INVESTIGATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD, MULTICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY ATTITUDES OF PRACTICING SCHOOL COUNSELORS

by

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ABSTRACT

SHENIKA JUANITA JONES. Investigating the relationship between belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge, multicultural awareness and social justice advocacy attitudes of practicing school counselors. (Under the direction of DR. PHYLLIS POST)

The school counseling profession is governed by national standards to promote the academic, personal, social, and career development of all students. There is an emphasis on outlining professional dispositions for school counselors. Yet, the personal values, beliefs, and attitudes that influence their interactions with students and the carrying out of national standards are not being assessed. The purpose of the study was to examine school counselors' beliefs about justice in the world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness in relation to their attitudes about social justice advocacy. The response rate was 6% and included 88 practicing, professional school counselors who were members of the American School Counseling Association.

The participants completed the Belief in Just World Scale, Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale, Social Justice Advocacy Scale, and a demographic questionnaire. Sequential multiple regression analysis indicated that the three variables in the study were not predictors of social justice advocacy attitudes of professional school counselors. However, according to the Pearson correlation, there was a statistically significant negative relationship between belief in a just world and multicultural counseling awareness. This suggests that participants who believe that people get what they deserve in life had less multicultural counseling awareness. Also, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between multicultural counseling

knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness. The outcomes of the study suggest

that future research should concentrate on expanding the empirical literature base in order

to better understand the factors that impact school counselors' commitment to social

justice advocacy for all students.

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In conclusion, I thank God for giving me the strength, courage, and wisdom necessary to succeed. I also thank God for making sure that I was always surrounded by the most amazing people along the way including the everlasting companionship of His son, Jesus Christ.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this accomplishment to my guiding light, my late adopted father Abraham Jones, Sr. It was the many memories of his lifestyle of love, courage, and persistence in the face of what seemed hopeless that helped me to overcome and succeed. He told me to get as much education as possible because education is one thing that no one can take away from me. I finished strong too.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Most professional school counselors with training and experience in the United States of America are familiar with the ratio 250 to 1. Recommended by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2012) and adopted by the U.S. Department of Education (2012), this ratio illustrates the ideal student-to-school counselor ratio. However, the most current assessment of student-to-counselor ratio from the 2009-2010 academic year was 459:1, which is nearly double the suggestion of experts and represents an increased rate from the previous academic year (ASCA, 2012). The discrepancy between the ideal and the actual student-to-school counselor ratio clearly exposes the need for an increase in practicing school counselors. Those in support of this goal have confidence that increasing the number of counselors in schools will increase their availability to advocate for all students (ACA, 2012). Even with empirical evidence supporting a decreased student-to-school counselor ratio, there has not been any significant progress toward this goal (McIntosh, 2009). Therefore, a shift toward encouraging the profession to refocus its attention on how school counseling is being done, not on the number of students per counselor, could be an impetus for more effective school counseling in the 21st century (Littrell & Peterson, 2001).

There are assumptions of professional counselors that guide their work with students that are likely to remain unknown, unchallenged, and therefore unchanged whether there is a higher representation of counselors in schools or not. It is important to

understand how the innate beliefs and views of the school counselors in critically important areas, such as multicultural awareness, knowledge, beliefs and personal approaches to social justice advocacy could provide insight about their daily practice. A more acute awareness of the viewpoints of school counselors could help counselor educators to more clearly conceptualize and implement intentional interventions to provide counselors-in-training with skills to maximize their potential for advocacy even in schools with high student-to-counselor ratios.

Therefore, in response to statistics demonstrating that the student-to-counselor ratio has moved further away from the national recommendation each year, the focus should perhaps shift to understanding the beliefs, values, and assumptions that guide the efforts of the current, even though disproportioned population of school counselors. To avoid a direct violation of ethical standards for school counselors that requires an understanding of diverse cultural backgrounds of students and remain aware of personal values and beliefs about multiculturalism, it is imperative for the profession of school counseling to respond incisively as the changes in the demographics of students within the public school system will require an increased level of multicultural competence to effectively serve students (ASCA, 2012).

By 2020, projections indicate that children of color will represent the majority racial demographic of students in public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). According to the Year of 2020 Projection, public school enrollment numbers for all non-White racial groups will increase substantially in representation (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004). The ethnicities included in the projection were Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific

Islander. While the number of students representing minority cultures is expected to

grow to an unprecedented high number within the next several years, the percentage of

minority students in training programs to become mental health professionals is not

experiencing the same surge (Chandler, 2011). Therefore, as racial minority students

become the majority in our culture for the first time in the history of the U.S., the

demographics of professional school counselors is expected to essentially remain the

same; the makeup of professional school counselors in the public school setting primarily

consists of white, middle-class females who predominately serve students who share their

racial identity (Erford, 2007). As we approach such a shift in the racial dynamics within

the school setting, it is critical to evaluate the current assumptions of school counselors in

order to effectively move forward with the promotion and practice of social justice for all

students.

     The organizational approach used by most school counselors is ASCA's (2003)

National Model for School Counseling Programs. The cornerstone standards of

comprehensive school counseling programs are to promote the academic, personal-social,

and career development of all students (ASCA, 2003). There has been a strong focus on

school counseling program management and evaluation of academic outcome measures

(ASCA, 2003), and other than the development of the Transforming School Counselor

Initiative (TSCI) introduced by The Education Trust (2007), there has been less emphasis

on the cultural sensitivity of counselors or the academic achievement gap between

diverse student populations that continues to exist. This could prove to be increasingly

detrimental for the ever-evolving culture of students-served (Erford, 2007).

ASCA's (2012) preamble states "professional school counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equity in access and success in educational opportunities." (p.1). However, the standards that guide the initiatives of school counselors do not clearly factor in cultural issues so the collective concentration on academic, personal-social, and career components by school counselors creates a perceived sense of security. Yet, the adherence to a model that does not directly address issues of social justice advocacy has the potential to result in a profession of school counselors who are guilty of protecting the status quo and are unwilling to think critically about the advantages and disadvantages for students within the educational system (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007).

Furthermore, according to the Transforming School Counselor Initiative, the counseling profession has come to accept the idea that a social justice perspective belongs at the center of good practice for impartiality to guide their interactions with clients, families, and the surrounding community (Erford, 2007; Herr & Erford, 2007; Stone & Dahir, 2006). However, serving in the role of a counselor, change agent, and advocate is often easier to conceptualize than implement. Like any new paradigm, advocacy is dependent on practitioners, educators, and scholars to change the assumptions that guide their work (ACA, 2012). Therefore, it is imperative to evaluate the guiding assumptions of today's school counselors in order to more strategically challenge those assumptions. The level of training that school counselors receive on issues of multicultural competency is significant as it relates to their attitudes toward social justice advocacy (Singh, Urbano, Haston, & McMahon, 2010). Furthermore, as ethnic minority populations progressively become the new majority, the need to evaluate

the beliefs, attitudes, and views of professional school counselors on topics of cultural diversity and their roles as advocates becomes more immediate.

This section will provide an overview of the outcome and predictor variables in the study beginning with the history of social justice advocacy. Then, more specifically, the role of advocacy in the counseling profession will be discussed followed by a summary of both predictor variables in the study, which are belief in a just world and multicultural competency. The other sections of this chapter will explain the purpose and significance of the proposed study, a statement of the research problem, research question, research design, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, operational definitions, and a summary.

Overview

History of Social Justice Advocacy

The construct of social justice originated from religious theories and philosophies. Social justice is a pivotal component of Catholicism, the Protestants' Gospel, and is included as one of Four Pillars of the internationally-known Green Party (McMahon, Arthur, & Collins, 2008). Social justice is achieved when all persons are provided equal opportunity to achieve in socialist environments. The quest for a world that is socially just in every domain for every individual is impossible; however, in history and in the present, there are organizations and individuals who dedicate their time, talents, and service to the cause of social justice (Masiglia & Kul, 2009). Although, there is less religious connotation around the concept of social justice at the present, the idea is sometimes viewed as controversial and possesses different meanings depending on

professional philosophy and personal values (McMahan, Singh, Urbano, & Haston, 2010).

Advocacy in the Counseling Profession

Advocacy in the counseling profession is the process of recognizing the impact of oppression and social injustices on the psychological health of clients (Odegard & Vereen, 2010). The promotion of social justice is not only accepted, but expected, in the arena of professional counseling (Bernak & Chung, 2008; CACREP, 2012; Dowden, 2010; Holcomb-McCoy & Chen-Hayes, 2007). Although there are a variety of theoretical basis for counselors to employ, the foundational element of counseling deals with improving the welfare of the client. In many cases, the welfare of the client is compromised due to personal injustices based on race, age, gender, or perhaps even disability (Astramovich & Harris, 2007). Professional counselors who practice from a social justice paradigm are more likely to develop empathy and the understanding necessary to provide effective, systemic interventions for clients (Ratts & Ford, 2010).

Furthermore, professional school counselors are in a unique position relative to social justice advocacy; the counselor can influence the surrounding community and combat inequality that permeates as well as help support students who have experienced unfair treatment (Smith, Reynolds, & Rovnak, 2009). In addition, preparation and integration are important factors for counselor educators to consider. When counselors focus solely on the client without any acknowledgement of the strength of oppression as a direct result of prejudice, discrimination, oppression and privilege, advocacy is not at the center of professional practice (Hays, 1996; Lieberman & Sales, 2007). It is important that school counselors seeking to infuse social justice advocacy into practice demonstrate

cultural competence. Culturally competent counselors are self-aware, knowledgeable, and skilled in supporting students from diverse backgrounds (Arrendondo et al., 1996).

Belief in a Just World

Individuals usually fall on one of two sides of the platform of social justice by either believing in equality for all or not believing in equitable access to critical needs such as educational opportunity. As a result, the non-believers will potentially be very critical of advocacy efforts and believers will tend to demonstrate passionate support for fair access (Dowden, 2010). The construct of belief in a just world (BJW) focuses on beliefs about whether or not individuals get what they deserve in life. It could be useful to examine in light of school counselors' commitment to social justice advocacy. Beliefs often fuel actions; therefore, understanding what counselors believe about justice in the world could be related to social injustices and influence perceptions of their roles as advocates in the school setting (Hutchins, 2010).

Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness

The multicultural competencies are comprised of cognitive, philosophical and affective reflection based on knowledge, skills, and awareness expectations of professional school counselors (Ponterotto & Potere, 2003). Developing competency in working relationships with minority cultures can be influenced by training and experience. Therefore, in most counselor preparation programs, the course requirements for school counselors include courses aimed at the promotion of cross-cultural competence (Ponterotto, Alexander, & Grieger, 1995). This approach to counselor training supports the notion that culturally competent counselors have the ability to empower individuals and encourage environmental change (Lewis & Bradley, 2000).

Similar to the constructs of nature vs. nurture, competent counselors recognize that clients are cultural beings who are inseparable from their surrounding systems and contexts (Ratts, 2011). For these reasons, multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness will be assessed in this study, because they are the two areas of cultural competence that are most extensively researched (Ponteretto, Gretchen, Utsey, Rieger, & Austin, 2002).

American School Counselor Association

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. ASCA provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to more than 31,000 members. Of the total number of ASCA members, over 18,000 are professional school counselors at elementary, middle, and secondary schools. There are 267,000 employees with the title as School Counselor or related titles in education, advising, college, and career counseling in the United States of America (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). The number of employees with the exclusive title as School Counselor was not included. Therefore, the percentage of school counselors represented in ASCA is inconclusive.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness as they relate to the social justice advocacy attitudes of practicing professional school counselors.

Significance of the Study

Counselors vary in their approach to social justice advocacy; investigating factors that predict school counselor approach to their role as change agents is of interest to counselor educators so they may provide appropriate training. There is the understanding that individuals have an innate stance on belief in a just world that is often challenged by multicultural knowledge, awareness, and skill and exposure to minority cultures (Rubin & Peplau, 1973). There has been emphasis on evaluating the systemic influence of assumptions and actions of school counselors on the students who they serve and will serve. Counselors identified as having a strong approach to social justice advocacy in the study may share particular trends that could be used to increase the advocacy efforts of current and future school counselors. However, the social attitudes and cultural perspective of school counselors relative to their approach to social justice advocacy will remain unknown without relevant research studies like this one.

The study will examine the level of multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness of practicing professional school counselors and their beliefs about justice relative to their approach to social justice advocacy. The study will reexamine how belief in a just world relates to social justice advocacy attitudes of school counselors (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011) and build upon the previous study by exploring belief in a just world in conjunction with multicultural competency as it relates to social justice advocacy attitudes.

Throughout the literature, authors highlight the parallel between the construct of multicultural competence and social justice advocacy (Dowden, 2010; Ratts, 2011; Ratts & Ford, 2010; Singh, Urbano, Haston, & McMahon, 2010). Theoretically, factors that

promote multicultural competence should also promote social justice advocacy. Empirical results of a recent study by Penn and Post (2012) suggests that multicultural education, color blind racial attitude, and supervision may influence play therapists' multicultural counseling abilities. The results show an increase in multicultural counseling abilities for play therapists only. This study will extend this stream of research by examining whether factors related to multicultural counseling competence will result in a change in the approach to social justice advocacy of school counselors. Thus, this study is significant as the variables will assess school counselors instead of play therapists to investigate similarities, differences, and new discoveries that will be relevant to the practicing school counselor and the students they serve.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. Is there a relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy?

2. How much more does multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural awareness add to prediction of social justice advocacy?

Research Design

A sequential regression research design will be used to examine how belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness relate to the level of to social justice advocacy of practicing professional school counselors. This correlation research study will be a non-experimental survey design. A two-step sequential multiple regression analysis to analyze the amount of variance the predictor variables influence social justice advocacy attitudes of school counseling professionals.

Assumptions

1. Counselors will participate willingly and honestly.

2. All school counselors will be practicing in a school setting at the time of their participation in the study.

3. The sample will represent only school counselors in the United States.

Delimitations

1. The study will include only those individuals who are current members of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

2. Participants with varying levels of experience from all different parts of the U.S. who work with varying age groups will be included in the study.

Limitations

1. Accessibility and ASCA membership status will limit the number of participants.

2. There may be school counselors strongly committed to social justice advocacy who are members of the American Counselors Association's (ACA) social justice division who would not be included in the study if they are non-ASCA members.

3. Social desirability bias of the participants could limit the results of the study. Because an electronic survey will be used to assess participants' views of themselves, their self-report could be higher than their actual level of competence.

4. The study is a correlational study; therefore, the researcher cannot make causal inference.

Threats to Validity

Threats to validity can confound the results of studies. Therefore, measures will be taken to control for both internal and external threats to validity. The specific measures taken for this study will be included in the following sections.

Threats to Internal Validity

Internal validity is the level of confidence in the results of a study based on the method of collecting data and the accuracy of responses by participants. For this non-experimental study, the instruments in the study are reliable and valid. However, internal threat to validity is prevalent in self-reported studies due to the effect of social desirability (Dillman, 2007). To control for self-report bias in this study, the surveys will be completed on-line, anonymous, and confidential.

Threats to External Validity

In addition to internal threats to validity, there is the potential for external threats to validity. External validity is defined as problems that threaten the researcher's ability to generalize results to other people, places, and situations (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Therefore, in an effort to reduce the amount of threats to external validity, the sample for this study will be obtained using a randomized selection from ASCA. The association is comprised of school counselors with varying professional and personal backgrounds including different years of experience, school settings, and geographic locations (ASCA, 2012).

Operational Definitions

Operational definitions for terms included in the research study are as follows:

Social Justice Advocacy

Social justice advocacy is the level of perceived responsibility of the counselor to support efforts to enhance equality, fair access, equal opportunity, and harmony for all members of society. It is defined by Van Soest (1996) as "everyday advocacy on behalf of members of oppressed populations" (p. 194). Social justice advocacy is operationally defined in this study as the participants' total score computed based on an average of all items on the Social Justice Advocacy Scale (Van Soest, 1996). The instrument measures individual's attitudinal commitment to social justice advocacy.

Belief in Just World

Individuals with stronger belief in a just world believe that the world is a just place and people get what they deserve. Yet, those opposed to the belief in a just world view the world as less of a just place and believe people are subject to unfair treatment. Belief in a just world is operationally defined in this study as the participants' total score on the Global Belief in a Just World Scale (Lipkus, 1991). The instrument measures the belief that "people get what they deserve and deserve what they get" (Lipkus, 1991, p. 1172).

Multicultural Knowledge and Multicultural Awareness

Multicultural competency is the ability to interact effectively with different cultures as a result of acquired knowledge and awareness. The multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness of the participants is operationally defined in this study as the sub-scale scores on the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS). The instrument examines the areas of multicultural knowledge and awareness through self-report. Higher scores indicate that a practicing school counselor perceives

themselves as being culturally competent due to their general knowledge of multicultural issues in counseling and their attitudes and beliefs regarding culturally diverse clients or students.

School Counseling Professional

School counseling professionals are operationally defined in this study as certified/licensed school counselors who are currently employed asschool counselors and are members of ASCA during the time of data collection. The current status of the participants will be determined by self-report because all members of ASCA are not current certified/licensed school counselors. Only practicing school counselors will be used in the study because this population of counselors often has a more direct influence on students. Although the advocacy attitudes of all counselors is important to assess, the overall reason for this study is to examine the beliefs, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness of practicing school counselors to determine if either of these factors influence their social justice advocacy attitudes.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Chapter One provided an introduction regarding the importance of understanding factors that influence social justice advocacy among professional school counselors. An overview of the changing demographics of schools further highlights the need for school counselors to be culturally competent. Ethical guidelines and professional standards define effective approaches to social justice advocacy in the counseling profession. Specifically within the field of school counseling, social justice advocacy is not a new construct. In fact, there are conceptual articles, training programs, and textbooks that emphasize the role of advocacy in counseling. However, there is only one research study

to date measuring potential factors that affect advocacy attitudes of professional school counselors, which demonstrates the need for continued research in this area.

Studies have indicated that personal values and beliefs are important to examine in order to determine how they translate into actions regarding social justice advocacy (Parikh, Post, Flowers, 2011). School counselors are receiving the necessary training to build cultural awareness and skill to understand oppression and privilege. However, an understanding of how multicultural training translates into equality for all students is limited due to the lack of research on the impact of both factors of multicultural training and personal beliefs of professional school counselors on their approach to social justice advocacy.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness relate to social justice advocacy attitudes among professional school counselors.

Organization of Study

This proposal is divided into three chapters. An overview of the study is presented in Chapter One and includes the importance of conducting this research, a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the research study, research question, delimitations, limitations, assumptions, and operational definitions.

A review of the literature is detailed in Chapter Two. A summary of the guiding assumptions that affect social justice advocacy attitudes will be discussed. The dependent variable, social justice advocacy, as well as the three independent variables in the study, belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness, will be

addressed and related to social justice advocacy as well as the school counseling profession.

Chapter Three will discuss the methodology in this study. The section will begin with an introduction. Then, the research question will be stated followed by detailed information regarding the participants, the procedures used to conduct this study, the instrumentation used, and the strength of those instruments based on reliability and validity measures. Finally, the specific research analysis will be discussed.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to examine factors related to the social justice advocacy attitudes of practicing professional school counselors. More specifically, this study investigates personal beliefs about injustice and the influence of multicultural competence on school counselors' roles as social justice advocates or change agents. The primary focus of this chapter is to review conceptual and empirical literature to demonstrate the need for this study.

This chapter will be divided into six sections. The first section will review the theoretical background of social justice advocacy including an overview of social justice, definition of social justice advocacy and implications of psychological responses to social injustice. The second section will include historic background on the counseling profession and social justice advocacy. In addition, literature related to social justice advocacy and counseling will be presented. The third section will focus specifically on the school counseling profession and the current role of the school counselor related to social justice advocacy. In addition, the very limited research related to school counselors and social justice advocacy will be discussed. The fourth section will include the conceptualization and definition of belief in a just world. Furthermore, the relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy will be discussed. This section will also include research related to belief in a just world and the school counseling profession. The fifth section will provide an overview of multicultural counseling

competence, research related to multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness, and review of the literature related to the relationship between multicultural competence and social justice advocacy. The final section will include a summary of the chapter and an overview of the conclusions based on the comprehensive review of the literature. Overall, this chapter will demonstrate the limited empirical research related specifically to factors influencing social justice attitudes of professional school counselors, which will demonstrate the need for the study.

<center>Theoretical Background of Social Justice Advocacy</center>

This study examines factors related to attitudes about social justice advocacy within the school counseling profession. Many counselors serve diverse populations of students to help them succeed academically. However, all students do not have fair support and equitable access to the resources necessary to aid in their scholastic achievement. Therefore, to intervene and help even the playing field for students, it is important to understand factors that influence the commitment of school counselors to advocate or refuse to advocate for the marginalized students impacted by societal oppression, discrimination and prejudice. An overview of social justice advocacy and definitions and concepts related to this construct will be included in this section. Although the research related to social justice advocacy in the field of school counseling is limited, this section will review the existing literature and empirical research studies regarding advocacy efforts within the general counseling profession. Moreover, this subsequent literature review will provide the theoretical framework for the research study.

Overview of Social Justice

The construct of social justice relates to human rights and equality and originated from religious theories based on the philosophical views of individuals who were connected to Catholicism, the Protestants' Gospel, and the Green Party. Social justice is achieved when all persons are provided equal opportunity to achieve in socialist environments. The idea of social justice advocacy is often viewed as controversial and has varying meaning based on professional goals, personal beliefs and understanding of social justice.

Justice comes from the Latin word suum cuique, which means "to each his due" (Miller, 1979, p.20.). Furthermore, social justice works to break down barriers, challenge prejudice, advocate for equality, provide equal access, encourage social change, support divergent ideologies, disseminate information, understand context, fight oppressive forces, and question the status quo (McConnell, 2012). Social justice is generally equated with the notion of equality or equal opportunity in society. Sometimes concepts such as equal opportunity and personal responsibility are used synonymously with social justice to diminish the organizational responsibility for combating social injustice and the tendencies to justify inequalities in modern society (Berry, 2005). The most prominent two accounts of social justice, each of which posits its own theory of social justice, are David Miller's (2003) *Principles of Social Justice* and John Rawls' (2003) *Justice as Fairness.*

According to Miller (2003), the principle of social justice relates to the disbursement of advantages and disadvantages in society by others with institutional power and privilege within society. Furthermore, social justice is concerned with the

ways that resources are allocated to people by social institutions. Some of the advantages

relevant for social justice include money, property, jobs, education, medical care, child

care, care for the elderly, personal security, housing, transportation, and other rewards.

To the contrary, the disadvantages include military service, dangerous work, and other

hardships. Miller's account of social justice is applicable to both private and public

sectors (Miller, 2003).

However, according to Rawls (2003), social justice is the assurance of equal

access to liberties, rights, and opportunities. In addition, social justice relates to taking

care of the least advantaged members of society. This theoretical perspective deciphering

whether something is just or unjust depends on whether it promotes or hinders equality of

access to civil liberties, human rights, opportunities for healthy and fulfilling lives, as

well as whether it allocates a fair share of benefits to the least advantaged members of

society (Rawls, 2003).

Prior to 2001, the concept of social justice was not included in the Educational

Research Information Center (ERIC) database, which is a comprehensive database

governed by the United States Department of Education which suggests that the concept

is receiving more attention in the literature within the past ten years. Perhaps, the increase

of interest is linked to the increasing popularity of the expression within the American

culture. Social justice and equality are undeniably lined to each other, yet the meaning of

social justice has a broader meaning (Scherlen and Robinson, 2008). Also, within the past

ten years, advocacy has become a buzz word in the counseling resulting in an increase of

literature on the topic (Bemak, 2000, Bemak & Chung, 2005, 2007, 2008; House &

Martin, 1998; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001; Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2001;

Lewis & Bradley, 2000; Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002; Stone & Hanson, 2002;

Toporek & Liu, 2001). The concepts social justice and advocacy have specific

connotations when used collectively.

Conceptualization and Definition of Social Justice Advocacy

There are many ways to define and conceptualize social justice. The Division of

Counseling Psychology of the American Psychological Association defined the concept

of social justice as "engaging individuals as co-participants in decisions which directly

affect their lives; it involves taking some action, and educating individuals in order to

open possibilities, and to act with value and respect for individuals and their group

identities, considering power differentials in all areas of counseling practice and

research" (Blustein, Elman, & Gerstein, 2001, p.9). In addition to providing a theoretical

foundation for social justice advocacy for professional counselors, Lee (2007) and

Constantine et al. (2007) describe advocacy as the valuing of fair and equitable

distribution of resources, rights, and treatment for marginalized individuals and groups of

people who do not possess equal power in society and provide a theoretical foundation

for social advocacy for counseling professionals. Lee (2007) not only supported clients

facing all types of oppression and discrimination by providing individual counseling, but

highlighted the importance of advocacy within the social context that affects clients.

The concept of social justice broadly constitutes the right to fairness and equity

for all individuals, especially those who have been marginalized due to their group

memberships or backgrounds (Lee, 2007). Furthermore, Cohen (2001) described social

justice from an institutional perspective by connecting change and transformation to

advocating for political, social, and economic decisions that will positively impact

people's lives. Advocacy within the context of social justice for counselors involves working for clients by challenging issues in the social arena (i.e. perpetuating stereotypes, biases and prejudices), which is where barriers hinder the personal, social, academic, and career development of clients and students (Lee, 2007).

Psychological Responses to Social Injustice

Internalized oppression and negative self-worth can increase feelings of helplessness for clients. However, often times, counselors do not consider the elusive impact of oppression on the client's presenting concerns during therapy. Umberson (1993) speculates that adherence to oppressive systems among the disadvantaged may signify an adaptive form of denial since the reality of "physical, legal, or other types of personal vulnerability" associated with being disadvantaged may be "difficult to face on a daily basis and could even interfere with the individual's daily functioning" (p. 587).

As the representation of minorities in the United States grows, it is expected that the identified psychological responses to social injustices and human rights violations will become more prevalent (Chung, 2005). Therefore, the counseling profession has a responsibility to recognize the impeding influence of oppression in society and its strong correlation to the presenting concerns of clients. Increased striving, militancy, engagement in prejudice and sympathy toward other groups are common psychological responses to social injustice. Also, some individuals will identity with others of similar economic standing and reject relations with those of higher economic standing. This conscious and sometimes subconscious decision is a protective measure for oppressed populations. These boundaries also demonstrate a rationale for the decreased number of minorities who seek professional counseling services.

There is a preconceived notion that educated counselors will not be able to understand or relate to the struggling minorities. This notion has unfortunately proven to be accurate at times, while at other times ideas as such only stifle the change and growth process for minorities by creating a barrier between minorities and helping professionals (Chang & Yoon, 2011; Horsman, Rodriguez & Marini, 2009; Sue & Sue, 1990). Furthermore, in the school system, students who perceive or experience injustices from teachers often respond by disengaging (Strambler & Weinstein, 2010). Psychological disengagement impacts their attitudes and overall school performance.

Summary

Social justice education can lead to advocacy for the advancement of individuals and transformation of the systems that govern society if the knowledge acquired is used to critically examine social institutions for injustices (Lewis, 2001). Although social justice is defined and conceptualized in a variety of ways, those committed to social justice advocacy tend to share a common goal of working toward fairness for diverse groups (Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009). Engagement in social justice advocacy can decrease the negative psychological consequences of social injustices on the lives of minorities.

Social Justice Advocacy and Counseling

The counseling profession has continuously evolved to better reflect the needs of society. Within the history of the profession, the duties of counselors have strongly correlated with societal issues, which have resulted in counseling professionals who are familiar with principles related to social justice. Counseling professionals have been called upon to exhibit multicultural competence, understand the permanence of

oppression in the lives of minorities, and advocate as change agents for diverse clients (Constantine et. al., 2007; Lee, 1998; Sue, Arredondo, and Davis, 1992). Therefore, this section will explore how the historic multicultural movement in counseling challenged counselors to advocate for social justice and societal change. Additionally, this section will also examine how social justice advocacy continues to be a critical component of the counseling profession. While there is little empirical research regarding counseling and social justice advocacy, literature will be examined to support the importance of advocacy within the field.

History of Social Justice Advocacy and Counseling

The issue of social justice is not a new concept in the field of counseling. However, the training and practice of social justice advocacy within the counseling profession remains premature. In the history of the counseling profession, early feminist and multicultural scholars criticized the absence of approaches to oppression and inequities in traditional psychological work (Espin, 1994; Sparks & Parks, 2000; Sue & Sue, 2008). Nevertheless, the support for social action was expressed throughout the history of the profession.

The history of advocacy in counseling began with Frank Parsons and Carl Rogers, two leading theorists in the counseling profession who envisioned changes in social policy interventions at the individual and societal levels (McWhirter, 1997). Social justice advocacy was foundational within counseling psychology as demonstrated as early as 1900's by the Father of Vocational Psychology, Frank Parsons. Parson's demonstrated his commitment to social justice work by collaborating with local social activists to provide employment for impoverished boys in Boston, Massachusetts (Fouad,

Gerstein, & Toporek, 2006). Parson's actions demonstrated the importance of connecting with the community to benefit others and cultivate lasting social change.

In the 1940s and 1950s, counseling psychologists participated in social justice work when they assisted World War II veterans in adjusting to civilian life. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, counseling psychologists promoted prison and higher education reform (e.g., veterans' educational benefits). They also advocated for changes for the homeless, women, and others who were being deprived of their basic civil rights (e.g., related to voting, desegregation, minimum wages, housing, and employment practices (Fouad et al., 2004). Various social justice oriented publications emerged throughout the 1970s related to social and liberation movements in America during this time (Hutchinson & Stadler, 1975; Ratts, 2006). Arredondo and Perez (2003) proposed that the social justice actions undertaken during the civil rights era by psychologists, counselors, and psychiatrists defined the beginning of the history of the multicultural counseling competency development process. During the 1980s and early to mid-1990s, advocacy focused more on the employment of counseling psychologists and staying competitive, rather than on advocacy for others outside of the profession (Fouad et al., 2006).

The specific theme of counseling and social revolution began in 1971 when ACA was referred to as the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA). Later, when APGA became the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD), it endorsed advocacy as a major thrust through the AACD Position Paper on Human Rights (1987), which called for social change through personal, professional and political activity.

These historical sentiments about social justice advocacy have remained consistent throughout the counseling profession. However, less consistent are actual advocacy efforts to demonstrate support for social justice within the counseling profession.

Overview of Social Justice Advocacy and Counseling

Arredondo and Toporek (2004) encouraged incorporating social justice principles into clinical work. Nevertheless, the force behind social justice within counseling profession is not weakened because of the focus on the conceptual background but the lack of practical application about the topic (Hunsaker, 2011). Although limited, the literature does support methods of integrating social justice into the counseling profession (Kiselica, M. S. & Robinson, Michelle. J, 2001; Singh, Annelise A.; Urbano, Alessandra; Haston, Meg; McMahon, Eleanor, 2010; Odegard, Melissa A.; Vereeri, Liriwood G., 2010).

Despite numerous attempts to provide effective treatments for multicultural populations, there have not been major changes in clinical practice in regards to social justice (Jun, 2010). It is debatable whether or not advocates are born or developed. However, according to Martin (2007), it is possible to develop advocacy skills, which supports the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program's (CACREP; 2012) unyielding commitment to assist in student development of advocacy skills to promote cross-cultural competency within the counseling profession. In addition to learning ways to serve as change agents, it is imperative for counselors to explore their own cultural identities and beliefs about society. In fact, Daniels (2002) supported that a counselor's ability to effectively advocate for social justice for minority

populations is based more on individual characteristics than multicultural training, theory, and education.

Kiselica and Robinson (2001) refer to professionals who emphasize social justice within their duties as advocacy counselors. Advocacy counselors recognize that influence must not solely impact the individual but should demonstrate a systemic impact, which means that counselors would lose the 50-minute to an hour idea of counseling and engage in community outreach. Helping professions can have a more in-depth sustained benefit to society by focusing on the social institutions rather than psychotherapy for individuals (Humphreys, 1996). Clients frequently demonstrate behavior stimulated by deep seeded issues rooted in their social, cultural, political, and economic environments (Chung & Bemack, 2012). Therefore, a shift in focus toward social justice advocacy within the counseling profession is likely to promote a more holistic understanding of the client as a result of addressing larger systemic issues.

Literature Related to Social Justice Advocacy and Counseling

Literature related to social advocacy is concentrated mainly in the psychology and social work fields (Linnemeyer, Hansen, Bahner, & Nilsson, 2005; Miller et al., 2009; Nilsson & Schmidt, 2005; Van Soest, 1996; Van Voorhis & Hostetter, 2006). There are many conceptual articles related to social justice within the counseling profession; yet, the amount of empirical research is limited. A reason for the limited number of empirical articles could be the challenge of effectively assessing a person's attitudes and behaviors related to social justice.

The outcome of research related to social justice advocacy and behaviors are varied. For instance, in Linnemeyer's (2010) dissertation study in counseling psychology,

she found no differences in rates of social justice attitudes or behaviors between 266 doctoral students in counseling, clinical, or school psychology. However, Nilsson and Schmidt's (2005) research study found higher reports of social advocacy desire and commitment among LGB participants and revealed relatively low levels of advocacy among counseling graduate students.

Bradley, Werth, Hastings & Pierce (2012) conducted a qualitative study to investigate issues that can create barriers for counselor involvement in social justice advocacy. In the study, eight mental health practitioners revealed their perspectives about social justice advocacy as it relates to their jobs as counselors. The researchers found that the majority of participants were not involved in community advocacy efforts because of the higher potential for contention when advocacy moves from a micro level involving only the individual client to a macro level approach. The article seemed to support the status quo of mental health counselors by presenting community advocacy engagement as more of an expectation of social workers not counselors. As demonstrated earlier in the profession, the level of involvement in social justice advocacy as counselors remains controversial (Robinson, 1984).

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) included Advocacy in 2000 as a general principle for professional practice, stating that school psychologists must "understand the public policy process to assist them in their efforts to advocate for children, parents, and systems" (p. 26). Along with the NASP's inclusion of advocacy as a general tenant to school psychology, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) unveiled the ASCA National Model in 2003, outlining guidelines and advocacy competencies grounded in leadership, collaboration, and system-level change (Schwallie-

Giddis, Maat, & Pak, 2003). According to this model, school counselors are expected to demonstrate advocacy endeavors such as "eliminating barriers impeding…development, creating opportunities, collaborating…within and outside the school to help students meet their needs, and promoting positive, systemic change in schools," (Trusty & Brown, 2005, p. 259).

In a grounded study by Odegard and Vereen (2010), four counselor educators were asked to explain their process of integrating social justice constructs into their pedagogy. Overall, while this study was limited in its generalizability, there were some important findings that contributed to the existing literature. An analysis of the interviews suggested that counselors are often unaware of the impact of their own values, skills, and personalities and contribute to the advocacy process. In an extensive review of the literature between 2007 and 2012 using the EbscoHost Discovery Service which searches nearly 50 article databases through the J. Murrey Atkins Library at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte seventeen articles appeared with only three empirical studies related to social justice advocacy in the mental health counseling field (Bradley, Werth, Hastings & Pierce, 2012; Nilsson, Schale, & Khamphakdy-Brown, 2011; Parikh, Post & Flowers, 2011).

Empirical Research Related to Social Justice Advocacy and Counseling

According to Constantine et al. (2007), social justice advocacy develops from active reflection on personal experiences of culture, power, oppression, and privilege (Constantine et al., 2007). In the field of mental health, researchers demonstrate support for this claim because the importance of being personally aware of values and beliefs was highlighted in each of the empirical articles about social justice advocacy (Bradley,

Werth, Hastings & Pierce, 2012; Nilsson et al., 2011; Parikh, Post & Flowers, 2011). In addition, as demonstrated in both qualitative studies, the decision of whether or not to engage in community advocacy was based on the confidence levels of participants (Bradley et al., 2012; Nilsson, Schale & Khamphakdy-Brown, 2011).

In the only quantitative study related to social justice advocacy and counseling, Parikh, Post & Flowers (2011) included belief in a just world, political ideology and religious ideology as predictor variables and all variables proved to significantly impact social justice advocacy attitudes. Similarly, although based on a qualitative research design, Bradley et al. (2012) concluded that awareness of values can influence decisions related to actively advocating for those with less power in society. The researchers from both studies decided to use purposeful sampling to include only helping professionals who were providing face to face services at the time of the research. This approach provided the researchers with the most current perspective on advocacy experiences of helping professionals and their level of commitment to social justice on a daily basis.

To the contrary, Nilsson, Schale & Khamphakdy-Brown (2011) did not include mental health professionals in their study. Instead, they selected participants who were master's and doctoral level counseling trainees at a Midwestern university to examine whether or not experiences with oppressed populations facilitated development of multicultural competence and social justice advocacy (Nilsson, Schale & Khamphakdy-Brown, 2011). The interviews revealed that experiences resulted in students who were more self-aware, confident in engaging in advocacy efforts and more apt to rely on factual knowledge about culture versus stereotypes. This study is the only empirical study to include an intervention to test the effect of experience on multicultural sensitivity and

advocacy engagement. According to the results of the study, the use of service learning to impact community engagement is effective (Nilsson, Schale & Khamphakdy-Brown, 2011). These researchers understand that without an established "best practice" for facilitating counselor trainee development in the area of social justice advocacy, mental health professionals are more likely to avoid contentious advocacy efforts when their in the field.

Bradley et al. (2012) discussed themes endorsed if mentioned by at least 3 of the 8 participants. The participants represented various facets of mental health including marriage and family, social work, clinical psychology, counseling, counselor education, and counseling psychology. Although the there were 26 themes in the study, the theme that was shared by all 8 participants related to their concern about advocacy being harmful o their personal and professional lives. Furthermore, 6 of the 8 believed their visibility could influence contentious advocacy efforts. In other words, these mental health professionals understand their power and influence in the community. Yet, they are stifled to respond because of their concern about the harmful backlash associated with advocating for oppressed populations.

In the Bradley et al. (2012) study, participants disclosed that most clients do not request advocacy from their counselor because they are not aware that this is one of the roles of the counselor. This severely limits the requests that practitioners receive from clients related to prejudice and discrimination. Problems are very rarely isolated issues especially or minority populations so to avoid the picture and focus solely on client empowerment because of counselor discomfort with engaging in more visible advocacy is a disservice to society (Bradley et al., 2012). Also, the study revealed that practitioners

were more likely to advocate in larger communities where they could act anonymously rather than in a small community where they were well known.

Summary

Counseling professionals have a unique role as it relates to social justice advocacy for clients and the communities in which they serve. Although counselors understand the importance of contributing to systemic change, the methods and tools necessary for effectively combating social injustices are often unclear. The conceptual understanding of social justice advocacy without practical guidelines for application creates a barrier between the mental health professional and their potential impact on society. The empirical research is too limited for a comprehensive understanding of the state of the profession, which limits the ability to structure behavioral interventions to improve the promotion and practice of social justice advocacy efforts. However, the importance of awareness of beliefs and values has been identified in every study pertaining to social justice advocacy and mental health professionals.

Social Justice Advocacy and School Counseling

School counselors are in a unique position of influence related to social justice advocacy efforts. First, this section will provide an overview of the school counseling profession. Secondly, this section will explore the current role of the school counselor. Thirdly, the relationship between social justice advocacy and school counseling will be examined. Then, the limited empirical studies related to social justice advocacy within the school counseling profession will be reviewed. Finally, a summary will conclude this section.

Overview of the School Counseling Profession

The school counseling profession has changed since the beginning years. From the early 1900's to the new millennium, Herr and Erford (2007) explain that the role of school counselors has historically consisted of responsibilities aligned with psychologists, researchers, student personnel administrators, vocational guidance personnel, and other supportive roles in the school system. However, the evolution of the counseling profession in response to the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 helped define the role of school counselors and created objectives for the profession to endorse the national goals. The NDEA realized the impact that school counselors are capable of having on the academic achievement of students. In response to the Soviet Union's launch of the first satellite to successfully orbit the earth, Sputnik, a more intentional process toward the achievement of more intelligent students in the U.S. became of importance hence putting spotlight on school counselors' to demonstrate their ability to contribute to the success of students.

Counselors motivated students to learn more about mathematics and science as these were the subject areas that directly influenced the success of Sputnik, which was an event that created a drive toward national competeveness related to academic achievement (Herr & Erford, 2007; Lee, 2001). In addition to this response to Sputnik, by the late 1960's, school counselors were providing crisis intervention, dropout prevention, career counseling, and participating in class scheduling. Then, the desegregation of schools as a result of the Civil Rights Movement shifted the attention of counselors to multicultural and diversity-related initiatives in support of schools counseling programs

to provide equal access to all students regardless of their culturally diverse backgrounds (Herr & Erford, 2007; Lee, 2001).

Several years later, the national legislature became more involved in setting the course for school counselors starting with the School to Work Opportunities Act of 1980. This act emphasized that school counselors would offer career development and guidance to elementary, middle, and high school students. The purpose was to expose students to various jobs while in elementary school, help students to connect their gifts and talents with specific careers in middle school, and assist students with selecting the courses, training, and education needed to fulfill their career goals in high school.

While counselors continued to uphold the objectives of the School to Work Opportunities Act of 1980, there was a shift from career development to the promotion of a profession that would provide counseling and direct support services for student through more standards-based initiatives which have resulted in a clearer understanding of the role of school counselor. These guidelines and standards supported the next evolution of the counseling profession, which is moving toward data-driven research to demonstrate the effectiveness of school counseling programs.

The school counseling profession has changed over the years. Instead of a strict emphasis on guidance, school counselors are using their position and power to serve as systemic change agents demonstrating the competence necessary to impact students, families and communities. In addition, school counseling professionals are becoming more preventative and responsive to the concerns, issues and problems that students face. Although school environments and administration often curtail the profession of school

counselors to serve as needed in non-counseling related duties, the common virtue of the profession is to promote and support student achievement.

Current Role of the School Counselor

The American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) national model, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, Education Trust's Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI), and the unyielding changes of the racial demographics of schools in the United States serve as the infrastructure of the current role of the school counselor (Cohen, 1990). In addition, school counselors are expected to abide by ethical standards of the profession. The standards and guidelines that direct school counselors each day at work are conceptually sound. However, the academic achievement gap between students of color and those within the dominant culture continues to spread (Herr & Erford, 2007; Stone & Dahir, 2006).

There has been an increase in attention given to statistics demonstrating significantly lower rates of academic achievement between students of color and their white peers (Ratts et al., 2007). The responsibility for their achievement continues to impact teachers and counselors. Moreover, the spotlight is now on school counselors and their role in student achievement. If racial minority students are receiving the support necessary to adjust to the demands of the system, there is a need for advocating for the system to change and adjust to the students (Menacker, 1976). Changing the counselors and changing the system are both daunting tasks.

Ratts et al.'s (2007) framework was considered an adaptation of Lewis et al.'s, (2003) ACA competencies in order to ensure applicability of the model to school counselors working with students. The framework included specific interventions on the

student advocacy level such as empowering students to identify ways to protect themselves from bullies or advocating on behalf of students by collaborating with teachers to ensure culturally diverse literature to help provide minority students with literary role models. At the school level, the authors noted that the "counselor's primary role is that of an ally" (p. 93).

While these efforts are admirable and needed in the school system, it seems like quite a lofty goal to place all student advocacy responsibilities on the shoulders of school counselors. Specifically, literature suggests school counselors' are already stretched thin in regards to the multiple roles they are expected to uphold in their profession (Field & Baker, 2004; House & Martin, 1998; Trusty & Brown, 2005).

The expectation to demonstrate successful practice through data is the impetus of more and more school counseling programs. As school counselors transition from performing based on faith that they will do the right thing for all students, counselors are expected to demonstrate the effectiveness of their interventions based on student outcomes and school evaluations. School counselors have been trusted for years to respond with equity and fairness toward all students. Although there are those who do, the profession is now expecting counselors to take an objective account of their influence on the school environment through evidence-based improvement plans to improve the holistic success of all students.

Social Justice Advocacy and School Counseling

The counseling profession has come to accept the idea that a social justice perspective belongs at the center of good practice in order for impartiality to guide their interactions with clients, families, and the surrounding community (ACA, 2012). In the

school counseling profession, there are three overarching organizations that serve as catalysts for the social justice advocacy movement within schools: American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association, and Education Trust. Each of these initiatives shares a central goal of promoting cultural social justice for diverse student populations. Furthermore, an increase in advocacy efforts in the school setting by school counseling professionals is necessary to adequately prepare for the changing demographics in public schools.

In preparing future school counselors to be advocates for their students, counselor educators are urged to concentrate curricula on issues, strategies, and interventions that will assist school counselors in closing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students (Green & House, 2006; House, 2004). Training school counselors in advocacy counseling has significant implications for the under-resourced children of society and the communities they inhabit. Advocacy is listed under the management system substructure as an appropriate counseling responsibility in the ASCA National Model (Holcomb-McCoy, 2007).

The American Counseling Association (ACA; 2012) has ethical standards to employ counselors, when appropriate, to advocate at societal, institutional, group, and the individual level to combat against injustices that can stifle the growth and development of clients. In addition, the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA, 2010) preamble states "professional school counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equality in access and success in educational opportunities" (p.1). Lastly, the Education Trust (2012) provides support for all students by promoting equity and accessibility to quality education. However, these ideals are not

achievable if helping professionals lack the knowledge, awareness, and inner conviction of the fact that minority children do not have equal access to resources in society (Smith, Baluch, Bernbei, Robohm, & Sheehy, 2003).

For many years, the service provided to students by professional school counselors was accepted by faith alone (Myrick, 2003). In other words, stakeholders trusted that counselors would respond empathically with respect to the cultural background of students and their families. However, national associations such as ASCA (2012) are undergoing a transformation in which school counselor accountability is contributing to a more evidence-based profession. Additionally, a review of evidence-based interventions within schools can be used to evaluate the commitment of school counselors to social justice advocacy work by empirically assessing their efforts to help minority populations. As the achievement gap continues to exist in public schools for minority children, the cultural responsiveness and attitudes about social justice advocacy by professional school counselors becomes a variable worthy of investigation.

Empirical Related Research

Although the associations that govern school counselors embrace social advocacy and the standards, preambles and missions demonstrate a clear expectation for engaging in advocacy work, the ability and commitment of school counselors to address the needs of their diverse students is very rarely assessed. In an extensive review of the literature using the EbscoHost Discovery Service of approximately 50 article databases to research articles between the development of the first ASCA model in 2002 to 2012, professional behaviors supported by ACA, ASCA, and Education Trust have been investigated in only one empirical study on social justice advocacy within the school counseling profession.

In the study, according to Parikh, Post, and Flowers (2011), personal variables did contribute to social justice advocacy attitudes of school counselors.

With this emphasis in the profession, empirical research to identify the specific variables that influence social justice advocacy is critical. Such an emphasis on those variables will help to provide an empirically-based snapshot of the personal attitudes and multicultural skillfulness that govern professionals in the field of school counseling.

Summary

School counseling professionals are integral in today's school systems because of their distinct capability to build relationships with students, families and leaders in the school and within the community. In addition to a commitment to social justice advocacy, school counselors are expected to advocate for the academic achievement, personal/social growth, and career development of all students. In order to serve on the front line of advocacy related initiatives in the school setting, it is imperative to conduct empirical research about the factors related to social justice advocacy attitudes of school counselors. This study will contribute to that body of literature.

Belief in a Just World

It is common for individuals to respond to social injustices in different ways based on cultural and personal values. Values collectively contribute to one's belief about the rationale for justice and injustice in the world. It is these values that begin to develop in early childhood that help to establish one's worldview of self and others (Bufford, 1997, 2007). The background of belief in a just world (BJW) will be outlined. Then, the theory will be related to social justice attitudes according to conceptual literature and a review of empirical research.

Conceptualization and Definition

In the early 1970's, the Belief in a Just World Scale was designed by Rubin and Peplau (1973, 1975). Belief in a just world is the belief that a person's fate is closely tied to his or her merit (Rubin & Peplau, 1975). This implies that those who have good things happen to them deserve their reward, while those who have bad things happen to them deserve their misfortune (Lerner, 1965). Lipkus and Siegler (1993) defined an individual's belief in a just world (BJW) as the idea that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get in life. People who believe in a just world have confidence that people experience injustice because of negative actions or personal characteristics that warrant oppression by society. Lerner (1980) proposed that people are motivated to believe that the world is a just place where people "get what they deserve" (p. 11).

According to Cohn and Modecki (2007), the underlying assumption of the belief in a just world construct is an issue of fairness; those who have a strong belief in a just world see the world as being a place of proportioned opportunity and equality for all. Those who do not have a strong belief in a just world or represent an oppressed population are more likely not to unconditionally accept the world as being a just place (Rubin & Peplau, 1975). In addition, Robinson and Be11 (1978), suggested that members of relatively low-status groups will tend to view the status quo as less legitimate than will members of higher-status groups.

Worldviews that are characterized by a lack of openness to diversity or accepting of societal oppression (i.e., a belief in a just world) may be related to lower commitments to social advocacy. It is important to investigate the validity of this trend among school counseling professionals. Because existing research continues to confirm that "race" is

the single most important factor shaping beliefs about injustice and equality in the nation (Klugel and Smith, 1986, Hunt, 1996), it is imperative to investigate the relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy to monitor the commitment of school counselors towards those in need of their assistance.

The assessment of one's belief in a just world has predicted other phenomena (Rubin and Peplau, 1975). Most have focused on aspects of victim blaming (Furnham & Proctor, 1989; Hafer & Begue, 2005; Lerner & Miller, 1978). The remaining studies focused on personal awareness such as reactions to their belief in a just world scores or their perception of the association between attractiveness and positive characteristics (Hagedoorn, Buunk, & Van de Vliert, 2002; Dion & Dion 1987).

Based on suggestions by earlier researchers (Furnham & Procter, 1989; Lerner & Miller, 1978), it is necessary to distinguish the belief in a personal just world, in which one is usually treated fairly, from the belief in a general just world or the belief in a just world for others, in which people in general get what they deserve (Dalbert, 1999; Lipkus, Dalbert, & Siegler, 1996). Smith and Green (1984) reported that African Americans and those with lower incomes were less likely to see the world as just when compared to whites and individuals with higher incomes.

Relationship to Social Justice Advocacy

Umberson (1993) speculates that just world-beliefs can lead to an adaptive form of denial resulting in a lack of advocacy efforts. Hochschild (1981) researched outcomes suggesting that lower-status persons often fail to challenge injustices. Traditionally, individuals with lower-status in society support social and political arrangements more strongly than those who are more privileged (Lane, 1962, Sennett & Cobb, 1972). If the

underprivileged are no longer fighting for justice in society and the privileged are complacent, then status quo becomes unfortunately inevitable.

Religious involvement represents one of the most often cited explanations for just-world beliefs and social justice advocacy. Past research reports positive correlations between just-world beliefs and "belief in an active God" (Rubin and Peplau, 1975). Such results have led some researchers to argue that the belief in a just world represents an expression of religious faith-particularly Judeo-Christian themes including the notion that moral behavior is rewarded while transgressions are punished. Historically, studies also suggest that the belief in a just world may be strongly tied to Protestant themes emphasizing connections between a "work ethic," worldly success, and salvation (Lerner, 1980; Ma & Smith, 1985; Smith & Green, 1984; Wagstaff, 1984).

The aforementioned religious perspective on just world-beliefs could hinder advocacy efforts because the helpers could justify their lack of commitment to social justice advocacy. If an individual is perceived to be getting what they deserve, then counselors may be more likely to allow one to reap what they have sown versus intervene and redirect in a more positive direction. In addition, this perspective suggests that success in life is a reward for moral behavior. Therefore, counselors may be more apt to help someone achieve greater success since they have already been helping themselves. Therefore, the oppressed remain oppressed and those who benefit from privilege are granted even more privilege.

Empirical Research Related to School Counseling

For significant and consistent social advocacy to occur, it is imperative for school counselors to explore their own cultural identities and beliefs about society (Erford,

2007). Therefore, Parikh, Post, and Flowers (2011) investigated the relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy of school counselors. The results indicated that belief in a just world was a statistically significant variable related to social justice advocacy.

The purpose of their study was to examine how belief in a just world, political ideology, religious ideology, socioeconomic status, and race related to social justice advocacy attitudes among school counseling professionals (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011). There were statistically significant correlations between social justice advocacy and three of the five predictor variables. Religious ideology and political ideology were positively correlated with social justice advocacy attitudes (r=.236, p.01 and r=.326, p.01, respectively) suggesting that liberal school counselors were more likely to engage in social justice advocacy. Also, belief in a just world was negatively correlated with social justice advocacy attitudes (r=-.246, p.01). This suggests that individuals with a higher belief in a just world are less likely to engage in social justice advocacy behaviors.

Parikh, Post, and Flowers (2011) included 298 participants in the study from a random sample of 2,000 members of ASCA. Eighty four percent of the respondents were white, and 84% were categorized as being female. The results from the study indicated that BJW had a negative beta and partial correlation, indicating an inverse relationship with SJA (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011). This suggests that individuals with greater BJW tended to report lower levels of SJA. In other words, counselors who believe that individuals do not get what they deserve have more of a commitment to advocate for justice for students and families.

In addition to the only study relating belief in a just world and social justice advocacy in the school counseling profession according to EbscoHost Discovery Service, there were only two other research studies that examined these two variables in the field of social work (Van Soest, 1996; Van Voorhis & Hostetter, 2006). These studies contributed to the understanding of the relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy. Yet, the findings were contradictory and both studies offered limited generalizability because the participants were aspiring social workers not counselors.

In the first study, Van Soest (1996) found that social work students who had a greater belief in a just world displayed fewer advocacy behaviors. These students also were more likely to feel uneasy about topics around social justice and oppression. The research on the beliefs and attitudes of two different helping professionals was supported in the findings of Parikh, Post and Flowers (2011) and Van Soest (1996). Yet, Van Voorhis & Hostetter (2006) did not find a correlation between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy, which demonstrates a different outcome than related studies (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011; Van Soest, 1994).

Summary

It is imperative to investigate, understand, and challenge beliefs about justice in the world of school counselors by school counselors who will be expected to assist an unprecedented representation of underprivileged students. Children of color will be the new majority in schools throughout the U.S. by 2020 (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001) and this new majority will represent ethnicities that have been impacted at the individual, group, institutional, and societal level by oppression and social injustices (ACA, 2012). The

change in demographics of the student population in public schools is inevitable but the

influence of professional counselors is not as promising because although advocacy

expectations are at the center of counseling practice social justice commitment,

behaviors, and accountability within the profession are not. Intellectual knowledge alone

does not transcend egocentric and ethnocentric attitudes, values, and beliefs that are

learned through socialization from early childhood (Jun, 2010). Being aware of the

inconsistencies between human knowledge and behavior requires self-reflection in order

to manifest communication and behavioral change. Reflection allows one to challenge

their own values, beliefs, and biases towards others in society (Jun, 2010).

<div align="center">Multicultural Counseling Competence</div>

Cross-culturally competent counseling has become the "fourth force" in the

counseling profession. Multicultural competence is determined by the helping

professional's ability to effectively assist diverse cultures of clients (Ponterotto et al.,

1996). Although specific ethnic groups tend to have more cultural differences among

their particular ethnic group than the amount of cultural differences that exist between

themselves and other ethnic groups, there are fundamental cultural differences that

professionals should understand regarding problems of discrimination and prejudice

against minorities in the United States (Allport, 1954). The importance of gaining the

competence to work with diverse populations has influenced the amount of multicultural

courses in counselor education programs and has resulted in the inclusion of

multiculturalism in more of the mission statements of departments and institutions of

higher education (Sue et al., 1998). Furthermore, The Council for Accreditation of

Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2012) confirms this position

by requiring specific standards related to multicultural competence in institutions of higher education before providing accreditation or reestablishing accreditation. According to CACREP (2012), counselor preparation programs are to train counselors to acknowledge cultural differences and promote social justice and advocacy by taking initiatives to improve the wellness and growth of individuals (CACREP, 2012). Therefore, the critical importance of multicultural competence within the school setting will be examined.

This section will provide an overview of multicultural competence. Also, this section will provide related research as it pertains to multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness. In addition, this section will focus on the relationship between multicultural counseling competence and social justice advocacy.

Overview of Multicultural Competence

The multicultural perspective is one of the most important ideas in this century. Although there are varying definitions of multiculturalism, multicultural counseling, and multicultural competence throughout the literature, the commonality between each of these concepts is the necessity of understanding variety of cultures and the complexity of defining the root word "culture." Locke (1990) supports that a view of multicultural counseling that does not direct attention toward racial/ethnic minority groups minimizes the cultural differences and highlights individual differences.

There is generally an emphasis on multicultural knowledge and awareness of the mental health professionals. Yet, the cultural and individual differences are important to distinguish when conceptualizing multicultural competence from the perspective of helpers. For instance, a counselor can glean knowledge and sharpen their awareness

about an individual client without gaining any new information about the shared beliefs, traditions and cultural context of the client. Furthermore, awareness, knowledge, and skills model used in the multicultural competencies supports advocacy oriented counselors who focus on empowering diverse, oppressed populations, provide conceptual frameworks, and effectively link multiculturalism with social justice (Arredondo et al., 1996).

The specific construct of multicultural counseling competencies was conceived by Sue and colleagues (Sue et al., 1982). Since the conception of this construct, the multicultural competencies have been referenced consistently within the conceptual and empirical work in multicultural counseling literature (Worthington, Soth-McNett, & Moreno, 2007). The tripartite model addresses multicultural counseling knowledge, awareness, and skill. Furthermore, multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness are the two areas most extensively researched (Ponterotto et al., 2002; Ponterotto & Pontere, 2003). Also, knowledge and awareness are the only two areas assessed in the most updated Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto et al., 2002).

Multicultural knowledge and awareness are important; however, emphasis on multicultural skill allowed for a working definition of multiculturalism. The limited literature and lack of inclusion of the multicultural skill component of the MCKAS does not demonstrate support for translating this dynamic, organic, and evolving concept into practical implications (Helms, 1994). This is disturbing because the multicultural skill component of multicultural counseling delineates an action-oriented, less conceptual dimension. Consequently, most professionals know when they act or behave unconstructively; however, they do not as readily have interventions and well-developed

and practiced skills component of multicultural competency for a more positive response to clients. The focus on multiculturalism is more valuable than other dimensions of counseling. Instead, the emphasis on the "fourth force" purports the necessity of recognizing the cultural factors at work within every facet of the counseling profession. However, an emphasis on multicultural counseling is just lip service if counselors perpetuate dichotomous and hierarchical thinking patterns in their treatment of culturally diverse populations (Jun, 2010).

Multicultural competencies continue to influence the advocacy efforts of school counselors. However, knowledge and awareness do not necessarily enhance "ethical conduct" which is the ability to interact with others as a result of the implementation of knowledge and increase of awareness (Jun, 2010). In Green & McCollum's (2004) Advocacy Counseling Paradigm model, multiculturalism is included as one of three components necessary to inform the advocacy model. While conceptual studies have significance, it is imperative to develop empirical research related to multicultural competence and school counselors.

Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness Research

The multicultural revolution has been most evident in educational settings. The school setting has become the battleground for movement toward a more diverse society starting with the Civil Rights Movement. The most current issue within schools is not whether there will be multiculturalism in schools. Instead, the real question is what kind of multiculturalism will survive (Ravitch, 1990). According to Ravitch (1990), individuals tend to assume one of two spirits and purposes related to diversity: One approach is described as reflective and accepting of diversity while the other approach

demands loyalty to a particular group. Because of the privilege and power attached to the mental health profession, it is worth investigating such polarized approaches as they relate to multicultural competence of counselors.

There were empirical studies conducted with results supportive of multicultural training to increase the level of competency of counselors. It is important to view cross-cultural sensitivity, multicultural knowledge and awareness from the perspective of the client and the counselors. In the Brown and Pomerentz (2011) study, clients were more likely to have unfavorable views of clinicians who had committed culturally based violations. These participants also indicated a greater likelihood of reporting culturally insensitive clinicians to a supervisor or ethics board. Their response to their counselors reveals the weakness of the therapeutic relationship from their perspective. However, clinicians have a tendency to self-report as being more competent than they actually are as it relates to multiculturalism.

Empirically, there is limited evidence of correlation specifically between multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge and school counseling professionals. In fact, programming about social justice and diversity are rarely integrated fully into schools and counseling programs (Zimmerman, Aberle, & Kritchick, 2005). Although not within the school setting, Penn and Post (2012) reviewed self-reported multicultural competence of play therapists who work with school-aged children and results suggest that multicultural education, color blind racial attitude, and providing supervision may influence play therapists' multicultural counseling attitudes. There are no other studies that look at the influence of cross-cultural competency on the attitudes of counselors. The proposed research study will extend this research, as it will be the first research to

examine the relationship between social justice advocacy attitudes and multicultural

competency amongst counselors within the school setting.

Relationship to Social Justice Advocacy

Social justice and advocacy are essential components of multicultural counseling

competency. Whereas multiculturalism is considered the fourth force in counseling,

social justice is considered the fifth force. Although empirical research is limited, the

conceptual relationship between social justice advocacy and multicultural counseling

competency has been developed in the literature. D'Andrea and Heckman (2008)

emphasize that social justice is one of the major forces in the multicultural counseling

movement, and there are various articles on social justice and multicultural counseling in

the Journal of Counseling and Development's issue on multiculturalism (Comstock et

al.,2008; Crether, Rivera, & Nash, 2008).

It is a lofty goal to expect for new professionals to achieve cross-culturally

competency regardless of the extent of their knowledge, training and experience during

their tenure in a counseling training program. In fact, becoming a multicultural competent

counselor is a journey not a destination. However, for it to be viewed as such, there

should continue to be stops along the journey for training, evaluation and accountability

for counseling professionals without them having to rely solely on self-directed efforts to

learn more about other cultures and become more effective in their work with those

cultures.

Preconceived beliefs or worldviews may actually be responsible for predicting

commitment to social advocacy efforts because advocates of justice must be able to

recognize injustices and feel a sense of responsibility to help those affected (Cohen,

2001; Cornelius, 1998; Garmon, 2005; House & Martin, 1998; Speight & Vera, 2004; Van Soest, 1996). It is possible that previously upheld openness to multicultural diversity or self-awareness would be predictors of advocacy commitment.

As it relates to multicultural competency and social justice, there were concerns that minority races have not received adequate counseling services because of limitations due to oppressive organizational policies and the individual value systems of professional counselors (Diller, 2004; Ridley & Kleiner, 2003; Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992, Sue et al., 1982).

Empirical Related Research

Social justice and multicultural competence have been inextricably linked for nearly four decades, influencing the development of multicultural competency standards and guidelines and organizational change in psychology (Arredondo & Perez, 2003). Current conceptual literature on expanding counselor competence through training and other initiatives exists (Marbley, Malott, Flaherty, Frederick, 2011; Ratts, Anthony & Santos, 2010; Toporek & Vaughn, 2010).

However, research that demonstrates the effectiveness of those approaches is severely limited. Nilsson, Schale, and Khamphakdy-Brown (2011) explored whether experiences of counselor trainees with refugee women in an outreach mental health program would facilitate the development of multicultural competency and social justice advocacy. Twelve students were interviewed, and their responses indicate that student involvement in the outreach program can strengthen multicultural sensitivity and advocacy engagement. The themes that emerged from the study demonstrated the impact of meaningful experience on social justice advocacy and multicultural competence.

Similarly, an immersion experience in Puerto Rico for graduate students provided a transformative learning experience and resulted in self-reported commitments to social justice advocacy (Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009). There was not a follow-up study on either group of graduate students to evaluate whether or not this short-term experience of counselor trainees continued to influence their interactions with minorities during their careers as professional counselors.

Caldwell & Vera (2010) examined the relationship between social justice orientation development and critical incidents of 36 participants including both trainees and counseling psychology professionals. The analyses of the qualitative, critical incident research design revealed five categories that impacted their commitment to minority populations and social justice through scholarship and clinical practice. In support of the studies above, one of the highest rank-ordered items in the survey was exposure to injustice indicating the importance of facilitating experiences to develop multicultural awareness and increase knowledge about various cultures. In addition, Caldwell & Vera (2010) reported significant persons as the most influential critical incident in the development of social justice orientation.

Furthermore, Beer, Spanierman, Green & Todd (2012) recently completed a mixed methods study to examine the commitments to social justice of counseling psychology graduate students. Results indicated that the participants' commitment to social justice advocacy was predicted less by their individual activist orientations and more by the overall commitment to advocacy of their training program. The results support incorporating macro-level social justice interventions in graduate student training to promote a systemic commitment to social justice. This is important because trainees'

perceptions of their training environment influenced their commitments to social justice. Regardless of personal values and strengths related to multicultural counseling and advocacy, the most significant impact on the commitment to social justice advocacy of the 260 participants representing counseling psychology programs across the nation were their perception of their training programs stance on social justice advocacy.

Awareness, experience and the overall culture of training programs influences helping professionals' perspective of social justice and multicultural counseling, which in turn impacts their service to students and clients. Johnson (2010) found that in a sample of 614 young adults between the ages of 22 and 30, six out of 10 reported the college advising from high school counselors to be inadequate. The study further reported that 91% of African American and 82% of Hispanics reported being poorly served by their school counselors in terms of college counseling (Johnson, 2010). Although there are inevitably other contributing factors and limitations in the study, the results warrant a more extensive investigation related to social justice advocacy and multicultural sensitivity of the school counselors.

Because of urbanization and modernization, cultures from around the world are increasingly looking to the field of counseling as a means of managing social problems (Sue, 1998). The diversity of clients and students served has challenged helping professionals to acknowledge the different beliefs and practices of privileged versus non-privileged populations in society. One of the strongest demonstrations and clearest gauges in the school counseling profession of cross-cultural knowledge and increased awareness is the practice of advocacy for all students, families and communities.

Summary

Professional counselors are expected to acquire knowledge, demonstrate skills, and sharpen awareness as it relates to addressing cultural issues of clients. The rationale for formulating and implementing multicultural counseling competencies within the profession are varied and vast. Nevertheless, the overarching intention is to protect all clients by developing culturally sensitive mental health professionals. There tends to be greater sensitivity to multicultural issues when helpers are aware of their assumptions concerning human behaviors, minority or culturally different clients, and effective intervention strategies (Sue et al., 1998). The culminating focus on multiculturalism and social justice, which are referred to as the fourth and fifth dimensions of counseling, may result in a more forthcoming profession. Multicultural competence and a commitment to social justice advocacy are likely to result in retention and satisfaction by minority clients and students as well as systemic change for families and communities.

<center>Summary and Conclusions</center>

Chapter Two provided a comprehensive review of literature related to social justice advocacy as it relates to the construct of belief in a just world and multicultural competency in the profession of school counseling. The counseling profession has come to accept the idea that a social justice perspective should be at the center of good practice (ACA, 2012). However, there is limited empirical research done to support this ideal stance for professional school counselors to take. Therefore as the profession moves toward expecting school counselors to demonstrate more results-oriented accountability for the services they provide students, it is imperative to assess the current viewpoint of school counselors and the assumptions that guide their daily work as it relates to social

justice advocacy. Otherwise, the school counseling profession is likely to continue to operate within the status quo and not move beyond conventional approaches to school counseling.

This will be the second study to address belief in a just world and social justice advocacy as it relates to school counseling in the literature, and the first study to address belief in a just world in addition to multicultural competency as it relates to social justice advocacy in school counseling literature.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness as it relates to the commitment to social justice advocacy among practicing professional school counselors. This chapter will include six sections that explain the methodology of this research study. The first section will describe the participants. The second section will describe data collection procedures. The third section will provide information on the specific instruments that will be used and the reliability and validity of those instruments. The fourth section will provide a description of the research design followed by the research question. The fifth section will describe the data analysis. The final section will summarize this chapter.

Description of Participants

A random sample of 1500 practicing, professional school counselors with active membership status in the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) participated in the study. Although all practicing, professional school counselors are not members of this professional organization, the membership census is representative of the current census of school counselors. While ASCA members include non-practicing school counselors, counselor educators and students, only professional school counselors who are serving in a school setting as a school counselor at the time the time of the survey

were included in the study. The sample of school counselors included professionals with varying years of experience representing elementary, middle, and high school levels in urban, suburban, and rural school settings.

<div align="center">Data Collection Procedures</div>

After permission was obtained from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Institutional Review Board for human subjects, email addresses from the ASCA on-line membership directory were collected by ASCA based on specific membership criteria requested. A random sample of 1500 email addresses of practicing, professional school counselors was created. These members were serving in the capacity of a school counselor at the time of the survey. Even with such a large random sample, Dillman (2007) noted that some portions of the population were still more likely to respond than others. Dillman (2007) suggested specific data collection procedures aimed at reducing error. For this particular study, to help reduce the amount of coverage error, a national database was used to ensure participants were randomly selected from across the country.

All participants received an email with a link to the surveyshare.com website. The researcher sent out three versions of the survey varying the order of the three questionnaires. In the email, the researcher provided an Introduction Letter (Appendix A) to all participants explaining the purpose of the research and ensuring the protection of their privacy. Although the protection of privacy is communicated to participants and will be honored by the researcher, possibility of self-report bias remains as school counselors may not want to outwardly admit or internally accept their viewpoints and values. In addition, some of the participants may have answered in a manner that they believe

would please the researcher by providing perceived best responses instead of truthful

responses on the surveys. Nevertheless, self-report bias for the study was likely reduced

since the sample was randomly obtained, and the participants were informed that their

responses would be kept both anonymous and confidential (Dillman, 2007).

After the introduction letter, participants accessed the link to the survey and an

Informed Consent (Appendix B) appeared on the website stating that participation was

voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. After the participants accepted the terms of the

consent, participants were prompted to complete the one-time online inventories: Social

Justice Advocacy Scale (Appendix C), Belief in Just World Scale (Appendix D),

Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (Appendix E), and the

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix F). These inventories remained available to

participants for two weeks. The researcher sent a follow-up email after the first week to

remind those who had not participated to participate. Those who had already participated

were encouraged to ignore the follow-up email.

After the assessment was open for participants for a two-week period, the

inventories became inactive on the website. All of the data collected was downloaded to

the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for screening and further

analysis.

<div align="center">Instrumentation</div>

Self-reported surveys were used to obtain the data for the study. Each participant

received an introductory letter (see Appendix A) and informed consent form (see

Appendix B). Then, participants were asked to complete the following instruments:

Social Justice Advocacy Scale (see Appendix C), Belief in Just World Scale (see

Appendix D), Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (see Appendix

E), and the Demographic Questionnaire (see Appendix F). In this section, the

introductory letter, informed consent form and each instrument are described.

Introductory Letter (Appendix A)

An introductory letter was sent to a random sample of ASCA members in the

body of an email. The letter explained the purpose of the study and requested their

participation. The letter described participation in the study as voluntary, anonymous, and

confidential.

Informed Consent Form (Appendix B)

Before conducting research, participants were prompted to read the informed

consent. The form indicated the purpose of the study, risk, benefits, and inclusion criteria.

The surveys included in the study were approved by the Institutional Review Board for

the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Participants engaged in the research

voluntarily and could stop at any time without penalty. The consent form preceded the

completion of any assessments.

Social Justice Advocacy Scale (Appendix C)

The Social Justice Advocacy Scale (SJAS) was developed to measure self-

reported attitudes about oppressed groups and the personal advocacy behaviors of those

who serve these populations (Van Soest, 1996). There were a total of 22 items and

participants used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "rarely or none of the time" to

"most of the time" to indicate advocacy behaviors on behalf of women, gay men and

lesbians, individuals with disabilities, Blacks, and other racial/ethnic minorities. The

scores ranged from 82-410, and higher scores indicated a stronger commitment to social

justice advocacy. In addition, participants responded by self-reporting their decision to engage or be a bystander in situations of discrimination in seven vignettes in which an oppressed individual was described as experiencing harm in some manner. Total scores were used for the analysis.

According to Van Soest (1996) the SJAS has face validity as well as reliability as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha of .92 for pre-test and .93 for post-test. Face validity is an evaluation of whether a test appears to measure a particular criterion. Measures may have high validity, but when the test does not appear to be measuring the intended criterion, it has low face validity (Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, 1999). Although the SJAS has face validity, there are no reports on construct or concurrent validity for the assessment (Van Voorhis & Hostetter, 2006).

Belief in a Just World Scale (Appendix D)

The Belief in a Just World Scale was created by Lipkus (1991) assesses the extent to which people believe that others get what they deserve, whether negative or positive. The standardized instrument evaluated individual viewpoints of justice in the world.

The BJW included 7 items with each response ranging from "strongly agree" to "strong disagree" on a Likert scale. The scores ranged from 7 to 49. Higher scores reflected greater acceptance of the belief that the world is a just place and people get what they deserve, while lower scores reflected a disbelief that the world is a just place and that individuals do not necessarily get what they deserve (Lipkus, 1991). Total scores were used for the analysis.

Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Skills Scale (MCKAS) (Appendix E)

Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS; Ponterotto,

Gretchen, Utsey, Riger, & Austin, 2002) assessed the competency of professional counselors to serve minority clients. The MCKAS has gone through many revisions, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, and critiques (Ponterotto & Potere, 2003). Knowledge and awareness are the two areas of multicultural competence examined by this scale.

The MCKAS included 32 items and uses a 7-point Likert scale with each response ranging from "not at all true" to "totally true." The knowledge subscale assessed general multicultural knowledge and issues. The subscale included 20 items with a possible range of scores from 20 to 140. The awareness subscale measured attitudes and beliefs about culturally different clients. The subscale included 12 items with a possible range of scores 12 to 84. Subscale scores were used in the analysis.

The MCKAS has content validity (Knowledge, Cronbach's alpha is .92; Awareness, Cronbach's alpha is .72), construct validity (Cronbach's alpha is .57), and criterion-related validity (Cronbach's alpha is .42) as indicated by Ponterotto and Potere (2003) after a comprehensive review of multiple studies. The instrument also has reliability. Internal consistency for both knowledge and awareness is .85 with a small correlation between the two subscales (r=.04) (Ponterotto, et al., 2002).

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix F)

The researcher developed a demographic questionnaire to describe the participants in the study. The questionnaire included 9 multiple choice items that either described the professional school counselor or the current school environment of participants. The questionnaire was used to collect data regarding the gender, race, socio-economic status of origin, and the number of years of experience of the participants. In

addition, there were questions about the school environment including information about the size of the student population, level of diversity, grade level, school setting, and geographic region.

Research Design

A regression design is useful in determining the relationships between variables. This design also gives an indication regarding the direction and strength of the relationships (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). A sequential multiple regression research design was used to examine how belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness related to the social justice advocacy attitudes of professional school counselors. The independent variable of the belief in a just world was entered into the regression model first as this construct is more innate, impacted by personal experience and family, yet can be influenced by life experiences. Secondly, the multicultural knowledge and awareness independent variables were entered into SPSS in the order of the knowledge subscale followed by the awareness subscale. The order was determined because new knowledge gained in counseling training programs can influence counselor awareness.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. Is there a relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy?

2. How much more does multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural awareness add to prediction of social justice advocacy?

Data Analysis

The data was downloaded from the website to the Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This software was used to screen the data, gather

descriptive statistics, and conduct the sequential multiple regression.

Screening Data

Prior to running the major analysis, data was screened. The screening process

examined all variables for accuracy of data entry, outliers, missing values, and normality

of distribution. Additionally, assumptions related to the sequential multiple regression

were addressed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the participants in this study.

Information regarding the school counseling professionals' gender, race, socio-economic

status of origin, and number of years in the profession was analyzed. In addition, the

school where the participant was presently employed was analyzed based on the size of

the student population, diversity saturation, grade level, school setting, and geographic

region.

Sequential Multiple Regression

A sequential multiple regression was used to analyze the data. A sequential

multiple regression analyzed the variability that is unique to each predictor that was

entered into the equation. Additionally, a sequential multiple regression focuses on the

change in predictability based upon the contribution that each predictor is making over

and above the other variable within the equation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).This type

of regression requires that the independent variables are specifically ordered into the

equation. The independent variables were assigned importance based on theory and previous research (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Consequently, the independent variable of belief in a just world was entered first into SPSS. Then, the second and third independent variables of multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness were entered into SPSS in the order of the knowledge subscale followed by the awareness subscale.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methodological framework that the researcher will use in this study. The sections within this chapter focused on the participants, data collection procedures, instrumentation, research design, research question, and the selected data analysis that will be used in this study.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the relationship between belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness on the social justice advocacy attitudes of professional school counselors. Two specific research questions were addressed to examine the relationship between the variables. The first question investigated the relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy. The second question examined how much more multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural awareness add to the prediction of social justice advocacy attitudes among professional school counselors.

This chapter presents the results of the study. The first section in this chapter will provide a description of the participants in the study. The second section will present information regarding instrument reliabilities. The third section will present the bivariate correlations and the fourth section will describe the results from the statistical analyses used to examine the research questions. This chapter will then conclude with a summary.

Description of Participants

The sample consisted of 1500 members of the American School Counselor Association. A total of 88 members completed the survey resulting in a participant response rate of 6%; however, the exact response rate is not certain because the researcher does not know how many of the 1500 in the sample actually received the survey because of subject blocking filters on school email accounts. Surveyshare, the

program used to collect data for the research, indicated that there were 82 members who accessed the survey but failed to complete it.

Frequencies and percentages of the demographic variables in this study are reported in Table 1. Demographic data indicated that of the total number of participants, 71 (80.7%) were female and 17 (19.3%) were male. The majority of the participants self-identified their race as being Caucasian 68 (77.3%). Twelve (13.6%) self- identified themselves as African American, 1 (1.1%) identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, 3 (3.4%) were identified as Hispanic/Latino, no participants (0%) were identified as Native American, 3 (3.4%) were identified as Multiracial, and finally, and 1 (1.1%) self-identified themselves as being Other. The study's demographic data is comparable to the counselors who are members of the American School Counseling Association with 77% of the members self-identifying as women and 75% as Caucasian. Of the remaining members, African Americans represent 8%, Asian/Pacific Islanders represent 1%, Hispanics/Latinos represent 10%, Native Americans represent 1%, and 5% of the members classify themselves as Other (ASCA, 2012).

Of the practicing school counselors who participated in the study, 36 (40.9%) reported working in a high school setting, 20 (22.7%) of the participants reported working in a middle/junior high school setting, and 32 (36.4%) of the participants reported they worked in an elementary school setting. The school settings consisted of different percentages of Caucasian students. School counselors served a range of less than 1% to 99% Caucasian students, and the mean percentage of Caucasian students served was 61.8%.

The participants had varying levels of experience as a school counselor.

Specifically, 20 (22.7%) reported having one to three years of experience, 26 (29.5%) reported having four to eight years of experience, 21 (23.9%) reported nine to fourteen years of experience, 11 (12.5%) reported having 15-20 years of experience, and 10 (11.4%) reported 21 or more years of experience. The counselors served at schools with student populations ranging from an alternative school of 75 students to a high school with approximately 4,400 enrolled students.

When examining the type of school setting, 30 (33.9%) identified themselves as working in rural setting, 36 (40.9%) identified themselves as working in a suburban setting, and 22 (25.0%) identified themselves at working in an urban setting. Additionally, the participants were from varying parts of the country. Specifically, there were 18 (20.4%) participants from the Northeast, 33 (37.5%) from the South, 22 (25.0%) from the Midwest, and 15 (17.0%) from the West.

Table 1: Numbers and Percentages of Demographic Variables

Variable	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Female	71	80.7%
Male	17	19.3%
Race		
Caucasian	68	77.3%
African American	12	13.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1.1%
Hispanic/Latino	3	3.4%
Native American	0	0%
Multiracial	3	3.4%
Other	1	1.1%

Table 1 continued: Numbers and Percentages of Demographic Variables

Variable	Number	Percentage
Years of Experience		
1-3 years	20	22.7%
4-8 years	26	29.5%
9-14 years	21	23.9%
15-20 years	11	12.0%
21-Plus	10	11.4%
School Level		
Elementary School	32	36.4%
Middle/Junior High	19	22.7%
High School	36	40.9%
School Setting		
Rural	30	33.9%
Suburban	36	40.9%
Urban	22	25.0%
Region		
Northeast	18	20.4%
South	33	37.5%
Midwest	22	25.0%
West	15	17.0%

Reliability of Instruments

This section will provide information regarding instrument reliabilities. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency measures were used to estimate the reliability of the Belief in a Just World Scale (BJWS), Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS), and Social Justice Advocacy Scale (SJAS). The means, standard deviations, number of items, and alpha coefficients for the three instruments is shown in Table 2.

Total scores were used for the analysis of BJWS. Participants could range from one to 49. Scores closer to one indicated a lower belief in a just world and scores closer to 49 indicate a higher belief in a just world. Participants had mean scores of 23.11 (SD=6.83). The mean score illustrates that participants had a moderate belief in a just world. The Cronbach's reliability estimate for the Belief in a Just World instrument yielded an alpha of .83.

On the MCKAS, there were 32-items to measure multicultural counseling competence based on knowledge and awareness factors. For the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge subscale respondents' scores ranged from 1 to 7 based on the mean score. Participants had a mean score of 5.11 (SD=.71) with higher scores, those closer to 7, indicating respondents had a higher perceived knowledge of multicultural counseling issues. Mean subscale scores for the Multicultural Counseling Awareness portion of the assessment ranged 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating a higher perceived understanding of Eurocentric worldview bias. Participants had a mean score of 5.47 (SD=.84). The Cronbach's reliability estimate for MCKAS instrument yielded an alpha of .86.

On the SJAS, items were based on a five point Likert scale. The responses ranged from rarely or none of the time to most or all of the time. Scores closer to 1 indicated "none of the time" whereas scores closer to 5 indicated "most of the time." Questions 9 and 10 were reversed from "rarely" or "none of the time" to "most" or "all of the time." The Social Justice Advocacy Scale had a mean score of 3.06 (SD=.30). As the mean score reflects, participants in this study scored closest to the some of the time scoring scale when rating their advocacy behaviors. The Cronbach's reliability estimate

was .91 for the Social Justice Advocacy Scale.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha, Number of Items, Means, and Standard Deviations of Assessments

Instrument	Coefficient α	Items	M	SD
BJW	.83	7	23.11	6.83
MCK	.86	20	5.11	.71
MCA	.86	12	5.47	.84
MCKAS	.86	32	5.29	.63
SJAS	.91	22	3.06	.30

Bivariate Correlations

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Prior to running the analysis, all variables were examined for outliers, missing data, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity of residuals, and collinearity. Outliers were examined and considered to be acceptable. Therefore, the data were not transformed. To account for missing data, the average scores for individual assessments were used to insure the inclusion of each participant in the analysis. Kurtosis and skewness generally did not indicate major departures from normality. The skewness and kurtosis for each variable is shown in Table 3. A scatterplot did not indicate areas for concern. Regression plots using the predicted and residual scores did not indicate major problems concerning the value. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, multicultural counseling awareness, and social justice advocacy were less than 2.0. This suggests that the beta estimates are not problematic.

Table 3: Skewness and Kurtosis Values

Variable	Skewness	Kurtosis
SJA	-.536	1.451
BJW	-.053	-.365
MCK	-.230	-.397
MCA	-.378	-.471

Pearson correlation were performed using the predictor variables (belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness) and the outcome variable (social justice advocacy). The Pearson Correlation matrix is displayed in Table 4. There were no statistically significant correlations between social justice advocacy and three of the predictor variables. The lack a significant relationship between the outcome and predictor variables suggests that the participants' beliefs regarding justice, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness are not related.

However, there was a statistically significant negative relationship between belief in a just world and multicultural counseling awareness (r=-411, p<.01). This suggests that participants with a higher belief in a just world had less multicultural counseling awareness. Also, as evidenced by the Pearson correlation, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness (r=.316, p< .01). This finding suggests that participants who have more multicultural counseling knowledge are more likely to have more multicultural counseling awareness.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Matrix Between Outcome and Predictor Variables

Variable	SJAS	BJW	MCK	MCA
SJAS	1.00	-.102	.170	.034
BJW	-.102	1.00	-.085	-.411*
MCK	.170	-.085	1.00	.316*
MCA	.034	-.411*	.316*	1.00

Note. *Indicates significant correlation at p < .01 level (2-tailed)

Sequential Multiple Regression Analyses

A sequential multiple regression was conducted to examine how belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness relate to advocacy attitudes among practicing school counselors. Predictor variables were ordered into the analysis based on previous research and theory. The ordering allowed the researcher to examine how much variance the predictor variables had after the previous variable entered into the equation.

The main research question sought to examine how belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness relate to social justice advocacy attitudes among practicing school counselors. Therefore, to answer the main question, the following research questions were ordered into the equation based on each step of the sequential multiple regression. The results of the sequential multiple regression analysis is presented in Table 5.

The first question examined was: Is there a relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy? After entering belief in a just world into step one, results indicated that the variance accounted for or (R^2= .010) and the (adjusted R^2=

-.001), was not significantly different from zero ($F_{(1, 86)}$= .896, p=.35). Therefore, the results indicate that there is not a relationship between belief in a just world and social justice advocacy.

The second research question analyzed was: How much more do multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural awareness add to prediction of social justice advocacy? To answer the research question, multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness were entered into the regression equation in the second step after accounting for the belief in a just world variance. The results indicated that (R^2=.040) and the (adjusted R^2=.006).

The change in variance accounted for (ΔR^2=. 030) was not a statistically significant increase in variance accounted for over the model in step one ($\Delta F_{(2, 84)}$ =1.315, p=.274). Therefore, multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness do not add to the prediction of social justice advocacy over and above belief in a just world.

Table 5: Sequential Multiple Regression Analyses Evaluating Predictors of Social Justice Advocacy

Models	R	R^2	ΔR^2	ΔF	Df	β
Step 1	.10	-.001	.01	.90	1, 86	
BJW						.10
Step 2:	.20	.006	.03	1.32	2, 84	
MCK						.18
MCA						-.07

Note. * Indicates statistical significance at p<.01 level.

Summary

The purpose of this research study was to examine how between belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness relate to the social justice advocacy attitudes among practicing school counselors. Demographic data, instrument reliabilities, bivariate correlations, and a sequential multiple regression were included in this section.

An analysis of the demographic data indicated that of the 88 participants in the study, the majority were white females with between 4-8 years of experience, worked in suburban schools, were high school counselors, and were from the southern region of the country.

This section also examined the reliability of the instruments used within this study. The Cronbach's Alpha for the Belief in a Just World scale was .83. The reliability estimate was .86 for the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale. The Cronbach's Alpha for the Social Justice Advocacy Scale was .91. The alpha coefficients indicated that the instruments used in the study were reliable.

The data analysis indicated weak to moderate relationships found between some of the predictor variables. In addition, a sequential multiple regression was used to further analyze the data. The first step of the regression indicated that the model was not statistically significant, such that belief in a just world did not predict the social justice advocacy attitudes of professional school counselors. The second step of the regression indicated that the model was not statistically significant, such that multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness were not predictors of the outcome variable.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This research study investigated the relationship between belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, multicultural counseling awareness, and social justice advocacy attitudes among practicing professional school counselors. The results of this study are discussed in this chapter. The sections include an overview followed by a discussion and conclusions section about the demographic data, Pearson's correlation, sequential multiple regression analysis, and all predictor variables. The remaining sections will include implications of the findings, recommendations for future research, and concluding remarks.

Overview

By 2020, projections indicate that children of color will represent the majority racial demographic of students in public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008) and public school enrollment numbers for all non-White racial groups will increase substantially in representation (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004). As we approach such a shift in the racial dynamics within the school setting, it is critical to evaluate the current assumptions of school counselors in order to effectively move forward with the promotion and practice of social justice for all students.

ASCA's (2012) preamble states "professional school counselors are advocates, leaders, collaborators and consultants who create opportunities for equity in access and success in educational opportunities." (p.1). However, the standards that guide the

initiatives of school counselors do not factor in the influence of counselors' beliefs and multicultural competence on the success of students. While there is an abundance of theoretical literature that supports school counselors taking on the role of change agent, a review of the empirical literature only found one study in the school counseling field to examine the relationship between the school counselors' personal beliefs and their commitment to social justice advocacy (Parikh, Post, & Flowers, 2011).

The researcher sought to continue the investigation of how personal attitudes and values related to advocacy attitudes of practicing school counselors. After examining the literature, the researcher planned to study how belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness related to the social justice advocacy attitudes of practicing school counselors. The sample consisted of 1500 members of the American School Counselor Association. A total of 88 members completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 6%. The participants who took part in the study completed a demographic questionnaire, the Belief in a Just World Scale, Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale, and the Social Justice Advocacy Scale.

<div align="center">Discussion and Conclusions</div>

Demographic Data

An examination of the demographic data indicated a lack of racial and gender diversity among the practicing school counselors who took part in the survey. There was not variability within the sample because most of the participants were Caucasian (77.3%) and female (80.7%). The sample of participants confirms Erford's (2007) inference that the school counseling field is primarily comprised of Caucasian females.

The majority of the school counselors who responded to the survey had one to fourteen years of school counseling experience (73.5%). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012), there has been a continual increase in job openings for professional school counselors over the last decade, which supports the high percentage of school counselors who have one to fourteen years of school counseling experience. In addition, at the turn of the century, the Education Trust, a Washington based, not-for-profit organization, began a five-year, national initiative for transforming school counseling (Martin, 2002). This initiative was the beginning of a major paradigm shift for school counselors as the role of the school counselor was redefined and broadened, which led to greater popularity and interest in school counseling as a profession. This may help to explain the school counseling experience of the participants; however, it is important to note that the years of experience may not have been consecutive.

Perhaps newer school counseling professionals are more knowledgeable, aware, and more inclined to participate in research that is related to multiculturalism and social justice advocacy. This may be attributed to the implementation of the American School Counselor Association's National Model (2012) and the formation of the Transforming School Counselor Initiative (TSCI) that strongly endorsed the practice of advocacy within the school counseling profession (The Education Trust, 2007).

Pearson's Correlation

A Pearson correlation was performed using social justice advocacy, belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness. There were no statistically significant correlations between social justice advocacy and the three predictor variables. The lack of a significant relationship between the outcome

and predictor variables suggests that the participants' beliefs about justice in the world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness are not related to their attitudes about social justice advocacy.

However, there was a statistically significant negative relationship between belief in a just world and multicultural counseling awareness suggesting that participants who strongly believe that people get what they deserve in life had less awareness of the impact of outside influences on individual success.. Also, as evidenced by the Pearson correlation, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness. This finding suggests that participants who have more multicultural counseling knowledge are more likely to have more multicultural counseling awareness.

Past studies show that clients are less receptive and trusting of counselors who are perceived as not understanding or respecting of their cultural backgrounds (Brown & Pomerentz, 2011; Johnson, 2010). Therefore, the correlation between the two variables highlights the importance of continuing efforts aimed at developing multicultural competence and increasing cross-cultural sensitivity within the counseling profession. Perhaps, the use of mental health services by minority populations will increase if counselors demonstrate greater knowledge and awareness of the many issues surrounding diversity (Diller, 2004; Ridley & Kleiner, 2003; Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992; Sue et al., 1982).

Sequential Multiple Regression Analysis

A sequential multiple regression design was used to analyze the data. The outcome was that belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge and multicultural

awareness were not related to social justice advocacy. Belief in a just world,

multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness will be

address below.

Belief in a Just World

The statistical analysis indicates that belief in a just world was not a predictor of

social justice advocacy attitudes of professional school counselors. Therefore, the results

of the current study do not support findings from previous studies which show that high

believers in a just world blamed negative outcomes such as poverty, oppression, and

crime on the victim (Appelbaum, Lennon, & Lawrence, 2006; Lipkus & Siegler, 1993;

Hunt, 2000). However, school counselors were not the participants in those studies.

Also, the results of the current study is in opposition to Van Soest's (1996) research

findings in which the researcher discovered that social work students who had a greater

belief in a just world displayed fewer advocacy behaviors. Furthermore, in comparison

to a study within the school counseling profession, the results do not support Parikh et

al. (2011) previous research in which the belief in a just world variable did have a

statistically significant relationship to social justice advocacy attitudes among practicing

school counselors. In that study, there was a negative correlation between the two

variables suggesting that school counselors with a higher belief in a just world were less

likely to advocate for social justice.

Despite the differences in outcomes and sampling size between the current study

and Parikh et al. (2011) with a 16% response rate, the mean scores and standard

deviations for the shared assessments were similar. For instance, the mean for social

justice advocacy for the current study was 3.06 (SD=.30), while the mean for this

outcome variable in the previous study was 3.63 (SD=.34). Also, the mean for belief in a

just world for the current study was 23.11 (SD=6.83). Similarly, the mean for the

previous study was 25.16 (SD=5.89). According Holbrook et al. (2007), after examining

the results of 81 national surveys with response rates varying from 5% to 54%, they

found that surveys with much lower response rates were only minimally less accurate.

While the results of these findings were not significant, it is important to note

that there was a lack of variability within the sample and a low response rate. Of the 6%

of participants, the majority of them were Caucasian females. Aside from the lack of

variability in the sample, it is necessary to note that the non-significant results suggest

that belief in a just world does not interfere with the school counselor's advocacy

attitudes. These findings are positive because school counselors have varying beliefs

and values. Their worldviews may differ from their diverse populations of students. If

school counselors have the capability to remain true to beliefs by not allowing their

personal values to interfere with their professional commitment to advocacy, students

would benefit from such maturity. School counselors, regardless of their beliefs about

fairness and equality, may be willing to advocate and support all students regardless of

their belief as to why the students are facing particular circumstances in life.

Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness

Multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness

variables were entered into the second step of the sequential multiple regression

equation. The analysis found that neither predictor variable was a statistically

significant predictor of social justice advocacy attitudes.

However, as shown in the correlation matrix above (See Table 4),

multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness of participants in this sample were significantly correlated with each other. Specifically, the variables had a statistically significant and positive relationship. It is possible that the two variables may measure the same construct resulting in similar outcomes. For example, school counselors who have more multicultural knowledge may have more multicultural awareness. The correlation of these variables is not surprising because 21st century counselors are more likely to receive multicultural counseling training in their counseling programs and are experiencing more diversity within their student populations. There tends to be greater sensitivity to multicultural issues when helpers are aware of their assumptions concerning human behaviors, minority or culturally different clients, and effective intervention strategies (Sue et al., 1998). Consequently, there are training programs focused on offering courses and providing immersion experiences to promote multicultural counseling knowledge. It is the understanding of these programs that more knowledge about cross-cultural issues will positively influence the level of multicultural awareness and sensitivity of future counselors (Nilsson, Schale, & Khamphakdy-Brown, 2011; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009; Caldwell & Vera, 2010).

Summary

The results confirm that belief in a just world is negatively correlated to multicultural counseling awareness. This is important because research supports that those with a high belief in a just world are less likely to advocate because of their belief that people get what they deserve in life. In addition, the only other study to examine

belief in a just world in the school counseling profession revealed a negative correlation between belief in a just world in relation to political ideology and religious ideology (Parikh et al., 2011). In fact, their study found that political ideology was a major variable that contributed to whether or not school counselors advocated for a marginalized or oppressed group. The current study revealed an additional factor, multicultural counseling awareness, which is also negatively correlated with belief in a just world.

Although there was no significance between the predictor variables and outcome variable, the study showed a positive correlation between multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness. This result implies that greater knowledge about cultural issues may be associated with greater awareness of self and others. To the contrary, counselors who lack knowledge are likely to lack awareness as well. Therefore, an emphasis on increasing the multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness of counselors could result in more effective schools and more successful students.

<div align="center">Contributions of the Study</div>

It is first important to note that this research study was the first in the school counseling literature to empirically examine how personal beliefs about justice, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness relate to social justice advocacy attitudes among practicing school counselors. Previous research in the school counseling literature did examine how personal constructs and beliefs influenced advocacy behaviors (Parikh et al., 2011). However, the influence of multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness was not

investigated. Furthermore, one of the implications of the Parikh et al. (2011) study was for future research to examine the influence of training in multicultural counseling on personal beliefs. There was also an implication of the study to explore how multicultural training and competency influence social justice advocacy attitudes (Parikh et al., 2011). The current study added to the literature by continuing this line of research with a comparable sample of school counselors.

Second, this study was the first to focus on the relationship between the fourth and fifth dimensions of counseling, which are multiculturalism and social justice, within the school counseling profession. Social justice advocacy is referred to as a way of correcting deficits of the multicultural counseling movement (Vera & Speight, 2003). Previous research in the counseling literature displayed the expectation and importance of counselors to demonstrate competence in both of these dimensions within the profession (Chung & Bemak, 2012; Smith, Reynolds, & Rovnak, 2009; Chang, Hays, & Milliken, 2009; Roysircar, 2009; King, 2010; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001; Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009; Hunsaker, 2011; Lewis, et al., 2002; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). However, until this study, there has not been emphasis on empirical research with a focus on examining the relationship between multicultural counseling and social justice advocacy within the school counseling profession.

Third, a major strength of this study is that the sample comprised of a randomly selected sample from ASCA, which is a national database of counselors. This study included a heterogeneous group of school counselors. The participants were from different regions of the United States, practiced in various school settings and school levels, and had varying years of counseling experience.

Finally, the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale had not been previously used in school counseling research, and the Belief in Just World Scale and Social Justice Advocacy Scale had only been used in one previous study with this specific population. Therefore, the study supported the interdisciplinary use of instruments that were created for populations outside of the school counseling profession.

<div align="center">Limitations of the Study</div>

There are several notable limitations in this study. First the sample was obtained from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) on-line membership directory. This omitted participants who were not members of this association from taking part in this study. Therefore, the ability to generalize the results is limited to ASCA members and those who have access to computers.

Additionally, the response rate for this study is assumed to be 6%; however, the exact response rate is not certain because the researcher does not know how many of the 1500 in the sample actually received the survey due to subject blocking for emails, which is often set by school districts as well as individuals. Nevertheless, this low response rate does suggest that there may be differences in the participants who chose to take part in this research study and those who did not. For example, participants who took part in this study may be more aware of and more open to social justice advocacy related issues in the school counseling profession and, therefore, may be more inclined to respond. The response rate for the study may also reflect the large number of requests for survey participation received by school counselors and their opposition or dislike of completing survey research. Counselors may have filters on their email accounts to

manage and redirect all survey research to particular folders that are only accessed at the counselors' discretion or availability.

Another limitation in this study was the surveys were self-report measures, and the participants were subject to responding based on social desirability. Although the participants were informed that their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential, some may have still responded in a manner that represented their ideal self instead of their true self. The participants were all helping professionals who are expected to enjoy working with others so they may have felt pressure to respond with the most positive or acceptable answer.

Finally, the researcher did not provide financial incentives or rewards as a persuasive motivator for reluctant respondents. It has been proven that providing currency incentives will increase response rates (Dillman, 2007). To encourage participants to engage in research, Dillman (2007) highlights three components as important: maximize the rewards by offering tangible rewards, minimize the costs by making participation appear brief, and establish trust by identifying with an organization that has legitimacy, such as ASCA. Each component was followed in conducting the research except providing the opportunity for individuals to receive a reward for participation.

<div align="center">Implications of the Findings</div>

Despite the many limitations, the results from this study contribute to the school counseling literature base by providing empirical research that investigated the relationship between personal beliefs and multicultural competency on social justice advocacy attitudes of school counselors. Furthermore, this study broadened the

literature base by providing a second analysis of a previous model on the influence of personal values on the school counselor's willingness to advocate for all of their students (Parikh et al., 2011).

Although the results from this study were not significant, the findings have important implications specifically regarding the response rate for this research study. From a sample of 1500 ASCA members, only 88 members completed the survey. Furthermore, there were nearly as many members who accessed the survey but did not complete it as those who did. The program used to formulate and distribute the surveys provided the researcher with an overview of the number of individuals who accessed the informed consent and the survey but did not follow through with it, which totaled 82 members.

The researcher followed Dillman's (2007) procedures for conducting web surveys, establishing respondent trust through the introductory letter and informed consent, and sending of a reminder to the sample. Therefore, the researcher has to evaluate other factors contributing to the 6% response rate. Although there are multiple possibilities for the low response rate, there are several implications for the results of the study.

While the profession has moved in the direction of more of a focus on social justice advocacy, it is apparent from the number of participants, or lack of participants in this study, that all school counselors may not be comfortable with the construct of social justice advocacy and it's influencing factors. The responses to the surveys required self-evaluation and a deeper level of reflection, which could have been uncomfortable for school counselors who fear introspection and change.

In addition, most school counselors have many demands during their workday and do not work within the ideal student to school counselor ratio of 250 students to one counselor. In fact, most school counselors have workloads that are double the recommendation (ASCA, 2012). Because of their work climate, time for personal reflection and engaging in research is limited. Most school counselors are included in before school and after school duty rotations and a host of administrative tasks in addition to their counseling-related responsibilities.

Therefore, an implication of this research is to encourage students in pursuit of careers in school counseling to become active members of the profession by engaging in research during their tenure as school counselors. Although school counselors have demanding schedules, it is critical to relay that completing surveys is not a waste of time. In fact, it is an investment. Research reveals ways to improve the profession, which will be beneficial for them, as school counselors, as well as the students they serve. If counselor educators can be more intentional about relaying the importance of conducting and engaging in research to future school counseling professionals, it is likely to increase and improve research participation.

The education and supervision received during many master's programs may be related to the correlation between multicultural counseling knowledge and multicultural counseling awareness of school counselors. However, within the profession, supervision and continued education around issues of social justice and multiculturalism are not required for school counselors. Therefore, the personal and professional benefits of evaluating their work with students with more experienced professionals, understanding how their beliefs influence their approach to counseling, and addressing cultural biases

may be lacking for some.

Because school counselors are not exposing and discussing their personal stance on working with racial/ethnic minorities, disabled individuals, sexual minorities, and students who come from poverty, surveys that require them to do so may be threatening and intimidating. However, it is important, in spite of such obstacles, to understand the personal beliefs of school counselors because they play a pivotal role in the success of students.

The number of students representing minority cultures is expected to grow to an unprecedented high number within the next several years. Although most school counselors enter the profession to help others improve their quality of life, additional training regarding multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness is needed to more effectively close the achievement gap between minority students and Caucasians. Yet, without participation in research, there is the potential for continued stagnancy within the profession as it relates to school counselors' ability to implement intentional interventions to improve the likelihood of success for all students.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Future Research</div>

Some important questions for future research emerge as a result of this research study. This study did not find belief in a just world, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural awareness to be significantly related to social justice advocacy attitudes. However, the small sampling size contributes to the outcome of the study and prevents the ability to generalize the results. Therefore, in addition to finding ways to increase the survey response of school counselors, there are other essential considerations for future research.

First, this research study was conducted using the ASCA on-line membership

directory. There is a cost associated with membership in this organization. Therefore, there may be differences between school counselors who are ASCA members and those who are not. Therefore, future research could focus on including both ASCA members and nonmembers. Future research could also focus on including more minority populations. For instance, the Native American ethnicity group was not represented in the study. To expand the research to school counselors who are not ASCA members, the researcher could conduct research through district administrators. The research could also be done with school counseling master's students who are in their last semester before graduation that have internship and practicum experience. Additionally, the on-site supervisors of those counseling interns and practicum students could be included in the study.

Second, it is imperative that continued future research focuses on the issues related to social justice advocacy of school counselors. While this study measured social justice advocacy attitudes, another research study could examine social justice advocacy behaviors of school counselors since attitudes and behaviors are not always harmonious. The research question could focus on ways that is advocacy efforts are demonstrated by school counselors. Another research question could address how advocacy efforts by school counselors are related to individual empowerment or systemic change?

A third consideration is to examine whether the number of minority students served by school counselors had an impact on their social justice advocacy attitudes. Does more exposure to minority populations increase the level of advocacy? Furthermore, research could compare the social justice advocacy attitudes of those with

high representation of minority students with those with high representation of Caucasian students to see if there is a significant difference.

Future research could also examine the amount of multicultural training received by the participants to investigate whether there is a link between training and attitudes about social justice advocacy. The research could focus on the ways counseling programs incorporate multiculturalism into their curriculums. Additionally, the research could investigate the percentage of current school counselors who do not have any multicultural training because it was not offered in their training programs. Their attitudes about social justice advocacy could be compared to the attitudes of those who have received multicultural training. Furthermore, school counselors who have both received multicultural training and were involved in an immersion experience to help promote cross-cultural sensitivity could be evaluated in the study. Previous studies show that immersion experiences within counseling programs increased advocacy efforts (Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009; Nilsson, Schale, & Khamphakdy-Brown, 2011).

Furthermore, the nonexistence of organized, required counseling supervision for school counselors may impact their multicultural counseling astuteness and awareness of beliefs that guide their daily practice with students. For a future study, the researcher could include both school counselors who are not receiving supervision and those who are receiving supervision for personal reasons or as a requirement towards becoming a licensed professional counselor in the sample. Then, belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, multicultural counseling awareness, and social justice advocacy attitudes could be investigated within each population ane compared to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences between supervised and non-supervised

school counselors.

Also, this research study was the second study to evaluate belief in a just world as a predictor variable of social justice advocacy within the school counseling profession. The studies have opposing outcomes. Therefore, future research could add to the body of literature by investigating professional school counselors' beliefs about justice in the world. For instance, researchers could find out the percentage of counselors who believe that students who have good things happen to them deserve their reward and those who believe that those who have bad things happen to them deserve their misfortune. Such findings could help with the development and implementation of strategies to challenge current assumptions that can lead to counselor latency and more inequality between the services provided for students.

A final recommendation for future research is to explore ways to engage school counselors in survey research because low response rates can produce unreliable research results. According to Dillman (2007), providing currency incentives will increase response rates. It has been repeatedly shown that providing financial incentives as a persuasive motivator for reluctant respondents is a viable and effective technique for increasing response rates. Therefore, those who conduct future research within the school counseling profession could focus on ways to maximize the rewards for survey participants.

The results of this study have created many more questions for future research studies. While there is currently a lack of empirical research related to this topic, there are more potential studies that can contribute to the body of literature. It is critical to engage in related research because the continuation of research studies will help the

profession to move forward with the promotion and practice of social justice for all students in the future.

Concluding Remarks

Although the link between personal values and attitudes related to social justice advocacy has been shown in prior research, the current research did not demonstrate a relationship between these constructs. In addition, this study did not find that the level of multicultural counseling knowledge and awareness was related to the social justice advocacy attitudes of school counselors. Nevertheless, it is important to continue this line of research.

The profession of school counseling has evolved from working as vocational counselors to serving students and the community in the capacity of change agents, leaders, and advocates. Perhaps, according to the limited results of the research, their commitment to student success allows them to maturely take actions toward fairness and equality instead of allowing personal beliefs to hinder their impact. However, according to Knapton & Myers (2005), research studies with low response rates like this research study can yield unreliable results. Therefore, more empirical research could provide a more thorough, accurate understanding of school counselors' attitudes concerning social justice advocacy and an examination of factors that influence their commitment to students.

The results demonstrate that counselors who lack multicultural counseling awareness tend to have a higher belief in a just world. This can be detrimental to children in society because counselors who are not reflective are more likely to maintain the status quo instead of challenge the system that has continuously proved unsuccessful

for marginalized groups of students.

One of the most powerful positions in the school system is that of professional school counselors. Yet, school counselors who are not aware of their power and capability to influence individuals and the community may not operate at their full potential. Without the commitment of counselors, the achievement gap between students will continue to widen and the influence of school counselors on the present and future of students is likely to remain stagnant or at worst dissipate.

In closing, this research study did not find belief in a just world, multicultural counseling knowledge, and multicultural counseling awareness as predictors of social justice advocacy attitudes of school counselors. Therefore, continued research should concentrate on expanding the empirical literature base to find out factors that actually do predict school counselors' approaches to social justice. Conducting additional research within the school counseling profession will help to better prepare school counselors to individually and systemically serve students, families, and communities.

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APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear School Counseling Professional,

You have been randomly selected to receive this email as an invitation to participate in an online survey as part of the dissertation requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in counseling at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The purpose of this study is to examine attitudes of practicing school counselors. Your name and email address was obtained from the ASCA on-line membership directory.

The survey will only take approximately 12-15 minutes to complete. Your participation in carrying out this research will add valuable contribution to the field of school counseling. If you choose to participate in this study, your information will be kept both confidential and anonymous, as no names or email addresses will be identified with your responses. You may withdraw or decline without penalty at any time.

Please click on the following link to complete the survey:

Your participation and time is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Shenika Jones, M.Ed.

Doctoral Candidate

Department of Counseling

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

As a school counseling professional you are being invited to participate in a quantitative research study that will examine the attitudes of school counseling professionals. You are eligible to participate because you are a licensed or certified practicing school counselor. Your participation will involve completing a survey.

If you decide to participate, you will be one of approximately 1500 participants in the study. The survey will take approximately 12-15 minutes. The data collected by the investigator will not contain any identifying information or any link back to your participation in this study; therefore any information collected will be kept both anonymous and confidential. To ensure anonymity, survey data will be entered into the computer program using only numerical coding.

The benefits of your participation in this human subject study include contributing to the current knowledge, characteristics, and views regarding current issues in the school counseling profession as well as implications for counselor educators and trainees. There are no known risks in participating in this study. You may withdraw or decline without penalty at any time.

You are a volunteer. The decision to participate in this study is completely up to you. If you decide to be in the study, you may change your mind and stop at any time.

UNC Charlotte wants to make sure that you are treated in a fair and respectful manner. Contact the University's Research Compliance Office 704-687-1871 if you have any questions about how you are treated as a study participant. If you have any questions about the project, please contact me, Shenika Jones, at 803-325-4738 or my Dissertation Chair Dr. Phyllis Post, PhD, 704-687-8961.

I have read the information and by clicking on the Accept button at the bottom of this page I am giving consent to participate in this study. I also agree that I am a licensed/certified practicing school counselor.

Thank you for taking the time to participate.

Sincerely,

Shenika Jones, M. Ed.	Dissertation Chair
Doctoral Candidate	Dr. Phyllis Post
Department of Counseling	Department of Counseling
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	University of North Carolina at Charlotte

APPENDIX C: SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY SCALE

Directions: Please circle the number which represents the response that best fits your experience. Use the following scale for all items:
1 = rarely or none of the time
2 = a little of the time
3 = some of the time
4 = a good part of the time
5 = most or all of the time

1. I challenge others when they make degrading remarks about:
   a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
   b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
   c. women 1 2 3 4 5
   d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
   e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

2. I would welcome as a friend someone who is:
   a. African American 1 2 3 4 5
   b. another ethnic or racial minority 1 2 3 4 5
   c. a woman 1 2 3 4 5
   d. a gay man or lesbian 1 2 3 4 5
   e. a person with a disability 1 2 3 4 5

3. I either laugh at or tell jokes that are derogatory toward:
   a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
   b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
   c. women 1 2 3 4 5
   d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
   e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

4. I speak up when someone is impolite or acting disrespectfully toward:
   a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
   b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
   c. women 1 2 3 4 5
   d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
   e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

5. I think about the effect of my comments and actions before I speak or act in
   relation to:
   a. an African American 1 2 3 4 5
   b. another ethnic or racial minority 1 2 3 4 5
   c. a woman 1 2 3 4 5
   d. a gay man or lesbian 1 2 3 4 5
   e. a person with a disability 1 2 3 4 5

1 = rarely or none of the time
2 = a little of the time
3 = some of the time
4 = a good part of the time
5 = most or all of the time

6. I support the need for separate social groups for:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

7. I communicate either verbally or nonverbally the message that:
    a. African Americans are not as competent
        as white people 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities are not
        as competent as white people 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women are not as competent as men 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men and lesbians are not as
        as competent as heterosexuals. 1 2 3 4 5
    e. people with disabilities are not as competent
        as able-bodied people. 1 2 3 4 5

8. The following are part of my social life:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

9. I repeat statements or rumors that reinforce prejudice or bias against:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

10. I joke about types of music, dress, and/or behavioral mannerisms that seem
    representative of:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

1 = rarely or none of the time
2 = a little of the time
3 = some of the time
4 = a good part of the time
5 = most or all of the time

11. I attend cultural events, read literature, and in other ways try to educate myself
    about the unique culture of:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

12. I protest (e.g. by calling or writing) when a book, newspaper, TV show, or
    other media perpetuates a stereotype or prejudice against:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

13. I tell other people that I support equal rights under the law for:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    b. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    c. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

14. I say something like "I think that's inappropriate" or "I don't like that" when I
    think a friend or family member's actions or words demonstrate prejudice
    against:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

15. When someone says: "Some groups have problems, to a large extent, because of
    their own unacceptable behavior," I agree (either verbally or silently) when
    the comment is about:
    a. African Americans 1 2 3 4 5
    b. other ethnic or racial minorities 1 2 3 4 5
    c. women 1 2 3 4 5
    d. gay men or lesbians 1 2 3 4 5
    e. persons with disabilities 1 2 3 4 5

Directions: For each of the following situations, <u>circle</u> the ONE response that you honestly think you would do. <u>There are no right or wrong answers</u>.

16. While shopping in a busy supermarket, you see the produce manager, a white man in his twenties, yelling loudly at a black worker: "I said get over here <u>now</u>, stupid!!"
    a. Since I don't know the situation, I might consider that the manager is justified.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably leave the situation rather than say anything
    d. I would provide information that would give the manager other options than yelling.
    e. I would challenge the manager or communicate in some way that I thought his behavior was humiliating and inappropriate.

17. While looking at a list of scholarship recipients, a friend says: "Look! 2/3 of the scholarships are going to students with Oriental or Indian names. Most of these scholarship recipients are foreigners, not real Americans!"
    a. I would probably agree.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably leave the situation rather than say something.
    d. I would provide information that gives another point of view or counters stereotypes.
    e. I would challenge him/her or communicate in some way that I thought the comment was inappropriate.

18. While talking over lunch in with your co-workers, one of them comments that a woman co-worker just got a promotion. Another co-worker responds, "Who did she sleep with to get **that** job?" Everyone laughs.
    a. I would probably laugh along with the others.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably leave the situation rather than say something.
    d. I would provide information that gives another point of view or counters stereotypes.
    e. I would challenge them or communicate in some way that I thought the comment was inappropriate.

19. A couple of months after you were hired, your supervisor approaches you before hiring a new worker and asks if you would mind working with a "faggot."
    a. I would probably think the supervisor was appropriately concerned about staff morale and I might thank her/him for asking me.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably not say anything.
    d. I would provide information that gives another point of view or counters

e. I would challenge the supervisor or communicate in some way that I thought the comment was inappropriate.

Directions: For each of the following situations, <u>circle</u> the ONE response that you honestly think you would do. <u>There are no right or wrong answers</u>.

20. You are at the mall with your client who has serious mental illness. A mother says to her child, "Stay away from that person! You never know what they might do!"
    a. I would probably understand the mother's concern about protecting her child.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably leave the situation rather than say something.
    d. I would provide information or do something that would counter the mother's stereotypes.
    e. I would challenge the mother or communicate in some way that I thought her comment was inappropriate.

21. You are in a staff meeting to discuss future programs for client groups. One of your co-workers suggests that staff obtain ideas from their clients, and another co-worker objects because people with serious mental illness can't really think about ideas for program or field trips.
    a. I would probably agree.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably leave the meeting rather than say something.
    d. I would provide information that gives another point of view or counters stereotypes.
    e. I would challenge him/her or communicate in some way that I thought the comment was inappropriate.

22. You are having lunch with your grandmother in a restaurant on the town square. A group of the participants in the county's day program for people with severe mental illness is standing across the street in front of the building that houses their treatment program. She comments that the program should find a building that is not on the main street because after all it is a major state highway and "what do people think about her town when they drive by and see all these people standing around on the sidewalk?"
    a. I would probably understand my grandmother's concern about maintaining her town's image.
    b. I would probably not say or do anything.
    c. I might be disturbed, but I would probably finish lunch and leave rather than say something.
    d. I would provide information or do something that would counter my grandmother's stereotypes.
    e. I would challenge my grandmother or communicate in some way that I thought her comment was inappropriate.

APPENDIX D: GLOBAL BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD SCALE

Please read each statement below and circle the one number that best corresponds with your beliefs based on the following scale:

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Slightly Disagree
4 = Neutral
5 = Slightly Agree
6 = Agree
7 = Strongly Agree

1. I feel that people get what they are entitled to have. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I feel that a person's efforts are noticed and rewarded. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. I feel that people earn the rewards and punishments they get. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. I feel that people who meet with misfortune have brought it on themselves.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. I feel that people get what they deserve. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. I feel that rewards and punishments are fairly given. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. I basically feel the world is a fair place. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX E: MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING KNOWLEDGE AWARENESS
SCALE

Using the following scale, rate the truth of each item as it applies to you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at All True			Somewhat True			Totally True

-- ----

1. I believe all clients should maintain direct eye contact during counseling.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I check up on my minority/cultural counseling skills by monitoring my functioning –
via consultation, supervision, and continuing education.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. I am aware some research indicates that minority clients receive "less preferred"
forms of counseling treatment than majority clients.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. I think that clients who do not discuss intimate aspects of their lives are being resistant
and defensive.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I am aware of certain counseling skills, techniques, or approaches that are more likely
to transcend culture and be effective with any clients.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. I am familiar with the "culturally deficient" and "culturally deprived" depictions of
minority mental health and understand how these labels serve to foster and perpetuate
discrimination.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Using the following scale, rate the truth of each item as it applies to you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at All True			Somewhat True			Totally True

-- ----

7. I feel all the recent attention directed toward multicultural issues in counseling is overdone and not really warranted.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

8. I am aware of individual differences that exist among members within a particular ethnic group based on values, beliefs, and level of acculturation.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

9. I am aware some research indicates that minority clients are more likely to be diagnosed with mental illnesses than are majority clients.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

10. I think that clients should perceive the nuclear family as the ideal social unit.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

11. I think that being highly competitive and achievement oriented are traits that all clients should work towards.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

12. I am aware of the differential interpretations of nonverbal communication (e.g., personal space, eye contact, handshakes) within various racial/ethnic groups.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

13. I understand the impact and operations of oppression and the racist concepts that have permeated the mental health professions.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

14. I realize that counselor-client incongruities in problem conceptualization and counseling goals may reduce counselor credibility.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Using the following scale, rate the truth of each item as it applies to you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at All True			Somewhat True			Totally True

---

15. I am aware that some racial/ethnic minorities see the profession of psychology functioning to maintain and promote the status and power of the White Establishment.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

16. I am knowledgeable of acculturation models for various ethnic minority groups.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

17. I have an understanding of the role culture and racism play in the development of identity and worldviews among minority groups.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

18. I believe that it is important to emphasize objective and rational thinking in minority clients.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

19. I am aware of culture-specific, that is culturally indigenous, models of counseling for various racial/ethnic groups.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

20. I believe that my clients should view a patriarchal structure as the ideal.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

21. I am aware of both the initial barriers and benefits related to the cross-cultural counseling relationship.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

22. I am comfortable with differences that exist between me and my clients in terms of race and beliefs.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Using the following scale, rate the truth of each item as it applies to you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at All True			Somewhat True			Totally True

----

23. I am aware of institutional barriers which may inhibit minorities from using mental health services.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

24. I think that my clients should exhibit some degree of psychological mindedness and sophistication.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

25. I believe that minority clients will benefit most from counseling with a majority who endorses White middle-class values and norms.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

26. I am aware that being born a White person in this society carries with it certain advantages.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

27. I am aware of the value assumptions inherent in major schools of counseling and understand how these assumptions may conflict with values of culturally diverse clients.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

28. I am aware that some minorities see the counseling process as contrary to their own life experiences and inappropriate or insufficient to their needs.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

29. I am aware that being born a minority in this society brings with it certain challenges that White people do not have to face.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

30. I believe that all clients must view themselves as their number one responsibility.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Using the following scale, rate the truth of each item as it applies to you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at All True			Somewhat True			Totally True

-- ----

31. I am sensitive to circumstances (personal biases, language dominance, stage of ethnic identity development) which may dictate referral of the minority client to a member of his/her own racial/ethnic group.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

32. I am aware that some minorities believe counselors lead minority students into non-academic programs regardless of student potential, preferences, or ambitions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Thank you for completing this instrument. Please feel free to express in writing below any thoughts, concerns, or comments you have regarding this instrument:

APPENDIX F : DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Please indicate your answer to the following demographic questions by typing an "X" on the appropriate line.

1. What is your gender?

    1) Female_____   2) Male_____

2. Which of the following best identifies your race?

    1) Caucasian   _____

    2) African American   _____

    3) Asian/Pacific Islander   _____

    4) Hispanic/Latino   _____

    5) Native American   _____

    6) Multi-Racial   _____

    7) Other   _____

3. Are you currently practicing as a school counselor?

    1) Yes _____   2) No _____

4. How many years have you been a professional school counselor? _____

5. How many students are in your school? _____

6. What percentage of your student population is classified as Caucasian? _____

7. At which level are you a school counselor?

    1) Elementary School   _____

    2) Middle/Junior High   _____

    3) High School   _____

8. What type of school setting do you work in?

      1) Rural   _____

      2) Suburban   _____

      3) Urban   _____

9. In which region of the country do you work?

      1) Northeast   _____

      2) South   _____

      3) Midwest   _____

      4) West   _____