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A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT OF COUNSELING STUDENTS

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education

William and Mary in Virginia

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision

_____

by

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M.Ed. William & Mary, 2019

March 2023

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT OF COUNSELING STUDENTS

by

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Dedication

To my husband, Peter Chin, without your support and constant encouragement, this would not be

possible.

To my children Mei-Li, Jade and Zen, may you always know who you are.

To Daddy, I wish you were here to see this. The choices you made led me to where I am today,

and I thank you for that. Everyting cook an curry.

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A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY

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ABSTRACT

This transcendental phenomenological study sought to understand the experiences of graduate counselor students during the development of their ethnic and racial identity (ERI). The research questions for the study were: How do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development during their graduate program and what is the meaning made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI development in their graduate program? Participants were recruited from a CACREP accredited graduate counseling program and the purposive sampling technique was used to identify those who have experience with the phenomena. In-depth, open ended questions were utilized to gather comprehensive descriptions of the participants' experience. The Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen was used for the data analysis procedure (Moustakas, 1994). Findings included: Shifting Perspective of ERI, ERI Complexity, Personal ERI Development, Integrating ERI into Clinical Work, Faculty Support and Peer Support. Future research and implications for counseling institutions are discussed.

Index Words: Ethnic identity, racial identity, transcendental phenomenology, counselor education, counselors in training

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT OF COUNSELING STUDENTS

Chapter One: Introduction

Background

Ethnic and racial identity (ERI) is a meta-construct that reflects one's ethnic background and racialized experiences associated with membership in a particular group (Santos et al., 2017; Umana-Taylor et al., 2014). ERI development is associated with higher racial and ethnic pride, and increased self-esteem (Peck, et al, 2014). ERI development is also a protective factor that supports coping and emotional regulation, decreased depression and anxiety coping with discrimination, and for succeeding in mainstream society (Hollingsworth & Polanco-Roman, 2022; Hughes et al. 2006; Saunders, 2018).

Counseling multicultural training is usually instilled through a lens of diversity across race and ethnicity (Quintana, 2007). Faculty, therefore, spend time illuminating the characteristics and cultural norms of various non-white ethnic and racial groups living in the United States. The multicultural trainer may continue to highlight culturally responsive clinical techniques that are deemed effective amongst these non-majority groups. Consequently, multicultural training focuses on identifying BIPOC groups as different from the dominant population. The training also looks at how these "minorities" experience the world, and how racial differences impact the power dynamic within the therapeutic relationship (Bartoli et al., 2015). The dominant discourse then becomes that race is a social construct that other people experience, rather than a construct that White students experience also (Carter, 2005). This makes race a characteristic of those who are not white (Dottolo & Kaschak, 2015). Race becomes a matter experienced only by racially marginalized groups or 'others' (Dottolo & Kaschak, 2015; Evans & Foster, 2000). Therefore, it is important that ERI is seen as a construct that is experienced by BIPOC and white counselor students alike.

Sue et al. published their model of multicultural counseling competence (MCC) in 1982. It became the tripartite model and theoretical framework for multicultural training (Sue et al., 1992; Sue & Sue, 2008; Chao, 2013; Jones et. al, 2016). Sue et al., 1992 further developed this work by delivering a set of cross cultural counseling competencies that focused on the counselor's expertise in three domains - counselor awareness of personal values and biases, understanding client's cultural background and the development of culturally appropriate intervention skills and techniques (Pieterse et al., 2008; Barden & Greene, 2015). The multicultural social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC) evolved from MCC to additionally conceptualize multiple intersecting privileged and oppressed identities, a wide-angle lens approach to viewing identity and multiculturalism, and a focus on social justice advocacy practice (Killian & Floren, 2020; Ratts et al., 2016).

Although the MSJCC is endorsed by the American Counseling Association (ACA) Governing Council, these competencies are not officially mandated by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards to be infused in the counselor curriculum. The CACREP accreditation standards do refer to social and cultural diversity stating, "Individual, couple, family, group, and community strategies for working with diverse populations and ethnic groups" (CACREP, 2015). MSJCC more specifically speaks of client worldview and the skills a counselor should acquire to display this competency as "privileged and marginalized counselors possess skills that enrich their understanding of clients' worldview, assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, biases, social identities, social group statuses, and experiences with power, privilege, and oppression" (MSJCC, 2015 p. 7).

Although multicultural training is essential to counselor education, the counseling teaching programs mostly focus on a single class approach (Pieterse et al., 2008) that covers a variety of marginalized identities to include gender and sexual identities, disabilities, and social class. Some researchers have suggested that racial-cultural competence be a prerequisite for overall multicultural competency. Carter (2005) stated:

"... each person is socialized as a racial-cultural being, and his or her racial-cultural self becomes an important part of his or her personality structure. In other words, only by appreciating the significance of racial-cultural factors in one's own life can psychologists and counselors begin to appreciate the significance of racial-cultural factors in the lives of people in general and their clients specifically. I believe that racial-cultural competence is superordinate to counseling competence: It is not possible to be a competent counselor without being racially and culturally competent" (Carter, 2005, p. 37).

Additionally, Wang noted that:

"... racial identity development as an essential life competence, people from all racial groups will be better equipped to navigate their personally and socially racialized experiences more effectively as fully integrated cognitive affective individuals" (Wang, 2005, p. 78).

Although Carter (2005) and Wang (2005) recommended racial and cultural identity development be acquired before the overall MCC, scholars have recommended an approach that "infuses multiculturalism into all aspects of counseling training programs" (Priester et al., 2008). This view was adopted as a general multicultural training course may be the first time counseling students are exposed to topics such as white privilege, microaggressions, colonialism, and intersectionality (Priester et al., 2008; Thrower et al., 2020). This is not surprising, as each person experiences ERI through a lens of their reference groups, whereby such phenomena may

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not be experienced (Carter, 2001; Gloria et al., 2000; Hughes, et al., 2006).Therefore, there is an argument for racially and ethnically focused competence development to first overcome the inevitable emotional and cognitive developmental challenges that will occur before most students are able to fully achieve competency across all marginalized identities (Thrower et al., 2020).

Statement of the Problem

The model for multicultural training in the counseling field teaches multicultural competence and awareness based on the perceived differences of race and ethnicity (Quintana, 2007). Thus, it operates from the lens of multicultural concerns occurring only to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals. Currently, the model for the multicultural course does not involve the intentional development ethnic and racial identity (Chao, 2013) and multicultural social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC). Additionally, there is nothing in the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2015) standards that mandates the implementation of ERI.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to understand the experiences of graduate counselor students around ERI development and what the participants were receiving in terms of ERI development in their graduate program. This study also identified what experiences would be necessary to develop each student's sense of being a 'racial being' and this impact upon one's relationship with power and privilege (Goren & Plaut, 2012; McDowell et al., 2019). The study examined the participant's personal viewpoint (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) on their understanding of ERI.

Rationale

Most counseling teaching institutions focus on a single class approach that covers a variety of marginalized identities including race, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities. However, scholars have called for racially focused competence training as a *prerequisite* for the overall acquisition of multicultural competency (Carter, 2005; Wang 2005). Additionally, scholars of ERI development models suggest that attaining the higher developmental stages involves an increased understanding of racial inequities, a correlational acquisition of social justice competency and macro level thinking (Cross & Vandiver 2001; Hardiman & Keehn, 2012; Helms 1984). This study focused on understanding the experiences of graduate counselor students ERI development and explored the participants' understanding of ERI development. Feedback on the experience of students will help to develop an understanding of what the students need to acquire and experience that may impact attitudes and behaviors towards ethnic/racialized experiences and social justice.

Significance of the Study

I considered and proposed the significance of this study through an empirical, theoretical, and practical lens.

Empirical Perspective

The review of the literature showed that there is a gap in the literature in respect to the experiences of intentional ERI development for counseling students. Unfortunately, research has shown that the traditional single class approach does not fulfill the MCC goals and lags in attaining anything near the achievement of the aspirational MSJCC goals. Additionally, ERI research is lacking on the effects of a racially focused training that simultaneously has the goal of developing awareness and actionable social justice behavior. More specifically, research is

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lacking on the experiences of counseling students in attaining their ERI. Such a lack of research results in a gap in the literature, thus creating a need for research concerning this phenomenon.

Theoretical Perspective

ERI and Critical Race Theory were employed to frame the study. The dearth of ERI developmental research and identity components provided the basis upon which to develop the study. Providing understanding of the experiences of counseling students will provide educational institutions with information to support these students in advanced multicultural competence and should generate new perspectives concerning ERI attainment.

Practical Perspective

This study provides counselor educators, supervisors, and faculty with an understanding of the experiences of master's level counseling students in relation to the development of ERI. It is important to explore this phenomenon as ERI development influences how one sees themselves and others. ERI impacts daily interactions and decisions, and how one presents as a student or a counselor. The results from this study may inspire an examination into the factors preventing ERI development and an adaptation of the current multicultural training approaches. Findings of this study will be shared within counselor education literature to provide a foundation for future research and practical changes.

Overview of Methodology

The research questions were formulated to fulfill the purpose statement and the significance of the study objectives. Additionally, the questions were created to understand the experiences of graduate counselor students during the development of their ERI.

Q1.   How do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development during their graduate program?

Q2.   What meaning is made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI

      development in their graduate program?

I utilized a transcendental phenomenological qualitative design to gather information and seek understanding of the common meanings shared by the counseling students (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The sample for this study was recruited from one CACREP accredited graduate counseling program in Virginia offering in person training. Convenience sampling was used as the participants were available, affordable, and willing (Palinkas et al., 2015). Interested participants completed a Qualtrics survey that included a consent form, procedures, risks, confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the study, how to withdraw and my contact information. My sample size of sixteen participants came from a variety of counseling tracks including clinical mental health, school counseling, marriage and family, and military.

Data collection processes for this transcendental phenomenological study included confidential interviews starting with two broad open ended questions to gather data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The six step Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method was used for the data analysis as it provides multiple clear steps to follow (Moustakas, 1994). The six step steps include epoche or bracketing, the horizontalization process, identifying the emerging themes, textural description and structural description (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Hays & Singh, 2011; Moustakas, 1994). The participants' responses were examined to identify the essence of what the participants have experienced and how they have experienced it (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Limitations

As the research design is transcendental phenomenology, the experience of the participants is particular to the phenomenon being experienced at the time. Therefore, the experiences are not generalizable to the overall experiences of all counseling students as this is

not a goal of phenomenology (Creswell, 1998; Hays & Singh, 2011). The process was extremely time consuming around a topic that is about a specific experience and the findings were slow moving (Hays & Singh, 2011).

Definition of Terms

- *Multicultural competence* refers to a person's ability to understand and constructively relate to the uniqueness of each client considering the diverse cultures that influence each person's perspective (Stuart, 2004)

- *Multicultural Counseling Competencies (MCC)* Sue et al., developed this tripartite model of MCCs that include attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills (Sue et al., 1992). The MCC has been mandated by counselor education governing bodies) into the counseling curriculum.

- *Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC)* provide a framework for addressing the constellation of identities that clients and counselors bring to the therapeutic relationship. The MSJCC also set the expectation that counselors address issues of power, privilege and oppression that impact clients. Moreover, the MSJCC require counseling professionals to see client issues from a culturally contextual framework and recommend interventions that take place at both individual and systems levels (Ratts et al., 2016)

- *Ethnic and Racial Identity (ERI)* reflects one's ethnic and racialized experiences associated with membership in a particular group and how an individual's sense of self is defined by their ethnic heritage and racial background (Kiang et al., 2021; Umana-Taylor et al., 2014)

- *Critical Race Theory* can be defined as a way for scholars and activists to transform the relationship between race, racism and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) with central tenets and goals to utilize the methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary

This chapter provided an introductory overview of the study which seeks to examine the experiences of counseling students during the development of their ERI. The current model of multicultural teaching does not intentionally develop ethnic and racial identity or even facilitate the acquisition of the MSJCC (Chao, 2013). Understanding the lived experiences of ERI development of counseling students during their graduate program is the primary concern of this proposed study. Transcendental phenomenology is the selected method as it facilitated the examination and understanding of the lived experiences of human beings experiencing the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). The following chapter will provide a review of the literature in relation to multicultural competence, ethnic and racial identity, and the proposed theoretical frameworks.

<center>**Chapter Two: Review of the Literature**</center>

<center>**Overview**</center>

In this chapter I will discuss the history of multicultural counseling competencies (MCC) from the 1980's to 2023, and its attainment in the counseling field. I will discuss the existing research around the need for cultural competence. I will review the literature and discuss how ethnic and racial identity (ERI), ERI theory and ERI developmental models are foundational to gaining MCC or multicultural social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC). I will expose through this literature review the lack of conceptual and empirical scholarship on developing ERI in counselor education. Additionally, I will utilize Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a theoretical foundation that informs our understanding of ERI development.

Multicultural Competence

Historical Overview

During the 1970's the American Psychology Association made a call to address the lack of addressing multicultural issues in training. Following, Sue at al., (1982), developed the foundational multicultural training blueprint and competencies (MCC) for the counseling field to facilitate the acquisition of the knowledge and skills by counselors and counseling students to work with the culturally different (Sue et al. 1992). D'Andrea and Daniels (1991) further developed a four stage framework that was reflective of the varied multicultural training at the time. The framework also provided a guideline through which one could facilitate and measure the development of multicultural competencies. Level one is the Cultural Encapsulation level that encompasses the first two stages. The Cultural Encapsulation level represents an almost nonexistent existence of multicultural training within an institution and an ignorance of cultural differences. Stage one of this level is the Culturally Entrenched Stage. At the Culturally

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Entrenched Stage, there is little focus on cultural awareness and there is an institutional

viewpoint that all clients, regardless of the racial or ethnic background operate from the same

assumptions about their social locations and experiences. Stage two of this level is the Cross

Cultural Awakening Stage. Regardless of its name, this stage only represents a mere

acknowledgement of cross cultural differences, however no critical discourse is facilitated and

clients from diverse backgrounds are seen as presenting unique challenges.

Level two is the Conscientious Level of Counselor Education, which entails the final two

stages. The Conscientious Level of Counselor Education represents an acknowledgement of the

critical role of race, ethnicity, culture and other multicultural factors that affect a client's

experience. At this level an institution guarantees multicultural training to its students. Stage

three is the Cultural Integrity Stage. At the Cultural Integrity Stage there is just a mere inclusion

of a multicultural class in the core curriculum which more than likely follows a single class

approach. Additionally, the goal of the multicultural trainer at an institution at stage three is to

eliminate any false information about non-white racial groups and other marginalized cultural

groups. The final stage is the Infusion Stage. At this ideal stage, there is intentional advancement

of the multicultural curriculum and training and may be described as interdisciplinary. The

institutions at the Infusion stage encourage students to take separate ethnic courses that prepare

and sensitize them to the needs of non white racial and ethnic groups (Atkinson, et al., 1989;

D'Andrea & Daniels, 1991). A systemic integration of multicultural perspectives is infused into

the entire program and other courses through the program. At the time of their published

research, D'Andrea and Daniels had highlighted the need for counseling programs to attain the

Cultural Integrity Stage level with an aspirational goal of programs encouraging the enrollment

of students into culturally specific courses as a foundation and support for an overall infusion of multicultural perspectives and development throughout their graduate education.

Subsequently the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) mandated multicultural training within graduate counseling programs to facilitate the acquisition of these multicultural competencies (MCC) (Chao, 2013; Pieterse et al., 2008). Therefore, multicultural training has become an essential course in counseling programs to earn a master's degree in the field. Studies have confirmed that this training develops multicultural counseling competencies (MCC) (D'Andrea, et al., 1991; Sodowsky et al., 1998). Consequently, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) infuses multicultural competencies and standards throughout expectations for counselor programming and counselor identity (CACREP, 2015). Specifically, CACREP highlights social and cultural diversity as elemental to counselor identity, including: "a) multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally; b) theories and models of multicultural counseling, cultural identity development, and social justice and advocacy c) multicultural counseling competencies d) the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others e) the effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients f) help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients g) the impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldviews h) strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination" (CACREP, 2015). Therefore, it could be determined that master's level training of effective counselors includes developing an awareness of diversity, one's location amidst the sociopolitical dimensions, and instilling action oriented social justice awareness.

In further supporting the growth of multicultural competence, the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics stipulated that salient counseling values include "honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts; [and] promoting social justice" (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014, p. 3; O'Hara et al., 2021). This endorsement continued to lay the groundwork for the development of social justice advocacy. Advocacy itself has been defined as the "the process or act of arguing or pleading for a cause or proposal" (Lee, 1998; Myers et al., 2002). Many counseling professionals are now making efforts to become agents of change or social justice advocates (Ramirez et al., 2017). However, the decision to become active in advocacy "hinges on identifying a need or problem and having the necessary motivation to take action" (Myers et al., 2002, p. 398). By training institutions achieving D'Andrea & Daniels (1991) Conscientious Level of Counselor Education, counseling students not only can become aware of systemic issues, but educators have the option of inspiring actionable social justice advocacy. While most multicultural training programs are guided by competencies that highlight cross cultural differences (Sue at al., 1982), effective cross cultural training also stimulates counselors and counseling students to identify issues and intervene at a systemic level to facilitate a client's well being (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1991; Ramirez et al., 2017).

As an evolvement of the MCC, the multicultural social justice competencies (MSJCC) were developed as an operational framework upon which counselors and counselor educators may implement multicultural competence into theory and practice (Ratts et al., 2016). MSJCC specifically focuses on counselor's attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, skills, and action in the areas of counseling and advocacy interventions (Ratts et al., 2015). In fact, scholars have described the MSJCC as the "next iteration of the larger human rights movement for equity and justice"

(Singh, et al., 2020, p. 242). These competencies deliver a set of developmental domains that are projected to build multiculturalism and social justice (Killian & Floren, 2020; Ratts et al., 2016). The MSJCC framework model consists of three connected areas that are to promote a stronger insight into multiculturally competent counseling practices. These are four quadrants showing the intersection of privileged and marginalized status between client and counselor, four developmental domains that include (1) counselor self-awareness, (2) client worldview, (3) counseling relationship, and (4) counseling and advocacy interventions, and four competencies that include (1) awareness, (2) knowledge, (3) skills, and (4) action.

Multicultural Competence Research

Researchers studied how to align multicultural education with various multicultural competency models (Smith & Trimble, 2016). Scholars focused on developing cross cultural multicultural training models (Pederson 2000; Shizuru et al., 2013; Smith & Trimble, 2016), while others focused on identifying effective factors to ensure successful attaining of the competencies (Ponterotto, 1998; Smith & Trimble, 2016).

Currently, multicultural competencies are used as general guidelines for the development of the curriculum (Smith & Trimble, 2016) as content and techniques appear to vary among programs (Ponterotto & Austin, 2005; Smith & Trimble, 2016). Subsequently, many multicultural training classes focus on the first two domains of the MCC (i.e., counselor awareness of personal values and biases and understanding client's cultural background) with much less emphasis on intervention skills and techniques (Jones et. al, 2016). Research found that when multicultural counseling competence was examined, only the Awareness subscale displayed statistically significant gains, while the Knowledge and Skills subscales did not have statistically significant gains (Castillo et. al, 2007). Also, studies have found that despite the

infusion of multicultural competencies in training, graduates often report feeling ineffective and unprepared for cross cultural clinical work with diverse clients (Barden & Greene, 2015; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers 1999; Jones et. al, 2016; Priester et al., 2008).

Ethnic and Racial Identity (ERI)

Ethnic Identity

While there has been much research into multicultural competencies, other scholars have focused on researching ethnic and racial identity (ERI). The origins of ERI research derive from the construct of cultural identity within the fields of anthropology, history and sociology (Ponterotto & Mallinckrodt, 2007). Researchers have not come to a consensus on clear definitions of ethnicity or race as they are both socially constructed ideas whose definitions and meanings change over time (Cockley, 2007). According to Quintana, ethnicity has historically been defined in terms of demographics and race in terms of perceived differences, however, counseling literature uses the terms to reflect socially constructed meanings (Quintana, 2007). In his contribution to a special section on racial and ethnic identity in the Journal of Counseling Psychology, Trimble spoke of the inadequate understanding, description, and definition of constructs of culture in counseling psychology (Ponterotto & Mallinckrodt, 2007). Trimble further stated:

> "[ethnic] origin, culture, identity and groups are common dimensions of ethnicity, yet each is distinctly unique—there are interrelated contextual facets, too, that define a component of ethnicity" (Trimble, 2007 p. 249).

There has been a development from how previous to more recent scholars in the fields of anthropology, sociology, history, and counseling define ethnicity and ethnic identity. Phinney described ethnic identity as the subjective sense of ethnic group membership that

involves self-labeling, sense of belonging, preference for the group, positive evaluation of the ethnic group, ethnic knowledge, and involvement in ethnic group activities (Phinney, 1990, 1996). Ethnic identity has also been described as the cultural outlook and practices of a community of people that distinguish them from others (Giddens, 1997; Webber et al., 2013). Anthropologists traditionally viewed ethnicity as a biological construct, with subgroups displaying a distinctive culture and language (Trimble, 2007). Other researchers based ethnic identity primarily on physical characteristics with additional shared historical and religious experiences (Greeley, 1974; Trimble, 2007). In fact, even among a common racial category, ethnic identity was used under this definition to impose differences and discrimination. For example, the ethnicity of certain White groups such as Irish, Italian and Jews were conveniently changed to be viewed as racial groups to impose injustice (Cockley, 2007). Ethnicity and ethnic identity have been viewed as pliable in definition and therefore easy to change based on the social consciousness and political climate (Cockley, 2007; Smedley, 1999).

Over the decades ethnic identity took on a more multicultural approach, to consider a common descent and cultural background, including commonalities in language, race, religion and homeland (Trimble, 2007; Yinger, 1986). More recently, ethnic identity has been defined as membership to one specific ethnic group (Hollingsworth & Polanco-Roman, 2022) and developmental research examines the processes by which ethnicity is explored and formed (Verkuyten, 2016). Research has divided ethnic identity into the four components of sense of belonging, the participation in cultural traditions with other members of the group, feeling of attachment to the group and an understanding that their identity as a member of that group (Hollingsworth & Polanco-Roman, 2022; Phinney, 1992).

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Phinney particularly noted that one should identify based on their parents' ethnic heritage, which would form the basis for one's group membership (Cockley, 2007; Phinney, 1992). Current research in the counseling literature has focused on studies that show a positive correlation of highly developed African American and Latinx ethnic identity as a protective factor against suicidality, depression, and anxiety (Brittain et al., 2015; Hollingsworth & Polanco-Roman, 2022; Neblett et al., 2013; Street et al., 2012). Research has also looked at the positive correlation between ethnic identity and the acquisition of MCC (Matthews et al., 2018; Rowell et al., 2008).

Racial Identity

According to Helms, 1994, "ethnicity is often used as a euphemism for race" (p. 297) and "Neither culture nor ethnicity necessarily have anything to do with race as the term is typically used in U.S. society or psychology (p. 292) (Trimble, 2007). Scholars have noted that in the US race is described in terms of biological fact and traits (Morning, 2004; Smedley & Smedley, 2005). From the times of colonial conquests and the enslavement of indigenous Indians and Africans in the Americas to the twentieth century there has been the existence of racial classification systems. During the early twentieth century, anthropologists put race into four categories, monloloid, negriod, australoid and caucasoid (Quintana, 2007). Scholars have noted the oversimplifcation of these classification systems and taken on a wider lens approach, noting that sociological processes such as intermarriage and racial mixture has historically prevented persons from being a member of one racial category (Quintana, 2007; Smedley & Smedley, 2005; Yee et al., 1993). More recently, scholars have investigated the different views of race. They have found that there is a biological or essentialist view that holds onto a more rigid

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definition of race based on physical attributes, versus those who have a social constructionist view of race (Hong et al., 2009; Johnston-Guerrero, 2016).

As race and racial identity is mostly viewed as a social construct in the counseling literature, it is difficult to define. Helms described racial identity as the collective identity of any group of people socialized to think of themselves as a racial group (Cockley, 2007; Helms & Cook, 1999). For example, in the United States, one may assume that a Black person is African American. However, the Black person may not define themself as African American, but rather by their ethnic group identity, such as Latinix, Caribbean or a distinct African ethnic group. As a result, the participants in counseling research involving the variable of race, are selected because the researchers define them as members of a racial group rather than members of a sociocultural identity that is not necessarily racial for all participants (Quintana, 2007). The counseling literature has focused on white racial identity as a developmental variable to support various phenomena (Constantine, 2002; Evans & Foster, 2000; Gushue et al., 2001; Johnson et al., 2015; Neville et al., 1996; Pack-Brown et al.,1999; Parker et al., 1998; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003). This includes studies on how predominantly or exclusively white counselor or counselor trainees' racial identity development correlates to their perceived MCC (Evans & Foster, 2000; Middleton et al., 2005; Middleton et al., 2011; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2000). Other research has looked at the alliance between racial identity and the supervisor-supervisee working alliance (Bhat and Davis, 2007).

The Theory of ERI

Research on ERI in Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities has been built upon prior research on racial and ethnic socialization (R/E). R/E research was focused on the transmitting of messages about race and ethnicity from parent to child regarding

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developing ethnic identity and pride, and resilience against discrimination (Douglass & Umana-Taylor, 2015; Hughes, et al., 2006; Kiang et al., 2021; Peck, et al, 2014). Furthermore, scholars have noted the importance of socialization in school settings and within peer groups (Verkuyten, 2016). The development of ethnic and racial identity and pride began to receive more attention from scholars which is reflected in an uptick of research in this area over the past few decades (Verkuyten, 2016).

As research on ethnic and racial identity expanded, researchers have noted the overlap and complexity of their definitions and uses, as ethnicity and race are changeable with time, politics, and social consciousness (Cockley, 2007; Webber, 2013). Scholars therefore called for the hybrid term 'racial-ethnic' to address the intersectionality of the two interlaced constructs as a lived experience (Cross & Cross, 2008; Webber, 2013). In fact, Strauss and Cross (2005) findings support the hybrid term as their findings demonstrated how five different factors intersected within non-white students with optimal identity development levels (Cross & Cross, 2008; Strauss & Cross, 2005). The five factors are buffering (the transaction of encounters with racism), code switching (the ability to move in and out of one's axial and ethnic group), bridging (the desires and competencies to develop friendships with people of other races and culture), bonding (experiences and affiliations within one's group that nourish attachment to the group) and individuality (the transaction of personal identity and related interests the person cherishes beyond the purview of race and culture). Subsequently, this research showed how racial and ethnic factors coincide and interrelate as part of identity development and adjustment.

Recent scholars have therefore defined ethnic and racial identity (ERI) as a meta-construct that reflects one's ethnic background and racialized experiences associated with membership in a particular group (Santos et al., 2017; Umana-Taylor et al., 2014). From a more

psychological perspective ERI has been defined as a concept that "establishes a bridge between individual psychology and the structure and function of social categories and groups in society. It is concerned with thoughts and feelings that are linked to the ethnic–racial categories and groups to which people belong or to which they are assigned." (Verkuyten, 2016, p. 1797). Consequently, these thoughts and feelings are reflected in a sense of belonging, group pride and feelings about one's group membership (Mims & Williams, 2020). Specifically, these thoughts and feelings are reflected in ERI dimensions or identity components that provide information on how ERI relates to psychosocial thinking (Sellers et al., 1998). The ERI dimensions include oppressed minority ideology, centrality, and public regard (Sellers et al., 1998; Umana-Taylor et al., 2014). Oppressed minority ideology refers to the view that marginalization experienced across groups is more similar and related than threatening and divisive (Greenwood, 2008; Kiang et al., 2021). Centrality is how central or important to one's ethnicity/race is one's sense of self, and public regard is the degree to which one perceives others as having a positive view of one's group (Kiang et al., 2021). These dimensions directly evolved from identity development (Umaña-Taylor et al. 2014). Identity development leads to a social justice identity as a sense of ERI membership and how it is affected by socio-political factors.

Research has shown a link between the existence of ERI dimensions or identity components, and a heightened development of social justice advocacy. Oppressed minority ideology can be linked to the heightened attitudes of critical reflection, which is the analysis and rejection of inequities (such as racial and ethnic injustices) (Watts et al., 2011). Additionally, oppressed minority ideology highlights the commonality of experienced injustice with other marginalized groups, which may develop the feelings of desire and responsibility to fight against inequities (Kiang et al., 2021). Centrality was also linked to heightened attitudes of critical

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reflection because as one develops their own sense of self as an ethic and racial being, one starts to analyze systemic racialized systems and reject discrimination (Kiang et al., 2021; Mathews et al., 2019). Furthermore, the third ERI dimension, public regard, has been positively linked to greater civic participation and critical action (individuals or collective action taken to change aspects of society) to enact social change (Kiang et al., 2021; Watts et al., 2011). Such research supports the theory that ERI development will lead to the establishment of the ERI dimensions, which in turn builds critical reflection and action, which will result in social advocacy. Consequently, the awareness of injustice and oppression will result in MSJCC development.

ERI Identity Development & Models

Overall Identity development is an all-encompassing phenomenon that looks at how the evolving process labels, beliefs, attitudes and knowledge emerges (Kiang et al., 2021; Umaña-Taylor et al. 2014; Williams et al., 2012). The development of ethnic and racial identity is viewed as essential to one's identity development through incorporating race and ethnicity into one's Ife (Plummer, 1995; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Verkuyten, 2016). Scholars have provided models that focus on the developmental stages that individuals must pass through to develop their ethnic or racial identity (Mims & Williams, 2020).

Cross's psychological nigrescence theory (Cross, 1971, 1991) focused on African American racial identity development as a process whereby one built their awareness around becoming Black (Appling & Robinson, 2021). The nigrescence theory reflected four stages: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion and internalization-commitment. At stage one, an African American has not explored their ERI or they see it through a white dominant lens (Watt et al., 2002). In stage two an event may occur that illuminates that race affects one's life and one begin to think about affecting change. In the immersion-emersion stage, a sense of pride in being

African American develops along with an awareness of privilege and oppression of the dominant culture. At stage four, an African American begins to work "through the challenges of their new identity and moving from how others view them to how they view themselves" (Appling & Robinson, 2021, p. 3; Cross, 1991).

Some years later, Seller's et al. (1998), developed the multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI) that focuses on 4 dimensions of African American racial identity: salience, centrality, regard, and ideology (Sellers et al., 1998). Salience is the extent to which one's race is a relevant part of one's self concept at any particular moment. Centrality is the extent to which a person regularly defines themself regarding race. Regard refers to feelings of positive or negative regard to being African American and ideology refers to one's views of how others of their race should act. Seller's et al's study combined racial identity research approaches, mainstream and underground. The mainstream approach focused on universal aspects of group identity (Gaines & Reed, 1994, 1995; Sellers et al., 1998), while the underground approach highlights the significance of race and ethnicity in people's (mostly African American) lives (Phinney, 1992). As the researcher clearly mentioned, the MMRI is a racial model specific to the cultural issues faced by African Americans and was developed for this group only (Sellers et al., 1998).

Scholars such as Hardiman (1982), Helms (1984), and Ponterotto (1988, 1991) established white racial identity models to explain the stages of racial development of the white population. A combination of these scholars' works reflects five stages of development. Stage one reflects an unawareness of self as a racial being and oblivious to racial issues. During this initial stage, one has given little thought to multiracial issues and does not see how their whiteness has benefited from racism (Ponterotto, 1988,1991). The second stage reflects an increase in knowledge about race and racial matters. At this stage the white person may revert to

the initial stage of color blindness (Hardiman & Keehn, 2012; Helms, 1984). The third stage

reflects a level of resistance and disintegration (Hardiman 1982; Helms 1984; Ponterotto, 1988,

1991). At this level the white population may commence the process of unlearning racism, as

well as the desire to distance themselves from whiteness (Hardiman & Keehn, 2012). Stage four

reflects a retreat and reintegration into racist and pro-white stance (Ponterotto, 1991). Stage five

reflects the point of redefinition and integration. They begin to examine whiteness in a manner

that is devoid of guilt (Hardiman & Keehn, 2012).

Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) presented an empirically supported identity developmental

model built upon the 1939 work by Stonequist that focused on biracial identity as a linear

developmental process based on age and time (Arteaga, 2012; Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007).

Their model is based on age and time, but also considers the intersectionality of personal,

societal and environmental factors, the fluidity of racial identity, and that one may choose more

than one racial identity (Arteaga, 2012). The age and time consideration includes the stages of

preschool (awareness of racial differences), entry to school (one places themself in a category),

preadolescence (an awareness of differences in physicals traits, language and culture),

adolescence (pressure to choose one group over another), college/young adulthood (an

appreciation of multiple heritage) and adulthood (an integration of different parts of one's

background) (Aldarondo, 2001).

Cross & Vandiver (2001) developed the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) whose end

goal was to develop a sense of confidence in one's racial identity (Arteaga, 2012). Cokley

(2007) described this model as a best practice for a racial identity scale as it takes into

consideration six identity types: three Pre-Encounter types—Assimilation, Miseducation, and

Racial Self-Hatred; one Immersion-Emersion type—Anti- White; and two Internalization

types—Nationality and Multiculturalist (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). Cross further posited that there is a personal and reference group identity as a subcontext to racial identity and therefore his revised model considered intersectionality (Cross, 1991).

Teaching ERI

While scholars have utilized ERI developmental models to build identity in various settings, others have investigated specific ERI teaching methods. Some training strategies have focused on those students who are visibly BIPOC (Wang, 2005). Unfortunately, such an approach may further marginalize the BIPOC student, as they are seen as individuals who experience race as opposed to the white students. Consequently, BIPOC focused training methods do not challenge the trainee's own cultural beliefs, values, and stereotypes (Wang, 2005). Other ERI training methods have decided to ignore race altogether to focus on the common factors of all humanity. This type of method may lead to color blindness, which upholds marginalization. It also facilitates the post civil rights era perspective whereby the white community held the view that race ought not to matter (DiAngelo, 2018; Todd et al., 2011). As a result, color blindness upholds the marginalization of the BIPOC individuals because it neglects the reality of how racial socialization, racial identity and "entire groups of people and communities are not acknowledged, thus making learning and the work about race even more impersonal" (Wang, 2005, p.80).

Scholars have noted that some multicultural training reflects outdated views of ERI (Evans & Foster, 2000). Others have noted that the current approach is a deficit one as it fosters color blindness (Franco & McElroy-Heltzel, 2019), therefore, preventing the development of ERI.

Limited Research

There is scarce literature that refers to the purposeful training and development of ERI in counselor trainees. Rather scholars have focused on the effects of multicultural training on white racial development and color blind attitudes (Chao, 2012; Johnson & Jackson, 2015), white racial development and racial attitudes (Bolin & Finkel, 1995; Ottavi et al., 1994), white racial development and interracial comfort (Parker et al., 1998), white racial development and moral development (Evans & Foster, 2000), and white racial development and white therapist competencies (Neville et al., 1996). The commonality here in the above mentioned research is the *effects* of the training upon *white* racial development. While this research led to the counseling field acknowledging the impact of multicultural training on white racial identity, consequential research now focused on the positive correlation between ERI and higher levels of MCC (Constantine, 2002; Constantine et al., 2005; Middleton et al., 2005; Neville et al., 1996; Pope-Davis & Ottavi 1994; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003). Some studies investigated groups beyond white participants, to study differences in MCC acquisition between ethnic and racial groups (Constantine, 2002; Parker et al., 1998). Overall, research found that multicultural training does little to *develop* ERI as a reflection of one's MCC (Chao, 2012, 2013). Consequently, there is very little mention in the literature, if any, on the effects of the purposeful development of ERI on one's MCC.

There is scant research in the counseling literature on the relationship between ERI and MSJCC or the *experiences* of participants who develop ERI and MSJCC. Historically counseling literature has focused on a link between race/ethnicity and MCC (Chao, 2013). Also, the positive correlation between ERI and higher levels of MCC (Constantine, 2002; Constantine et al., 2005; Neville et al., 1996; Ottavi et al., 1994; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003). Most recent research

involving MSJCC focuses on the applications of the competencies in the clinical space (Brown & Shin, 2020; Day-Vines et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2020). There is a qualitative study on the acquisition of MSJCC using three different pedagogical approaches (Killian & Floren, 2020). However, there is scant research in the counseling literature on the relationship between ERI and MSJCC or the *experiences* of participants who develop ERI within the framework of MSJCC.

Furthermore, there are gaps in the research around examinations of ERI training and development and any impact on MSJCC. Killian & Floren (2020) conducted a study around multicultural training and the acquisition of six independently interpreted constructs: multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and counseling relationship; self-perceived privilege; and social justice advocacy using various pedagogical approaches. The study found that the pedagogical approaches of didactic, experiential, and community service learning were significant in acquiring the constructs. Although the study gave available information on the type of teaching methods that may be successfully used in overall MSJCC acquisition, ERI was not one of the constructs examined. Field et al., 2019 studied how to implement MSJCC into the counseling program along with the appropriate pedagogical strategies during the practicum and internship experiences. The study found an increase in the acquisition of social justice awareness but no significance around social justice action and advocacy. Developing ERI as a pedagogical strategy to develop MSJCC was not discussed.

The current multicultural training model focuses on developing MCC, but little to develop ERI or MSJCC (Chao, 2012, 2013). Scholars have confirmed the attainment of multicultural competence (Constantine, 2001; D'Andrea et al., 1991; Sodowsky et al., 1998), but more research is needed on the interventions required to develop ERI as a competency of MCC or MSJCC. However, a primary step would explore the experiences of counselor students in the

attainment of ERI during their graduate program. Examining these experiences would highlight and justify the racial lens through which students operate within a program and expose whether ERI development is supported and facilitated by those in power.

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race theory (CRT) aims for human beings to become more critically conscious whereby one learns to observe and act against the oppressive elements that exist in society and transform the relationship between race, racism and power (Castro & Brawn, 2017; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Rodriguez & Huemmer, 2019). The beginnings of CRT were in legal research, whereby the theory stated that racial disparities and inequities are not a result of personal deficits or unfortunate mishaps, but a product of the US legal system, designed to perpetuate white supremacy and racial inequality even after the Civil Rights Movement (Bell, 1995; Christian et al., 2019: Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Johnson-Ahorlu, 2017). CRT further developed into a theoretical framework and research as an important conceptual category and a predictor of social outcomes (Butler, 2021; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT in the realm of pedagogy, can be used to highlight the salience of race and racism in acquiring multicultural competency and skills, while acknowledging that racism is embodied in the curriculum and teachings of higher education institutions (Bell, 1995; Christian et al., 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995,1998; Yosso, 2002).

Researchers who embrace this theory focus on social justice issues, the historical problems of domination and alienation, how resources are allocated, and methods of systemic oppression (Castro & Brawn, 2017). CRT also values an individual's narrative as a valid form of data and focuses on the life experiences of minoritized racial groups to challenge and validate racial realism (Bell, 1995; Christian et al., 2019; Johnson-Ahorlu, 2017). Five central tenets of

CRT that are considered in qualitative research include: the centrality of race and racism in society, the challenge to dominant ideology, the centrality of experiential knowledge, the utilization of interdisciplinary perspectives and the commitment to social justice (Yosso, 2005). Additionally, CRT has three main goals: present stories from the perspective of people of color, the eradication of racial subjugation while recognizing that race is a social construct, and address areas of inequities experienced by individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Parker & Lynn, 2002).

Scholarship on ERI development or the lack of it in the counseling academia continues to build upon CRT and color blindness research (Bonilla-Silva, 1997, 2001, 2017). Color blindness may occur in any racial group during the initial stage of racial identity development. Bonilla-Silva's work has asserted the need to understand racism as the racial ideology of a racialized social system that sustains racial domination (Christain et al., 2019). By not developing ERI, academia maintains racism. Utilizing the conceptual contributions from CRT, the study aimed to address issues of power, dominance and racial ignorance (Mueller, 2017; Singh et al., 2020) in counseling education as shown through ERI development. CRT as a framework, is used to understand and examine the ways in which race and racism affects ERI development. Lack of ERI development results in normalizing race neutrality and color blindness that, in turn, serves to strengthen the dominant ideology and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2018; Singh et al., 2020; Yosso, 2002).

For this study, CRT addresses the need to intentionally develop ERI and critically see how race has been used as social construct to oppress the non-white population (Bartoli et al., 2015; Castro & Brawn, 2017). Additionally, race has been depicted as a construct only experienced by people of color. There is also a lack of interdisciplinary approaches (if any)

towards developing ERI, as any focus attached to this topic comes from the single class approach. Consequently, utilizing CRT to examine the lived experiences of counseling students in reference to ERI development during their graduate program provides information for counselor educators to reassess the counseling curriculum and help Counselor Education programs begin to modify the training to meet the needs of all students.

Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature on multicultural competencies, social justice advocacy development and ERI development in the context of counseling standards and students' education in counseling programs. This chapter discussed the need for the acquisition of ERI and explored how racial identity, ethnic identity, and ERI developmental models are underutilized in the current counselor multicultural training approach. The chapter confirmed that more research is needed on what exactly is occurring around the acquisition and development of ERI among counseling students. The following chapter will introduce the methodology, including the research design, participants and data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methods

Overview

In this chapter, I will describe my research perspective including my worldview and chosen paradigm that frames this study. Next, I will discuss the research design and detail the methodology, to include the sampling procedures, a description of the population, site information and data collection procedures. Following, information on the research questions and analysis procedures will be discussed. Finally, I will provide a description of the study's trustworthiness measures, and my positionality statement.

The Research Perspective

Worldview

Qualitative research reflects certain beliefs or assumptions that influenced my actions throughout the research process. My worldview and chosen paradigm are reflective of my philosophical orientation toward the world and the nature of research (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). There are four common paradigms discussed in literature: Postpositivist, Constructivist, Transformative and Pragmatic (Creswell, 2014; Phillips & Burbules, 2000).

Transformative Paradigm

There is no one paradigm that is 'correct'. It is the researcher's choice to identify their paradigmatic view and determine how it informs the research design in answering the research question (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). I chose the transformative or emancipatory paradigm, as it is a direct alternative to postpositivist imposition of structural laws and theories that inherently oppress marginalized groups. The transformative paradigm provides an alternative to constructivism, which critics state does not consider marginalized individuals or groups (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The transformative paradigm states that knowledge is neutral, and

reality reflects social and cultural power dynamics (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Research designs associated with a transformative paradigm may be quantitative or qualitative (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). In this study, Critical Race Theory served to feed my worldview.

Assumptions

The assumptions or beliefs of qualitative research include the following categories: ontology, epistemology, axiology, rhetoric and methodology (Hays & Singh, 2011; Phillips & Burbules, 2000). Ontology is based upon the constructivist worldview that the truth of the phenomenon comes from how 'real' it is to the researcher and participants (Hays & Singh, 2011). It was important in this study to utilize a research design that supports a participant's personal viewpoint (Hays & Singh, 2011). I chose a phenomenological research design that facilitates the experiences and meanings made by the participants (Hays & Singh, 2011). I will discuss my choice of phenomenology further along in this chapter. Epistemology is based upon the theory that knowledge is unlimited and co-constructed between the researcher and the participant (Hays & Singh, 2011). Therefore, the methodology and sampling procedures are based on the ability of the participants to speak about the phenomena. With the transformative paradigm, true knowledge comes from the participants' experiences and lies in the collective meaning making, Therefore, true knowledge informs group action, that improves the lives of the participants (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012).

Axiology is the study of judgment of value. Axiology acknowledges that the researcher's values play a role in their understanding of the research design, as the researcher is an instrument (Hays & Singh, 2011). In this study, I analyzed the data and conclusions for bias by confirming that the trustworthiness criteria were put in place throughout the research process. I addressed my researcher positionality, engaged in bracketing and noted the consistency of the research

approach in findings of the study (Hays & Singh, 2011). These actions aligned with the

transformative paradigm, as I achieved objectivity by reflecting and examining my values to

ensure appropriateness in carrying out the study (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012).

Rhetoric refers to the data that reflects the participant's voice, describes the role of the

researcher, and describes the research setting in understanding the research problem (Hays &

Singh, 2011). The chosen methodology for this study facilitates the participant's voices. It also

destroy myths and false knowledge by empowering people to act to transform society (Chilisa &

Kawulich, 2012).

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Research Design

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For this study I used a qualitative approach that would fulfill my goal of understanding

the experiences of counseling students who experience ERI development. I implemented a

phenomenological research design that is consistent with the fundamentals of qualitative

research, its assumptions and that aligned with my worldview as a researcher.

What is Phenomenology?

To examine the experiences of students ERI development, I utilized a phenomenological

approach to guide the research design and analysis. Phenomenology focuses on the individual's

subjective thoughts and lived experiences, so that 'everything is perceived freshly, as if for the

first time' (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Edmond Husserl is seen as the Father of Phenomenology.

Husserl established the method of phenomenological reduction to develop a researcher's ability

to attain a view that sees beyond everyday appearances and arrive at things as they are in

themselves (Hanna, et al., 2017; Zahavi, 2005). The phenomenological approach "involves a

return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a

reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience" (Pau & Frieden, 2008;

Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). Phenomenology aims to understand what an individual's story reveals about them and how they make meaning of certain events (Hays & Singh, 2011). Phenomenology reports on the commonality that multiple individuals experience during an event or phenomena of interest and "seeks to capture the meaning or common feature or essence of an experience or event" (Starks & Trinidad, 2007, p. 1374). Capturing the common meaning is then reduced to a description of universal essence (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Haskins et al., 2021). The universal essence may only be achieved authentically through epoche (the abstinence of judgment) or bracketing by the researcher, which means removing the self and setting aside one's experiences to report on the participants perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Haskins et al., 2021; Moustakas, 1994). The researcher brackets themself to identify and portray a core experience of the phenomena as experienced in consciousness by the participants (Smith et al., 2009). Phenomenologists seek access to a construct or system and engage in a personal journey to experience the essential nature of the phenomenon while acknowledging the significance of the researchers' interpretation (Pau & Frieden, 2008; Smith et al., 2009).

Transcendental Phenomenology

The purpose of this phenomenological approach was to gather information and seek understanding of the common meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018) shared by the counseling students who experience ERI development. For this study I utilized a transcendental phenomenological approach. Transcendental phenomenology was built upon Husserl's phenomenological theory and Moustakas' transcendental phenomenological research design (Flynn, 2021). Transcendental phenomenology emphasizes the wholeness of experience, search for meaning, and description of the experiences of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Haskins et al., 2021). According to Moustakas, the procedures of transcendental phenomenology

include identifying a phenomenon, the use of epoche or bracketing, and collecting data from several individuals' experiences (Haskins et al., 2021; Moustakas, 1994). As per Husserl, bracketing

"involves shifting our attention from the world itself to our own consciousness of that world. Indeed, rather than putting aside our judgments, bracketing involves actively reflecting on those conscious acts (i.e., perceiving, analyzing, valuing, and so forth). The object of our reflection moves from being an object in the external world to the object of our own consciousness" (Perry, 2013, p.267).

Transcendental phenomenology allowed me to identify the salient themes about the experiences of the participants in the development of their ERI. It further allowed me to understand the wholeness of the participants' experiences and define the common essence of the experience. Specifically, I chose the transcendental phenomenological method as it facilitated the integration of the human consciousness (perception, thought and emotion) with the participants' experience with ERI development (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology, therefore showed how my own experiences as a counseling student and ethnic/racial being can justify future studies in exploring, justifying, and explaining the phenomenon of ERI development within counselor education and counselor development.

Methodology

I will now describe the methodology used in this study. I will discuss the sampling, recruitment strategy, participants, site, research questions, data collection procedures, interview questions, data analysis and trustworthiness measures.

Sampling

My study examined the lived experiences of students in their ERI development while attending a CACREP accredited counseling master's program. The sample for this study was recruited from one CACREP accredited counseling program in Virginia offering in person training. Purposive sampling was used as this is a technique that identifies "information rich" participants that have experience with the phenomenon, are available to interview, and able to explain their experiences (Palinkas et al., 2015; Patton, 2002). The rich data provided by the participants provided the significant information needed to answer the research questions. There are different types of purposive sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015). For this study I chose two types of purposive sampling: convenience and criterion sampling strategies. A convenience sampling strategy means that the participants were easily available, affordable, and willing to participate (Palinkas et al., 2015; Taherdoost, 2016). The criterion sampling strategy means the participants have predetermined similarities and have experienced the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Palinkas et al., 2015). For this study, the participants were not compensated.

The goal of the sample size for this study was based on qualitative research foundations. Qualitative research seeks to collect extensive details about each participant, to not generalize the information, but to gather the specific (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative studies commonly seek to reach the point of data collection whereby no new information is surfacing, and further collection is no longer necessary (Saunders et al., 2018). Prior research on phenomenological studies have found that anywhere between five to twenty-five participants would meet saturation (Creswell, 1998; Dukes, 1984; Mason, 2010; Morse, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). I achieved a sample size of sixteen student participants for this study.

Recruitment Strategy

The participants were recruited from an in person graduate counseling program Interested participants completed a Qualtrics survey that included a consent form, procedures, risks, confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the study, how to withdraw and my contact information. At the end of the survey, the participants were redirected to a link which took them to an online calendar to reserve the date and time to complete the research interview. The participants were advised that they would not be penalized in their class if they declined to participate, that they could choose to disclose information to the extent they were comfortable and could withdraw from the study at any time.

Participants

Participants were over 18 years of age, had verified current enrollment in a graduate counselor education program; were willing to be interviewed multiple times and agreed with being digitally recorded during lengthy interviews. My sample size of sixteen participants came from a variety of counseling tracks including clinical mental health, school counseling, marriage and family, and military. The participants self-identified as White (4), Black or African American (4), Asian or Asian-American (2), Latinx (1), biracial (2), multiracial (3), female (13) and male (3). The ages of the participants ranged from 23 to 67 years. The participants did not receive any incentives for participating in this study.

Site

The research study was conducted at the School of Education (SOE) at William and Mary (W&M) in Williamsburg, Virginia. W&M is a public university, with the SOE having approximately 780 students. The demographics of the entirety of the college are not diverse. According to the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES), public reports for the

institution show a population of 59.3% White, 8.8% Hispanic or Latino, 9% Asian, 7% African

American or Black, 0.1% American Indian and 6.1% multiracial. The W&M SOE class profile

for 2022-2023 reports a student population of 70% White, 13% African American, 8% Asian,

7% Hispanic, 2& American Indian/Native Alaskan, < 1% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific

Islander and 1% multi-ethnic. The mean age for the SOE was 34 years with the enrollment being

80% female (William & Mary, n.d.). It is considered a high research university according to

Carnegie Classifications. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2011).

Research Questions

The research questions within a transcendental phenomenological framework are based

on the use of prompts that elicit substantial participant description of the phenomena (Moustakas,

1994; Husserl, 1983). It is important to acknowledge the subjective experiences of the participant

from their point of view. All the research questions were intentionally developed as open-ended

and broad to gather subjective responses about the participants experiences and any derived

meaning making (Moustakas, 1994). The two research questions for this study were:

Q1.   How do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development

        during their graduate program?

Q2.   What meaning is made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI

        development in their graduate program?

Data Collection Procedures

After IRB approval was obtained from William & Mary, I began the data collection

process. First, each participant completed a demographic survey before their interview through

Qualtrics. (Appendix C). The demographic information helped in describing the participants and

situating the findings reported in the following chapter.

Interview

   The data was collected through a semi structured interview with each participant (Appendix E). Interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom. The recordings were stored in a HIPAA compliant password protected cloud folder. A pseudonym was assigned to each of the participants' recordings and was further referred to in the results of the study. The confidential interviews commenced with two broad research questions to gather data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Each participant was interviewed for approximately thirty minutes to an hour using the Zoom virtual platform and multiple audio recorders were used. A predetermined sequence of interview questions using the same wording helped to ensure an identical and replicable process (Appendix E). The questions were open ended to prevent bias and encourage the participants' authentic thoughts (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). The interview questions helped to elicit the subjective experiences and perceptions of the participants as a result of their ERI development:

Data Analysis

   The six step Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method was used for the data analysis (Moustakas, 1994). This method is popular among researchers (Creswell, 1998), as it provides multiple clear steps for even the novice researcher to follow. As the first informant to contribute to the research (Moustakas, 1994), my first step was to implement epoche, whereby I described my own experiences with the phenomenon to set aside them aside and be able to analyze the data with a fresh perspective (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Haskins et al., 2021; Moustakas, 1994). Any personal bias or preconceived ideas were bracketed by being interviewed by a colleague asking the same interview questions that was presented to the participants of the study (Moustakas, 1994). Data was then collected from the participants by way of the previously described semi structured interview. The completed interviews were sent to an online transcription service called

Rev.com whereby each participant was identified by a pseudonym. Upon receiving the transcribed interviews, I removed any further identifying information to maintain participant confidentiality.

The second step was the horizontalization process, which entailed developing a list of significant statements from each of the transcribed interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2017). I examined each of the participants' responses from each interview to see how they experienced the phenomenon (Haskins et al., 2021). I highlighted all the significant statements from each interview within each interview document. I then created a horizontalization chart in Microsoft Excel and transferred the significant statements there, so that I could clearly see my data. A horizontalization chart is a document that allows the researcher to list the significant statements and give each equal value (Hays & Singh, 2011; Moustakas, 1994). A description was then applied to the significant statements and those descriptions developed into codes (Hays & Singh, 2011). The codes were either a short phrase or a sentence describing the participants' experiences derived from the participant's actual words. The horizontalization process served to highlight the significant statements, sentences or quotes that provided understanding of the participant who experienced the phenomenon. I consulted and coded with a member of my dissertation committee throughout the coding and horizontalization process, as is customary in qualitative research (Hays & Singh, 2011).

The third step involved grouping the significant statements into themes (broader units of information) to eventually develop clusters of meaning (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2017). For this step, I created a separate document so that I could clearly see the codes that were derived from the significant statements. I then identified which of the original codes

could be grouped together to create broader codes. These broader codes or themes developed into clusters of meaning (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

In the fourth step the themes are developed into a textural description. The textural description translates "what" they experienced and a description of the meaning the students had experienced (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Moustakas, 1994). The textural descriptions were then supported by the significant statements of the students. This led to the fifth step which was writing a description of the structure or the structural description. The description of the structure provided the readers with the setting and context of where the phenomenon was experienced (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Essentially, I described how the students experienced ERI development during the counseling program, while considering a variety of meanings and divergent perspectives (Moustakas, 1994). The fourth and fifth steps were repeated for each participant which resulted in a textural-structural description for each participant.

Finally in the sixth step, I wrote a composite description representing the group experience (Moustakas, 1994). At this point, I was able to reduce the textural and structural descriptions (the *what* and the *how*) to describe the essence of the phenomenon that all the students experienced (Moustakas, 1994). The essence resulted in the central meaning of the experience (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The results of the data analysis are discussed in terms of implications and future research for counselor education in the next chapter.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness or validity (or rigor) in qualitative research refers to the consistency, neutrality, and the degree of confidence in the data, methods, and interpretations of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Connelly, 2016; Pilot & Beck, 2014). For qualitative research there a several criteria that may be used to implement trustworthiness into the methodology and

outcomes of a study (Hays et al., 2016; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Within this study I

instilled trustworthiness by ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability

(Hays & Singh 2011, Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Creswell (2012), researchers should

utilize at least two of the following strategies in a qualitative study to ensure trustworthiness:

prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case

analysis, reflexivity, thick description, member checking, and external audits (Creswell 2012;

Hays et al., 2016). For this study I used thick description, external audits, peer debriefing and

reflexivity.

Credibility

Credibility or the internal validity of qualitative research within a phenomenological

study is achieved when "knowledge sought is arrived at through descriptions that make possible

an understanding of the meanings and essences of experience" (p. 84), Moustakas (1994). Within

this study I addressed credibility by precisely following the Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen

(SCK) method for the data analysis and thick description. Thick or rich description was achieved

by providing details about the derived themes using participant quotes and interconnecting the

details of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Generating this thick description throughout the data

analysis process, aligned with the SCK method of developing a textural description.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the ability of a researcher to transfer a study from one setting to

another. Although phenomenology does not allow for generalizability, transferability was

ensured in this study by giving detailed information of the procedures, and thick description of

the participant's experiences and the derived themes (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). By

providing thick and detailed descriptions, the reader is now able to determine whether the

findings can be transferred to another setting for further scholarly research (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Dependability

Dependability refers to reliability or the ability of another researcher to replicate the study. One may repeat the study by following a process that is systematically followed with in-depth methodological descriptions of the procedures (Morrow, 2005; Patton, 2002). A reduction strategy that includes a horizontalization process and developing textural descriptions was used to ensure dependability as it is a rigorous systematic procedure (Haskins et al., 2021; Moustakas, 1994). In continuing to address dependability I engaged an external auditor to review the data, determine consistency of themes and examine the overall methodology and findings of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018, Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My external auditor was not involved with the study, and primarily served to assess accuracy. The external auditor was a faculty member at a separate graduate institution within a counselor education program with an established record of qualitative scholarly publications

Confirmability

Confirmability or bias is addressed by utilizing strategies that expose assumptions or bias (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). Confirmability reduces researcher interference during the research process to increase objectivity through methodology (Hays & Singh, 2011). As both dependability and confirmability are achieved through an auditing process (Creswell & Poth, 2018), my engagement of an external auditor also helped to achieve confirmability.

I employed reflexivity by adding my positionality statement as the following "researcher positionality" statement in this chapter, and in the form of an epoché by way of a bracketing interview. Reflexivity is written into a study to allow the researcher to state their experiences,

and how this may inform the interpretations of the data in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Epoche is consistent with transcendental phenomenology, as the bracketing interview allowed me to set aside my biases in being objective with the participant's experiences (Hays & Singh, 2011). The bracketing interview was conducted by a peer via Zoom, who asked me the same research questions asked of the participants. The interview was transcribed by Rev.com. My positionality statement provides readers with a level of transparency on how my own biases may affect the study (Moravcsik, 2014; Morrow, 2005; Patton, 2002).

Bracketing Process

As the researcher of a transcendental phenomenological study, I consistently set aside my prejudice to report the views of the participants. As mentioned previously, I commenced the bracketing process by having a colleague interview me with the same questions posed to the participants (Appendix F). This helped me to suspend my judgements through consciously expressing and processing my own experiences with the phenomenon. Staying true to the transcendental process, I continued to reflect and process any memories and prejudgments, to remain present of my own consciousness throughout the study (Moustakas, 1994). As I focused on my own consciousness around the phenomenon, I actively worked toward suspending my own judgment by checking in with my committee chair on a weekly basis and contacting my external auditor. During these conversations, I expressed and processed my own judgments and set aside my own thoughts. As I continued this process, I was able to fully embrace the data without my own experiences influencing the analysis or findings. In this way I displayed Giorgi (2009) ideas of bracketing as not forgetting one's experiences but preventing one's past from impacting current experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Researcher Positionality

As a masters counseling student, I learned my positionality as a Black, Afro-Caribbean, middle class, cisgender, straight, middle aged, immigrant, first generation, non-disabled, female. I had been aware my entire life that I am Black, however, it became suddenly apparent that walking in this skin bears the burden to bear witness to its inherited sufferings and to represent other people of color who were not represented in the graduate school. I recognized that even though I was there to seek my own education, as a Black counselor in training, I had the duty and opportunity to shift the viewpoint of fellow students. Through continual reflection exercises, and eye opening experiences, it's a burden I became accustomed to. My ethnic and racial identity was beginning to develop. After graduating, I knew I wanted to provide literature to support future counselors around ERI development.

I was born in England to Jamaican parents, spent half my childhood in England and half in Jamaica, and have lived in various parts of the United States for over twenty years. During the master's program it became painfully clear that there was a lack of information about someone like myself. I did not fully fit into the category of African American, as I did not grow up in the USA, none of my ancestors were born or raised here either. I did not inherit the same historical stressors (particularly those of the 20th century) of the African American group. However, as a Black person I connect with the common history of slavery, colonialism, classism, and colorism. I connect with the power and privilege yielding against Black people and the marginalization offered by people of color. Therefore, my ability to empathize is higher than others, however my path and reality are different. I believe that much of the research and literature made available to counseling students put people in finite racial categories with little room for flexibility. I felt that reinforced a dominant societal view that one should be assigned and choose a racial identity. I

wondered how a novice counselor would provide therapy to a client like myself who is of mixed racial heritage and ethnicity but is defined by society only by the color of their skin and the dark tight curls of their hair. I wondered if the lack of information surrounding ERI development in the master's curriculum had not further developed racial disparity. Now that I have furthered my education, my goal is to develop and support the multicultural requirements by integrating and promoting ERI development processes within counselor education.

My role and background relate to the counseling students who will participate in the study. I am a graduate of the same college site where the participants will be recruited from. I am currently enrolled as a student in William and Mary's counselor education and supervision doctoral program and a licensed professional counselor. I have received doctoral level training concerning CACREP accreditation standards and the general academic preparation of counseling students. Moreover, I have participated in cultural competence, advanced multicultural classes and am a member of various research teams that involve ERI and social justice advocacy. As a person who identifies as Black, marginalized and a social justice advocate, I must bracket my subjective thoughts, views, and knowledge to eliminate bias. I therefore set aside my judgements by taking part in a bracketing interview (epoche) to encourage trustworthiness and be open to the totality of the phenomenon (Hays & Singh, 2011, Moustakas, 1994).

Ethical Considerations

I sought IRB approval from William and Mary to conduct the study. After selecting participants and before data collection began, I informed the participants on the purpose and goal of the study and obtained their consent through a Qualtrics survey. The consent form included notification of the audio and video being recorded for interview purposes. It also informed that the audio would be pulled from the recording, and the video would not be saved. The participants

were informed that the result of the interviews not being used in any evaluative manner. Moreover, I explained that the participation was voluntary and that there was no penalty for not taking part in the study. There were no known risks associated with the study. Peer review or debriefing was also employed as a measure to ensure ethical validation. The peer debriefer kept me honest and played devil's advocate by asking challenging questions about the process and results (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, the peer debriefer was a member of my research committee, as it was important for the role to be occupied by someone who was familiar with the research but had no part of the data collection process (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Summary

In this chapter, I presented a research design and methodological strategies informed by my transformative worldview but guided by foundational elements of phenomenological qualitative research. The process fostered critical self-reflection as I. also experienced the interview process through bracketing. I was able to distinguish my experience as a student and person of color from the experiences of the participants. The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to understand the subjective experiences of ERI development within a counseling program. The results of this study are discussed in chapter four.

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of graduate counselor students around their ERI development through a transcendental phenomenological lens. Specifically, I sought to examine what the counselor students were receiving in terms of ERI development in their graduate program and what experiences would be necessary to develop each student's sense of being a 'racial being' (Goren & Plaut, 2012). Through transcendental phenomenology, I examined participant interpretation of experiences and the meaning associated with these experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The study examined the participant's personal viewpoint (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) on their understanding of ERI.

I interviewed sixteen participants to obtain a thick description and recurring themes across participants' experiences utilizing the six step Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method (Moustakas, 1994). Out of a careful systematic data collection and analysis process, emergent experiences and meanings emerged to answer the two main research questions. This chapter will provide participant descriptions, the analysis of the data collected, a presentation of the emergent experiences and meanings identified from the data analysis, the supporting data of the emergent experiences and meanings and a summary of the findings.

Participant Descriptions

The sixteen participants were all graduate students enrolled in a CACREP accredited counseling program. The participants' willingness to share their perspectives and stories is what gave the depth of material required to obtain the meanings and experiences offered by this study. The participants were representative of a variety of counseling graduate tracks, including clinical mental health, addictions, school counseling, marriage and family and the military track. Each

participant description was obtained from the demographic information each student provided and additional information offered to me during the study only if the participant thought it was relevant to the phenomenon being studied:

Ally

Ally is a 23 year old student on the marriage and family counseling track, who describes herself as a "first generation American" as her parents are immigrants to the United States. She believes that introducing herself as "first gen" comprises all her ethnic and racial experiences without having to go into detail.

Anna

Anna is a 23 year old student on the clinical mental health track, who identifies as biracial. Anna shared that "anti-racism, social justice, and just ethnicity and race to be a lifelong process" of learning for her. She described herself as a student who is always asking during class how certain topics affect multiracial individuals.

Brian

Brian describes himself as coming from a "mixed cultural background". He is 55 years old, and on the addictions counseling track. Brian believes that although racial groups may look alike, their experiences are not homogeneous, as "ethnicity has a lot to do with it and experiences are not necessarily the same".

Don

Don is a 50 year old student on the military track who describes himself as multiracial. Don shared that any ideas of ERI were erased during his time in the military. He shared that during

the program his view has "been reversed" as he is exploring the impact of ethnic and racial identities upon himself and others during the program.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth is a 67 year old student on the marriage and family counseling track, who describes herself as European with a biracial child. Elizabeth beliefs that race is an individualized phenomenon resulting from how individuals are raised or "what kind of identity has been placed upon them from their parents, family or society".

Emily

Emily is a 22 year old student on the school counseling track who describes herself as "Black American" unless she is speaking to people who understand that there is a Black diaspora. Emily explained that for the White students she had the "assumption that everyone's White American and is learning there is a diaspora as some are "White from other countries".

Grace

Grace is a 22 year old international student on the clinical mental health track. Grace shared that in her culture of origin, there is a collectivist view of people. Therefore, Grace explained that discussing ERI highlights the differences in people, which deemphasizes her culture's view of "harmony of the group".

James

James is a 25 year old male student who describes himself as biracial and multiethnic. James focuses on family therapy and described his experiences with ERI during the program as changing his 'understanding of how identity relates to my profession".

Jenny

Jenny is a 26 year old school counseling student who describes herself as being born in Latin America. She felt very fortunate to be in a diverse cohort representing "all backgrounds" whereby she can learn from their experiences. Jessica said she approaches counseling from a "respectful" viewpoint as "not everyone thinks the same".

Jessica

Jessica is a 34 year old White woman on the military track, who has come to have empathy for marginalized racial groups. Jessica said growing up in an area where her race was in the minority, she had learned that there are "more perspectives and different ways to look at things"

Mary

Mary is a 25 year old student on the military track who defines herself as multiracial and multiethnic. She feels that racial and ethnic labels do not encompass many people's identity. Mary also thinks that people confuse race and ethnicity whereby they "try to separate the two, whereas they probably shouldn't be separating the two, and it should just be one thing".

Michelle

Michelle is a 22 year old student on the school counseling track who identifies as Black. She shares her understanding of being Black as an experience "across the spectrum and the diaspora, with lot of versions and experiences that a lot of different Black people have". Michelle shares "I have learned a lot about my history during the program and I am proud to be who I am".

Natalie

Natalie is a 27 year old addiction track student who identifies as White cisgender female. Natalie shared that being in the program has offered her a first experience of being around people of

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mixed race which has led her to realize that race is "not necessarily how you present or what you look like; it can be quite complex!"

Samantha

Samantha is a 24 year old student on the clinical mental health track who describes herself as "pretty much White European". Samantha came from an area where she had no interaction with people of color and has since learned that "there are so many different places that people are from and so many different cultures" to consider when providing therapy.

Sara

Sara is a 22 year old on the addictions track who identifies as Asian American. Sara shared that their parents are immigrants and since being in the program they have given more thought to their heritage and "how I view the world, especially when dealing with clients and thinking about their culture".

Valerie

Valerie is a 35 year old student on the clinical mental health track who identifies as African American. Valerie shares that she sees how other racial groups outside of the African American racial group are "being marginalized and treated in a very different way from others" and she shared "I have to remind myself that their experience is their experience".

Findings

Research Question One

The first research question asks, "how do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development during their graduate program?". The participants stated they experienced development of their ERI through a change or shift in their perspective of ERI.

While there was no fundamental change in how the participants defined ERI, the shift occurred as the participants started to view ERI as less about physical attributes and more influenced by cultural and societal factors. The participants also stated that discussions about race were pivotal in developing their ERI development, as racial discourse illuminated the experiences of broad racial groups as not monolithic.

The participants experienced an increased awareness of the complexity of ERI. They shared an increased knowledge of how broad terms for ethnic and racial groups did not reflect the variety of specific factors affecting people's lives. Additionally, the participants felt they became more aware of the process of navigating ERI complexity. Next, the participants experienced a heightened interest in learning about their own ethnic and racial background and exploring their personal biases.

Research Question Two

The second research question asks, "what meaning is made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI development in their graduate program?". The meaning behind the participants' experiences with ERI development was found in the information shared with me during the interviews. The participants felt that their awareness of others' ERI had developed through an increased awareness of the differences of others. They stated this was effective in preventing discriminatory behavior but recognized that it distinguished the White group from the non-White groups, which was discerned as "othering". Overall, the participants recognized they were more prepared and aware that ethnic and racial differences impact the therapeutic space.

The participants observed there was little modeling of how to facilitate discussion about ERI during therapy with clients, or little direct guidance on the therapeutic applications required to manage ethnic or racial issues experienced by a client. The participants stated they were ill

prepared to start an ethnic or racialized conversation unless it was presented as central to the issues by the clients themselves. The participants noted their heightened awareness of ERI also resulted from peer sharing and support. The participants recognized that peers from diverse backgrounds sharing their perspectives and experiences mostly in small groups, outside of the classroom conversations, or initiating discussion about race or culture in the classroom, vastly helped with their own ERI development. The participants identified that peer sharing also modeled how to consider and integrate race into the clinical space.

Supporting Data

In addition to responding to the research questions, I identified recurring themes derived from the analysis of the in-depth interviews with the student participants. Through this transcendental phenomenological study, I identified six emergent themes that described the essence of what the participants experienced. These themes are Shifting Perspective of ERI, ERI Complexity, Personal ERI Development, Integrating ERI into Clinical Work, Faculty Support and Peer Support.

Shifting Perspective of ERI

All the participants shared their personal definition of ERI and how they ethnically and racially identified. The participants expressed a shift in their perspective of ERI rather than any general change in understanding of the definition of ERI. Overall, the change in perspective made each participant take a deeper look at ERI. The shifting perspectives seemed to be highly influenced by the participants' views of culture and society, and the impact of racial discussions.

Culture and Society

Culture and the society in which one lives has an impact on the ERI of individuals. The participants expressed their understanding of ERI as mostly reflective of culture and society,

rather than a phenotype of physical racial traits. Although is it difficult to define culture, the participants, like some scholars, defined culture as a mix of customs, ideas, behaviors and attitudes derived from family and the society (Matsumoto, 1996; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2012; Spencer-Oatey, 2008). The participants shared a broad view of race and ethnicity that encompassed multiple variables. Brian, a 55 year old African American and Indian student, grew up in the United States with an awareness that his parents represented two different racial groups. However, Brian revealed that although he was raised under one culture, he acquired a broad-minded view of ERI. Brian stated that ERI:

> Depends on where you're from, how you're raised, that type of background that you come
> from, and the region of the world that you may have been born in or lived in for a period
> of time.

While Brian considered culture and upbringing, some participants communicated an even wider perspective of their understanding of ERI. Some participants with more experience outside of one country added the additional component of societal systems when considering ERI. Elizabeth, is a 67 year old White student who grew up and lived outside of the United States for many years. She shared that she was in an interracial marriage, which created a biracial child, and felt her life experience gave a her more liberal view of ERI. Elizabeth declared that ERI is:

> How each individual person is brought up and what kind of identity has been placed on them
> by their parents, by their family, by society, in how they've dealt with that kind of thing.

Grace is a 22 year old international student. Grace identifies as Asian and described her experience with ERI as nonexistent in her home country. Grace has described her cultural view as "collectivist", where everyone is seen as the same, although the system is set up where certain

ethnic groups receive more privileges than others. Grace experienced a shift in her perspective of ERI during the program. Grace said of ERI:

> It's about the cultural background and of course the genetics, our facial appearance, but also how the culture and the country as well as the policy influenced a person and influenced the person to define who they are and how they belong, how they feel, their sense of belonging.

Both Elizabeth and Grace reflected a macro level view of their understanding of ERI to include the societal and cultural policies and norms beyond the family unit. They both stated that the societal norms that define ERI has an impact on how an individual will ultimately define themself.

Racial Discussions

While the participants were certain on how they defined ERI, they revealed that their view of ERI had shifted throughout their graduate program. The participants found themselves experiencing this change as a result of racial discussions. While not all discourse creates change, critical discourse, such as discussion about race, communicates individual values that can shape the classroom or campus climate (Arellano & Vue, 2019). Racial discourse illuminated an awareness or a broadening of understanding about the experiences of different racial groups as non-monolithic. Participants learned that not all White people experienced life the same, nor did all Black people or all Asian people. Participants shared that "discussions around race has been a change for me", "it's prevalent right now to talk about race and ethnicity" and as a result they "learned a little bit more" and gained a "broader understanding". Michelle, a 22 year old Black student has only lived in the United States, explained that her perspective shifted as she began to

learn that the African American Black experience is not the *only* Black experience. Michelle described this as:

> I had a very narrow understanding of what it meant to be a Black woman, specifically because I've only been in the context of the United States, but through the program, I've been able to understand that being Black is across the spectrum and the diaspora. And there are a lot of versions and experiences that a lot of different Black people have. So, I think that through the program and experiences with other people who identify as Black, that I have a broader understanding of what it means.

Samantha, a 24 year old White student explained in her interview that she has little previous interaction with people of color growing up or during her undergraduate studies. Samantha grew up in an area with little diversity and shared that she was enjoying the opportunity to be in a cohort with students representing different backgrounds. Like Michelle, Samantha felt racial discussion shifted her perspective. Samantha stated:

> I guess at the beginning, it was more of, you're Black, you're White, you're Asian. But then as I've gone on in the program, I have seen people...were all lumped together. There are so many different places that people are from and so many different cultures, and so yeah, that's what I've kind of learned.

The increased awareness of racial groups being placed under broad groupings led to an awareness that members of the broad groups did not have monolithic experience. This shift aligned well with the next theme of an increased awareness of ERI Complexity.

ERI Complexity

An important aspect of experiencing ERI during the counseling program included an increased awareness of the complexity of ERI. As mentioned earlier, the participants divulged

their burgeoning realization that racial groups labelled under broad categories do not undergo a monolithic experience or identity. Researchers have espoused a more fluid belief of the nature of race and ethnicity, which dismantles the boundaries mostly based on societal normed physical understandings of race (Brown et al., 2006). In other words, within a multiracial and a multiethnic society, such as the United States, racial and ethnic categories are more complex than how groups are currently categorized. In addition to their change in perspective that race and ethnicity involve personal, familial, cultural and societal variables, the participants felt broad racial and ethnic categories were too opaque and excluded many people's specific experiences.

Broadness to Specificity

Participants experienced an increased realization that umbrella terms such as 'African American', 'Asian' or 'Hispanic' did not consider different variables or factors related to an individual's specific experience or identity. Participants identified that through discussions they gained an understanding of the "different aspects of identity", "different variables that people identify with" and "complexity to identity". Mary, a 25-year-old student, described herself as multiethnic and multiracial. Mary identifies closely with her Latina culture and struggles with the broad societal labels put upon this group. Mary described her experience:

> I think for a lot of times people, especially in my shoes, Latinos, Latinas, Latinx, whatever it may be, however you identify, especially in that, we're kind of in that middle ground of where does our identity fall on the spectrum and why are we allowing other people to define this for us?

The participants shared that as they began to see how broad labelling restricts experiences and identity, some reflected on the need to be more specific even within their own racial groups. Brian explained, as an African American himself, he could now:

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See that there's a lot of different variables now that people now identify with. Because

they said if you're talking to a Jamaican person, even though they look Black, they may

technically not be Black. But looking at them and going into their culture though, you'd

kind of have a tendency to say, "Okay, well this is a Black African American female,"

versus just saying that she's Jamaican or she's an islander or she's from some other part of

the world.

Jessica is a 34 year old White woman who grew up in a predominantly Black neighborhood,

where she described herself as the "minority" race at school. Jessica disclosed her view on the

need to be more specific when considering ethnic and racial experiences and identity, especially

in conversation with others:

The Black population is what, 15% of our country? That's a huge percentage. So, what it

means for you to be Black might be completely different for somebody else. So, I don't

want to come at it making any sort of assumptions about what that means.

Navigating Complexity

Other participants shared that their realization of ERI complexity was not a new

consideration, but discussions of multiculturalism resurrected some existing viewpoints on ERI.

These participants reflected on how they have navigated the complexity of their own identity, the

complexity of others and even their conflicted feelings toward the process. Mary, stated:

That's my problem with it. I hate it. We always talk about how we hate labels, but labels

do help identify, but at the same time it's one thing if a label doesn't encompass

everything for everybody.

Ally, is a 23-year-old student, whose parents immigrated to the United States from Africa. As a

"first generation American", Ally has chosen to explain her identity based upon the audience. If

she is speaking to someone whose parent was also born in another country, she shares she will give more details of her identity to include her parent's African country of origin and their ethnic tribe. However, if someone does not have that experience, she will identify herself as "Black" as she finds the grouping of African American to be "too broad". Ally explained "African American seems too broad, and I don't think it's defined well within our culture, our society, what does that actually mean? Usually I don't use that, I'll use black, but I won't use African American". Furthermore, Ally shared:

> As a first generation American I've had to spend more time trying to articulate the different aspects of my identity. More often than not, I know that when people say their racial or ethnic background, it may not be the full story. I'm accustomed to asking more details, trying to figure out what that actually means for the person who is saying it.

Both Mary and Ally relate the complexity of what ERI may mean to an individual. They both state that broad labels are not specific to each person's experience. They both shared that their acknowledgement of complexity helps them conceptualize others experiences and identities. Another major theme which aligned with Mary and Ally's experience with ERI Complexity was Personal ERI Development.

Personal ERI Development

Although the participants expressed no major change in their definition of ERI, there was a shift in perspective and an increased awareness of ERI complexity. It appeared that all the participants experienced a personal change in their ERI development. This change evolved from increased knowledge about their own ethnic or racial background, an acknowledgement of their former biases and an increased acceptance of diverse perspectives.

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Learning about One's Own Ethnic & Racial Background

The topic of race and ethnicity may lead some people to be more curious about their own background. This aligns with stage two of most racial identity models, whereby an event incites an interest in increasing one's knowledge of ERI and its effects on one's life experiences (Cross 1971, 1991; Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1984; Ponterotto 1991, 1988). The participants in this study appeared to experience such curiosity. Although the participants could identify the race, ethnicity, culture and country of their origin, an exploration of their personal background increased their awareness of how ERI is projected into their lived experiences. Participants shared they were learning about their "own culture", "identifying more with my immigrant identity" while being inspired to work more with people "of a similar ethnic and racial background". Sara, a 22-year-old first generation Asian American who had previously spent little time considering her own heritage explained, "just hearing different students discuss their identities and how they felt it made them both individual and part of something bigger, made me want to do the same thing". Sara continued to share:

> My parents are Japanese, but they are not very... they don't identify with it that much. I feel like it's been getting lost through the generations so I'm trying to reclaim that part of my culture...It's kind of made me step back and think about my identity as a counselor, especially thinking about implicit biases and everything. I think it's made me think more about my culture and think about how I view the world, especially when dealing with clients and thinking about their culture. So, just trying to become more familiar with my own racial and ethnic identity.

Don, a 50-year-old student of mixed Mexican, American Indian and Asian heritage shared a similar experience. Don's prior involvement in the military stripped any individualistic thoughts

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about race or culture. Therefore, Don did not see himself through any ancestral ethnic or racial

lens, but rather first and only as a soldier. During the graduate program, Don shared his personal

experience of ERI development as:

I am stripping away my thoughts on ethnicity and more embracing it. So, I'm learning

how to be more ethnic to follow and to learn about my culture's history.

Personal Bias

Personal bias appeared to develop out of the shifting perspectives of ERI and the

awareness of ERI complexity. The participants discovered a heightened awareness of their

personal biases resulting from ERI development during the program. Participants expressed a

desire to make changes to their biases and be more open to other's perspectives. The participants

offered insights such as "being more compassionate and understanding", "I'm a White woman,

and I'm going to experience things very differently than an African American woman or a

Hispanic woman", and "make the unconscious, become the conscious". Samantha, who

previously had little experience with diversity stated:

I think that I'm going to be more compassionate and more understanding, that when

someone comes in and they're presenting a certain skin color, that doesn't mean that

they're understanding a certain... You don't give into stereotypes.

Valerie is a 35 year old African American student was used to living in areas that are

predominantly Black. As another student who had little experience with diversity, she reflected:

I'm trying not to be as stubborn and to just be a listener. Even if they're saying something

that I disagree with, I'm like, okay, you still need to listen to this and take it some way

somehow, because you are going to be dealing with different viewpoints your entire life,

especially in your career. This is great practice, so just being mindful of that, to not shut

them off.

While exploring their own background and bias, the participants revealed a deeper consideration of how they show up and affect their client in the clinical space. Natalie, a 27 year old student shared, "as a White woman, being understanding of the fact that race and ethnicity can play a role in how people develop and how people present themselves, such as being aware of that fact, and understanding internally that I'm never going to know exactly what they've gone through, but what can I do to try to show you that I am understanding, and I am listening?". As an Asian woman, Grace also shared a consciousness of how her identity may reflect in the therapeutic space by stating, "so I feel like my identity, the feeling of I'm different... I will have clients with a lot of different backgrounds, to be aware of it and try to dig into how my culture and these identities influence me". As these themes highlighted the participants' experiences, the following themes began to highlight the meanings they attached to the phenomenon.

Integrating ERI into Clinical Work

The integration of ERI into clinical work represented a theme that inspired passionate responses from the participants. The counseling literature has spoken of students increased awareness of multicultural competence but who struggle with actionable skills (Castillo et. al, 2007). Researchers have also spoken of students feeling unprepared for cross cultural clinical work (Barden & Greene, 2015; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers 1999; Jones et. al, 2016; Priester et al., 2008), although it is an expectation that students will graduate with the ability to start, broach and interact verbally around such a topic as ERI. The participants revealed some common struggles around incorporating ERI in the counseling space.

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No Prep to Converse

Participants shared the experience of declaring there was little direct and actionable preparation in facilitating conversation about ERI during a counseling session. The participants mentioned that broaching was spoken of and how to be aware of the differences of others, but there was little modelling of what exact steps to take. Michelle is an African American student who reports receiving feedback from her supervisors that she excels in considering race and ethnicity in case conceptualizations. However, Michelle has explained that although she experiences race, she does not know how to bring it into the clinical space. Michelle stated:

> I feel like the word broaching is thrown around by faculty. They say, I want to say encourage, but I don't even know if it's encouraged. They tell us to broach topics. But I feel like there isn't a clear understanding of how to broach a topic. Which is, they're just saying it, but nobody's actually demonstrating it. So, it's hard to translate the theoretical understanding of broaching into practice.

Ally expressed some frustration with the preparation to have cultural discussions in the clinical space as a "disservice" to the students and their future clients. She explained her view:

> I feel like I can leave this program still with a missed opportunity, if that makes sense, for further understanding. I think there is merit in battling and having those type of conversations, but if we're not having them, then it's just like, all right, and then what I'm just going to have to hope and pray doesn't come out in a session, or what if someone is battling the same thing or a client comes in and the presenting issue is around identity and ethnic and racial background?

Let the Client Bring it Up

Michelle and Ally's words reflect the experiences of other participants who are able to conceptualize the issues of ERI that show up for clients but continue to struggle with initiating the discussion. Participants share their cultural awareness but describing client clinical situations such as "the hardship they have faced their entire lives that has resulted to where they are today, because of how they are presenting ethnically or racially" and "I think with this family, the way the parents choose to raise their children is a direct result of their experiences being people of color". However, participants have shared that if ethnicity and race is not introduced by the client, they hesitate to commence the conversation. James, a 25 year old who shares a White and Latino identity has shared his struggle with inviting discussion of race and ethnicity into therapy. James stated:

> I haven't asked the clients that I don't share some form of their racial or ethnic identity. I haven't asked them. I feel like it's maybe harder to ask, but I still allow the space for them to talk about it. But I'm not the one bringing it up. I don't know if that's good.

Faculty Support

As mentioned in the previous theme, the participants shared the experience of recognizing they were not prepared to hold critical conversations about race and ethnicity in the clinical space. Their stories included how faculty supported the students in developing an awareness of others, which included a recognition of the differences between people and that others may be different from you. However, the participants observed there was little change in terms of what steps to take to move beyond awareness to conversation.

Awareness of Others

The acquired awareness of differences of others is a foundational MCC goal in the development of a counseling student as to be prepared to work with the culturally different (Sue et al. 1992). The participants shared that in all their classes, culture, race, and ethnicity were always put forth as a lens through which to conceptualize the differences in people's culture and background. Participants observed that ERI, "is always factored in", "it is brought up all the time" with a focus on "you don't know what kind of client is going to come into your office" or "getting exposed to all the different cultures that are out there through the readings, through discussion, and through the classes". Valerie, an African American student, felt that the approach to raising awareness of other races and cultures made sense as it prevents students from being discriminatory. However, she recognized that during the process the differences of non-White groups were particularly highlighted. Valerie explained how this made her feel as being a person of color:

> We're all bunched together. It's like you all are othered. It was this sense of otherness. It's like there are White people and then there's the otherness.

Other participants shared a more concentrated view of the faculty's approach to increase the awareness of the differences of others. These participants disclosed that this approach by faculty taught them to "have that kind of awareness and possibly maybe do some research beforehand if you know what kind of client you might be having" and to know of "some racial, cultural difference, how that the difference may influence the clients to express themself" while "there are multiple ethnicities and races, and we just have to be respectful of each one of them, and just try to obviously maybe get in touch with each one of them and understand a little bit". All in all, the participants shared the experience of an increased awareness of others as preparing

them to be nondiscriminatory and devoid of personal bias. As Brian shared, the faculty prepared the students to:

> Not be totally blindsided or you're not suggesting, saying to them something that they may not want to hear at that time, or maybe your personal feelings regarding that particular race or identity.

Facilitating ERI Discourse

A previous theme noted there was no preparation to have conversations about ERI in the clinical space. The participants felt that this extended to the faculty, not facilitating direct racial conversation in the classroom. The participants expressed a palpable observation of discomfort from the faculty around racial discussion. The participants described this discomfort in the classroom as "ethnic and racial identity and what that means was so surface level", "the content of the class is not heavy", "faculty members in the program should not fear these conversations" and "some of them just gloss over it because they sense that this is awkward". Sara observed this as:

> There's been such a surge towards social justice and hearing marginalized voices, but it almost feels like they're just putting it in because it needs to be put in, kind of how a lot of syllabus material has the anti-racial statement at the end, not like I'm saying professors don't agree with it, but it almost feels like it's something that just needs to be put in, if that makes sense.

Although Valerie noted that were indeed some faculty that were "going to talk about this for as long as anyone wants to talk about it because this conversation needs to be had", she stressed that "there needs to be some type of commonality among the professors on what we are talking about... some of them are not on the same page when discussing certain topics of racial and

ethnic identity. Some of them are not comfortable with it". Ally was able to summarize the long term effects of faculty facilitating racial discussion as:

> Just having faculty model the discomfort that can come with it and understanding that it
> is a journey, it is a learning process and that it's not always pleasurable, it's helpful. I
> think conversations about race and ethnicity can make people uncomfortable. Those
> who've had the privilege of not having to think about it, it makes them uncomfortable. I
> think having faculty who look (like) them talk about that is the most effective. For people
> who've had to think about race and ethnicity their entire life...and not having a lot of
> faculty who look like us to talk with.

Peer Support

Another theme was that of peers sharing their experiences with each other. The sharing of peer perspectives was not part of the curriculum per se, rather a sharing of stories at the encouragement of faculty and willingness necessity of the student. An important note is that the word 'peer' covered those who were masters and doctoral students. The participants crossed paths with the doctoral students as group leaders, teacher assistants and during conversations outside of the classroom. The participants also felt that peer sharing was impactful because of the diverse range of racial and ethnic backgrounds represented by the students.

Peer Sharing

The participants stated that peer sharing about their diverse backgrounds and experiences provided the most impact on their ethnic and racial identity development. It appeared to be the fundamental experience that helped the participants to shift their perspectives around ERI, involve them in racial and cultural discourse, introduce them to ERI complexity and influenced their personal ERI development. Peer sharing occurred through "collage or a board of different

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places (they) have been", "discussions in a smaller group", "role playing" and presenting "family genograms". Emily felt that the professors who did not have non-White identities "talk on their experience with working with clients from different backgrounds, but they always leave space for people to act as native experts basically". Jenny, a 26 year old student from South America felt that "the professors ask us 24/7 to talk with [our peers] even in groups". Both Emily and Jenny felt that the faculty encouraged the students to ask questions and bring up topics of interest within small groups of peers. Not all the participants felt that faculty intentionally encouraged peer sharing in small groups but agreed that peer speaking on their own experiences was impactful. Michelle explained:

> I learned a lot in relation to other people. So, I think the role playing and discussions of small topics is beneficial...it wasn't implemented by the faculty members that are in these small group discussion or role plays that we would address racial identity, but the people in the groups would bring it up.

Sharing Diverse Experiences

Peer sharing about diverse experiences provided support for those students to explore their own perspectives and learn from others while feeling safe and secure. It is notable that the participants stated that having a diverse cohort of master's students was helpful with broadening perspectives and introducing viewpoints to those who have not considered such differences before. As Anna explained:

> For my peers who don't have as much experience learning about multicultural considerations, they've been really curious. They've been asking a lot of questions and I know that it can be hard to ask questions, so that's really great to see.

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Sharing diverse perspectives also helped with within group conversations and understanding. Emily expressed that being part of the same racial group does not mean everyone has the same experience, but it does create a sense of camaraderie, support and confidence to speak on one's experiences with other group members.

Generally, the participants appreciated the diversity of culture, race and ethnicity that was represented in the student makeup. The participants felt that the diversity contributed to an invaluable learning experience. Jessica stated "We have a lot of diversity; we have several people that are Black, LGBT, Asian-American. So, it's been so amazing to get to know this group of people". Michelle expressed her thought on this as:

> I feel like my peers who have different racial and ethnic identities from me, are sensitive in the question asking process. We're very respectful of each other's cultures, but we're also curious and we trust each other, we feel safe enough to be honest and have difficult conversations, which has been really nice.

Modelling ERI in Counseling

The participants conveyed that throughout the program the doctoral students played a pivotal role in modelling how ERI can be incorporated in conversation, research and the counseling space. The participants shared observations such as "doctoral students have done the best job modeling", "I've learned a lot just watching what [they] have done or what [they] have brought to the table and different perspectives", "they gave me the confidence to, "Go ahead and share you. You'll be okay", and the doctoral students have also "done a great job of asking me how I show up in the room as a result of my racial and ethnic identity and how other people show". Valerie, who shared a previous discomfort with expressing her views without being judged by others shared of her experience with the doctoral students:

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They're always open to have the conversation. I love that they jump first, head first...the

doctoral students, because they always are willing to talk about race, and they're going to

talk about it and express that it shouldn't be an uncomfortable conversation, which I

enjoy.

Ally also touched on the doctoral students' influence on modeling how to converse about ERI.

She implied that the modelling of including ERI in the conversation included empathy, curiosity

and encouragement. Ally described her experience as:

I think being able to own ethnic and racial identity and being able to at least even model

what it means to think about it outside the context of just reading a textbook. Even just

bringing the conversation up even when it's not technically part of the curriculum

The Essence of the Experience

The ethnic and racial identity development of counseling students begins with enrolling

in a counseling graduate program that includes discourse on ethnicity and race. The students

engage in or listen to discussions about ethnicity and race and begin to see their perspectives of

ERI becomes less about physical attributes and more influenced by cultural and societal factors.

A broadening view develops which leads to an appreciation of the complexity of ERI. The

students become more aware of themselves and others as ethnic and racial beings. The students

now wonder what their identities mean personally and as a counselor. The students then felt

unprepared with introducing ERI discussion into the clinical space and would rather wait until it

was presented as a central issue by the clients. The students began to rely on the ERI

conversations offered by their peers. These conversations were mainly led by peers who

represented a diverse diaspora of ethnic and racial backgrounds, with a variety of cultural

experiences. The conversations modeled how to discuss ethnicity and race and led to effective

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changes in perspectives and views of the students around ERI and its experiences. The essence of the experience is sharing diverse experiences and that sharing leads to student ERI development.

Conclusion

The participants shared their lived experiences of ERI development during their graduate counseling program. The findings, as presented in this chapter, resulted in six main themes derived from the collected data. These themes were shifting perspectives of ERI, ERI complexity, personal ERI development, integrating ERI into clinical work, faculty support and peer support. An examination of the statements provided to me by the participants also allowed me to answer the research questions. Further analysis of the emergent themes, textural and structural description allowed me to capture and describe the meaning the participants attributed to the experience...the 'essence'. In the next chapter, I will further discuss the experience of the counseling students and the results of this study in terms of implications and future research within the counseling literature.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The findings of this study advance the existing literature by providing insight into the counselor students' experiences of the development of their ERI during their graduate program. These findings illuminate the narratives and meanings the participants attached to their experiences. This study provided several implications for the counselor education field, clinical practice and future areas of research.

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to understand the lived experiences of graduate counselor students around their ERI development. Specifically, I sought to examine what the counselor students were receiving in terms of ERI development in their graduate program and what experiences would be necessary to develop individual ERI. The participant interpretation of experiences and the meaning associated with these experiences was examined and offered in the previous chapter. Sixteen participants shared their experiences through one hour interviews. The six step Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method (Moustakas, 1994) was used to acquire a thick description and capture the emergent themes that came out of the interviews. This data analysis resulted in the identification of shared themes and meanings that answered the two main research questions, "how do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development during their graduate program?" and "what meaning is made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI development in their graduate program?".

This chapter will begin with a review of the meaning or the 'essence', the participants attributed to the experience. Next will be a discussion about the results of the study's findings, the limitations, the implications for counselor programs, and future directions for the counselor education field. Clarity will be given in how this study positions itself within the current body of research and its relationships with previous research.

Summary of Results

This study began with a mission to answer the following research questions:

    a. "How do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development during their graduate program?"

    b. "What meaning is made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI development in their graduate program?".

The meanings that the participants attributed to the experience of ERI development resulted in a description of the overall essence. The participants found themselves in a graduate counseling program where there were discussions about ethnicity and race. The participants engaged in or listened to these discussions and began to see their perspectives of ERI expand to realize the complex nature of ERI. The participants began to be aware of themselves and others as ethnic and racial beings. During this process the participants had concerns about their preparedness to have ethnic and racial conversations within the clinical space. The participants waited until it was presented as a central issue by the clients themselves. The students began to rely on and fully appreciate the ERI conversations offered by their peers who represented a diverse diaspora of ethnic and racial backgrounds. From peer sharing and discussion, the participants experienced changes in their perspectives and views of ERI and its experiences. The experience of sharing diverse perspectives led to student ERI development.

Discussion

Confirmation of Previous Research

This study confirmed previous research within the counseling literature. The participants discussed feeling unprepared to introduce or discuss ERI with clients. Many of the participants discussed leaving it up to the clients to introduce any discussion of ethnicity or race. The feeling

of being unprepared to have ERI discussion was revealed in relation to two of the themes: integrating ERI into clinical work and faculty support. The experience of the participants can be confirmed in the works of previous researchers. Jones et al (2016) discussed that multicultural training indeed focuses on students attaining just two domains of MCC (counselor awareness of personal values and biases and understanding client's cultural background), with little movement in intervention skills and techniques (Collin et al., 2015; Jones et al., 2016; Preister et al, 2008). Other researchers sought to measure the attainment of MCC and found that the skills subscales did not show statistically significant gains or development (Castillo et. al, 2007; Priester et al., 2008). Follow up studies showing that there is still a need to develop the skills necessary for counselors to discuss cultural factors with a diverse clientele (Mayorga et al., 2013). The shared experience of the participants relying on the clients to introduce ERI during therapy, confirms the research by Holcomb-McCoy & Myers (1999), who shared that counseling students often feel ineffective and unprepared for cross cultural clinical work with diverse clients. The current study shows the lack of significant gains in the skills needed by the participants to converse about ERI in the last 24 years.

This study is also consistent with previous findings that the attainment of the Awareness subscale by counseling students was significant with multicultural training and development (Castillo et. al, 2007). The participants shared their development and increased awareness of others which prevented them from being discriminatory and helping them take more time to learn about different ethnic and racial experiences. The increased awareness among the participants also brought up the concept of otherism. Researchers have stipulated that multicultural training approaches situate people of color as the only ones that experience race (Wang, 2005). Through this approach, whiteness is considered neutral, while people of color are

defined by their nonwhiteness (Brown et al., 2006). The participants observed they only learned about the non-White groups, which felt "othering" to them, which led those participants who were non-White to feel singled out as different (Seward, 2014).

The study confirmed existing research through the participants' narratives of their personal ERI development. The participants revealed a heightened interest in learning about their own ethnic and racial background, which is reflective of the development of an ERI component. This ERI component is centrality. Centrality reflects how important one's ethnicity/race is to one's sense of self (Kiang et al. (2021). Existing research has shown that developed centrality is linked to heightened attitudes of critical reflection and a sense of self as an ethic and racial being (Kiang et al., 2021; Mathews et al. 2019). When this occurs, one starts to analyze systemic racialized systems and reject discrimination. Some participants shared experiences where they were able to see how individuals are marginalized and how this was reflective of racialized systems.

Contradiction of Previous Research

Some scholars concluded that students undergo emotional and cognitive challenges before being able to achieve competency across all marginalized identities (Carter 2005; Sue et al., 2011; Thrower et al., 2020). These challenges include feeling anger, guilt, and fear, while trying to remain focused on the content being presented. The participants in this study did not reveal any of these emotional and cognitive challenges. This study showed that while some participants expressed feelings attached to their experiences across all the emergent themes, none of these emotions prevented the development of ERI or attaining a higher level of multicultural competency. Additionally, Thrower et al (2020) discussed their findings and those of previous researchers who suggest that intentionally developing emotional safety for students when

facilitating racial topics may not be desirable (Singleton & Linton, 2006). However, the participants explained that their peers provided a feeling of comfort and safety as they explored their feelings, biases and sought more understanding of other's experiences, which challenges previous findings

The participants were all students in a graduate program, so there is some assumption that they have higher than normal critical thinking skills. However, past research has stipulated that significant learning requires higher order critical thinking skills (Ambrose et al., 2010; Freire, 1970; Malott et al., 2014). Higher order critical thinking skills represent considering how macro level systems such as politics, education and religious organizations affect a situation. For students developing ERI, the attainment of higher order critical thinking skills would reflect a high stage of identity development. The participants in the study revealed some development in their ERI to reflect the attainment of some MCC. It can be argued then, that the participants' experience of the themes represented significant learning, but it did not require higher order critical thinking skills.

Study positioning with Current Body of Research

The findings of this study add to the existing body of counselor education research. This study highlights the different stages of racial identity development that students concurrently experience. Whether one was at an early stage of development or at a more advanced stage, shows the comfort level of having racial conversations, seeing oneself as a racial and ethnic being, and having the ability to provide ERI interventions during clinical practice. This study highlighted the participants' observations of discomfort from the counseling faculty around racial discussion, and difficulty with teaching actionable ERI clinical strategies, which is reflective of

initial stages of identity development. The participants' experience displayed the need for student and faculty racial identity development.

This study builds upon prior research on the importance of a diverse higher education student population in fostering students' academic and social growth (Gurin et al., 2002). It also confirms and builds upon prior findings that interactions with diverse peers are highly influential upon multicultural training (Coleman, 2006). Specifically, this study highlights the benefits of diverse student identities within a counseling program. The participants shared how peer sharing about diverse cultural experiences led to a shift in personal ERI perspectives, ERI development and a reflection on personal biases. This study revealed that exposure to various races and ethnicities introduced many participants to perspectives outside of their normal frame of reference. The participants not only learned of varied cultural experiences but began to appreciate the complexity behind ERI.

Unanticipated Findings

The findings of this study did not show that social justice advocacy competency or the acquisition of social justice skills were necessary to develop ERI. The participants made no mention of social justice thinking or development. This may have resulted from the lack of reference to MSJCC or social justice advocacy in the interview questions. This may also be reflective of an early stage of racial identity development. Based upon the racial identity models and the information gathered from the data, the participants appeared to have attained stage two or three level of development. Research has shown that reaching a higher stage is necessary to integrate social justice advocacy into one's general thought process.

Implications

Clinical Practice

An implication for clinical practice coming out of the study is the importance of learning and putting into practice strategies that help with client ERI development or facilitate ERI discussion. This has been stipulated by the governing and accreditation bodies of the field. As mentioned earlier, the MCC goals include counselors developing intervention techniques and strategies (Singh et al., 2020; Sue et al., 1992). Section II.D of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2016 standards state that "syllabi are available for review by all enrolled or prospective students, are distributed at the beginning of each curricular experience and include (1) content areas, (2) knowledge and skill outcomes". Section II.F of the 2016 CACREP standards also state that preparation for counselors in training include them learning "strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination (CACREP, 2015). Additionally, the American Counseling Association (ACA) in its 2014 code of ethics stipulate that counseling faculty "actively train students to gain awareness, knowledge, and skills in the competencies of multicultural practice (ACA, 2014; F.11.c.p.15). The unpreparedness to utilize effective intervention techniques is a significant implication as this information came from the participants themselves. It is therefore the responsibility of counselor supervisors, counseling faculty and counseling programs to ensure that these standards are infused in the curriculum to prepare counselors in training for their practicum, internship, residential and future professional clinical practice.

Another implication is the students' difficulty in facilitating ethnic and racial discourse during clinical practice. The participants shared they had difficulty in starting the conversation,

but they shared that clients' ERI and their ERI experiences was an important consideration in their case conceptualizations. For the counseling program, this means that the basic multicultural competency has been achieved. However, in alignment with the previous implication, there is little guidance as to the next steps. Furthermore, the ACA 2014 code of ethics states that "counselors recognize that culture affects the manner in which clients' problems are defined and experienced. Clients' socioeconomic and cultural experiences are considered when diagnosing mental disorders." (E.5.b.p.11). (ACA, 2014). In order to uphold this standard, it is imperative for counselor supervisors to maintain the supervisees recognition of multicultural issues and develop a broadened view of the impact of ERI on a client's mental health.

Counselor Education

Aligning with the clinical practice implications are the implications for counselor education. One noted implication was the need for counseling faculty ERI development. This study revealed the participants' observation of faculty discomfort with, and a lack of modelling of how to have critical ethnic and racial discussion. This study showed that a small percentage of faculty would have conversations, but a majority would not, which led to the observation of faculty not being prepared to develop ERI in others. The unpreparedness and discomfort reflect an early stage in racial development which as the research has stipulated, leads to color blindness, guilt or reiterates the view that color should not matter (DiAngelo, 2018; Franco & McElroy-Heltzel, 2019; Hardiman & Keehn, 2012). This study suggests that processes be implemented by institutions to actively develop faculty ERI as a core foundational skill required for cross cultural competent teaching and supervision. Furthermore, CACREP (2016) standards reiterate this by stating that counseling graduates should understand "the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of

others (2.F.2.d). It would be hard for a faculty member to encourage and have this type of discourse without a personal understanding of their own ERI. This understanding of ones ERI requires self-reflection of one's biases, social position and the recognition of simultaneously possessing privileged and marginalized identities, which will impact how they teach or interact with students (Hurtado, 1996; Kishimoto, 2018; Tatum, 2003).

The implication of peer and faculty diversity should not be overlooked. The literature is clear on the benefits of diversity in higher education. As mentioned previously, the study builds upon prior research that highlights the importance of a culturally diverse student population to enhance the experience of acquiring multicultural competence. For counseling programs, faculty diversity is important as to also enhance multicultural competence training, as this would provide more opportunities to interact with a variety of cultural backgrounds (Dickson et al., 2008; Ponterotto et al., 1995). There is a higher chance that faculty with varied cultural identities and experiences will have a heightened awareness of their ERI which may be applied to their teaching and research through an anti-racist lens (Kishimoto, 2018). Faculty and peer diversity facilitates more conversation, interaction with and understanding of ERI complexity.

CACREP

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) has stated one of its core values as "promoting practices that reflect openness to growth, change and collaboration", while "creating and strengthening standards that reflect the needs of society" (CACREP, 2016). The findings from this study show the importance of ERI development for faculty and students within an institution. Purposefully imposing strategies to develop ERI would help to fulfill the MCC requirements as endorsed by CACREP, specifically in teaching students how to broach and communicate about ERI within the clinical space. Taking

steps to achieve the 3rd competency would speak to the core values of change, growth and meeting the needs of a diverse society.

CACREP speaks to institutions making systemic efforts to retain diverse faculty and students, but fails to define what diversity means, which leaves institutions to interpret these standards as they see fit (2016 CACREP Standard 2.K; 2016 CACREP Standard 2.Q). The absence of ERI development would also go against the responsibilities set upon CACREP accredited institutions to identify and eliminate prejudice and/or discrimination (2016 CACREP Standard 2.F.2.h). CACREP provides guidelines but does not specify the steps that need to be taken.

Connection With Theoretical Foundation

As mentioned in chapter 2, Critical Race theory (CRT) not only focuses on people being more critically conscious, but encourages observation, action and the transformation of the relationship between race, racism and power (Castro & Brawn, 2017; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Rodriguez & Huemmer, 2019). Critical consciousness around the academia identifies how race, racism and power is embodied in the curriculum and teachings (Bell, 1995; Christian et al., 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995,1998; Yosso, 2002). As CRT is the theoretical foundation for this study, I placed the utmost value on the narratives of the participants and highlighting the centrality of race and racism in the participants' experiences.

By ignoring the lack of skills needed by students to converse about ERI in the last 24 years, counselor education has upheld the dominant ideology that chooses to diminish the salience of ethnicity and race. Counselor education has failed to see how faculty and students remaining at an early stage of ERI has prevented all students from acknowledging their racial existence. When this occurs, students are not given the opportunity to process, or discuss how

one's experience is viewed through and impacted by a racial lens. Such disregard is supported by lack of faculty development, lack of faculty led ERI discussion and the failure of the field to fulfill the MCC goal of teaching the skills and strategies required to bring ERI discussion into clinical work. This results in an absence of understanding of the inequitable experience for those students of color versus those students who are White. As CRT is committed to social justice, this gap is where there is an opportunity to change how Power (institutions) may change to provide equity and justice through the curriculum and policies.

Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. First, the participants were all students enrolled in one Southeastern in-person higher education institution. Although the participants represented different counseling tracks and identified with several ethnic and racial backgrounds, the participants were mostly female and United States citizens or born in the USA. Given that the results represent participants' lived experiences, it is difficult to determine if similar findings would be obtained if participants held different identities, or if the interviews took place at another geographical location or were enrolled in a program that held strong religious values. There is a homogeneity that the participants hold that is not likely to be replicated. Additionally, a criticism of transcendental phenomenology is that the essence of the experience is representative only of a unique place, time, a particular group of participants and their particular experiences (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). Therefore, the essence of the phenomenon experienced will always be different depending on any change in setting, location, religious, political, cultural or the makeup of participants.

Another limitation is the absence of any secondary data in the form of additional written reflections, texts or assignments. Although not transcendental phenomenology, secondary data

may have been added to the study's credibility, and elicited valuable information not asked about in the interview. As ERI was not a topic focused on within any specific class, it was difficult to acquire secondary data that would directly reflect the intentional development of the participants' ERI during the program.

A third limitation is connected to the unanticipated finding that the acquisition of MSJCC was not necessary to develop ERI. As previously mentioned, there was no mention of social justice advocacy, but this may have been result of MSJCC not being a factor in the interview questions. Moreover, as transcendental phenomenology is based on the participants experiences and their answers to the interview questions, I wonder if social justice thoughts would be prevalent if all the students were closer to graduating or had at least started their clinical internship. As the participants were a mixture of both first year and second year students, MSJCC consideration may result from time and experience, and developmentally appropriate for students with more clinical and classroom experience. Any future research should take this limitation into consideration.

Delimitations

Sixteen counseling student participants were selected from a CACREP accredited graduate program. This allowed me to collect extensive details about each participant to achieve saturation. I provided detailed information about the purpose of the study to the participants and required consent from all participants. I engaged in a bracketing interview to ensure the absence of my judgment and to ensure my ability to analyze the data with a fresh perspective (Haskins et al., 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Moustakas, 1994).

Future Research

There are several areas for future research coming out of the findings and limitations of the study. Similar studies may be conducted based on differentiating factors. These factors could be a different geographical area of the United States or an online counseling program. The development of ERI in students from hybrid programs may also be compared or analyzed. Future studies should concentrate on one identified track within a program, such as school counseling. Research should include a comparative analysis of study with a historically black college or university (HBCU) or a Hispanic serving institution (HSI), versus a predominantly white institution (PWI), or a religious institution versus a non- religious college. The findings can help counselor program administrators see the importance and impact of a developed ethnic and racial identity on the multicultural development of future counselors and their clients.

As this study shows, there was no consistency or intentionality with how ERI was developed. Future research should explore interventions and strategies to integrate ERI into the counseling curriculum. The existence and peer support of doctoral students in intentionally developing the ERI of master's students should be studied, based upon the prevalence of the impact of doctoral peer support in the program. Studies utilizing quantitative methods can further develop the research into this area and its effects on the counselor education field. Quantitative research could include a scale development to measure the effectiveness of student ERI development upon clinical skills. Researchers should examine the variety of factors that affect the integration of ERI into the counseling programs such as faculty and student diversity, faculty multicultural competency, faculty's own ERI and the apparent absence of skills identified to utilize ERI in clinical work. Future research should examine the complexity of this around the current sociopolitical positions that non-White students find themselves within an educational

institution or its immediate environment. Finally, researchers can specifically investigate how stage three or above racial identify development may be attained resulting from specific teachings in the counseling classroom. Future findings from the above noted studies, can be used to adjust the cultural competency standards, usher in anti-racist textbooks and explore opportunities for MSJCC attainment.

An additional area for future research is to explore the experiences of faculty in their ERI development. Gathering data from faculty participants from a variety of counseling institutions would be helpful. Such variety would include institutions from a range of geographical locations, public and private colleges, and religiously oriented versus non-religious environments. Moreover, gaining an understanding of faculty ERI development from their personal perspectives will highlight the challenges with eliminating discomfort around ethnic and racial discourse and introducing effective ERI strategies in the classroom.

Summary

The findings of this study highlighted and explained the emergent themes and experiences of the participants and their positioning in the current counseling literature. The findings supported findings in the literature around the unpreparedness of counselors in training to discuss ERI with clients, their increased awareness of cultural differences and their own ERI. The findings of the study specifically spotlighted the need for increased higher stage racial identity development of faculty and the benefits of having a culturally and racially diverse student population. An unanticipated finding was that the acquisition of social justice skills was unnecessary for the initial development of ERI. The study also highlighted various implications for clinical practice and counselor education, including the need for strategies to integrate ERI

with clients and the ERI development of faculty. Finally, the study discussed ways to enhance the exiting research by suggesting several areas for future scholarship.

Researcher Reflection

I have reflected on what led me to this study and what it all means. I commenced my doctoral program in the fall of 2020, soon after George Floyd was murdered, during a time of simultaneous racial awakening and outright racism, a contentious presidential election, and the lock down due to COVID 19. I spent the beginnings of my doctoral career thinking that conversations about race and ethnicity would become easier. However, I didn't see much change. As a Black, Afro-Caribbean, multiracial woman, I wondered why racial and ethnic discourse appeared to become more challenging, especially in the counselor education space. Surely, if there was anywhere where we could overcome our differences and discomfort, it would be here? As my main research interest is in ERI, and I come from a country who celebrates and takes pride in having multiple races and ethnicities, I wondered what could change, at least in counselor education, to effectively have racial and ethnic discussions.

In the counseling field, students are prepared to address difficult topics including suicide, homicide, sexual abuse, grief and loss. In fact, there is a dearth of information on strategies, techniques, assessment tools and theories to assist with managing these issues. However, the same cannot be said about issues of race, ethnicity, racism, cross culturalism and anti-racism. My personal theory is that developed ERI is the foundation required for racial healing. I then found that the research confirmed there was little intentional development of counselor students' ERI. However, first I wanted to investigate what was happening with ERI development in counselor training and what the counselor students were experiencing. This study highlighted the themes that positively and negatively impact student ERI development. I hope this study will inspire

change in the counselor education approach to racial and ethnic discourse and encourage the

field to intentionally develop ERI in our students, counselors and faculty.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Form/IRB Outline

Dissertation Title: A Qualitative Investigation into the Ethnic and Racial Identity Development of Counseling Students

Brief Rationale:

The current model for multicultural training in the counseling field teaches multicultural competence and awareness based on the perceived differences of race and ethnicity (Quintana, 2007). Thus, it operates from the lens of multicultural concerns occurring only to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals. Currently, the model for the multicultural course does not involve the intentional development ethnic and racial identity (ERI) (Chao, 2013) and multicultural social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC). Additionally, there is nothing in the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) standards that mandates the implementation of specific ERI.

Most counseling teaching institutions focus on a single class approach that covers a variety of marginalized identities including race, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities. However, scholars have called for racially focused competence training as a *prerequisite* for the overall acquisition of multicultural competency (Carter, 2005; Wang 2005). Additionally, scholars of ERI development models suggest that attaining the higher developmental stages involves an increased understanding of racial inequities, a correlational acquisition of social justice competency and macro level thinking (Cross & Vandiver 2001; Hardiman & Keehn, 2012; Helms 1984).

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to understand the experiences of graduate counselor students around ERI development. Further examinations will uncover what the participants are receiving in terms of ERI development in their graduate program. It will also identify what experiences would be necessary to develop each student's sense of being a 'racial being' and this impact upon one's relationship with power and privilege (McDowell et al., 2019; Goren & Plaut, 2012). This research design will examine participant interpretation of experiences and the meaning associated with these experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The study will examine the participant's personal viewpoint (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) on their understanding of ERI.

The primary research question guiding the study is:

Q1.   How do counseling students experience ethnic and racial identity development
        during their graduate program?

Q2.   What meaning is made by graduate students in their experiences with ERI
        development in their graduate program?

Methodology

A transcendental phenomenological approach that was built upon Husserl's phenomenological theory and Moustakas' transcendental phenomenological research design (Flynn, 2021). Transcendental phenomenology emphasizes the wholeness of experience, search for meaning, and description of the experiences of the participants (Haskins et al., 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Moustakas, the procedures of transcendental phenomenology include

identifying a phenomenon, the use of epoche or bracketing, and collecting data from a number of individuals' experiences.

Data Analysis:

The six step Modified Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method will be used for the data analysis. This method is popular among researchers (Creswell, 1998), as it provides multiple clear steps for even the novice researcher to follow. As the first informant to contribute to the research (Moustakas, 1994), my first step will be to implement in epoche whereby I will describe my own experiences with the phenomenon to set aside these experiences and be able to analyze the data with a fresh perspective (Haskins et al., 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Moustakas, 1994). Any personal bias or preconceived ideas will be removed by asking myself the same interview questions that will be presented to the participants of the study (Moustakas, 1994). Data will then be collected from the participants by way of interviews and transcribed utilizing a professional online transcription service. The investigator will examine the participants' responses to identify the essence of what the participants have experienced and how they have experienced it (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

The second step will include the reduction and horizontalization process. Horizontalization will highlight the significant statements, sentences or quotes that provide understanding of the participant who experienced the course. Data reduction will be performed to identify the strongest points the participants made to form textual descriptions that produce themes (Moustakas, 1994) related to ERI development. The third step involves developing clusters of meaning (Creswell & Poth, 2017), text segments (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018) or themes,

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from these significant statements. These significant statements will then develop into a textural description ("what" they experienced) that will report the essence and an overall description of the common experiences of the participants. This process includes developing a textural description that will be examined from different perspectives or an imaginative variation. This will lead to a description of the structure (how they experienced) the phenomenon. The process will be repeated in the fourth and fifth steps for each participant that will result in a textural-structural description for each participant. Finally in the sixth step, a composite description representing the group experience will be offered (Moustakas, 1994). The results of the data analysis will be discussed in terms of implications for counselor education and future research with the counselor student population.

Interview Protocol:

- The demographics questions are:

    o What year and semester are in your program?

    o What is your counseling specific track?

    o What is your ethnic/cultural identity?

    o What is your gender identity?

    o How many multicultural or competency classes have you taken part in?

- General Questions:

    - How do you define ethnic and racial identity?

    - Tell me about any changes to your understanding of ethnic and racial identity over the course of the master's program. What was you understanding at the beginning of your program? What is it now?

- How would you describe your experience of the ERI development in the master's program? How are you different because of your ERI Development?

- How do you think ERI is integrated into work with clients?

- What did faculty do during their courses to focus on ERI?

- What courses focused on ERI development?

- What strategies were most useful in your ERI development?

- What did peers do during your interactions that assisted with your ERI development?

- What did doctoral students do that assisted with your ERI development?

- What recommendations do you have for integrating ERI in graduate programs?

- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Participants

Purposeful sampling for this study will be used to utilize a convenience sampling strategy, so that the participants are easily available, affordable and willing to participate (Palinkas et al., 2015; Taherdoost, 2016). This will be intentional, to select individuals (in this case groups of counseling students) and a site to learn and understand the central phenomenon (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). The researcher will try to achieve a sample size of at least fifteen student participants. This will allow the researcher to collect extensive detail about each participant to not generalize the information but to gather the specific (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Based upon the

research of Polkinghorne (1989) and Dukes (1984), ten student participants will meet saturation.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The data collected in this investigation will be kept confidential. Identifying information will be kept separate from the analysis and will not be connected to the collected data. Names of participants will be changed to ensure confidentiality of responses. In addition, all participant information will be stored on HIPAA-compliant cloud space.

Results

Results and findings from this qualitative study will be communicated to participants. Transcripts of the participants' interviews will be shared to ensure correctness of content; at this time, participants will be invited to edit or change their responses if necessary. The aggregated results will be submitted for presentations and publication and could be reviewed by participants at that time.

Consent form

You have been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Philippa Chin from the Counselor Education program at the William & Mary School of Education.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of Master's counseling students of their ethnic and racial identity development during their graduate program. The goal is to have 15 participants tell me about their experiences.

Duration of Participation: If you have had this experience, we would love to interview you for somewhere from 60 to 90 minutes.

Procedures: You will be audio and video recorded during your interview and asked questions regarding your lived experience. The audio will be pulled from the recording, and the video will not be saved. No identifying information will be linked to your recording. Files will be stored on HIPAA-compliant Dropbox or locked in the senior team member's office without identifying information.

Confidentiality: Your participation is confidential and anonymous. We will not associate your name with your story, and results will not be used in an evaluative manner within W&M.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the research is voluntary. You may choose not to answer any or all questions, and you may stop at any time. There is no penalty for not taking part in this research study.

Discomforts and Risks: There are no known risks associated with this study. You will be simply asked to share what you feel comfortable with.

If you have any questions regarding this study, you can contact Dr. Jessica Martin at jlmartin@wm.edu.

You may report dissatisfaction with any aspect of this study to Dr. Thomas Ward, the Chair of

the Protection of Human Subjects Committee by telephone (757-221-2358) or email

(tjward@wm.edu).

Thank you for your consideration!

Principal Investigator Bio:

Philippa Chin is a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision with five years of

clinical experience and two years research experience.

Appendix B: Recruitment Email

Dear Potential Participant:

A Doctoral Candidate in Counselor Education is seeking current second year William and Mary Master's students in counselor education who have completed both the (a) CACREP-required Theory and Practice of Multicultural Counseling course, and (b) at least one semester of supervised clinical work. Your email was selected because you have been identified as a member of the second-year cohort.

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of Master's level counseling students with regard to how their experiences in the development of their ethnic and racial identity during their graduate program.

Participation in this study involves:

· A time commitment of 1to 1.5 hour Zoom interview

If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact Dr. Jessica Martin at jlmartin@wm.edu.

If interested in participating, please complete the following brief demographic questionnaire that will take 3-5 minutes to complete. After completion, I will contact you directly to find a time that works in your busy schedule.

Thank you,

Philippa Chin, M.Ed., LPC, LMFT, NCC

Doctoral Candidate

Study Title: *A Qualitative Investigation into the Ethnic and Racial Identity Development of*

Counseling Students

Appendix C: Demographics Questionnaire

Name:_____

Email address:_____

Phone Number:_____

How would you like to be contacted:_____

Age: _____

Race/Ethnicity:_____

Gender Identity:_____

Pronouns:_____

1. **What year and semester are in your program?**

    _____

2. **What is your counseling specific track?**

    _____

3. **How many multicultural or competency classes have you taken part in?**

Appendix D: Protocol

Good morning/afternoon/evening,

Thank you for making the time to be here. My name is Philippa Chin and I am a Doctoral Candidate in the Counselor Education program at William and Mary. As part of the partial requirements in fulfillment of my dissertation completion requirement, I am exploring the perceptions of Master's counseling students with regard to how their experiences in the program developed their ethnic and racial identity.

You will be asked questions related to your experiences in the counseling program and their relationship to your ethnic and racial identity development. You are not obligated to respond to all the questions and that at any time you are able to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your participation.

After this interview has been transcribed, the audio/video recording will be destroyed, and the transcript will be returned to you to review before data analysis. You may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. At any time, you can request that the investigator destroy your data or that the investigator exclude your data from any analysis. Your participation will not impact your educational status and will not be discussed in any evaluative manner.

The recordings will be stored in a HIPAA compliant Dropbox folder. Any identifying information will be removed. A pseudonym for your responses will be utilized and in the results

of the study. Additionally, password protected files will be used to keep your personally identifiable information confidential. If the results of the study are published, your name or any identifying information will not be used. Results will be presented in summary form only and a draft will be sent to you prior to publishing. Every effort will be made to keep your personal information confidential and conceal your identity throughout the process. If at any point during or after this interview you have any questions about this, please contact me, Philippa Chin @ pachin@wm.edu.

To my knowledge, there are no anticipated risks in participating in this study. The benefits of participating in this study are that you will have the opportunity to express your views about your experiences with ethnic and racial identity development during the Master's program, and you will have the opportunity to help develop a research line of inquiry about this subject matter. Societal benefits include the ability to better address the needs of master's level students in clinical work, particularly regarding multiculturalism.

If you agree to participate in the study, please bold either Yes/No.

Appendix E: Interview Questions

1. How do you define ethnic and racial identity?

2. Tell me about any changes to your understanding of ethnic and racial identity over the course of the master's program. What was your understanding at the beginning of your program? What is it now?

3. How would you describe your experience of the ERI development in the master's program? How are you different because of your ERI Development?

4. How do you think ERI is integrated into work with clients?

5. What did faculty do during their courses to focus on ERI?

6. What courses focused on ERI development?

7. What strategies were most useful in your ERI development?

8. What did peers do during your interactions that assisted with your ERI development?

9. What did doctoral students do that assisted with your ERI development?

10. What recommendations do you have for integrating ERI in graduate programs?

11. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix F: Bracketing Interview

Interviewer:

I will be asking you a few questions today about your own experiences, I guess, with your data collection in your dissertation. Are there any questions before we start? Anything that you want to share with me before we begin?

Philippa:

No. I know this is part of my dissertation process. This is my bracketing interview. So, although I've seen these questions, I wrote these questions, I have not actually thought about the answers to these questions in terms of my experience, so I appreciate you doing this for me.

Interviewer:

Okay, sounds good. So, the first question is, how do you define ethnic and racial identity and how do you define your ethnic and racial identity?

Philippa:

So, it's hard for me to not go back to the literature of what I say ethnic and racial identity is. But to me, ethnicity denotes what group you feel you belong to and that's usually based off of your family of a origin and racial identity is what race you identify with or what races you identify with. So for me, ethnic wise, I say Jamaican, that might confuse people. But Jamaican, this sense of a lot of different races coming together and you just spat us out, history, colonial history spat us out. And then my racial identity, it kind of depends on who I'm with and who I'm talking to. So, funny enough, in the past I would say if somebody goes, "What race you are?" I'd said, "Jamaica," and then you'd have to go deeper into it. If I'm talking to people I feel very comfortable with, and this is only in my 40s, I would say I'm actually multiracial. The facts are that I am multiracial. I knew this growing up. It was not said in those words, multiracial. It's just

that you're Jamaican, you mix up with everything. They say, "You mix up with everything." But again, starting my scholarly work, the detail is there. I am mixed race. There's a lot of different races in me. And it's close enough in my ancestry, we're just going to grandparents, great-grandparents, that there's definitely... Well, the proof is there, the names are there, we know. First and foremost, I am black. I look black, I know I'm black, I'm not confused by that. But when I find myself in African American around African American people, I will definitely say Black. I don't say African American per se, because I feel like I did not grow up in this country. And the history of black people in the United States and the history of people in Jamaica are somewhat different. The systems are not necessarily set up against you in Jamaica. So there you go.

Interviewer:

Yeah, thank you for sharing that. The second question is tell me about any changes to your understanding of ethnic and racial identity over the course of the master's program.

Philippa:

Okay, so yes, the master's program now, now that I'm in a doctoral program, I may have... Maybe I should answer that question in terms of being in the master's program because I did do the master's program at William & Mary. So again, the question is again? I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

Interviewer:

So tell me about any changes to your understanding of ethnic and racial identity over the course of the master's program. What was your understanding at the beginning of your program? What is it now?

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Philippa:

Well, at the beginning of the program, again, I thought in terms of how I think of myself, my ethnicity is Jamaican. I was more so... I thought of race in silos to be honest with you. And I still wasn't at the place to say, "But I am actually multiracial." I just described myself in terms of how people would have seen me. I described myself in terms of what society sees me as. I didn't have the words, or maybe even the courage to say, well, this is what it is. So, my understanding was surface level. My thought process around it was a little bit more surface level in the public arena. Of course, I had my own internal thoughts, but in terms of the classroom, it was more surface level. And then by the end of the program, going through classes, after going through multicultural class and not seeing myself, again, there were the silos, there was the African Americans, there was the Asians, there was the white people, there was the Latinx at the time they called it. And I was like, "But I don't see myself, somebody who really is, in Jamaica, we say "We mixed up," and have these different experiences. I don't see myself here. So, I put a lot of thought into it, which has led to me coming all the way around to wanting to do this as my dissertation.

Interviewer:

Okay. And then the third question is, how would you describe your experience of the ERI development in the master's program? How are you different because of your own ERI development?

Philippa:

How would I describe the ERI development in the master's program? It didn't exist. There was absolutely none. And again, I graduated just in 2019. I'm not talking about doing this 10, 20 years ago. This was just before COVID really, if you think about it. COVID was the following

year it started, 2020? Maybe my timeline is gone, but it wasn't, there was no ethnic and racial identity development. Again, let me make sure you counselors in training are aware that there is the African American group, there's Asian group, there's Latinx group, there's all these marginalized racial groups and they exist and this is how you should talk to them. But there was no identity as in let's figure out how we can personally develop ourselves and our viewpoints about our own racial identity and take into consideration the complexity and the intersectionality and all of that. No, it didn't exist at all.

Interviewer:

So, everything was still in silos?

Philippa:

Everything was still in silos.

Interviewer:

Yeah, okay.

Philippa:

Yeah. There was nothing. There was not one. I can't even think of any situation where that came up. It came up through me when I saw, I don't see myself in this textbook, I am not being spoken about in this room. And all I saw around me was White people. And I was like, well, who's going to even understand these thoughts in my head anyway? Who am I going to have this conversation with? Like, who? So yes.

Interviewer:

And then how do you think ERI is integrated into work with clients?

Philippa:

Oh, how I do that now?

Interviewer:

Mm-hm.

Philippa:

To be honest, after I graduated and I'm working at a rural agency, which is really, again, mostly White clients, I didn't incorporate anything. I didn't know how to. Again, it wasn't part of the program, I didn't know how to do this. These were just thoughts in my head. I didn't even know how to have the conversation, I didn't know how to bring it up, and certainly it was not brought up to me. It would be only once in a while where maybe you'd have a client, an African American client, and it would come up in the sense where "I'm the only one in the school" or "I feel I'm being treated less than". And even then, I did not have the wording or the training or the competence really to take that to another level. And it wasn't until starting my doctoral program, I was able to really get a little bit deeper into that and be able to have these conversations with people because of my own interest in racial identity development.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Philippa:

So that's what happened.

Interviewer:

So it really changed for you in your doc program is what I'm hearing.

Philippa:

Yes. And that's more so because of my own personal interest. Again, nobody was leading me or helping with this, this is my own research interest. Seeing what the literature says and doing my own presentations and writing up papers and that sort of thing, so that's where it came from. And

being able to lean on more culturally responsive theories like narrative therapy, so now I have something, a foundation or process really, that can help me have these conversations.

Interviewer:

Okay. And what did faculty do during their courses to focus on ERI? And I think you spoke to this already, but if you want to share some more.

Philippa:

Yeah. Well again, I mean in my master's program, and I was at the same institution, master's program and here in my doctoral program, that just didn't happen. It just didn't happen. I even remember being in classes, and I remember once or twice I would bring up... Oh, I actually remember once or twice bringing up, because you'd watch tape of people presenting on families that were African American families, right? And I would bring up, "Well, can we consider the fact that they're African American? I can't give you details right now because I can't remember, but how they are showing up and their lens, how what they're experiencing is through a different lens. Again, I was the only Black student. I was the only Black student. I was the only Black student. I need to paint a picture, the only one. And it was always a pushback. One of the things I heard was the faculty said, "I don't care about that." I don't care about that, and it was like a stab to the heart. So, I was like, "What?" But there was nobody to support me, I didn't even know where to go from there. "I don't care about that." What the faculty member was trying to say, no, focus on the theory. And I was like, "Oh, there's a theory? Care about that. I don't know, I didn't know, and I was just angry, and I didn't know what to do with that anger.

And then more so in the doc program, you can have a conversation, maybe one or two. But again, that I think that comes more from because this is my research interest and faculty will go,

"Oh," and then they can lean into that a little bit more with me. But I think that's more so where it's coming from.

Interviewer:

Great. Yeah, thank you for sharing that. I'm also curious what strategies were used in the program. So, what strategies that were used in the program were most useful in your ERI development?

Philippa:

Well, again, nothing in my master's program. Nothing was happening. And I want to go back, this is a little different because I guess I'm comparing the two because the fact is this is who I am, and I'm in this doctoral program. Again, I graduated in May 2019. This was before George Floyd was murdered. And everyone including this industry is now, I don't know, people say racial reckoning. I'm like, really? Where's the reckoning? I don't know where it went. But before people are trying to be more or becoming more conscious of the systemic racism. So, I do believe now in my doc program, maybe these conversations are facilitated more because of this sacrifice really this man has made for us all. But nothing was happening then, and it wasn't a safe space to bring it up at all. So, I don't know, did that answer the question?

Interviewer:

You answered it. I think you answered two questions at the same time because I realized I missed one. But the question I had asked you was what strategies were used in the program that you found most useful in your ERI development?

Philippa:

Right. There was none. And again, for this program, it was more being able to have critical conversations. So, facilitating critical thought and critical conversations would have been the

best strategy, just having conversations. And now, being in a program where I see people of color in my own cohort, the cohort behind me, just having that where people are like, yeah, all right, you can understand my situation, my thought process. Maybe we're not exactly the same, but you can understand my thought process much more than when I look in a room and I just see a sea of White people and not any faculty willing to have this conversation or have the ability to have this conversation.

Interviewer:

I think you spoke to this already, but I'll ask it anyway. What courses focused on ERI development?

Philippa:

So none.

Interviewer:

Yeah, sorry.

Philippa:

Actually, and I want to even say that the multicultural class focused on that. Again, it was just, here's the awareness that there are different sets of people, but there was nothing about ethnic and racial identity that really comes from within, and then it can grow as a group. Nothing.

Interviewer:

Okay. And then what did peers do during your interactions that assisted with your ERI development?

Philippa:

Nothing.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Philippa:

I mean, it's sounds so sad, but nothing. I'm trying to remember if there was anything. That example I gave you about when I was speaking in that class, and I was like... It wasn't the first time, it was a couple times. And at one point, you could see that I was angry. My whole energy shut down. And I went to my cohort members when we were in the clinic, there was only five of us and they were in there, and you could tell they were uncomfortable around me. They were uncomfortable around me because my energy shifted. I was always, and now I'm like shut down. And I brought it up, I said, "Let me explain to you why I'm feeling this way, because there are central components that we need to talk about and nobody wants to talk about it." And they listened to me, but nobody validated me because they probably couldn't. Nobody really answered me. What they did is that they respected me for a minute and sat down and listened to what I have to say. Oh, but wait, I do remember, there was somebody in my cohort. It wasn't during that time, but it was later on in the program. It was after multicultural class. She did ask me, "What is it like to be the only Black student in this program?" And I didn't, but I almost felt like... It was weird, I almost felt like I was going to cry. It was almost as if this whole weight was off my shoulders. I didn't, but I felt like I was going to cry. And I talked to her. I don't know if that had any impact on her, but what it did, it was the first time somebody had kind of acknowledged you know, I'm the only one here, right? Let's put it out there. But it was the first time somebody had done that from my peers.

Interviewer:

From your peers, yeah. And then what did doctoral students do that assisted with your ERI development?

Philippa:

First of all, the doctoral students were extremely supportive to me. But again, in terms of ethnic and racial identity, because that's the question. In terms of that, now they were supportive in the sense where they realized, and I don't even know if these particular words were used, but they were supportive in the sense where they realized, look, I see you are the only person of color, you're the only one that obviously looks different. So, I got the support when they started realizing, oh, wait a minute, she is really the only person, what kind of experience must this person be having. And it was just that they always checked in with me and they always made sure they were around, they were around for me. And I realized that. But there was no, I think of racial identity... There was nothing around that either. And they probably didn't get it either themselves.

Interviewer:

Right, right. And what recommendations do you have for integrating ERI in graduate programs?

Philippa:

Well, I have thought about developing an ethnic and racial identity course. And as I think, I'm thinking they talk about anti-racism now. We just came from a conference where they are having something, where they're integrating anti-racism. They had a presentation where I think there were professors, faculty could go in and they could actually go into the presentation with their syllabus, and they would go through how you can integrate in anti-racism in their syllabus. So right there, they could do something. It was actionable.

I was like, oh, that's such a great idea. How can I do that with ERI? So instead of maybe coming up with a separate course, which some people may find helpful, how do you actually just integrate with what you have? Because that may be more... So instead of going through the road

where we'll have the multicultural class and we have the ethnic and racial identity course, which again, could be again, siloed. It could be just this course that is dismissed. It could just go through that multicultural course way, which has not been totally successful. Then how do I find a way of integrating it in classes? How do I find a way of having people integrate it in the clinical work too and in policies and procedures?

So that's where my mind is now. So that would be my recommendation, just integrating it throughout and it being a fundamental part of the training of faculty, not to just do the multi... "Oh, I'm not doing the multicultural class, so I don't have to think about it." How do you integrate, I think of racial identity in particular, into every single class? How do you do that? So that's my recommendation.

Interviewer:

So, as we conclude our interview, I'm curious if there's anything that you feel like I missed in the questions that you would like to share more of, or something that maybe came to mind as you were answering questions that you felt like is important to share.

Philippa:

Again, I mean, since yesterday I've just been thinking so much about past conditioning and the way that we are trained to think and how it affects us, trained to think from how we're growing up and how it still affects us. I mean, I'm 47 years old and how it still affects and how it can just be quick, and how the systems in place just kind of numb you to who you are in terms of your ethnic and racial identity, and then how essential it is to kind of fight to bring this up out of people. I don't know. My thoughts are just around that right now.

It's a lot, but again, how we're just conditioned to just, "Forget about that, that doesn't matter. Let's be colorblind." I wasn't colorblind was when I was in a room in my master's program and

everybody was White. I was so colorblind in a way that I was actually comfortable in that space until I was like, "But wait, I'm totally disregarded." Now how can you say that, make that comment? How can microaggressions be happening in my front of my damn face? And I need to stand up and say something. So, I know that's not... I don't have anything really totally intelligent to say around that. I just have these thoughts are coming up in my head right now and I got to write them down and just do research around it and put it out that way.

Interviewer:

Yeah. I appreciate you sharing, and that kind of concludes the interview.

Philippa:

Well, thank you so much!

Appendix G: Coding Example

Interviewer:
And I have my questions over here. So as I've told everybody, I'm not being rude, I'm just looking over here at the questions.
Interviewee:
Okay.
Interviewer:
Okay. All right. So ==how do you define your ethnic and racial identity?==
Interviewee:
==I am black==.
Interviewer:
Okay. Okay. So when you say you're black, that represents your ethnicity as well as your race?
Interviewee:
Yes.
Interviewer:
Okay. Okay. All right. ==Tell me any changes to your understanding of ethnic and racial identity over the course of the Master's program? So basically, what was your understanding at the beginning of the program and what is it now?==
Interviewee:
==So I think in the beginning of the program, I had a very narrow understanding of what it meant to be a black woman, specifically because I've only been in the context of the United States, but through the program, I've been able to understand that being black is across the spectrum and the diaspora. And there are a lot of versions and experiences that a lot of different black people have. They're like non-native blacks, and there are native black Americans. So I think that through the program and experiences with other people who identify as black, that I have a more broader understanding of what it means.==
Interviewer:
Okay, during the program. Wonderful, wonderful. So under your idea of... Your understanding that is of ethnic and racial identity, the term African American, do you view that as something that is representative of one group, or is it, I mean, how do you view that term?
Interviewee:
I think it's representative of one group. When ==I think of people who have non-native immigrant parents, I think when it comes to labeling someone as an African American, I think people who are immigrants or who have parents as immigrants sometimes get excluded from that, which is why I prefer the term black. I think that, [inaudible 00:02:14] better job. It's more inclusive all in all.==
Interviewer:
Okay. So tell me, are your parents born in the United States?
Interviewee:
Mm-hmm.
Interviewer:
Are they born... Okay.
Interviewee:
United States.
Interviewer:

I see. So you prefer to use the term black because it's more inclusive versus African American, which I think what you're saying is that for black people who are parents that are born in this country, or you're born in this country, you would think that they would be more under the umbrella of African American. Correct?

Interviewee:

Yes.

Interviewer:

Okay. Okay. All right. Thank you for sharing that. Okay. So how would you describe your experience of ethnic and racial identity development in the Master's program? Big question.

Interviewee:

That's a wonderful question. I think my ethnic and racial identity has developed because I feel like it's more of a [inaudible 00:03:26] identity for me now. As you know, women [inaudible 00:03:30] predominantly by institution, and in high school and before that was mostly around other black people who identify as African American, who had been in the area for a very long time. So I was comfortable, and I didn't really view myself as an other because everybody around me looked like me.

Interviewer:

Right.

Interviewee:

So, through the program, I've really begun to understand what it's like to experience microaggressions and racism and discrimination, which was difficult in itself, but it also made me proud to be who I am. And I learned a lot about my history in the process.

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I understand that because it's interesting because as you know, I was born in England, and when I say we were the only black family, the only family of color, I was just used to white people. And then when I moved to Jamaica, it was like all these people of color. I was like, what the... And then as an adult now leaving there and coming to the United States to going back to this, Oh, I'm a minority.

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

It shifts the way that, Oh, people view me different. It's such a shift going back and forth, but it does help with the ethnic and racial identity. Absolutely. Absolutely. Okay. So you touched on this already in terms of you're more proud of yourself, but is there any other way that you find that you are different? How are you different because of your ethnic and racial identity development?

Interviewee:

I think to your point about me being more proud of myself, I think the pride comes from the fact that I've not only advocated for myself, but I work really hard to advocate for the other marginalized communities around me. I think that has developed as a result of my racial and ethnic identity, developing the fact that I can recognize how the systems are oppressive to people of marginalized communities. And I'm actively working to remedy some of those things.

Interviewer:

Wonderful. Wonderful. So you've got that social justice file lit?

Interviewee:

Yes.

Interviewer:

Ready to really work towards that, do something actionable?

Interviewee:

Mm-hmm. Hundred percent.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Okay. How do you think ethnic and racial identity is integrated into your work with clients?

Interviewee:

I think of one family in particular, and I think with this family, the way the parents choose to raise their children is a direct result of their experiences being people of color. It reminds me of, how can I say this? It makes me think of the need to protect, especially black and brown boys, so being, discipline them now so that when it's time for them to go out into the real world, they know what it's like to respect authority. And I think that's a result of them knowing and navigating the world as black and brown people, that the world is cruel to people of color and wanting to prepare their children for that experience.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Wow. Yeah. Okay. So you see that. Have you actually... So it sounds like you've had that awareness of this is what's happening. How have you actually integrated that awareness into the sessions?

Interviewee:

I think for me is that, this is a relatively new family, but it has started by discussing their upbringing and some of the intergenerational trauma and comparing how they were raised, their parents raised them to how they choose to raise their children.

Interviewer:

Okay. Okay. Wonderful. Thank you for that. All right. So then what have faculty done? So I'm switching a little bit. What has faculty done during your classes, during your courses that have to focus on ethnic and racial identity?

Interviewee:

Nothing.

Interviewer:

You're shaking your head.

Interviewee:

I feel like our faculty throw the word broaching around. They say, I want to say encourage, but I don't even know if it's encouraged. They tell us to broach topics.

Interviewer:

Right.

Interviewee:

But I feel like there isn't a clear understanding of how to broach a topic. Which is, they're just saying it, but nobody's actually demonstrating it. So it's hard to translate the theoretical understanding of broaching into practice.

Interviewer:

Okay. Okay. Okay. So what courses then have focused on ethical and racial identity developments?

Interviewee:

None of them. You would think the multicultural counseling class would've focused on that, but I don't remember that happening. We got a brief informal understanding of broaching in internship and that was because you came to class.

Interviewer:

Oh, I remember that.

Interviewee:

But that was it.

Interviewer:

That was it. Wow. Okay.

Interviewee:

But there [inaudible 00:09:21] encouraged to be culturally competent therapists, which we should be culturally competent. We live in a diverse world, diverse, ethnic and racist identities, genders, thoughts, beliefs, perspectives, and we're using these words, but nobody's modeling the behavior or...

Interviewer:

How to actually do it.

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

So talking about something, but how do you do it? Two different things. Okay. Okay. So then my next question, you might laugh at me then, but I'm going to ask it. What strategies were most useful or have been most useful in your ethnic and racial identity development during the program?

Interviewee:

(laugh)

Interviewer:

I knew you going to laugh. So again, this could be, you can think of what teaching strategies that have been used in the program have been most useful in your ethnic and racial identity development?

Interviewee:

Maybe...

Interviewer:

If any?

Interviewee:

None. But I think for me specifically, I learned a lot in relation to other people. So I think the role playing and discussions of small topics is beneficial.

Interviewer:

Okay. Has that been done or you were saying it would be beneficial?

Interviewee:

No, it has been done. It has been done.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Interviewee:

It wasn't specific to, it wasn't implemented by the faculty members that are in these small group discussion or role plays that we would address racial identity, but the people in the groups would bring it up.

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Interviewer:

I see, I see. Okay. So this leads me to my next question then. What have your peers done during interactions that have assisted with your ethnic and racial identity development?

Interviewee:

Yeah, I love this one. I think my peers, the ones I'm closest to, do a great job of asking thoughtful questions. I feel like my peers who have different racial and ethnic identities from me, are sensitive in the question asking process. We're very respectful of each other's cultures, but we're also curious and we trust each other, we feel safe enough to be honest and have the difficult conversations, which has been really nice.

Interviewer:

So really having those conversations with each other has been helpful?

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Okay. Can have critical conversations with each other?

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Because you trust each other. Right.

Interviewee:

We need that, We need more than that.

Interviewer:

Yeah, definitely. Okay. And you touched on this a little bit, but overall, what have doctoral students done that have assisted with the ethnic and racial identity development?

Interviewee:

Oh, [inaudible 00:12:17] are great. I think when in practicum and internship experiences, my supervisors have done a great job of asking me how I show up in the room as a result of my racial and ethnic identity and how other people show [inaudible 00:12:33] and how that impacts me because of their racial identity. So it's nice to conceptualize things in that way and I think the doctoral students do a good job of reminding us that.

Interviewer:

Okay. Okay. So it sounds like, Oh, sorry, go ahead.

Interviewee:

Oh no, that's it.

Interviewer:

Okay. It sounds like with the doctoral students they have been able to do that, but outside of the classroom. So it's like when we are, again, as you said, internship practicum.

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

All right. It sounds like the doctoral students have been able to help clinically...

Interviewee:

Yes.

Interviewer:

But it's not necessarily in the classroom when it's textbook work or...

Interviewee:

No.

Interviewer:

Okay. Okay. All right. So what recommendations do you have for integrating ethnic and racial identity into the graduate programs?

Interviewee:

I was about to answer that first question. I think this ties to the second one. I think the fact that there has been gaps in racial and ethnic identity in the classroom and I guess TA and the black students is because of the way our program is structured academically and the fact that we're using dated textbooks and the textbooks have been written by a white men. I think integrating, even if we have to use the textbooks by white men, because that's the book that exists, right? And that's the foundational understanding that we have at this current state.

Interviewee:

I think it would be beneficial to start including some more up to date research by people of color to balance the perspectives in the classroom. I think that's a great place to start. And I also think to go to the first, that's a great place to start integrating. But to go back to your previous question, I don't know how much autonomy the TAs have over what they can and cannot present or teach on during these classes. So I think giving the TAs a little bit more autonomy because the doctoral students right now make up a lot of racial and ethnic backgrounds. So I think involving them a little more in the discussions of what is going to be taught could also be helpful.

Interviewer:

Right. That's great. That's great recommendation. Because you're right, and I'm great that you see that... Yeah. I suppose you're going in and if you have the faculty member that allows you that autonomy and says, Hey, here you are allowed. Because again, I think when you brought up that I had come in, guess what? I was given the autonomy.

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

I was given the opportunity. So you're right, when you say that, I'm like, Wow. Yes. That literally happened to me in my life and experience. But hearing it from your perspective, I'm like, wow. Yeah, that's what had to happen. Somebody had to give me the autonomy, give me the opportunity for how that happen.

Interviewee:

It was a black woman who gave it to you.

Interviewer:

It was a black woman. Because she knows this is my research interest.

Interviewee:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

This would help. Wow. So we need the diversity in the faculty to really realize this in the first place [inaudible 00:15:56] It's a whole thing.

Interviewee:

Yes. All of that thing.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Wow. Okay. Well thank you for that. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Interviewee:

That's it. That's it. Those were really great questions.

Vita

Philippa Anne Chin was born on the 9th of August 1975 in Wokingham, England.

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