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A study to determine the perception of racial attitudes of graduate counseling students

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE PERCEPTION
OF RACIAL ATTITUDES OF GRADUATE
COUNSELING STUDENTS

A Thesis

Presented to the
Department of Counseling
and the Graduate College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Christa F. Brown

February 1996

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

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University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of
Nebraska at Omaha.

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ABSTRACT

This study measured the perceptions of racial attitudes in graduate level counseling students. The participants were 138 graduate counseling students from the counselor education program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha enrolled in the fall semester of 1995. The racial attitudes were measured using the revised Social Scale (SS) questionnaire. The outcome showed a relationship between the number of hours taken in the graduate level counseling class as offered at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and positive racial attitudes. However, the null hypothesis was accepted when measuring a) the racial attitudes of participants in different counseling programs, b) racial attitudes and age of first interpersonal experience with an individual from another racial group, c) racial attitudes and the percent of other racial groups in the community in which participants resided and the age of the participants, d) first interpersonal experience with a member from another racial group and the perception of that experience, and e) first interpersonal experience with a member from another racial group and racial attitudes. The null hypothesis was rejected since the means score of students who had taken a counseling multicultural and diverse population class was significantly higher than those students who had not.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Background

It has been noted that by the year 2000 more than one-third of the United States national population will be racial and ethnic minorities and by the year 2010 racial and ethnic minorities will be the majority (Sue, 1991). The "diversification of America" is the result of immigration patterns, a decrease in birthrates of Whites, and an increase in the birthrates of racial and ethnic minorities (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue in press). America counselors will more than likely be working with individuals from various backgrounds as a result of this "diversification in America." Counselors and counseling students will need to be familiar with counseling styles that are helpful to diverse populations. Culturally skilled counselors should be flexible and have a broad knowledge of skills to choose a methodology that is appropriate to clients of various racial backgrounds (McDermott & Stadler, 1988).

Techniques for effective multicultural counseling will include having access to a broad base of knowledge and skills, ability to develop a trusting relationship, ability to show genuineness, warmth, and reflect empathic understanding as well as acceptance of multiple perspectives, and ability to value difference within the client populations. Multicultural counseling is unique in that it is vulnerable to misinterpretation and

misunderstanding, meaning that attitudes and beliefs of a racial group can be seen as pathological. A counselor must also reflect attitudes that show respect for a client's background, culture, beliefs, and lifestyle (McDermott & Stadler, 1988).

With the increase in the amount of racial and ethnic violence in the United States (Goleman, 1990) encompassing all aspects of American life: businesses, college campuses, and streets, there is a strong need for professionals who are able to counsel minorities. Hate crimes against minorities in the United States have been reported by the FBI as totaling 7,648 in 1993 with the majority of these crimes being racially motivated (Neville & Furlong, 1994). Epidemiological studies by Carter and James (1994) show that racism has a negative affect on the mental health of minorities especially since the escalation of hate crimes, housing discrimination, and school resegregation, and that racism is one major contributor of psychopathology.

There have been references made that counseling is "the handmaiden of the status quo" and "transmitters of society's values" meaning the counseling profession sometimes reflects the values and attitudes of society at large (Katz, 1985; Sue & Sue, 1990). Perceptions and attitudes of both the counselor and the client are linked to their experiences of racism and oppression in the world. The minority client is more likely to approach counseling suspiciously and the counselor is more likely to bring to the counseling

relationship their own racial attitudes and cultural biases.

Rationale

Professional counselors who have no training or competence in working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds are unethical and potentially harmful (Sue, Arrendondo & McDavis, 1992). With the "diversification of America" and the increase in multiculturalism in schools and businesses there is a need for graduate counseling programs to address multicultural counseling issues.

It is important that the counselor be aware of his/her racial attitudes toward certain racial and ethnic groups in order to be effective in counseling. Counselor education programs have a responsibility to educate counseling students of techniques and knowledge helpful in providing effective counseling to diverse racial populations. Vontress (1981) stated one difficulty facing counselor education programs is that the majority of counselors in training are Caucasian and reside in a society that is racist.

Research has shown that minorities underutilize counseling services. Citing reasons minority students are: apprehension, fear, and discomfort and a lack of racially similar and culturally sensitive counselors. In many instances when minorities do seek counseling they tend to drop counseling after a few sessions because of dissatisfaction with the counseling session or the counselor. In many instances minorities do not seek

counseling but rely on family, friends, and the church. Some minority groups, Asian in particular (Sue, 1990) consider seeking counseling as losing face and will not pursue help from mental health professionals.

As mentioned, due to the increase of racial incidents and the polarization of race in America, special attention is required to confront problems unique to racially diverse populations. This study focuses on assessing racial attitudes of counseling students and determining if racial attitudes become more positive as students progress through the counseling program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to measure the perception of racial attitudes in graduate counseling students. Students who were accepted into the counselor education program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha were asked to participate in this study.

Counseling students, the University of Nebraska at Omaha counselor education program, as well as other counselor education programs offered at other universities will find the results from this study beneficial. The results show that counselors-in-training need to make a conscious effort to change some of their negative attitudes that could prove detrimental when counseling clients of various racial backgrounds. The results also indicate an increase in the amount of training offered for counseling

diverse populations within counselor education programs.

The null hypothesis of this study states that there would not be an increase in positive racial attitudes of counseling students as a result of progressing through the counselor education program and taking a multicultural class. Counseling students come into a counseling education program with their own preconceived attitudes and beliefs of racial minorities based on lifetime experiences. This study suggests that the fifteen week course offered in multicultural counseling will expose students to diverse populations but will not effectively change long standing patterns of racial attitudes.

The questions to be answered in the study are:

1. Are there changes in attitudes as a result of taking Counseling the Multicultural and Diverse Populations (CMDP)?
2. Is there a significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the amount of credit hours taken in the counseling education program?
3. Is there a significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the amount of exposure to different racial groups and the percentage of other racial groups residing in the community while growing up?
4. Is there a significant difference in racial attitudes between school counselors, community counselors, college student personnel counselors and racial attitudes?
5. Is there a significant difference between the age

of the first interpersonal relationship with a member of another racial group and the perception of that experience and positive racial attitudes?

Definitions of Key Terms

Terms used within this study have the following specific definitions:

Professional counselor - is a mental health practitioner licensed in their particular field through their state. Counselors could include chemical dependency counselors, career counselors, college student personnel counselors, community counselors, and psychotherapists.

Graduate student - any student who has been accepted to the University of Nebraska at Omaha graduate counseling program and taking classes in the fall semester, 1995.

Multicultural counseling - counseling that has special techniques geared towards helping persons of various ethnic and racial backgrounds receive the maximum benefits of the interactive experience.

Social Scale (SS) - an instrument used to determine attitudes towards various racial and ethnic groups (Neville & Furlong, 1994).

Racism - any attitude, belief, behavior, or institutional discrimination that favors one racial or ethnic group over another which results in unfair treatment on the sole basis of race.

Racial attitudes - beliefs and ideas one has established through life and interpersonal experiences

concerning people of different racial background.

Minority - racial groups that have different languages, cultures, physical appearances, attitudes, and beliefs from that of the dominant culture.

Prejudice - refers to people's attitudes and beliefs which tend to favor one group over another.

Organization of the Study

Chapter one includes the background, rationale, purpose, and definitions of terms are included. A review of related research and literature is included in chapter two. Chapter three outlines the methodology which include the sample, instruments, procedure, data collection and analysis, validity, and limitations. Chapter four details the results and chapter five consists of summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Research and Literature

Introduction

This review of the literature focuses on how mental health professionals' racial attitudes influence work with populations of diverse racial backgrounds.

Misinformation, prejudice, preconceived expectations, and perceptual distortions hinder how the counselor facilitates a counseling relationship with clients from various minority groups. Many times mental health professionals may observe a behavior that is appropriate for a client's culture and conclude that it is pathological because it is unfamiliar or unknown in their culture. Another problem that exists in a therapeutic relationship between a counselor and client of different racial backgrounds is that often the counselor will view a client negatively if they are unaware of their world view and that of clients.

It has been documented that when minorities seek mental health services they are diagnosed differently and are given inferior or inadequate forms of treatment versus that of their White counterparts (Bloombaum & Yamomoto, 1968). The underlying cause of the differential treatment stems from the mental health professional's stereotyping of or attitudes toward the minority individual.

Many minority clients are aware of inconsistencies in their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences and the values

expressed in counseling (Sue, 1977). Many minority clients become disillusioned with the counseling experience and drop out after a few counseling sessions. It is not only important to minorities seeking help that there be a caring therapeutic environment but that there be counselors who are racially similar and culturally sensitive.

Counselor education programs will have to increase their efforts in assisting students to identify and overcome negative values and attitudes which can prove detrimental to counseling clients of different racial backgrounds. A major component of counselor education programs should be to recognize and resolve limitations of culturally biased attitudes toward minorities.

One way counselor educators can help counseling students identify and overcome their negative values and attitudes is to expose them to techniques and tools proven effective in counseling minorities. Another way to overcome students' negative values and attitudes is for counselor education programs to provide the opportunity for continuous direct contact with members of various racial groups. This can be in the form of inviting different civic leaders, professionals, or church leaders from different racial groups to converse with counseling students about the unique beliefs, attitudes, culture, and language specific to their racial group.

A third way counseling students' attitudes and values can be changed is for students to actively interact with

classmates who are from various racial backgrounds. One model of attitude, Zajonc's (1968) "mere exposure" hypothesis, can verify that repeated exposure to a stimulus enhances one's attitude toward it, the underlying assumption is that exposure to diverse populations will produce more favorable racial attitudes. Several studies show that interracial contact has an affect on racial attitudes (Sherif, 1958).

Counselors' negative attitudes toward racial minorities can prove disastrous to clients of various racial backgrounds. In Bloombaum and Yamomoto's (1968) study of psychotherapists it was found that 22.6 percent of the psychotherapists maintained some cultural stereotypical views (McDermott & Stadler, 1986).

Race and Counseling

Race plays an important part in how individuals are treated and diagnosed. According to Halpern (1993) being a minority is a disadvantage when seeking help for mental illness. Another study was done in which a random sample of 313 severely mentally ill individuals were assessed from four mental state hospitals in the Chicago area. The study showed that being Black was a predictor of being diagnosed as schizophrenia. This study highlights that there are major problems that exist in the diagnoses and treatment of minorities within the mental health system (Pavkov, Lewis & Lyons, 1989).

In addition, there needs to be more mental health

centers geared toward minority populations. Not only should there be more mental health centers but the unique needs of the minority client should be taken into consideration. An investigation of 107 mental health facilities, agencies, and counselors along with 120 Black and ethnic clients and non-clients shows that the minorities felt excluded from decisions concerning services offered by the community mental health facilities. In fact, many of the counselors and other mental health providers had little contact with minorities and yet made major decisions concerning their needs for mental health services (Roach, 1992).

Counselors in Various Settings

Counselors will encounter minorities in all settings: schools, universities, hospitals, private agencies, and clinical settings. Therefore it is imperative that counselors have some knowledge about diverse populations. Since the increase of racial incidents on college campuses over the past years, ranging from verbal harassment to violent attacks (Iasenza & Troutt, 1990) college campuses are becoming more sensitive to minorities' needs.

Even though there has been a need for peer counselors to be trained to handle diverse populations there are limited training models for counselors. However, the University of California-Davis' Counseling Center has established the Cross-Cultural Training Committee to train peer counselors in cross-cultural awareness (Vohra, Rodolfa, De La Cruz, Vincent, & Bee-Gates, 1991). The training at

the University of California-Davis consisted of 1.) introductions, 2.) an ice-breaker which emphasized the uniqueness of each student's ethnicity, 3.) a small experience designed to explore perceptions of racism, 4.) explanation of the exercise, and 5.) discussion.

The results of the cross-cultural awareness seminar showed that students became aware of other cultures and their own ethnic backgrounds (Vohra, Rodolfa, De La Cruz, Vincent, Bee-Gates, 1991). The article further stated that 98% of the students undergoing the cross-cultural awareness program would recommend it to their friends.

School counselors also have to work with students of various racial backgrounds and play an important part in providing mental health services to students. Levy and Land's (1994) article states that school counselors can play an essential role in the prevention of depression in adolescent minorities with help from community leaders, clergy, parents, and local mental health professionals.

Counselors working in the agency and clinical settings also have to be culturally sensitive to minority client's needs in order for there to be a therapeutic counseling environment. Since only five percent of mental health professionals are minorities there is a critical need for non-minority mental health professionals to be very sensitive of cultural bias within their client populations.

Models

There have been three models that have been used to

guide and interpret research regarding racial and ethnic minorities. The first is the inferiority or pathological model which states that minorities are low on the evolutionary scale. The second model suggests that minorities were genetically deficient, therefore concluding European-Americans are genetically superior to racial minorities. The third model relates to cultural deprivation which states that the culture is to blame for the "minority problem" (Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992).

These models were harmful and biased against minorities. However, a new model referred as the "culturally different model" has emerged in the past 10 years. This model has four principles. First, being culturally different does not mean inferiority nor suggest pathology, second, racial and ethnic minorities are bi-cultural, third, being bi-cultural is positive, finally, individuals are viewed as how the environment (racism, oppression, etc.) affects them and not as the problem (Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992).

The "culturally different model" states that culturally skilled counselors should have certain beliefs and attitudes for an awareness about their own assumptions, values, and biases; understand the world view of the culturally different client; and develop appropriate intervention strategies and techniques. These attitudes and beliefs of a culturally skilled counselor are detailed below: (Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Counselor Awareness of Own Assumptions, Values, and Biases

1. Culturally skilled counselors should be aware of their culture heritage and value the difference of other cultures.
2. Culturally skilled counselors should be aware that their own attitudes, values, and biases can influence the psychological processes.
3. Culturally skilled counselors are comfortable with different racial background, religious preference, or culture of the client.
4. Culturally skilled counselors can recognize their limitations.

Understanding the Worldview of the Culturally Different Client

1. Culturally skilled counselors are willing to be aware of their negative reactions to racial or ethnic group. They are willing to contrast their own attitudes and beliefs to those of their client in a non-judgmental ways.
2. Culturally aware counselors are conscious of their own stereotypes toward certain ethnic and racial groups.

Developing Appropriate Intervention Strategies and Techniques

1. Culturally skilled counselors respect their clients religious preference .
2. Culturally skilled counselors have alternative ways of treating and respect the networking within a minority

community.

3. Culturally skilled counselors value other languages and do not perceive bilingualism as being a disadvantage (Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Summarization and Implication

Literature indicates that there needs to be more emphasis placed in counselor education programs to guide and change would-be-counselor's attitudes that could be detrimental to minority clients. Mental health services should be more culturally sensitive of the community which they serve and elicit input from the minority clientele on possible improvements or changes in their services.

Studies show that minorities do not utilize counseling services because there are limited members of culturally-similar counselors or culturally sensitive counselors. Interesting enough there has been a study which points to an incident in which minorities do utilize the mental health services. Rosenheck and Fontana's (1994) study indicates that minorities who are Vietnam veterans were no less likely to use mental health services, in fact they were more likely than Whites to use inpatient mental health treatment. The "culturally different" model developed to help counselors become culturally skilled should be used by counselor and education programs, mental health facilities, college counseling centers, and school counselors.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Sample

The accessible population was 215 graduate level students enrolled in the fall semester of 1995 at the University of Nebraska at Omaha counseling education program. The sample consisted of 138 students who volunteered to complete the instruments and participate in the study.

Instrument

The assessment tool used in this experiment was the modified Social Scale (SS). The modified Social Scale has five subscales which are African-American, European-American, American-Indian, Asian-American, and Latino that measure attitudes towards African-Americans, European-Americans, American-Indians, Asian-Americans, and Latinos. Bogardus's (1933) Social Distance Scale was developed to measure attitudes participants had toward Blacks. Adapted from that scale was the Byrnes and Kiger's (1988) Social Scale. A modified version of the Social Scale was developed to measure attitudes towards the five major racial/ethnic groups (Neville & Furlong, 1992).

In addition to measuring racial attitudes, three questions were added to the modified Social Scale to measure social attitudes. "I would be happy to have an Asian-American: (1) walk alone on the beach, (2) invite-home for Thanksgiving, (3) seek help for a personal concern. Each

scale includes eleven items which are rated on a 7 point Likert-type scale ranging from 7 very comfortable to 1 very uncomfortable. The higher scores on the subscales indicate more positive racial attitudes. The coefficient alphas show reliability for the revised Social Scale ranged from .95 on the American-Indian social subscale to .91 on the Asian-American social subscale.

The Social Scale has two dimensions: the first involves nonintimate social relationships and the second factor consists of intimate partner social relationships. The average mean for nonintimate items was 5.78 and for intimate factors 4.48.

The construct validity of the Social Scale was assessed by its association with the validated Modern Racism Scale (McConahay, 1986). The Modern Racism Scale measures political attitudes regarding race relations and correlates highly with participants' expressions of racial prejudice (Byrnes & Kiger, 1988). The correlation between the Modern Racism Scale and the Social Scale is $r = .48$. The face validity of the Social Scale was established because of the clarity of the content of the scales' items.

The demographic questionnaire consists of age, sex, racial background, number of hours in the counseling program, type of setting raised in, percentage of racial minorities in the community in which you were raised. The questionnaire also included first interpersonal experience with a person from a different racial or ethnic background,

perception of the experience, amount of contact in years with each racial group, was CMDP taken, if so did CMDP change any of your racial attitudes.

Procedure

A list of the graduate counseling classes' dates and times was generated from the data base located in the counseling office. The questionnaire and the revised Social Scale (SS) were handed out in the beginning or at the end of class and then collected after each student had completed the questionnaire and scale. The demographic questionnaire and SS were coded to ensure confidentiality.

Data Collection and Analysis

The scores were collected, analyzed, and recorded. Some of the data was divided into groups; for example, credit hours were divided into four groups 0-12, 13-24, 25-36, and 37 and over to better analyze the data. Analysis of variance and t-test were used to determine the significance of differences between the means. The scores were calculated to determine the mean and standard deviation. The scores were used to test the null hypothesis that there was no difference between positive racial attitudes and the number of hours completed in the counseling program. The alpha level that was accepted for statistical significance was .05.

The results relied on the responses of the participants on the Social Scale. Since the subject matter, racial attitudes, is sensitive some participants may give socially

desirable answers thereby increasing the chance that the data was not accurate.

The researcher ensured confidentiality to the participants by only requesting the last four digits of their social security number on both questionnaires. The researcher allowed the participants sufficient time to fill out the questionnaires and gave the option of not participating to those who wished not to. The lack of randomness in the study, participants not answering questions truthfully, and students choosing not to participate can affect the validity of this study.

Limitations in the Study

1. Sample is not reflective of the general population in that it is predominantly White, female, and only measures counseling students.
2. Prior counseling experience involving other means was not addressed in the demographic questionnaire. Prior counseling experience with minorities can change one's racial attitudes.
3. Finally, there is always the danger that the participants will chose socially desirable answers that will reflect them more positively. This could skew the data one way thereby giving an incorrect reading.

Despite the limitations of a homogeneous population, not addressing prior counseling experience, lack of measurement of the long term effects of the counselor education program and multicultural counseling on student's

racial attitudes, this study should provide some insight into the racial attitudes of counseling students and provide baseline research which will prove helpful to counselor education programs, counseling students, and professional counselors.

CHAPTER IV

Results

All 215 students attending each class offered during the fall semester of 1995 in the counseling program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha were asked to fill out the Social Scale (SS) questionnaire (see Appendix A) and a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B). To ensure confidentiality the students were asked to put the last four digits of their social security number on both questionnaires. After the questionnaires were distributed, 138 counseling students out of 215 enrolled returned the questionnaire. The results were hand coded on scantron sheets and scanned by computer. The highest score possible on the Social Scale (SS) questionnaire was 308 and the lowest score possible was 44, and the scores ranged from 308 to 44. To ensure an accurate attitude score, the scores from the participant's own racial group were deleted.

This chapter will include the demographic make-up of the participants, findings, and analysis. Analysis of variance was used to determine the significance of differences.

Demographics

The demographics are shown in Table 1 through 5.

Table 1

Ethnicity of Participants

Ethnic Origin	Frequency	Percent
African-American	10	7.2
European-American	123	89.4
Asian-American	1	.7
American-Indian	2	1.4
Latino	1	.7

Table 2

Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	103	74.6
Male	19	13.8
Missing	16	11.6

Table 3

Ethnicity and Gender of Participants

Ethnicity/Gender	Frequency	Percent
European-American Female	93	67.4
European-American Male	15	10.9
Asian-American Female	1	.7
Asian-American Male	-	-
American-Indian Female	1	.7
American-Indian Male	1	.7
African-American Female	6	4.3
African-American Male	2	1.4
Latino Female	1	.7
Latino Male	-	-

Table 4

Areas of Concentration

Program	Frequency	Percent
Community Counseling	97	70.3
College Student Personnel	12	8.7
Gerontology	4	2.9
School Counseling (elem)	20	14.5
School Counseling (secon)	5	3.6

Table 5

Type of Setting Resided in While Growing Up

Setting	Frequency	Percent
Rural	48	34.8
Urban	76	55.1
Other	14	10.1

Table 1 shows that most of the participants were European-American (89.4%), Table 2 shows that the majority were female (74.6%), Table 3 states most (67.4%) were European-American female, Table 4 indicates that the majority (70.3%) were enrolled in community counseling, and Table 5 states that a large portion (55.1%) grew up in an urban setting. Tables 1 through 5 state that the majority of the participants were European-American females who grew up in the urban area and are enrolled in the community counseling program.

Findings and Analysis

The purpose of this study was to measure the perception of racial attitudes in graduate counseling students. The following questions were selected for this study:

1. Are there changes in attitudes as a result of taking (CMDP)?
2. Is there a significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the amount of credit hours taken in the counselor education program?
3. Is there a significant difference between racial

attitudes and the amount of exposure to different racial groups and the percentage of minorities residing in the community while growing up?

4. Is there a significant difference between school counselors, community counselors, college student personnel and racial attitudes?
5. Is there a significant difference between the age of first interpersonal relationship with a member of another racial group and perception of that experience and positive racial attitudes?

Question 1: Are there changes in attitudes as a result of taking CMDP?

Sixty one (44.2%) of the 138 participants in this study had taken CMDP and 77 (55.8%) had not taken CMDP. The mean score of participants who had taken CMDP was 271.6721 and the mean score of those who had not taken CMDP was 253.2226. Group 1 represents those who have taken CMDP and Group 2 represents those who had not taken CMDP.

Table 6

Significant Difference Between Participants Who Have Taken CMDP and Those Who Have Not

Variable	Num of Cases	Mean	t val	DF	2-tail
Group 1	61	271.6721			
Group 2	77	253.2226	2.57	126.97	.011

A t-test was used to determine the mean difference between participants who had taken CMDP and those who had not taken CMDP. The significance of difference was .011. Since the alpha level that is accepted for statistical significance is .05 and the significance of difference between the mean of participants who have taken CMDP and those who have not is .011 the null hypothesis is rejected.

Thirty seven (60.1%) participants who had taken CMDP said that CMDP did change their racial attitudes, and 24 (39.3%) participants said that CMDP did not change any of their attitudes. The mean score on the Social Scale (SS) questionnaire for those who stated that CMDP did change their attitudes was 271.8649 and the mean score for those who stated that CMDP did not change their attitudes was 271.3750. Table 7 shows the mean of those who have taken CMDP and state that the course changed their attitudes and those who stated that it did not. Group 1 represents those who indicated a change in attitude Group 2 represents those who did not indicate a change.

Table 7

Significant Difference Between Perceived Change in Attitude and No Change in Attitude

Variable	Num of Cases	Mean	t val	DF	2-tail
Group 1	37	271.8649			
Group 2	34	271.3750	.05	40.20	.957

According to the t-test that was used to determine the difference, the means of participants who stated that CMDP changed their attitudes toward the other racial groups and participants who stated that CMDP did not change their attitudes toward other racial groups was not significantly different (.957). This means that the null hypothesis in this case was accepted.

Question 2: Is there a significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the amount of credit hours taken in the counselor education program?

The credit hours were divided into four groups, 0-12 hours, 13-24 hours, 25-36 hours, and 37 or more.

Table 8

Mean Difference Between Credit Hours and Positive Racial Attitudes

Credit Hours	Frequency	Percent	Mean
0-12	52	37.7	245.8400
13-24	26	18.8	269.6154
25-36	23	16.7	276.5652
37 or more	37	26.8	267.5946

In order to find out if there is a significant difference between the completion of credit hours in the counseling program and racial attitudes, analysis of variance was employed.

Table 9

Significant Difference Between the Means

Sum of Sq	DF	Mean Sq	F	Sig of F
18358.734	3	6119.578	3.279	.023

In order to find out where the significant difference lay, a Scheffe test was used.

Table 10

Significant Differences Between Credit Hours

D.F.	Sum of Sq	Mean Sq	F ratio	F prob
3	20568.5551	6856.1850	3.7069	.0134

The Scheffe test indicated that the significant difference (.0134) was between the 0-12 credit hours and the 25-36 credit hour groups. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Question 3: Is there a significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the percentage of other racial groups residing in the community while growing up?

The percentages of racial groups residing in the community while growing up were divided into five groups. Group 1 (low through 60) meaning that the community in which the participant resided in was heterogeneous as far as racial groups are concerned. Group 2 (61 through 70) means that the community in which the participant resided in was fairly heterogeneous in different racial groups. Group 3 (71 through 80) the community was fairly homogenous and

Group 4 (81 through 91) was mostly homogenous and Group 5 (19-100) predominately consisted of the participant's own racial group.

Table 11

Diversity in Participant's Community While Growing Up

Value	Frequency	Percent
1	16	11.6
2	10	7.2
3	16	11.6
4	30	21.7
5	64	46.4

Analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the percentage of other groups residing in the community while growing up.

Table 12

Significant Difference in Positive Attitude and Percent of Racial Groups Residing in Community

Sum of Sq	DF	Mean	F	Sig of F
14027.743	4	3506.936	1.808	.131

There is no significant difference between the racial attitudes and percent of other racial groups in community while growing up. The significance of the F value was .131

and since the alpha level accepted for statistical significance is .05, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Question 4:- Is there significant difference between school counselors, community counselors, college student personnel counselors and racial attitudes?

Table 13

Participants Enrolled in Different Programs and the Means of Their Racial Attitude Scores

Program	Frequency	Mean
Community Counseling	97	261.4845
College Student Personnel	11	276.0000
Gerontology	4	254.0000
School Counseling (elem)	20	257.7000
School Counseling (secon)	4	248.5000

Analysis of variance was run to determine if there was a significant difference between the means.

Table 14

Significant Difference Between the Means of Participants Enrolled in Different Programs

Sum of Sq	d.f.	Mean Sq	F	Sig.
3502.5732	4	875.6433	.4391	.7801

The F value's significance was only .7801 therefore there is no significant difference between students enrolled

in different programs.

Question 5: Is there a significant difference between the age of the first interpersonal experience with a member of another racial group and perceptions of that experience and positive racial attitudes?

The first portion of the question to be answered will be is there a significant difference between the perception of the first interpersonal reaction to a member of another racial group and positive racial attitudes.

Table 15

Mean Difference Between First Interpersonal Relationship and Positive Attitude

Value	sum	mean	std dev	variance	cases
Very unc	1937.00	242.1250	88.7781	7881.5536	8
Uncom	524.00	262.0000	5.6569	32.0000	2
Smw Unc	2289.00	254.3333	46.7065	2181.5000	9
Neither	4164.00	260.2500	41.3191	1707.2667	16
Smw Com	5085.00	242.1429	46.4040	2153.3286	21
Com	13900.00	267.3977	35.5608	1264.5701	52
Very com	6512.00	283.1304	33.3866	1114.6640	23

Analysis of variance was used to determine if there was a significant difference between perception of the first interpersonal experience and positive racial attitudes.

Table 16

Significant Difference Between Perception and Racial Attitude

Sum of Sq	DF	Mean Sq	F	Sig.
23692.4023	6	3948.7337	2.1257	.0549

Table 17 shows that there was no significant difference (.0549) between perception of first interpersonal experience and positive racial attitudes.

The second portion of the question to be answered focused on a significant difference between age of first interpersonal experience and racial attitudes.

The ages of the first interpersonal experience with a member of another racial group were divided up into 4 groups: Group 1 (0-5), Group 2 (6-10), Group 3 (11-18), and Group 4 (19 and up) in order to calculate the difference.

Table 17

Significant Difference Between Perception of First Interpersonal Experience and Positive Racial Attitude

Variable	Sum	Mean	Std Dev	Variance	Case
1	7168.00	265.4815	54.7697	2999.7208	27
2	9264.00	257.3333	44.9863	2023.7714	36
2	12701.00	264.6042	38.0446	1447.3932	48
4	5414.00	257.8095	43.9518	1931.7619	21

Analysis of variance was computed to determine if there

was a significant difference between the age of the first interpersonal experience and racial attitudes.

Table 18

Significant Difference Between Age and First Experience

Sum Sq	DF	Mean Sq	F	Sig
1795.1708	3	598.3903	.2998	.8255

There was no significant difference between age of first experience and first interpersonal experience with racial attitude.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Summary

Counselor education programs, professional counselors, and would-be-counselors need to be aware of their racial attitudes in order to provide proper professional services to racial minorities. Counselors and counseling students need to be culturally skilled by making a conscious effort to interact with different cultures or attend workshops which provide specialized training in counseling diverse populations.

The purpose of this study is to measure the perception of racial attitudes in graduate counseling students. The students (138) who were accepted into the counselor education program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha chose to participate in this study. The Social Scale (SS) and a demographic questionnaire were used to gather information.

From an analysis of the study, the null hypothesis was rejected at the alpha level of .05. The null hypothesis was rejected when it was discovered that there was a significant difference in the change of racial attitudes in favor of those students who had taken CMDP. There was not a significant difference between the age at which the student experienced their first interpersonal relationship with a member of another racial group and positive racial attitudes.

Conclusion

The majority of the students who participated in this study were European-American females (67.4%), were enrolled in the community counseling program (70.3%), and grew up in an urban setting (55.1%). The answers to the questions directly related to the hypothesis of this study are as follows:

- 1.) The results of the t-test (.011) indicated that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of students who had taken CMDP and those who had not taken CMDP.
- 2.) The t-test ($t=.957$) shows that there is no significant difference between those who have taken CMDP and report an attitude change and those who have taken CMDP and do not report an attitude change.
- 3.) There was a significant difference (.023) between positive racial attitudes and the amount of credit hours taken in the counselor education program. A Scheffe test was used to determine where the difference laid, and found the difference was present between the 0-12 and 25-36 credit hour categories.
- 4.) There is no significant difference between positive racial attitudes and the percentage of other racial groups residing in the community while growing up (.131).
- 5.) There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students enrolled in the school counseling,

community counseling, college student personnel counseling programs and racial attitudes (.7801).

6.) There is no significant difference between the perception of the first interpersonal experience with a member of another racial group and positive racial attitudes (.0549).

7.) There is no significance difference between age of age of first interpersonal experience and positive racial attitudes (.8255).

Responses to individual items on the Social Scale (SS) indicate that participants tend to have problems with dating someone from another race and going to someone of another race for spiritual counseling.

Even though the null hypothesis was accepted in most of the cases this does not indicate that racial attitudes should not be addressed within the University of Nebraska at Omaha counselor education program and other counselor education programs at other universities. This study has provided baseline data on the racial attitudes of graduate level counseling students which can serve as a basis for further research in this area.

Recommendations

This study did not provide explicit data calling for more education in dealing with diverse populations. Through observation and experiences the researcher thinks there needs to be a conscious effort on the part of counselor education programs, students, and professional counselors to

become more knowledgeable about serving these unique populations with the inclusion of more classes specializing in helping diverse populations instead of one 15 week course. This was evident in the fact that there was a significant difference between students who had taken the CMDP course and students who had not taken the course. This study also indicated that there was no significant difference regarding the change of attitudes as a result of being enrolled in the course, these results require further investigation.

Forums need to be held to discuss the special problems racial minorities must confront. Civic leaders, church leaders, and community leaders of various racial backgrounds should be invited to discuss issues confronting specific populations to give counseling students a better understanding and appreciation of minority issues.

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Appendix A
Social Scale

Social Scale

This questionnaire is designed to measure how comfortable you would feel in certain situations involving a member of a different racial group. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer each item as carefully and accurately as you can.

Directions: Using the following 7-point scale, state how comfortable you would feel in each condition listed below. Write in your response to the left of each item number.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very uncomfortable	uncomfortable	somewhat uncomfortable	neither	somewhat comfortable	comfortable	very comfortable

I believe I would be happy to have an African American (Black):

1. _____ as my roommate
2. _____ rent my home from me
3. _____ as my spiritual counselor
4. _____ as my personal physician
5. _____ as governor of my state
6. _____ as president of the U.S.
7. _____ as a dance partner
8. _____ as someone I would date
9. _____ as someone I would walk alone on the beach with
10. _____ as someone I would invite home for Thanksgiving
11. _____ as someone I would seek help for a personal concern

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very uncomfortable	uncomfortable	somewhat uncomfortable	neither	somewhat comfortable	comfortable	very comfortable

I believe I would be happy to have a Latino/ a (Hispanic):

1. _____ as my roommate
2. _____ rent my home from me
3. _____ as my spiritual counselor
4. _____ as my personal physician
5. _____ as governor of my state
6. _____ as president of the U.S.
7. _____ as a dance partner
8. _____ as someone I would date
9. _____ as someone I would walk alone on the beach with
10. _____ as someone I would invite home for Thanksgiving
11. _____ as someone I would seek help for a personal concern

I believe I would be happy to have an European American (White):

1. _____ as my roommate
2. _____ rent my home from me
3. _____ as my spiritual counselor
4. _____ as my personal physician
5. _____ as governor of my state
6. _____ as president of the U.S.
7. _____ as a dance partner
8. _____ as someone I would date
9. _____ as someone I would walk alone on the beach with

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very uncomfortable	uncomfortable	somewhat uncomfortable	neither	somewhat comfortable	comfortable	very comfortable

10. _____ as someone I would invite home for Thanksgiving
11. _____ as someone I would seek help for a personal concern

I believe I would be happy to have an Asian American:

1. _____ as my roommate
2. _____ rent my home from me
3. _____ as my spiritual counselor
4. _____ as my personal physician
5. _____ as governor of my state
6. _____ as president of the U.S.
7. _____ as a dance partner
8. _____ as someone I would date
9. _____ as someone I would walk alone on the beach with
10. _____ as someone I would invite home for Thanksgiving
11. _____ as someone I would seek help for a personal concern

I believe I would be happy to have an American Indian:

1. _____ as my roommate
2. _____ rent my home from me
3. _____ as my spiritual counselor
4. _____ as my personal physician
5. _____ as governor of my state
6. _____ as president of the U.S.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very	uncomfortable	somewhat	neither	somewhat	comfortable	very
uncomfortable		uncomfortable		comfortable		comfortable

- 7. _____ as a dance partner
- 8. _____ as someone I would date
- 9. _____ as someone I would walk alone on the beach with
- 10. _____ as someone I would invite home for Thanksgiving
- 11. _____ as someone I would seek help for a personal concern

Appendix B
Demographic Questionnaire

Dear Counseling Students,

I am a graduating student completing a Master's Degree in Community counseling at UNO. As a final requirement for my degree I am writing a thesis titled:

A Study to Determine the Perception of Racial Attitudes of Graduate Counseling Students.

1. Your Age _____

2. Your Ethnicity/Racial background

_____ European-American (White)

_____ Asian-American

_____ American-Indian

_____ African-American

_____ Latino (Hispanic)

3. _____ Male _____ Female

4. How many credit hours have you completed in the graduate counseling program? _____

5. What program are you enrolled in?

_____ Community Counseling

_____ College Student Personnel

_____ Gerontology

_____ School Counseling (elementary)

_____ School Counseling (secondary)

6. What type or setting did you grow up in?

_____ rural _____ urban
_____ other please specify _____

7. Please indicate the percentage of each multicultural/racial group that was present in the community in which you grew up.

European-American (White) _____ %
Asian-American _____ %
American-Indian _____ %
African-American _____ %
Latino (Hispanic) _____ %

8. At what age did you first have your FIRST interpersonal experience with each of the following ethnic/racial groups that is different from your own ethnic/racial group.

_____ European-American (White)
_____ Asian-American
_____ American-Indian
_____ African-American
_____ Latino (Hispanic)

9. Please describe the experience _____

10. How did you perceive the experience. Please circle your answer.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very uncomfortable	uncomfortable	somewhat uncomfortable	neither	somewhat comfortable	comfortable	very comfortable

11. What has been the total amount of time in years that you have had significant contact with each racial group?

- _____ European-American (White)
- _____ Asian-American
- _____ American-Indian
- _____ African-American
- _____ Latino (Hispanic)

12. Have you taken multicultural counseling 8520? _____

13. Did it change any of your racial attitudes?

_____ yes _____ no