1-1-2012

Exploring the relationship between pre service school counselor's academic training and reported levels of multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion

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EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRE-SERVICE SCHOOL COUNSELOR’S ACADEMIC TRAINING AND REPORTED LEVELS OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE AS PREDICTORS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD INCLUSION

by

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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2012

MAJOR: COUNSELING

Approved by:

________________________________________
Advisor Date
DEDICATION

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Ephesians 3:20, NLT

This work is dedicated to my children,

Camille and Jonathan,

who I pray will pursue their dreams.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to acknowledge and express my sincere appreciation to Dr. John Pietrofesa for serving as my advisor and providing the support and direction necessary for this journey. I also wish to express my deepest gratitude to my committee members, Dr. A. Antonio Gonzales-Prendes, Dr. Joanne Holbert, Dr. Stuart Itzkowitz, and Dr. Tami Wright, for their time, thoughtful insight and guidance. Dr. Delila Owens, thank you for playing a significant role in making this achievement possible for me.

My gratitude to Dr. John Pietrofesa, Dr. Stuart Itzkowitz, Dr. Joann Holbert, Dr. George Parris, Dr. Tami Wright, Dr. Arnold Coven, Dr. Jassett Crooks, and Joy Johnson, M.A. for permission to enter into your classrooms to obtain student surveys. To all the students who completed the surveys, this endeavor would have been impossible if not for your input. My sincere thanks to each and every one of you.

I give my sincerest thanks to Mrs. June Cline for her invaluable statistical expertise, guidance, time and knowledge. I am grateful to Dr. Cathy Pietrofesa for her belief in me and for planting the seed that has now come to fruition. To my mentor and friend, Dr. Noelle Clark, I am forever indebted, as you have inspired, cultivated and motivated me every step of the way.

Finally, I wish to express gratitude to my siblings, Yvonne, Belinda and Michael for their support of my academic endeavor. My love and thanks to Camille and Jonathan who believed in me and cheered me on every step of the way. Eric, your patience and support will be forever appreciated. Last but not least, I am grateful for the legacy of my parents, John and Lula Evans who instilled in me a thirst for knowledge and a drive to never stop.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background

Since passage of Public Law (P.L. 94-142 1975) there have been ongoing school reform movements that focus on equitable services, learning experiences and educational opportunities for children who have disabilities (Greer, Greer, & Woody, 1995). Prior to the 1975 passage of the law known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, students with severe disabilities were typically educated in schools or class settings separate from students with no disabilities (Villa & Thousand, 2005). Public Law 94-142 (1975) stated that:

To the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including those in public and private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

This law marked the beginning of the shift from segregation of special needs students to a continuum of placement options for students with disabilities (Tarver-Behring, Spagna, & Sullivan, 1998). Options have included resource classes, mainstream for designated classes, general and special education co-teaching, special day schools and specialized classrooms.

The 1990 reauthorization of Public Law 94-142 is known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This mandate required every child with a disability receive a free and appropriate public education and learn in the least restrictive environment. This law promoted the education of special needs students in general education classroom settings as opposed to separate and/or specialized settings. The 1997 and 2004 reauthorizations of the IDEA further bolstered the ideas and expectations that children with disabilities have equal opportunities for learning in general education settings. Though IDEA did not use the specific
terms “inclusion”, the critical language “least restrictive environment’’ created the impetus for inclusive practices.

The provision of education services to children with disabilities in the general education setting was referred to as inclusion (Tarver-Behring et al., 1998). Avramido and Norwich (2002) communicated it as a “restructuring of mainstream schooling that every school can accommodate every child irrespective of disability and ensures that all learners belong to a community” (p. 131). Villa and Thousand (2005) summarized inclusion as a “belief system, not just a set of strategies” (p 50). A conceivable outcome of inclusion was equitable educational experiences and opportunities for all students (Greer et al.1995).

Since the inception of mainstreaming (a precursor to inclusion) there have been huge debates regarding the efficacy of inclusion and factors that might impact efficacy. Some of the earlier proponents of inclusion included Lipsky and Gartner (1989) who measured the school performance of children who received special education services. They found little to no positive effects for students who were educated in separate special education classrooms (regardless of disability). In support Baker, Wang, and Walberg (1994) concluded special needs students educated in regular education classrooms did better academically and socially than students in a non-inclusive setting. A more recent series of studies by Freeman and Adkin (2000) revealed similar results. Stainback and Stainback (1996) supported full inclusion based on their review of benefits (e.g., academic benefits and equitable services). More recent research by Villa and Thousand (2005) extolled the benefits of inclusive practices and recommended strategies for ways to create inclusive schools. On the contrary, Leiberman (1988) introduced compelling counterpoints to full inclusion and advocated the need for specialized and individualized services. One of his most compelling arguments in contrast to Lipsky and Gardner (1989) was
that children with true handicaps do not do well in general education. He also argued that regular
education programs failed to provide effective academic programs for slower learning children
(not disabled) and they were unnecessarily placed within special education programs. Vergason
and Anderegg (1992) advocated for a continuum of placement options (e.g., segregated to least
segregated classrooms) such as resource room classes, a combination of special and general
education classes and/or specialized classrooms. Hall (2002) suggested an array or range of
services to best meets the needs of the student.

In spite of the debates, inconclusive studies, and research results that support or oppose
inclusion efficacy, the rise of inclusion practices continues (Depauw & Doll, 2000; Henning &
Mitchell, 2002). The number of students who have disabilities and receive special education
services also continues to rise. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCSE,
2011), over six million students in the United States receive special education services. As a
result of the increases in enrollment of students with disabilities and more pervasive inclusion
practices, all levels of the education system have been impacted, in particular, the roles and
responsibilities of school counselors (Greer et al., 1995).

Counselors’ roles typically change as a result of social, economic, and political
conditions (Borders & Drury, 1992). Historically, counselors provided vocational and guidance
services (Neukreg, 2007). Roles have expanded to include individual and group counseling,
parent and teacher consultation, collaboration, classroom guidance, transition planning,
avocacy, program coordination and scheduling (Baker, 2000). School counselors are often
invited to be a multidisciplinary team member in the development of education, behavioral
and/or individualized education programs (Snyder, 2000). Clark and Breman (2009) stated that
as a result of the inclusion of students with special needs, there would be an increase in the
provision of more direct and systemic services to children with disabilities. Implications for school counselors could include increased involvement in multidisciplinary teams, promoting acceptance by nondisabled peers, addressing the needs of medically fragile children, increased interactions with social workers, parent counseling, working with sibling of children with disabilities and developing peer helper programs (Greer et al., 1995). Lockhart (2003) likewise emphasized the increasing important role that school counselors will play in educational needs of students with special needs.

To promote the development and success of students with disabilities, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, mandated counseling services for students with disabilities and their parents. Subsequently, the IDEA outlined a requirement for support and supplementary services (including counseling). The assurance of development and success of all students is promoted through the American School Counselor Association’s (2010) ethical standards. It calls for school counseling programs in which school counselors serve as “advocates for and affirms all students from diverse populations including :ethical/racial identity, age, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/ expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity and appearance” (p.1). In addition, the American School Counseling Association, 2010 position statement on students with special needs, emphasized a commitment to advocating for students with disabilities in the school and/or community. This included but was not limited to 1) assisting students with disabilities in planning for transitions to careers or to post-secondary institution, 2) assisting with the establishment and implementation of behavior modification plans for students with disabilities, and 3) counseling parents and families of students with disabilities and making referral to appropriate specialists (p.1). According to the American School Counselor
Association Ethical Standards (2010) its members are “certified with unique qualifications and skills to address all students’ academic, personal/social and career development needs” (p.1). Counselors are in a prime position to ensure the success of inclusion practices and “are especially well-suited to play proactive, catalytic roles in defining the future for programs that support the education of all students” (Adelman & Taylor, 2002).

Though laws and ethical standards provide mandates, guidelines and guidance to promote and support inclusive practices, the success or lack of can be influenced by a variety of factors and variables. Variables have included administrators’ attitudes (Cook, Semmel & Gerber, 1999); Praisner (2003), preparedness and preparation (VanReusen, Shoho & Barker, 2001), staff support (Avramidis & Brahm, 2002), and acceptance of students with disabilities (Alghazo, Dodeen & Algaryouti, 2003; Dunn & Baker, 2001). Studies by Buell, Hallam, Garmen-McCormick and Sheer (1999) and Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, and Mastropieri (1998) suggested an educator’s attitude is one of the most important predictors of successful inclusion practices. Hasazo, Johnson, Liggett and Schattman (1994) and Simpson (2004) also supported this idea regarding attitude and the success of inclusion. Furthermore, Fullan (2001) posited that attitudes are an integral component for successful school change.

Researchers have explored a number of variables that might impact attitudes. They include training and preparation (Milsom, 2002, Studer & Quigney, 2004) and perceived competence in working with students with disabilities (Dunn & Baker, 2002). Perceived multicultural competence (specifically for the disability culture) might also prove to be a beneficial variable to consider in that counselors will increasingly work with students who can be considered as part of a distinct culture, i.e., disability culture.
Training and Preparation

The importance of adequate and appropriate training of counselors to address the needs of the people that they serve is emphasized in the ACA Code of Ethics Section C, Professional responsibility (2005, p.9.) In addition, schools that are credentialed by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) require training in equity issues and training that requires specific attention to individuals with disabilities. Given that counselors’ work with increasing numbers of students with disabilities, and they are called to perform a wide range of services, Milsom (2002) suggested that school counselors be prepared to provide needed services. School counselors who have not received adequate training and education to provide services to students with disabilities “often relinquish services to special education personnel and others perceived as more knowledgeable about special education issues (Studer & Quigney, 2004, p. 57). In addition, Greer et al. (1995) recognized the need for increased pre-service and in-service training.

Accordingly, with the increase in inclusion and the increasing opportunities to address the needs of students with disabilities, it is imperative that school counselors equip themselves with increased training and education to work with children who have disabilities. ASCA Ethical Standard for School Counselors (2010) calls for professional competence via professional development and professional education opportunities (p. 5). The American Counseling Association 2005 Code of Ethics encourages counselors to aspire to be professionally responsible by engaging in continuing education to maintain competence in the skills to “keep current with the diverse populations and specific populations with whom they work” (p. 9). Inadequate training presents to be a significant factor in the service to students with disabilities and possibly the acceptance toward inclusion (Issacs, Green & Valesky, 1998)
**Multicultural Competence**

Multicultural competence refers to the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and skills of counselors in working with those who are identified as belonging to diverse groups (Sue, Arrondondo & McDavis, 1992). Cultural competence statements are included in position statements and ethical standards by the ASCA and ACA. According to the American School Counselor Association position paper on cultural diversity “Professional school counselors promote academic, career, and personal/social success for all students” (p.1). Students who are a part of the “underperforming population” are included in this definition (ASCA Ethical Standards, 2005, p.5). The ASCA Ethical Standards (2010, pp. 5-6) calls for counselors to (a) strive for exemplary cultural competence (b) develop competencies in how forms of oppression (including ableism) affect self, students and stakeholders (c) acquire educational, consultation and training experiences to improve awareness, knowledge, skills and effectiveness, and (d) affirm the multiple, cultural and linguistic identities of every student. The position statement set forth by the American School Counselor Association Ethical Standards (2010) promotes the service of students with special needs through advocacy, collaboration, guidance and service.

The phenomenon of individuals with disabilities being associated with a culture has been recognized by a number of researchers including Hall (2002); Sue and Sue (2008) and Gilson and Depoy (2002). People with disabilities as a group often experience oppression, inferior status in this society and are “severely disadvantaged socially, vocationally, economically and educationally” (Sue & Sue, 2008, p. 487). This definition would allow for people with disabilities to be defined within a culture using both social and political models of disability (Gilson & Depoy, 2000).
McEachern (2003) highlighted the importance of preparation and competence in meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Milsom (2002) discussed measures that might improve overall competence. Milsom (2006) emphasized the importance of counselor self-awareness (i.e., beliefs and attitudes in their work with students with disabilities). This view is on par with being a multiculturally competent school counselor.

Holcomb-McCoy (2005) suggested that one of the major challenges to school counselors is adequately addressing the needs of increasingly diverse populations. In light of the importance of inclusion success and the integral roles and responsibilities of counselors, insight and understanding of factors that might impact its success is essential.

**Theoretical Framework: Bandura’s Social Learning Theory**

Bandura (1997) posited that the types of choices we make are based on our beliefs in our abilities to perform a task and do it well. In other words, people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce exert strong influences on how they think and subsequently behave. According to Bandura (1997) people with a strong sense of self-efficacy will approach tasks with high assurance in their abilities and with heightened and sustained efforts. Contrary to this approach, people with a weaker sense of self-efficacy would experience lower assurance in their abilities and less of a commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. In support of these assertions, school counselors who have strong beliefs or attitudes about their competencies, (i.e., multicultural competence and training in providing services to children with disabilities) would approach their responsibilities with heightened and sustained efforts. This might ultimately impact their attitude toward inclusion practices. With this mindset, it would follow that school counselors’ that do not perceive that they are capable of performing tasks related to students with
disabilities and do not feel competent addressing the needs of students with diverse needs, might likely avoid or be less committed to pursuing those tasks.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between academic training and perceived multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion.

**Statement of the Problem**

Historical and recent legislation seems to indicate that the paradigm shift from exclusive to inclusive education practices will continue (Villa & Thousand, 2005). There also continues to be a rising trend in the number of students identified as having disabilities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Unfortunately, there is a critical shortage or absence of literature addressing the work of school counselors and students with special needs (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). This is alarming given the aforementioned trends and the significant roles that counselors can play in the lives of these exceptional students (McEachern, 2003). It is important for counselors to embrace attitudes that are conducive to inclusion success (Isaacs, Greene & Valesky, 1998). Research related to counselors’ attitudes and predicting factors could lend to successful practices with students with disabilities, teachers, parents, administrators, support staff, and all who might be impacted. This research study explored the relationships between attitudes of pre-service school counselors toward inclusion and variables (i.e., academic training and perceived multicultural competence) that might influence those attitudes. Information obtained from this study can be used by pre-service counselors, school counselors and school personnel and training programs to address attitude-related variables that might promote or encumber inclusion practices. Variables to be examined included pre-service counselors’ academic training in the area of disabilities and pre-service counselors’ perceived multicultural competence. These variables were be explored as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion.
Research Questions and Associated Hypothesis

Research questions that were explored in this study include.

RQ1: Does pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training in relation to students with disabilities, significantly predict attitude toward inclusion.

H1: Pre-service school counselors’ training significantly predicts their attitude toward inclusion.

RQ2: Does pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predict their attitude toward inclusion?

H2: Pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predicts their attitude toward inclusion.

RQ3: Does pre-service school counselors’ demographic characteristics significantly predict attitude toward inclusion.

H3: Pre-service school counselors’ demographic characteristics significantly predict their attitude toward inclusion.

Definition of Terms

*Inclusion* – As defined by the National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion (1995), inclusion is the provision of services to students with disabilities, including those with severe impairments, in the neighborhood school, in age-appropriate general education classes with the necessary support services and supplementary aids (for the child and the teacher) both to assure the child’s success-academic, behavioral and social-and to prepare the child to participate as a full and contributing member of society (p. 3)

*Pre-Service School Counselor* - A student who is currently enrolled in a graduate counselor education program with a focus in school counseling. Participants in this study were
students at a Midwest urban university who were enrolled in the Counselor Education Program. The sample for this study will focus on students who specialized in school counseling.

*Multicultural Diversity Competence:* Sue and Sue (2008) defined cultural competence as the ability to engage in actions or create conditions that maximize the optimal development of client and client systems. Cultural competence resides in three major domains: attitudes and beliefs of one’s own cultural conditioning that affects personal beliefs, values and attitudes; understanding and knowledge of the worldviews of culturally diverse individual and groups; and an ability to determine and use culturally appropriate intervention strategies when working with different groups. According to ACA, cultural competence includes “a capacity whereby knowledge of self and others, and how this awareness and knowledge is applied effectively in practice with clients and client groups” (American Counseling Association, 2005, p.20).

*Academic training:* For the purpose of this study academic training was defined as; 1) the number of graduate courses completed that specifically focused on students with disabilities, 2) the number of graduate courses completed that included discussion about students with disabilities in addition to other course content and 3) the number of clinical experiences (e.g., practicum, internship) completed during graduate school that included students with disabilities, 4) the number of graduate courses completed that specifically focused on cultural diversity, 5) the number of graduate courses completed that included discussion about cultural diversity in addition to other course content. Academic training also included advanced courses- post Masters Degree.

*In-service training:* Conferences, workshops and training attended that provided information related to students with disabilities. This included those attended concurrent with
and prior to enrollment in the counselor education program. It included in-service programs workshops, seminars or training related to students with disabilities.

School Counselor Endorsement- NT: A person who can be employed in a school in a counseling role with a valid Michigan teaching certificate and a counseling endorsement.

School Counselor License – SCL: A person who can be employed in a school as a school counselor that is licensed as a school counselor but does not possess a teaching certificate.

Certified Teacher- A person who has successfully completed a state approved teacher preparation program and passage of the appropriate state test for teacher certification.

Summary

This chapter included background information on inclusion history, efficacy findings and counselor roles in the provision of services to students with special needs. Information was presented on variables that might impact attitudes toward inclusion. This included pre-service counselor training and perceived multicultural competence. The theoretical framework was outlined. This chapter concluded with the statement of the problem, research questions, hypothesis and definition of terms.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effect of academic training and perceived multicultural competence as predictors of inclusion attitudes. This chapter provides a comprehensive review of counselor and teacher attitudes toward inclusion. The topics that are incorporated in this chapter also included a review of the literature on counselor academic training, multicultural competence, and factors influencing multicultural competence.

Attitudes

Isaacs, Greene, and Valesky (1998) noted that “attitudes of professionals toward their ability to perform the tasks to make inclusion successful are predictive of their successful performance of those tasks” (p.70). Bandura (1997) posited that the types of choices we make are based about whether or not we can do certain things. In other words, if there is a belief that one will fail, one may fail. If there is a belief that one will be successful, their chances of success will increase. Negative and positive assumptions, attitudes and/or beliefs can lead to self-fulfilling prophesies (Bandura, 1986). Attitudes and beliefs impact how we respond to others and situations. Horrocks, White and Roberts (2008) found attitudes to be an integral component for successful change. Likewise, Fullan (2001) concluded the same regarding attitudes toward inclusion. Coates (1989) found that one of the most important predictors of successfully integrating students into regular classrooms is the attitudes of general education teachers. It would seem to follow that attitudes of counselors (who collaborate, advocate, provide services and support) would also impact inclusion success. Isaacs et al. (1998) suggested that a
counselor’s attitude toward inclusion and those with disabilities might impact or influence the viability of inclusion and their ability to provide services.

Attitudes toward students with disabilities might be equally as important as attitudes toward inclusion. Praisner (2003) pointed out that attitudes “could result either in increased opportunities for students to be served in general education or limited efforts to reduce the segregated nature of special education services” (p.136) This would essentially impact inclusive practices. In a similar vein, Beattie, Anderson and Antonak (1997) correlated negative attitudes toward students with disabilities to expectations of low achievement.

**Counselor attitudes.**

There is a paucity of research on school counselor and pre-service school counselors’ attitudes toward inclusion. This is alarming in light of the fact that attitudes can create barriers to role fulfillment and goals of students with disabilities (Antonak & Livneh, 2000). Though there has been a great deal of research regarding teacher attitudes toward inclusion, fewer articles examine school counselor attitudes. Isaac et al. (1998) found elementary school counselors had somewhat positive attitudes about inclusion. Their findings also revealed middle school counselors were more comfortable than high school counselors (though less than elementary counselors) to engage and support teachers and parents in making inclusion placements. Education courses and field experiences with special education students had an impact on efficacy attitudes. Counselors who had taken more special education courses and with more field experiences had more positive attitudes toward inclusion. Erhard and Umansky (2005) explored variables affecting attitudes and involvement of school counselors in the inclusion of students with disabilities. Results revealed counselors expressed positive attitudes toward inclusion and inclusion practices were perceived to be a major component of their work. Monahan, Marino,
Miller and Cronic (1997) explored and compared teacher, administrator and counselor attitudes about inclusion. Philosophically counselors, teachers, and administrators were for the most part pro inclusion. Attitudes toward actual feasibility were less promising and received fewer positive responses. Mainstreaming and inclusion are conceptually different but both involve the integration of special education and regular education students (Milsom, 2006). The results of Filer’s (1982) research on counselor trainee’s attitudes toward mainstreaming suggested that students had reservation about the benefits of mainstreaming. Yuker and Block (1986) explored the relationships between attitudes towards individuals with disabilities and attitudes toward mainstreaming. Their research revealed attitudes toward individuals with disabilities are positively correlated with attitudes toward mainstreaming.

**Teacher attitudes.**

A great deal of research has been generated on attitudes toward inclusion. The majority of research investigations focus on teacher attitudes. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1966) synthesized forty years of research studies on mainstreaming and inclusion. Their research found that two thirds of teachers supported the concepts of inclusion but time, training, and resources might impact implementation. More recent research regarding teacher’s attitudes towards inclusive classrooms yielded mixed results and studies often differentiated between the attitudes of general vs. special education teachers. Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000) focused on mainstream teachers and found that the severity of the disability impacted teacher’s acceptance toward inclusion. Campbell, Gilmore, and Cuskelly (2003) found that regular education teachers have not been in favor of the increase in students with special needs. Mixed results were indicated in the research conducted by Burke and Sutherland (2004). Buell, Hallam, Garnel-McCormick, and Scheer (1999) found that special education teachers held a more positive attitude regarding
inclusion as compared to general education teachers. Avramidis et al. (2000) stated active experience in inclusion practices resulted in more positive attitudes. Overall studies seem to show that general educators who have limited experience teaching students with disabilities express less confidence in teaching children with disabilities (Avramidis et al., 2000).

Attitude has been researched in conjunction with a multitude of variables. Some of the variables have included preparedness, training and attitude toward the disability (VanReusin, Shoho & Barker, 2001); belief about the nature of the disability and class size (Short & Martin 2005); teacher’s perception of their competency and resources, facilities and personnel (Ryan 2009); collaboration (Villa, Myers & Nevin, 1996) and administrative support (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003).

**Academic Training**

School counselors play a prominent role in meeting the needs of students with exceptional needs (Bowen and Glenn, 1998). As a result of expanding roles, counselors are more involved in the education and placement of special needs children (Wood, Dunn and Baker, 2002). The challenge is expected to continue with the growth and proliferation of legal mandates that call for inclusion. Meeting the needs of all children is important. As such, the American School Counseling Association published a position statement regarding the professional school counselor and students with special needs. It states that “professional school counselors are committed to helping all students realize their potential, and make adequate yearly progress regardless of challenges resulting from identified disabilities and other special needs” (ASCA 2010 p.1). The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) outlined expected curricular experiences for school counseling programs that include “student training for the profession of school counseling must be instructed in equity issues,
barriers that impede academic, career and personal/social success and development” (CACREP, 2005). Despite reform movements and the call for school counselors to increase their involvement with students who receive special education services, literature suggests that there is a lack of adequate counselor training and preparation (Milsom and Akos, 2003). Studer and Quigney (2004) stressed the importance for counselors to receive adequate training around issues and laws related to students with special needs and special education services. Furthermore, their research revealed school counselors received inadequate pre and in-service training for special education related issues. Milsom (2002) examined counselor preparation in relation to current counselor practices. Survey results revealed school counselors indicated feeling “somewhat prepared” to provide services to students with disabilities, and school counselors felt more prepared when their training included course work and workshop and direct experiences. In other words increased preparation, i.e., coursework, resulted in counselors feeling that they were more prepared to perform their duties with students with disabilities. Dunn and Baker (2002) examined the roles of school counselors as well as formal education. While many of the school counselors had some level of training (undergraduate, graduate, post graduate, professional development) to increase preparation, preparation training varied greatly. The authors concluded an increased need for more professional development and counselor’s need to be more informed about legislation that mandates services. On a more positive note, Milsom and Akos (2003) examined school counselor programs, specifically disability courses, experiences, training accreditation differences and program differences. Results suggested school counselor education programs are incorporating more information whether actual courses or integration of disability content in courses. McEarhern (2003) surveyed United States universities to examine content of counselor preparation programs. Results indicated that the majority of 146 respondent schools did not
require coursework related to exceptional students. Findings revealed 62% did not require coursework, while 35% did require coursework and 3% of the respondents did not know whether their programs had such a requirement. On a more encouraging note 53% of the schools that did not require coursework related to exceptional students did incorporate information regarding disabilities. Milsom (2002) recommended an increase in in-service training in school counselor programs to incorporate internships for counselor educations in which internships would provide opportunities to work with students with disabilities. Lack of training, education and experience could result in grave implications for inclusion issues. Praisner (2003) even suggested school personnel might possess negative attitudes toward students with disabilities as a result of inadequate or lack of training regarding disabilities and subsequently they (school personnel) might be unprepared to meet student needs.

**Multicultural Competence**

Multicultural competent counselors have the skills necessary to work with people from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Sue, Arrendondo, & McDavis, 1992). Multicultural competence in counseling as defined by Sue and Sue (2008) is the ability to engage in actions or create conditions that maximize the optimal development of client and client systems. This definition of cultural competence includes three major domains: (a) attitudes and beliefs of one’s own cultural conditioning that affects personal beliefs, values and attitudes (b) understanding and knowledge of the worldviews of culturally diverse individual and, groups and (c) an ability to determine and use culturally appropriate intervention strategies when working with different groups (Sue et. al, 1992).

Though earlier definitions of culture were limited to descriptions of characteristics or customs of groups more recent definitions include values, traditions, social and political
constructs (Nietio, 2004). Lindsey (2003) suggested an expansion of the definition to include “everything you believe and everything you do that enables you to identify with people like you and that distinguishes you from people who differ from you.” Gilson and Depoy (2000) and Weinrach and Thomas (2002) called for a more inclusive definition of multiculturalism to include people who have disabilities. Miller, Miller, and Stull (2007) agreed to adopt a more inclusive perspective and pointed out that “culture is about groupness.” Hall (2002) clearly advocated the importance of “fostering a disability culture for children”. He argued that “inclusion proponents are overlooking the value of the culture that is fostered when children with disabilities have the opportunity to associate with and learn alongside others who share similar identities and life experiences.” The National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME) identified a number of factors that define culture, including disability. Johnson and McIntosh (2009) supported the adoption of NAME’s cultural perspective and in addition posited that there is sufficient evidence of a disability culture.

The importance of multicultural training was highlighted in research by Constantine, et al. (2001). She emphasized the importance of counselor/student differences and related “it is vital that these counselors are cognizant of such differences so as to sufficiently consider the impact of students’ cultural backgrounds in their lives” (p. 14). Constantine, et al (2001) found that the number of multicultural counseling courses taken was significantly and positively predictive of school counselors self reported multicultural counseling knowledge. Greater cultural competency was noted in counselors who receive multicultural counseling in their education programs (Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999). Holcomb-McCoy (2005) also found that perceived multicultural competence differed significantly based on whether or not counselors had taken entry level multicultural courses. Holcomb-McCoy (2004) highlighted the importance
of multicultural competence and suggested it may encourage counselors to alter their perceptions and learn to more effectively counsel and consult with diverse populations. A heightened degree of perceived multicultural competence has been related to heightened success with different cultures. It might also follow that heighted degree of perceived competence in working with students who have a disability (disability culture) would be related to heightened success in understanding and providing services.

Holcomb-McCoy (2005) pointed out that there is “a paucity of information regarding the multicultural competence of existing professional school counselors,” (p. 415). In addition, Holcomb-McCoy (2005) concluded that “considering the increasingly diverse composition of school populations, this notion of multicultural competence is particularly critical to school counseling professional” (p.415). The American School Counselors Association emphasized the importance of cultural knowledge in its 2009 Cultural Diversity position statement that encourages school counselors to create a school and community climate that ensure that students of culturally diverse backgrounds have access to appropriate services and opportunities which promote maximum development (p.1). The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education programs (CACREP) has included and emphasized multicultural content in the current 2009 CACREP standards. It specifies a requirement for learning experiences that that explore diversity issues relevant to school counseling.

**Factors Influencing Multicultural Competence**

Constantine and Yeh (2001) explored factors contributing to counselor multicultural competence and found that the number of multicultural counseling courses taken was significantly and positively predictive of multicultural counseling knowledge. Holcomb-McCoy (2005) examined a number of variables including multicultural counseling courses, gender, years
of experience and work setting. The researcher found no significant relationships between school setting, gender and years of experience. Contrary to these findings, Pope-Davis, Reynolds, Dean and Ottavi (1994) found education variables to be predictive of multicultural competence. Ottavi, Pope-Davis and Dean (1994) also found white racial identity development to be influential in attainment of multicultural competence.

**Summary**

This chapter highlighted pertinent literature reviews on attitudes and their relation to task performance. Topics reviewed also included counselor and teacher attitudes toward disabilities and inclusion, the academic training and preparation of pre-service school counselors and counselor multicultural competence. This chapter concluded with a review of factors that influence multicultural competence.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research was designed to explore the relationships between pre-service school counselors’ academic training and their reported levels of multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion. Variances in demographic data were also examined as predictors of attitudes regarding inclusion. The research questions explored included:

1. Does pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training, significantly predict attitude toward inclusion?
2. Does pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predict their attitude toward inclusion?
3. Does demographic data predict attitude toward inclusion?

This study used Pearson product moment correlations and multiple regression analysis to address the research questions. This statistical technique was used to determine the relationships among the quantifiable variables. According to Hair et al. (2006), this technique is used to “analyze the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables.” This study was reviewed and approved by the university’s Internal Review Board’s Human Investigation Committee.

Research Hypotheses

H₁: Pre-service school counselors’ academic training significantly predicts their attitudes toward inclusion.

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between pre-service counselors’ academic training and their attitudes toward inclusion.
H₂: Pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predicts their attitude toward inclusion.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between pre-service counselors’ levels of perceived multicultural competence and their attitudes toward inclusion.

H₃: Variances in demographic data gleaned from pre-service school counselors predicts their attitude toward inclusion.

H₀₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between demographics and attitudes toward inclusion.

**Research Variables**

Academic training, perceived multicultural competence and subject demographics were the independent variables. The dependent variable was the ranking of the pre-service school counselors’ attitude toward inclusion. The research was of a non-experimental design. Limitations included the inability to manipulate independent variables, lack of power to randomize and the risk of improper interpretation. Extraneous variables that might have influenced the outcome of this research included, participants providing false responses to survey questions, small sample size, and participant bias.

**Participants**

The population was pre-service counselors. All participants were students enrolled in a large urban Midwest university. Students from 15 classes were recruited. Classes ranged from introductory counseling courses to internship, practicum, and doctoral level courses. Permission was granted from course instructors to meet with their students to complete surveys. In order to obtain a representative sample, ensure anonymity and avoid singling out pre-service school counselors’ versus community and rehabilitation counselors, all students in the class were asked
to complete the surveys. Surveying entire classes increased the likelihood of adequate pre-school counselor representation, increased the response rate and increased the likelihood to achieve a higher statistical power. Participation in this study was strictly voluntary. The researcher and teacher were not present as surveys were being completed. Surveys were placed in a large envelope placed at the back of the room and collected after all surveys were completed. The participants were provided with a research information sheet detailing the study, three surveys and a demographic sheet (See Appendix A). In total, the responses from 59 pre-service counselors were collected, analyzed, and reported in this study. The data were collected between the weeks of October 24, 2011 and November 24, 2011.

**Instruments**

In addition to the Demographic Questionnaire, students were asked to complete three survey instruments: the School Counselor Preparation Survey - Revised (SCPS-R; Milsom 2002), The Multicultural Counseling and Competence Training Survey - Revised (MCCTS-R; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999), and The Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES; Wilczenski, 1992).

The demographic data was relevant to this research as it was used to determine the relationship between attitudes toward inclusion and age, gender, ethnicity, disability status, family disability status, level of education, counseling specialty, and credentialing. One question that was included on the demographic questionnaire was concerned with the counseling students’ perceptions that disability was a distinct culture. This question was rated by the students using a dichotomous response format, yes or no.
School Counselor Preparation Survey – Revised.

The SCPS-R (Milsom, 2002) was created to assess counselors’ educational experiences, academic training, how prepared they feel to perform activities with students with disabilities, and a description of activities that the respondents perform for students with disabilities. The entire survey was not used. Portions used included information on the number of courses focusing on and related to disabilities and cultural disability, school counseling, cultural diversity, experiences, additional training, and education. The attitudinal items that addressed preparedness also were used. Portions that were not used included counselor caseload activity and open ended questions. A description of this survey can be found in the article published by Milsom (2002). Permission to use portions of this survey were granted by the author (Milsom, via email 3-19-2011).

Participants documented (by number), the number of courses specifically focusing on students with disabilities, courses in which information about students with disabilities was presented in addition to regular course content and practical experiences. The same questions were presented on courses related to cultural diversity and school counseling courses. Participants were asked to describe additional training and education. One item on the survey, “Preparedness to provide services to students with disabilities” was rated using a 6 point Likert Scale, with the following descriptions, 1 for Completely Unprepared, 2 for Unprepared, 3 for Somewhat Unprepared, 4 for Somewhat prepared, 5 for Prepared and 6 for Completely Prepared.

The portions of the SCPS-R used included academic preparation, experiences and preparedness to provide services to students with disabilities. The portions that measured perceived preparedness were not used therefore reliability and validity measures are not appropriate. The academic preparation, experiences and preparedness data was used in the
descriptive analysis and a correlation design/analysis was performed to determine the impact on the dependent variable, attitude toward inclusion.

The Multicultural Counselor Competence and Training Survey–Revised

The Multicultural Counselor Competence and Training Survey – Revised (MCCTS-R) was developed in 1999 by Holcomb-McCoy and Myers to assess counselors’ perceived multicultural counseling competence and training. This survey was based on the American Multicultural Counseling Division’s (AMCD) Multicultural Competencies and Explanatory statements (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004, p.156).

The (AMCD) is a division of the American Counseling Association. Multicultural Counseling Competencies are divided into three areas: 1) Counselor Awareness of Own Cultural Values and Biases, 2) Counselor Awareness of Client's Worldview and 3) Culturally Appropriate Intervention Strategies (Arrendondo et al., 1996). The AMCD statements were developed and organized around competencies outlined in the article by Sue, Arrendondo, and McDavis (1992).

The MCCTS was revised in 2001 by Holcomb-McCoy and Myers to assess school counselors’ perceived multicultural competence. A factor analysis of the survey items reflected three subscales: terminology, knowledge, and awareness (Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004). Competency statements were rated on a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from 1-Not competent to 4-Extremely competent. A competency score is obtained for each subscale by summing the numeric ratings for the included items. The total score is then divided by the number of items on the subscale to obtain a mean score. The mean scores allow direct comparison among the subscales and provide scores that reflect the original unit of measurement.

Permission to use this survey was granted by the author Holcomb-McCoy via email on March 18, 2011.
Reliability and validity. The Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS) was a precursor of the MCCTS-R. In 1999, Holcomb-McCoy and Myers’s used a component analysis of the MCCTS that revealed five constructs: Multicultural Knowledge, Multicultural Awareness, Definition of Terms, Knowledge of Racial Identity Development Theories and Multicultural Skills. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha) were .92, .92, .79, .66 and .91 respectively (Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 2004).

The MCCTS was revised in 2001 to reflect school counselors’ language. Construct validity was determined using a factor analysis. Three factors emerged from the analysis explaining a total of 55.12% of the variance in the MCCTS. The associated eigenvalues were greater than 1.00 and all items had factor loadings greater than .40 on their respective scales. According to Holcomb-McCoy and Day-Vines (2004), Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were obtained for the three subscales (multicultural terminology [.97], multicultural knowledge [.95], and multicultural awareness [.85]) that emerged from the principal components factor analysis. The alpha coefficients indicated that the subscales had good to excellent internal consistency as a measure of reliability. The MCCTS-R presents as reliable and valid. Participant bias (volunteer, self-report, characteristics of the respondents) and sample size may impact generalizability.

The Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale

The Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES; Wilczenski, 1992) was designed to measure the physical, academic, behavioral, and social aspects of integration of students with disabilities into general education classes. The scale has 16 items, with 4 items measuring each category. Participants rated each of the items using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Wilczenski, 1992). An overall attitude rating was obtained by summing the raw scores, with mean scores obtained by dividing the total
subscale score by the number of items on each respective subscale. The use of a mean score provides a score that reflects the original unit of measure and also allows direct comparison among the four subscales. The lower mean scores indicate the respondent favors exclusive education, with higher scores favoring placement in regular education classes. Factor scores were derived from the 4 categories (i.e. physical, academic, behavioral and social).

**Reliability and validity.** A principal components factor analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the ATIES. Four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.00 emerged from the analysis using a varimax rotation. Starting with the 32 items, a decision was made to reduce the scale to 16 items. To be retained on a factor, the item had to have a factor loading of .55 or greater. Deleted items had factor loadings less than .50. Factor 1, physical, included only items that were concerned with physical disabilities. Factor 2 was concerned with integration of students who required academic modifications (ranging from minor to major) in a regular education class. The third factor focused on behavioral problems, with the fourth factor concerned with the integration of students who had difficulty in social participation in a regular education class.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach alpha coefficients were obtained for each of the subscales. The alpha coefficients ranged from .82 for the social subscale to .87 for the behavioral subscale. The overall alpha coefficient was .92. These results provided evidence that the instrument had adequate to good internal consistency as a measure of reliability.

**Data Collection Procedures**

After receiving approval from the Human Investigation Committee, the researcher began the data collection process. Pre-service counselors from the Counselor Education program were recruited to complete the surveys. Instructors from eight counselor education courses were
contacted. Permission was granted to address their students at the end of their class to request participation in this research. After permission was granted this researcher met with students in their classroom and introduced the study as a research on attitudes toward inclusion. The researcher developed survey packets that included copies of the three instruments and the demographic survey. The entire packet included the The Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale, and The Multicultural Counselor Competence and Training Survey – Revised, Academic Preparation Survey, demographic and research information sheet. The research information sheet included the same information as an informed consent form, but did not require a signature. Instead, return of the completed surveys provided evidence of the participants’ willingness to participate in the study.

The study was open to all students in the classroom. Students were informed that completing the surveys would take approximately 30 minutes. To ensure student anonymity, the researcher and instructor were not present during completion of the survey. A large envelope was placed in the room. Students were asked to place their completed surveys in the envelope. This researcher collected the envelope after all surveys were completed.

**Data Analysis**

The data collected from the surveys were entered into a data file for analyses. As the study was focusing on school counselors, the surveys from the community and rehabilitation counselors were eliminated from the data analysis. The data analysis was divided into three sections. The first section used frequency distributions and measures of central tendency and dispersion to provide a profile of the students who participated in the study. The second section used descriptive statistics to present baseline information about each of the scaled variables. The third section of the data analysis used inferential statistical analyses, including Pearson product
moment correlations and stepwise multiple linear regression analyses to test the hypotheses and address the research questions. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05. Table 1 presents the statistical analyses that will be used to test each hypothesis.

Table 1

**Statistical Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question/Hypothesis</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Statistical Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training, significantly predict attitude toward inclusion?</td>
<td>Attitudes toward inclusion • Physical • Academic • Behavioral • Social Level of academic training • Number of academic courses focusing on disabilities • Number of core courses on students with disabilities • Number of school counseling courses • Additional practical experiences with students with disabilities</td>
<td>Pearson product moment correlations will be used to test the direction and magnitude of the relationships between academic training for working with students with disabilities and their attitudes toward inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₁: Pre-service school counselors’ academic training significantly predicts their attitudes toward inclusion.</td>
<td>H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between pre-service counselors’ academic training and their attitudes toward inclusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predict their attitude toward inclusion?</td>
<td>Attitudes toward inclusion • Physical • Academic • Behavioral • Social Level of multicultural competence • Multicultural terminology • Multicultural knowledge • Multicultural awareness</td>
<td>Pearson product moment correlations will be used to test the direction and magnitude of the relationships between attitudes toward inclusion and their level of multicultural competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₂: Pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predicts their attitude toward inclusion.</td>
<td>H₀₂: There is no statistically significant relationship between pre-service counselors’ levels of perceived multicultural competence and their attitudes toward inclusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question/Hypothesis</td>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>Statistical Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does demographic data predict attitude toward inclusion?</td>
<td>Criterion Variable: Attitudes toward inclusion • Physical • Academic • Behavioral • Social</td>
<td>Separate stepwise multiple linear regression analysis will be used to determine which of the personal characteristics can be used to predict attitudes toward inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₃: Variances in demographic data gleaned from pre-service school counselors predicts their attitude toward inclusion.</td>
<td>Predictor Variables: Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Absence/Presence of a disability, Family member absence/presence of a disability, Educational Counseling Credentials, Disability as a separate culture</td>
<td>Personal characteristics that are not continuous (gender, ethnicity, etc.) will be dummy coded to allow their use in the stepwise multiple linear regression analyses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₀₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between demographics and attitudes toward inclusion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

This chapter included a description of methodological procedures, research questions and hypothesis, research and statistical design, scoring procedures, an overview of the demographic data and overview of the MCCTS-R, ATIES and SPCS-R instruments. Validity and reliability information was presented.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the data analyses that were used to describe the sample and address the research questions are presented in this chapter. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides the demographics of the participants using frequency distributions and measures of central tendency and dispersion. The second section presents the scaled variables using measures of central tendency and dispersion. The results of the inferential statistical analyses that were used to address the research questions are included in the third section of the chapter. The final section provides additional nonhypothesized findings.

This research was designed to explore the relationships between pre-service school counselors’ academic training and their reported levels of multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion. Variances in demographic data and were also examined as predictors of attitudes regarding inclusion.

A total of 139 counseling students completed surveys that were distributed during their graduate counseling classes. One question on the survey asked the area of specialization of the students, school, community, and rehabilitation. As the study focused on inclusion of students with disabilities in general education, only those students (n = 59) who were planning to become school counselors were included. The remaining 80 participants were eliminated from the data analysis for the present study.

Description of the Sample

The participants were asked to indicate their age on the survey. Their responses were summarized using descriptive statistics. Table 2 presents results of this analysis.
Table 2

Descriptive Statistics – Students’ Ages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>30.12</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean age of the students was 30.12 (sd = 8.45) years, with a median age of 28 years. The students’ ages ranged from 22 to 60 years.

The participants were asked to indicate their gender, ethnicity, and educational level on the survey. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 3 presents results of this analysis.

Table 3

Frequency Distributions – Gender, Ethnicity, and Educational Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender, Ethnicity, and Educational Level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the participants (n = 51, 86.4%) were female, with 8 (13.6%) participants reporting their gender as male. The largest group of students (n = 34, 57.6%) indicated their ethnicity was White, with 22 (37.3%) students reporting their ethnicity was African American/Black. Two (3.4%) students were Asian and 1 (1.7%) student indicated his/her ethnicity as “other,” but did not specify an ethnicity. The majority of the students (n = 47, 79.7%) had completed a bachelor’s degree and 12 (20.3%) had obtained master’s degrees.

The students were asked if they had a disability or if a family member had a disability. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 4.

Table 4

*Frequency Distributions – Disability Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have a disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate family member has a disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five (8.5%) of the participants reported they had a disability, with 54 (91.5%) indicating they did not have a disability. Twenty-eight (47.5%) students indicated they had a family member with a disability. Thirty-one (52.5%) of the participants reported that they did not have a family member with a disability.

The participants were asked to indicate their certifications/endorsements. Frequency distributions were used to summarize their responses. Table 5 presents results of this analysis.
Eleven participants indicated they had a certification/endorsement. Of this number 8 (13.6%) were certified school teachers and 2 (3.4%) had school counselor endorsement (NT certified teacher). One (1.7%) had a school counselor license. The remaining 48 participants did not indicate a certification or endorsement.

The participants were asked if students with disabilities were members of a distinct culture. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 6.

Table 6

*Frequency Distributions – Students with Disabilities are Members of a Distinct Culture*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students with Disabilities are Members of a Distinct Culture</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Twenty-six (44.1%) participants agreed that students with disabilities are members of a distinct culture. The remaining 33 (55.9%) participants indicated that students with disabilities are not members of a distinct culture.

The students were asked to indicate the courses and experiences they had that were related to students with disabilities. Their responses were summarized using descriptive statistics for presentation in Table 7.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses and Experiences Related to Students with Disabilities</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses completed focusing on students with disabilities</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses completed where information about students with disabilities was presented in addition to regular course content</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical experiences with students with disabilities (e.g., internship, practicum)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses specifically focusing on school counseling</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participants had completed courses that focused on students with disabilities (m = 1.02, sd = 4.60). The median number of courses was 0.00, with a range from 0 to 35. When asked to indicate the number of courses the participants had completed where information about students with disabilities was presented in addition to regular course content, the range of courses was from 0 to 30, with a median of 1.00. The mean number of courses was 1.73 (sd = 4.00). The students reported a mean of .54 (sd = 1.34) practical experiences with students with disabilities. The range of practical experiences was from 0 to 7, with a median of 0 practical
experiences. The students had completed a mean of .73 (sd = .91) courses specifically focusing on school counseling. The median number of courses focusing on school counseling was 1.00, with a range from 0 to 4.

The students provided additional information regarding training or education they had completed related to students with disabilities. This data were qualitative, with the responses summarized using content analysis. A total of 10 students completed undergraduate studies (coursework) related to students with disabilities. One student received additional training at a workshop and one documented additional training through employer training. Four students described related receiving on the job experience as additional training. Students were also asked if they had completed additional training related to cultural diversity. Five students completed undergraduate coursework in cultural diversity. An additional 5 students obtained additional training at workshops/conferences, while 5 others received training through employer training. Two students described additional experiences though on the job training and 4 described their additional training as on the job experiences.

The students were asked to indicate the number of courses and practical experiences they had completed related to their additional training. The responses were summarized using descriptive statistics for presentation in Table 8.
Table 8

*Descriptive Statistics – Additional Courses and Experiences Related to Students with Disabilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Courses and Experiences Related to Students with Disabilities</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses completed related to students with disabilities</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical experiences completed with students with disabilities</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean number of courses completed related to students with disabilities was 1.68 (sd = 4.84), with a median of 0. The range of courses that students had completed related to students with disabilities was from 0 to 30.

The mean number of practical experiences completed with students with disabilities was 1.76 (sd = 3.72). The median number of practical experiences was 0 with a range from 0 to 19.

The students were asked to rate how prepared they felt overall to provide services to students with disabilities. They used a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from completely unprepared to completely prepared. The results of the frequency distribution used to summarize the findings are presented in Table 9.
Table 9

*Frequency Distributions – Overall Preparedness to Provide Services to Students with Disabilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Preparedness to Provide Services to Students with Disabilities</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely Unprepared</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprepared</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Unprepared</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Prepared</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely Prepared</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest group of students (n = 20, 33.8%) indicated they felt somewhat prepared to work with students with disabilities, while 13 (22.0%) felt they were somewhat unprepared for this challenge. Seven (11.9%) students indicated they felt completely unprepared to work with students with disabilities and 8 (13.6%) were unprepared for this type of work. Six (10.2%) students felt they were prepared to work with students with disabilities and 5 (8.5%) were completely prepared for this work.

**Scaled Variables**

The responses to the Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES) and the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey – Revised (MCCTSR) were scored using the scale developers’ protocols. The summed scores for each of the subscales were divided by the number of items on the subscales to obtain mean scores for each participant. The use of a mean score provided scores that reflect the original unit of measurement and allowed for comparisons among the subscales on each measurement tool. The mean scores for the subscales were summarized using descriptive statistics. Table 10 presents the results of this analysis.
Table 10

Descriptive Statistics – Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Scale and Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey – Revised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey – Revised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terminology</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean scores for the ATIES subscales ranged from 3.45 (sd = 1.03) for behavioral subscale to 4.71 (sd .76) for the social subscale. The actual scores for the social subscale ranged from 3.50 to 6.00, while the behavioral subscale’s actual scores ranged from 1.50 to 6.00. Possible scores on this subscale could range from 1.00 to 6.00, with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes regarding inclusion of all children into general education classrooms.

The MCCTS-R subscale scores ranged from 2.85 (sd = .54) for knowledge to 3.58 (sd = .56) for terminology. The range of actual scores for knowledge was from 1.89 to 4.00 and from 2.00 to 4.00 for terminology. The mean scores for awareness was 3.45 (sd = .42), with a range from 2.56 to 4.00. Actual scores on these subscales could range from 1 to 4, with higher scores indicating more positive perceptions regarding the three subscales measuring multicultural counseling competency.
Research Questions

Three research questions were developed for the study. Each of these questions was addressed using inferential statistical analyses. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05.

Research question 1. Does pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training, significantly predict attitude toward inclusion?

The pre-service level of academic training was correlated with their attitudes toward inclusion using Pearson product moment correlations. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Pearson Product Moment Correlations: Pre-service Level of Academic Training with Attitudes toward Inclusion (N = 59)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes toward Inclusion</th>
<th>Courses focusing on students with disabilities</th>
<th>Courses with information on students with disabilities</th>
<th>Courses focusing on school counseling</th>
<th>Additional practical experiences with students with disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.773</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.646</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.695</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Attitudes</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.640</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.581</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of the correlations between pre-service level of academic training and attitudes toward inclusion provided no evidence of statistically significant relationships among
the variables. Based on these findings, it appears that pre-service counselors’ level of academic training to work with students with disabilities was not related to their attitudes toward inclusion.

**Research question 2.** Does pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predict their attitude toward inclusion?

Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine if scores on the MCCTS-R subscales were significantly related to the pre-service counselor’s attitudes toward inclusion. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12**

Pearson Product Moment Correlations: Attitudes toward Inclusion with Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey – Revised (N = 59)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes toward Inclusion</th>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.996</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Attitudes</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlations between the ATIS and MCCTS-R provided no evidence of statistically significant relationships between the subscales on the two measures. Based on these findings, it appears that multicultural counseling competence and training was not related to pre-service counselors’ attitudes toward inclusion.

**Research question 3.** Does demographic data predict attitudes toward inclusion?

The four subscales and total score for attitudes toward inclusion were used as the dependent variables in separate stepwise multiple linear regression analyses. Selected
demographic variables i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, having a disability, having a family member with a disability, higher degree, counseling major, type of credential or endorsement, and consider students with disabilities as a distinct culture, were used as the independent variables in these analyses. None of the independent variables entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equations, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of the four subscales (physical, academic, behavioral, social) or the total score for attitudes toward inclusion.

Ancillary Findings

The pre-service counselors were asked to indicate the level of practical experience they had with students with disabilities. Their responses to these items were correlated with the pre-service counselors’ attitudes toward inclusion and their multicultural counselor competence using Pearson product moment correlations. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 13.
A statistically significant correlation was obtained between the Inclusion subscale, academic, and the participants’ perception of their preparedness to provide services to students with disabilities ($r = .30$, $p = .022$). The positive relationship indicated that participants who had higher perceptions regarding academics as part of their attitudes toward inclusion were more likely to have higher self-reports of their preparedness to provide services to students with disabilities. Two statistically significant correlations were obtained between Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey – Revised knowledge subscale and practical experiences with students with disabilities ($r = .30$, $p = .021$) and practical experiences with students from diverse cultures ($r = .37$, $p = .004$). These findings indicated that participants who had more positive perceptions of knowledge of multicultural students were more likely to have
had practical experiences both with students with disabilities and with students from diverse cultures. The remaining correlations were not statistically significant.

Summary

The results of the statistical analyses that were used to describe the sample and address the research questions have been presented in this chapter. Conclusions and recommendations based on these findings can be found in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter includes a brief summary of literature, a discussion of study findings, implications and recommendations for future research. This research was designed to explore the relationships between pre-service school counselors’ academic training and their reported levels of multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion. Variances in demographic data were also examined as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion.

As a result of current legal mandates beginning with the Education for All Handicapped Childrens Act (PL94-142, 1975) and subsequent reauthorizations and amendments (e.g., Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA], 1990, 1997, and 2004), there have been significant movements to include students with disabilities into general education classrooms. This practice is known as inclusion. The number of students who receive special education services continues to rise (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). In fall 2008, NCES statistics indicate 95% of 6-21 year old students with disabilities were served in a regular school and the percentage of time these students spend in special education settings more than 60% of the time is less than 50% (NCES, 2011). This indicates a positive trend toward inclusive education.

As the practice of inclusive education increases, the roles of school counselors are likely to follow the path of change. According to Adelman (2002), “school counselors are especially suited to play proactive, catalytic roles in defining the future for programs that support the education of all children” (p. 235). Furthermore, House and Hayes (2002) emphasized school counselors can be proactive by being advocates for all students, providing a strong leadership role, acting as consultants, and working collaboratively with parents, teachers, and students.
Hence, counselor’s can be instrumental in the success of full inclusion (Tarver-Behring, Spagna & Sullivan, 1998).

Research on inclusion efficacy is confounding and inconclusive due in part to the myriad of factors and variables inherent in the research. Researchers have explored a number of variables that might impact inclusion services and efficacy. Attitude toward inclusion has been suggested as being on the most important predictors of successful inclusion practices (Buell, Hallam, Garmen-McCormick & Sheer, 1999; Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, & Mastropieri, 1998).

The types of choices we make are based on our beliefs in our abilities to perform tasks and do it well (Bandura, 1997). This would suggest that one’s belief or attitude can affect his/her behavior and sense of efficacy toward the task. Vanreusen, Shoho & Barker (2001) surmise that “the attitudes and beliefs that teachers, administrators, and other school personnel hold toward inclusion and the learning ability of students with disabilities may influence school learning environments and the availability of equitable educational opportunities of all students,” (p. 8). This researcher chose to explore two factors that might impact attitude toward inclusion; academic preparation and multicultural competence. Counselors need to be prepared to work with the populations that they serve and be able to fully participate in programs and processes that will impact them. Training and preparation are emphasized in the ACA Code of Ethics (2005), ASCA Code of Ethics (2010), and the ASCA position statement on School Counseling Preparation Program (2008). Counselors also have an ethical responsibility to develop multicultural competencies and acquire educational and training experiences about diverse cultures (ASCA, Ethical Standards, 2010). In addition, the ACA Code of Ethics (2005) calls for counselors to “gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, and skills pertinent to working with a diverse client population” (p.9). The role of the school counselor in advancing the needs
of students with disabilities is further supported in the ACA Code of Ethics and American School Counselor Association (ASCA) position statements.

In order to remain viable and useful in the ever changing climates of the school systems, school counselors must be in a position to actively participate in inclusive practices and remain informed of significant factors that might impact service delivery and inclusion efficacy. Given that inclusion practices can influence delivery of counseling services and the learning experiences of all students, the exploration of variables that might affect the delivery of services is important.

**Methods**

A nonexperimental, correlational research design was used to examine the relationships between the dependent variable (attitudes toward inclusion), and the independent variables (perceived multicultural competence and academic preparation) in Master and doctoral level counseling students participated in the study. A total of 59 students who indicated they were working on advanced degrees to become school counselors were included in the sample. Three instruments, The Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (ATIES), Multicultural Counseling and Training Survey-R and portions of The School Counselor Preparation Survey (SCPS-R) were used to collect the data needed to describe the sample and address the research questions.

**Findings**

The students in the study had a mean age of 30.12 (sd = 8.45) years and ranged in age from 22 to 60 years. The majority of the participants were female. The largest group of students indicated their ethnicity as White, with the second largest group indicating their ethnicity as African American. The greatest number of students had completed bachelor’s degrees. Five (8.5%) students reported they had a disability and 28 (47.5%) indicated that a family member
had a disability. The majority of participants \((n = 33, 55.9\%)\) reported that they did not think that people with disabilities formed a distinct culture.

The students had completed a mean of 1.02 \((sd = 4.60)\) courses focusing on students with disabilities, with students reporting a mean of 1.73 \((sd = 4.00)\) courses completed where information about students with disabilities was presented in addition to regular course content. The students also reported an average of .54 practical experiences (e.g., internship, practicum) with students with disabilities and a mean of .73 \((sd = .91)\) courses specifically focusing on school counseling. When asked about additional courses and experiences related to students with disabilities, the students indicated that the range of courses completed that were related to students with disabilities was from 0 to 30, with a mean of 1.68 \((sd = 4.84)\) and a mean of 1.76 \((sd = 3.72)\) practical experiences with students with disabilities.

When asked about their overall preparedness to work with students with disabilities, the largest group \((n = 20, 33.8\%)\) reported they were somewhat prepared, while 13 \((22.0\%)\) indicated they were somewhat unprepared. Five \((8.5\%)\) students indicated they were completely prepared to work with students with disabilities, while 7 \((11.9\%)\) indicated they were completely unprepared for working with these students.

Three research questions were developed for this study. Each of these questions and associated hypotheses were tested using inferential statistical analyses. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05. The following research questions were examined:

1. Does pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training significantly predict attitude toward inclusion?
H₁: Pre-service school counselors’ academic training significantly predicts their attitudes toward inclusion.

Pearson product moment correlations were used to test the correlation between pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training and their attitudes toward inclusions. The four subscales, physical, academic, behavioral, and social, as well as the overall score on the survey were used in this analysis. No statistically significant correlations were obtained on these analyses. Based on these findings, the null hypothesis was supported, indicating that academic training does not predict attitudes toward inclusion.

2. Does pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predict their attitude toward inclusion?

H₂: Pre-service school counselors’ reported level of multicultural competence significantly predicts their attitude toward inclusion.

The scores for the four subscales measuring attitudes toward inclusion, physical, academic, behavioral, and social, as well as the total score, and the three subscales measuring multicultural competence, terminology, knowledge, and awareness were correlated using Pearson product moment correlation analysis. The results of these analyses were not statistically significant, providing support to retain the null hypothesis. Pre-service school counselors reported level of multicultural competence could not be used to predict their attitudes toward inclusion.

3. Does demographic data predict attitude toward inclusion?

H₃: Variances in demographic data gleaned from pre-service school counselors predicts their attitude toward inclusion.
The participants’ demographic characteristics were used as independent variables in separate stepwise multiple linear regression analyses. The dependent variables were scores for the four subscales measuring inclusion and the total score. None of the demographic variables entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equations, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of pre-service school counselors’ attitudes toward inclusion. As a result of these analyses, the null hypothesis that variances in demographic data for pre-service school counselors could not be used to predict attitudes toward inclusion.

Ancillary findings.

In addition to the research questions, Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between practical experiences with students with disabilities and their attitudes toward inclusion and multicultural competencies. Three statistically significant correlations were obtained on these analyses. Students who reported they felt better prepared to provide services to students with disabilities were more likely to have higher scores for the academic subscale measuring attitudes toward inclusion. In addition, the knowledge subscale on multicultural competence was significantly related to having a greater number of practical experiences with students with disabilities and practical experiences with students from diverse cultures. The remaining correlations were not statistically significant.

Discussion

Academic training, perceived multicultural competence and demographic data were not found to be statistically significant predictors of attitudes toward inclusion for pre-service school counselors. Ancillary findings that were statistically significant included the (a) correlation between pre-service counselors’ attitude toward inclusion (academic domain) and preparedness
to provide services to students with disabilities (b) correlation between multicultural competence (knowledge domain) and practical experiences with students who have disabilities and (c) correlation between multicultural competence (knowledge domain) and practical experience with students from diverse cultures. Despite the lack of statistically significant findings on the research questions, the preponderance of research continues to support the positive impact of academic, experiential, and multicultural training in preparing pre-service school counselors to work with a diverse population of both general and special education students.

Descriptive statistics indicate respondents completed a mean of 1.02 courses focusing on students with disabilities. A slightly higher mean (1.73 courses) were completed where information about students with disabilities was presented in addition to regular course content. Actual school counseling courses ranged from 0 to 4 with a mean of .73. Students completed an average of 1.68 additional courses in counseling. These findings reflected limited course work that addressed students diagnosed with special needs. Isaacs, Greene, and Valesky (1998) substantiated the positive impact that academic preparation and training had on attitudes. In addition, Milsom (2002) found that preparation impacted the extent to which school counselors felt prepared to work with students with disabilities. The limited educational experiences of the respondents may have impacted pre-service counselors’ attitude toward inclusion.

Practical experiences with students with disabilities averaged 0.54. The participants reported a mean of 1.76 additional practical experiences working with students diagnosed with disabilities. These experiences could include internships, practicums, and volunteering to increase exposure to students who might be included in their caseload after completing their programs. These findings reflected limited experiences with students with disabilities. Additionally, the limited practical experiences of the respondents may not have included services
related to inclusion practices. According to Antonak and Livneh (2000), attitudes are developed and acquired through experiences. In a similar vein, Isaacs, Greene, and Valesky (1998) stated that “self-efficacy and attitudes are both determined by behavioral experiences” (p. 71). This assertion suggested that the lack of practical experiences could influence pre-service counselors’ attitudes toward students with disabilities as well as their experiences with inclusive practices.

Despite the fact that there was no evidence of statistically significant findings between multicultural competence and training and pre-service counselors’ attitudes toward inclusion, the importance of multicultural competences is paramount to counselors’ profession and practice. An emphasis on multicultural competence remains prominent throughout the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2005), American School Counselors Association (ASCA) ethical standards (2010), and ASCA (2009) position statement on The Professional School Counselor and Cultural Diversity. Holcomb-McCoy (2002) emphasized the importance of school counselors in addressing the concerns of culturally different students. To engage effectively with a client of a different culture, a counselor should examine his/her biases, views, and attitudes in relation to those different from their own (Sue & Sue, 2008).

Multicultural client contact has been related to higher levels of self-reported multicultural competence (Sodowsky, Taffe, & Gutkin (1991). Holcomb-McCoy (2005) even suggested that multicultural awareness is developed through life experiences rather than education. Holcomb-McCoy’s assertion suggested that the limited practical experiences of these pre-service counselors might influence levels of multicultural competence. Survey results indicated low occurrence of academic preparation and experiences to work with students from diverse cultures.

The varying extent to which pre-service counselors exhibit multicultural competence is dependent on, or specific to, the domains of multiculturalism (awareness, knowledge, and
terminology; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). The author further stated that “because one is able to articulate his or her own biases and prejudices does not mean one is knowledgeable of other cultures or is skilled in cross-cultural counseling” (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005, p. 417). Perhaps one’s attitude toward inclusion involves much more than enhancing a counselor’s knowledge about disabilities and multicultural competency. In support of this position, Carpenter, King-Sears, and Keys (1998) contended that “efforts to translate inclusive research to practice requires more than enhancing educators and counselors knowledge about disabilities” (p. 2).

Inclusion can be a complex and often ambiguous process/service. It is not simply a philosophical belief or set of strategies for placement. Implementation of inclusion might vary by school settings, by district, region, etc. Inclusion practices often are dependent on the students’ disabilities. Definition and interpretation of inclusion might vary among pre-service counseling students, thus impacting attitude. Researchers (Kirk, 1998; Proctor and Niemeyer, 2001) examined pre-service teacher attitudes and beliefs about inclusion. Proctor and Niemeyer (2001) found inclusion beliefs were influenced by inclusion experiences. Findings by Kirk (1998) did not indicate attitude changes, but future teachers became more aware of adaptations, extra time, and support necessary when working in an inclusive setting. As a result the teachers became more realistic about their selected career paths. Given the limitations in coursework and practical experiences (inclusion experiences), a thorough understanding of inclusion and inclusion theory is likely to be limited (possibly idealized) and could subsequently affect attitudes.

Notable findings emerged in two areas; (a) correlation between pre-service counselors’ attitude toward inclusion (academic domain) and preparedness to provide services to students with disabilities (b) correlation between multicultural competence (knowledge domain) and practical experiences with students with disabilities and (c) correlation between multicultural
competence (knowledge domain) and practical experiences with students from diverse cultures. Responses indicated that more positive perceptions of preparedness were related to more positive attitudes toward academics associated with inclusion. This finding highlights the importance of counselor preparation. Pre-service counselors who had more practical experience with students with disabilities and had more practical experience with students from diverse cultures scored higher on multicultural knowledge. These findings would support the importance of practical experiences for pre-service counselors before beginning work in a school with a diverse student population. Holcomb-McCoy (2005) found that multicultural coursework did not significantly affect school counselors’ multicultural awareness. She suggested that cultural awareness is developed through experiences with people from many cultures.

**Implications of the Study**

School counselors will continue to have the responsibility of providing services for all students regardless of their ability levels and cultures. Pre-service school counselors will need to be prepared to provide for these students and participate in the programs and missions that affect school and student. A significant movement in school systems throughout the United States is inclusion. This mission will no doubt involve more contact with students with disabilities, increased calls for advocacy, collaboration, consultation and potentially increased contributions to academic planning.

Counselor education programs are vanguards in educating and preparing school counselors. Counselor education programs should assess their curriculums, courses, and course content and evaluate the need to incorporate more information on students with disabilities. In addition, school counseling course content should be evaluated to determine the sufficiency of information and if it appropriately reflects the needs of school systems.
The increased provision of services to students with disabilities calls for increased competencies to address their cultural needs. Assessment of disability courses and course content could also be evaluated to determine adequacy and to assure content is aligned with the needs of the students that they will be serving.

Experiential requirements (i.e., internships and practical experiences) could assist pre-service school counselors to experience the reality of working with students with disabilities and school practices related to students with disabilities. Counselor education programs could assess curriculum requirements for real-life experiences and determine changes that might improve existing programs.

Communication and collaboration between school systems, practicing school counselors and counselor education programs might assist programs in determining what might be most beneficial in terms of training and preparation for work with students with disabilities and school processes.

Pre-service school counselors should be mindful of their beliefs and attitudes toward students with disabilities and the effect that they might have on inclusion beliefs, practices and multicultural competence. Exploration would assist them to gain insight, recognize how it may affect their delivery of service and be an impetus for action and change if necessary.

Pre-service school counselors are ultimately responsible for assessing their own training, preparation, competence and attitudes. They need to assume an active role in determining their needs and then pursue academic and nonacademic experiences that could help prepare them adequately for work with a diverse student population.
Limitations

The ATIES, SCPS-R and the MCCTR-S are self-rated by the participants. The responses may reflect socially desirable replies that indicate a desire to be more competent or knowledgeable about either inclusion or multicultural competence. The size of the sample (n = 59) also limits the generalizability of the findings to all school counselors. The size of the sample may have had an effect on the power of the study. A larger sample would have increased the power and reduced the probability of a Type 2 error (failing to reject a false null hypothesis).

The study was conducted with a sample drawn from a large urban university and may not be representative of all school counselor programs. The findings may have been different if the study was completed using pre-service counseling students from more than one university or counselors in other areas of the country where the population is more heterogeneous. This sample is heavily slanted toward females (86.4%). This is as a representation of this counselor education program but may not be indicative of other counselor education programs. A sample that includes a more equitable number of males and females might impact generalizability.

Recommendations for Further Study

The following recommendations should be considered to extend this study and validate the findings:

- Replicate the study using a larger sample drawn from several graduate counseling programs in college and universities located in locations throughout the United States. The purpose of this study will be to determine the extent to which pre-service counselors are similar or different to the students included in the present study.

- Examine attitudes of school counselors regarding effects of training and experiences (e.g., internships, practicum’s, etc.) while in their graduate programs on their ability
to work effectively with students diagnosed with special needs or from diverse ethnic cultures.

- Use an experimental design to determine changes in attitudes for working with students with special needs in inclusive classes by having pre-service counseling students work in school settings with students with disabilities for 10 weeks. The pre-service counselor’s attitudes could be pretested using the same instruments used in the present study and then post tested at the end of the 10 weeks. Changes in attitudes would provide accurate assessment of the changes in their attitudes toward inclusion.

- Conduct a content analysis subject matter included in academic courses and the composition of practical experiences in graduate programs in counseling. The content of the courses and practical experiences of participants may be diverse and wide-ranging. A controlled study in which specific courses, content areas or experiences are used as would provide for a standardized treatment conditions.

- Examine differences between practical experiences and academic coursework as predictors of attitude toward inclusion.
APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS

Academic Preparation Survey

For the purposes of this survey, “students with disabilities” is defined as individuals who would qualify for special education or related services based on them meeting criteria for one or more of the following: Autism, Emotional Disturbance, hearing Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Cognitive Impairment (formerly Mental Retardation), Orthopedic Impairment, Speech/Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Visual Impairment or some Other Impairment which adversely affects education performance (e.g., ADHD)

1. **During your counseling graduate program, how many:**
   - Courses specifically focusing on students on disabilities did you complete) e.g., Special Education, Exceptional Children)? ______
   - Courses where information about students with disabilities was presented in addition to regular course content did you complete (e.g., core courses)? ______
   - Practical experiences with students with disabilities did you have (e.g., internship, practicum)? ______
   - Courses specifically focusing on school counseling? ______

2. **What additional training or education have you completed related to students with disabilities?**
   (e.g., bachelors degree in special education)

3. **During that additional training or education, how many:**
   - Courses related to students with disabilities did you complete? ______
   - Practical experiences with students with disabilities did you have? ______

4. Using the scale below, please rate (circle) how prepared you feel **OVERALL** to provide services to students with disabilities.
   1= Completely Unprepared
   2= Unprepared
   3= Somewhat Unprepared
   4= Somewhat Prepared
   5= Prepared
   6= Completely Prepared

5. **During your counseling graduate program, how many:**
   - Courses specifically focusing on students on cultural diversity did you complete (e.g., Cultural Diversity)? ______
   - Courses where information about cultural diversity was presented in addition to regular course content did you complete (e.g., core courses)? ______
   - Practical experiences with students from diverse cultures did you have (e.g., internship, practicum)? ______

6. **What additional training or education have you completed related to students cultural diversity (e.g., workshops)?** Briefly describe

Portions of this survey were adapted from The School Counselor Preparation Survey (SCPS-R; Milsom, 2002).
Demographic Information

1. Your age: _____
2. Your gender: _____
3. Your ethnicity

_____ African American or Black
_____ American Indian or Alaska Native
_____ Asian
_____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
_____ White
_____ Latino/a or Hispanic
_____ Arab American
_____ Other, Please Identify________________

4. Do you have a disability?  _____ yes  _____ no

5. Does anyone in your immediate family (spouse, partner, sibling, child, or grandchild) have a disability?  
____ yes  _____ no

6. Your educational background
   Highest degree earned: ___________
   Major: ____________________________

Current counseling major or specialty: __________ (School, Art Therapy, Rehabilitation, Agency, Substance Abuse Counseling, Sports and Exercise, Undetermined), etc.

Please check if you currently possess the following credential or endorsement;

Certified School Teacher  _____
School Counselor Endorsement (NT certified teacher)  _____
School Counselor License (SCL)  _____

Do you consider students with disabilities as being a member of a distinct culture i.e. disability culture?  (Please check only one).  _____ yes  _____ no

Thank you for your participation!

For the purposes of this survey “inclusion” as defined by the National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion is defined as “the provision of services to students with disabilities, including those with severe impairments, in the neighborhood, in age-appropriate general education classes with the necessary support services and supplementary aids (for the child and teacher) both to assure the child’s success -academic, behavioral and social- and to prepare the child to participate as a full and contributing member of society.”
ATTITUDES TOWARD INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SCALE

This scale concerns “inclusive education” as one method of meeting the legal requirements for placing students with disabilities in the “least restrictive” educational environment. Inclusive education means that all students with disabilities are mainstreamed and become the responsibility of the regular class teacher who is supported by specialists.

INSTRUCTIONS

On the blank line, please place the number indicating your reaction to every item according to how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Please provide an answer for every item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Students whose academic achievement is 2 or more years below the other students in the grade should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Students who have difficulty expressing their thoughts verbally should be in regular classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Students who are physically aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Students who need training in self-help skills and activities of daily living should be in regular classes.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Students who cannot move without help from others should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Students who use sign language or communication boards should be in regular classes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Students who are shy and withdrawn should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Students who cannot control their behavior and disrupt activities should be in regular classes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Students whose academic achievement is 1 year below the other students in the grade should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Students who need an individualized functional academic program in everyday reading and math skills should be in regular classes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Students whose speech is difficult to understand should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Students who cannot hear conversational speech should be in regular classes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Students who cannot read standard print and need to use Braille should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Students who do not follow school rules for conduct should be in regular classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Students who are verbally aggressive toward their peers should be in regular classes.</td>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Student who are frequently absent from school should be in regular classes.</td>
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© 1993 F. L. Wilczenski
Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised
Multicultural Counseling Competence Component
(School Counselor Version)

Developed by Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Ph.D.
University of Maryland at College Park

Directions: Listed below are competency statements based on AMCD’s Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Explanatory Statements. Please read each competency statement and evaluate your multicultural competence using the following 4-point scale.

1 - Not competent (Not able to perform at this time)
2 - Somewhat competent (More training needed)
3 - Competent (Able to perform competently)
4 - Extremely competent (Able to perform at a high level)

1. I can discuss my own ethnic/cultural heritage. 1 2 3 4
2. I am aware of how my cultural background and experiences have influenced my attitudes about psychological processes. 1 2 3 4
3. I am able to discuss how my culture has influenced the way I think. 1 2 3 4
4. I can recognize when my attitudes, beliefs, and values are interfering with providing the best services to my students. 1 2 3 4
5. I verbally communicate my acceptance of culturally different students. 1 2 3 4
6. I nonverbally communicate my acceptance of culturally different students. 1 2 3 4
7. I can discuss my family’s perspective regarding acceptable and non-acceptable codes-of-conduct. 1 2 3 4
8. I can discuss models of White Racial Identity Development. 1 2 3 4
9. I can define racism. 1 2 3 4
10. I can define prejudice. 1 2 3 4
11. I can define discrimination. 1 2 3 4
12. I can define stereotype. 1 2 3 4
13. I can identify the cultural bases of my communication style. 1 2 3 4
14. I can identify my negative and positive emotional reactions toward persons of other racial and ethnic groups. 1 2 3 4
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not competent (Not able to perform at this time)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat competent (More training needed)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Competent (Able to perform competently)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Extremely competent (Able to perform at a high level)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I can identify my reactions that are based on stereotypical beliefs about different ethnic groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I can give examples of how stereotypical beliefs about culturally different persons impact the counseling relationship.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I can articulate the possible differences between the nonverbal behavior of the five major ethnic groups (i.e., African/Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, European/White).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I can articulate the possible differences between the verbal behavior of the five major ethnic groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I can discuss the counseling implications for at least two models of racial/ethnic identity development.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I can discuss within-group differences among ethnic groups (e.g., low SES Puerto Rican student vs. high SES Puerto Rican student).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I can discuss how culture affects a student’s vocational choices.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I can discuss how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>I can discuss how culture affects the manifestations of psychological disorders.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>I can describe the degree to which a counseling approach is appropriate for a specific group of people.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>I can explain how factors such as poverty, and powerlessness have influenced the current conditions of at least two ethnic groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>I can discuss research regarding mental health issues among culturally/ethnically different populations.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>I can discuss how the counseling process may conflict with the cultural values of at least two ethnic groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 - Not competent (Not able to perform at this time)
2 - Somewhat competent (More training needed)
3 - Competent (Able to perform competently)
4 - Extremely competent (Able to perform at a high level)

28. I can list at least three barriers that prevent ethnic minority students from using counseling services. 1 2 3 4

29. I can discuss the potential bias of two assessment instruments frequently used in the schools. 1 2 3 4

30. I can discuss family counseling from a cultural/ethnic perspective. 1 2 3 4

31. I can anticipate when my helping style is inappropriate for a culturally different student. 1 2 3 4

32. I can help students determine whether a problem stems from racism or biases in others. 1 2 3 4

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!
APPENDIX B

RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Study: Exploring the relationship between pre-service school counselors' academic training and reported levels of multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion.

Principal Investigator (PI): Rachael Evans
Theoretical and Behavioral Foundations Counselor Education

Purpose:
You are being asked to be in a research study examining the attitudes of pre-service counselors toward inclusion because you are a counselor education student. This study is being conducted at Wayne State University. The estimated number of study participants at Wayne State University is about 150.

Study Procedures:
If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to fill out a survey. The survey questions will ask you to provide demographic information, answer questions about multicultural competence and academic training. If possible please respond to all questions. The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. The survey contains no identifying information. This will insure confidentiality.

Benefits
As a participant in this research study, there will be no direct benefit for you; however, information from this study may benefit other people now or in the future.

Risks
By taking part in this study, you may experience the following risks: As a student, you might feel coerced. To reduce this risk the investigator and instructor will not be present and confidentiality of your responses is assured.

Costs
There will be no costs to you for participation in this research study.

Compensation
You will not be paid for taking part in this study.
Confidentiality
All information collected about you during the course of this study will be kept without any identifiers.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal:
Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. You are free to withdraw from participation in this study at any time. Your decisions will not change any present or future relationship with Wayne State University or its affiliates, or other services you are entitled to receive.

Questions:
If you have any questions about this study now or in the future, you may contact Rachael Evans at the following phone number _____________. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Institutional Review Board can be contacted at (313) 577-1628. If you are unable to contact the research staff, or if you want to talk to someone other than the research staff, you may also call (313) 577-1628 to ask questions or voice concerns or complaints.

Participation:
By completing the survey you are agreeing to participate in this study.

APPROVED

OCT 17 2011
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
APPENDIX C

HUMAN INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE APPROVAL

CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

To: Rachael Evans
Theoretical & Behavioral Foundations

From: Dr. Scott Mills
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)

Date: October 17, 2011
RE: IRB #: 10381183X
Protocol Title: Exploring the Relationship Between Pre-Service School Counselors Academic Training and Reported Levels of Multicultural Competence as Predictors of Attitude Toward Inclusion
Sponsor:
Protocol #: 1110010208

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for Exemption according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 46.101(b)].

- Revised Protocol Summary Form (received in the IRB Office 10/11/2011)
- Protocol (received in the IRB Office 09/30/2011)
- The request for a waiver of the requirement for written documentation of informed consent has been granted according to 45 CFR 46.117(1)(2). Justification for this request has been provided by the PI in the Protocol Summary Form. The waiver satisfies the following criteria: (i) the research involves no more than minimal risk to participants, (ii) the research involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context, (iii) the consent process is appropriate, and (iv) an information sheet disclosing the required and appropriate additional elements of consent disclosure will be provided to participants.
- Research Information Sheet (revision dated 10/11/2011)
- Data collection tools: The Multicultural Counseling and Training Survey- Revised (MCCTS-R), The Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale, Academic Preparation Survey, and Demographic Information.

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

- Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
- All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB BEFORE implementation.
- Adverse Reactions/Unexpected Events (AR/UE) must be submitted on the appropriate form within the timeframe specified in the IRB Administration Office Policy (http://irb.wayne.edu/policies-human-research.php).

NOTE:
1. Forms should be downloaded from the IRB Administration Office website at each use.
REFERENCES


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*Counselor Supervision.* 61-69.


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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRE-SERVICE SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ ACADEMIC TRAINING AND REPORTED LEVELS OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE AS PREDICTORS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD INCLUSION

by

RACHAEL ANNETTE EVANS

May 2012

Advisor: Dr. John Pietrofesa

Major: Counseling

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

The principal aim of this study was to explore the relationships between pre-service school counselors’ academic training and their self-reported levels of multicultural competence as predictors of attitudes toward inclusion. Variances in demographic data also were examined as predictors of attitudes regarding inclusion. A nonexperimental, correlational research design was used. Pearson product moment correlations were used to test the relationships between pre-service school counselors’ level of academic training and their attitudes toward inclusions. No statistically significant correlations were obtained on these analyses, indicating that academic training does not predict attitudes toward inclusion. Pearson product moment correlations were used to test the relationships between pre-service school counselors’ perceived level of multicultural competence and their attitudes toward inclusions. The results of these analyses were not statistically significant. Pre-service school counselors self-reported level of multicultural competence could not be used to predict their attitudes toward inclusion. Selected demographic variables (age, gender, ethnicity, having a disability, having a family member with
a disability, higher degree, counseling major, type of credential or endorsement, and consider students with disabilities as a distinct culture) were used as the independent variables in these analyses. None of the independent variables entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equations, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of the four subscales (physical, academic, behavioral, social) or the total score for attitudes toward inclusion. In addition to the research questions, Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between practical experiences with students with disabilities and their attitudes toward inclusion and multicultural competencies. Three statistically significant correlations were obtained on these analyses. Students who reported they felt better prepared to provide services to students with disabilities were more likely to have higher scores for the academic subscale measuring attitudes toward inclusion. In addition, the knowledge subscale on multicultural competence was significantly related to having a greater number of practical experiences with students with disabilities and practical experiences with students from diverse cultures. The remaining correlations were not statistically significant. Recommendations for future research were offered.
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

RACHAEL ANNETTE EVANS

Education
Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan
   Doctor of Philosophy, 2012
   Major: Counselor Education

   Master of Arts, 1984
   Major: School and Community Psychology

University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Michigan
   Bachelor of Arts, 1979
   Psychology

Professional Licenses
Limited Licensed Psychologist, 1985 –Present
Certified School Psychologist, 1997-Present

Professional Experience
Detroit Public Schools
   2003-Present
   School Psychologist

   Wayne State University
   2008-2011
   Instructional Assistant - Group Counseling, Introduction to Counseling

Clark and Associates Psychological Services
   1987-Present
   Limited Licensed Psychologist,

Macomb-Oakland Regional Center
   1987-2003
   Limited Licensed Psychologist,

Professional Organizations
National Association of School Psychologists
American Counseling Association