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Exploration of gendered patterns in counseling students' perception of training experiences

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EXPLORATION OF GENDERED PATTERNS IN COUNSELING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TRAINING EXPERIENCES

A Dissertation

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The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
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Yukio Fujikura
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EXPLORATION OF GENDERED PATTERNS IN COUNSELING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TRAINING EXPERIENCES

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research is dedicated to the following devoted teachers at the College of William and Mary: Dr. Whalon, Dr. Douglass, Dr. Brendel, Dr. Foster, Dr. McAdams, Dr. Bryan, and Ms. Laurie Rokutani. I must also dedicate this research to those who kept encouraging and mentoring me as a Master’s student at Old Dominion University: Dr. Lovell, Dr. McAuliffe, Dr. Jurgens, Dr. Parker, Dr. Brown, and Dr. Lee. The dedication list must also include my caring and devoted site supervisors: Mrs. Faison, Ms. Yarn, Mr. McCaughan, Mrs. Murphy and Dr. Marcy. The dedication of this study, to whom I owe most, include my family members and friends: my mother, my sister Izumi, our family friend Mrs. Coffey, and my steadfast friends Ann, Adele, Carrie, Chris, Dale, Emilie, Esther, Iso, Hoshino, Kristi, Rei and Shiori. Finally and especially, this research is dedicated to the four big wheels that have carried me here and now: Dr. Gressard, Dr. Moore, Jill, and Greg.

Although this small study is far from satisfactory, it owes so much to people around me. Especially, I feel unduly privileged to have received generous help from all people mentioned above. I believe that the excellent education I have enjoyed in this country adequately prepared me to pass the favor and care that I have received down to those who are where I had been. Including transference and counter-transference, life consists of so many metaphors. Experiences have made me see both counseling and counselor education as a metaphor of love.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore gender differences in students' perceptions of their program experience, focusing on experiences of males as the minority and those of females as the majority. Women represent about 75% of the student population in entry-level counselor preparation programs. Nevertheless, there exist few studies that explored the impact of gender disparity among students who will be expected to work with both male and female clients.

This study utilized a qualitative approach, specifically, a constructivist framework and grounded theory methodology. First, 13 Master's level students (six males and seven females) participated in individual interviews and focus groups where data was generated. Second, auxiliary data was collected using archival data.

Data analysis found that male participants' perceived experiences included male isolation in the program, and needs for more support as minority with feelings of disconnection. Alternatively, female participants' perceived experiences included their feeling connected and supported in the female dominated learning environment, needs for advanced training, and lacking male perspectives and resultant preparation for working with male clients.

Implications for counselor education are the following. First, the preexisting mentoring system in the program does not seem to work consistently enough. Designated senior students with appropriate skills and knowledge are good candidates for this role.
Second, a monthly men’s focus group should encourage them to openly share their views and feelings suppressed in the classroom. Finally, multicultural training should incorporate gender issues and provide appropriate discussion topics.
EXPLORATION OF GENDERED PATTERNS IN COUNSELING STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TRAINING EXPERIENCES
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Gender Imbalance in the Counseling Field

The number of female students enrolled in counselor preparation programs far exceeds that of males, reflecting the current demographic trend of students in such programs. According to a 2002 National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) survey, women, mostly White, represent about 75% of the student population in entry-level counselor preparation programs (Clawson, Henderson, Schweiger, & Collins, 2004). What factors encourage females to pursue the counseling profession? What keeps more male students from entering this field? The latter question brought this researcher to pre-existing masculinity studies based on a paradigm called Gender Role Conflict (GRC) (Mintz & O'Neil, 1990).

Society describes certain behaviors, expectations, and values as masculine or feminine, “gender roles.” Gender roles are learned through gender socialization and “may change with the demands of adulthood and aging” (O’Neil, 1990, p. 24). Society regards behaviors consistent with gender roles to be appropriate; deviation from them can result in either low self-esteem or punishment from society (O’Neil, 1990). Rigid gender roles can lead to either an external or internal gender role conflict (GRC). Existing research on the male GRC indicates that men in general not only have more difficulty in openly expressing and exploring their emotionality, but they also perceive counseling more
negatively than women in general (Levant, 2003; Mintz & O’Neil, 1990; Moore, 1990; Segalla, 1996; Wester, Vogel, & Archer, 2004; Wester & Vogel, 2002; Wester, Vogel, Pressly, & Heesacker, 2002). Furthermore, in a study of factors affecting people’s avoidance of counseling, Vogel, Wester, and Larson (2007) stated that men tend to be more reluctant to seek professional help than women because the male gender role emphasizes “being independent and in control” (p. 414), and puts a social stigma on such behavior. These studies imply psychological barriers for men entering the counseling field.

On the other hand, it also seems that the counseling field is more attractive and friendlier to women than other professions. In their exploration of ways women and men define success, and the impact of these definitions on their career progress, Dyke and Murphy (2006) argued that based on their literature review, women defined success in term of connectedness to, and caring for, others while men did so in terms of wealth and status. The emphasis on relationships and care in the counseling relationship suggested a strong congruence between female aspirations in career choice and core practices and values in the counseling profession. In a separate study of the gendered nature of recruitment and dropout rates in higher education, Mastekaasa and Smeby (2006) found that female students’ dropout probability was much lower in female-dominated fields than in strongly male-dominated ones. According to Robst, Keil, and Russo, “The proportion of females in the academic staff had a positive effect on retention for female students” (as cited in Mastekaasa & Smeby, 2006). It follows that the current female-dominated
learning environment in many Master’s level programs makes the counseling field more accommodating and accessible to female applicants and students.

The lack or lowering of barriers to female employment and the conformity between women and the profession in values, however, might be a mixed blessing. Unfortunately, the accessibility of a profession to women may imply that it is ranked lower on the occupational hierarchy. According to research on the history of nurse education (Evans, 2004), Western patriarchal societies have assigned traditionally female occupations with a lower value that require fewer skills so that the prestige and status of men would not be compromised. In reviewing existing research on men pursuing female-dominated careers, Jome and Tokar (1998) also found that “non-traditional careers for men often are associated with lower socioeconomic status and prestige” (p. 130). In his study on personality and background features of men in female-dominated professions, Lemkau (1984) found that men employed in such professions disproportionately belonged to racial minorities. Jacobs mentioned “occupational gender segregation” and described it as “the disproportionate overrepresentation of women and minorities in low-paying, low-status occupations compared to men and non-minorities” (as cited in Murrell and James, 2001, p. 244).

No existing research in the counseling field known to this researcher has explored the current scarcity of male trainees in counselor preparation programs. According to Lemkau (1984), “Consistent with their low status and numbers, occupationally atypical men have attracted little research attention” (p. 111). The gender
gap in counseling preparation programs may reflect what Evans (2004) described as the oppressive professional hierarchy and outdated gendered division of labor. It is also possible, however, that the gender gap exists in numbers without any significance for the profession. In other words, male and female students may differ in numbers but not in their perceptions of training experiences. As a critical step to understanding any meaning or the impact of the existing gender gap on counseling preparation programs, the current study explored the possibility of gender-specific patterns on the ways in which students construct the meaning of their training and educational experiences.

Men in the Counseling Culture

Counseling has been conceptualized as a threefold acculturation process. First, in the vocational guidance movement around the beginning of the 20th century, counseling made a primary step toward a helping profession status by helping immigrants' acculturation process such as (e.g., immigrants from Europe.) At the same time in the United States, the Industrial Revolution and a phenomenal increase in immigration necessitated services to help people assimilate and adapt to their new environment (Gysber, Heppner, & Johnston, 2003; Neukrug, 2003). Second, describing counseling as a distinct culture, Hoiman and Lauver (1987) pointed out, “to the extent that practitioners are acculturated within the counseling culture, their relationships with clients from outside of this culture are subject to barriers of cross-cultural understanding” (p. 185). This suggested that the counseling relationships asked clients to acculturate to counseling by becoming more independent. Third, the acculturation process can also apply to
counselor education. New students entering counselor preparation programs are expected to learn and acquire the core values and practices of the field.

Some experiences in counseling preparation programs, however, might be particularly stressful for male students who find few same-gender peers in their classes. According to the American Counseling Association (ACA), as of January 2003, one in every five counselors is male (Mobley, 2005). Recently, two studies indicated males represent either about 18% or 28% of students depending on the sample (Busca & Wester, 2006; Myers, Mobley & Booth, 2003). Most Master’s counseling programs known to this researcher report male to female student ratios as less than one to fifteen, creating a substantial gender imbalance.

Besides having few same-sex peers, socialization characteristics of men may also have a different and continued impact on their acculturation process. Society continuously shapes boys in traditional ways resulting in efforts to excel competitively rather than to cooperate with others and to restrict emotions and affectionate behaviors amongst themselves (Wester & Vogel, 2002). Thematic similarities exist between core counseling practices and female gender roles, which Gilligan described as consisting of “responsibility in human relationship, care for others, interpersonal sensitivity, and empathy” (as cited in Gielen, 1991, p. 48). It is possible that female students may benefit more from this relative proximity to the profession than their male peers. Traditional male gender role socialization fosters a self-imposed restriction of emotionality, which may negatively influence their learning basic counseling skills such as empathizing and
maintaining good rapport with others. On the other hand, the traditional gender role socialization of girls is much more conducive to acquiring those skills (Levant, 2003). Although it is a challenging acculturation process for most students to negotiate the various kinds of coursework, androgynous or gender neutral attitudes preferred or required for success in the training program are in close proximity to the traditional feminine socialization (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Emphasizing the congruence between ‘maternal thinking’ and core conditions of humanistic counseling such as ‘empathy’ and ‘unconditional positive regard’, Waterhouse (1993) defined counseling as “a profoundly feminized activity” (p. 57). This kind of learning environment may lead to the psychological, as well as physical isolation of male students in counselor training programs.

The more disproportional male/female ratios in counselor education training programs become, the further gendered the counseling profession appears to be. The more gendered the counseling profession looks, the fewer male applicants programs can recruit. This gender polarization in the profession has been a matter of considerable concern to many educators who appreciate and work with gender-minority trainees in preparation programs for conventionally gender-specific professions. For example, while few publications on counselor education refer to male trainees’ attrition rates, high attrition rates of male nursing students have attracted considerable attention from nurse educators and administrators (Scott, 2004). As males comprise about five percent of the nursing population in the US, Sullivan (2000), stated that “the [nursing] institution must
become sensitive to the subtle, and not so subtle, ways that men are made to feel excluded" (p. 254). Emphasizing the valuable contribution as well as the diversity of resources male trainees could bring into the field, Sullivan (2000) insisted on “changing collective behavior in a profession or society” (p. 254) by increasing awareness of the current practice and its effect on male nursing students so that “none of these talents should be lost or ignored” (p. 254). In reviewing the literature on factors considered to impinge on the educational experience of male nursing students, Scott (2004) also pointed out that the stress and pressure of the coursework, which includes feelings of self-doubt and isolation, makes many male students consider quitting the training program. To work with the issue, Wester and Vogel (2002) suggested that training programs should “decrease the degree to which male students are isolated from their peers, mentors, and other sources of support” (p. 375).

Statement of the Problem

Counselor education programs require trainees to acculturate into their specific learning environment. According to Holland’s (1997) typology theory, people’s success and satisfaction in a particular environment correlate with the compatibility between personality types and environmental characteristics (Gysbers et al., 2003). Traditionally, student difficulties were viewed as an individual deficit or inability and/or unwillingness to achieve at an acceptable level (Bemak, Epp, & Keys, 1999). Counselor training addressed these deficits in student performance, by means of individual supervision,
academic advising, peer mentoring, and in some cases, removal from the training programs (Bemak, Epp, & Keys, 1999; Bernard & Goodyear, 2004).

Accurate understanding of the specific needs and challenges, especially those based on trainees’ gender in counselor education programs, may have been overlooked or under-researched due to the current emphasis on the more apparent racial, ethnic and sexual orientation minorities in this country. While counselors and their educators were busy advocating minorities’ rights with passion and eloquence, the profession may have neglected the gender-specific needs of trainees. The field dedicated little effort to recruit more male applicants or to explore the gender imbalance in the field. As for female students’ needs, while emphasizing the proximity and compatibility between the counselor training and traditional feminine socialization, the counseling field might have failed to thoroughly check prevailing but invisible barriers to women’s seeking, assuming, and maintaining leadership positions. For example, Goodlad (2004) pointed out that traditional Western patriarchal values such as autonomy, competition, and success with the naïve belief in ‘fair and open’ are epitomized in higher education, including counselor education programs. It is possible that female trainees have struggled with the discrepancy between core values of the counseling profession and those institutionalized in higher education systems.

Statistics showed a strange reversal, suggesting a possible impediment to female advancement in the field. For example, while females represent three-quarters of the student population in entry-level counselor preparation programs, most doctoral level
programs in counselor education have more male students. Between 1993 and 1996, on average, counseling doctoral programs had almost equal numbers of male and female students (Hollis, 2000). Although the 2003 data showed fewer males than in previous years, decreasing to about one-third of the population, the number of male doctoral students was still disproportionate to that of Masters’ programs. Nursing education programs report similar trends. According to Scott (2004), a number of studies report “the disproportionate number males [are] in administrative and elite specialty positions” (p. 326; Evans, 2004). What factors keep more female counselors pursuing higher degrees or leadership positions? According to Bernard and Goodyear (2004), counselor educators and supervisors, regardless of their gender, tended to work with male supervisees more respectfully compared with female supervisees. While supervisors were more likely to value male trainees’ opinions than females’, female students were subordinate to their supervisors more often than their male peers (Nelson & Holloway, 1990; Granello, 2003, as cited in Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). On the other hand, some female counseling students reported difficulty in identifying appropriate role models in leadership position. Recently, one female doctoral student from Idaho shared with this researcher her great shock when she attended a professional conference where the presenters were mostly male and the audience mostly female.

Two factors may put male students at a psychological disadvantage. First, as previously mentioned, personal characteristics prevalent among male students seem to be less compatible with the learning environment that currently exists in the counselor
education field. Male gender role socialization, including restricted emotionality, may be putting male students at higher risk than their female peers for difficulty or failure in acquiring some basic clinical skills such as empathy, cooperation, and attention to feelings. While the primary responsibility for outgrowing their un-adapted socialization lies in each individual student, counselor educators seem to be liable for facilitating as well as helping all students with this process.

Second, the scarcity of appropriate role models may adversely affect the formation of the professional identity of male trainees. While research has pointed to the great influence the school environment has on students' self-concept formation, men in non-traditional careers have had much more difficulty finding appropriate role models than women in non-traditional careers (Gysbers et al., 2003). Although male faculty members could serve as good role models, their busy schedules, variety of roles assigned, and relative priorities often make it difficult to provide this modeling (Choate & Granello, 2006). Without appropriate role models, many male trainees may struggle in establishing their unique identity as a male counselor. According to a study of wellness of counseling students (Myers, Mobley, & Booth, 2003), “Female graduate students scored statistically higher than male students on Gender Identity” (p. 268). While implying the possibility of the male GRC, their findings supported the necessity of exploring gender-specific needs among counseling students. Moreover, the lack of the exploration and possible neglect of gender-specific needs of students in counselor preparation programs might send a subtle,
but powerful, discouraging message to prospective male applicants interested in the field of counseling.

Since gender is such a salient construct for humans, many have become insensitive to its profound influence on our daily lives. Since the mental health professions emphasize the time-honored tradition of the therapists’ position of neutrality, most counselor educators may have unintentionally overlooked the impact of gender on trainees’ development and paid little attention to gender specific needs (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Some needs of trainees might be more personal since individual needs originate from individuals’ backgrounds. Other needs might be more institutionalized and less visible. For example, a disproportionately small number of female students in doctoral programs seemed to indicate still lingering patriarchal practices and values in higher education institutions as well as our society in general (Hollis, 2000). The male GRC research suggested challenges male trainees could face in their programs together with the scarcity of the same gender role models (Wester & Vogel, 2002). It is high time for the counseling profession, and its educators, to explore the issue of the gender imbalance in the field to further enhance the efficacy of counselor education training programs.

*Constructivist Framework*

The current study will attempt to identify any gender specific themes or patterns in counseling students’ perceived experiences in their training, which is continuously constructed and reconstructed within a unique socio-historical context (Suyemoto, 2002).
Although the constructivist paradigm insists on multiple realities constructed by individuals from their unique perspectives, truth is considered to be co-constructed by those who participated in the very construction process, which makes it "impossible and undesirable for the researcher to be distant and objective" (Hatch, 2002, p. 15).

Furthermore, Gergen, Wentworth and Wentworth posited, "we do not construct our worldviews in a vacuum; rather we construct our view within a socio-historical context (as cited in Suyemoto, 2002, p. 73). That follows that the researcher's position including personal and cultural background cannot help influencing, as well as be influenced by, participants' construction of their realities, and could significantly affect the research findings.

Position of the Researcher

Being a mature male and international student in a counselor education program comprised of 99% White students, the author is aware of his own potential for triple marginalization within a peer group comprised primarily of young White female students. Having been raised and spent most of life in a homogenous society where more than 99% of the population are Japanese, at first the word *multiculturalism* somehow sounded "sweet and fresh". The more I read or heard about the importance of multicultural issues and perspectives to counselors, however, the deeper the gap I came to sense between what students discussed in classrooms and what they actually did outside. Classroom discussions on how students can incorporate multicultural perspectives into their daily lives often seemed to be too intellectual, technical, and polite. I had an impression that
something prevented them from openly sharing their negative experiences and emotions in public. While none deny the importance of multicultural training, truly open and honest discussion of marginalization is not possible if students' historical and geographical backgrounds have resulted in their being too polite to each other when discussing racial issues openly, especially negative issues. In discussing social justice in the classroom, Brooks and Thompson cite Lewis-Charp who said, “As students mature, they get the message that comments dealing with race are rude or socially unacceptable and they stop bringing those topics up” (2005, p. 48).

This learned silence or “blindness” to negative emotions deep inside might not only be institutionalized, but may also be individually internalized. Most students in counselor training programs appear to be very kind, friendly, but when asked their opinion on multicultural issues, they would give a textbook answer every time they were asked their opinion. One can see these answers imprinted on their faces but can hardly hear genuine emotion in their voices. All these impressions and accompanying feelings of being marginalized or alienated could be the personal transference of the author as an ethnic minority. It may be that American male students share the same feelings in classrooms totally dominated by female peers. Female students, on the other hand, might be experiencing counter-transference in their interactions. The author has long held a belief that the phenomena of transference and counter-transference may be underlying most multicultural conflicts. The encounter between two cultures (e.g., Americans and Asians, males and females, straights and gays, rich and poor, etc.) can sometimes create
two sounding boards producing a sharp cacophony of sound rather than a soft harmony.

As an Asian male student, the author must take special care to ensure that leading questions do not elicit particular responses from interviewees. It seems unrealistic to seek complete neutrality of the impact of the author's background as a male student from Japan on interviewees. The confirmability of the study, the degree to which the interpretations can be traced back to the data rather than the author's beliefs and expectations, has been obtained through the member checking of transcribed data by participants, as well as constant self-observation by the author throughout the study.

Research Questions

Research questions provide direction to a study and make possible the research design, and evaluation of the study (Hatch, 2002). Rossman and Rallis (2003) defined the qualitative research process as "a discovering experience." Any expedition of discovery should delimit the scope of the inquiry. "A solid set of research questions gives direction to a study by carving out a piece of territory for exploration" (Hatch, 2002, p. 41). The following questions will guide this study:

1. How do counselor trainees, specifically male as the minority and female as the majority, perceive their experiences in preparation programs?

2. Are there any significant gender differences in their perception of the program experience?

Significance of Study

Many students in counselor education programs often find few male peers in
their classrooms. What impact does such a learning environment have on both male and female trainees as well as training programs? Just as cultural encapsulation often makes issues in the society invisible to native eyes, neither students nor instructors in counselor training programs may be aware of the negative impact of the male-female imbalance on the professional development of trainees. Encapsulation in the counseling culture may also have made instructors and supervisors blind to latent gender-specific needs of trainees. The exploration of gender specific ways counselor trainees' perceived each experience might shed light on the critical gap between the current training practice and their unique needs. Further, this qualitative study could help trainees acculturate themselves into the counseling culture by providing a chance to share and reflect on their own unique experiences.

**The Purpose Statement**

The main purpose of the current study was to explore how counseling students, specifically male as the minority and female as the majority, perceived their learning experience in the counselor education program through a constructivist lens. The study also made use of grounded theory strategies within a constructivist paradigm to look for gender specific patterns or themes in perception. Through the analysis of interview and artifact data, the study attempted to explore each students' unique experience in a counselor training program and identified some themes or patterns characteristic of each gender. By giving voice to latent challenges and needs experienced by trainees in the acculturation process in counselor preparation programs, this study could also provide
Delimitations and Limitations

With its focus on local knowledge and individually constructed realities, the major limitation of this qualitative study was the external validity, or generalizability of findings. "The purposes and strengths of qualitative research and quantitative methods exist in tension with each other, with one more useful for generating hypotheses and the other for testing them" (McAuliffe & Lovell, 2006, p. 309). Nevertheless, the qualitative approach can provide "more accessible, or experience-near, description of linkage" (McAuliffe & Lovell, 2006, p. 309) between research findings and actual counselor education practice, making this approach more suitable to the exploration of the meaning and impact of life experiences on the professional development of counselor trainees.

The fact that this study was designed and conducted by a male international student might have both positively and negatively affected the data collection process. Positive influences included potentially less defensiveness and more openness to concerns male participants brought to the interview because of the shared gender membership. Since English is the second language of the researcher, the language barrier between participants and the research might also have affected the research in a positive manner. Asked to speak more slowly and to repeat their statements, the participants had more time to reflect on their experiences. The language barrier, however, could also be the greatest threat to the trustworthiness of the study because of the likelihood of verbal and nonverbal misunderstandings between participants and the researcher.
According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), a study’s trustworthiness is judged by its conformity to two sets of standards; first, acceptable and competent practice, and second, authenticity. The cultural gap between the participants and researcher, mainly language in this case, could have led to the misunderstanding of a nuance and to the missing of important information communicated either verbally or nonverbally. This could damage two dimensions of authenticity: dependability which refers to the ability to obtain similar, consistent results if the study were repeated; and confirmability, or the degree to which the interpretations can be traced back to the data rather than the researcher’s beliefs and expectations (Hoepfl, 1997). To reduce this risk and enhance the trustworthiness of the study, there was exhaustive triangulation of the data through peer review, thick description, and member checking (Patton, 2002).

Despite the great gender disparity in student numbers in most counseling programs, few studies explored its impact on counselor trainees. Focusing on this gender disparity, the current study explored how counseling students perceived their training experiences through a constructivist lens. The following literature review focuses on issues concerning male socialization and examines how previous studies on masculinity have conceptualized the nature of their experiences and its impact on the counseling relationship.
CHAPTER TWO

Selected Review of Literature

Overview

This review of the literature highlights existing conceptual frameworks for the exploration of the unique experience that counselor trainees, especially males, may face in counselor preparation programs. The first part examines issues concerning counselors’ professional identity. This is followed by a brief historical review of the counseling profession with arguments on the female identity and their career development. Next, the concept of male Gender Role Conflict (GRC) is introduced and supported by the adverse effects of traditional masculine gender role socialization. Then, the impact of male GRC, specifically restricted emotionality, on counseling and supervisory relationships is discussed. Finally, counselor trainee impairment, remedial intervention, and critical incidents analyses are discussed shedding light on the professional difficulties and growth of counselor trainees’ experiences in preparation programs in order that they can be better understood and these issues addressed.

Identity Development of Counseling Profession and Feminist Critique

Professional identity is such a pervasive issue that counseling journals are abound with arguments over counselors’ identity. Pointing out the political tension among counseling, counseling psychology, and psychology, Hanna and Bemak (1997)
questioned, "whether the quest for identity is genuine or based on an elaborate illusion" (p. 195). O'Bryant (1994) stated, "I wish counselors wouldn't be viewed as the bastard children of psychologists and social workers" (as cited in Hanna & Bemak, 1997, p. 195).

While some counselor educators exclusively advocated for a humanistic perspective, others emphasized the importance of maintaining the balance between two conflicting perspectives, both biological and humanistic. Pointing out the inconsistency between the two perspectives, Hansen (2003; 2007) repeatedly argued against the increasing incorporation of the biomedical model of mental health including diagnostic training, into counselor training programs. Discussing the increasing demand and the importance of counseling interventions in gene-associated mental disorder, Douthit (2006) argued that instead of living in the aversion to a medical approach, counselors and counselor educators should actively take advantage of the latest findings and knowledge in the bio-psychiatric field.

The identity struggle of the profession emerged from its complicated life history (Hanna & Bemak, 1997). The counseling profession originated from the vocational guidance movement in the early 20th century (Gysbers et al., 2003; Neukrug, 2003). Then, after World War II came the National Defense Education Act (NEDA) in 1958 following the Sputnik shock, the Community Mental Health Centers Act (CMHCA) of 1963, and the Supreme Court decision in Donaldson v. O'Connor in 1975 leading to a deluge of patients discharged from state mental hospitals to the community (Neukrug, 2003). While the vocational guidance movement helped people adapt to various kinds of new
environments, NEDA motivated students to seek higher education and promising careers and CMHCA helped people discharged from mental hospitals to adjust into local communities. In short, the history of the counseling profession appears to be that of helping various populations accommodate themselves to new and challenging environments.

The focus of the profession, however, was mainly on individuals rather than society, which later drew the criticism from feminists. Feminists have criticized the traditional humanistic counseling and developmental theories for its myopia, univocally defining human growth in terms of increasing autonomy and as Kegan noted, failing to recognize "the political at work in personal" (Waterhouse, 1993, p. 62).

*Women's Career Development and Relational Identity*

Arguing against applying traditional career theories to women, Crozier (1999) discussed women's career development based on two feminist theories, Gilligan's (1982) theory of relational identity formation and Belenky and Associates' (1986) theory of cognitive development. Crozier denied the applicability of traditional career theories to women as well as today's men, pointing out that most of these theories are based on White male identity development models with the following inappropriate assumptions: (a) there are no barriers to free occupational choices; (b) the paid work role is completely independent of other major life roles; and (c) career achievement is in the full control of the individual. Crozier also referred to the similarity in career development concerns between women and ethnic minorities.
According to Crozier (1999), many women, especially in North America, tended to cherish a strong career interest in social occupations, as classified according to Holland’s (1997) typology theory, owing to their emphasis on a connected way of knowing (Belenky et al., 1986), which includes “helping others, working with people or making a meaningful contribution” (p. 236). In their study on women’s development of knowledge, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (as cited in Crozier, 1999) found that women in their study constructed knowledge differently than men. Perry (1970) referred to this process as ‘connected knowing.’ In addition, Gilligan’s research (as cited in Crozier, 1999) found that women “developed a sense of their identity through relationships, defining themselves using relational terms, such as ‘giving,’ ‘helping,’ ‘caring,’ ‘being kind,’ and ‘not hurting others’” (p. 234). According to Gilligan, in contrast to male morality that is guided by the abstract principles of justice and rights, female morality is “guided by principles of care and responsibility for others with moral judgment coming from a subjective, contextual perspective” (as cited in Crozier, 1999, p. 234).

Crozier (1999) argued for connecting the close link between the career development of women and Gilligan’s (1982) stages of female moral development. According to Crozier, young women, who were typically at the stage of emphasizing self-sacrifice in the service of others, tended to choose “stereotypical female occupations, those that allow for the nurturing and care of others and their life dreams would often involve planning for a home and family” (p. 238). Alternately, while women who entered
the next stage focusing on individuation and their own needs, and shifted their attention from the needs of others to their own needs for pursuing self-fulfillment, those in the final stage of Gilligan's moral development model began to find ways to balance caring for others with fulfilling their own needs for greater satisfaction (Crozier, 1999). Crozier's new perspective on women's career development seemed to be very helpful both in understanding various factors behind women's career aspirations and their unique needs based on their stages of moral development. This current study focused on the exploration of gender differences in students' perception of their training experiences. As such, the gender and age differences in career interest and development suggested by Crozier's study can provide a possible polar coordinate system, tentatively placing the collected data in the latter stage of the data analysis process.

**Dramatic Shifts in Gender Composition in Higher Education**

Over the past three decades, higher education has undergone a significant gender composition change. In the early 1980s, for the first time, more than 50% of bachelor's degrees were awarded to women (Pion, Mednick, Astin, Hall, Kenkel, Keita, Kohout, & Kelleher, 1996). While fewer men have sought graduate training, the number of women entering graduate programs has steadily increased (Pion et al., 1996). Between 1970 and 1991, for example, the percentage of women who earned doctorates in Education increased from 21.9% to 58.1%, PhDs in humanities almost doubled, and PhDs in medicine nearly quadrupled (Pion et al., 1996). As for the fields of clinical psychology, as of 1994, women represented approximately 64% of doctoral students (Singer, Cassin, &
Dobson, 2005). This feminization of psychology seems to be a global trend, especially in industrial nations. According to Stevens and Gielen (2007), women represent about two-thirds of the undergraduate psychology majors in the United States, 80% in Spain, and 84% in the United Kingdom.

Concerned with what they call the feminization of the field and its potentially negative impact on the profession, the American Psychological Association task force surveyed trends in the gender composition in professional psychology and examined its related factors. Owing to the assumption that women are allowed to enter an occupation only after men leave for more profitable careers, an increase in women in an occupation is often associated with a sign of the decline in the occupation status (Pion et al., 1996). The task force report suggested that the feminization of the field concurred with “the shift towards psychology as a health service provider discipline [rather than a decline in status of psychologists]” (Pion et al., p. 519). In regard to salaries; the report stated that both male and female psychologists had lost ground compared with other major disciplines. However, Pion et al. (1996) stated that reflecting growth in the discipline, “the increasing representation of women in psychology is a positive phenomenon” (p. 525). Their task force report concluded that “the concern over the increasing representation of women and its potential impact on the prestige of the discipline received little support” (p. 526).

In Canada, the increase in the number of female students in graduate programs in psychology led to a study on the similarities and differences between male and female graduate students by Singer, Cassin, and Dobson (2005). Their study suggested that more
women have been drawn to the field because of their greater accessibility to emotions, high valuation on relationships, and more awareness of other’s needs. They also suggest that “women will be drawn towards careers that they perceive as flexible and will enable them to attend to child-rearing and other household responsibilities” (Singer et al., 2005, p. 215). While counseling and psychology differed in various aspects, the two disciplines still overlapped in many ways. Research findings on the field of psychology above, especially those in the clinical field, could be applicable to and of great value for the counseling field.

Fluctuating Masculinity

Culture strongly impacts humans in various domains (Leafgren, 1990; Robinson & Hamilton, 2000). Robinson and Hamilton (2000) identified race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic class, and spirituality as the main factors of culture. While the definition of gender differed from one culture to another, it generally covered “the culturally determined attitude, cognitions, belief systems about females and males” (Robinson & Hamilton, 2000, p 102).

In most Western and Eastern societies, “the devaluation of women is culturally rooted” (Robinson & Hamilton, 2000, p. 102), and males have traditionally been viewed as the preferred sex. Moore and Leafgren (1990), however, note that “men in our culture are in conflict” (p. v). They argued that the cultural expectation for men is so high and so rigid that it often prevents men from viewing themselves as they are. In their qualitative study of the psychological development of women, Belenky, Clincy, Goldberger, and
Tarule (1986) found that some women who were oppressed by society became voiceless or without their own opinion, a state referred to as “silence.” It may be that some men have similarly been deprived of their own voice. The 1970s and 1980s saw substantial accusation against the male gender role values as “patriarchal, oppressive, and discriminatory against women” (O’Neil, 1990, p. 23). This accusation led to various kinds of reactions from men including denial, anger, and a search for their new roles and values (O’Neil, 1990, p.23). To describe men’s challenge in this critical period, Moore and Leaflgren quote Jean Houston:

> We are undergoing perhaps the most critical revolution in history, comparable to when men moved from being a hunter and random forager to agriculture society. Man is radically questioning what it is to be a man, and it might be in part because for several hundred thousand years, he has been man the worker . . . We are now in the first or second generation of a different type of man; man the player, man who has the leisure and the freedom to explore all those potentials he has kept on the shelf all those hundreds of thousands of years (1973, p. 10).

May (1990) attributed men’s resistance to self-exploration and change to the following: (a) men’s pre-verbal/unconscious emotional development in their early life; (b) their rigid defense mechanisms against strong internal emotions; (c) the grip of the learned socialization; (d) the mask men developed to hide the fear of femininity, which O’Neil (1982) defined as “a primary driving force behind the concept of ‘gender role constrain’” (p. 13); (e) men’s lack of appropriate understanding and appreciation of
masculinity; and (f) their unexplored relationship with their fathers as "the missing link in developing his self-concept" (p. 13).

Men in Female-Dominated Professions

Although modern society has certain labor markets in a gender-segregated tradition, the number of students who pursue atypical careers is increasing (Jome & Tokar, 1998; Lemkau, 1984; Zyberg & Berry, 2005). What factors maintain the lack of gender diversity in certain professions and what motivates people to choose nontraditional careers remains to be fully explored. In their study on men who pursued careers traditionally considered as women's, Jome and Toker (1998) classified college majors with more than 80% men as traditional careers and those with more than 80% women as nontraditional. On the other hand, Lemkau defined occupations with more than 75% male or female as atypical professions. Since approximately 20% of counselors are male (ACA, 2003), the counseling profession qualifies as an atypical or nontraditional career to men. With only five percent of those holding a nursing license being male, coupled with significant attrition rates of male trainees, nurse educators seem to have taken the importance of gender diversity in the profession more seriously (Scott, 2004; Sullivan, 2000). For example, referring to the success in recruiting a race and gender diverse student population in medical and law schools, Sullivan (2000) insisted that nurse education should not wait for male students to apply to nursing schools but should examine their admission processes and progression politics to actively recruit men.
To explore the personality and background factors of men who pursue atypical careers, Lemkau (1984) compared 54 men employed in non-traditional professions with 63 men in traditionally male professions. The study found that men in atypical professions shared the same personality and background factors, which separated them from those in gender typical professions. According to Lemkau (1984), men in atypical careers see themselves behaving less masculine and more androgynous. They described themselves as more subjective, kind, and gentle. They frequently refer to the positive influence of women and more frequently have mothers with nontraditional careers.

In their study on men who pursue female-dominated careers, Jome and Toker (1998) compared two groups of 50 men, defined as career-traditional or career-nontraditional in terms of their scores on the Male Role Norms Scale (MRNS), the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS), and the Index of Homophobia-Modified (IHP-M). MRNS assesses masculinity ideology using a 26-item self-report instrument on a 7-point Likert-type scale. GRCS measures personal dimensions of gender-role conflict in men. IHP-M assesses homophobia with a 25-item self-report scale. Their study results showed no significant group differences for age, year in college, and mother’s and father’s educational level, indicating that demographic variables had nothing to do with the group membership. On the other hand, the authors reported that the MRNS, GRCS, and IHP-M were useful in predicting participants’ group membership. They concluded that the results supported the hypothesis that career-traditional men would sanction traditional masculine values significantly more than career-nontraditional men. They also suggested that men
with more masculine standards avoided nontraditional, female-dominated careers for fear of appearing feminine and gay-affirming. Referring to recent research, they added that gay men were more likely to pursue nontraditional careers than heterosexual men (Jome & Toker, 1998).

Scott’s (2004) review of the literature on the socialization process of male nursing students, Scott (2004) stated that one main source of problems male nurse students might experience is role strain, which Jerry and Jerry defined as “tension in coping with the requirements of incompatible roles” (as cited in Scott, 2004, p. 92). Scott’s definition of the source of male students’ problems is quite similar to that of the Gender Role Conflict by O’Neil (1990).

Overview of Male Gender Role Conflict

O’Neil (1990) defined GRC as “a psychological state in which gender roles have negative consequences on the individual or on others” (p. 25). Gender role strain, or sex role strain, is one outcome of GRC, which Garnets and Pleck operationally defined as “a discrepancy between the real self and that part of the ideal self-concept that is culturally associated with gender” (as cited in O’Neil, 1990, p. 25). They conceptualized gender role strain as an intra psychic process potentially resulting in psychological dysfunction. O’Neil (1990) proposed that GRC should be conceptualized in various ways. He suggests that GRC could be experienced partially as cognitive, affective, behavioral, and conscious and unconscious processes.

O’Neil (1990) also proposed a diagnostic schema for psychotherapists and
education programs to use in assessing male GRC. Four domains of male GRC including cognitions, emotions, behaviors, and personal experiences and situations were assessed. In the cognitive domain, the degree of “the masculine mystique” was assessed. O’Neil (1990) defined the masculine mystique as a sexist set of thoughts and attitudes that violate not only women by devaluing anything feminine, but men as well by depriving them the right to express their emotions and feminine sides. In the emotional domain, men’s fear of emotions and femininity was assessed as well as six patterns of GRC for the behavioral domain. These included restricted emotions, homophobia, needs for control, restricted sexual and affectionate behaviors, obsessions with achievement and success, and health care problems (O’Neil, 1990). As for the domain of the personal experience and situations, the assessment aimed to identify how and from whom the conflict emerges for an individual man. O’Neil (1990) suggested that both psychotherapists and educational programs be more proactive in helping men overcome and outgrow their GRC.

The Masculine Mystique and Impact of GRC on Male Trainees

Wester and Vogel (2002) authored an article that discussed the theory of male GRC and its impact on male psychotherapists and trainees. They suggested that male GRC, its impact on the self-efficacy and clinical performance of male therapists, and implications for their success in counselor training programs be included in multicultural training. With regard to male GRC, the four patterns of psychological distress identified as being related to masculine mystique (O’Neil, 1990) were success-power-competition
(SPC), restricted emotionality (RE), restricted affectionate behavior between men (RABBM), and conflict between work and family relationships (CBWFR) (Wester & Vogel, 2002).

With regard to emotionality, Wester and Vogel (2002) found that "some traditionally socialized male therapists would have difficulty expressing empathy and warmth because of the vulnerability implied by such behavior" (p. 372). RE and RABBM levels in male therapists also had been found to negatively affect their attitudes towards non-traditional clients (e.g., gay men) (Wester & Vogel, 2002). Discussing the effect of GRC on psychotherapy training and the self-efficacy of male therapists, Wester and Vogel (2002) pointed to a negative relationship between GRC and clinical performance; that is, "a low sense of CSE (Counselor Self Efficacy) has the potential to hinder the development of appropriate therapeutic skills" (p. 372). Two factors, a trainee's personal characteristics and perception of the training environment, were found to relate to low CSE (Wester & Vogel, 2002).

Wester and Vogel (2002) also suggested that GRC might prevent male trainees from seeking necessary supervision voluntarily, since in times of uncertainty, male trainees may focus "more on their feelings of fear and anxiety about violating the socialized male gender role, and less on learning through increased client contact and effectively using clinical supervision" (p. 373). They concluded that GRC could lead male trainees to avoid taking training risks and limit their learning process by avoiding work with challenging clients, selectively picking their practicum and internship sites.
They closed the discussion with the suggestion that “future research should continue to explore the relationship between GRC and men’s training experience, clinical practice, and CSE (counseling self-efficacy)” (p. 374).

The importance of their article lies in that it not only alerted counselors and their educators to issues concerning male gender issues in the counseling and supervisory relationship, but it also gave researchers a new direction for theory development toward men’s liberation from the male mystique. A major limitation rests in its exclusive focus and reliance on male GRC theory in conceptualizing the impact of gender on counseling/supervisory relationships. For example, an inclusion of an analysis from the feminist perspective might have added more depth to their argument. As was suggested by Jung, beneath masculinity should lay a hidden femininity (Christopher, 2000). A more holistic approach seems appropriate to the exploration of gender issues.

The literature indicates that male gender role conflict is most likely to occur in situations where behaviors based on the traditional male socialization become inappropriate (O’Neil, 1990). Counselor education programs are considered to be among such situations (Wester & Vogel, 2002). This implies that GRC can have negative impacts on male counselor trainees’ professional development, which include, but are not limited to, restricted emotionality (RE) and restricted affectionate behavior between men (RABBM). RE and RABBM are especially problematic in both counseling and supervisory relationships between men (Mintz & O’Neil, 1990; Wester, Volge, & Archer, 2004). Furthermore, discussing the benefits of emotional expressiveness, Moore (1990)
stated that “there is evidence that physical and emotional health deteriorates with emotional constriction” (p. 183). Good and Mintz found significant relationships between depression and GRC factors (as cited in Robinson and Hamilton, 2000).

The argument regarding adverse effects of male GRC on psychological wellness of the male population can be found in a wide range of counseling literature. For example, Young (2005) argued that some men experience difficulty openly expressing their own feelings in the counseling relationship because of the upbringing they received. Gerter discussed that male GRC may prevent men from seeking psychological help, resulting in untreated depression (as cited in Robinson & Hamilton, 2000).

The traditional male norm of restricted emotionality could severely inhibit male counselors’ ability to express empathy and warmth because of its incompatibility with humanistic emphasis in counseling (Wester & Vogel, 2002). Discussing the negative effect of male GRC on male supervisees’ professional development, Bernard and Goodyear (2004) reported that “the male pattern of excelling through competition” (p. 127), another component of traditional male socialization, prevented male trainees from voluntarily seeking feedback about their deficits.

**Gender Differences in Emotion and Male Restricted Emotionality**

The relationship between gender and the ability to express emotion has been explored in many studies (O’Neil, 1990; Wester & Vogel, 2002; Wester et al., 2002; 2004). Levant (2003) focused on helping male clients with interpersonal issues improve
their relationships with significant others through enhancing emotional expressiveness from the feminist perspective. He argued that the traditional patriarchal values violated the freedom not only of women, but also of many men, depriving them of their emotional freedom. Wester, Vogel, Pressly, and Heesacker (2002) explored the validity of generally perceived gender differences in emotionality and their implication for counseling practice. According to Wester et al. (2002), gender differences in emotional expression are not generally supported by current research but, rather are highly context-dependent. They suggested that men may have the ability to express emotions openly depending on the context. The internalized stereotyping about men's emotionality, however, might prevent them from openly expressing their emotions in many contexts. That outcome implied that the enhanced understanding of the relationship between the context and restricted emotionality could help male clients or supervisees express their emotions more openly in the counseling or supervising relationship.

In their previous study on gender-based emotional stereotyping, Heesacker et al. (1999) stressed the necessity of increasing education in gender similarities and differences for counselors as well as the general public. They also suggested several avenues for future research, including an assessment of the degree of counselors' awareness of basic research on the relationships between gender and emotionality and the development of effective methods for altering stereotypical beliefs among those working in the mental health fields. In conclusion, they echoed a previous focus on the urgency for improving counselors' knowledge and skills with regard to gender-related issues.
In spite of its apparent relevance, the literature review by Wester, Vogel, and Archer (2004) found no studies on the impact of GRC on male trainees during their counseling training process. Consequently, they conducted a study aimed at assessing the relationship between male trainees' experience of RE, one dimension of male GRC (Wester & Vogel, 2002), and two defensive styles in supervision, turning against self and turning against others. They also examined the interaction of RE and the gender makeup of the supervisory dyad (Wester et al., 2004). According Ihilevich and Gleser, turning against others was a defensive style of becoming angry and upset at others mainly employed by those who have power over others and who deal with negative feelings and psychological distress caused by GRC (as cited in Wester et al. 2004). In the turning against self type of defense, individuals with less power deal with negative feelings by directing their anger inwards, resulting in depression as well as low self-esteem.

The study included three research hypotheses. The first research hypothesis stated that “male psychology interns would report less RE than the general population, but more than practicing counselors by virtue of their having some training but limited client contact” (Wester et al., 2004, p. 92). The second hypothesis stated that the predicted relationship between RE and psychological defense styles would result in the negative relationship between RE and counselor self-efficacy. The third hypothesis predicted that there would be an interaction of RE and the gender makeup of the supervisory dyad. The research participants consisted of 103 male psychology interns; pre-existing samples in the literature of middle-aged men, mental health professionals and
trainees served as a control group. Research instruments included a demographic questionnaire, the Gender Role Conflict Scale assessing supervisees' reactions to traditional gender role expectations that might be inconsistent with their currently expected roles as a counselor, the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee Version (SWAI-T) assessing supervisees' perceptions of effectiveness of the supervisory relationship, and Counseling Self-Estimate Inventory (COSE) assessing supervisees' judgment of their counseling ability as well as expectancies for success in the field.

They found that the potential impact of RE could affect not only male clients but also male therapists and trainees; thus, their first hypothesis was supported by the data. As for the second and third hypotheses, while the negative relationship between RE and counselor self-efficacy was supported, the relationship between RE and psychological defense styles turned out to be more complex than expected. Those with higher RE showed more negative perceptions of their own self-efficacy, and "male supervisees working with male supervisors expressed poorer perceptions of the supervisory working alliance, regardless of their degree of RE" (Wester et al., 2004, p. 95). Wester et al. suggested that counselor education programs should reframe multicultural training so that "the potential impact of male socialization on men themselves" (p. 96) might be fully appreciated by the profession. They concluded their study with the following statement, "The profession must embrace this new area of study and work to ensure that training programs are inclusive of all people, not just those who fit the dominant counseling culture" (Wester et al., 2004, p. 97).
Following previous studies and suggestions concerning the necessity of the empirical research on the impact of GRC on counselors and trainees, the current study by Wester et al. has provided valuable information for counselor educators as well as for those who provide trainees with supervision. However, their study suffered from some methodological limitations that might have compromised the findings. First, their use of pre-existing samples of middle-aged men, mental health professionals and trainees as a control group produced chronological time differences between experimental and control data, which might have affected the results. Second, while the sample of 103 participants was sufficient for statistical validity, the return rate of only 41% of the test packets was below the 50% desired, resulting in the potential for response bias. Further, the sample included 66% of participants working toward a Doctoral degree and 34% working toward a Master's degree. By comparing each population with control groups separately rather than jointly, the study may have generated richer information. In spite of these limitations, the findings by Wester et al. (2004) provide the empirical support for the contention of the current study: that male counselor trainees might face unique challenges in counseling education programs and that their unique experiences and needs must be explored.

**Gender Roles and the Process of Counseling**

Based on the argument that previously existing theories “suffer from [the] misguided assumption that biological sex is equivalent to socialized gender role behaviors” (p. 381), Mintz and O’Neil (1990) introduced a new paradigm that provides a framework for differentiating between the influence of biological gender and various
aspects of gender roles on the therapeutic process and relationship. After reviewing over 700 book chapters and articles on sex, gender roles, and the psychotherapy process, Mintz and O’Neil (1990) found differential socialization patterns based on gender, with men being socialized to be emotionally inhibited and women being socialized to be emotionally expressive (Mintz & O’Neil, 1990). They also concluded that “counselors are subject to the same gender role socialization as other members of our culture” (p. 383). The challenge for a female therapist with the traditional gender role view could be to accept her own authority as legitimate. The challenge for a male therapist valuing the traditional gender roles could be “to temper his socialization toward assuming authority with that of empathy” (p. 383). While not all literature reached the same conclusion, “much research has demonstrated association between an androgynous gender role orientation and variables such as self-disclosure, empathy, and interpersonal flexibility” (Mintz & O’Neil, 1990, pp. 385-386). Bernard and Goodyear (2004) insisted that counselor education programs should make much more of androgynous attitudes in trainees, describing them as necessary for building the effective counseling relationship.

Because Mintz and O’Neil conducted their study more than 17 years ago, it may no longer be applicable to the current therapeutic environment; however it did appear to stimulate a series of studies that included a series of the impact of GRC on counseling. Wester et al. (2002, 2004), studied gender-based emotional stereotyping. A study of the relationship between the shame-proneness was undertaken by Heesacker et al. (1999), as well as a study on GRC by Segalla (1996). Finally, a study was designed to examine the
relationship among GRC, training, and wellness by Mobley (2005). Segalla (1996) investigated the impact of the male gender role and an associated character trait, shame-proneness, on male attitudes toward and expectations of counseling. Lewis believed that shame-proneness is a hypothetical construct referring to people's level of vulnerability to feelings of shame in their response to some situations, especially negative ones, that will result in a psychological disruption (as cited in Segalla, 1996). The Segalla study was based on the two kinds of bodies of knowledge. The first posits that the incongruity between the male gender role and the emotional intimacy required in the therapeutic environment should negatively affect the counseling process (as cited in Segalla, 1996). The second body of literature emphasizes the relevance of shame to male GRC and its negative impact on the counseling relationship as a result of “shame-inducing aspects” of the helping relationship (Osherson & Krugman, 1990, as cited in Segalla, 1996). Following the introduction of the two perspectives there was a conclusion that disproportionately few men use counseling services in spite of the nearly same rates of pathology in men and women. According to the Counseling Center Director's Data Bank, this proves to be especially true in college counseling centers where women represent more than two-thirds of the clients (as cited in Segalla, 1996). Wilson stated that “this apparent reluctance men have to pursue counseling is of particular concern when one considers the higher rates of completed suicides of men” (as cited in Segalla, 1996, p. 5).

With instrument packets mailed to research participants consisting of 215 male
graduate and undergraduate student volunteers in a university, Segalla (1996) examined the relationship between shame-proneness and gender role conflict and stress as well as the relationship between these three variables and participants' expectations of and attitudes toward counseling. The instrument packet included the Test of Self-Confidence Affect (TOSCA), as an assessment of shame and guilt proneness with a mid-internal reliability of Cronbach Alphas around .60; the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help (ATSPPH) scale, as an assessment of help-seeking attitudes, or emotional reaction toward counseling having a high internal reliability of Cronbach Alphas around .90; the Expectations About Counseling (EAC), as an assessment of the client's cognitive perception of counseling with a mid-internal reliability of Cronbach Alphas around .80; the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS), as an assessment of a pattern of gender role conflict resulting in negative psychological consequences with a mid-internal reliability of Cronbach Alphas around .80; the Masculine Gender Role Stress (MGRS), as assessment of masculine gender stress in a given narrative situation; and a demographic questionnaire (Segalla, 1996).

The study found a significant relationship between shame-proneness and the male gender role measures, GRCS and MGRS. The significant amount of the variance associated with shame-proneness was accounted for by these scores, suggesting that the male gender role conflict/stress is relevant to shame-proneness that is assumed to have negative impacts on the client's help-seeking attitudes. The results also supported the prediction of significant relationships between the gender role conflict/stress and
participants' expectations of and attitudes towards counseling, indicating that the male gender role conflict/stress would produce less help-seeking behavior. On the other hand, the expected relationship between attitudes/expectation and shame-proneness was not supported by the data. This implies an indirect relationship between help-seeking behaviors/attitudes and shame-proneness because the study data supported the relationships between the male gender role conflict/stress and each of these two factors.

As discussed by Segalla (1996), the main limitation of this study came from its methodological design. The statistics utilized did not allow the researcher to explore the causality between variables, whereas either path analysis or structured equation modeling might have helped to identify a possible causal relationship between the shame proneness and GRC. However, the study provides valuable information concerning the relationships between GRC and men's attitudes towards and expectations of counseling as well as evidence of a relationship between shame-proneness and GRC. While these findings need further verification through a follow-up study, counselor education programs and educators might benefit by more actively examining and utilizing them to improve their training.

**GRC and Male Counselor Training**

Mobley (2005) conducted quantitative research on the relationship among GRC, counselor training, and wellness in professional male counselors based on the previous research of Wester and Vogel (2002). The focus of Mobley's study was to examine the relationship between GRC, the experience of male counselors, and the amount and
quality of training experience.

Research instruments included a demographic questionnaire, the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS), and the 4F-Wel. The demographic questionnaire included information on gender, race, age, marital status, years of practice, credentials held, etc. The GRCS was developed by O'Neil et al. (as cited in Mlobey, 2005) to measure the previously described personal dimensions of GRC: Success Power Competition (SPC), Restricted Emotionality (RE), Restricted Affectionate Behavior Between Men (RABBM), and Conflict Between Work and Family (CBWF). The 4F-Wel developed by Myers et al. (2003) is “a 91-item paper-and-pencil inventory based on the four-factor model of wellness” that assessed the General Wellness and four primary component factors. The primary four component factors included Cognitive-Emotional Wellness to assess the cognitive and affective aspects of wellness, Physical Wellness to assess nutrition, diet, physical activity/exercise, and related behaviors, Spiritual Wellness to assess conscious engagement in religious or cultural activities related to personal belief and values, and Relational Wellness to assess social support from family and friends (Myers et al., as cited in Mobley, 2005).

Mobley’s research hypotheses included: (a) there would be a significant negative relationship between amount of counselor training in gender issues including male GRC and scores on the GRCS; (b) there would be a positive relationship between the amount of gender issue training and counselor wellness; (c) and there would be a negative relationship between counselor wellness and scores of the four aspects of GRC: SPC, RE,
RABBM, and CBWF (Mobley, 2005). Research participants were professional male counselors who were members of the American Counseling Association, and graduate students in counselor education programs who were selected from a listserv for counselor educators and counseling graduate students.

The study found that professional male counselors trained in CACREP accredited programs experienced less GRC and more wellness compared to a control group consisting of male counselors from non-CACREP accredited program; these findings supported the findings of the previous research by Wester et al. (2004). However, no relationship was found between amount/quality of counselor training in gender issues and scores of GRCS. Furthermore, no significant difference was found in the relationship between scores on wellness and those on the four aspects of GRC (SPC, RE, RABBM, and CBWF). With only partial support for the previous research findings, the study failed to prove the predicted relationship between wellness and GRC, especially the domains of RE and RABBM indicated by previous studies. While Mobley attributed his study’s inconclusiveness to the complex and subjective nature of the wellness construct and the difficulty measuring such a construct, it could also be that it is not the quality or length of the training in gender issues but, rather, the clinical experience of each counselor that affects scores on the GRCS and the counselor wellness scale.

The data gathering method seemed to have been the main limitation of the study. As stated by the author, “the use of self-report survey is susceptible to over-rater or under-rater bias” (Mobley, 2005, p. 114). Another limitation was the study’s failure to
control for extraneous variables impacting the participants, such as their work environment, the quality of their peer relationships in the work site, their recent life experiences, and their physical health. At the conclusion, Mobley (2005) discussed the necessity of applying qualitative research in the future to “elucidate the relative impact of training in comparison to past socialization at more formative stages of personal and professional development and the occurrence of significant life events” (p.127). Despite the inconclusive findings, this study provided rich information about pre-existing studies and literature on male gender issues, and it pointed to the limitations of existing assessment tools. The study also illustrated the difficulty the researchers faced in quantitatively studying gender issues in counseling, thus providing support for the application of qualitative research in this area.

Alexithymia

Levant (2003) coined the term Alexithymia to describe an inability among males with traditional Western values of masculinity to express emotion. Using a feminist lens, he contrasted masculine with feminine values stating:

The traditional gender role socialization of girls fosters attachment, emotional expressiveness, and caretaking—attitudes and skills that are functional in creating emotional closeness, and maintaining relationships. Conversely, traditional masculine gender role socialization fosters alexithymia (without words for emotions), discomfort with intimacy, and a competitive orientation—attitudes and skills that are functional in creating emotional distance.
From a feminist perspective, Levant (2003) introduced strategies for helping male clients encapsulated into the traditional male role to overcome their inability to express emotion. Levant’s (2003) program consisted of the following five steps: (a) education about alexithymia, helping male clients understand their emotional limitations, learn how to express emotions, and develop tolerance of certain emotions; (b) helping male clients “develop a vocabulary for the full spectrum of emotions, particularly the vulnerable and caring/connection emotions” (p. 182); (c) learning to read the emotions of others by helping men learn to apply the developed vocabulary to certain situations; (d) keeping an emotional response log: shifting from other people’s emotion to their own experience and accompanying emotions, teaching clients how to keep an emotional response log which includes recording the bodily sensation, describing the social relational context, and going through the emotional vocabulary list developed and selecting the appropriate words for the particular experience; and (e) practicing: rehearsing learned skills so that people might be able to function better in their social relationships.

The applicability of this approach to male counselor trainees suffering from GRC in the supervision context remains to be examined. More than 10 years before the introduction of the Levant’s strategies, Moore (1990) proposed a structured group process. Discussing various benefits of emotional expression such as tension reduction, he introduced a new program called Ten Group Sessions, which included group activities focusing on various areas, reading, and homework assignments. Each week the sessions
focused on a specific area, ranging from basic relationship skills such as listening and attending to family and home to intimacy. Surprisingly, while Levant’s and Moore’s programs were based on the same concept, they were developed in isolation from each other. Moore’s work, which included many works by prominent figures such as Levant and O’Neil, cannot be found in Levant’s reference lists. The neglect of Moore’s study in subsequent literature might indicate a lack of cohesiveness in research regarding male gender issues in the counseling relationship.

**Counselor Trainee Impairment and Remedial Intervention**

Reviewing existing trends, policies, and procedures in the training programs, Bemek, Epp, and Keys (1999) explored “the potentially harmful consequences of impaired graduate students to graduate program, faculty, other graduate students, and the counseling profession” (p. 19). Quoting Lamb et al., they defined impairment as:

> Interference in professional functioning that is reflected in one or more of the following ways: (a) inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one’s repertoire of professional behavior, (b) inability to acquire professional skills in order to reach an acceptable level of competency, and (c) inability to control personal stress, psychological dysfunction, or excessive emotional reaction that interfere with the professional’s functioning (1999, p. 598).

They found that “only 13% of counselor education programs in the U.S. possess formalized screening procedures to identify and dismiss impaired graduate students” (p.
As for contemporary trends, it was noted that in spite of doubts about the efficacy of traditional admission criteria, most graduate programs continue to rely on college GPA, standardized test scores and personal interviews in deciding admission (Bemek et al., 1999).

In a review of professional literature on the competence evaluation of trainees in psychology programs, Forrest, Elman, Gizara, and Vacha-Haase (1999) provided valuable information concerning counselor trainee impairment and remedial intervention. Their review covered the literature on the following areas:

(a) the definition of impairment, (b) established professional standards, (c) methodological critiques of empirical studies on trainee impairment, (d) issues related to evaluation and identification of trainees with difficulty, (e) issues related to remediation, (f) dismissal and due process, and (g) relevant legal cases and consideration” (p. 627).

Their discussion on the types of impairment concluded, “the most common forms of impairment identified across these studies were clinical deficiencies, interpersonal problems, problems in supervision, and personality disorders” (p. 642). Of these most common four forms, male GRC could worsen both interpersonal problems and problems in supervision as was suggested by Wester et al., (2004).

Concerning rates of impairment, they found that “most academic and internship programs (66%-95%) reported having at least one impaired trainee during the past five years, and annual impairment rates varied from 4.2% to 4.8%” (p. 644). Based on this
figure, Forrest et al., (1999) concluded that, on average, each program surveyed was working with at least one ongoing case of impairment. As for gender and race factors in rates of impairment, only two studies were found that included a demographic analysis. On the basis of these, the researchers concluded that “there was a higher rate of dismissal for men than women and for Whites than minorities” (p. 645). With regard to the reason for the higher dismissal rate for both men and Whites, Forrest et al. (1999) referred to a previous research conclusion: “The recent emphasis on affirmative action and women’s rights may have resulted in greater fear of legal reprisal when dealing with minority and/or female interns” (Boxley et al., as cited in Forrest et al., 1999). However, it also seems plausible to speculate that the higher dismissal rate for men might have resulted from the negative impact of GRC on male trainees. Forrest et al. (1999) suggested that future research should further explore the relationship between rates of impairment and dismissal and demographic factors like race and gender.

Wilkerson (2006) proposed a new five-step model for assisting the work with impaired trainees. The model allows counselor educators or supervisors to apply the commonly used therapeutic process/model to their supervisory relationship, “while also performing the equally crucial (and unique) gate-keeping function” (p. 210). While potentially beneficial to counselor trainees with the accurate understanding of the therapeutic process, the proposed model needs further empirical validation.

*Developmental Supervision Model*

The current study examined participants’ perceptions of their training experiences
and explored gender patterns in those experiences. Pre-existing studies on counselor trainees' experiences can be categorized in two ways. The first category focuses on participants' perspectives of the trainee experience; critical incident analysis studies are included in this category. The second category focuses on trainees' professional development within the framework of the supervisory relationship. In this section, a review of a developmental supervision model will enhance our understanding of the trainees' experiences.

According to Stoltenberg (2005), the Integrated Development Model (IDM), the most detailed developmental theory of supervision, is not only helpful in understanding the trainees' development process, but is also useful in fostering their professional competencies such as relevant knowledge and skills. Although a few researchers were critical about conceptual grounds of the IDM and the quality of research supporting this model, most reviews of research on developmental models of supervision supported the utility of the IDM (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Stoltenberg, 2005).

The IDM is based on Hunt's Conceptual System Theory, which described psychological development as persons' increasing their conceptual complexity as they move up the developmental hierarchy (Holloway, 1987). According to the IDM, trainees undergo qualitative changes between developmental levels in three domains, self and other awareness, motivation, and autonomy.

Stoltenberg (2005) described each developmental level as follows: Level 1 of the IDM, the trainees' primary focus is on themselves. They focus on their own behaviors,
thoughts, and emotions; this focus results in strong anxiety, as well as the necessity of more structure in supervision. At Level 2, their attention moved towards their clients. This results in a better understanding of their clients and some occasional confusion concerning their effectiveness and autonomy. Level 3 brought about more balanced *self-other awareness* with more stable motivation and autonomy in the trainees’ cognitive structure.

As mentioned above, developmental approaches to supervision are not without criticism. According to Bernard and Goodyear (2004), although many key developmental models of supervision were developed between 1950s and 1970s with the explosion of interest in the topic in 1980s, few researchers have reported new theories or research since then. While arguing for the usefulness of developmental models including IDM with emerging evidence, Stoltenberg (2005) also refers to a few studies criticizing developmental models. Ellis and Ladany’s (1997) criticized the models on the quality of research that support them. They found “little viable information about supervisee development” in their review of the developmental literature, and described their experience as extremely disappointing (Ellis & Ladany, 1997, as cited in Bernard & Goodyear, 2004, p. 86). Holloway (1987) criticized the IDM on its conceptual grounding. According to Holloway (1987), based on Hogan’s (1964) stage model and Hunt’s (1975) conceptual system theory, the IDM fails to pay sufficient attention to the influence of trainees’ previous life experiences and well established cognitive structure.

Although the IDM drew some criticism and failed to mention gender aspects of the
trainees’ development within the trainees’ mind structure, it could provide a helpful perspective from which to examine participants’ training experiences. Within the IDM framework, the following were examined: a) the extent to which participants’ perceived experiences would be consistent with the IDM concerning proposed levels and three domains, and b) if there were any gender differences in participants’ congruity with the IDM.

Critical Incident Analysis from a Qualitative Perspective

Although the current study focused on gender aspects of counseling students’ experiences, a review of the literature identified a few studies exploring students’ experiences from a qualitative perspective, including two critical incident analysis studies discussed in this section. The original definition from Flanagan of critical incident analysis is “a combination of critical incidents and the analysis that followed as an observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act” (as cited in Collins & Pieterse, 2007, p. 17). Many disciplines including education and nursing have used various types of critical incident analysis as a training tool (Collins & Pieterse, 2007). For example, in applying this approach to nurses’ training, Parker, Webb, and D’Souza redefined the critical analysis approach as “a type of reflective learning that involves three main features: personal experience, reflection, and transformation of knowledge and meaning” (as cited in Collins & Pieterse, 2007, p. 18). Their new definition connoted constructivist assumptions, in that they appreciate the relativity of knowledge and the meaning of
experience. The foci of critical incident analysis are “events that are catalysts for change, rather than on the developmental change” (Furr & Carroll, 2003, p. 484).

Although a few previous studies focused on such incidents during the process of clinical supervision, considering its importance, studies on counselor trainees’ critical incidents are scarce in the literature (Furr & Carroll, 2003). A qualitative study by Furr and Carroll (2003) attempted to identify patterns or themes in counseling students’ experiences during their training. Their participants were 84 Master’s level counseling students from CACREP-accredited programs. Eighty-three percent of the participants were woman, while men comprised the remaining 17%. Participants were asked “to describe any critical incidents that happened in their graduate training (or outside of their graduate training) since they began taking counseling courses” (p. 485) along with selected information concerning their training experience.

Although Furr and Carroll’s study did not include the gender aspects, they provided interesting data concerning students’ training experiences. First, they found that participants reported critical incidents during the field-based training most frequently. New students without any field-based training experience viewed counseling techniques/skill courses as the most important experience for their professional development (Furr & Carroll, 2003). Private counseling, life-threatening events, and death of a significant person were also regarded as critical for Master’s-level students’ development. It was also reported that most students valued experiential more than classroom experiences (Furr & Carroll, 2003). Another important finding was that most
students “did not expect the amount of personal exploration and intense self-examination ... and had not been prepared for the emotional impact” (p. 488) of their training experiences. In concluding their discussion, Furr & Carroll (2003) recommended “further exploration of the impact of personal issues on counselor development” (p. 489).

Howard, Inman, and Altman (2006) also studied critical incidents among novice counselor trainees. Instead of interviews, journals kept by nine practicum students were examined qualitatively using discovery-orientated methodology to identify critical incidents (CIs) with descriptive statistics. Their data analysis revealed 157 CIs with five overarching categories: professional identity, personal reactions, competence, supervision, and philosophy of counseling. They concluded that while positive experiences seemed to contribute to the development of trainees’ confidence, negative experiences were more likely to be associated with negative emotions and dissatisfaction with the training.

Other Qualitative Counselor Preparation Studies

In addition to these previously cited studies, two other qualitative studies using different methodologies were identified. Melton, Nfzinger-Collins, Wynne, and Susman (2005) investigated the inner experiences of 34 first-year counseling students using a qualitative collective case study approach. They used the Inner Experience Recording Booklet (IERB), “a 16 page booklet to enable participants to record their inner experiences at preset intervals during the audiotape review of the counseling session” (Melton et al., 2005, p. 85), and found four affective themes: (a) anger/frustration, (b) disappointment/regret, (c) anxiety/fear, and (d) happiness/excitement. While their research
investigated students’ experiences during the students' review of the counseling sessions they conducted as counselors in training, concepts such as isomorphism and transference suggested far-reaching implications of these strong emotions on their training experiences such as anger, frustration, disappointment, anxiety, and excitement.

Alternatively, Woodside, Oberman, Cole, and Carruth (2007) explored trainees' program experiences through eight phenomenological interviews with pre-practicum students. Their data analysis resulted in seven themes: (a) the journey; (b) decision making; (c) self-doubt; (d) counseling is empowering, being with/listening, and who I am; (e) learning classroom, practice, and self; (f) boundaries between self/others and work/home; (g) differences between graduate/undergraduate, classmates/colleagues, and clients.

While these qualitative studies provided us with new insights into counseling students’ experiences of their programs, none of the studies referred to gender factors, which could potentially influence findings because women were the majority of participants, in some cases more than 80%. Furthermore, most studies conducted by faculty researchers with students as participants may have vulnerabilities due to the impact of power-differentials on the findings. It is very likely that participants may suppress honest responses fearing negative consequences (e.g., a negative evaluation.) In spite of their failure to pay closer attention to gender issues and power differentials, however, it could be useful to compare their findings with the current study’s final analysis to enhance our understanding of the meaning of their experiences.
Conclusion

This selected literature review provided a historical and theoretical background from which the current study emerged. First, the literature suggested that the process of women’s career and identity development is more relationship orientated and different from those of men. Second, survey studies indicated dramatic shifts in gender composition in higher education, especially in the field of psychology. Third, the literature supported the idea that male therapists and interns may be vulnerable to the negative impact of men’s restricted emotionality on their personal wellness and professional practice and the necessity for research on gender issues in counselor education (Mobley, 2005; Wester et al., 2004). Fourth, as suggested by Wester et al. (2004), trainees’ gender-specific experiences in counselor education programs should be understood in light of the frameworks of multicultural training and supervision. Fifth, the literature also presented possible interventions to help male trainees as well as clients overcome the male gender role conflict. Finally, the IDM by Stoltenberg (2005) and recent qualitative research including two studies on critical incidents analysis provided us with general views on Master’s level students’ unique experiences in training programs. However, the literature review by this researcher found no existing studies on the influence of gender on students’ experiences. Together with the literature on a critical incident analysis approach, lack of pre-existing research on this topic makes it defensible to have adopted this approach in the current study. Through its employment of the individual interview and focus group discussion as research methods, the current study
has the potential to fill the gap between pre-existing literature in order to gather the data to further meet the needs of students in counselor education programs.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

The current study explored counseling students’ perceived experiences in their training program using the following guiding questions: (a) how do counselor trainees, specifically males as the minority and females as the majority, perceive their experiences in preparation programs?; and (b) if there are any differences in their perception of the program, are those experiences based on gender? Considering the exploratory nature of this study, a qualitative approach seemed more suitable than a quantitative approach. A constructivist approach, particularly, enabled the researcher to identify unknown patterns and generate themes in participants’ perceptions through focusing on how, rather than why, participants constructed their meanings in specific contexts (Charmaz, 2006).

Compatibility between Qualitative Research and Counseling

According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), “Research conducted within the positivist paradigm has dominated the social sciences” (p. 45). Many researchers in the social sciences presume that “reality can be approximated but never fully apprehended” (Hatch, 2002, p. 14), so experimental and quasi-experimental designs still predominate educational research, including professional counseling journals. Alternatively qualitative research utilizes a naturalistic perspective. In other words, the researcher studies each
phenomenon in its natural setting with an appreciation of the importance of the context (Hoepfl, 1997). Qualitative researchers also recognize the impact that they have on the unfolding tapestry of experience by way of their research and interaction with the environment (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Qualitative findings are emergent from the depth of information gathered, and theory is often generated in this manner. Training experiences both in counseling and research gave this researcher an impression that qualitative researchers and counselors share common perspectives.

Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches to Psychotherapy

Psychiatrists and clinical psychologists in general treat their clients as quantitative researchers do, by maintaining a neutral position to achieve their objective reasoning. Hansen (2003), for example, argued against including diagnostic training in counseling curricula, arguing that introducing reductionism in psychiatric approaches into counseling education would compromise time-honored counseling values and practices. Criticizing their neutral position, Fink (1997), a Lacanina psychoanalyst, emphasized the critical role of the therapist's desire in the therapeutic relationship. Counselors, on the other hand, are traditionally expected to work with clients in a manner similar to qualitative researchers through their cooperative interaction with, and immersion into, the context.

Quantitative research is based on the positivistic-reductive conceptual system that values objectivity, linearity, cause and effect, repeatability, reproducibility, predictability, and the quantification of data (Merchant & Dupuy, 1996). Merchant and
Dupuy (1996) also pointed out “the basic epistemological fit” (p. 537) between qualitative research and multicultural counseling, which constitutes one of the essential domains of counseling. However, humanistic psychotherapy with a post-modern perspective, which includes counseling, values non-linearity, holistic approaches, interrelatedness or interpersonal relationship, and non-judgmental approaches (Walker, 2001). It is clear that a qualitative approach lends itself to studying non-linear interpersonal dynamics and understanding worldviews different from our own.

Hill and Nakayama (2000) stated that the use of qualitative methods were more appropriate and consistent with the humanistic philosophy of client-centered therapy, noting that “our traditional quantitative methods are limited in their ability to capture complicated clinical phenomena [like empathy]” (p. 871). Walker (2001) insisted that the accountability of modern psychotherapies should be more appropriately improved using post-modern approaches, which take into consideration essential factors such as the inequity in power relations, rather than positivist/post-positivist ones such as experimental designs, which strive for the objective truth. Rossman and Rallis (2003) pointed out that “qualitative research has clear roots in certain philosophical traditions, notably phenomenology . . . and hermeneutics” (p. 7). Similarly, the humanistic approach to counseling, such as the person-centered therapy, also has its foundation in the phenomenology, with a particular focus on the client’s subjective world (Corey, 2001).

Paradigm: Constructivism

Each researcher’s understanding of the nature of reality and knowledge and
his/her perception of participants inevitably leads him or her to embrace a certain research paradigm (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). This researcher's view is that individuals construct their own unique reality. The reality for a group of people in a certain environment is different for each person. To value the uniqueness of each participant, the main focus of this study was on the local meaning and multiple realities of each person being studied. This was attained through the use of the qualitative research methodology.

In defining constructivism, Schwandt (2002) stated: “The reliability of constructions is determined instrumentally in terms of their evolutionary viability. Radical constructivism claims a debt to the genetic epistemology of Jean Piaget (1896-1980)” (p. 31). Piaget considered our cognitive structures as “the products of the process of construction resulting from the interaction between mind and environment” (Schwandt, 2001, p.31). This implies that our experience and assumed reality are bound by the process of human and personal evolution as well as the environment. Constructivists deny accessibility to absolute truth or the existence of an external reality independent of each knower's experience (Schwandt, 2001). They assert that “truth is, in fact, what we agree it is” (Hatch, 2002, p. 15). Kuhn considered the nature of scientific inquiry as power struggles between competitive and exclusive paradigms rather than a gradual accession to the absolute truth about nature (Patton, 2002). It is not that we possess a certain worldview, but the worldview possesses us. In referring to Kuhn’s (1970) work, The Structure of Scientific Revolution, Patton (2002) stated: “If science knowledge is socially constructed and consensually validated, as opposed to consisting of
empirical truths validated by nature, then surely all knowledge is socially constructed” (p. 99). The constructivist assumption about the nature of the relationship between the knower and the environment best fits the author’s world view and experience.

This research has drawn from the constructivist paradigm in exploring the participants’ perspectives of their experience in a Master’s-level counselor training program and in examining possible gendered patterns in their perception of their training. Arguing against both naïve realism and strict empiricism, constructivists emphasize the symbolic and arbitrary nature of knowledge (Hatch, 2002). “What is defined or perceived as real is real in its consequences” (Thomas & Tomas, as cited in Patton, 2002, p. 96).

Guba and Lincoln added the following to the primary assumption of constructivism (as cited in Schwandt, 2001):

(a) Truth is matter of consensus . . .; (b) Facts have no meaning except within some value framework . . .; (c) Causes and effect do not exist except by imputation . . .; (d) Phenomena can only be understood within the context in which they are studied . . .; (e) Data derived from constructivist inquiry have neither special status nor legitimation . . (p. 98)

From this perspective, a study should focus on each individual’s constructions of the experience, not the objective facts or events.

**Research Strategy: Grounded Theory**

Grounded theory methodology has been defined as a “rigorous set of procedures for producing formal, substantive theory of social phenomena” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 110).
Grounded theory has deep roots in the post-positivistic perspective introduced by Glaser and Strauss (as cited in Hatch, 2002). Their model is based on the assumption that it is possible to “discover approximations of social reality that are empirically represented in carefully collected data” (Hatch, 2002, p. 26).

With its focus on the theory-generating process, “grounded theory depends on methods that take the researcher close to and into the real world so that results and findings are grounded in the empirical world” (Patton, 2002, p. 125). Constant comparison is the method for making the approximations to participants’ reality possible (Hatch, 2002). According to Glaser and Strauss, “Using the constant comparison method makes probable the achievement of a complex theory that corresponds closely to the data, since the constant comparison forces the analyst to consider much diversity in the data” (as cited in Dey, 1999, p. 40).

According to Charmaz (2006), “Grounded theory has taken two somewhat different forms since its creation: constructivist and objectivist grounded theory” (p. 130). While objectivist grounded theory attends to data as in and of themselves, a constructivist approach focuses on the process in which participants construct unique meanings from shared experiences in specific contexts exploring how and why (Charmaz, 2006). With the incorporation of post-modern assumptions, constructivist grounded theory has turned the cacophony into harmony guided by the following constructivist assumption:

(a) Realities are socially developed, locally determined, and based on participant’s experiences; (b) researchers and participants are subjectively and
interactively linked; (c) the interaction between researchers and participants creates meaning for the phenomenon being explored; and (d) understanding evolves from ongoing interaction between researchers and participants (Guba & Lincoln, as cited in Auxier et al., 2003, p. 27).

While socially constructed realities are given to us by our surroundings, we in turn take part in further constructing them. Viewing reality as a socially constructed experience by those who are closely involved in the same social context enabled the researcher to incorporate a post-positivistic method into a constructivist paradigm.

With the hope of casting fresh light on issues concerning the gendered imbalance in counselor preparation programs, as well as finding any gendered patterns in trainees' perception of their training experience, this study will employ a constructivist grounded theory approach that is not only clearly discussed by Charmaz (2006) but also employed in the study of counselor trainee identity development by Auxier et al. (2003).

Research Methods

Sampling Strategy and Participants

Because the purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of both male and female trainees in a counselor education programs, the selection of participants was purposeful. That is, the current study utilized a purposeful criterion and theory-based sampling strategy. While theory-based sampling refers to selection of participants based on "their potential manifestation or representation of important theoretical constructs" (Patton, 2002, p. 238), criterion sampling focuses on "all cases that meet some
predetermined criterion of importance” (p. 238). The researcher contacted all male students enrolled in a Master’s-level counselor education program in a small public university in the Southeast, which included school, community/addiction, and family counseling programs.

For every male participant who agreed to participate in the study, a female participant from the same counselor education program (i.e., school, community/addiction, or family counseling) was randomly selected. Originally, seven male and seven female students were recruited to participate in this study. Later one male participant dropped out. Each participant was individually interviewed to explore how she/he perceived her/his experience in a counselor education program.

Qualitative research adopts sampling strategies that allow the researcher “to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question” (Cresswell, 2003, p. 185). Such sampling strategies require the researcher to specify and explain relevant criteria for selecting specific sites and participants (Schwandt, 2001). Alternatively, sampling strategies ask the researcher to check that the sites and participants are not simply selected because of a good likelihood of their producing desired results or findings.

Site and Site Access

Based on the researcher’s original concern about the gender imbalance in the counseling field, a small public university in the Southeast was selected, where a Master’s-level counseling program primarily consisted of female students. While many
counseling programs focus on school and community counseling, the selected program includes three specialty areas including school, community/addiction, and family, which enabled the researcher's access to a diverse population of trainees' specialties. The researcher is a doctoral student in counselor education at the university, which permitted the researcher to do in-depth analysis, as well as ongoing observation of participants in their learning environment. While the researcher's familiarity with accessible institutions and its accompanying biases and resulting inattention might increase the risk of compromising neutrality, it also facilitated closer and more flexible interaction between the researcher and participants. Because participants are "the ultimate gatekeepers" (p. 51) who determined the degree of the researchers' access to the desired information, building rapport was essential in this qualitative study (Hatch, 2002). The researcher's familiarity with the program was expected to make it easier to develop good working relationships with participants.

*Researcher as Instrument*

According to Cresswell (2003), "Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive" (p.182), meaning the data are generated and findings constructed based on an interpretation the researcher makes. The researcher is expected to be sensitive and reflective on his or her impact on the research (Cresswell, 2003). Furthermore, research contexts, participants, and the researcher are closely related in qualitative research, and all of them are "nested within larger cultural, political, and historical framework that must be considered as studies are planned" (Hatch, 2002, p. 44). Information about how the
researcher's background and personal views affected the research process and findings can be found in appendix B.

Data Gathering

The current study gathered data through two phases. First, the main data was generated through individual interviews and focus groups. Second, auxiliary data was collected from archival data such as student application essays and journal entries.

Overview of Data Gathering Process

The current study of gendered patterns in counselor training experiences started with an interest in how the gender disparity in student numbers affected their program experiences and the extent gender affected perception. Thirteen of the 14 individuals originally contacted via email agreed to participate in the study. Initial data gathering started with the 13 individual interviews consisting of six males and seven females using six prescribed questions. After the 13 individual interviews, two focus groups were conducted using an initial question followed by a few questions improvised to facilitate the discussion. Archival data (application essays and reflective journals) paralleled the individual interviews.

Individual Interview

The primary means of data generation in this study were through a series of guided interviews with each participant. The availability, as well as expected time constraint of participants, further delimited the accessible population from which participants were collected from the originally planned fourteen to thirteen. By
interviewing each participant twice, first individually and then in a small group setting based on gender, the researcher gained a detailed and thick description of the individual's perception of his/her experience in the counseling program. In keeping with the constructivist paradigm, interviews provided each interviewee a safe environment in which to reflect on one's experience and constructed reality.

Using an emergent interview technique, the researcher framed each interview around the following six predetermined initial questions:

1. What do you think motivates people to enter the counseling profession?
2. What motivated you to enter the counseling profession?
3. To what extent did gender affect your decision to enter the counseling profession?
4. What made you choose this particular counseling program?
5. Please describe your experiences in the counseling education program.
6. To what extent do you feel your experiences were influenced by gender?

It was expected that framing initial questions in each interview would help participants focus on their experiences in order to reflect on them. All questions thereafter were based on the participant’s response to original questions. The researcher was engaged in active listening and asked follow-up questions when appropriate and relevant to the participant’s unique perspective of the topic. Participants were encouraged to talk openly about their experiences and constructs, entirely from their perspective. An audio tape recorder was used for later transcription of the oral interviews into a narrative format.
Member checking was conducted during the interview by periodically presenting the participant with a summary of the interview and asking if it correctly reflects what he said. A complete transcription was generated at the completion of the interview and a tentative summary was sent to the participants as part of the member-checking process. This process was intended to enhance the credibility of the study. A few participants provided their feedback via email. Discrepancies, pointed out by participants, were checked by comparing the written transcript to the actual audio recording, thereby generating new data.

Focus Group

As a secondary method of data gathering, participants were invited to join one of two gender-specific focus groups. The purpose of forming two gender-specific focus groups was to elicit the gendered socialization of each group from their discussion, especially voices of male participants where their voices might have otherwise been suppressed or compromised in a mixed group. They could also share their experiences in the program and accompanying feelings in a presumably safer environment than the typical clinical supervision group, since no evaluation or judgment of students’ performance or aptitude was associated with it. Focus groups were facilitated by the researcher, and began with an explanation of the group’s purpose and assurance of confidentiality. To begin the discussion the researcher asked how the participants perceived their current experiences. In addition to the statement, “Please share your experience in this program,” specific questions that followed were improvised based on
responses from participants in an effort to facilitate their discussion. The session was tape-recorded and transcribed into narrative form for analysis purposes.

Archival Data as Material Culture

Material culture refers to “various objects created by members of a past or present culture that can be studied as reflection of that culture” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 629). In the current study, material culture included participant selected reflective journal entries and the essays that accompanied their original application for admission into the counselor education programs. The purpose of these artifacts was to gather data concerning their perspectives both before and after their admission to the program in order to support and complement the interview data. Participants were asked to bring a journal or reflective writing piece that each participant felt was representative of their current experience in the program. Participants’ application essays were examined to gather data concerning their attitudes towards, as well as expectation of, the counselor training program.

Data Analysis

Transcription

All individual interviews and focus groups were digitally voice-recorded and sent to a professional transcription service via e-mail so that all interviews were transcribed verbatim by native English speakers. After the completion of the interview and focus group transcripts, the summary of the transcript was e-mailed to each participant, asking
them to check the narrative summary of the interview for any corrections, clarifications, and further elaborations if necessary.

Analysis Process

1. Two sets of analytic strategies were used: (a) categorical analysis helped identify similarities and differences among data segments to develop appropriate categorical codes; and (b) holistic analysis connected the content of different data types and sources to produce a narrative portrait of each participant (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Both strategies were used simultaneously following the process suggested by Rossman and Rallis (2003) and Schwandt (2001).

2. After generating data, the researcher familiarized himself with the data by reading it twice. The process of constant comparative analysis begins as follows: each time new data emerge in the form of interviews, archives, and personal writings, they are transformed into various levels of units of analysis such as word by word, line by line, and thought by thought. Then these units of analysis are compared to existing data to search and determine similarities and differences between them.

3. The researcher created a codes list consisting of category/code titles as well as definitions for each through the search for recurring words and topics.

4. Thick description of the participant’s experience obtained through triangulation which helped the researcher look for meanings and essence in
data in order to refine the findings.

5. The researcher created the final list of categories based on "semantic relationships discovered within frames of analysis" (Hatch, 2002, p. 162). Spradley identified the following nine semantic relationships that could help systematically analyze categories: (a) inclusion expressed as X is a kind of Y; (b) spatial as X is place in Y; (c) cause-effect as X is a result of Y; (d) rationale as X is a reason for doing Y; (e) location of action as X is a place for doing Y; (f) function as X is used for Y; (g) means-end as X is a way to do Y; (h) sequence as X is a step in Y; and (i) attribution as X is characteristic of Y (as cited in Hatch, 2002).

6. The researcher searched for underlying themes across and within categories (Hatch, 2002).

7. The researcher created a coordinate system, or a frame of references, consisting of primary factors extracted from the previous procedure.

8. The researcher advanced theories by interpreting the meaning of the coordinate system.

9. The researcher examined and confirmed the developed hypotheses by providing supportive or contradictory data.

Analysis

Coding Procedure

While all individual interview data were gathered using the six initial open-ended questions shaped by the guiding interests of the researcher, each interview reflected the
particular relationship between the researcher and the participant and what was brought into the interview. As Charmaz (2006) suggested, “relative differences in power and status [might have been] acted on and played out during an interview” (p. 27), which necessarily influenced not only the information shared by the participant but follow-up questions by the researcher.

The first major phase in coding, initial or open coding, began with the first individual interview, staying close to the data with an open mind, comparing data with data, and labeling as initial codes the information emerging repeatedly and saliently, which resulted in the initial categorization of the data (Charmaz, 2006). Initial coding included in vivo codes referring to terms created by participants or those specific to a particular group and insiders, such as “showing the PG-13 version of myself”, “touchy, feely profession”. Although provisional coding is a recursive process, initial coding evolved from labeling at-face-value impressions through routine rationales into preserving “the fluidity of their experience” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 49) with the reflection of participants’ words and actions. Each time a new interview transcription was added to the data, new codes emerged and existent codes were modified. The size of the unit of data to code was basically line-by-line coding supplemented by word-by-word coding.

The next major coding phase of the current study, axial coding put the data “back together in new ways after open coding by making connections between categories” (Strauss & Corbin, as cited in Dey, 1999, p. 97). The final major coding phase, focused coding, selected the most significant and frequent codes that “[made] the most analytic
sensed to categorize [the] data incisively and completely” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57), constructing the bridge between coding and theorizing.

**Theorizing**

Describing the procedure for theorizing in grounded theory as an activity that not only produces explanations for studies, but reflects the researcher’s interests, Charmaz (2006) advocated using gerunds in coding to increase the researcher’s theoretical sensitivity to enacted processes. Following this suggestion, the current study defined and conceptualized relationships among the major experiences of participants, resulting in clarifying explanations for participants’ perceived experiences as well as new questions.

**Ethical Considerations**

Rossman and Rallis (2003) suggested two sets of standards for research that should be applied to judge research trustworthiness: first, “acceptable and competent practice,” and secondly ethics. The first set of standards was established by fulfilling criteria for the evaluation of trustworthiness and authenticity. The second set of standards which was ethics was maintained throughout the research by continuously answering the following questions suggested by Hatch (2002):

1. What are we doing this study for?
2. Why are we studying it at this site?
3. What is our relationship to the participants?
4. What are the participants’ roles in the study?
5. Who benefits from the study?
6. How do we as researchers benefit?

7. How do the participants benefit?

8. Who may be at risk in the context we are studying? (p. 68)

Answering these questions enabled the researcher to judge the legitimacy of the various behaviors and decisions made during the research by weighing the potential benefits and risks.

**Trustworthiness and Authenticity**

Trustworthiness and authenticity are for the qualitative study what validity and reliability are to the quantitative study. Criteria for the evaluation of trustworthiness and authenticity have been developed by Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Schwandt, 2001). Trustworthiness is established through saturation of the data and triangulation with other forms of data including interview, observation, artifact, and literature (Schwandt, 2001). Peer review, thick description, and member checking also help to ensure trustworthiness (Patton, 2002). According to Gall et al. (2003), triangulation is “a process of enhancing data credibility by generating corroborating evidences through multiple data-collection methods and data sources to check the validity of the data as well as eliminate potential biases in the data” (p. 464).

As discussed above, a study’s trustworthiness is judged by its conformity to two sets of standards, the first being acceptable and competent practice, and the second being authenticity (Rossman and Rallis, 2003). The first standard requires researchers to meet four dimensions of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and
confirmability. Hoepfl (1997) defined the following: (a) credibility as the extent to which multiple realities are adequately represented in research results; (b) transferability as being the applicability of the research findings to new situations; (c) dependability as the ability to obtain similar, consistent results if the study were repeated; and (d) confirmability as the degree to which the interpretations can be traced back to the data rather than the researcher’s beliefs and expectations.

In this study, credibility was achieved through the triangulation procedure: the use of member checks, the examination of the archival data, and the review of reflective journals as the artifact data. As transferability requires rich description of the context of the study, as well as detailed background information of participants, such information was provided within the limitation of confidentiality. Dependability of the study was obtained through the thick description of data collection and analysis procedure. On the other hand, confirmability was demonstrated through the examination of the audit trail provided by the researcher, which mainly consisted of raw data, analysis and process notes, and personal memos (Hoepfl, 1997).

**Distribution of Results and Implications**

The research findings were distributed via email files to participants and counseling faculty. Participants and instructors were also encouraged to give feedback to the researcher. Furthermore, if requested, doctoral students providing clinical supervision for participants will also be given a copy of the findings. It was anticipated that the findings from this study would provide both counselor educators and supervisors with
better understanding of how trainees of each gender perceived their experience in programs, the unique challenge they might face, and specific needs and necessary support. The findings may inspire counselor educators to modify or develop new ways of teaching to enhance students’ development.
CHAPTER FOUR

Findings and Analysis

Evolving Data Analysis

The main purpose of this study was to explore gender-specific patterns or themes in students’ perceptions about their program experiences using grounded theory strategies within a constructivist paradigm. Data gathering and analysis occurred side by side, affecting one another. Every new piece of data provided new insights and perspectives for data coding and analysis, which in turn led the researcher back to the preexisting data to double-check what might have been missed before. Thus, coding and accompanying analysis continuously evolved from the first individual interview to the end of the data analysis. Salient codes developed gradually into major categories along with axial codes, which subsequently introduced underlying themes across and within those categories.

Findings

Data analysis resulted in the emergence of the following five major themes:

1. All participants reported their strong interest in directly working with people and described their passion for, and joy of, helping others as reasons for entering the field. They also expressed an eager desire to be a skilled practitioner.

2. Most participants, especially males, associated their experiences of being
isolated or marginalized with lacking sufficient support and connectedness, which was often accompanied by feelings of alienation, as well as frustration.

3. Most females reported feeling connected and comfortable in the female dominated classroom and having natural helping skills because of female socialization. They also mentioned a few disadvantages in belonging to the female dominant field.

4. Most participants emphasized the necessity of more support from the program to enable the novice trainee to become a competent professional.

5. Males and females perceived impacts of male perspectives on their learning experiences differently. While females mostly appreciated their bringing more diversity into the program, males reported conflicting views regarding both positive and negative consequences of being a minority in the field.

Of the five major themes and accompanying 10 sub-themes identified in data analysis, some are gender-specific and others are cross-gender. In short, all participants reported their training experiences with the description of perceived salient environmental factors and their unique responses to such factors. Male participants associated gender disparity in the classroom with feeling isolated. Contrarily, female participants perceived the female-dominated environment as supportive and friendly. For males, females were challenging factors in their learning environment. Alternatively, for females, few male students in the program represent the lack of diversity in their learning environment.
Outlines of Theme Analysis

1. A brief description of the first theme, desiring to help others, will be followed by the description of two sub-themes, a) desiring to directly help people and be involved in their lives, and b) desiring to be a "skilled practitioner."

2. A brief description of the second theme, being isolated or marginalized without support and connectedness, will be followed by discussion of three sub-themes.
   a. Being male as a minority in the program will be compared to being female as a majority. Then descriptions of four constituencies of this major theme will follow.
      i. Standing out as a minority
      ii. Having different perspectives as males
      iii. Holding back
      iv. Lacking support from peers and connectedness with peers
   b. Feeling distance from a majority of young peers
   c. Needs sometimes minimized as minor novice

3. The third theme, being female as majority in the program, consists of three sub-themes, a) feeling connected with peers, b) having natural skills as a woman, and c) having disadvantages in a female-dominated field.

4. The fourth theme, the necessity for more support from the program as a
novice trainee, also includes the following two sub-themes: a) needing more support, and b) needing more structure and coordination.

5. The fifth theme, conflicting views on impacts of male perspectives, will be discussed.

6. A summary of the chapter will be presented with two conceptual models on male and female perceptions of program experiences.

Desiring to Help Others

The first major theme, desiring to help others, reflects what motivated participants to pursue the profession and their common aspiration to be a skilled practitioner.

Desiring to Directly Help People and Be Involved in Their Lives

Most participants either explicitly or implicitly shared their appreciation and enthusiasm for feeling connected with, and supported by others during individual interviews and in their application essays. Eight of the 13 participants, four males and four females, distinctly articulated their desire for direct involvement with people and helping them; they considered this as the counselors' job. When describing why she wanted to become a counselor, one female participant said, "I wanted to be able to sit and interact with people throughout the day and those were important things to me and so I thought this would be good." Alternatively, a male participant said, "I think it's a desire to help people, you know it's a way to interact with people, it's a way to promote change in both individuals and in groups." Other participants used the third person while
referring to their own intentions. For example, one said, "Most people come into
counseling . . . they think they can help others."

The archival data submitted via e-mail included eight application essays and 10
journals from 13 participants; participant responses supported the above argument with
colorful descriptions of past experiences in helping others, and ardent desires to continue
helping others. Illustrating his work experience with youth, one participant wrote, "I
enjoy the relationships that have been established and getting the chance to recreate with
the youth who attend." Another wrote, "As a mentor and life coach, I was a steady
presence in the lives of these refugee families as they struggled to adjust to life outside of
their native country." In short, regardless of gender, most participants presented a similar
description of the reason they chose the field; that was their eager desire to help others
through direct contact and involvement.

_Desiring To Be a Skilled Practitioner_

Through their application essays, reflective journals, individual interviews, and
focus groups, participants, particularly females, repeatedly expressed their earnest desire
to be skilled counselors. Describing her excitement and anxiety about starting her first
field training, one participant reported, "I am starting my practicum and I’m going back
and doing a lot of my own review and preparation." Focusing on developing effective
helping skills and counseling strategies, another stated, "I really wanted to be—a
catalyst, a way to change, help somebody change what they see as a problem." Another
wrote in her application essay, "I am more dedicated than ever as a result of
self-examination and personal experience to become a well educated, ever learning counselor.”

Sometimes, though, the participants’ eagerness led to concern and frustration when they felt they were not getting what was necessary to be an effective helper. Emphasizing the necessity of diversity in the program that might help develop their multicultural competency as a counselor, one female participant expressed her concern about having few male classmates. She said, “Any time there is an imbalance . . . whether it is racial or gender or whatever, you miss something.” Worried that the program might place too much emphasis on experiential learning and basic skills such as self-reflection and attentive listening, but few structured lectures and less variety of skills, another commented, “I need direction on how to develop my clinical skills, not on how to develop self-awareness . . . I need those strategies and techniques and I don’t get that.” Reporting that the program provided her with very basic helping skills, but not what she thought necessary to be an effective practitioner, another stated, “I need more than just me in order to be effective counselor . . . but for right now, I feel like all I have to bring out with me in the counseling realm is me.” Complaining about unavailability of faculty’s help and advice when it was critical for her professional development, another participant made a more caustic comment illustrating how she perceived her program experience. “I feel very—not resentful, but somewhat angry.” It was not only first-year but, also second-year students, both male and female, who asked for more support and training to be an effective practitioner.
Being Isolated or Marginalized without Support and Connectedness

The second major theme, *being isolated or marginalized without sufficient support and connectedness*, was diametrically opposite to the first theme, desire for connectedness and helping others, both of which were the participants’ main reasons for entering the program. Perceptions such as being different from a majority, standing out as an outlier, and having a family or full-time job, were associated with various kinds of experiences of being marginalized or minimized, including males as a gender minority, generational differences, and most students as novices in the field.

Being Male as Minority in the Program

As for the gender minority status, the male participants’ experiences were in sharp contrast to the female participants’, particularly young ones’. Female participants reported that they felt connected with and supported from peers in the female dominated learning environment. However, according to male participants, being male as a minority in the program consisted of four mostly negative factors: (a) *standing out as a minority*, (b) *having different perspectives as male*, (c) *holding back*, and (d) *lacking support from and connection with peers*. Participants occasionally associated the first two factors with positive consequences such as getting favorable attention. They mentioned that their site supervisors treated them favorably because of their being scarce or possessing unique perspectives in a female-dominated field. They perceived, however, that these four factors mostly led to negative experiences. As for positive impact of being a minority in the field, a fuller description will be presented in discussing the final major theme, the
conflicting views on the impact of male perspectives.

Standing out as a minority. The first factor, standing out as a minority was frequently accompanied by getting constant and critical attention from others, especially from female peers; three males and three females reported such cases. One male said, “Being in the minority like it’s hard to defend myself when you know you have 30 other eyes staring straight at you.” A female pointed out:

They are put on a hot spot and so I do feel sad for them in that matter. I feel that they have got extra stress, sometimes put upon them because they are—when you are different in some way from the majority, you stand out. And I feel like they sit in classes and they stand out . . . and teachers are going to be like, ‘Let’s see what guys have to say’, and so I feel like they are put on a hot spot.

This was also one of the major topics in the male focus group, in which one participant shared the following story:

Talking about group class, I was the only guy in the group class that I was in. And one of the group’s members, that wasn’t in my group, I was given the task of observing the other groups in the middle, we were doing the ‘fish bowl’ and this particular night brought up a very strong emotional experience with sexual assault. This female had been sexually assaulted and I mean, just a very, very powerful emotional group, no female talked to me after that class. Like nobody would look at me, nobody would talk to me after the class . . . and I just felt like, it was like the burden of being male from that class.
In the above context, standing out for men mostly implied having stressful experiences caused by getting excessive and continuous attention as a minority from peers, as well as instructors.

*Having different perspectives as male.* The second factor, having different perspectives as males, often led to feelings of being dismissed as an outsider or sexist person. Five males and three females mentioned that such negative consequences resulted when having different views from the majority. Although they told the researcher that they could not come up with specific examples when asked to explain in more detail, most of the male participants associated their presenting different views with getting negative reactions from peers or sometimes instructors. One male reported, “I just do feel like sometimes it’s easy for a group of females to gang up against one guy, you know, but it’s just because they have things similar or similar points of view.” Another remarked, “On the rare occasion I said something that hit a nerve with a lot of women that I didn’t do on purpose but there had been a couple of times where I have said something.” Frustrated with what he perceived as the continuous rejection or dismissal of the male voice, as a part of White privilege, by female peers as well as instructors, another also claimed

> When I go from one classroom to the next and the issues are again framed in a race, class, gender-type environment where I represent the top of the pyramid and not given a voice . . . because of a male because we come from, especially a White male, our position and privilege.
With regard to female views regarding this issue, one admitted, “The females’ opinions seem to override what the male opinion is.” Weeks later, after all individual interviews, the male participants had an enthusiastic discussion on this topic in the male focus group:

Male Participant One: I agree. I mean, I also feel like a lot of times we get ganged upon in class, in terms of like the debate. . . . This is stupid, but this one example I can think of is we were in career counseling and we were talking about, and we saw some video and it was about whether or not how girls wear their hair natural or not, something multi-cultural. I asked, well, what’s the importance of that? A serious question—I get up, I put a hat on when I shower and it takes me two seconds to towel-dry my hair. I asked a serious question about why that is so important. I felt like I got attacked by like five or six different girls, do you remember this?

Male Participant Two: Yes.

Male Participant One: Yelling at me about how you just don’t get it; very important for girls. . . . I don’t know about it, I’m trying to learn, I feel like I’m getting attacked.

Another described perceived lack of tolerance towards White males from female peers and some instructors as the feminization of men.

Male Participant Three: I see there’s a diversity thing because in our class, just you know, our training to be helpers and everything, so much attention and so much respect will be given to someone that comes from a different cultural
background or something, but there is no or very little tolerance for us representing ourselves as men. You know, we are expected to become more feminine in order to fit into the environment versus acknowledging us for being men. Yes, just acknowledge the fact that I am a man, I am different, I was cultured very differently by society. I've been brought up differently. . . .

Another referred to his perception that while females were more tolerant towards differences in views among themselves, the same level of differences introduced by males tended to receive a flat rejection.

Male Participant Two: Well, I think sometimes there are things, this might be what you're talking about, you have a difference of opinion, it's that. . . . What it seems like is just a difference of opinion but, then you throw on top of that there is this male-female difference when really gender doesn't play a role.

In short, they argued that the cause of intolerance was not differences in views in and of themselves, but rather gender-bias against White males. They openly discussed how sharing different views from a majority would result in a deluge of negative reactions from female peers and attendant feelings of frustration against a lack of understanding and tolerance on the part of female peers. In turn, the male participants felt outnumbered by their female peers.

**Holding back.** The third factor, holding back, assumed greater prominence as data analysis progressed. Holding back referred to participants avoiding expressing themselves in class, which was mainly experienced among male participants. Four males
and one female reported such experiences. Using a figurative expression, one male described his experience as, “I am kind of showing more like the PG-13 version of myself.” Another male stated

I hold back my opinions and I choose my words very carefully. I’m not free to be [myself]—because when I’m free to be, I’m not afraid to say what I’m feeling then it causes a lot of turmoil. . . . My innermost, what drives me, my thoughts, my values, my beliefs; those are suppressed. . . . Especially if that was in the classroom environment and I’m going to object to someone emotionally, you know, or not emotionally, but stubbornly to a point of view. So most of the time, I just don’t say anything.

In contrast, experiencing this holding back in a quite different context, one female stated, “Sometimes I realize that I am easily one of the more talkative people in class and that I hold back even because I don’t—I want to be respectful of other people and let them share when they want to share.” While men’s holding back came from their perceived lack of support, and was frequently connected with their having different views from the majority, this participant did so to give opportunities to speak to less vocal female peers. The male focus group discussed the issue at length. One described his feeling dismissed by his peers:

Male Participant One: I think [for] me it was here, having more to do with that I would hold back because I felt like my opinion was just going to be dismissed as ‘it’s a guy thing,’ ‘he doesn’t get it, he is male’ and the sort of in my thought
process and you are sort of being dismissed, as a guy thing, not being given, so why bother even bring it up? . . .

Another explained that his naive honesty at the beginning of the program entailed negative consequences in the classroom that resulted in his shutting himself away from peers.

Male Participant Two: I just think, I mean, and you can tell that in class, like I’m a fairly straightforward individual and like during that first like groups being first semester, first year, like I did, I stated my opinion honestly and not really knowing people and feeling I’m in a comfortable environment, you know how it’s like that you are honest you’ve been judged, you know . . .

Male Participant Three: Our position and privilege, we are not seen as having a voice or right to be male, you know, just be what we are, at least that’s what I feel about it.

He repeated his point that White males were unfairly treated and judged in the program based on their White privilege.

Male Participant Three: All this stuff you said though, is exactly the point I was making earlier to diversely think who would, if you are Black, heaven forbid, anyone generalize you or try to ask you about how the Black people feel bad or you know, if you made a generalizing statement or you are woman you should understand that there would be sensitivity with that, but when the exact same thing is done because of a male because we come from, especially a White male.
Another concluded that there was no easy solution to their hardships.

Male Participant Four: Nothing has been working out.

Compared with individual interviews, participants were more likely to express their strong emotions, such as frustration and anger, openly in a group setting. Alternatively, male participants reported that when placed in a small group setting, and as the only male member, they perceived more gender disparity and constant pressure from the majority. One participant reported a difficult experience during the group counseling class. He reported that, although it was the only time he felt alienated because of gender, the impact was so deep that he started “shutting his mouth” beginning that semester. After describing how his opinion caused an immediate reaction of anger from all other group members and that he could not get over the experience, he stated, “I had even carried on because I had classmates from that class and other courses and I kept my distance. I was much more removed from the classes immediately the next semester.” A few negative experiences as a male in the group counseling class were also presented in the focus group. A few participants used the expression, burned the bridge, implying both physical and psychological isolation from female peers. The data gathered from female participants, however, included no reports about “burned bridges.”

Lacking support from, and connectedness with peers. The fourth factor, lacking support from, and connection with peers, was also a salient subject that frequently emerged from the interview data. As for men, it described their emotional isolation primarily from female classmates. All six male participants explicitly mentioned such
experiences. One male participant explained that males would be allowed no margin for learning, or even “a slip of the tongue,” because of the stereotypical rejection of White male privilege by others. He claimed

If I say something, I was perceived as sexist, well maybe another guy would be able to say okay, I get it, this is what he meant and this is what came out. There is you know—so I feel like if I had that support, I would not have to monitor quite so closely what I say.

Another affirmed, “You are the only male and you are the loner, you know, standing up for what you say.” On the other hand, three females also showed their concern for male peers’ isolation; one mentioned, “I think that may be difficult for them as well, like if they are so kind of isolated in the program.” Subsequently, they had a heated discussion about this subject in the male focus group. This factor was strongly associated with the previous one, holding back, and frequently reported in the context of small group settings.

“If you had that group class, I feel like I’ve ‘burned a lot of bridges’ in the group class—just to echo your frustration from that class.”

Concerning the archival data, no journal writings reported participants’ negative experiences in the program, such as negative reactions from peers, holding back, and lacking support from, and connection with, peers.

*Feeling Distance from a Majority of Young Peers*

The interview data suggested that the experiences of older students were more affected by age differences and not so much being marginalized by their younger peers.
Three students who had children and previous careers discussed their sensing a certain distance from much younger peers. One of them said, "It's like being in a different universe, I mean surrounded by youth—I have a son, my eldest son is the same age as most of my classmates." Another reported:

I think I am more affected by the age difference than maybe the gender issue for myself. And just you know, general life differences, being married, having a child, that kind of thing so that even in discussions in class it's like different things come out for me than they do for the other students.

Afterwards, the female group had an engaging discussion regarding the age gap in the program.

Female Participant One: I think we have a lot of age diversity.

Female Participant Two: I mean, most people I have talked to—I guess I would have say one or two years out in my perspective seems like just about the same as directly out. I mean, I know you’ve had valuable experiences, but I mean you are the same age group, you are in the same, you know unmarried for the most part, most people don’t have children, most people are on their first career. So for me it’s a very different experience being old and married and a parent and coming at a second career. So I mean, I would say that people who are in their lower 20s are in the same age group, regardless of whether they had a year or two here or there.

In short, each participant had her or his unique views on diversity of age and life
experiences.

Needs Sometimes Minimized

Some first-year and second-year participants complained that their voices were frequently unheard and that their developmental needs were minimized. One participant reported, "I have been frustrated with . . . a particularly frustrating experience last year trying to meet with a faculty member and just feeling like I wasn’t heard and then I wasn’t being taken seriously." Having felt that their earnest requests for support from instructors was being frequently ignored, another said, "I also learned how to deal with people who I don’t necessarily get along with, or people who make you jump through the roof for no reason, kind of thing."

Being Female as Majority in the Program

Feeling Connected with Peers

Most female participants, especially those in their twenties, reported that they appreciated the female dominant environment and noted that it was conducive to their feelings of being connected and supported by peers. Feeling connected and supported by peers, all four young females in their twenties illustrated how the female dominated classroom environment had a positive impact on their learning and well being. One female participant stated

It’s easier for me to know more about my female classmates and socialize with them outside of class. So, that might be especially you know, adjusting to living in the area and starting grad school. It’s good to have a support group of kind of
class and that's easier for the woman to get than for the guys to get.

Requesting gender diversity, on the other hand, some female participants argued for the necessity of more male students in the program so that they could learn different perspectives. One participant reported

I value the opinion so I would honestly like there to be more men, if they were the majority I might be more intimidated, but I... I can get to learn a lot if there were more guys in the program.

Admitting the helpfulness of more diversity in the classroom, a few participants appreciated that the female dominated environment contributed to their feeling less intimidated or experiencing less tension between opposite sexes. One reported, “Being with a lot of women... is more comfortable. Because there is not that tension. . . .”

**Having Natural Skills as a Woman**

As for natural skills, five female participants described themselves or women in general, as having natural skills or aptitudes as a counselor. After discussing differences between male and female socialization, one participant claimed, “I feel like even coming into the program that I had some very basic relationship skills already and it was—the techniques classes more just fine-tuned those rather than gave them to me.” Another stated in the similar context, “I think I have skills that can be fine tuned to help me be a competent counselor.” Another maintained, “I think women are more in tune with [emotions] than men are.” Some female participants described themselves as possessing natural skills or aptitudes as a counselor and attributed these skills to their gender
socialization which was consistent with the female dominated learning environment.

*Having Disadvantages in a Female Dominant Field*

According to female participants, being in the female dominant field, while supportive at times, also has its disadvantages. First, most female participants reported that lack of male students might deprive them of opportunities to learn about male perspectives and make them less prepared for working with male clients. Discussing the helpfulness of having more male classmates, so that she could be better prepared for working with male clients, one participant reported, “I plan on counseling men. I am only expert on women and I am not expert . . . it would be nice too, to have more of a male voice.” In the similar context, another stated, “We need more males. The more diversity we have in counselors; the better we are to assist our clients.”

Second, referring to tough competition she was facing in search of a training site, one participant expressed her concern about getting a good position after graduation. She stated

I am already feeling some of the competition just because there I had three other girls in the program who all want the same internship that I want and that’s like how do you set yourself apart and I think that will be true when we all are looking for jobs later . . . So, I do feel some anxiety about the job search and being able to find something, and being able to go up against some of them [who] will be qualified people.

One participant explicitly reported her concern about expected competition among
women with regard to future job search.

_Necessity of More Support from Program as a Novice_

Most participants, both male and female, first-year and second-year, reported the necessity of more support from the program, greater structure in lectures, and more concrete strategies to work with clients as a novice counselor. Their argument was connected with their dissatisfaction of the perceived gap between what they expected from the program and what they actually got.

_Needing more support_

Regardless of gender and years in the program, students reported their needs for more support from the program mainly during the focus group. While males reported their needs of more support from faculty for adjusting to the female dominated learning environment and females tended to emphasize the necessity of more advanced training, most participants basically argued for the necessity of a close and organized mentoring service. In the male focus group, they discussed their needs for a mentoring service aimed at their well-being. Referring to needs for a devoted mentor who could provide support and care for them, one participant stated, "I should feel something, I should have a mentor I should have someone, you know, all of a sudden you've got me dealing with touchy feely stuff." Another added, "Since there is not a peer support network in the graduate program of counselling, there should be someone who checks in with you, that just . . . someone says come here and sit down for a minute."

On the other hand, in the female focus group, both first-year and second-year
students emphasized the necessity for more support in specific domains, such as more advanced counseling theories and skills, research and diagnostic training, and preparation for conference presentations. One participant reported:

I expected a team of professors to be supportive of us as students branching out and doing things and trying conferences and having new ideas and trying to figure it out. I feel that’s part of what the educational experience is not. . . . I don’t really feel a mentor role here within a lot of professors and so I have had to seek out a mentor role in a professor [of another program].

Another added:

I have never been to a conference. I have never done this sort of stuff and so to me that’s like diving head first into 12 feet of water. But, . . . I would love to have that experience, but I don’t know where to start, I don’t know what to do and to not have that professor mentor, even from a doc student, to be like, hey, would you like to do this with me, or hey, would you like to learn more about this, or I am offering my services, I am not going to baby you, but if anybody would like to come talk to me and see how to get this done, I just didn’t get that . . . part of me is like, you just want them to baby you and help you along, and then other part of me is, like, well, they should help me along a little bit.

These comments seemed to suggest insecurity as a novice, as well as earnest desire to be an effective and skilled counselor that motivated them to seek extra training and mentoring service. In discussing their first field training that was about to start, one
participant reported, "Maybe I could go with more of my own style, but, if I never have the chance to do that—to actually practice that, and then you push me out the door, I am unprepared and that's kind of how I felt this experience has been." And another replied, "That's a really good point because I almost feel like I'm experimenting on clients and I don't think that's a good thing at all, we are not prepared for it."

**Needing More Structure and Coordination**

Although two females appreciated how the program was structured in their individual interviews, three males and two females referred to negative aspects of the program structure in individual interviews, and most females agreed with them in focus groups later. In referring to lack of structure in the program or some classes, participants discussed various issues such as their perceived lack of communication between some instructors, and less organized materials or explanations presented in some classes, which they thought needed revising. Pointing out the perceived lack of coordination among instructors, one participant reported, "It's almost like the four buses that we'll be taking at a time, but all going in different directions rather than working together." Commenting on the lack of clarity in presentations of course material, another stated, "Some very clear, very clear presentation of material, very clear definitions, very clear learning objectives, and I have not got that in a lot of the courses." Participants briskly discussed this subject in the focus group

Female Participant One: since getting here I guess I have had to deal with a lot of frustrations in terms of just very generalized knowledge given to us and given to
Female Participant Two: I think our expectations were not hit, because I felt like everyone to varying degrees definitely feels we are not getting structured training.

Conflicting Views on the Impact of Male Perspectives

Although all female participants talked about their appreciation for men’s unique perspectives, most males, five out of six, pointed out perceived negative impacts of their male perspectives on the classroom interaction with their female peers. The gap concerning the impact of male perspectives in the female dominated environment could also be found within male remarks. Three males described having different perspectives as an advantage in individual sessions. This topic was discussed at length later in the focus group. One participant described his feeling more respected and empowered as a male school counselor intern than female peers.

Male Participant One: I’m a guy that just gives me more respect and definitely when I’m counseling individual clients . . . because I’m a male and I feel like the other teachers, administrators or a counselor give me a little bit more of an authoritarian or power position.

Another mentioned his maleness being appreciated by his site supervisor as one who could be a good role model for their clients.

Male Participant Two: My supervisor wants to . . . have a male, an older male like that to be able to model for people.
Another participant described his feeling empowered by unexpected respect from his supervisor, even though he had just started his first field training:

Male Participant Three: I was kind of shocked, that you know, as a practicum, I had been a counselor for eight months and, I don't know what it was, they were two probation officers in post they were females but, I was very surprised on how respected my opinion was so soon into my practicum and that they would trust me.

Two others attributed their getting such respect, in spite of being a novice, to their being a male in the field:

Male Participant One: The only thing I can contrast is that I am the only male.

Actually, as one of the males at my site, and the treatment I get, it does not appear to be the same as my female peers.

Male Participant Four: I think part of that might be because we're sort of seen as a rare commodity in the counseling field; they don't want to give us a bad experience and have us quit the field when we are in demand, so maybe they are treating us with kid-gloves to make sure that we stay.

Considering the interaction and context under which these remarks were made, they clearly indicated the conditions and consequences of standing out, having different perspectives, and having male privileges at their training sites. At the same time, these same participants talked about their occasional holding back of honest opinions, and anticipating negative reactions from female peers. They suggested that while supervisors
appreciated their unique views, female peers would not; this seemed to directly contradict what most female participants said. In an individual interview, one female explained

They bring a very distinct viewpoint to everything, but especially helping professions and the way that we think about problems. Just through my experience with the two males that are in the program in my level, they are very parsimonious and they are very like, “get to the point” sort of way of thinking, they over analyze things, they kind of got the most simplistic and easiest explanation, and trying to work from it in a very reality-based sort of way. . . .

The way they think about problems is about the easier explanation and is probably the right one. It doesn’t necessarily have to be some sort Freudian problem from their past when they were five-years old wherever they are presenting is more than likely what’s going on, at least from some of the males that I’ve experienced.

Another also stated in her individual interview that “[women] are more emotional, expressive . . . [but] men experience the same levels of emotion, but maybe they express it differently.” During the focus group, another female insisted

I think the man is a whole different species as much as a different ethnicity. And I think it’s critical to have a male point of view from all ages, from all colors. I think it’s a sad and significant loss to not have more men in the room. Men just process information differently. . . . Well I perceive—just we’re more—it’s all the typical gender differences. Women are more emotional, we are more reactive, we
connect things to other things and think, you know, are able to compartmentalize and the pressures on a man in society are different than the pressures on a man and woman. And, I am going into [deleted for confidentiality], so it’s important for me to understand, you know what the man’s is coming in with, what he thinks he is supposed to be doing, how he thinks he is supposed to be relating, what his history, and how you can mend that in the relationship. So I think it is important to have men.

Appreciating the contribution to their learning of male perspective, another attributed the perceived differences in views between the two genders to be more about developmental factors. She stated the following:

. . . while I completely agree, I do think that it’s—it would be nice to have more of the male perspective, I just feel like personally that there is too much emphasis on gender differences, that the research shows that we are a lot more alike than people give us credit for, that we do process things pretty similarly as far as like and it’s more like intellectual level and like moral level than it is male and female. And so where I think it would be nice to have that, I just don’t think it’s necessary, I would like to see more of it, I would love to see more it but I would also love to see more ethnic diversity.

In summary, the female participants all appreciated male views as they bring a diversity of views into the program, and they all agreed that men have a distinct viewpoint of being more solution focused. One female described the way males think
about problems as “parsimonious… [getting] the most simplistic and easiest explanation.” Alternatively, few male participants detailed how their perceptions were different from females, simply mentioning their having different views and values from female peers. Instead, male participants indicated they’re having a hard time integrating what they perceived as genuineness with what they presumed was expected of them by the female-dominated field. One male participant framed it this way:

But when I am speaking in a room, I might be the only man and there is, and there are 30 women in the room. And there is a discussion and it’s all about a woman’s point of view and if I interject a men’s a point of view, then it will be labeled as out of touch, or you know, sexist or something instead and the work will be on making me more feminine. Why can’t I get in touch with my feelings, why can’t I talk about things, why can’t I be open? The female quality is that more about changing my maleness into becoming more female, instead of changing the system to recognize and incorporate the differences of my maleness.

Summarization of the Findings

Male Students’ Perceptions of Program Experiences

With regard to male participants’ perceptions of their program experiences, the analysis of interview data indicated not a straightforward cause-and effect-relation, but a contextual-conditions/consequences relation. That is, an indirect contribution to each other in the following categories: standing out as a minority, having a different
perspective as a male, holding back, lacking support and connection, concerned about grading and evaluation, anticipating negative reactions or evaluations from peers, instructors, and supervisors, and getting male privileges/advantages. As shown in Figure 4.1, men's holding back appeared to be the gravity center of negative consequences of contextual conditions such as lacking support, having different perspectives, standing out, anticipating negative reactions or evaluations, and getting male advantages.

First, according to the male participants' interviews, a combination of standing out as male and having different perspectives from majority female peers could lead to either their getting advantages as a minority or anticipating negative reactions from peers in the classroom. Five out of six male participants mentioned their expecting higher
chances of getting positions in future job searches as the field needed more male practitioners and that they got more respect because of their male perspective. Conversely, the same combination could bring negative evaluations from instructors, which would result in their holding back their opinions. One participant reported such a concern:

There is a small little thing in my head, still in the back of my mind wondering, am I going to get gigged for this? Gigged, you know, like am I going to get, you know, a black mark, you know, a bad check because of that.

A few participants reported in their individual meeting and in the focus group that they would feel “thirty pairs of eyes gazing at” them. One of them explicitly added his concern that innocent but misleading remarks might result in negative evaluations from faculty.

Second, a combination of standing out and lacking support might also lead to their anticipating negative reactions from peers, which resulted in their holding back their opinions. Participants repeatedly reported such experiences in a small group setting such as the group counseling class.

Finally, a combination of lack of support and having different perspectives might lead to getting negative reactions from the majority, which results in holding back. They anticipated negative reactions from female peers because of this combination. In the focus group, a few complained that opinions from males would draw much more negative attention and reaction than similar ones presented by female peers later in the same class. They discussed that it was not solely differences in views, but rather a combination of those differences and lack of connectedness with, and support from, the majority that
would result in negative reactions from them. Data indicated that a few such experiences resulted in male participants “shutting their mouths” or becoming very cautious in openly expressing their views thereafter.

**Female Students’ Perceptions of Program Experiences**

The analysis of data from female participants’ individual interviews and focus group also suggested contextual-conditions/consequences relations among the following categories: being female as majority in the field, having natural skills as a woman, desiring to help others, appreciating peer support and connectedness, needing more diversity including male perspectives as well as research and diagnosis training, needing advanced theories and skills, and being a skilled practitioner. As shown in Figure 4.2, the

**Figure 4.2: Female Perceptions of Program Experiences**
gravity center of other categories was females being skilled practitioners.

First, a combination of a female majority in the program and having natural skills as a woman seemed to lead to their appreciation of peer support and feeling connected in a female-dominated learning environment and competition among peers. All female participants in their twenties explicitly reported their appreciation for peer support and feeling connected during a difficult transition into the graduate program.

Second, a combination of having natural skills and desiring to help others seemed to bring on their needing advanced theories and skills. As mentioned previously, one participant insisted that being an effective counselor should require her to be more than herself; she needed more advanced training.

Third, a combination of desiring to help others and being female as majority seemed to result in perceived needs for more diversity in the classroom, including male views as well as more research and diagnosis training. In addition, as discussed above, one participant expressed her concern about the competition among women for a limited number of job positions and the necessity of more qualifications. Finally all categories discussed above seemed to be moving toward being an effective and skilled counselor.

Conclusion of Data Analysis

In conclusion, the data analysis revealed gendered patterns and differences concerning participants’ perception of their program experiences. As for male participants, their perceived lack of support from others led to holding back from openly sharing their views with peers. On the other hand, female participants’ earnest desire to be an effective
counselor brought them to ask for more support and training. As for the uniqueness of male perspectives, females valued the males’ perspectives as a part of diversity and viewed them as teaching materials that the program should provide. Males asked for more tolerance from the majority towards gender differences. Finally, data analysis found some inconsistencies, outliers, and anomalies in the data. Inconsistencies were sometimes found in the form of anomalies in individual data. A few participants had very unique backgrounds and long life experiences prior to entering the program. This enabled them to view their training experiences somewhat differently than younger peers. On other occasions, discrepancies were seen between what was heard in individual interviews and what was heard in the focus groups or found in archival data. This suggested that there is a continuous construction of reality by each participant as well as context dependency of such construction. One experience was described positively in an individual interview. Later the same experience was illustrated in the focus group as something negative. Quotations to support the previous argument, however, were omitted because of a concern about confidentiality.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will discuss research findings from various perspectives and further explore their meanings for counselor education. First, male participants' views of their program experiences will be examined within the paradigm of male gender role conflict (GRC). Second, female participants’ views on their experiences will be examined from the frame of a women’s career development scheme. Third, participants’ experiences will be examined from the perspective of the Stoltenberg’s (1981) Integrated Developmental Model (IDM). Fourth, gendered patterns identified in the data analysis will be discussed from the perspective of power differentials between opposite sexes with their implications for multicultural training. Fifth, one overarching theme in the research findings will be explored from the cross-cultural perspective. Finally, limitations and implications of the current study are discussed.

Male Experiences in the GRC Perspective

According to the male GRC theory, men in general have more difficulty in working with their emotions because of their socialization; this could affect male counselor trainees, too. Findings from the current study indicated symptoms of GRC in male participants. Data analysis suggested that men holding back their views could be at
the center of male participants’ program experiences. Although participants did not mention restraining emotions directly, they reported occasionally holding back their opinions while in the classroom. However, it was unlikely that holding back their opinions occurred without restraining emotions. Findings of the current study seem congruent with existing literature concerning the impact of male GRC on male counselor trainees.

When the male participants hold back their thoughts and feelings, their training may be influenced. Wester and Vogel (2002) suggested that male trainees may avoid seeking necessary supervision because of GRC. The current study found that reflective journals did not include any male participants’ negative experiences in the female dominated classroom. This appeared to indicate that male trainees fail to share their serious concerns with instructors. This supports the above argument by Wester and Vogel (2002). Studies on male GRC (Wester and Vogel, 2002; Wester et al., 2004) argued that GRC, especially restricted emotionality (RE) and restricted affected behavior between men (RABBM), can have a negative impact on their professional development, including counseling and supervisory relationships.

Second, the literature supported the findings in this study that indicated a complicated association between GRC and male counselor trainees. According to existing research, both male counselors and trainees are less susceptible to GRC, specifically restricted emotionality, because of their training than their clients (Wester et al., 2004). Similarly, in the current study, most male participants reported their having little
difficulty working with feelings. Only one male reported, "I didn't grow up to deal with touchy feely stuff and so I am being confronted with all of these areas for growth, and yet where is my support system?" Wester and Vogel (2002) pointed out that male GRC is more likely to occur in situations such as counselor education programs where traditional male socialization becomes inappropriate. Their argument is based on a study on gender differences in emotional expression that suggested men may have the same ability to express emotions openly as women, but their emotional expressivity is more highly context-dependent than females (Wester et al., 2002). Again, male participants attributed their holding back their views in the female-dominated learning environment, where their "innocent words" could be easily misconstrued. These studies suggested that while counselor training might help male trainees overcome the negative impacts of male socialization, the same learning environment could set forward male GRC, which the current study seemed mostly to support. The only discrepancy herein was that instead of referring to the training program contribution, one participant reported, "My family always encouraged me to express my feelings." In the similar vein, another male mentioned the influence of his mother, who was also a counselor.

Third, previous research indicated the existence of a complicated relationship between trainees' psychological defense styles and restricted emotionality (RE), which the current study seems to moderately support. According to the Wester et al. (2004) study on the relationship between male counselor trainees' RE and their defensive styles in supervision, the defense style of turning-against-others was used by those who have
power over others in dealing with negative feelings and distress caused by GRC and led to anger and being upset with others. The defense style of turning-against-self, on the other hand, was said to be used by those who have less power in the same context, resulting in depression and low self-esteem. In the current study, no male participants reported openly confronting their female peers when the males’ remarks drew negative reactions from the females. No one reported depression or low self-esteem. Instead, many vented their frustration in the focus group. At first sight, male students who were a gender minority in the program used neither turning-against-others nor self defense, but rather a turning-against-nobody defense style. No male participants reported that they openly complained to others about being outnumbered by female peers in class or feeling depressed in reaction to the stressful situation.

Being outnumbered by females in the classroom, however, did not necessarily mean that males had less power. A few males explained that they did not confront female peers for fear that their deep male voice and wild argument might intimidate them. Instead, they decided to “shut their mouths” on such occasions. This reaction may be related to the fact that they still belonged to the powerful majority in the greater society. One participant, referring to an incident in which his comments were dismissed by classmates, remarked that as a White male he was not used to being in a minority position and it was very different from outside the program. Another complained about being treated unfairly as a White male, whose identity the females kept questioning and challenging in most classrooms. Male participants struggled with the gap in their status.
inside and outside the program, leading them to use the turning-against-nobody defense.

Overall, findings of the current study support the existing literature and the existing literature helped verify the data analysis and findings. First, while all male participants reported signs of GRC, none of their responses indicated that they shared the information with instructors. Not sharing has been described in the literature as a potential barrier for effective supervision (Wester & Vogel, 2002). Second, the current study revealed a complicated relation between GRC and male counselor trainees, which support most existing studies. Hereupon, counselor training programs should be likened to a double-edged-sword, which could not only help but prevent male trainees from working on their emotional issues such as frustration and isolation. Finally, the current study might have revealed a complicated relationship between trainees’ psychological defense styles and RE, which was moderately supported in the existing literature. With the difference in their status, male participants in this study seemed to be bewildered. In conclusion, the report of male participants seemed to indicate a symptom of GRC and the necessity of some active interventions to support male trainees as well as to improve communication between male and female students in the program.

Female Experiences in a Women’s Career Development Scheme

The findings of this study revealed that female participants’ experiences in the Master’s programs broke down into three major categories; a) being female as majority in the field, b) desiring to help others, and c) having natural skills as women. Subsequently, these categories would converge on their desire for being a skilled counselor. This section
examines these findings in light of the literature on women's career development. The findings related to females' majority status in the field was supported by the existing literature. According to Singer, Cassin, and Dobson (2005), more females were drawn to the psychology field because of gender socialization experiences that encouraged greater emotional expressiveness and value caring for and connecting with others. Women represent about two thirds of the undergraduate psychology major population in the United States, 80% in Spain, and 84% in the United Kingdom (Stevens & Gielen, 2007). In spite of many differences between counseling and psychology, some fields of psychology, such as counseling psychology, overlap considerably with counseling (Goodyear, 2000). A recent National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) survey also reported that females represent about 75% of Master's-level counseling students (Clawson, Henderson, Schweiger, & Collins, 2004). As discussed in the previous chapter, this female dominated learning environment could have both positive and negative impacts on women. While many female participants appreciated the feelings of being supported and connected with peers, they also mentioned their concern about the expected competition among women in future employment as well as having fewer opportunities to learn of male perspectives in the currently female-dominated program.

What then motivates women to enter the counseling field and how do findings of the current study agree with existing literature? Singer et al. (2005) suggested that perceived flexibilities in work hours make the field attractive to women who have traditionally had more responsibilities for attending to child-rearing and other housework.
A few participants, including one male, in the current study also described the flexibility in work schedule as one of main reasons for their choosing this field.

Alternatively, many women in North America tend to have a strong interest in occupations that involve human interactions (Crozier, 1999). Guided by principles of care and responsibility for others, young women at the first stage of their career development tend to pick up traditional female occupations that involve nurturing and care (Crozier, 1999). Crozier’s model would suggest that the counseling program should attract young women at the first stage of their career development. Most female participants, however, regardless of their age and years in the program, were very vocal in expressing their personal aspiration to be a competent professional helper. This notion seems inconsistent with Crozier’s description of the first stage. According to Crozier’s (1999) model, women shift their attention from needs of significant others to their own for pursuing self-fulfillment on entering the second stage of individuation, which is more aligned with what participants reported. They reported on their striving towards being competent mental health practitioners and emphasized the need for more consistent support and structured training.

This researcher supposes that Crozier’s (1999) stage theory could also apply to a specific generation. It seems that while most women in past generations devoted their entire lives as care givers, women in the present generation seem to have been raised and educated differently, producing more assertive and self-sufficient women. The researcher has met no women under 60 in the U.S. who seem to be at the first stage that emphasizes
self-sacrifice and the service of others. Then, where has the first stage of self-sacrifice and devoted care gone? We could attribute the foundation of many women’s eager desire for helping others to compensating for abandoned roles. Ostensibly liberating themselves from their traditional gender roles, such as sole responsibilities for household chores and childrearing, many women might be still continuously encouraged to fill the void in their time with jobs that approximate their traditional roles through upbringing and various media. According to Dyke and Murphy (2006), early socialization experiences were so critical to the formation of gendered values that women defined their success in terms of connectedness to and caring for others. Their aspiration to help or care for others might come not only from nostalgia, but from an invisible, constant social pressure to assume traditional gender roles.

Prevailing patriarchy assumptions help maintain gender segregation in labor (Cohen, 2004). Historically, society judged women’s success according to the relationship they developed with significant others, not by their public achievement (Levinson & Levinson, as cited in Dyke & Murphy, 2006). Today, women face a different set of expectations, which include caring for others and nurturing close relationships with surroundings that may lead them to have different values from society (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). These stereotyped values might have been so deeply ingrained in all of us that only discerning eyes could see their influence. Five female participants claimed that they have natural skills as a counselor partly because of their gender socialization and upbringing. The adjective ‘natural’ put before skills implies that many women might view
their prescribed roles as a gift.

Six of the participants described counselors as having a lower status and being paid less money than psychologists. By contrast, only one male referred to less money and none of them referred to lower status. Female participants’ perceptions on the counseling profession seemed to be related to what Charles (2003) called vertical and horizontal segregation in labor markets. In her study on gender inequities in labor market, Charles (2003) defined horizontal segregation as the situation where women are underrepresented in manual occupations such as manufacturing, and overrepresented in non-manual occupations such as clerical service. Alternatively, she called vertical segregation the situation where men predominate in highest-status occupations. Charles (2003) attributed the distribution of inequality in labor markets to patriarchal assumptions and practices entrenched and instituted in our daily lives.

Subsequently, according to Charles (2003), “The cultural value of male primacy is converted into vertical segregation through mechanisms analogous to those generating horizontal segregation: discrimination, internalized self-evaluations, and expected sanctions” (p. 9). She further pointed out that “some women may self-select out of high-status positions, because these are too demanding or time-consuming to be compatible with the heavy domestic responsibilities that they expect to assume” (Hakim, as cited in Charles, 2003, p. 9). The above argument is congruent with what some female participants reported in their individual interviews. A few female participants attributed some salient factors to choosing the counseling field such as shorter training in the
program than in clinical psychology and flexibility in work schedule necessary for taking care of small children. This researcher cannot help associating female counselor trainees with Japanese immigrants working at sushi bars as a waitress. Owing to both cultural and linguistic barriers, it seems to be much easier and more comfortable for them to work at sushi restaurants than at gas stations or McDonalds.

Current Findings from the Perspective of IDM

As a whole, participants’ experiences seemed to fit well into Stoltenberg’s Integrated Development Model (IDM) (1981), which described counselor development as occurring through four stages with each stage being characterized by changes on three overriding structures: self-awareness, motivation, and autonomy (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). According to the IDM, counseling supervisees at level one have high motivation and anxiety, need “a highly structured, supportive, and largely instructional supervisory environment, [and are] apprehensive about evaluation” (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004, p. 88). This is congruent with Choate and Granello’s (2006) argument that beginning level counselors needs structure and clear answers. Those at level two begin experiencing “conflict between autonomy and dependency, much as an adolescent” (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004, p. 88). Many participants complained about the lack of sufficient support and structure in certain domains; some reported ambivalence about autonomy in pursuing research activities, and a few male participants referred to concerns for negative evaluation from faculty.

The IDM predicted that supervisees would become more independent and
self-sufficient as they develop through higher levels. The question remains if counselors moving along the stages represents the course of self-actualization as an emerging professional or rather a forced adaptation to an unaccommodating learning environment in the name of professional gate-keeping, a process for eliminating poor candidates. According Stoltenberg (2005), novices in the field are primarily concerned about themselves, their own aptitudes, knowledge, skills and effectiveness as a counselor. These concerns result in self-doubt, anxiety, and frustration. Most will eventually outgrow level one and move towards level two, turning their attention away from themselves to their clients’ inner worlds (Stoltenberg, 2005). However, what most participants of the current study, both first-year and second-year students, emphasized in their interviews was the need for more support, not self-concern or doubt. While their claim for more knowledge and skills indicated their focus as being more on themselves than on clients, few reported frustration at themselves. Rather, they reported being frustrated at others. Some, both males and females, reported that they would look for support or mentors on their own. It seemed that autonomy is brought about not so much by an outgrowing self-doubt or anxiety, but the result of getting insufficient support.

Developmental approaches to supervision face some criticism. The IDM fails to pay sufficient attention to the influence of trainees’ previous life experiences and well established cognitive structure. Holloway (1987) suggested that different learning environments were appropriate for each trainee based on their established cognitive level. In the current study, participants with much more life experiences demonstrated different
concerns than their younger peers. Two of such participants mentioned that the program would treat all students alike regardless of their various backgrounds. They also referred to their perceived lack of respect for their previous life experiences and accompanying knowledge from others in their classes. Critics of the developmental models discussed above do not refer to the propriety of valuing autonomy too much in human development, leaving such an argument to feminist theorists who advocated alternative values such as care for others and responsibility in human relationships (Kuhmerker, 1991).

According to Bernard and Goodyear (2004), “Not only does counseling and psychotherapy continue to reflect the dominant culture in the United States, but it also makes up a culture in and of itself” (p. 119). Bradshaw (1990), a feminist psychotherapist, argued that lack of active support from others is characteristic of American mainstream culture and the psychotherapy developed here, which describes a healthy self as (a) having the sense of self-entitlement, (b) being self-assertive and self-supportive, and (c) capable of maintaining self-esteem. This argument could be applied to counselor education. Frustrations at unmet needs could be the main contributor to the development of autonomy in clients as well as counselor trainees. As discussed previously, interview data suggested that counselor trainees would not outgrow self-doubt or anxiety to be an autonomous practitioner, but rather they learned to be independent through the lack of sufficient or rather extra support.

While the above argument makes a serious allegation against counselor educators as well as counseling, counselor education programs might be unreflectively producing
helpers who would help only those who could help themselves. After the focus group, one participant asked this researcher if their voices in the current study would be heard by the program, contributing towards the program improvement. Listening to this exchange, second year students gave us a smile, implying that it could not happen. Twohey and Volker (1993) also maintained that training programs might unguardedly infuse patriarchal values in the form of orthodox intervention while ignoring students’ voice of care and connectedness, “despite the fact that the most widely used counseling skill clusters include traditionally female skills” (p. 189).

Differentials between Opposite Sexes and Multicultural Training

The analysis of data in this study resulted in two main gendered patterns and one major gap in perceptions between male and female participants. Most male participants reported serious concern over negative consequences of factors such as their different perspectives, standing out, and lacking support from and connectedness with peers in the classroom. These factors led to them holding back their genuine voices. Alternatively, most female participants reported that although they had aptitudes or natural skills as a helper because of their socialization and upbringing, they needed more support from the programs since they are novices in the field. While male participants focused on gender disparity and accompanying power differentials in the classroom, female participants seemed to be much more concerned about their needs as a trainee fulfilled by the program than the latent tension between opposite sexes.

As for males, a few embarrassing incidents in the classroom led them to be
highly sensitive to the tension caused by differences in views and impact of voices between opposite sexes with possible negative consequences. Maslow's hierarchy would see them in need of psychological safety and belonging. According to Rogers (1979), one of the ultimate goals of counseling is a creation of a safe and secure environment that will inevitably lead to personal growth. Ironically, sensing the lack of safe and secure learning environment, these participants decided to be quiet about their concerns. On the other hand, females mainly communicated their eager desire for becoming competent and independent practitioners. They did not mention any negative interactions between opposite sexes. Rather, they appreciated the peer support in the woman friendly environment and the diversity that male perspectives would bring in. They seemed to focus on the needs of self-esteem and self-sufficiency in Maslow's hierarchy. Instead of focusing on their basic psychological needs such as safety and belonging, female participants seemed to be more orientated towards educational and professional attainments.

Up to this point, we have seen a replay of the modern society, in microcosm. While minorities struggled with the more basic needs of survival in an inhospitable environment, those within a nurturing environment as the majority can afford to focus on higher needs such as self-esteem and self-actualization (Neukrug, 2003). While most male participants asked for more peer support in the classroom, female participants focused on getting better education and training, paying less attention to the sneaking tensions in the classroom. It means that communication between opposite sexes in the
program may not be as good as it is supposed to be, especially from the perspective of counselor education.

This researcher came to have an impression that the current multicultural training in many counseling programs fails to effectively foster students' multicultural competency. First, researchers suggested that gender issues should be included in the multicultural training (Twohey, & Volker, 1993; Wester et al., 2002; 2004). The current study found lack of good communication between male and female trainees. This seemed to indicate lack of such training and competency. This type of lack of good communication between men and women seems to partly come from the difference in communication patterns. According to Tannen, while female students tended to participate in a classroom discussion by offering their own experiences to support instructors, males were more likely to question and challenge instructors (as cited in Munson, 1997). This was exactly what the researcher observed while working as a teaching assistant in many classes. Collins and Pieterse (2007) also stated that although current approaches to multicultural training succeeded in developing trainees' skills and knowledge related to multicultural issues, "research suggest these efforts may be falling short of increasing multicultural awareness . . . experiential and emotional domains unaffected" (p. 16). It was not mere differences in views between males and females but accompanying frustration suppressed by male participants that the current study found. Awareness of gendered communication patterns must be an important aspect of multicultural awareness that students of both sexes should explore and develop. In
addition to gender issues, the psychological distance from young peers reported by much more experienced students, yet another missing subject in the classroom, might also support this argument.

Based on his hard-won experiences as an international student in two counseling programs, this researcher came to have a general impression concerning the effectiveness of multicultural training, which is basically similar to the above discussion by Collins and Pieterse (2007). While focusing on superficial diversities among people, the current multicultural training seemed to neglect helping students work with invisible conflicts that occur daily through the latent antagonism between opposite sexes. How could counselor educators help trainees develop their multicultural competence without having them examine their daily encounter with people of a different culture or, the opposite sex? This must be an issue a multicultural training class should address. “Women and men are raised in different cultures, they often speak in different voices” (Gilligan, as cited in Twohey & Volker, 1993). Despite being a fundamental multicultural issue, gender tends to be a peripheral topic in multicultural counseling classes. In their study on men’s GRC Wester et al. (2004) suggested the necessity of counselor education programs to examine and incorporate potential impacts of gender socializations, especially those of men’s, into multicultural training.

Neglect of gender issues such as latent conflicts between opposite sexes in the counseling training seemed to extend to supervision. According to Bernard and Goodyear (2004), “Although most concern and fear seem to revolve around cross-racial supervision,
the limited research we have seems to indicate that gendered behaviors have been the most damaging within supervision” (p. 135). It is suggested that while the focus of supervision was on multicultural issues, gender issues were neglected, which could have a negative impact on the profession. Except GLBT issues, gender seemed to be invisible to most participants. It is really amazing that no multicultural trainings known to this researcher have made use of the ubiquitous teaching material. The researcher believes that an effective multicultural training should focus more on gender issues. Citing Pederson (1991), Ellis and Robbins (1993) also stated, “We believe that it is crucial to view gender bias within the context of multicultural issues. To do otherwise may reinforce the notion of a hierarchy among the various multicultural biases and issues—a truly undesirable situation” (p. 209). Before discussing limitations of the study, the following section will further examine research findings from a cross cultural perspective.

**Autonomy vs. Amae or Passive Object Love**

As an international student, this researcher has been struggling with cultural and language barriers in two counseling programs. In this section, participants’ experiences will be examined from the perspective of amae psychology. *Amae*, a Japanese word signifying indulgent dependency of an infant on its mother, is a psychoanalytic concept introduced by Doi (1971) to explain differences in mentality between Americans and Japanese. According to Doi (1971), it was his experience of cultural shock as an international student from Japan that originally had him preoccupied with the concept of amae. In short, Doi (1971) argued that it is for and against amae that separates Japanese
and American mentalities. While Japanese show much more tolerance and affirmative actions towards the spirit of dependence, Americans firmly advocate the spirit of self-reliance, which would lead American therapists “to abandon the patient to his helplessness and even make it impossible to understand the patient’s true state of mind (Doi, 1971, p. 22). Doi (1971) suggested that putting too much emphasis on autonomy and equity as cultural norms might have made American psychotherapists blind to clients’ desire to be loved, in other words their fundamental needs for support and connection. Having much in common and as his former student, the researcher can fully appreciate Doi’s perspective and believes that the following discussion will add a valuable contribution to the sum of literature on counselor education.

In spite of gendered patterns concerning participants’ perception on their program experiences identified in data analysis, the overarching theme in these findings appeared to be the participants’ needs for sufficient support and feelings of connectedness. Interview data indicated that while striving towards becoming an independent counselor, everyone seemed to need more care and support from others. It was not only first year students that asked for more support. Some second year students joined them in their protest. As discussed previously, however, these needs might be usually suppressed or distorted because of the devaluation of dependency by the American mainstream culture. Anger that this researcher sensed in many participants’ voices might have reflected their dilemma of doing without enough support or of being seen as dependent and immature.

Arguing against the American mainstream culture including psychotherapy which
tends to unreflectively identify autonomy with personal growth, Bradshaw (1990) maintained.

The American culture offers very few situations in which one is allowed to indulge someone else the way one might a puppy, and also be indulged. The defensively hide weakness behind the armor of self-reliance robs us from acknowledging the universal human weakness and sense of belonging. (p. 85)

Alternatively, many Americans’ aspiration to help or care for others might come from a desire to wipe out or compensate for the memory of their having abandoned their desire to be indulged or dependent on their parents forever.

Referring to expressions such as Please help yourself and Heaven helps those who help themselves, Doi (1971) suggested the absence of unconditional love in the American society. He indicated that U.S. society requires those who seek help to be assertive and independent to a certain extent, comparing it with Japanese society where the dominant Buddhist Philosophy reasons that total surrender is the only way to be helped. Some participants emphasized that they were not directly helping or supporting others, only helping them help themselves. This researcher wonders if counselor trainees may develop their respect for clients by projecting their own experiences in the counseling relationship, which will, in turn, promote their self respect.

**Implications for Counselor Education**

Male participants reported their perception of the atmosphere in the counseling courses as not safe enough to openly share their views, and as a minority, they felt less
connected with peers and felt as if they were not getting enough support. Effective intervention to address male trainee difficulties should be aimed at male and female students. First, female students need opportunities to reflect on and learn about latent gendered tensions in the classroom, possibly through a multicultural counseling class. Second, male students need a safer and nonjudgmental environment where they can freely share and explore views and feelings they now suppress in the classroom. As discussed earlier, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs suggests that it is necessary to secure psychological safety first. It seems essential that the programs provide a safe environment for male students so that their growth might be secured. Here, however, counselor educators could find themselves in moral dilemmas. Counselor education necessarily includes the gate-keeping process for weeding out poor candidates to protect future clients as well as the profession. Fear of unfavorable judgment and negative evaluations from instructors made some trainees hesitant to openly share their difficulties or need for support.

It seemed helpful for participants to develop small self-help groups. One participant explicitly expressed his concern about such possibilities, referring to an occasional conflict between his values and instructors’. Many Master’s level students, including participants of the current study, reported a far-reaching impact, both positive and negative, of the group counseling class. In addition, observation of the male focus group suggested that a monthly or bi-weekly men’s focus group should encourage them to openly share their views and feelings that might have been suppressed in the classroom.
It is possible, however, that male students' participation in the gender segregated focus group may lead to further separate themselves from female peers and aggravate their frustration against the majority. Therefore, group leaders should give considerable care so as not to agitate against the majority. In addition, to eliminate any evaluative factors, as well as to facilitate open communication with women, it might be ideal to have two senior students of both genders with appropriate experiences to co-lead the group without any academic implications. Two co-leaders are expected to actively explore gender issues in the program under the necessary supervision of faculty. The female group leader especially is expected to play the role of a tolerant big sister who can provide both constructive and challenging feedback for male students. Furthermore, official documents to ensure confidentiality might help nurture participants' sense of safety.

Alternatively, female participants protested that they needed more structured training, as well as consistent mentoring support. The findings of current study are congruent with the literature and suggested that the preexisting mentoring system in the program is not working consistently enough to provide sufficient support and care for most students, or role models. Bilos et al.'s finding that "counseling students without mentors felt frustrated and questioned their career choice, feeling more secure only after gaining some competencies" (as cited in Tentoni, 1995, p. 33) was consistent with findings of the current study. On the other hand, according to Anderson and Shannon, "Current applications of mentoring have been quite vague and ambiguous with inconsistencies between student and faculty perceptions about the functional
components” (as cited in Tentoni, 1995, p. 33). Black, Suarez, and Medina (2004) also pointed out the disparity between the actual practice of the mentoring and its widely recognized importance in counselor training. They reported, “Despite its well-documented benefits, mentoring is still poorly defined (Jacobi, 1991; Tentoni, 1995) and infrequently practiced (Brown-Wright et al., 1997; Bruce, 1995; Johnson & Huwe, 2003; Mintz, Bartels, & Rideout, 1995)” (Black et al., 2004, p. 44).

While faculty advisors are expected to serve an important role in promoting student development in various areas, most of them appear to be less motivated to assume such extra responsibilities given their already busy schedules with multiple roles such as instructor, supervisor, researcher, and gatekeeper (Choate & Granello, 2006). Again, senior students with appropriate skills and knowledge are good candidates for this job. The greatest challenge is, however, that most students are too busy with their own course and assistant work and have little time left for providing extra mentoring service for other students. Now, most counseling students work as a graduate assistant from 10 to 20 hours a week. To spend 10 GA hours mentoring Master’s students might help not only protégés but mentors themselves, who will greatly benefit from opportunities to teach and conduct research as candidates for future leaders in the field.

As for power differentials and lack of smooth communication between opposite sexes in the program, a multicultural counseling class should incorporate gender issues in the curriculum. Providing appropriate discussion topics as a part of class activities might help improve communication between opposite sexes. Twohey and Volker (1993) also
pointed out gender-related communication problems that may occur in counseling and supervision. Focusing on communication in counseling and supervision relationships, their argument seemed to support the necessity for this kind of intervention in the classroom. High priority should be given to provide more information and occasions to reflect on the gendered tension in the classroom in order to help female students prepare for working with male clients. One participant shared his previous counseling experience with a female counselor whose overt hostility toward men had him stop seeing her.

Because students are assigned grades and because of the disparity in representation of genders, it seemed difficult for students to openly share their views when they differed from the majority. In introducing topics concerning gender disparities, instructors need to encourage students to focus on power differentials between opposite sexes, inside and outside the program. It should also require instructors to openly admit and explore power differentials between students and themselves as a role model.

In conclusion, three suggestions were presented in order to further help trainees' professional development. First, a regular male group led by senior students could provide them with a safe environment to share and explore their sometimes stressful experiences as a minority in the female dominated program. Second, an official mentoring service should be offered by senior students to those who are interested in advanced training, such as learning specialized counseling skills, forming a research project, and preparing for a conference presentation. Third, gender issues such as a latent conflict between the opposite sexes could be introduced in multicultural training to foster
Limitations of the Study

Factors that might have affected the findings of the current study are the following: (a) the language and cultural barriers between participants and the researcher, for whom English is a second language; (b) the dual relationship between participants and the researcher, who graded them as a teaching assistant; (c) the gender of the researcher, who has much more in common with male participants than females; and (d) the gender, age, and ethnic composition of the program participants enrolled, which consists mostly of young white females.

First and foremost, it is very likely that the researcher’s being an international student had both positive and negative impacts on the research findings. While the researcher’s limited English occasionally retarded the smooth communication in generating data, it might have encouraged both parties to use accurate language and clear expressions with greater reflection upon our words. Second, the researcher previously graded some participants as a teaching assistant. This might have deterred the participants from openly sharing their views of their program experiences. After their individual interviews and focus groups, some participants asked the researcher to ensure confidentiality in order that their identity not be revealed. Third, having similar experiences, it was much easier for the researcher to put himself “in the male participants’ shoes,” resulting in more follow-up questions and longer interviews. On average, interviews with male participants were several minutes longer than those with
female participants. Finally, with young White females predominating, the program participants enrolled might be extreme cases, which might have intensified male participants' experiences as a gender minority excessively.

Although factors mentioned above might have negatively influenced the data generating process, the following steps taken during the data analysis process provided the current study with greater trustworthiness and authenticity. Throughout the data analysis section, the researcher made the most of direct quotations from participants avoiding the use of paraphrasing so that the text could reflect voices of participants as well as their unique perspectives on program experiences. Additionally, informative feedback came from participants as well as peer counseling researchers to counter-balance arguments based on selected interview excerpts and other artifact data, which mainly reflects the researcher's subjective reconstruction of data. The feedback was gathered through both occasional face-to-face follow-ups and e-mail exchanges.

**Implications for Future Research**

Findings of the current study raised the following questions:

1. To what extent do the following factors relate to each other: (a) female to male student ratios, (b) the degree of male students' feeling disconnected from female peers, (c) that of standing out as a "minority, (d) that of having different perspectives from most female peers, and (e) male students' GRC scores? According to Wester & Vogel (2002), male GRC was more likely to occur in situations that prohibited traditional male socialization. It is
hypothesized that factors such as female to male ratios and perceived psychological distance between them will contribute to the development of such situations.

2. If, in which domain, and to what degree do students feel satisfied/dissatisfied with the structure of and support from the program? Interview data indicated participants' dissatisfaction with certain domains in the program such as theory and advanced skill training, and communication between students and faculty, regardless of their program year. Conversely, the IDM predicted trainees' gradually outgrowing their anxiety, frustration, and needs for structure and support. It is likely that some of the students' dissatisfaction originates from their developmental stages and others stem from the structure of the program. Systematic assessment of needs and frustration of trainees may help provide better service to them.

3. If and how does getting training in a gender-imbalanced environment affect the current and future clinical work of male and female counseling students? Data analysis suggested gaps or lack of good communication between students of the opposite sex in the program, especially in the discomfort experienced by males. In the future, this could lead to dissatisfaction or premature termination in their working with clients of the opposite sex. It is hypothesized that female counselors from predominantly female programs have more difficulty in working with male students, and vice versa. A survey
of trainees’ preparedness for working with clients of the opposite sex, and that of clients’ satisfaction in their experience with counselors of the opposite sex should be carried out to examine impacts of gender disparity on trainees’ effectiveness.

4. If and how effectively will the small support groups work to help the professional development of counselor trainees? Will they complement the existing irregular and less organized peer mentoring system? As discussed in the previous section, both students’ voices and observations of two focus group meetings suggested potential helpfulness of support groups for trainees’ professional development. Systematic assessment of the effectiveness of such support groups will help improve counselor training programs.

**Personal Reflections**

Two compelling reasons motivated the use of the qualitative approach in the current study in spite of researcher’s limited English. First, there exists the compatibility between qualitative research and counseling, for which many researchers have provided eloquent descriptions such as “the basic epistemological fit” (Merchant & Dupuy, 1996, p. 537), the compatibilities between humanistic psychotherapy with post-modern perspective (Walker, 2001), the qualitative approaches providing “more accessible, or experience-near, description of linkage” (McAuliffe & Lovell, 2006, p. 309), and their ability to capture complicated clinical phenomena [like empathy]” (Hill & Nakayama,
Second, as an international student with a different cultural background in the doctoral program, the researcher has been struggling for a better understanding of American counselor-trainees as well as counseling. It seemed that the researcher benefited much from close interaction with participants in the qualitative study, who are also studying counseling. For example, it was not until collecting data for the current study that the researcher found that such a word as “chicks” could be very offensive to young females.

While reflecting upon all individual interviews and focus groups, it occurred to the researcher that it was not about care, but respect towards others and humanity that makes the counseling profession similar to qualitative research while still distinguishing itself from the other helping professions. The utmost concern in qualitative study is not on the important findings, but rather the participants’ well-beings. Providing participants with a positive lead for their professional development in a safe environment is no less important than building new theories upon the data. This in turn helped the professional development of the researcher.

Conclusion

The current study explored the Master’s-level counseling students’ training experiences focusing on gendered patterns and differences. The findings included the three major themes:

a) male students’ occasional self-restraint possibly resulting from their perceived isolation,
differences in perspectives, and lack of support and connection with peers; b) students',
especially females', needs for more structured and consistent support in certain domains
of the program, and c) lack of good communication between students of the opposite sex.

To work with these issues, three kinds of promising interventions were suggested: a)
incorporation of latent gender issues in the classroom into multicultural training, b) a
regular male support group led by doctoral students, and c) official mentoring services of
doctoral students to all Master's-level students. Counselor education programs have to
handle moral dilemmas. Counselor educators are supposed to educate professional
helpers who are expected to be non-judgmental towards others while continuously
supervising and evaluating them. Doctoral students with their unique positions in their
programs could be the key to the solution.
Appendix A

Consent for Participation Form

The purpose of the current study is to explore gendered patterns in Master's level counseling students' perception of their training experiences. Both individual and group interviews will be conducted by Yukio Fujikura, a doctoral student in the Counselor Education Ph.D. program at the college of William & Mary, under the supervision of his dissertation committee members. The participants of the study will be those who are in the Master's level counselor education program in the college of William & Mary. In the focus group, participants will share and exchange the information and concern about the life experience in the counseling education program. To record both individual and group session, an audio tape recorder will be used. The recorded data will be transcribed and a narrative summary will be created. For correction and clarification, the summary will be forwarded to the participants via email as part of the member-checking process. All recordings will be erased after they are transcribed and member-checked. In addition, participants will be also asked to share their reflective journals as the artifact data. The archival data, specifically participants' application, essays will be also examined by permission of participants and authorities.

As a participant in this study, you do not have to answer every question asked, and are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time by informing the researcher in person or by telephone. Your decision to participate or not participate will not affect your relationship with the researcher, instructors, and the College of William & Mary.
in general.

The research findings will be shared with counselor educators of the program each participant belongs to as well as all participants. The researcher is professionally and ethically bound to preserve the confidentiality of all personal information that is revealed by the participants in the interview. This study will be recorded with a pseudonym of participants’ choice that will allow only the researchers to determine their identity. Participants may keep a copy of the consent form. The study findings will be also distributed electrically to participants upon request via email.

If you have any questions or problems that arise in connection with this study, please contact Dr. Charles F. Gressard, the committee chair of the current study at 757-221-2352 or cfgress@wm.edu, or Dr. Michael Deschenes, the chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the College of William and Mary at 757-221-2778 or PHSC-L@wm.edu.

I have read and understand the above statements regarding the participation in the study, confidentiality, and recording of the session.

My signature below confirms that I am at least 18 years of age, that I have received a copy of this consent form, and that I consent to participate in this study including the examination of selected reflective journal entries and application essay by the researcher.

______________________________  __________________________
Participant Signature          Date

I request the electrical copy of the study findings upon the completion of the study, and would like to receive it via the following email address:________________________
@ __________.

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2008-01-02 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-01-02.
Appendix B

Researcher as Instrument Statement

*Researcher as instrument*

The role of qualitative researchers should not be one of experts but one of being active learners (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It seems that a part of being human is our unremitting inquiring mind’s need to measure, explore, and discover the world. This perspective engenders the following two hypotheses. First, every human life is an unintended qualitative study, in which each subject is struggling for the meaning of his or her life. Second, the counselor’s role is to help individuals explore, examine, and identify themes specific to their lives. Counseling could be seen as a collaborative qualitative study by the counselor and client. Qualitative research, reversely, might be reframed as a counseling act by the researcher.

*What Counseling Means to Most Japanese*

While having taught in a Japanese high school for more than 16 years, the author had never met a school counselor before his current visit in the US. Although the Ministry of Education in Japan recently began placing school counselors in all middle schools, they are all part-time workers with a background in clinical psychology. Thus, to most Japanese, there is no difference between counseling and clinical psychology. Since the start of my Master’s degree in a counseling program in the US, my understanding of counseling has increased progressively through interaction in the classroom and field experience as a practicum student and guidance intern at local schools.
Key Experiences

A few critical incidents during the counseling practicum in the Master's program have helped me fully appreciate what constructivists claim. After a seemingly satisfying session, an instructor gave me very negative feedback from a client on my clinical performance. My shock was such that my unremitting reflection led to enthusiastic appreciation for constructivists' claim. It was through that precious experience, however, that I came to realize the fact that while living under the blue sky in early summer, each individual sees, feels, and breathes it differently. Although two lovers can enjoy the fresh green of May, the green speaks to each of them differently. At first, it sounds simple and natural that each person has his or her unique experience and view. Monotonous but also stressful daily life, however, deprives us of critical judgment and makes us assume that we are having exactly the same experience or that we know "the truth." Both total embedded-ness in and differentiation from the environment or context could result in our losing fair and balanced judgment. Being in an extraordinary close relationship, both the counselor and client are especially vulnerable to this kind of prejudice. I have had to keep it in my mind that there are as many truths as the number of people who think they know the truth. There exists as many justices as the number of people who believe they are right.

Personal Beliefs

I believe that both biological limitations and human nature make completely open and honest communication impossible. Humans tend to tell lies, or a preferable part
of the story, to themselves as well as to others consciously and unconsciously.

Evolutionary psychologists suggest that we must lie in order to survive and thrive (Gaulin & McBurney, 2001). I would say that we not only construct our own stories but also keep reconstructing them proffering a reason for why we can never have the same experience while sharing the time and space. Each of us experiences a different reality with our own unique values. However, this relativistic perspective does not necessarily invite or engender chaos in human knowledge. Relativism must be what guarantees our respect for others by enabling us to see the limitation and relativity of personal belief and judgment. It also ensures that we keep changing and developing throughout our lives. Relativism lies both between and within us. It transcends absolute subjectivity and objectivity, moving toward a just and caring community.

Personal Values

I insist that counseling is an art not because it requires unique techniques or qualities but rather that it involves the devoted care for others, what Fromm (1956) called, the art of loving. I believe that the essence of the counseling relationship lies not in the art of healing but in caring. Why do we care for others? Yalom (1980) wrote, “It seems important, if an activity is to supply meaning, that it lifts the individual out of himself, even though it is not explicitly altruistic” (p.435). What brings about meaning-making is a fervent and unfulfilled desire to lift self out of itself, to liberate oneself from the jail of existential isolation. We care for others for we all know that it will give us a lift, which I would like to call an existential emancipation.
A Word of Self-caution

It is obvious that most researchers want to find some patterns or themes in their studies. While being willing to discover something divergent from expected responses, the author might unknowingly focus on some stereotypical responses of participants based on the male gender role conflict theory. Qualitative researchers can be likened to travelers in the desert who are thirsty for water. We have to be especially careful not to waste precious time and resources chasing after the mirage of the oasis. Similarly, we have to pay more attention to places where we are most likely to overlook. The researcher might pay less attention to stories that seem ordinary or familiar. Peer and member checking will be essential for the researcher to gain various perspectives, as well as feedback so that fair and balanced decision and judgment could be made.
Appendix C

List of First Axial Codes and Sub Categories

1. The axial code *counseling profession character* includes categories such as desiring direct involvement with people and their change process, keeping distance from research and psychiatric diagnoses, getting a lower status and less money than psychologists, and seeking a quicker training than clinical psychology.

2. The axial code *being male as a minority in the program* includes standing out as a minority, having different perspectives as male, holding back, lacking support and connection, and getting male privilege.

3. The axial code *being female as a majority in the program* includes feeling connected and supported by peers, and affected by age gap.

4. The axial code *impression on program experiences* includes having experiential learning, concerned about grading and evaluation, disappointed with the program structure, and having much less male peers than expected.

5. The axial code *previous experience* includes getting mothers' influences, and having natural skills.
Appendix D

Reflexive Journals

<p>| 1/22 (Tue) | Today was the first day of my data collection. I had three interviews with female students, two first year students and one second year. Before recording the session, I handed them consent for participation forms, explaining research objectives. First two interviews in the morning turned out to be much shorter than I had expected. While I expected each interview to last at least 30 minutes, they were between 15 and 20 minutes. I tried to give participants as few leading questions as possible and not to intervene in their stories. In addition, it being my first day of my data collection, I was a little nervous and self-preoccupied. Those factors might have negatively affect sessions. In the third interview in the afternoon, I found myself less nervous asking more follow up questions, which resulted in about 30 minute interview. I shared with participants the possibility that I might ask for the professional help in transcribing the interview data. At night I emailed my appreciation to my participants, asking to send me their journal reflections and application essays. |
| 1/23 (Wed) | I had two interviews, one with first year male student and the other second year female students. Partly owing to my deep interest in male students' perspective, and partly owing to his willingness to share his story, we had a |</p>
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<td>1/24 (Thu)</td>
<td>much longer session than others, more than 40 minutes. The other interview with a female participant was also longer than interviews I had the previous day. She openly shared her experiences and emotions with the researcher. As for transcribing the interview data, I found many professional services in the internet. I consulted three faculty members about asking for the professional transcription service and obtained positive responses.</td>
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<td>1/25 (Fri)</td>
<td>I had one interview with first year male student. It was about 35 minutes, longer than my interviews with female participants. His story was much different from the first male students, which surprised me a little. I had two interviews with first year students, each lasting around 30 minutes. At the end of the second interview, after revealing very personal and sensitive information, the interviewee asked to me to delete the part from the transcript. I told her that while I could delete the part from the written transcript, it might be difficult to delete the part from the digital file. She agreed that I would only delete the part from the paper transcript if I could not delete the part of the file. After the session, I checked if I could delete the part of the interview file, only to find it impossible without a special software. Now I am wondering if and how this particular incident during the interview would help both the participant’s and my personal and professional growth; this experience must have provided us with precious food for thought concerning the counseling relationship and how to gradually work</td>
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with our own personal issues, or rather unfinished business.

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<td>1/26</td>
<td>Reflecting back upon all interviews I had this past week, I have an impression that while most female participants were much more likely to focused on their personal relationships/encounters with faculty members than males in their stories. It also occurred to me that it was not care about but rather respect towards both others and humanity that makes the counseling profession similar to qualitative research but distinguish from other helping professions.</td>
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<td>(Sat)</td>
<td>I interviewed one male student in the afternoon. He was very friendly and open. It took more than 40 minutes. Somehow, all interviews with males were longer than ones with females. I am wondering if it is because they had much more to share with me or rather because I was more eager to listen to their stories. Looking back to today's session, it seems that I felt more excited with what he shared. My participants began sending me their reflective journals and application essays, most of which I found very are very consistent with what I heard in their interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>I had two interviews, second year female and male. Both of them were very open and cooperative. Especially, I found a lot of commonality between the male students' story and mine when I was in the Master's program. Since I started collecting data last week, I frequently felt a little frustrated that my</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
poor English prevent me from asking appropriate follow-up questions and my interviewees sometimes looked a little confused with my questions. As of today, I finished all female individual interviews.

1/30 (Wed)

I had one interview with a first year male student in the morning. Before recording the interview, he seemed to be more concerned with confidentiality issue, particularly how his personal information would be handled, and detailed explanation was provided. Once the interview stated, I had an impression that he spoke a little faster than others, implying his nervousness or rushing at. Our interview lasted about 30 minutes, a little shorter than previous interviews with other male participants. However, after recording the interview, we had a fairly long and friendly conversation.

1/31 (Thu)

I had my next to the last interview with a third year part-time male student. Although he was very open, friendly, and corporative, I became a little worried about my interview skills. While my research paradigm is constructivism, I felt like giving too many follow-up, or rather guiding questions to most of my interviewees including him. So far I had this occasional impression that to many of my participants my original questions seemed to be a little too abstract or ambiguous. On my seeing a kind of perplex on their faces, I found myself giving them follow-up questions. So should I consider my behavior as giving too many guiding questions or
I had the female focus group today. At first I was so nervous that I failed to introduce each member to others. The meeting turned out to be much livelier with active/open exchanges among members and lasted nearly 70 minutes. It seemed that serving light meal worked very well and helped participants feel relaxed.
Appendix E

Participants’ Profiles

**Joan:** Joan is a first year marriage and family counseling student, just starting her practicum training. She is more experienced than most of her classmates who are in their early to mid twenties, single, and Caucasian.

**Kenna:** Kenna is a second year community counseling student, currently in the last semester of her internship. She is more experienced than most of her classmates in their twenties, married, and Caucasian.

**Rose:** Rose is a first year community/addiction counseling student, just started her practicum training. She is in her twenties, single – though engaged, and Caucasian.

**Tom:** Tom is a first year community/addiction counseling student, just started his practicum training. He is in his twenties, single, and Caucasian.

**Noone:** Noone is a second year school counseling student, currently in the last semester of her internship. She is in her twenties, single, and Caucasian.

**Allen:** Allen is a first year community/addiction counseling student, just started his practicum training. He is in his twenties, single, and Caucasian.

**Gertrude:** Gertrude is a first year community/addiction counseling student, just started her practicum training. She is more experienced than most of her classmates in their twenties, single, and Caucasian.

**Maria:** Maria is a first year community/addiction counseling student, just started her
practicum training. She is in her twenties, single—though engaged, ethnic minority.

Luke: Luke is a first year marriage and family counseling student, just started his practicum training. He is more experienced than most of his classmates, married, Caucasian.

A.Y.: A.Y. is a second year community/addiction counseling student, currently in the last semester of her internship. She is in her twenties, single, and Caucasian.

Peter: Peter is a first year community/addiction counseling student, just started his practicum training. He is in his twenties, single—though engaged, and Caucasian. Being a fulltime student, he also has a fulltime job outside the program.

Scout: Scout is a third year community/addiction counseling student, in his internship training. He is in his twenties, married, and Caucasian. Being a part-time student, he also has a fulltime job.

Adam: Adam is a second year school counseling student, currently in the last semester of his internship. He is in his twenties, single, and Caucasian
Appendix F

Feedback from Participants via Email

From Participant R to me.

I enjoyed meeting with the other women in the program today. For what it's worth, I did not feel that our interaction was any different than it would have been normally. Your English is perfectly fine! I have never had problems understanding you, and I've had the opportunity to talk with you many times. I do understand your feelings and self-doubt. I lived in [deleted] for four months last year, and I was always aware of how mediocre my Spanish was. No matter how hard I tried I could not communicate my thoughts at the same level of those around me. I really admire you and your persistence in this program. I try to imagine myself completing a doctoral degree in counseling in a Spanish-speaking country and it is a frightening thought for me! Please let me know if I can help out in any way. Thank you again for the pizza and the chance to interact with other women in my program. We were able to communicate things that we normally do not say to each other and that was valuable.

From K to me.

Very interesting! One comment about this quote: I mean most people I have talked to -- I guess I would have say one or two years out in my perspective seems like just about the same as directly out. I mean I know you've had valuable experiences but I mean you are
the same age group, you are in the same, you know unmarried for the most part, most people don’t have children, most people are on their first career. So for me it’s a very different experience being over and married and a parent and coming at a second career. I believe the word "over" in the last sentence here should be "older."
**Appendix G**

**Summary of Code**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axial Codes (categories)</th>
<th>Open &amp; focused Codes (properties: discovered)</th>
<th>code #</th>
<th>M (6)</th>
<th>F (7)</th>
<th>sum</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Profession Character</td>
<td>Desiring to help others by direct contact/involvement</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>less research/ diagnosis</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getting lower status &amp; money</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getting quicker degree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Male as minority in the field/program</td>
<td>(+) Standing out</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>major topic in M. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-) Standing out</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>major topic in M. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(+) Having different views</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-) Having male perspectives</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>major topic in M. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holding back</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>major topic in M. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lacking support /connection</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Major topic in M. F.G. implied by females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>getting respect /privilege</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>major topic in M. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Female as majority</td>
<td>Feeling connected/ supported</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>All young females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other issues - age gap (being as male)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>All experienced, major topic in F. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impressions on program experiences</td>
<td>Getting experiential learning</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>major topic in F. F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concerned with evaluations</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>topic in Male F.G.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disappointed (satisfied)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>major topic in both F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having much less male</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>topic in Female F.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Experiences</td>
<td>Having mother’s influences</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>May be related to lower status, easy degree, time flexibility,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having Natural skills</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix H

### Interview Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axial Codes (factors)</th>
<th>Open Codes (variables)</th>
<th>Examples from Interviews (values)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being Male as minority in the field/program</td>
<td>+Stand out</td>
<td>m1). I thought that could be an advantage in one way to make me stand out from the rest of the crowd. m2) I was most definitely aware of the gender, you know difference in the field and the field is most definitely mostly females but I actually -- hopefully that worked to my advantage, you know being a male in a dominant female field hopefully would be an advantage in the long run.</td>
<td>m1</td>
<td>f4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Stand out</td>
<td>m1). being in the minority like its hard to defend myself when you know you have 30 other eyes staring straight at you f3) they are put on a hot spot and so I do feel sad for them in that matter. I feel that they have got extra stress, sometimes put upon them because they are when you are different in some way from the majority, you stand out. And I feel like they sit in classes and they stand out. f4) I see them struggling a little bit with some frustrations about may be feeling like they are too aggressive with the way that they talk to people m4) when I am speaking in a room for, I might be the only man and there is, and there is 30 women in the room. And there is a discussion and it’s all about a woman’s point of view and if I interject a men’s a point of view, then it will be labeled as out of touch or you know, sexist or something instead and the work will be on making me more feminine</td>
<td>m1</td>
<td>f3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+Different perspectives</td>
<td>m1). I think I have a different perspective f1) it would be beneficial for the program to balance out the voices; to hear more from the man, to share the insides of the man.</td>
<td>m1</td>
<td>f1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **f2)** they bring a very distinct viewpoint to everything but especially helping professions and the way that we think about problems.  
| **f3)** we need more males, it's the more diversity we have in counselors the better we are to assist our clients  
| **f6)** I think it would be nice if there were more men in the program because I think it would be, you know, more different experiences, more different perceptions that can be included |

| **-Different perspectives**  
| **m1)** on the rare occasion I say something that hit a nerve with a lot of women that I didn't do on purpose but there had been a couple of times where I have said something  
| **f2)** the females' opinions seem to override what the male opinion is  
| **m2)** a female student say something, I can't think of an example right now and then several females students will, you know would jump on her side and I feel completely opposite.  
| **f3)** a few times the teachers would be like, “So what do you say that's what guys would say?” And the reactions of the two boys it's like “Oh okay, I am going to speak for the whole male gender now. Okay.” I am like I feel sorry for them because of that.  
| **m4)** When I go from one classroom to the next classroom and the issues are again framed in a race, class, gender type environment where I represent the top of the pyramid and not given a voice.  
| **m4)** I am not given a voice meaning not being able to really share, really contribute from the White male, White, middle-aged male prospective. |

| **Holding back**  
| **m1)**. there are definitely times when I am in class or out or anything and I think of something that I know my old friends would think as funny but I keep my mouth shut. And that that's a little frustrating. ...  
| **m1)** if I say something, I was perceived as  

| **m2)**  
| **m3)**  
| **m4)**  
| **m5)**  
| **f1)**  
| **f2)**  
| **f3)**  
| **f4)**  
| **f5)**  
| **f6)**  
| **f7)** |
sexist, well maybe another guy would be able to say okay I get it, this is what he meant and this is what came out. There is you know -- so I feel like if I had that support I would not have to monitor quite so closely what I say...

m1) I am kind of showing more like the PG13 version of myself
m3) there were sometimes where I would hold back on --- Because of the gender, especially not wanting to come off being chauvinistic, you know, being particularly if I disagreed with the opinion that a female student had expressed.

m3) I am holding these opinions back, but I am being taught that's not what I should be doing.

m4) I hold back my opinions and I choose my words very carefully, I'm not free to being--because when I'm free to be, I'm not afraid to say what I'm feeling then it causes a lot of turmoil...

m5) I don’t feel like I can express those opinions.

---

Being Female as majority in program

Feeling connected/ supported

f2) it is nice to have that kind of female camaraderie or that a friendship or bond between females and understand thing what everybody goes through

f4) it’s easier for me to know more about my female classmates and socialize with them outside of class. So, that might be especially you know, adjusting to living in the area and starting grad school. It’s good to have a support group of kind of class and that’s easier for the woman to get than for the guys to get.

f4) I think well all of the women in the class sort of tried to form relationships with each other; friendships

f4) it’s easier for me to know more about my female classmates and socialize with them outside of class. It’s easier for me to know more about my female classmates and socialize with them outside of class.
| Other issues | f5) Well, the fact that I am a woman and a majority in this environment, you know, in group when personal things came up, I was comfortable with the men in the room and certainly I think it's a possibility that there are times where I wouldn't open up as much as I do about some topics.... I may still hold back if there were 20 guys and only 10 girls |
| | f7) being really honest, just in general being with a lot of women instead of, you know, in the program in some ways is more comfortable. Because there is not that tension that you have... I really feel less intimidated. |
| | f4) I am already feeling some of the competition just because there I had three other girls in the program who all want the same internship that I want |
| | f5) as a woman, you still see a lot of sexism f5) sometimes I realize that I am easily one of the more talkative people in class and that I hold back even because I don’t -- I want to be respectful of other people and let them share when they want to share. |
| | f6) I was a little surprised that so many of the students who had just come out of their bachelor’s degrees. |
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Development.


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