survey had not been completed. Any of the surveys that had completed the MCKAS and M-GUDS-S in full were utilized for the analysis. The data consisted of 93 surveys that were taken online. Of those, only 58 were complete enough to be utilized for the data analysis. Of the physical, mailed surveys that were used, all 8 of them were completed in full. Thus, the total number of completed online and physical packet surveys (N = 66) that included enough information were utilized for data analysis.

Of the surveys that were complete enough, the next stage of cleaning the data involved recoding and totaling the scales used for this study. Chapter Three outlines the questions on the both MCKAS and M-GUDS-S that are recoded and how to sum up each scale.

## Instruments

This section outlines the psychometric properties of the scales used in this study, including means, standard deviations, and reliability reported. This study utilized the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto, et al., 2002) and the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short (M-GUDS-S; Fuertes, et al., 2000). Both the MCKAS and M-GUDS-S utilize Likert scale questions. The MCKAS utilizes a 7 point Likert scale from 1 (*not at all true*) up to 7 (*totally true*) with a midpoint anchor of 4 (*somewhat true*). The total score for the measure ranges from 32 up to 224. Knowledge subscale scores range between 20 and 140, and the Awareness subscale scores range from 12 up to 84. In the sample for this study, the MCKAS scores were recorded as having a range from 36 up to 220 with a mean of 181.1 and standard deviation of 24.9. The Knowledge subscale demonstrated a range from 23 up to 137 with a mean of 108.7 and standard deviation of 17.1. The Awareness subscale resulted in a range from 13 to 84 with a mean of 72.4 and standard deviation of 10.5.

The items of the M-GUDS-S are based on a 6 point Likert scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*). The total score for the scale ranges between 15 and 90. Scores for each subscale can range from 5 up to a score of 30. The total scores for the M-GUDS-S resulted in a range from 18 up to 90 with a mean of 75.2 and standard deviation of 9.9. The Diversity of contact subscale indicated a range from 6 up to 30 with a mean of 24.1 and standard deviation of 4.6. The Relativistic Appreciation subscale resulted in a range from 7 to 30 with a mean of 24.2 and standard deviation of 4. Lastly, the Comfort with Differences subscale reported a range from 5 to 30 with a mean of 26.9 and standard deviation of 3.6.

*Table 4: Descriptive Statistics*

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
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MCKASTotal	66	36.00	220.00	181.1061	24.86835
MCKASKsub	66	23.00	137.00	108.7121	17.11478
MCKASAsub	66	13.00	84.00	72.3939	10.54934
MGUDSTotal	64	18.00	90.00	75.2344	9.94547
MGUDSdiversity	64	6.00	30.00	24.1250	4.59641
MGUDSrelativistic	64	7.00	30.00	24.2344	4.01877
MGUDScomfort	64	5.00	30.00	26.8750	3.56571
Valid N (listwise)	64				

To check for consistency within the results of the study, the researcher ran comparison of means analyses to determine if there were any significant differences based on location of graduate training and type of survey administered. Neither the MCKAS nor the M-GUDS-S showed any statistically significant differences on either of these variables. The location that participants lived (Alaska, Hawaii, or other) showed no difference. Similarly, the type of survey administered (online or through the mail) demonstrated no significant difference in MCKAS or M-GUDS-S scores.

The psychometric properties of the scales utilized for this study showed strong internal reliability in general. The researcher utilized a Cronbach's Alpha test to determine internal reliability for the measures used for this study. The MCKAS produced an alpha of .924, demonstrating strong internal reliability for the items of this measure. Both of the MCKAS subscales for Multicultural Knowledge ( $\alpha = .902$ ) and Multicultural Awareness ( $\alpha = .868$ ) scored well for internal reliability as well. The MCKAS total score in the present study produced an even higher coefficient alpha than any of the previous published studies to use this measure. The knowledge subscale performed similarly to previous studies, and the awareness subscale produced a slightly higher alpha than has been reported previously.

The M-GUDS-S produced an alpha score of .861, similarly showing strong consistency between the items of this scale. The M-GUDS-S subscales did not perform as strongly but did produce satisfactory internal reliability for the Diversity of Contact subscale ( $\alpha = .753$ ), the Relativistic Appreciation subscale ( $\alpha = .727$ ), and lastly, the Comfort with Differences subscale ( $\alpha = .826$ ). The M-GUDS-S total score, the Relativistic Appreciation subscale, and the Comfort with Differences subscale all resulted in higher alpha scores than any of the previously published studies to use this measure. The Diversity of Contact subscale scored similarly to previous research with this scale.

### **Description of Participants**

The sample for this study consisted of students and alumni from counseling related programs in geographically remote locations. The final sample included 66 completed surveys by participants. There was no way to calculate a response rate for the online survey because it was distributed by stakeholders who did not report how many potential participants, if any, they emailed the link to. As for the mailed surveys, there was a total of 52 requested survey packets and 8 were mailed back, which is a 15.4% response rate.

The first two research questions focused on participants' time in their current residence. Most of the participants acknowledged living in the location of their graduate training for more than three years ( $n = 43$ ), with fewer reporting living there one to three years ( $n = 8$ ), less than a year ( $n = 2$ ), or moving to that location with the purpose of starting their graduate training program ( $n = 9$ ). The remaining 4 participants did not answer this question. Of the sample, only a few participants indicated moving to their current location as due to military service ( $n = 8$ ) while the rest who did answer this item on the survey indicated that this was not their motivator for moving ( $n = 44$ ).

*Table 5: Immersion*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Moved for program	9	13.6	14.5	14.5
	Less than a year	2	3.0	3.2	17.7
	1-3 years	8	12.1	12.9	30.6
	More than 3 years	43	65.2	69.4	100.0
	Total	62	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	6.1		
Total		66	100.0		

As for type of graduate training program that the participants were completing or had completed, the programs were as follows: Counseling Psychology (n = 13), Clinical Psychology (n = 2), Social Work (n = 36), and Other (n = 3). In terms of the level of degree that participants were currently engaged in, most of the participants were master's degree students (n = 33), with some doctoral students (n = 7) and some who had already graduated from their programs (n = 14). In terms of the highest degree earned, most of the participants had either earned a Bachelor's degree (n = 30) or a Master's degree (n = 23), with only one student indicating an earned Doctorate degree. Most of the participants indicated being full time students (n = 37), with some indicating being part time (n = 11) and others indicating some of each (n = 5). In each of these demographic variables, there were a number of participants who did not report this data as well. The range for years of graduate coursework completed was 0 to 9 years with a mean of 2.09 years. Not every participant reported their years of coursework completed, with 6 participants missing.



*Table 6: Type of program*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Counseling Psychology	13	19.7	24.1	24.1
	Clinical Psychology	2	3.0	3.7	27.8
	Social Work	36	54.5	66.7	94.4
	Other	3	4.5	5.6	100.0
	Total	54	81.8	100.0	
Missing	System	12	18.2		
Total		66	100.0		

*Table 7: Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Years of coursework	60	.00	9.00	2.0872	1.76521
Valid N (listwise)	60				

The largest portion of the students presently resided in Hawaii ( $n = 38$ ), with fewer living in Alaska ( $n = 18$ ), and another portion identifying living in other locations ( $n = 6$ ). Some participants did not report location lived ( $n = 4$ ). Although recruitment efforts took place in Guam as well, the researcher did not receive any stakeholder responses, so the sample did not have any representation from that territory.

*Table 8: Present Residence*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Alaska	18	27.3	29.0	29.0
	Hawaii	38	57.6	61.3	90.3
	Other	6	9.1	9.7	100.0
	Total	62	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	6.1		
Total		66	100.0		

The study also asked about various demographic information from the participants and resulted in a sample that is much more diverse than many previous studies of this construct. The

age range for the participants was from 22 to age 67. The average age for the participants was 35.9 years of age with a standard deviation of 10.35 years. The sample consisted primarily of female participants (n = 53) followed by male participants (n = 9), and some who did not report gender (n = 4). This is consistent with previous research that has also found primarily female samples. There were no participants in this study who indicated a nonbinary gender.

*Table 9: Gender*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	53	80.3	85.5	85.5
	Male	9	13.6	14.5	100.0
	Total	62	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	6.1		
Total		66	100.0		

In terms of sexual orientation, the majority of the sample identified as heterosexual or straight (n = 45), followed by bisexual (n = 9), other (n = 5), questioning (n = 2), and lesbian (n = 1). Another 4 participants did not report sexual orientation.

*Table 10: Sexual Orientation*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bisexual	9	13.6	14.5	14.5
	Heterosexual or straight	45	68.2	72.6	87.1
	Questioning	2	3.0	3.2	90.3
	Other	5	7.6	8.1	98.4
	Lesbian	1	1.5	1.6	100.0
	Total	62	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	6.1		
Total		66	100.0		

The racial makeup of the sample was diverse with nearly the same number of Caucasian participants ( $n = 24$ ) as those who reported being multiracial ( $n = 23$ ). Other races represented included African American ( $n = 3$ ), Asian ( $n = 3$ ), Latino/a ( $n = 1$ ), Native American/Alaska Native ( $n = 1$ ), Pacific Islander ( $n = 1$ ), and other ( $n = 6$ ). Some participants did not report their race ( $n = 4$ ).

*Table 11: Race/ethnicity*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African American	3	4.5	4.8	4.8
	Asian	3	4.5	4.8	9.7
	Caucasian	24	36.4	38.7	48.4
	Latino/a	1	1.5	1.6	50.0
	Native American/Alaska Native	1	1.5	1.6	51.6
	Pacific Islander	1	1.5	1.6	53.2
	Multiracial	23	34.8	37.1	90.3
	Other	6	9.1	9.7	100.0
	Total	62	93.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	6.1		
Total		66	100.0		

## Findings

Prior to running the analysis to seek answers to the research questions, the researcher first utilized a correlation matrix for both the MCKAS and M-GUDS-S to determine relationships between these variables, including subscales for each measure. Given the strong previous evidence supporting the positive relationship between these two measures, the researcher utilized a 1 tailed Pearson's  $r$  correlation. Results indicated that all of the total and subscale scores correlated positively and significantly with each other with the strongest correlation between the MCKAS total score and MCKAS Knowledge subscale ( $r = 0.94, p = 0.00$ ). The smallest

correlation coefficient was between the MCKAS Awareness subscale and the M-GUDS-S Relativistic Appreciation subscale ( $r = .417, p = 0.00$ ).

Table 12: Correlations

		MCKAS Total	MCKAS Ksub	MCKAS Asub	MGUDS Total	MGUDSdiversity	MGUDSrelativistic	MGUDScomfort
MCKAS Total	Pearson	1	.940**	.833**	.839**	.746**	.599**	.702**
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	66	66	66	64	64	64	64
MCKAS Ksub	Pearson	.940**	1	.593**	.765**	.667**	.614**	.580**
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	66	66	66	64	64	64	64
MCKAS Asub	Pearson	.833**	.593**	1	.738**	.677**	.417**	.714**
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	66	66	66	64	64	64	64
MGUDS Total	Pearson	.839**	.765**	.738**	1	.858**	.788**	.796**
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	64	64	64	64	64	64	64
MGUDS diversity	Pearson	.746**	.667**	.677**	.858**	1	.485**	.557**
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	64	64	64	64	64	64	64
MGUDS relativistic	Pearson	.599**	.614**	.417**	.788**	.485**	1	.445**
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	64	64	64	64	64	64	64
MGUDS comfort	Pearson	.702**	.580**	.714**	.796**	.557**	.445**	1
	Correlation							
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	64	64	64	64	64	64	64

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

### Research Question One

The first research question consisted of exploring differences in MCKAS scores, measuring multicultural knowledge and awareness, based on participants level of cultural immersion, measured by time lived in the location of graduate training before beginning that training. Because the groups were uneven, the researcher chose to separate the immersion group from the comparison group by those who lived in the specific location either more or less than three years. This still created an immersion group ( $n = 14$ ) that was smaller than the comparison group ( $n = 40$ ). There were another 12 participants who did not respond to the survey item asking about time lived in the location of graduate training. The following tables outline the results of this analysis. None of the analysis for the first research question resulted in any statistically significant results. In terms of RQ1a, results of the comparison of means indicated the following,  $t = -1.343$ ,  $p = .184$ . As seen in the table below, the mean for the immersion group was 174.79 while the mean for the group who lived in that location longer was 184.09. The comparison group did show a slightly higher average than the immersion group but this was not statistically significant.

*Table 13: Group Statistics*

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MCKASTotal	.00	19	174.7895	37.12977	8.51815
	1.00	43	184.0930	17.69425	2.69835

*Table 14: Independent Samples Test*

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means
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	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
MCKASTotal variances assumed Equal	2.052	.157	-	60	.184	-9.30355	6.92946	-	4.55744
			1.343					23.16454	
variances not assumed			-	21.700	.309	-9.30355	8.93532	-	9.24204
			1.041					27.84914	

In terms of the findings for RQ1b, this question analyzed if there were differences in MCKAS Knowledge subscale scores based off of cultural immersion, time lived in the location of graduate training. This result was also not statistically significant ( $t = -1.442$ ,  $p = .155$ ). There was a slight difference in the means for the immersion group (104.16) and comparison group (110.86). This difference was not statistically significant however.

*Table 15: Group Statistics*

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MCKASKsub	.00	19	104.1579	22.73583	5.21596
	1.00	43	110.8605	13.61124	2.07569

*Table 16: Independent Samples Test*

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper

MCKASKsubEqual	.770	.384	-	60	.155	-6.70257	4.64863	-	2.59608
variances assumed									16.00122
Equal			-	23.896.244	-6.70257	5.61380	-	4.88641	
variances not assumed				1.194					18.29156

Analysis to answer the next research question focused on differences in the MCKAS Awareness subscale based on cultural immersion. The results from RQ1c ( $t = -.871$ ,  $p = .387$ ) were not statistically significant either. The means for each group were 70.63 for the immersion group and 73.23 for the comparison group, but this was not a significant difference.

Table 17: Group Statistics

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MCKASAsub	.00	19	70.6316	15.54996	3.56740
	1.00	43	73.2326	8.01141	1.22173

Table 18: Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MCKASAsubEqual	1.932	.170	-	60	.387	-2.60098	2.98569	-8.57325	3.37130
variances assumed					.871				
Equal			-	22.338.497	-2.60098	3.77081	-	5.21234	
variances not assumed					.690			10.41430	

## Research Question Two

The second research question similarly analyzed differences in scores for universal-diverse orientation based on cultural immersion, as indicated by time lived in location of graduate training prior to starting that training. RQ2a analyzed total scores for the M-GUDS-S and each of the sub-questions for research question two analyzed each of the subscales of the M-GUDS-S.

Of these analyses, none of which resulted in any statistically significant results. Each of the results for the comparison of means resulted in the following scores for M-GUDS-S total scores ( $t = -.829$ ,  $p = .410$ ), Diversity of Contact scores ( $t = -.831$ ,  $p = .409$ ), Relativistic Appreciation ( $t = -.219$ ,  $p = .828$ ), and Comfort with Differences ( $t = -.1.029$ ,  $p = .308$ ). The following tables outline the results for the comparison based on M-GUDS-S total scores. As seen in the following table, the mean for the immersion group (73.84) and the mean for the comparison group (76.14) were not significantly different for the universal-diverse orientation total score.

*Table 19: Group Statistics*

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MGUDSTotal	.00	19	73.8421	15.01208	3.44401
	1.00	43	76.1395	6.93020	1.05685

*Table 20: Independent Samples Test*

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means
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	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
MGUDSTotal variances assumed	2.020	.160	-	60	.410	-2.29743	2.77163	-	3.24666
			.829					7.84152	
Equal variances not assumed			-	21.468	.530	-2.29743	3.60251	-	5.18448
			.638					9.77934	

The following tables outline RQ2b, which examined differences in the Diversity of Contact subscale of the M-GUDS-S based on cultural immersion. The difference between the immersion group's mean (23.47) was not statistically significant enough of a difference from the comparison group's mean (24.53).

*Table 21: Group Statistics*

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MGUDSdiversity	.00	19	23.4737	5.53141	1.26899
	1.00	43	24.5349	4.19381	.63955

*Table 22: Independent Samples Test*

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means
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	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
MGUDSdiversityEqual variances assumed	.652	.423	-	60	.409	-1.06120	1.27705	-	1.49329
			.831					3.61569	
Equal variances not assumed			-	27.544	.462	-1.06120	1.42104	-	1.85185
			.747					3.97425	

The next analysis, for RQ2c examined differences in the M-GUDS-S subscale of Relativistic Appreciation based on cultural immersion. This finding also did not result in any statistically significant differences between the immersion group's mean (24.1) and the mean for the comparison group (24.34).

*Table 23: Group Statistics*

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
					Mean
MGUDSrelativistic	.00	19	24.1053	5.80129	1.33091
	1.00	43	24.3488	2.99113	.45614

Table 24: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MGUDSrelativistic	Equal variances assumed	3.724	.058	-.219	60	.828	-.24357	1.11421	-2.47233	1.98518
	Equal variances not assumed			-.173	22.345	.864	-.24357	1.40690	-3.15871	2.67156

The next analysis examined differences in Comfort with Differences, the third M-GUDS-S subscale, based on cultural immersion. This mean difference of 26.26 for the immersion group and 27.26 for the comparison group was not statistically significant.

Table 25: Group Statistics

	Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MGUDScomfort	.00	19	26.2632	5.48576	1.25852
	1.00	43	27.2558	2.15023	.32791

Table 26: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
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	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
MGUDScomfortEqual variances assumed	2.069	.156	-	60	.308	-.99266	.96474	-	.93711
Equal variances not assumed			-1.029	20.486	.454	-.99266	1.30054	-	1.71609
								3.70140	

### Research Question Three

The third research question examined differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores as based on the amount of multicultural training received. The Demographics and Background Questionnaire asked about the number of multicultural related courses that participants had taken. The researcher included this question in order to examine other factors that may explain counseling student multicultural knowledge and awareness scores. Some of the reported numbers for multicultural related coursework were abnormally high, so in order to compensate for this, the researcher chose to run a comparison of means analysis instead of a correlation. Additionally, because of the small sample size of this study, the researcher chose to dichotomize the independent variable of number of multicultural courses taken in order to allow for greater representation in each group. The range for reported multicultural courses was from zero courses ( $n = 12$ ), one course ( $n = 20$ ), two courses ( $n = 10$ ), up to another 16 participants reporting having three up to as many as 30 multicultural courses. Lastly, some participants did not answer this item on the survey ( $n = 8$ ).

Results of this analysis did not reveal a statistically significant finding ( $t = -.959$ ,  $p = .342$ ). As seen in the following table, the means for each group were different with the 0-1

multicultural courses group having a mean MCKAS score of 178.78 and the average for the 2+ multicultural courses group being 185.35, but this difference was not shown to be statistically significant.

*Table 26: Group Statistics*

	MC courses	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MCKASTotal	0-1 MC Courses	32	178.7813	31.73553	5.61010
	2+ MC Courses	26	185.3462	16.07468	3.15250

*Table 27: Independent Samples Test*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MCKASTotal	Equal variances assumed	1.986	.164	-.959	56	.342	-6.56490	6.84891	-20.28492	7.15511
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.020	47.763	.313	-6.56490	6.43518	-19.50536	6.37555

#### **Research Question Four**

The next research question was designed to be similar to the previous one, this time measuring for differences in universal-diverse orientation scores based on the number of multicultural courses taken. The researcher similarly dichotomized the independent variable of multicultural coursework in order to allow for greater representation in each group. The results of this analysis did not result in any statistically significant findings ( $t = -506, p = .615$ ). The

mean M-GUDS-S score for each group were 74.9 for the 0-1 course group and 76.27 for the group who had 2+ multicultural courses, showing that there were no significant differences based on multicultural coursework.

*Table 28: Group Statistics*

	MC courses	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MGUDSTotal	0-1 MC Courses	32	74.9063	12.72123	2.24882
	2+ MC Courses	26	76.2692	5.66080	1.11017

*Table 29: Independent Samples Test*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
MGUDSTotal	Equal variances assumed	2.880	.095	-	56	.615	-1.36298	2.69116	-	4.02805 6.75402
	Equal variances not assumed			-	44.662	.590	-1.36298	2.50792	-	3.68928 6.41525

### Research Question Five

Research question five examined the relationship between universal-diverse orientation and multicultural knowledge and awareness. This question also analyzed the predictive value of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on scores of multicultural knowledge and awareness. In addition to running the analysis for this research question, the researcher conducted a correlation analysis to determine the strength of relationships between the variables used for this question. As seen in the following table,

universal-diverse orientation was shown to have statistically significant relationships to the MCKAS total score ( $r = .839$ ,  $p = .000$ ) as well as the knowledge ( $r = .765$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and awareness ( $r = .738$ ,  $p = .000$ ) subscales. Cultural immersion and years of coursework did not demonstrate any statistically significant results to the total or subscale scores for multicultural knowledge and awareness.

*Table 30: Correlations*

		MGUDSTot	Immersion	Years of coursework	MCKASTot	MCKASKsu	MCKASAsu
		al	n	k	al	b	b
MGUDSTot	Pearson	1	.086	-.061	.839**	.765**	.738**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.538	.644	.000	.000	.000
	N	64	54	60	64	64	64
Immersion	Pearson	.086	1	-.074	.147	.136	.131
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.538		.604	.290	.327	.347
	N	54	54	52	54	54	54
Years of coursework	Pearson	-.061	-.074	1	.083	.093	.048
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.644	.604		.530	.482	.715
	N	60	52	60	60	60	60
MCKASTot	Pearson	.839**	.147	.083	1	.940**	.833**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.290	.530		.000	.000

	N	64	54	60	66	66	66
MCKASKsu b	Pearson Correlation	.765**	.136	.093	.940**	1	.593**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.327	.482	.000		.000
	N	64	54	60	66	66	66
MCKASAsu b	Pearson Correlation	.738**	.131	.048	.833**	.593**	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.347	.715	.000	.000	
	N	64	54	60	66	66	66

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The first part of this question (RQ5a) analyzed each universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training as predictor variables for multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores and did result in a statistically significant result ( $F = 162.852$ ,  $p = .000$ ), demonstrating that  $R = .875$  with an R square of .765. This model shown to account for 76.5% of the variance in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores.

*Table 31: Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.875 <sup>a</sup>	.765	.760	13.26811

a. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

*Table 32: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28668.847	1	28668.847	162.852	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	8802.134	50	176.043		
	Total	37470.981	51			



- a. Dependent Variable: MCKASTotal  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

*Table 33: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	15.404	13.143		1.172	.247
	MGUDSTotal	2.201	.172	.875	12.761	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: MCKASTotal

The second part of question five (RQ5b) looked again at the same predictor variables of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training as related to the multicultural knowledge subscale of the MCKAS. The results indicated  $R = .810$  with an  $R$  square of .656, which shown to be a statistically significant result ( $F = 95.471$ ,  $p = .000$ ). This model accounted for 65.6% of the variance in multicultural knowledge scores.

*Table 34: Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.810 <sup>a</sup>	.656	.649	10.71704

- a. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

*Table 35: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10965.315	1	10965.315	95.471	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	5742.743	50	114.855		
	Total	16708.058	51			

- a. Dependent Variable: MCKASKsub  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

Table 36: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	6.655	10.616		.627	.534
	MGUDSTotal	1.361	.139	.810	9.771	.000

a. Dependent Variable: MCKASKsub

The third part of research question five (RQ5c) similarly analyzed universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training as predictor variables for the multicultural awareness subscale of the MCKAS. This analysis similarly resulted in a statistically significant finding ( $F = 78.283$ ,  $p = .000$ ) with  $R = .781$  and an R square of .610. This demonstrated that this model accounted for 61% of the variance in multicultural awareness scores.

Table 37: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.781 <sup>a</sup>	.610	.602	7.30166

a. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

Table 38: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4173.596	1	4173.596	78.283	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	2665.712	50	53.314		
	Total	6839.308	51			

a. Dependent Variable: MCKASsub

b. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

Table 39: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	8.749	7.233		1.210	.232

MGUDSTotal	.840	.095	.781	8.848	.000
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a. Dependent Variable: MCKASAsub

Because the factors of cultural immersion and duration of counseling training did not demonstrate a statistically significant correlation to MCKAS total or subscale scores, the researcher decided to also run the regression analysis using only M-GUDS-S total scores for universal-diverse orientation as a predictor variable for MCKAS scores measuring the total for multicultural knowledge and awareness. This model similarly produced a statistically significant result ( $F = 146.92$ ,  $p = .000$ ) with  $R = .839$  and an R square of .703. This showed that scores for universal-diverse orientation alone showed to account for 70.3% of the variance in multicultural knowledge and awareness scores.

*Table 40: Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.839 <sup>a</sup>	.703	.698	13.83578

a. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

*Table 41: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28124.779	1	28124.779	146.920	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	11868.580	62	191.429		
	Total	39993.359	63			

a. Dependent Variable: MCKASTotal

b. Predictors: (Constant), MGUDSTotal

*Table 42: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	

1	(Constant)	21.464	13.299		1.614	.112
	MGUDSTotal	2.124	.175	.839	12.121	.000

a. Dependent Variable: MCKASTotal

### Summary

This section outlined the results of this study. The data cleaning process resulted in 66 completed surveys that comprised the data for the study. This section also described the psychometric performance of each of the measures used in this study, and both the MCKAS and M-GUDS-S demonstrated acceptable internal reliability. The resulting sample consisted mostly of participants from Hawaii and participants in social work programs, and the sample was very racially diverse.

The first two research questions utilized cultural immersion, as measured by time lived in the location of graduate training prior to starting that training, as an independent variable and each multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation as dependent variables. The analysis examined differences in each of these dependent variables for those who experience cultural immersion or not. The analysis for both of these research questions resulted in no statistically significant results. This signified that for participants who experienced cultural immersion, they had no significantly difference in either multicultural knowledge and awareness or universal-diverse orientation as compared to the non-immersion group. The third and fourth research questions were designed to search for the differences in each multicultural knowledge and awareness and universal-diverse orientation based on amount of multicultural training. These analysis similarly did not result in any statistically significant results. This indicated that those who had taken more multicultural coursework did not have any significantly higher scores for multicultural knowledge and awareness or universal-diverse orientation.

The fifth and final research question explored the predictive value of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores and subscale scores. In particular, universal-diverse orientation was found to have the greatest effect on multicultural knowledge and awareness scores, accounting for a significant amount of the variance of MCKAS scores. Each of the total and subscale scores for the M-GUDS-S, measuring UDO, were also shown to have significant positive relationship to each the total score and subscale scores of the MCKAS, measuring multicultural knowledge and awareness. The next chapter will discuss these findings in relation to previously published research and discuss the implications of the present findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Overview of the Study

This study was designed to explore differences in counselor multicultural knowledge and awareness as based on cultural immersion. The study did not find any statistically significant differences in either multicultural knowledge and awareness scores or universal-diverse orientation scores based on cultural immersion. This did not confirm findings from Fawcett et al. (2010) who did quantitatively show the impact of cultural immersion, but the present study's findings were similar to the results from Barden et al. (2015). Similarly, no significant differences were found between either multicultural knowledge and awareness scores or universal-diverse orientation scores based on amount of multicultural training received. This was contradictory to several other studies who have used the MCKAS (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine, 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001) or the M-GUDS-S (Weatherford & Spokane, 2013) to explore this factor but was similar to the findings of Tummala-Narra et al. (2012).

Some results of this study confirmed findings from previous research; the results of the correlational analysis demonstrated a strong relationship between MCKAS scores and M-GUDS-S scores. This is one of many studies to have shown a positive relationship between the concept of multicultural competence and the concept of universal-diverse orientation (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004; Tummala-Narra et al., 2012; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013).

One of the advantages of this study was the unique and diverse sample. By sampling in geographically remote locations, these findings may be generalizable to populations previously not studied. The researcher is unaware of any other studies to research multicultural competence

in these geographically and culturally distinct locations. The diverse racial makeup of the sample also shows that these findings may be applicable to more diverse populations as well.

### **Research Questions**

This section covers the results and implications of each of the specific research questions from the present study. Each question reiterates the study's findings and how those relate to previous research done on these topics. Similarities and differences between the present study and past research will be discussed.

#### **Research Question One**

The first research question analyzed the differences in scores from the MCKAS as based on cultural immersion, time lived in the location of graduate training prior to starting that training. The results looked at differences in MCKAS total scores and each the knowledge and awareness subscales of that measure. Through this analysis, none of the results indicated any statistically significant differences. The lack of statistically significant findings for this research question appears to be contradictory to much of the previous research on cultural immersion experiences. There could be several explanations for these differences. First, this is the first study that the researcher is aware of that studied cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation and time spent living in a location of participants' graduate training. One of the only studies to document experience living in a location was that of DeRicco and Sciarra (2005), who studied the experiences of a Caucasian woman living in a predominantly African American neighborhood. That study is potentially the closest to a lived experience in a culturally distinct location, as was measured in the present study. Secondly, the sample from the present study was quite racially diverse and obtained from very culturally distinct locations, which could be an

indication that those living there may be exposed to more diversity already. This could explain why no statistically significant differences were found between the groups.

A number of published studies have found evidence of counseling students' personal experiences being associated with multicultural competence (Coleman, 2006; Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001; Furr & Carroll, 2003; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Furr and Carroll (2003) found that the most commonly reported critical incidents for counseling students were those that took place outside of their counseling training, and Coleman (2006) found that counseling students' personal encounters with diversity was a key theme in development of multicultural competence. Many of the previous studies of cultural immersion involved short term trips to immersion locations. These studies involved trips to Belize (Smith-Augustine et al., 2014), Britain (Cunningham et al., 2011), Costa Rica (Barden et al., 2015), Guatemala (Fawcett et al., 2010), Ireland (Prosek & Michel, 2016; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004), Mexico (Wilson & Taylor, 2013), New Mexico (Ishii et al., 2009), South Africa (Choi et al., 2015; Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010; West-Olatunji et al., 2011), and Trinidad (Alexander et al., 2005).

One of the major differences between most of these immersion studies and the present research though is the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research. Nearly all of the immersion research previously has been qualitative in nature. The researcher is only aware of two quantitative cultural immersion studies previously conducted. In those studies, Barden et al. (2015) completed a quasi-experimental study that produced few statistically significant results, similar to the lack of significant findings in the present study. Prior to that, Fawcett et al. (2010) did demonstrate statistically significant increases in multicultural competence for participants who completed an immersion experience. However, the present study did measure cultural immersion by a different definition than the short term study abroad that Fawcett et al. utilized,



which consisted of ten day trip to Guatemala. The findings of the Fawcett et al. study may also not be generalizable due to a small sample size ( $N = 12$ ).

Overall, this research question did not produce any statistically significant differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness scores based on cultural immersion. Although this does not align with many previous findings, any number of differences among these studies may explain this lack of consensus. This could be due to the use of quantitative measures instead of qualitative inquiry or likely could be attributed to the very racially diverse sample that was procured from such culturally distinct locations.

### **Research Question Two**

Similar to research question one, the second research question was used to examine differences in scores of universal-diverse orientation based on the factor of cultural immersion. Cultural immersion was again measured by time lived in the location of graduate training prior to beginning that training. Each of the sub-questions for this research question focused on the M-GUDS-S total score as well as each of the subscales of the measure. The findings were also similar to research question one in which no statistically significant differences were determined by the analysis. The researcher is unaware of any studies to have examined this factor previously, so there are no studies to compare these findings to.

### **Research Question Three**

The third research question examined differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness total scores based on the amount of multicultural courses taken. This variable was not found to have a statistically significant difference. These findings confirm some previous research while contradicting other previous findings. One area that Constantine et al. (2001) focused on was the number of multicultural classes taken as related to MCKAS scores. The

present study also examined this phenomenon and where Constantine et al. (2001) did find a small, positive relationship between MCKAS total scores as well as the Knowledge subscale and number of multicultural courses taken, the present study did not find any significant differences in MCKAS scores based on multicultural courses taken. It is possible that this resulted from the smaller sample size of the present study. It is also possible that the demographic differences between these two studies could explain this difference. Constantine et al. (2001) utilized a sample (N = 100) comprised mostly of Caucasian participants (n = 91) whereas the present study was much more racially diverse, in which less than half of the participants identified as Caucasian.

In a similar study, Constantine, Juby, and Liang (2001) studied the relationship between multicultural counseling courses and MCKAS scores. When these researchers controlled for social desirability, multicultural classes taken did result in a statistically significant positive relationship to multicultural knowledge scores but not to scores for the multicultural awareness subscale of the MCKAS. That study did consist of a larger but distinctly different sample than the present study. Their sample consisted of Marriage and Family Therapists (N = 113) who all identified as White, so the type of student was different as well as the racial makeup of the sample.

In another related study, Chu-Lien Chao (2012) also studied multicultural training as associated with the MCKAS. Multicultural training was measured by asking participants about multicultural coursework, workshops, and research projects that they had encountered. Results indicated a strong, positive association between multicultural training and both the knowledge and awareness subscales of the MCKAS.

There were some differences between the present study's sample and that of Chu-Lien Chao (2012). That study utilized a large sample (N = 460) of national certified counselors (NCC), while the present study was comprised of a much smaller sample mostly consisting of students in training. The Chu-lien Chao study did have a fairly racially diverse sample, with only 59% of the participants identifying as White, compared to previous research, but was still not as racially diverse as the sample from the present study. Any of these differences could account for the differences in findings between that study and the present research.

In another study that found similar results as the present study, Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) also examined multicultural coursework and post degree multicultural workshops as related to multicultural competence and found no significant relationship between these variables. Despite those limited findings, Tummala-Narra et al. did find that participants' level to which they found multicultural workshops helpful demonstrated a significant positive association to multicultural competence for both coursework and multicultural workshops. So based on these findings, it is possible that simply attending classes or workshops has less of a relationship to multicultural competence than what participants perceive to have earned from attending such educational opportunities. That could explain the similar findings surrounding the lack of significance between coursework and multicultural competence.

Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) did utilize a much larger sample (N = 196) than the present study, and focused on counselors who had already completed their graduate training. Although the present study did involve some participants who had already graduated, the majority of the sample remained graduate students. Tummala-Narra et al. did produce a more racially diverse sample than previous research, with 64.3% identifying as Caucasian, but not as racially diverse as the present study.

Another difference between each of these studies that relate multicultural competence to multicultural coursework is that the previous studies have utilized correlation while the present study used a comparison of means. This could explain why most of the studies have found this relationship yet the present study did not find significant findings. The present study's racially diverse sample that was procured from remote locations also is a major distinction from previous studies as well, potentially explaining these inconsistencies in the findings.

To summarize, although numerous studies have found that multicultural training is associated with increased multicultural competence (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001) utilizing the MCKAS, there is some evidence that did not find this significant result. The present study, which did utilize the MCKAS as well, did not find any statistically significant differences in multicultural knowledge and awareness based off of multicultural coursework taken. Similarly, findings by Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) did not find a significant relationship between multicultural coursework and multicultural competence. Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) did utilize a different measure for multicultural competence, which could explain this difference in the findings from previous research. The size and composition of each of the samples from these studies are distinctly unique, so any of these factors this could account for some of those differences as well. The present study is much more racially diverse for example than any of the previous studies and came from remote locations. The present study also utilized analysis searching for differences in scores instead of relationships between variables. Additionally, some of the distinctions between groups in the present study had to be chosen arbitrarily based on the composition of the sample and a need to find enough representation in each group. This may have reduced the likelihood of finding statistically significant differences.

#### **Research Question Four**

This research question examined the differences in universal-diverse orientation scores based on multicultural coursework taken. This analysis did not result in any statistically significant results. There are only two studies that the researcher is aware of to have explored similar analysis (Constantine et al., 2001; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013). The first study by Constantine et al. (2001) did not find any relationship between scores of UDO and number of multicultural courses taken. The study utilized the M-GUDS-S and found no statistically significant correlations between any of the total or subscale scores as related to number of multicultural courses taken.

Weatherford and Spokane did find statistically significant relationships between subscales of the M-GUDS-S and the study's definition of multicultural exposure, which was measured in part by multicultural coursework and multicultural workshops attended. That study did find significant positive correlations between both the subscale of Diversity of Contact and Relativistic Appreciation to both multicultural courses and multicultural workshops. The third subscale entitled Comfort with Differences also positively correlated with multicultural workshops and multicultural work with clients but not to multicultural courses taken.

These findings by Weatherford and Spokane (2013) were not confirmed by the findings from the present study, but the findings from Constantine et al. (2001) were similar in that there was no relationship between UDO and multicultural courses taken. There were several key differences though among the samples of these studies. First, Constantine et al. (2001) was comprised of a sample of 100 school counselors in which 91 of the participants identified as White. Weatherford and Spokane used a much larger sample size of counselors in training (N = 201) than did the present study. Weatherford and Spokane utilized a sample that was primarily

Caucasian (83%). Nearly half of the sample from that study came from Clinical Psychology programs and the Constantine et al. study was comprised entirely of school counselors while the present study consisted mostly of social work students followed by counseling psychology students. The present study also utilized a much more racially diverse sample than both of these studies and that sample came from geographically remote locations. It is possible that these differences between the samples could have explained the lack of statistically significant results in the present study compared to the findings of Weatherford and Spokane (2013). Although the present study's findings are similar to the Constantine et al. (2001) study, that study examined relationships between UDO and multicultural coursework while the present study examined differences in scores based on number of multicultural courses taken. This is another distinction between these studies.

### **Research Question Five**

The fifth research question analyzed the predictive value of universal-diverse orientation, cultural immersion, and duration of counseling training on scores for multicultural knowledge and awareness. Each of the three sub-questions analyzed MCKAS total scores and the scores for each the knowledge and awareness subscales respectively. The models shown to account for significant portions of the variance in MCKAS total scores (76.5%), multicultural knowledge scores (65.6%), and multicultural awareness scores (61%). The researcher also analyzed the predictive value of UDO alone on MCKAS total scores and found that universal-diverse orientation accounted for a significant amount of the variance in multicultural knowledge and awareness scores (70.3%). These findings demonstrated that universal-diverse orientation showed to be a strong predictor variable for multicultural knowledge and awareness scores.

As part of the correlation analysis that the present study conducted, the findings demonstrated statistically significant positive relationships between every total score and subscale score between the M-GUDS-S and the MCKAS. These findings showed similar relationships between MCKAS and M-GUDS-S scores that previous studies have found as well. For example, Constantine et al. (2001) found a significant positive correlation between these two measures as well as positive relationships between most of the subscales of each measure as well.

In a similar study by Munley et al. (2004), the researchers also found a significant positive relationship between MCKAS scores and M-GUDS-S scores. That study also found that scores for universal-diverse orientation predicted scores for multicultural knowledge and awareness, similar to the present study's finding. Although Munley et al. had a much larger sample ( $N = 165$ ) than the present study ( $N = 66$ ), the present study included a much more diverse sample. Munley et al. did acknowledge the homogeneity of their sample as being a limitation, such as 80.6% of the sample identifying as Caucasian, so the present study may be more generalizable to diverse groups of counseling students.

A similar study by Tummala-Narra et al. (2012) also analyzed the relationship between universal-diverse orientation, measured by the M-GUDS-S, and multicultural competence as measured by the California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale (CBMCS; Gamst et al., 2004) and the Clinicians' Multicultural Practices in Psychotherapy Scale (CMPPS), a measure created for the purpose of that study. The study showed a significant positive relationship between UDO and multicultural competence, similar to the findings of the present study. That study also demonstrated a regression analysis model that showed universal-diverse orientation scores to be predictive of self-report multicultural competence scores. The Tummala-Narra et al. study

demonstrated this similar relationship between UDO and multicultural competence but with the use of different measures for multicultural competence.

Weatherford and Spokane (2013) similarly studied universal-diverse orientation and multicultural case conceptualization ability (MCCA). Their research found multiple statistically significant correlations between the M-GUDS-S subscales of Diversity of Contact and Relativistic Appreciation to MCCA etiology scores. This study provided more evidence of the link between UDO and multicultural competence; however, the study did utilize a different means of measuring multicultural competence. Weatherford and Spokane utilized a fictitious vignette in order to measure MCCA, so that study's findings are slightly different from the present study's results.

This significant finding demonstrating the relationship between universal diverse orientation, by use of the M-GUDS-S, and multicultural knowledge and awareness has been similarly published previously with use of the MCKAS (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004) and other measures for multicultural competence (Tummala-Narra et al., 2012; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013). Similar to the present study, Munley et al. (2004) also found a predictive value of M-GUDS-S scores on scores of the MCKAS. All of these findings suggest a strong, positive relationship, and predictive value, between universal-diverse orientation and multicultural competence. It is possible that this predictive value of UDO is due to the fact that this construct is broader than multicultural competence because UDO includes the factors of diversity of contact, relativistic appreciation, and comfort with differences. These forms of attitudes, awareness, and contact with diversity could be the underlying reason that universal-diverse orientation has been shown in multiple studies to have a predictive value for multicultural competence.



To conclude this section covering each of the research questions, this study's research questions were mostly found to not demonstrate any statistically significant results. No significant differences were found for either multicultural knowledge and awareness or universal diverse orientation based on cultural immersion. Similarly, no statistically significant results were found with either multicultural knowledge and awareness or universal diverse orientation based on the amount of multicultural coursework taken. Lastly however, the research did find that UDO demonstrated a strong, positive relationship and predictive value to scores of multicultural knowledge and awareness. This confirmed the results of several previous studies that have also found significant positive relationships between M-GUDS-S scores and MCKAS scores (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004) and studies that found relationships between the M-GUDS-S and other measures of multicultural competence (Tummala-Narra et al., 2012; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013). These findings from many different studies have shown the strong relationship between multicultural competence and UDO for numerous, varying samples and measures utilized. The present study's findings may be generalizable to different populations than have been previously studied because of the sampling that took place in geographically remote locations and because of the racial diversity of the present sample.

### **Implications**

The implications of this research have applications within the mental health and counselor education fields. One of the largest differences between this study and previous research done was the diversity and location that the sample was obtained from. By sampling in the geographically remote and culturally distinct locations of Alaska and Hawaii, the findings of this research are applicable to samples that have been previously unstudied to the researcher's knowledge. For this reason, any significant results from the study may be generalizable to a

more diverse populations than have previously been studied. This racial diversity was observed in both the immersion group and the comparison group.

The locations of Alaska and Hawaii have very unique cultures, which may explain some of the results of the study. Participants who chose to pursue graduate training in these locations may exhibit preexisting differences in attitudes based on this fact. These cultural experiences of living in such unique locations may have been more of an influence than simply the immersion factor itself. This may be an explanation as to why no differences were observed between the immersion group and the comparison group. For this reason, the results of this study may not generalize to the rest of the country because of the cultural differences exhibited by this sample.

The diversity of this sample offers implications based on intersectionality as well. The majority of the participants identified as a minority status, with a sample comprised mostly of female identified and minority racial groups. This may have resulted in some unique findings based on the participants' experiences with diversity. It is possible that these participants could have experienced numerous encounters with diversity, influencing the results of the study.

Another implication is that even though this study was developed from a counselor education program, the majority of the sample of the study actually consisted of social work students. With 36 of the 66 participants identifying as participating in a social work degree program, the implications of this study may be more focused on social work programs than counseling programs. It is possible that this may be a factor that explains some of the findings and unique composition of the sample.

Even though most of the findings of this study did not produce statistically significant results, the main finding that did reach significance was the strong relationship between M-GUDS-S scores and MCKAS scores and the predictive value that universal-diverse orientation

had towards multicultural knowledge and awareness. For both clinicians and counselor educators, fostering greater universal-diverse orientation could be a method of increasing multicultural competence. This increased focus on developing UDO as a means of fostering multicultural awareness also has ethical implications. Ethical codes such as the ACA Code of Ethics (American Counseling Association, 2014) emphasize culturally competent care as an ethical guideline. Given this strong relationship between UDO and MCC, fostering UDO could be an ethical responsibility for counselor educators.

Efforts to increase MCC through more UDO could include the development of factors related to the subscales of UDO, which are diversity of contact, relativistic appreciation, and comfort with differences. Given that part of the subscales of UDO are related to cultural immersion, as in diversity of contact and comfort with differences, this could provide more evidence that increased cultural immersion experiences could be related to multicultural competence as well. Therefore, by fostering contact with diversity for clinicians in training could be a means of increasing UDO and ultimately multicultural awareness. Focus on developing more accepting attitudes towards diversity, as is seen in the relativistic appreciation subscale, could further be a path towards increasing multicultural awareness in particular.

### **Limitations**

One of the main limitation of this study was the small sample size. Most quantitative studies require large sample sizes in order to reach statistical significance. This study did produce larger sample sizes than the two previous quantitative studies of counseling student cultural immersion in which Barden et al. (2015) utilized a sample of 37 and Fawcett et al. (2010) had a sample of 12 participants. However, the present study did not find any statistically

significant differences in factors related to multicultural competence based on cultural immersion.

Along with the small sample size, the cultural immersion variable did not demonstrate enough participants in each category, resulting in an uneven number of participants in each group. Of the main analysis of the study, exploring cultural immersion, the majority of the participants had lived in their location of their graduate training for more than three years prior to starting that training. This left few participants who actually moved to that location for the purpose of starting their training, indicating cultural immersion. The subsequent division, of dichotomizing the participants based on those who lived in the location of their graduate training for either more or less than three years, had to be chosen arbitrarily based on the composition of the sample. Similarly, the survey item asking about multicultural courses taken did not have enough representation in each group and similarly had to be dichotomized arbitrarily to analyze differences. If these variables would have shown more diversity in the scores, this may have resulted in some statistically significant findings.

Another limitation to this study would be the risk of self-selection bias. It is possible that participants showing an interest in multicultural counseling competence would seek out a study such as this more frequently than others. This is a limitation that some of the studies referenced in this manuscript have also discussed (Barden et al., 2015; Coleman, 2006; Fawcett et al., 2010; Tummala-Narra, 2012). This study could have reduced some of the effects of this bias with the use of a comparison group who did not experience the cultural immersion. Even though the participants are self-selected, being able to compare those who experienced the defined type of cultural immersion in contrast to those who did not does control for some of the self-selection effects.

In addition to self-selection bias, the use of self-report measures in this study presents another limitation to this line of research. However, the available instruments to measure cultural competence and universal-diverse orientation are only available in a self-rated form. Constantine and Ladany (2000) did demonstrate that the MCKAS is one of the multicultural competence measures that appears to be least affected by social desirability. Although the measures used in this study have been utilized in numerous studies in the past, self-perceived cultural competence may not reflect actual multicultural competence. Studies have demonstrated differences between counselors' self-report multicultural competence and counseling performance (Cartwright, Daniels, & Zhang, 2008; Dillon et al., 2016; Gonzalez, 2015). However, research has produced mixed findings related to the use of scales for multicultural competence. Cartwright et al. (2008) compared practitioners' self-report scores of multicultural competence to those of an independent observer and found that the self-report scores were significantly higher. Another study by Dillon et al. (2016) examined the relationship between self-report and client reported multicultural competence scores but found no significant correlation between these variables. Gonzalez (2015) actually found that clients reported higher scores for both multicultural competence and working alliance than counselors in training rated themselves. These studies show that the data comparing self-reports of multicultural competence to external reports is mixed, demonstrating a need for more research on self-report measures of multicultural competence.

Another factor to take note of for this study's background literature is the order in which some of the studies were published. Several of the studies that state using the MCKAS (Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine, Juby & Liang, 2001; Constantine & Ladany, 2000) were published before the official MCKAS creation study was published (Ponterotto et al., 2002).

Each of those previous studies cites unpublished manuscripts (Ponterotto et al., 2000; Ponterotto et al., 1999) pertaining to suggested edits to be made to the original version of the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCAS; Ponterotto, Sanchez, & Magids, 1991), the predecessor of the MCKAS. The present author is unaware of exactly how these studies were conducted before the MCKAS creation study was published. However, it is possible that the MCKAS was created in time for research to be conducted with the instrument, and it took longer to publish that MCKAS creation study than it did these other studies mentioned.

In another potential limitation, the structure of the MCKAS only measures for Knowledge and Awareness and does not have a specific subscale for skills, as many other multicultural measures do. The original creation of the MCAS demonstrated a better two factor loading, and the knowledge and skills components fit better together (Ponterotto et al., 2002). This was continued in that the MCKAS was a revision of the MCAS. This could emerge as a limitation within the present study by not measuring for multicultural skillset. However, since a portion of the sample consisted of clinicians in training who may not have seen clients yet, the selection of the MCKAS may be a more fitting measure. Studies have demonstrated the additional counselor development that takes place after counselors are able to see clients (Fong, et al., 1997; Granello, 2002; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Welfare & Borders, 2010).

Finally, this study would not account for other cultural immersion experiences that participants had experienced. Any statistically significant differences found in the data analysis could only be attributed to the relocation factor of cultural immersion. It is possible that many other cultural factors not being controlled for in this study could have an effect on the results. For this reason, this study could not indicate causation of any of the variables, so the cultural immersion itself could not be stated as the cause for increased multicultural competence. In

order to compensate for this limitation, the survey inquired about several other factors that may affect the study results. This included inquiry about the number of locations in which participants have lived, the extent of their multiculturalism training, and an open text box where participants can describe other cultural experiences. Research questions were also devoted to the effect of additional graduate training potentially explaining relationships between variables. Examining these other factors could allow for better attribution of the results to the study's primary focus on cultural immersion. Lastly, the final research question does examine several variables' predictability of multicultural competence though, which could provide some direction to the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

### **Future Research**

The first aspect of future research that the researcher intends to pursue is use of the qualitative data that this study produced. The final two questions of the demographics and background questionnaire asked for participants to explain the reasons that they chose to pursue their specific graduate training program and also asked about any other significant cultural experiences that the participants may have experienced. Qualitative research is a fitting method for examining cultural immersion experiences, as evidenced by the strong qualitative evidence supporting cultural immersion. Pursuing this data that already exists from this study may lead to much greater levels of insight as to the current results of the study.

Future studies could be designed to address the limitations of the present study. This study could be replicated with a larger sample to potentially increase the study's statistical power. Replicating this research with different samples may also lead to greater generalizability of the results. For example, replicating this study in less geographically remote locations could allow for comparisons to be made in multicultural knowledge and awareness scores and

universal-diverse orientation scores between these samples. Any differences could be indicative of the multiculturalism of living in the geographic and culturally distinct locations utilized for this study.

Next, much of the cultural immersion literature acknowledges the risk of self-selection bias. It is possible that the participants who would choose such an experience would answer the study's survey differently than randomly selected participants. Future studies could utilize random assignment in order to control for self-selection bias.

More research is needed relating self-report multicultural competence measures to reports from clients or independent observers. Because these findings have produced mixed results (Cartwright, Daniels, & Zhang, 2008; Dillon et al., 2016; Gonzalez, 2015), more research could explore the efficacy of self-report MCC scales. Findings from the present study could also be expanded by use of another form of measurement, such as through client rated or independent observer rated scores. For example, use of a client rated scale could expand upon these findings. For example, Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington, and Utsey (2013) created a relatively new assessment tool measuring the construct of cultural humility. These authors described that, "cultural humility involves the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the client" (p. 354). This measure of cultural humility may offer advantages being a client report measure as opposed to the self-report means of most of the cultural competence measures.

Future studies could also control for participants' other cultural experiences. Although findings from the present study explore cultural immersion in the form of geographic relocation, it is possible that participants could have been exposed to other culturally impactful experiences that may have affected the study results. Controlling for other cultural experiences could allow



for better attribution of differences in multicultural competence being due to the cultural immersion experience.

### **Conclusions**

This study produced a very racially diverse sample of participants from the geographically and culturally distinct locations of Alaska and Hawaii. This study was designed to measure differences in universal-diverse orientation and multicultural knowledge and awareness based on cultural immersion, as measured by time lived in the location of graduate training prior to beginning that training. Accordingly, the first two research questions inquired about these differences, yet neither resulted in any statistically significant results. This finding was inconsistent with much of the cultural immersion literature previously. However, being that this study was quantitative in nature, few results have been published utilizing quantitative means (Barden et al., 2015; Fawcett et al., 2010).

The study also measured for differences in each UDO and multicultural knowledge and awareness based on the amount of multicultural training received. Each of these findings did not result in any statistically significant results. These findings were similar to research by Tummala-Narra et al. (2012), that also did not find a significant relationship between multicultural coursework or workshops to multicultural competence. However, the present findings were in contrast to several other studies that have found multicultural training to have a positive relationship with multicultural competence as measured by the MCKAS (Chu-Lien Chao, 2012; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine, Juby, & Liang, 2001).

With regards to universal-diverse orientation, Weatherford and Spokane (2013) did find that did find a statistically significant relationship between M-GUDS-S scores and multicultural exposure, as measured by multicultural coursework and workshops attended. Contrary to that

finding, Constantine et al. (2001) did not find any statistically significant relationship between any of the M-GUDS-S subscales and multicultural courses taken. Hence, the findings of the present study were more similar to Constantine et al. than the Weatherford and Spokane research findings.

The final research question of the present study examined the relationship between universal diverse orientation and multicultural knowledge and awareness, measured by the M-GUDS-S and MCKAS respectively. The study also utilized cultural immersion, years of coursework completed, and universal-diverse orientation as predictor variables for the MCKAS. Although cultural immersion and years of coursework completed did not demonstrate a significant relationship to MCKAS scores, UDO was shown to have a strong positive relationship as well as a predictive value on multicultural knowledge and awareness. This was consistent with the results of multiple previous studies that demonstrated the significant positive association between M-GUDS-S and MCKAS scores (Constantine et al., 2001; Munley et al., 2004). This also confirmed findings from studies that found positive relationships between the M-GUDS-S and other multicultural competence scales (Tummala-Narra et al., 2012; Weatherford & Spokane, 2013).

One of the major implications of this research is that the findings may be generalizable to a more unique population than has previously been studied. Because the present study involved a very diverse sample from geographically distinct regions, the findings could be applicable to minority populations who typically are not studied. Although many of the results were not statistically significant, the predictive value of UDO to multicultural knowledge and awareness is particularly relevant to clinicians and counselor educators. Being able to foster greater universal-diverse orientation could be a key path towards increasing counselor multicultural competence.

There are several limitations of this research. First, the small sample size may limit the study's results and generalizability. Self-selection bias and the use of a self-report measure of multicultural competence may also have impacted the results. These reported results may not be an indication of participants' actual abilities to work with clients from different cultural backgrounds for these reasons. Lastly, because this study only examined one factor of cultural immersion, it is possible that other cultural experiences that participants encountered could have affected the results of the study.

This study opens up the possibilities for numerous research paths to be pursued in the future. Firstly, the study included some qualitative data as well that had participants describe their reasons for choosing their graduate training programs in such remote locations. This data could prove valuable towards further explaining the findings of this study. Secondly, this study could be repeated with a larger sample size to increase the study's power. Replicating the study with different samples, potentially not as geographically remote, could allow for a comparison of multicultural competence between these samples. Use of random selection could also reduce the effects of self-selection bias. Measuring multicultural competence from different vantage points than only self-report measures could also increase the validity of these findings.

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## APPENDIX A: CONTACT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

### Recruitment Email for Online Survey

Dear [stakeholder],

You are receiving this email because you have been identified as a key stakeholder within a helping profession graduate training program. My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competence for students who complete their graduate training in remote locations. I earned my Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, so I am passionate about this topic from my own experiences. This study explores how studying in a culturally distinct location may relate to practitioners' development of multicultural competence. Potential results of this study could be particularly relevant to students in your graduate training program. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in distributing a survey. I ask that you distribute the study information and a link to an online survey to current students and/or alumni from your program.

Participation is completely voluntary and carries minimal risk. Responses will be anonymous, and the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Virginia Tech IRB (#17-1176) has approved this study.

To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
- Have attended the graduate training program on location at your university.

If you are willing to distribute the survey, and work with students or alumni who meet the above criteria, please forward the information and link below. You may contact me at either jardonam@vt.edu or (406) 431-4571 if you have any questions. I very much appreciate your assistance.

Please distribute the following information and link to students and/or alumni of your graduate training program:

Dear Student,

I am a doctoral student in Counselor Education at Virginia Tech. I am conducting a research study to explore multiculturalism in students conducting their graduate training in remote locations. I am requesting your participation, which will involve completion of an online survey. The entire survey is expected to take approximately 10-15 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and responses to the survey will be recorded anonymously.

To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
- Have attended the graduate training program on location at a university.

The risks of the study are minimal, but may include mild discomfort in answering items related to your professional experiences. The potential benefits include a better understanding of therapist development of multiculturalism.

If you have any questions concerning the research study please email me at [jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu), or call (406) 431-4571. Thank you for considering taking the time to complete the survey. You may complete the survey by utilizing the following link:

[https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cImaorQqYHnCpKZ](https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cImaorQqYHnCpKZ)

Thank you,

Alexander Jardon  
Doctoral Student  
Counselor Education  
Virginia Tech  
[jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu)  
(406) 431-4571

## Recruitment Call for Online Survey

Hello [stakeholder],

My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare on my dissertation. Do you have a moment for me to discuss my study with you?

You are receiving this call because you have been identified as a key stakeholder within a helping profession graduate training program. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competence for students who complete their graduate training in remote locations. I earned my Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, so I am passionate about this topic from my own experiences. This study explores how studying in a culturally distinct location may relate to practitioners' development of multicultural competence. Potential results of this study could be particularly relevant to students in your graduate training program. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in distributing a survey. I am wondering if you would be willing to distribute the study information and a link to an online survey to current students and/or alumni from your program. To be eligible to participate, students must be enrolled or have graduated from your [INSERT GRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAM] and have attended the graduate training program on location at your university. Participation is completely voluntary and carries minimal risk. Responses will be anonymous and the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Virginia Tech IRB has approved this study. Is this a study in which you would be willing to facilitate this participation?

Thank you. I will email you the information about the survey and a link to the online form of the survey to disseminate to program students and/or alumni. I very much appreciate your assistance. Are there any questions I could answer for you about the study?

Thank you again for your assistance. I will be in touch shortly. Goodbye.

## Follow-up Recruitment Email for Online Survey

Dear [stakeholder],

My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare. I had sent you an email recently with a call for participation in my dissertation study, and I was wondering if you had seen that email or were interested in disseminating the survey. If you would like to review the study's information below, I would greatly appreciate your assistance in disseminating a survey.

You are receiving this email because you have been identified as a key stakeholder within a helping profession graduate training program. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competence for students who complete their graduate training in remote locations. I earned my Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, so I am passionate about this topic from my own experiences. This study explores how studying in a culturally distinct location may relate to practitioners' development of multicultural competence. Potential results of this study could be particularly relevant to students in your graduate training program. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in distributing a survey. I ask that you distribute the study information and a link to an online survey to current students and/or alumni from your program.

Participation is completely voluntary and carries minimal risk. Responses will be anonymous, and the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Virginia Tech IRB (#17-1176) has approved this study.

To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
- Have attended the graduate training program on location at your university.

If you are willing to distribute the survey, and work with students or alumni who meet the above criteria, please forward the information and link below. You may contact me at either jardonam@vt.edu or (406) 431-4571 if you have any questions. I very much appreciate your assistance.

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To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
- Have attended the graduate training program on location at a university.

The risks of the study are minimal, but may include mild discomfort in answering items related to your professional experiences. The potential benefits include a better understanding of therapist development of multiculturalism.

If you have any questions concerning the research study please email me at [jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu), or call (406) 431-4571. Thank you for considering taking the time to complete the survey. You may complete the survey by utilizing the following link:

[https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cImaorQqYHnCpKZ](https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cImaorQqYHnCpKZ)

Thank you,

Alexander Jardon  
Doctoral Student  
Counselor Education  
Virginia Tech  
[jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu)  
(406) 431-4571

### Follow-up Recruitment Call for Online Survey

Hello [stakeholder],

My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare on my dissertation. I had sent you an email recently with a call for participation in my dissertation study, and I was wondering if you had seen that email or were interested in disseminating the survey.

Do you have a moment for me to discuss my study with you?

You are receiving this call because you have been identified as a key stakeholder within a helping profession graduate training program. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competence for students who complete their graduate training in remote locations. I earned my Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, so I am passionate about this topic from my own experiences. This study explores how studying in a culturally distinct location may relate to practitioners' development of multicultural competence. Potential results of this study could be particularly relevant to students in your graduate training program. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in distributing a survey. I am wondering if you would be willing to distribute the study information and a link to an online survey to current students and/or alumni from your program. To be eligible to participate, students must be enrolled or have graduated from your [INSERT GRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAM] and have attended the graduate training program on location at your university. Participation is completely voluntary and carries minimal risk. Responses will be anonymous and the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Virginia Tech IRB has approved this study. Is this a study in which you would be willing to facilitate this participation?

Thank you. I will email you the information about the survey and a link to the online form of the survey to disseminate to program students and/or alumni. I very much appreciate your assistance. Are there any questions I could answer for you about the study?

Thank you again for your assistance. I will be in touch shortly. Goodbye.

## Recruitment Email for Mailed Survey

Dear [stakeholder],

You are receiving this email because you have been identified as a key stakeholder within a helping profession graduate training program. My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competence for students who complete their graduate training in remote locations. I earned my Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, so I am passionate about this topic from my own experiences. This study explores how studying in a culturally distinct location may relate to practitioners' development of multicultural competence. Potential results of this study could be particularly relevant to students in your graduate training program. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in distributing a survey packet to current students and/or alumni from your program. This will involve making the survey packet available to participants at a location that is convenient to you. Students can then return the surveys via a pre-addressed envelope attached to each survey.

Participation is completely voluntary and carries minimal risk. Responses will be anonymous, and the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Virginia Tech IRB (#18-533) has approved this study.

To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
- Have attended the graduate training program on location at your university.

If you are willing to distribute the survey and work with students or alumni who meet the above criteria, please email me with (1) an address to mail the survey packets and (2) an estimated number of survey packets to have available. You may contact me at either [jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu) or (406) 431-4571 if you have any questions. I very much appreciate your assistance.

Thank you,

Alexander Jardon  
Doctoral Student  
Counselor Education  
Virginia Tech  
[jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu)  
(406) 431-4571

### Recruitment Call for Mailed Survey

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I very much appreciate your assistance. Are there any questions I could answer for you about the study?

Thank you again for your assistance. I will have those surveys in the mail soon. Goodbye.



### Follow-up Recruitment Email for Mailed Survey

Dear [stakeholder],

My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare. I had sent you an email recently with a call for participation in my dissertation study, and I was wondering if you had seen that email or were interested in disseminating the survey. If you would like to review the study's information below, I would greatly appreciate your assistance in disseminating a survey.

You are receiving this email because you have been identified as a key stakeholder within a helping profession graduate training program. My name is Alexander Jardon and I am a doctoral student at Virginia Tech working with Dr. Laura Welfare. I am conducting my dissertation on multicultural competence for students who complete their graduate training in remote locations. I earned my Master of Arts degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Hawaii at Hilo, so I am passionate about this topic from my own experiences. This study explores how studying in a culturally distinct location may relate to practitioners' development of multicultural competence. Potential results of this study could be particularly relevant to students in your graduate training program. I would greatly appreciate your assistance in distributing a survey packet to current students and/or alumni from your program. This will involve making the survey packet available to participants at a location that is convenient to you. Students can then return the surveys via a pre-addressed envelope attached to each survey.

Participation is completely voluntary and carries minimal risk. Responses will be anonymous, and the survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Virginia Tech IRB (#18-533) has approved this study.

To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
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Thank you again for your assistance. I will have those surveys in the mail soon. Goodbye.

## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENTS

### Informed Consent for Online Survey

Dear Student,

I am a doctoral student in Counselor Education at Virginia Tech. I am conducting a research study to explore multiculturalism in students conducting their graduate training in remote locations. The purpose of the study is to better understand the development of multiculturalism for practitioners in mental health related fields. Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (#17-1176) has approved this study.

I am requesting your participation, which will involve completion of an online survey. The survey includes three measures: one scale measuring multicultural knowledge and awareness, a second scale measuring universal-diverse orientation (attitudes towards and engagement with diversity), and a third scale comprised of a demographics and background questionnaire. The entire survey is expected to take approximately 10-15 minutes. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to not participate there will be no penalty. Please answer the following items to the best of your knowledge, and responses to the survey will be recorded anonymously. A summary of the results from the study may be published but your name will not be known.

To be eligible to participate, participants must:

- Be enrolled or have graduated from a graduate training program in the mental health field.
- Have attended the graduate training program on location at a university.

The risks of the study are minimal, but may include mild discomfort in answering items related to your professional experiences. The potential benefits include a better understanding of therapist development of multiculturalism.

If you have any questions concerning the research study please email me at [jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu), or call (406) 431-4571. The submission of the completed questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate. You should keep this page for your own records. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board at [irb@vt.edu](mailto:irb@vt.edu) or [\(540\) 231-3732](tel:(540)231-3732).

Sincerely,

Alexander Jardon  
Doctoral Student  
Counselor Education  
Virginia Tech  
[jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu)

## Informed Consent for Mailed Survey

Dear Student,

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- Have attended the graduate training program on location at a university.

The risks of the study are minimal, but may include mild discomfort in answering items related to your professional experiences. The potential benefits include a better understanding of therapist development of multiculturalism.

When you have finished the survey, please mail it to the researcher using the attached, pre-addressed envelope. If you have any questions concerning the research study please email me at [jardonam@vt.edu](mailto:jardonam@vt.edu), or call (406) 431-4571. The return of the completed questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate. You should keep this page for your own records. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board at [irb@vt.edu](mailto:irb@vt.edu) or (540) 231-3732.

Sincerely,

Alexander Jardon  
Doctoral Student  
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Virginia Tech  
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## APPENDIX C: SURVEY

### Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale

From Ponterotto, J. G., Gretchen D., Utsey, S. O., Rieger, B. P., & Austin, R. (2002). A revision of the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 30*(3), 153-180. doi:10.1002/j.2161-1912.2002.tb00489.x

Using the following scale, rate the truth of each statement as it applies to you.	Not at all true			Somewhat true			Totally true
1. I believe all clients should maintain direct eye contact during counseling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I check up on my own minority/cultural counseling skills by monitoring my functioning - via consultation, supervision, and continuing education.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am aware some research indicates that minority clients receive “less preferred” forms of counseling treatment than majority clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think that clients who do not discuss intimate aspects of their lives are being resistant and defensive.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am aware of certain counseling skills, techniques, or approaches that are more likely to transcend culture and be effective with any clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I am familiar with the “culturally deficient” and “culturally deprived” depictions of minority mental health and understand how these labels serve to foster and perpetuate discrimination.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I feel all the recent attention directed towards multicultural issues in counseling is overdone and not really warranted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I am aware of individual differences that exist among members within a particular ethnic group based on values, beliefs, and level of acculturation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I am aware some research indicates that minority clients are more likely to be diagnosed with mental illness than are majority clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I think that clients should perceive the nuclear family as the ideal social unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I think that being highly competitive and achievement oriented are traits that all clients should work towards.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I am aware of different interpretations of nonverbal communication (e.g., personal space, eye contact, handshakes) with various racial/ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. I understand the impact and operations of oppression and the racist concepts that have permeated the mental health professions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I realize that counselor-client incongruities in problem conceptualization and counseling goals may reduce counselor credibility.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I am aware that some racial/ethnic minorities see the profession of psychology functioning to maintain and promote the status and power of the White Establishment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I am knowledgeable of acculturation models for various ethnic minority groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I have an understanding of the role culture and racism play in the development of identity and world views among minority groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I believe that it is important to emphasize objective and rational thinking in minority clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I am aware of culture-specific, that is culturally indigenous, models of counseling for various racial/ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I believe that my clients should view the patriarchal structure as ideal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I am aware of both the initial barriers and benefits related to the cross-cultural counseling relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I am comfortable with differences that exist between me and my clients in terms of race and beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I am aware of institutional barriers which may inhibit minorities from using mental health services.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I think that my clients should exhibit some degree of psychological mindedness and sophistication.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I believe that minority clients will benefit most from counseling with a majority counselor who endorses White middle class values and norms.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I am aware that being born a White person in this society carries with it certain advantages.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I am aware of the value assumptions inherent in major schools of counseling and understand how these assumptions may conflict with values of culturally diverse clients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I am aware that some minorities see the counseling process as contrary to their own life experiences and inappropriate or insufficient to their needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I am aware that being born a minority in this society brings with it certain challenges that White people do not have to face.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. I believe that all clients must view themselves as their number one responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. I am sensitive to circumstances (personal biases, language dominance, stage of ethnic identity development) which may	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

dictate referral of the minority client to a member of his/her own racial/ethnic group.							
32. I am aware that some minorities believe counselors lead minority students into non-academic programs regardless of student potential, preferences, or ambitions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale - Short

From Fuertes, J. N., Miville, M. L., Mohr, J. J., Sedlacek, W. E., & Gretchen, D. (2000). Factor structure and short form of the Miville-Guzman Universality Diversity Scale. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling & Development*, 33, 157–169.

Indicate how descriptive each statement is of you by circling the number corresponding to your response.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree a Little Bit	Agree a Little Bit	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I would like to join an organization that emphasizes getting to know people from different countries.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Persons with disabilities can teach me things I could not learn elsewhere.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Getting to know someone of another race is generally an uncomfortable experience for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I would like to go to dances that feature music from other countries.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I can best understand someone after I get to know how he/she is both similar to and different from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I am only at ease with people of my race.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I often listen to music of other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Knowing how a person differs from me greatly enhances our friendship.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. It's really hard for me to feel close to a person from another race.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I am interested in learning about the many cultures that have existed in this world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. In getting to know someone, I like knowing both how he/she differs from me and is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. It is very important that a friend agrees with me on most issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I attend events where I might get to know people from different racial backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Knowing about the different experiences of other people helps me understand my own problems better.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I often feel irritated by persons of a different race.	1	2	3	4	5	6



### Demographics and Background Questionnaire

- 1) Take a moment to reflect on the places you have lived during your childhood and adulthood.
  - a) In which city and state/province/territory have you lived for the longest in your life?  
[TEXT BOX]
  - b) If you have lived in a second place, please list that city and state/province/territory here.  
[TEXT BOX]
  - c) If you have lived in a third place, please list that city and state/province/territory here.  
[TEXT BOX]
- 2) Where do you consider home or your primary residence? [TEXT BOX]
- 3) In which state or territory do you presently live? [TEXT BOX]
- 4) If you relocated to where you currently live, was your relocation related to military service for yourself or a family member?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
- 5) At what college or university are you currently studying or did you complete your graduate training? [TEXT BOX]
- 6) How long had you lived in the state or territory where your graduate training program is located prior to beginning your program?
  - a) I moved here for the program
  - b) Less than a year
  - c) 1 – 3 years
  - d) More than 3 years
- 7) What type of graduate training program do/did you attend?
  - a) Clinical Psychology
  - b) Counseling
  - c) Counseling Psychology
  - d) Social Work
  - e) Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) What level of degree are you presently working towards?
  - a) Master's degree
  - b) Doctoral degree
  - c) Already graduated
  - d) Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Which best describes your highest completed degree?
  - a) Bachelor's

- b) Master's
  - c) Doctorate
  - d) Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) Are you or were you enrolled part time or full time during your graduate coursework?
- a) Part time
  - b) Full time
  - c) Some of each
- 11) How many years of graduate coursework have you completed? [TEXT BOX]
- 12) How many multiculturalism related courses have you taken during your graduate training? [TEXT BOX]
- 13) How many hours of multiculturalism related workshops have you attended outside of your graduate coursework? [TEXT BOX]
- 14) When is your previous or anticipated graduation date from your graduate training? [TEXT BOX]
- 15) What is your age? [TEXT BOX]
- 16) How do you identify your gender?
- a) Female
  - b) Male
  - c) Nonbinary
- 17) How do you identify your sexual orientation?
- a) Bisexual
  - b) Gay
  - c) Heterosexual or Straight
  - d) Lesbian
  - e) Questioning
  - f) Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 18) How do you identify your Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply):
- a) African American
  - b) Asian
  - c) Caucasian
  - d) Latino/a
  - e) Native American/Alaska Native
  - f) Pacific Islander
  - g) Multiracial
  - h) Other \_\_\_\_\_

- 19) For what reason(s) did you choose to attend your specific graduate training program? [TEXT BOX]
- 20) What other significant cultural exposure experiences have you had, either positive or negative? [TEXT BOX]