An Investigation of the Relationship Between Self-reported Multicultural Counseling Competence and Middle School Counselors' Efforts to Broach Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Factors with Students

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-REPORTED MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING COMPETENCE AND MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNSELORS' EFFORTS TO BROACH RACIAL, ETHNIC AND CULTURAL FACTORS WITH STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Despite several decades of theoretical support and empirical validation concerning Multicultural Counseling Competence (MCC), the mental health field has been criticized for a lack of measurable constructs that embody multicultural counseling skills (Sanchez-Hucles & Jones, 2005; Weinrach & Thomas, 1998). In an effort to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of observable multicultural counseling interventions, web-based survey research was used to examine the relationship between the counselor's broaching behavior and multicultural counseling competence in a sample of middle school counselors. Broaching has been conceptualized as a measurable multicultural counseling skill and refers to a counselor's effort to initiate and process discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture in the counseling relationship (Day-Vines, et al., 2007).

Results revealed a statistically significant relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence. Most notably, advanced attitudes toward broaching as conceptualized in the broaching construct are predictive of multicultural counseling competence. Additionally, the relationship between broaching skills and MCC seems to indicate that even rudimentary attempts at broaching may also be predictive of multicultural counseling competence. Equally as important, the study supported the conclusion that avoiding discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture has a negative impact on the counseling relationship. Results need to be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size (N = 65) and the continued validation of the Broaching Attitudes and Behavior Scale.

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CHAPTER ONE

CONSTRUCTS AND RATIONALE

Multicultural counseling competence (MCC) represents the ability to work effectively with clients from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds whose worldview may differ markedly from the dominant culture and/or the culture of the counselor **(**Sue et al., 1992). For the purpose of this manuscript, the phrase is limited to working with visible racial ethnic minority groups as opposed to the broader focus that encompasses gender, sexual orientation, able-bodied, religious orientation, social class, as well as related identity dimensions. Although a wealth of literature documents the importance of multicultural counseling competence, far less information documents the efficacy of certain counseling interventions and multicultural counseling competence. In fact, the field has been criticized for not operationalizing MCC techniques and interventions (Sanchez-Hucles & Jones, 2005; Weinrach & Thomas, 1998). The goal of this study was to investigate the extent to which a sample of middle school counselors broaches the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture. A second goal of the study was to determine the relationship between the counselor's broaching behavior and a measure of multicultural counseling competence.

Although such an investigation benefits all aspects of the mental health field, this investigation in particular answers Holcomb-McCoy's (2005b) call for targeted research involving school counselors' culturally sensitive practice. As such, this manuscript relies on the term student (vs. client) in discussing multicultural counseling in a school context except when referring to authors whose works are referenced. Because much of the conceptual and empirical literature regarding MCC has been done in settings other than schools, the term "client" will sometimes represent more accurate terminology. This author fully recognizes the distinction

between student and client and the fact that school counselors are prohibited from conducting therapy in their interactions with students.

In justifying the need for an examination of the culturally sensitive interventions of school counselors, this chapter begins with a definition of MCC, continues with an enumeration of mandates for MCC from professional counseling organizations, and summarizes a review of pertinent research. The chapter continues with an introduction of the broaching construct - a model developed and conceptualized by Day-Vines, et al. (2007) that delineates attitudes and behaviors of counselors in terms of their efficacy in having explicit discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture that may be related to students' counseling concerns. Following the definition and research related to the benefits of broaching, a compelling rationale for examining the broaching behaviors of school counselors follows citing demographic shifts, achievement gaps, structural inequalities, and adolescent development as factors necessitating culturally effective interventions in our schools. The chapter concludes with implications of these factors for middle school counselors.

Background of the Study

Multicultural Counseling Competence

Definition. In conceptualizing Multicultural Counseling Competence (MCC), Sue et al. (1992) enumerated three dimensions of MCC: *Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills*. Multicultural *Awareness* concerns an understanding of how sociocultural and sociopolitical influences form the context for the development of a personal worldview including one's values, assumptions, biases, and behaviors. Furthermore, multicultural *Awareness* embodies the recognition that the same sociocultural and sociopolitical factors influence members of marginalized groups differently than they may influence members of the dominant cultural group, that is, in the United States, middle class Whites. Multicultural *Knowledge* encompasses the acceptance of

multiple worldviews as legitimate, and the willingness to gain and utilize information about diverse worldviews in order to provide culturally sensitive counseling. Finally, multicultural *Skill* integrates multicultural *Awareness* and *Knowledge* competencies in the development of culturally sensitive strategies, interventions, and techniques that enhance the counselor-student relationship, and by extension, student outcomes. Chapter two incorporates a more thorough discussion of these multicultural counseling concepts when explicating the theoretical basis for this study. The remainder of this section, therefore, documents the importance of acquiring MCC by enumerating professional and empirical support for doing so.

Professional Endorsement of Multicultural Counseling Competence. The ethical codes, position statements, and accrediting guidelines of professional counseling organizations mandate the provision of culturally responsive counseling interventions that meet the needs of an increasingly ethnically diverse population [American Counseling Association (ACA), 2005; American School Counseling Association (ASCA), 2004; Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP), 2001]. ACA, ASCA, and the National Model for School Counseling Programs (ASCA, 2003) address the counselor's multicultural counseling responsibility for: a) developing a personal cultural awareness of her or his own racial, ethnic, and cultural background; b) acquiring a familiarity with how their own and their students' race, ethnicity, and culture impacts the counseling relationship and counseling outcomes; c) engaging in professional multicultural training; and d) providing leadership in advocating for systemic change. In particular, Section F of the ACA code of ethics mandates multiculturalism in terms of professional multicultural training, teaching, and supervision as necessary to providing ethically appropriate services. It specifically tasks counselor educators with infusing multicultural training into counselor preparation in both the classroom and clinical domains.

More specific to school counselors, ASCA (2004a, b) addresses MCC not only in separate sections of the code of ethics, but also in the preamble to the code as well as in a separate position statement on cultural diversity. Section E of the code, *Responsibilities to Self*, specifies the responsibility of the school counselor to affirm not only culturally diverse students but staff and families as well while also expanding personal cultural awareness, gaining knowledge regarding the impact of racism and discrimination, and pursuing educational, consultation, and training experiences that enhance school counselors' effectiveness in working with diverse populations. The preamble (ASCA, 2004b) identifies students of color as among those who historically have not received adequate educational services and asserts the right of all students to be affirmed in relation to their group identity. Drafted first in 1988 with three subsequent revisions (1993, 1999, 2004), the ASCA position statement (2004a) on cultural diversity asserts that counselors will not only maximize the opportunity for growth of every student but also foster systemic cultural awareness and understanding in the school and community. The magnitude of these mandates is reinforced in that ASCA holds *all* professional school counselors to these standards of ethical practice, whether or not they maintain membership in the organization.

Curiously, the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs (ASCA, 2003) refrains from using culture specific language, and emphasizes instead the leadership role of school counselors in effecting both individual and systemic change in the schools. In delineating competencies in the areas of academic, career, and personal/social development, the framework explicitly states that students must have the requisite tools for understanding and respecting both self and others. Although the document refrains from specifying respect for self and others in terms of racial, ethnic, and cultural identity, school counselors would be negligent if they disregarded these identity dimensions when promoting academic, career, and personal/social

student development. Developmentally congruent interventions are germane to the role of the school counselor, and race, ethnicity, and culture are salient aspects of adolescent identity development (Phinney, 1989). This topic is addressed later in the chapter. For now, suffice it to say that promoting acceptance of cultural diversity promotes personal as well as systemic efficacy (Edgar, Patton, & Day-Vines, 2002). Implicit in the leadership role explicated by the National Model, then, is the school counselor's responsibility for promoting cultural diversity rather than treating it as a deficit to overcome.

Consistent with the mandate for multicultural counseling competencies endorsed by ASCA, CACREP (2001) emphasized the importance of infusing instruction in cultural diversity throughout counselor training curriculums. Specific to the training of school counselors, CACREP guidelines require demonstrated knowledge of and curricular experiences related to racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage. Clearly, counselor educators must provide school counselor trainees the requisite skills to foster personal awareness, enhance school success for students of color, and implement systemic change that eliminates barriers to academic, career, and personal/social development.

MCC Research. Since the inception of MCC as an area of expertise in the 1960s, multicultural counseling competence has enjoyed a considerable amount of empirical support. A substantial number of researchers have investigated the relationship between MCC and various attitudinal and dispositional constructs across multiple mental health disciplines and levels of training (Constantine, 2001b, 2002; Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2001, 2005b; Neville, et al., 1996; Ottavi, Pope-Davis & Dings, 1994; Sodowsky, Kuo-Jackson, Richardson, & Corey, 1998). Research participants have included bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level practitioners, graduate and doctoral level counseling and school counseling students, clinical psychology students, school counselors, social workers, and licensed professional psychologists.

Results of these studies indicate a statistically significant relationship between MCC and racial identity (Ottavi et al.), racist attitudes (Constantine, 2002), theoretical orientation and empathy (Constantine, 2001b), social inadequacy and locus of control race ideology (Sodowsky et al.), independent self-construal (Constantine & Yeh), multicultural coursework (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005b), and ethnicity (Pope-Davis, Reynolds, Dings, & Nielson, 1995). Research concerning such attitudinal and dispositional constructs is significant in identifying the relationship between MCC and personal attributes. However, less attention has been devoted to investigating the relationship between MCC and specific multicultural counseling techniques and interventions (Sue, 2001). Notably, numerous scholars have implored counselors to identify and examine multicultural process skills and interventions (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005b; Sanchez-Hucles & Jones, 2005; Weinrach & Thomas, 1998). Existing research in this area suggests that interventions involving explicit discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture enhance the therapeutic relationship, promote client self-disclosure, and reinforce commitment to counseling (Burkard, Knox, Groen, Perez, & Hess, 2006; Fuertes, Mueller, Chauhan, Walker, & Ladany, 2002; Knox, Burkard, Johnson, Suzuki, & Ponterotto, 2003). Until recently, however, no uniform terminology or conceptualization of this process existed. Day-Vines et al. (2007) developed a conceptual model for facilitating explicit discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture during the counseling process, and labeled the process *broaching*.

The next portion of this manuscript defines broaching as conceptualized by Day-Vines et al. (2007), and presents empirical support demonstrating its effectiveness. Following this introduction to the broaching construct, which will be discussed more fully in chapter two, a rationale for utilizing broaching in a school counseling context is delineated by enumerating factors contributing to the discrepancy in academic outcomes between Caucasian students and students of color.

Broaching as a Multicultural Counseling Process Skill

Definition. Broaching refers to the counselor's consideration of race, ethnicity, and culture within the counseling relationship. Day-Vines et al. (2007) defined and conceptualized broaching as a multicultural counseling intervention involving a counselor's willingness and ability to initiate and utilize discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture to assess a student's presenting problem, provide a contextual dimension for understanding a student's concern, enhance the counseling interaction by empathizing with the student's cultural experiences, and aid the student in developing effective and culturally congruent problem solutions. The authors further noted that the counselor's broaching behavior falls on a continuum which progresses from a refusal to broach racial, ethnic, and cultural factors with a student and transitions to the counselor's ability to integrate the salience of group membership into her or his understanding of human interaction, capacity to recognize and address the implications of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students, and a commitment to systemic change.

Research. Although not labeled as *Broaching*, previous research with adult samples has suggested that addressing race, ethnicity, and culture in the counseling dyad enhances the working relationship in terms of trust, rapport, depth of disclosure, and counselor credibility (Fuertes et al., 2002; Gim, Atkinson, & Kim, 1991; Knox et al., 2003). To date, however, no studies have addressed the counselor's broaching behavior in a school setting. Nevertheless, students of color interact in a school environment where they are likely to encounter stressors, sociopolitical realities, and cultural differences reflective of the larger society that can threaten their best efforts at success. Therefore, it seems probable that inviting adolescents to consider the impact of racial, ethnic, or cultural factors on their school experience would enhance the counseling relationship, and ultimately, provide an opportunity to develop interventions and problem solving strategies leading to enhanced educational outcomes. Assessing the impact of

the counselor's broaching behavior on interactions with students, however, requires knowledge regarding the extent to which school counselors address issues of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to examine the extent to which professional school counselors broach racial, ethnic, and cultural factors with students. Relatedly, in addressing the call for operationalization of MCC in terms of skills, this study also examines the relationship between the counselor's self-reported broaching behaviors and multicultural counseling competence in terms of *Awareness, Knowledge, Skills*, and *Relationships*. The remainder of this chapter provides a rationale for studying these constructs in a sample of middle school counselors.

Rationale

Although developing multicultural skills for effectively working with culturally diverse clinical populations is necessary, culturally congruent counseling in the schools provides an opportunity for counselors to intervene on an individual, group, and systemic level. Therefore, this section of the manuscript highlights circumstances that provide justification for studying MCC in school settings. This section begins with a discussion of the demographic shifts occurring in the United States, continues with documentation of the academic underperformance of students of color compared to their Caucasian counterparts, enumerates structural inequality in the schools along racial lines and its impact on achievement, clarifies the importance of identity development during adolescence, specifically racial and ethnic identity development, and closes with the implications of these factors on the role of middle school counselors as it pertains to multicultural counseling competence.

Demographic Shifts

The racial and ethnic landscape of the United States population continues to shift. Although Caucasians currently comprise the largest racial group, the percentage of people of

color will surpass the percentage of Whites by 2050 (Burns, Keyes, & Kusimo, 2005). The school population inevitably reflects this shift. Estimates indicate that by 2008, students of color will comprise 41% of the national student body (Burns et al.) with Latinos constituting the largest proportion of the student population (Davison Aviles, Guerrero, Howarth, & Thomas, 1999). In marked contrast the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE, 1999) reported that the percentage of White teachers continues to increase while the percentage of African American teachers declines. Although ASCA provides no comparable statistics for school counselors, studies conducted among school counselors consistently report high percentages of Caucasian counselors compared to their ethnic minority counterparts (Grothaus, 2004). Table 1.1 provides a representative example of school counselor race among study participants.

Table 1.1
Percentage of Caucasian Counselors vs. Ethnically Diverse Counselors

Study	Caucasian	Ethnically Diverse	Other
a	68.6%	31.4%	
b	82.7%	16.6%	.6%
c	83.0%	15.0%	2%
d	89%	8.0%	2%
e	89%	11.0%	

[a] Study 1: Constantine, 2001b
[b] Study 2: Constantine & Yeh, 2001
[c] Study 3: Holcomb-McCoy, 2001
[d] Study 4: Holcomb-McCoy, 2005b
[e] Study 5: Holcomb-McCoy & Day-Vines, 2004

Given the potential cultural schism created by racial discontinuity between students and staff, especially when the racial background of students and counselors differ (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000), and the fact that the academic achievement levels of ethnic minority students lag behind those of their Caucasian counterparts (The Education Trust, 2004), continued inattention to the

needs of ethnically diverse students in our schools has the potential for dire consequences in terms of an educated and self-sufficient work force (Davison Aviles et al., 1999).

Aligned with teachers and staff in the goal of providing the most advantageous opportunities for students to achieve personal and occupational success, and the professional and ethical mandate to promote the optimal development of all students (ASCA, 2003), school counselors are in a unique position to nurture culturally sensitive school environments in order to produce consistent educational outcomes irrespective of the student's race. In an empirical article, Scott and House (2005) addressed the importance of school counselors broaching race-related stressors in guidance interventions that teach stress management and problem solving in order to help students of color develop healthy ways of responding to environmental stressors. As it stands now, some research suggests that despite positive attitudes toward counseling, African American students are more likely to utilize counseling resources outside of the school community than those provided within the school community (Ponterotto, Anderson, & Grieger, 1986). It would seem, then, that effectively broaching the implications of race, ethnicity, and culture is one way school counselors can foster confidence among ethnic minority students in the ability of school counselors to align with them to enhance opportunities for academic success.

Achievement Gap

The landmark legislation of *Brown vs. Board of Education* in 1954 ushered in a legal mandate to achieve academic equity for all Americans. Later, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s demanded that actual change be enforced. With this emphasis the academic achievement gap between Caucasian and African American students decreased steadily between 1970 and 1988. Since then, however, the gap has widened not only between Caucasian and African American students (Haycock, 2001), but also between Caucasian and other ethnic minority students (The Education Trust, 2004). According to figures published in 2004 by The Education

Trust only 13% of African American, 14% of Latino, and 16% of Native American fourth grade students were reading at grade level proficiency compared to 42% of their Caucasian counterparts. By eighth grade, five times as many Caucasian students as African American students achieved minimum proficiency in grade level math; Latinos and Native Americans did not perform much better than African American students. The discrepancy continued throughout years of schooling resulting in African American and Latino 17 year olds being taught math at the same level as Caucasian 13 year olds.

Similar discrepancies appear in special education and gifted and talented statistics as well. Despite the fact that African Americans comprise approximately 17% of the student population (The Education Trust, 2004), estimates of African American students in special education classes range from 20% (The Education Trust) to 38% (Patton, 1998). Whereas African American students remain overrepresented in special education programs relative to their proportion of the school age populations, they remain woefully underrepresented in gifted and talented programs. In fact, estimates indicate that African American comprise 8% of the gifted and talented population (Education Trust).

Although their representation in special education classes is proportionate to their enrollment, Latino students lack appropriate representation in gifted and talented classes. That is, Latino students constitute 16% of the school population, but only 10% of the students in gifted and talented classes (The Education Trust, 2004). Complicating the bigger picture of Latino student achievement is the fact that Latinos have the highest school dropout rate of any other group of students (Davison Aviles et al., 1999) and many Spanish origin students spend their academic careers in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes (Valdes, 2001). Conversely, statistics for Caucasian students reflect proportional representation in special education and overrepresentation in gifted and talented programs. Although Caucasian students

comprise 61% of the student population, they represent almost 75% of students enrolled in advanced classes.

Although as a group, the academic performance of Asian American students exceeds that of Caucasian students, some Southeast and South Asian ethnic groups such as Hmong and Laotian experience considerable academic difficulty (Ngo, 2006). Hmong American students, for example, are referred to special education classes and labeled learning disabled when the discrepancy between their home culture and the culture of the school interferes with their understanding of the content taught in their classrooms (Thao, 2003).

It is unlikely that students remain disaffected by these disturbing and historically embedded imbalances**.** Not only do these inequities limit the academic growth potential of students of color, but they promote internalization of erroneous stereotypes within the school community and negative academic self-efficacy for students of color.

Phinney and Tarver (1988) document these consequences in a qualitative study of Black and White 8th grade students. Their study illuminated the fact that both White and Black students internalized the stereotype that students of color are remedial students while White students are academic achievers. Similarly, Howard (2003) reported that African American students verbalized that the low expectations of teachers and counselors directly impacts their academic self-concept. Davison Aviles et al. (1999) found that Latino young adults verbalized that school personnel who encouraged them to opt out of mainstream education contributed to their decision to drop out of school, and Valdes (2001) demonstrated that English as a second language (ESL) programs do not prepare students to transition into general education or college preparatory curriculum. Rather, many ESL programs focus on English language acquisition without regard for grade level content.

School counselor behaviors also reflect internalized stereotyping. The National Commission for Cooperative Education (2006) conducted a study of 20,000 professional school counselors. Findings indicated that the race and class of students predicted counselors' recommendations for postsecondary options. For instance, counselors recommended middle class African American student with sub-par academic records for community college far more frequently than middle class Caucasian students with similar performances.

Inaccurate and negative academic perceptions concerning students of color are issues which have particular salience for school counselors who are in a unique position to both help students make sense of these experiences and promote systemic change. Tasked with the professional mandate to promote the optimal academic development of all students in culturally sensitive ways (ASCA, 2003) and the role responsibility of social and personal development, career planning, and course selection (ASCA), school counselors are compelled to initiate culturally sensitive interventions to reverse these pervasive and detrimental trends of placement, perception, and expectations. Broaching the impact of race, ethnicity, and culture with students from marginalized populations most affected by these inequities can be an effective way for counselors to acknowledge the discrepancies, normalize the reactions associated with the experiences, convey an awareness of the sociopolitical impact of racial group membership, communicate a commitment to promoting change, and help students develop adaptive strategies to enhance their success within and beyond school while working to address the systemic inequities in the school environment.

Structural Inequalities

The literature identifies numerous factors that contribute to the aforementioned academic discrepancy between Caucasian students and students of color. These include individual differences, distressed home environments, low teacher expectations, student placement in

lower-level classes, unchallenging curricula, counselors who underestimate student potential, principals who ignore students' concerns, funding gaps, teacher expertise, and course curriculum (Haycock, 2001; Thao, 2003; The Education Trust, 2004). According to Campbell-Whatley and Comer (2000) teachers who designate individual differences and home environment as the principal determinants of low academic achievement among students of color engage in a self-perpetuating cycle of low teacher expectations, which can lead to fewer efforts to validate and affirm students, the consequences of which may be diminished levels of student self-efficacy and achievement. On the other hand, Haycock validates students' perceptions that the system exacerbates socio-economic disadvantages by expecting less, underestimating students' potential, providing unstimulating and culturally irrelevant curriculum, and ignoring their concerns.

In addition to these personal perceptions, empirical data supports the existence of structural inequities in the educational system. The Education Trust (2004) reported that while approximately 20% of teachers in schools with low ethnic minority enrollments (i.e. ethnic minorities comprise less than 15% of the student body) lacked sufficient coursework to teach in their subject area, almost 33% of the teachers in schools with higher ethnic minority enrollment (ethnic minorities comprise greater than 50% of the student body) lacked the necessary credentials; Haycock (2001) reported percentages as high as 50% of similarly unqualified teachers in the highest minority schools (90% minority).

Disproportionate funding also exists. According to the Trust (2004), the US average for state educational funding is $1256 less per student in school districts with high poverty student enrollment (students of poverty comprise greater than 50% of the student body) than in school districts with low poverty student enrollment (students of poverty comprise less than 15% of the student body). This translates to over $500,000 per year difference for an elementary school of

400 students. Overall, “school districts that educate the greatest number of minority students receive substantially less state and local money per student than districts with the fewest low-income and minority students” (The Education Trust, 2003, p. 2). With the preponderance of print and visual media exposing individuals to the luxuries of affluence, it is unlikely that poor children remain disaffected by the discrepant advantages perpetuated by this lack of financial investment in their schools. Finally, the 2004 report cited a general lack of enrollment in upper level math and science courses despite employers’ demands “for individuals with high-level knowledge and skills” (p. 12), and suggested that ethnic minority and poor students have less access to these upper level courses than their White counterparts. Campbell-Whatley and Comer (2000) reported specific instances where Caucasian students and students of color with the same test scores were placed differently into academic tracks with the ethnic minority students consistently placed in lower tracks.

Howard (2003) addressed the impact of these institutional practices on the self-perceived intellectual ability of African American students. In his qualitative study, Howard reported that students verbalized a direct impact of counselor expectations on self-perceived intelligence. If placed in advanced classes, students considered themselves to be smart but if placed in an average class, they perceived themselves not to be smart despite high academic achievement in previous years of schooling. Steele and Aronson (1995) identified this internalization of negative expectations as the *stereotype threat*. Their research demonstrated that African American students manifested the negative stereotype of lower intellectual ability by underperforming on a test of cognitive ability when they were told that a test measures intelligence, but performed on par with their other race peers when they believed the test was not a cognitive assessment.

Although one or two of these factors may not account for the academic disparities between Caucasian students and students of color, the exponential impact of the combination of low teacher and counselor expectations, unqualified teachers, exclusion from challenging curricula, and lack of financial resources could be staggering if left unchecked. Patton (1998) stressed the need to establish a culturally responsive educational system to reverse the impact of this academic imbalance. Because school counselors consistently interact with students, parents, teachers, and administrators, they are in a position to cultivate such a multiculturally responsive system. However, the willingness and ability to effectively initiate and respond to discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture seems a prerequisite for effectively identifying and changing a culturally inequitable system. Middle school seems a particularly crucial environment in which to promote these changes. Preparation and placement into academically differentiated courses in middle school sets the pathway for curriculum readiness in high school and beyond. Additionally, race and ethnicity assume great personal as well as academic relevance during the adolescent years (Akos, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005a; Phinney, 1989).

Adolescent Development in the Middle School Years

The discrepant advantages in the educational system noted above have particular salience during the adolescent years when the major developmental task is identity formation. Erikson (1980) labeled this stage of development as role identity vs. role confusion, and described it as a transition from an individual focus to a social one, when adolescents discover where they fit in the world and how they will contribute to it. As a result, adolescents assimilate societal messages into their identity structure around such dimensions as gender role, ethnicity, social status, sexual orientation, and race. More specifically, the concept of racial identity development conceptualizes how individuals view the personal implications of their racial group membership (i.e. Caucasian, African American, Latino American, etc.), and how they view self in relation to

people of other racial groups (Helms, 1990). According to Helms, racial identity development proceeds from naive assumptions concerning race to an integrated identity that transcends personal distinctions based on race. Cross and Vandiver (2001) highlighted the role that society plays in racial identity development in particular stating that the salience of race depends on the society in which one lives. For those living in the United States, racial identity development varies by race. Because Euro-American culture dictates the cultural norm for many individuals in this society, a substantial number of Caucasians of European descent can go through life never being aware of the implications of their being White (McIntosh, 1990). On the other hand, people of color whose physical appearance, cultural values, attitudes, and/or behaviors differ markedly from European American ideals cannot help but be aware of their difference. For adolescents, this racial awareness occurs simultaneously with other aspects of identity formation (Tatum, 1997).

In a qualitative study of 48 Black and White 8th graders, Phinney and Tarver (1988) evaluated the salience of racial identity development in adolescents. Findings demonstrated that racial identity development was more salient for both racial groups than previously indicated. Subsequently, in a 1989 study, Phinney found that White students did not relate to the concept of ethnic or racial identity aside from being American, but approximately half of the study's ethnic minority participants were either actively exploring their racial identity or had completed their exploration and had achieved racial identity integration. So, while White students seem to have more of an option in developing a racial identity as stated above, multiple studies (Howard, 2003; Phinney; Phinney & Tarver) have attested to the high salience of racial identity development for students of color. Given the salience of racial identity development for students of color, that these students enter middle school at differing levels of racial identity development, and that the school culture is based on Eurocentric norms, it seems imperative that school

counselors broach the impact of racial group membership on a student's identity as they facilitate students' healthy transition through personal, social, and cognitive developmental stages (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005a).

Helms (2003) discussed the salience of racial identity development specifically within the school environment. Her theory of interaction postulates a direct relationship between the racial identity of school personnel and its impact on a student. According to Helms, a teacher with a lower racial identity development status interacting with a student at a higher racial identity status results in a *regressive* interaction wherein the student is frustrated in his/her attempt to progress in their racial identity development. Conversely, a teacher with a more advanced racial identity status promotes a *progressive* relationship in which the teacher can enlighten and enhance a student's racial identity development. If the teacher and student are at the same racial identity level the interaction is a *parallel* one. Holcomb-McCoy (1997), highlighted the importance of understanding the implications of racial identity status, and tasked school counselors with educating school personnel on this topic while exploring their own values, biases, and assumptions regarding people of color. Implicit in this directive is the call for school counselors to broach racial, ethnic and cultural issues with students and staff in a culturally sensitive and competent manner.

Given the differential experiences of students of color within the educational system discussed previously, and the evolving social development characteristic of this age, adolescents of color cannot help but absorb into their personal identity negative messages emanating from a monocultural educational system. Although strong parental support and a future orientation to college can compensate for this dissonance (Howard, 2003), some African American students cope by developing an oppositional identity to the school culture (Ogbu, 2004). In doing so, students of color internalize the supposition that academic achievement belongs to the domain of

“Whiteness”, and intentionally spurn academic success as “acting White” and betraying a healthy Black identity. For these students, excelling in academics would mean relinquishing their Black identity and selling out to the dominant culture.

For Latino students, research suggests that the cultural mismatch between the American educational system and the home culture promotes dropping out of school as an appealing solution (Davison Aviles et al., 1999). It would seem, therefore, that the willingness and ability of school counselors to address race, ethnicity, and culture can help create an atmosphere wherein students of color can negotiate cultural ambivalence, discuss issues related to discrimination (Scott & House, 2005), develop self-advocacy skills, learn problem solving, and assimilate both a strong racial identification and a commitment to academic success into their personal identity.

In her groundbreaking work on African American adolescents and racial identity functioning, Tatum (1997) described a process of peer group identification which also acts as a buffer for African American students. Although many school personnel consider the self-segregation Tatum describes as counterproductive, the author explains that, in reality, African American adolescents congregating in the cafeteria are not only behaving in age appropriate ways, but are also implementing an effective coping strategy. It is vital that students of color connect with someone who can validate and understand their experiences of inequities and other students of color can and do provide this support. However, middle school counselors can also provide a respite wherein the experiences of students of color can be acknowledged and validated, and where students receive the acceptance, encouragement, and support to answer the fundamental question for this stage of development, “Who am I” as it pertains to both personal and academic identity.

Racially salient experiences are also highlighted during adolescence because of advanced cognitive ability. Adolescents are able to more accurately detect the subtleties of preferential treatment, lower expectations, and societal stereotypes. Campbell-Whatley and Comer (2000) provided anecdotal evidence of such subtle discrimination in the spontaneous behavior of a math teacher directing African American students new to the school to the second track math course because she assumed they did not belong in the first track. Tatum (1997) described the social rejection students of color feel from their Caucasian friends as they enter the world of dating and recognize they will not be included in that salient social interaction because of their race. Students of color are acutely aware of these subtleties and 'mishaps', and by addressing them directly with students, school counselors validate these experiences, offer support in coping with them, promote strong positive racial identity as a buffer, and promote the development of adaptive strategies that will ultimately reduce psychological distress and lead to improved academic outcomes. Secondarily, acknowledging and validating discriminatory experiences lays the foundation for systemic awareness and change.

Implications for School Counselors

When students are confronted with lower expectations, fewer challenging opportunities, untrained academic personnel, inadequate financial resources, and negative stereotypes of their minority group membership they may internalize negative societal messages (Steele & Aronson, 1995). In turn, these internalized messages can impact students' self-concept, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. Professional training in the developmental tasks of adolescence, and professional mandates to enhance students' personal growth necessitate that school counselors address these issues. It is incumbent upon school counselors to advocate for these students by creating, supporting, and implementing culturally sensitive interventions that offset the negative impact of systemic inequities and negative stereotypes. Professional, theoretical, and empirical

evidence supports this role for school counselors. A major theme of ASCA (2003) is advocacy on both an individual and systemic level to enable every student to achieve to his/her full potential. The ethical standards (ASCA, 2004) address the right to counseling services irrespective of race or ethnicity, and specifically state that the multicultural competency of school counselors includes an understanding of diverse cultural backgrounds as well as an awareness of their own ethnic identity, and its impact on working with students of diverse backgrounds. Helms' (1994) theory of interaction predicted the negative consequences to students of ignoring the impact of racial identity status, and Howard (2003), Phinney and Tarver (1988), and Powell and Jacob Arriola (2003) documented the importance of addressing the implications of racial group membership on positive academic outcomes.

Conclusion

The increasing diversity of our nation, the significant achievement gap that still exists between Caucasian students and students of color, the structural inequities that correspond to student ethnicity, the essential role that racial identity development plays in successfully negotiating the tasks of adolescents, and the ASCA (2004) mandate for school counselors to provide multiculturally competent counseling for all students, necessitate the identification of effective culturally sensitive interventions for middle school counselors. Broaching appears to be one such intervention. Both recognizing and addressing the implications of racial group membership appears fundamental to the academic success of students from marginalized groups. Research in this area is essential. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter has been to substantiate the rationale for such an investigation. The author of this study investigated the extent to which middle school counselors broach the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students, and subsequently analyzed the relationship between the counselor's broaching efforts and

multicultural counseling competence as a preliminary step in identifying effective multicultural counseling process skills.

Definition of Terms

Broaching. A culturally relevant intervention that incorporates discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture into the counseling relationship leading to effective and culturally congruent problem resolution (Day-Vines, et al., 2007).

Caucasian. In the literature, this term usually places emphasis on middle class Whites. Therefore, the terms Caucasian and White are used interchangeably in this text.

Culture. Integrated patterns of behavior that includes thoughts, values, beliefs, and customs (Day-Vines et al., 2007).

Ethnicity. Refers to a shared heritage among peoples including country of origin, language, and history that is passed on from generation to generation (Helms, 1990).

Multicultural Awareness. Recognition of one's own biases, values, assumptions, and limitations regarding their view of members of various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Multicultural Counseling Competence. The ability to work effectively with clients from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. For the purpose of this manuscript, the term is limited to visible racial ethnic minority groups as opposed to the broader focus that encompasses gender, sexual orientation, able-bodied and the like (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Multicultural Knowledge. A nonjudgmental understanding of worldviews that differ from one's own (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Multicultural Skills. The ability to utilize culturally appropriate and effective intervention strategies with ethnic minority clients/students (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

People of Color. Refers to individuals of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds other than Caucasian of Euro-American descent (African, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Arab, etc.).

Race. While race is biologically determined, it currently operates as a social construction distinguishing between the dominant racial group which establishes norms and minority racial groups which are expected to confirm to the established norm.

Racial Identity. "A sense of group or collective identity based on one's *perception* that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group" (Helms, 1990, p. 3).

White. Refers to Caucasian individuals of Euro-American descent.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Whereas chapter one established the importance of studying the broaching attitudes and behaviors of middle school counselors as a multicultural counseling skill, chapter two explains the theoretical basis for the constructs under investigation. More specifically, chapter two begins with a synopsis of multicultural counseling competence, including an elucidation of Sue and Sue's (2003) meta-theory of multicultural counseling competence, and continues with a review of the empirical literature supporting the study of MCC in school counselors. Next, the chapter summarizes Day-Vines et al.'s (2007) model of broaching and reviews the empirical literature supporting an investigation of broaching in middle school counselors. The chapter concludes with a summary of the relationship between MCC and broaching and the contribution the study makes to the multicultural counseling literature.

Multicultural Counseling Competence

In 1991, Pedersen identified multicultural counseling competence as the fourth force in counseling which complemented the psychodynamic, cognitive, and humanistic forces already acknowledged. Pedersen defined cultural competence as understanding the client's worldview in order to promote growth that is personally meaningful to the client rather than to the counselor or some objective criterion. In doing so, the multiculturally competent counselor considers clients in their cultural context, understands the sociopolitical impact of racial and cultural heritage, and recognizes cultural influences as integral to understanding identity development. Moreover, the multiculturally competent counselor views the culturally diverse client as a member of a group whose values, beliefs, and attitudes are valid alternatives to the traditional Euro-American values on which current counseling theories rely.

Sue and Sue (2003) go a step further than Pedersen (1991) and declare multicultural counseling competence superordinate to traditional counseling competence because multicultural counseling considers the impact of group membership on the client's concerns. Whereas traditional counseling theories focus on the universal aspects of humanity and the individual characteristics of the client, the client's cultural heritage is not typically emphasized. Multicultural counseling, on the other hand, acknowledges the significance of group affiliation in the socialization process involving the acquisition of values, beliefs, and other factors inherent in personal identity development. According to Sue et al. (1992) disregarding the cultural context of a client amounts to unethical and incompetent counseling practice.

Multicultural counseling competence continues to be defined and operationalized in a myriad of ways (Constantine & Ladany, 2000; Sue, 1998), but Sue and Sue's (1999) conceptualization enjoys the most widespread acceptance and empirical support (Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Ponterotto, Rieger, Gretchen, Utsey, & Austin, 1999; Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994). In responding to the need to categorize components of multicultural counseling competence, Sue and Sue identified awareness, knowledge, and skills as three separate but complementary domains that create a foundation for the provision of culturally sensitive counseling services to diverse client populations. Moreover, Sue (1998) maintains that cultural competence unfolds in a linear fashion such that each component builds successively on the previous component. That is, in order to achieve multicultural knowledge competencies, individuals must first accomplish multicultural awareness competencies. Similarly, mastery of multicultural skills presumes that individuals possess both multicultural awareness and knowledge competencies. Although this sequence for developing multicultural counseling competencies is generally presumed within the counseling profession empirical support has not yet been established.

Multicultural awareness addresses the personal processes of the counselor including conscious and unconscious bias, values, and stereotypes. Multicultural knowledge involves acquiring expertise about the client's worldview, and multicultural skill refers to the integration of multicultural awareness and knowledge competencies into culture specific counseling interventions. The following sections contain more detailed explanations of these three components of multiculturalism. Since their original conception, Sue and Sue (2003) have expanded their model to accommodate other identity dimensions such as gender and sexual orientation, and also a more systemic focus on intervention such as the professional, organizational, and societal domains in addition to the individual client. Because clients are influenced by multiple aspects of their identity and any of these can have greater salience at any time, and because concerns can originate in systems outside of the individual, this expanded model appears appropriate. However, the purpose of the current study is to evaluate the multicultural counseling competence of school counselors as it relates to the counselor's broaching behavior or, more specifically, the counselor's consideration of the combined impact of race and ethnicity on the functioning of the student (Day-Vines et al., 2007; Day-Vines, 2007b). Therefore, the remaining discussion of multicultural counseling competence will focus on the characteristics of awareness, knowledge, and skill as it pertains to the middle school counselor's interaction with students.

Multicultural Awareness

Multicultural awareness refers to the ongoing process of self-discovery as a racial and cultural being. The process of becoming a multiculturally aware counselor involves acknowledging the impact of culture on the development of personally held values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, recognizing the influence of these values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors on psychological processes, identifying subconscious biases, assumptions, and

stereotypes, developing an openness and respect toward those from diverse cultural backgrounds, committing to ongoing cultural understanding, and, for Whites, seeking a non-racist White identity (Helms & Cook, 1999). Multiculturally competent counselors understand that their racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage influences the development of their values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, and further recognize that those whose cultural heritage differs from theirs will endorse values, beliefs, and attitudes consistent with a personally unique experience of socialization. In addition, the multiculturally aware counselor acknowledges the impact of the sociopolitical system in which socialization occurred. That is, sociopolitical influences enhance and support personal development for some groups while creating a barrier for others (Pinderhughes, 1989). For school counselors, self-awareness might include recognition that they inherently expect ethnic minority students to perform less well academically than their Caucasian counterparts. Acknowledgement of such socially and culturally conditioned negative assumptions serves as a prerequisite for eradicating one's stereotypes and biases.

Multicultural Knowledge

Whereas multicultural counseling awareness examines the implications of one's own cultural conditioning, multicultural counseling knowledge embodies the effort to understand culturally diverse worldviews. The multiculturally knowledgeable counselor acquires information about inherent values, beliefs, attitudes, family structures, and communication styles of various cultures as well as the effect of sociopolitical conditions such as oppression, racism, forced migration, refugee status, and poverty (Smart & Smart, 1995) while at the same time recognizing intra-group differences. Given that traditional counseling is based on Eurocentric norms, the culturally knowledgeable counselor understands that ethnically diverse students may manifest symptoms differently than Caucasian students and may, in fact, be utilizing coping strategies that make sense given their cultural experiences and ways of knowing. Interacting with

persons of diverse cultural heritages in settings other than a counseling relationship can help a counselor acquire perspective and understanding of culture specific behaviors in contrast to unhealthy functioning. For the school counselor, multicultural knowledge might entail knowing that the child of migrant workers may miss school because of familial responsibilities rather than a dismissive attitude toward school attendance.

Multicultural Skills

Finally, a multiculturally skilled counselor manifests a willingness to be flexible in meeting the needs of culturally diverse students and providing culturally meaningful interventions. Such flexibility might include an extended view of the concept of family, a consideration of symptoms in a culturally relevant context, and a readiness to explain the rubrics of the counseling relationship such as rights and responsibilities, appointment times, goals, confidentiality, and informed consent (Sue & Sue, 2003) as well as the culture of the mainstream United States educational system such as four-year plans, academic schedules, and career planning. Aside from the traditional Euro-American practice of working with students, clients, and/or families, culturally competent counselors might also collaborate with indigenous helpers such as healers, spiritual advisors, and extended family members (Sue et al., 1992). Multiculturally competent counselors recognize that most assessment instruments are normed on Anglo males, and they seek appropriately normed methods of assessment or compensate for this bias when interpreting results (Arredondo, et al., 1996) as mandated by the ASCA ethical guidelines (2004b). When discussing career aspirations with a student whose culture emphasizes the needs of the group over the needs of the individual, a culturally sensitive school counselor might incorporate this cultural value into career planning and discuss it with the student and/or with the student’s family. When the locus of a student’s concern is outside of the student and resides in institutional barriers, the multiculturally competent counselor acts as an advocate of

change. Finally, the multiculturally skilled counselor is comfortable initiating discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture in the counseling relationship as a way of validating the student's experience, endorsing the appropriateness of discussions of race, empowering the student to consider the sociopolitical implications of their group membership, developing effective problem solving and coping strategies, and enhancing the counseling relationship. For the school counselor, this might entail validating a Latino student's experience of negative academic teacher expectations, and fostering appropriate coping strategies to deal with future encounters of racism and discrimination. Using the example above of the child of migrant workers, the multiculturally skilled counselor might facilitate a meeting involving the student, parents, and teacher wherein all parties can understand the difference between the home culture and the school culture, ultimately leading to a solution in the best interest of the student.

The ability to have meaningful dialogue around the issue of race in the counseling relationship has been referred to as broaching by Day-Vines et al. (2007) and is the second construct examined in this chapter. It will be discussed following a review of the MCC literature pertinent to the current study.

Multicultural Counseling Competence Research

Correlates of MCC

This section of the manuscript begins with a review of the empirical research assessing multicultural counseling competence among mental health professionals. It continues with an overview of the research involving the self-reported multicultural counseling competence among school counselors in training and practicing school counselors, and concludes with a presentation of the ways in which the current study addresses some of the limitations in the current MCC research.

A considerable amount of MCC research examines the relationship between MCC and *training* (Constantine, 2001b; Constantine, Arorash, Barakett, Blackmon, Connelly, & Edles, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2001, 2005b; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Neville et al., 1996; Ottavi et al., 1994; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Sodowsky et al., 1998), *racial group membership* (Carter, 1990; Gim, Atkinson, & Kim, 1991; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers; Ottavi et al.; Pope-Davis et al.; Sodowsky et al.), and certain *attitudinal variables* (Constantine, 2001b, 2002; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Ottavi et al.; Sodowsky et al.; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2000, 2003). Multicultural coursework and multicultural counseling experience are so consistently correlated with MCC such that a preponderance of researchers now enter these variables first when conducting hierarchical regression analyses in order to control for their impact on the variance in MCC. Likewise, a substantial amount of research demonstrates that counselor ethnicity is predicitive of MCC (Holcomb-McCoy & Myer; Pope-Davis et al.; Sodowsky et al.) while demographic variables such as age and gender appear inconsistently correlated with MCC (Constantine & Yeh; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005b; Ottavi et al.; Pope-Davis et al.). Among attitudinal and dispositional characteristics examined for their relationship to MCC, racial identity status enjoys both frequency of investigation and theoretically consistent findings (Burkard, Ponterotto, Reynolds, & Alfonso, 1999; Neville et al., 1996; Vinson & Neimeyer; Watt, Robinson, & Lupton-Smith, 2002**)**. That is, counselors reporting a higher racial identity status also report higher levels of multicultural counseling competence. Conversely, counselors reporting a lower racial identity status report an inverse relationship with MCC (Neville et al.). Other attitudinal and dispositional characteristics investigated for their relationship to MCC include theoretical orientation and empathy (Constantine, 2001b), feelings of social inadequacy and locus of control racial ideology (Sodowsky et al.), universal diverse orientation (Constantine et al., 2001), and independent vs. inter-dependent self-construal (Constantine & Yeh, 2001).

Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999), Pope-Davis et al. (1995), and Sodowsky et al. (1998) are among the researchers who have investigated the relationship between MCC, educational variables, and counselor ethnicity. Using the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS), Holcomb-McCoy and Myers investigated the relationship between MCC and counselor ethnicity in a sample of 151 practicing counselors, 30% of whom were ethnic minorities. Results of a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed statistically significant differences between Caucasian counselors and counselors of color. Compared to their Caucasian counterparts, counselors of color reported greater multicultural counseling knowledge, awareness, skills, and familiarity with racial identity theories. Multicultural counseling terminology was the sole dimension of MCC measured in which a statistically significant difference was not attributed to counselor ethnicity. Counselors whose multicultural training included both coursework and experience with ethnically diverse clients also demonstrated significantly higher multicultural counseling knowledge and familiarity with racial identity theories. However, the results remain tenuous because the MCCTS was developed for this study and did not yet have established psychometric properties.

In a comparison of clinical and counseling psychology students, Pope-Davis et al. (1995) investigated the impact of demographic variables and culturally sensitive training on MCC. Using the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI), which assesses four dimensions of multicultural counseling competence (awareness, knowledge, skills, and relationship), results of a hierarchical regression analysis revealed that counselor ethnicity and MCC training made a statistically significant contribution to several MCI subscales although gender and age did not. Among counseling psychology students, ethnicity accounted for 8% of the variance in MCC awareness and 11% of the variance in MCC relationship while educational and clinical variables accounted for an additional 19% of the variance in MCC awareness. Among clinical psychology

students, ethnicity accounted for 16% of the variance in MCC awareness and 5% of the variance in MCC knowledge, while educational and clinical variables accounted for 24% of the variance in MCC awareness and 19% of the variance in MCC knowledge. Surprisingly, no statistically significant relationship was found on the MCI skills subscale for participants in either program. Results of this study seem to support the premise that although counselor ethnicity, and academic and clinical exposure seem to enhance MCC awareness, knowledge, and the counseling relationship, they do not seem to contribute to the acquisition of MCC skills.

Finally, using the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI), Sodowsky et al. (1998) assessed the impact of counselor ethnicity, as well as social desirability, feelings of social inadequacy (lack of self-assurance in a social context), locus of control racial ideology (beliefs concerning societal vs. individual responsibility for overcoming racism), and MCC coursework on self-reported MCC in a sample of 176 college counselors. Regressed on the full scale score of the MCI, counselor ethnicity accounted for 7% of the variance in MCC, multicultural social desirability accounted for 6% of the variance, coursework accounted for 10% of the variance, and social inadequacy combined with locus of control racial ideology accounted for an additional 11% of the variance in self-reported multicultural counseling competence. These studies support the conclusion that both counselor ethnicity and culturally relevant training are predictive of MCC.

Several researchers have considered the impact of the racial identity status of Caucasian counselors on MCC. Defining racial identity as the conception of self as a racial being as well as an individual’s conception of self relative to other racial groups, Helms (1990) enumerated 5 statuses that capture the racial self-conceptions characteristic of Caucasians in the United States: contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independent, and autonomy. These statuses represent the progression towards a positive White racial identity that transitions from implicit

and explicit racism and entitlement to racial transcendence that incorporates an ability to comfortably function across racial groups.

Using Helms' statuses, Ottavi et al. (1994) investigated the relationship between racial identity status and MCC in a sample (n = 128) of Caucasian counseling graduate students. Using the subscales of the MCI as the criterion variables, the results of four hierarchical regressions demonstrated that racial identity status accounted for 11%, 18%, 18%, and 19% of the variance in MCC skills, knowledge, awareness, and relationship respectively. In particular, the authors emphasized the relationship between Pseudo-Independent racial identity status and a counselor's perceived ability to establish a working alliance and consider the impact of race on the counseling interaction with culturally diverse clients. Individuals with a Pseudo-Independent racial identity recognize the inherent advantages of their racial heritage but seek to eliminate racism by assimilating ethnic minorities into the dominant culture.

More recently Constantine (2002) examined the relationship between racial identity status, racism, and MCC in a convenience sample of 99 Caucasian school counselor trainees. Using the scores from the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS) as the criterion variable, hierarchical analyses demonstrated that racial identity status and racist attitudes accounted for 37% of the variance in MCC. The relationship between MCC and the predictor variables, however, was negative. Higher scores on a measure of racism were inversely related to MCC. Also, among the five racial identity statuses, only Disintegration and Reintegration made a unique contribution to the variance in MCC. Both Disintegration and Reintegration represent less advanced levels of racial identity functioning in which the moral dilemma of racism is salient but resolved by selective attention to negative stereotypes of people of color. These studies support the conclusion that attitudes towards one's own and others' racial group membership impacts MCC.

Constantine (2001b) conducted a study of 105 school counselor trainees from the northeast that investigated the relationship between MCC, theoretical orientation and empathy. Using the full scale score of the MCI as the criterion variable in a hierarchical multiple regression analysis, Constantine concluded that previous multicultural training, theoretical orientation, and empathy accounted for 5%, 11%, and 13% respectively of the variance in MCC. Interestingly, although psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral theoretical approaches made a statistically significant contribution to MCC, participants who maintained an integrative theoretical orientation reported significantly higher levels of MCC than the other two. The findings of this study imply that both a flexible attitude as conceptualized by an integrative theoretical orientation, and an ability to display caring and warmth contribute to MCC.

Correlates of MCC in School Counselors

Despite a substantial amount of research on MCC, a paucity of research examines the MCC of practicing school counselors. Constantine et al. (2001) surveyed 100 practicing school counselors who were members of the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) to explore the relationship between a universal-diverse orientation (UDO) and MCC awareness and knowledge as measured by the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS). Individuals with a universal-diverse orientation recognize and appreciate both similarities and differences among people of diverse cultures. Using a hierarchical regression analysis with multicultural knowledge and awareness as the criterion variables, and controlling for multicultural coursework, the authors found that UDO accounted for 21% of the variance in multicultural knowledge and 9% of the variance in multicultural awareness.

Using a convenience sample of 156 practicing school counselors in New York City, Constantine and Yeh (2001) assessed self-reported multicultural counseling competency (MCC) as it relates to previous academic multicultural training and independent vs. interdependent self-

construal. An interdependent self-construal emphasizes one's connectedness to others while an independent self-construal emphasizes an individual's uniqueness in relation to others. Because these distinctions often emerge in members of Eastern vs. Western cultures, the authors evaluated this construct as a social dimension that might be predictive of MCC. The authors used the Cross-Cultural Counseling Competency Inventory-Revised (CCCI-R) which assesses cross-cultural counseling skill, sociopolitical awareness, and cultural sensitivity as their measure of MCC. The results of a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) yielded a statistically significant difference in the self-construal of men and women, with men reporting greater interdependent self-construals and women reporting greater independent self-construals. This finding was inconsistent with previous research (Oyserman & Packer, 1996). Because of this difference, two separate simultaneous regression analyses were computed with the CCCI-R score as the criterion variable. Results demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between multicultural training and MCC, and between an independent self-construal and MCC. In discussing this finding, the authors expressed concern that some of the school counseling behaviors consistent with an independent self-construal such as providing direction, offering advice, and being interpersonally assertive may be contrary to the interdependent self-construals of culturally diverse students. Constantine and Yeh make the suggestion that school counselors may need to exhibit cognitive flexibility in displaying collective vs. autonomous behaviors in order to provide ethical and competent counseling to their culturally diverse students.

Using the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS), and a convenience sample of 76 elementary school counselors, Holcomb-McCoy (2001) examined self-perceived multicultural counseling competence (MCC) in terms of awareness, knowledge, skills, terminology, and familiarity with theories of racial identity development. Holcomb-McCoy also investigated the relationship between the counselors' self-perceived MCC,

experience and coursework. Surprisingly, and contrary to the results of many other studies, a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed no statistically significant relationship between MCC and either experience or coursework. In terms of self-perceived MCC, however, results indicated that the counselors perceived themselves to be multiculturally competent overall, reporting the highest scores in MCC awareness and terminology and the lowest scores in MCC knowledge and racial identity development theory. Because the participants scored highest on subscales that reflect more about self and lowest on subscales that reflect consideration of the impact of race, ethnicity, and culture on others, Holcomb-McCoy recommended interpreting the results with caution when drawing conclusions about the overall strength of MCC of the participants.

Finally, Holcomb-McCoy (2005b) used the MCCTS-R(evised) to investigate the self-perceived MCC of 206 school counselors and its relationship to gender, work setting, experience, and training. Factor analysis reduced the original five subscales of the MCCTS-R onto three dimensions of MCC: awareness, knowledge, and terminology. A comparison of means indicated that the participants perceived themselves to be at least somewhat competent in all three dimensions. Contrary to Holcomb-McCoy's 2001 study reported above, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed a statistically significant relationship between MCC and previous multicultural coursework with no other demographic variable making a statistically significant contribution to MCC.

Holcomb-McCoy (2005b) administered her instrument (MCCTS-R) to both community and school counselors, and analyses of the latent variable structure of the MCCTS and MCCTS-R revealed both a five and three factor structure. The inconsistent factor structure produced by multiple administrations of the instrument and the fact that neither version of the instrument has enjoyed widespread use by researchers in the counseling field necessitate caution when

interpreting the data generated by this instrument. However, Holcomb-McCoy's research represents a major contribution to the school counseling field, comprising a sizable number of the studies assessing MCC among school counselors. As such, her research is germane to the field and is documented in this review.

Additionally, Holcomb-McCoy's research is consistent with the other studies presented for this review of the literature in that the overwhelming majority assess attitudinal, dispositional, and demographic variables as correlates of MCC. Although these variables are central to development of MCC in school counselors, they have contributed little regarding the specific correlates of multicultural process skills.

Sanchez-Hucles and Jones (2005) have called for the identification of measurable constructs within the profession, and Holcomb-McCoy (2001, 2005b) and Constantine and Yeh (2001) specifically recommended the examination of school counselors' multicultural counseling strategies. This would include culturally responsive strategies in which the counselor discusses the extent to which race, ethnicity, and culture may impact the presenting problem. More specifically, Day-Vines et al. (2007) developed a conceptual and measurable framework delineating the counselor's level of openness towards and ability to implement explicit discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture during the counseling process. They coined this process "*broaching*". Incidentally, *broaching* refers to the intentional discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture within the counseling interaction.

By delineating the way in which counselors initiate and/or respond to issues of race, ethnicity, and culture with students, Day-Vines et al. (2007) have provided the profession with an observable and measurable multicultural skills construct. This study utilizes Day-Vines, et al.'s contribution and responds to the call for process based research by assessing the extent to which middle school counselors discuss race, ethnicity, and culture in their counseling efforts

with students. Subsequently, the study analyzed the relationship between the self-reported broaching behavior of middle school counselors and MCC, thus investigating not only broaching as a multicultural counseling skill, but examining the relationship between broaching and other dimensions of MCC as well. Broaching is the second construct of this study, and a more detailed discussion is provided later in this chapter.

MCC Research Limitations

A critical look at the studies reviewed reveals that only one of the studies included a measurement of social desirability (Sodowsky et al., 1998) to offset the tendency for participants to respond in socially desirable ways. Yet, in a 2000 study investigating the relationship between four measures of MCC and social desirability, Constantine and Ladany found a statistically significant relationship between the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (M-C SDS) and the CCCI-R full scale score (CCCI-R is unidimensional), the MAKSS Skills subscale, and the MCI Relationship subscale. Only Ponterotto's Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS) was impervious to the effects of social desirability. Given that the accuracy of self-report instruments as an objective measure of competence is already under scrutiny (Schwarz, 1999), Constantine and Ladany recommended that researchers who investigate self-reported MCC include a measure of social desirability in their research. The current study addressed this concern about self-report instruments by including a short version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (M-C SDS).

Two of the four studies involving practicing school counselors (Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2001) were conducted with convenience samples. In distinguishing between the multiple methods of sampling, Patten (2004) stated that using a sample of convenience necessarily introduces bias into the study. Conclusions drawn from a study using a convenience sample can accurately be applied only to a group whose characteristics mirror the characteristics

of respondents. In Constantine and Yeh's study, for example, the results can only be generalized to school counselors from New York City who attended a local school counseling conference and were likely to volunteer to respond to the survey. No conclusions can be drawn about counselors from other areas who are not likely to attend a conference and not likely to voluntarily participate in a survey. The current study addressed this limitation by assessing counselors' broaching behaviors in a sample of practicing middle school counselors, taken from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and various state School Counselor Association memberships.

Broaching

The importance of practicing cultural sensitivity and expertise enjoys professional support in terms of mandates, ethical guidelines, and position statements (ACA, 2005; ASCA, 2004; CACREP, 2001). Additionally, Sue et al. (1992) have implored counselors to develop culturally sensitive counseling interventions. Yet, the counseling profession has been justifiably criticized for failing to operationalize multicultural competencies into measurable constructs (Delgado-Romero, Galvan, Mawchino, and Rowland, 2005; Sanchez-Hucles and Jones, 2005**)**. Previous research seems to suggest that acknowledging race, ethnicity, and culture during the counseling process constitutes culturally sensitive practice. For instance, Fuertes et al. (2002) documented the benefits of addressing racial and cultural factors as a means of enhancing the counseling relationship. Day-Vines et al. (2007) utilized the results of several qualitative studies (e.g. Fuertes et al.; Knox et al., 2003) and responded to the professional criticism by conceptualizing a model of broaching race, ethnicity, and culture as a measurable and developmental multicultural counseling skill. Because broaching provided a conceptual basis for the current study, the remainder of this section expounds upon the conceptualization of the counselor's broaching

behavior as a multicultural skill, and explicates the five categories of broaching enumerated by Day-Vines et al.

Definition

Day-Vines et al. (2007) coined the term “broaching” to refer to the counselor’s deliberate and intentional efforts to address race, ethnicity, and culture in the context of the counseling relationship. In expanding on the responsibility of the counselor to broach, Day-Vines et al. denoted four functions of broaching within the counseling relationship: (1) to introduce or respond to discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture with the client; (2) to help the client examine the salience of race, ethnicity, and culture in her or his life; (3) to process the implications of racial, ethnic, and cultural factors on the presenting problem; and (4) to utilize the resulting insights to develop effective problem solving and coping strategies.

As such, broaching incorporates the purposeful and interactive quality of addressing race, ethnicity, and culture with the student (client) as opposed to the purely cerebral action of “considering” or “acknowledging” these factors (Day-Vines, 2007b). In limiting the consideration of race, ethnicity, and culture to one’s own thoughts, the counselor may rely on personally assumed cultural stereotypes without explicit consideration of intra-racial distinctions provided by the student’s personal experiences. Although considering the implications of race, ethnicity, and culture appear to aid the counselor in case conceptualization or implementation of non-traditional intervention strategies, failure to include the student in discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture can potentially hinder the counselor from accurately assessing the salience of these influences in the student’s life, validating the student’s experience of these identity dimensions, inhibit pertinent student self-disclosure, and, ultimately, preclude the counselor from assisting the student with developing effective problem solving strategies (Cardemil & Battle, 2003).

Recognizing that counselors vary in their willingness and ability to implement broaching behaviors, Day-Vines et al. (2007) enumerated five levels of broaching performance on a continuum that progresses from the counselor's negation of the impact of race, ethnicity, and culture, accompanied by an unwillingness to broach these issues with clients, and advances to styles that reflect a well integrated understanding of the sociopolitical implications of race, ethnicity, and culture and the concomitant application of culturally responsive interventions that lead to imminent problem resolution on both an individual and systemic level.

Continuum of Broaching Attitudes and Behaviors

The five categories of broaching enumerated by Day-Vines, et al. (2007) are: (a) *avoidant*, (b) *isolating*, (c) *continuing/incongruent*, (d) *integrating/congruent*, and (e) *infusing*.

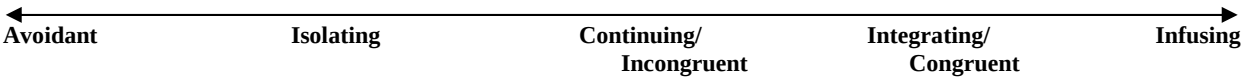

Figure 2.1 Continuum of Broaching Behaviors

Avoidant counselors lack multicultural awareness and knowledge. They ignore or minimize the salience of race, ethnicity, and culture, and maintain either a color blind orientation which does not acknowledge the salience of race, or assert that racism is no longer an issue for people of color. Previous research indicates that color blind attitudes are associated with racist attitudes (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000; Spanierman & Heppner, 2004). Many counselors with an avoidant stance maintain that considering the impact of race with a client only incites unwarranted negative emotions or provides the client with an excuse for denying personal responsibility for the presenting problem. Contrary to seminal counseling skills, in avoiding a discussion of race, ethnicity, or culture, the counselor may deny or fail to validate the client's experience – which is a fundamental component of change used to enhance the counseling relationship **(**Ivey & Ivey, 2003). This stance precludes the counselor from

developing culturally relevant responses and interventions. For instance, a Latino student confided in his counselor about concerns that his teacher was biased against students of color, to which the counselor countered, “I have not known Mrs. Jones to be discriminatory. Something must have happened to annoy her.”

Isolating counselors acknowledges obvious racial, ethnic, and cultural differences between the counselor and client, but fail to comprehend that racial and cultural experiences are embedded in the client’s identity and impact the client on more than a surface level. Broaching may be done in a simplistic manner acknowledging or restating a student’s comments without promoting greater student self-disclosure or advancing the discussion to a deeper level of problem conceptualization or insight. Broaching done in this manner is more a formality than an intervention, stifling in-depth student disclosure. Using the accusation made by the Latino student in the previous paragraph, the school counselor might engage in a perfunctory acknowledgment or restatement of the student’s concerns in a manner that does not permit more in depth discussion and problem solving. For instance, the counselor may retort. “You think that because you’re Latino and Mrs. Jones is White, she treats you differently.”

Continuing/incongruent counselors have an intellectual understanding of the impact of race, ethnicity, and culture and a commitment to promoting appreciation of diversity but these stances are based on a stereotypical viewpoint. They view persons of ethnic minority groups through a lens consistent with the perception that people represent monolithic entities and behave in characteristic ways consistent with their racial group membership. A counselor operating from this category recognizes the sociopolitical implications of racial group membership and acknowledges an inherent power imbalance and institutional racism but cannot parlay that understanding into meaningful counseling interventions. The continuing/incongruent counselor empathizes with the student’s experience and maintains openness towards broaching but

implements it awkwardly. In essence, the continuing/incongruent counselor broaches consistently but ineffectively given their dependence on stereotypical information and lack of facility in transferring their multicultural knowledge into an appreciation of the student's experience. Following through with the above example, the counselor may state, "It's always difficult for students of color to work with a White teacher."

Iintegrated/congruent counselors recognize that race, ethnicity, and culture shape a student's identity and experiences and encourages the student to process the influence of sociocultural and sociopolitical issues on the student's particular experience. A counselor operating at this level integrates broaching strategies into the counseling process with an expertise and confidence that enhances the counseling relationship, promotes student self-disclosure, and improves counseling outcomes. Integrated/congruent counselors are able to generate meaningful discussions around race, ethnicity, and culture with students because in addition to an intellectual understanding of the need for discussions involving race, ethnicity, and culture, broaching also represents a salient aspect of their professional identity (Day-Vines, 2007b). This level of expertise also enables the integrated/congruent counselor to distinguish between unhealthy human functioning and culture-specific behaviors. As a result, the integrated/congruent counselor is able to implement culturally relevant interventions which result in effective adaptive strategies and problem solving approaches for students. To illustrate using the above example the counselor may say, "So you're feeling that the teacher is treating you differently because you're Latino."

Finally, i*nfusing* counselors maintain a personal and professional commitment to the eradication of all forms of oppression and broach as a way of being rather than a professional responsibility. The infusing counselor has a heightened sense of consciousness regarding the sociopolitical implications of membership in a marginalized group. Moreover, the infusing

counselor implements interventions that involve both the counseling dyad and society at large. The infusing counselor uses broaching behaviors both to enhance problem resolution for the student and also to intervene on an institutional level in an effort to change the system that perpetuates or aggravates the student's concern. For example, in response to the student concern expressed above the counselor may say, "Jose, you are not the only student of color who feels this way. I'm thinking of initiating a program to enhance understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. I'm wondering if you would like to participate." (Appendix A contains a Table of Broaching Attitudes and Behaviors.)

This explication of the various styles of broaching behavior (Day-Vines et al., 2007) enhances the counseling profession in multiple ways. First, it helps counselors self-identify their placement on the continuum in order to improve their broaching ability. Second, it describes the nuances and progression of broaching behaviors from one category to the next. Third, it provides a rubric for educators and supervisors to assess and ultimately enhance the broaching behaviors of counseling students. Finally, it enumerates a multicultural counseling construct in a way that is measurable. Although the purposes of the continuum provide a useful heuristic for all practicing school counselors, the scope of the current study emphasizes the broaching efforts of middle school counselors.

Broaching Research

This section reviews the available research on the counselor's broaching behavior. Although scholars have not developed consistent terminology to describe the consideration of race, ethnicity, and culture within the counseling dyad, studies included herein involve deliberate and intentional efforts on the part of the counselor to address issues related to race and representation**.** Day-Vines (2007b) has suggested the term broaching as a means of unifying the profession and providing a measurable construct. The remainder of this manuscript utilizes the

term broaching to refer to any instance in which the counselor engages the client in discussions about the extent to which race, ethnicity, and culture shape the presenting problem.

The advantages of addressing race, ethnicity, and culture with adult clients have been empirically documented in the mental health literature (Atkinson, Casas, & Abreu, 1992; Burkard et al., 2006; Fuertes et al., 2002; Gim et al., 1991; Knox et al., 2003; Thompson, Worthingon, & Atkinson, 1994). Although this author recognizes that therapy is not the domain of school counselors, the foregoing studies attest to the advantages of broaching in terms of relationship, engagement, and outcome – all domains pertinent to the school counselor's ability to be effective in forming the "needed bridge between counseling and education" (ASCA National Model, 2003, p. 165). A counselor's ability to promote the "attitudes, knowledge and skills" (ASCA, p. 167) deemed necessary for successful academic, career, and personal/social development cannot be effective with students who are not engaged in the counseling process. Therefore, this review of the professional literature documents the advantages and justifies the inclusion of broaching as a fundamental multicultural counseling skill for practicing school counselors. In doing so, this section provides empirical support for the effectiveness of broaching in adult populations, reviews studies that suggest the positive impact of broaching in the school setting, and discusses limitations of the current research involving broaching in the school environment.

Empirical Support for the Effectiveness of Broaching

Fuertes et al. (2002) conducted a qualitative study to investigate cross-racial counseling dyads involving Caucasian psychologists and African American clients. All participating therapists reported addressing racial and ethnic differences between the self and the client within the first two counseling sessions. Regardless of how the therapist addressed the topic of race, whether by engaging the client in open discussions of race, validating experiences of racism,

utilizing awareness of the counselor's own racial identity, or in relationship to the counselor's preferred theoretical orientation, study participants reported that their broaching efforts enhanced the therapeutic relationship, contributed to committed and continued engagement of the client, and subsequently contributed to positive outcomes.

Similarly, Knox et al. (2003) conducted a qualitative study of cross racial counseling dyads involving both Caucasian and African American therapists as well as Caucasian and African American clients. Despite reporting less personal awareness of the implications of racial group membership, less multicultural training, less comfort with addressing race in cross-racial counseling dyads, and fewer instances of addressing race in cross-racial counseling dyads than their African American counterparts, both Caucasian therapists and African American therapists reported that broaching efforts enhanced the therapeutic relationship.

Gim et al. (1991) evaluated the effect of the counselor's broaching behavior on the therapeutic relationship in a sample of Asian American clients. Using cross racial counseling dyads involving Asian American clients and both Caucasian and Asian-American counselors, the researchers found that clients rated counselors of either race who broached the topic of culture as more culturally competent than their culture blind counterparts. Additionally, clients generally perceived culturally sensitive Caucasian counselors as more credible than their culturally blind racial counterparts.

In a similar study involving Mexican-American community college students, Atkinson et al. (1992) asked participants to rate the effectiveness and cultural competence of counselors who were culturally responsive vs. counselors who were culturally non-responsive. Results of a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed a statistically significant effect for cultural responsiveness. That is, counselors who were culturally responsive in their interactions with their clients were rated as more culturally competent.

Finally, Thompson et al. (1994) evaluated the effect of a universal content orientation vs. a cultural content orientation on the frequency and depth of client disclosure, rating of counselor credibility, and willingness of the client to return to counseling. A universal content orientation emphasizes the common human experience and minimizes the impact of racial, ethnic and cultural influences whereas a cultural content orientation underscores the influence of race, ethnicity, and culture in a person's life. Results of a univariate analysis of variance demonstrated that participants disclosed in greater depth to counselors with a cultural content orientation than to counselors with a universal content orientation. A 2 x 2 x 2 ANOVA revealed that participants exposed to the cultural content orientation were also more willing to return to counseling. However, because no reliability data exists for the instrument which assessed the client's willingness to return to counseling, readers should interpret these results with caution.

Empirical Justification for School Counselors' Broaching Behavior

While there is a dearth of research examining the impact of the counselor's broaching efforts on adolescents in a counseling relationship, the following studies are cited as empirical support for the school counselor's broaching behavior with culturally diverse students. Despite the fact that none of the studies examined the effectiveness of interventions used by school counselors, all of them involved secondary school students and proposed that discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture are salient to the role of the school counselor and integral to the academic success of students of color.

Scott and House (2005) investigated the relationship between the use of coping strategies and feelings of discriminatory distress in a population of African American high school students from a predominantly Black, faith-based school in the South. The authors hypothesized that higher reports of discriminatory stress would be related to greater use of avoidance coping

strategies whereas feelings of perceived control would correlate with greater use of approach coping strategies such as seeking social support and problem solving. A correlation analysis confirmed the hypothesis and found a statistically significant relationship between discrimination distress and avoidance coping strategies, and between perceived control and approach coping strategies. Furthermore, after controlling for gender, grade level, SES, and family structure in a hierarchical regression analysis, perceived control accounted for 7% and 12% of the variance in seeking social support and problem-solving coping strategies respectively. The role of school counselor has historically involved helping students develop effective coping strategies. The results of this study highlighted the salience of race as a source of adolescent stress that cannot be ignored and the use of approach coping strategies as effective in dealing with racial stress. Scott and House concluded their report with the following strong mandate for broaching issues of race with students of color:

> Despite apprehension that broaching the issues of racism and discrimination inflames passions, incites further divisiveness, or perpetuates victimization, Black youth should be provided with a safe and nonjudgmental environment to vent their frustrations and discuss their personal stories. (p. 269)

The responsibility of the school counselor to provide such a safe and nonjudgmental environment is further embodied in the modality of responsive services articulated in the National Model (2003) for school counselors to meet “individual students’ immediate needs, usually necessitated by life events or situations and conditions in the students’ lives” (ASCA, p.166).

Whereas Scott and House (2005) assessed the relationship between coping strategies and feelings of distress, Powell and Jacob Arriola (2003) investigated the relationship between coping strategies and academic achievement. In a study involving 75 African American public

high school students, Powell and Jacob Arriola investigated the relationship between psychosocial (non-cognitive) factors and GPA. Psychosocial factors examined were community service, academic motivation, social support, and students' methods of handling unfair treatment. After controlling for gender and absenteeism, the results of a regression analysis showed that only the method of handling unfair treatment showed a statistically significant relationship to grade point average. More precisely, those who talked to others about their experiences of unfair treatment rather than keeping it to themselves were more likely to have higher GPAs. These findings are consistent with Scott and House in reiterating the importance for ethnic minority students to engage in open discussions that offset the negative impact of perceived discrimination. These findings imply that, by being a resource where students disclose discriminatory experiences, school counselors can use student concerns constructively to help students engage in more effective problem solving and the development of effective coping strategies.

Although Scott and House (2005) and Powell and Jacob Arriola (2003) investigated the impact on students of discussing discriminatory experiences, the following two studies involve the role of the school counselor in addressing issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in the school environment.

Davison Aviles et al. (1999) conducted a focus group with 72 young adult Latinos age 16 – 24 who dropped out of school within the previous 5 years. Participant responses were categorized into five themes and three recommendations. Consistent across the data generated was the dissonance between the home and school culture, and the lack of flexibility on the part of the school to accommodate the needs of the Latino population. School counselors were identified as among those who verbalized to Latino students that they would not graduate. By contrast, in generating recommendations, the participants specifically requested multiculturally

sensitive, bilingual school counselors to bridge the communication mismatch between the home and school culture. As victims of a system that did not address cultural issues in a sensitive and responsible way, these young adults advocated for school counselors, in particular, to initiate conversations about the sociopolitical implications of race, ethnicity, and culture as a way of bridging the gap between the home and school cultures, and, subsequently, enhancing the academic achievement of Latino students.

Likewise, school counselors also advocated for skills to work effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse students. In a qualitative study, Schwallie-Giddis, Anstrom, Sanchez, Sardis, & Granato (2004) interviewed elementary and secondary school counselors who work with culturally diverse students and participated in a 9-month professional development program. The counselors identified their greatest challenges as: (a) addressing the dissonance between the student and family when acculturation levels between parents and children differed, and (b) achieving a level of comfort and skill interacting with linguistically and culturally diverse students and families. The study also implied that counselors may experience a certain amount of cognitive dissonance when addressing cultural issues for fear of appearing insensitive. Although this study did not assess the broaching behaviors of the participating counselors it provides a compelling rationale for doing so in order to advance the acquisition of culturally sensitive skills as a means of providing competent and effective counseling services.

Broaching Research Limitations

Although empirical evidence has demonstrated the benefits of broaching in an adult population, the connection between racial specific discussions and student success, and the role that school counselors are called to play in the effective facilitation of discussions related to race, ethnicity, and culture, a paucity of research examines the broaching behavior of school counselors. The proposed study takes a prerequisite step in studying the impact of school

counselors' broaching behavior by examining the extent to which middle school counselors address issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in the school setting. Furthermore, in responding to the call for measurable MCC constructs (Sanchez-Hucles & Jones, 2005; Weinrach & Thomas, 1998), and school counselor MCC interventions in particular (Constantine and Yeh, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2001, 2005b) the proposed study examined the relationship between broaching and MCC in terms of awareness, knowledge, skills, and relationships. In so doing, this study also supports the mandate of the professional counseling organizations to acquire multicultural counseling competence (ACA, 2005; ASCA, 2004a, b).

Conclusion

Given the ever-increasing cultural diversity within the US population, professional counseling organizations have mandated multicultural counseling competence as a necessary component of providing ethical counseling services to culturally diverse populations (ACA, 2005; ASCA, 2004b). In support of this mandate, a wealth of conceptual and empirical literature validates the relationship between MCC and certain demographic, attitudinal, and dispositional characteristics (Carter, 1990; Constantine, 2001b, 2002; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Gim et al., 1991; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Ottavi et al., 1994; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Sodowsky et al., 1998; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2000, 2003). Regrettably, there appears to be a gap in the literature in identifying and investigating process skills as they relate to MCC despite the fact that an emerging body of research demonstrates that broaching the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture with adults enhances client commitment, depth of disclosure, and counseling outcome in cross-racial counseling dyads (Atkinson et al., 1992; Fuertes et al., 2002; Gim et al., 1991; Knox et al. 2003).

Although these studies did not investigate the relationship between broaching and MCC, they do seem to provide evidence of a conceptual link between the two constructs. Yet, even this

conceptual link in the current research appears to be limited to the adult population. Despite evidence that openly dealing with issues of race, ethnicity, and culture are academically, socially, and personally beneficial to adolescents (Powell and Jacob Arriola, 2003; Scott and House, 2005), a scant amount of research examines the extent to which school counselors are broaching these subjects with students, and whether there is a relationship between school counselors' broaching behavior and their levels of MCC.

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to expand on the current literature involving MCC by investigating broaching as it relates to MCC, and, in particular, as a multicultural counseling process skill. In utilizing a sample of middle school counselors, this study furthers the profession's knowledge of MCC in terms of broaching racial, ethnic, and cultural factors with an adolescent population.

The following chapter elucidates the methods used to investigate: (a) middle school counselors' current multicultural counseling competency and, in particular, the extent to which they address race, ethnicity, and culture with culturally diverse students; (b) the relationship between broaching and MCC in terms of awareness, knowledge, skills and relationship; and, (c) the degree to which broaching predicts multicultural counseling competence.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

The goal for this study was to examine the relationship between multicultural counseling competence (MCC) and counselors' broaching behaviors in a sample of middle school counselors. To reiterate, broaching refers to the counselor's explicit discussion about the extent to which race, ethnicity, and culture impacts a student's presenting problem. Previous research has documented statistically significant relationships between MCC and certain demographic, dispositional, and attitudinal characteristics (Carter, 1990; Constantine, 2001b, 2002; Constantine et al., 2001; Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Gim et al., 1991; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Ottavi et al., 1994; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Sodowsky et al., 1998; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2000, 2003). However, less attention has been devoted to investigating relationships between MCC and culture specific strategies and interventions. The counselor's broaching behavior appears to be a multicultural intervention. Moreover, previous research examining the interactions between counselors and adult clients has demonstrated a conceptual link between the counselor's broaching behavior and MCC (Atkinson et al., 1992; Fuertes et al., 2002; Gim et al., 1991; Knox et al. 2003). To date, however, this conceptual link has not been documented for school counselors and their work with students. As such, this study examined the relationship between MCC and the broaching behaviors of middle school counselors. The questions guiding this study are as follows:

1) To what extent do middle school counselors: (a) broach the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students; and (b) self-identify as multiculturally competent?

2) What is the nature and extent of the relationship between broaching and MCC?

3) To what extent is broaching predictive of MCC, after controlling for selected demographic variables and social desirability?

The remainder of this chapter details the participants, instrumentation, procedures, and data analyses used in this study.

Participants

The participants for this study were solicited from members of the American School Counselor Association. The accessible population comprised middle or junior high school counselors who maintain membership in the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) and provided email addresses along with their identifying information to the organization. ASCA is an organization that promotes the professional and ethical practice of school counselors and focuses on enhancing school counseling programs, researching effective school counseling practices, and providing professional development opportunities to its members. Although this sampling frame does not embody all middle school counselors (e.g. those who chose not to be members of ASCA or did not provide their email address), ASCA membership represents the most comprehensive way to identify the largest available grouping of middle school counselors in the United States.

Currently, of the 867 ASCA members who designate middle or junior high school as their work setting, 825 provided email addresses, and comprised the sampling frame. Approximately 260 respondents were needed for a 95% confidence interval with a $\pm$ 5% error. Given the potential for a poor response rate, and that online data collection procedures involve minimal costs (Cobanoglu, Warde, & Moreo, 2001), all 825 ASCA members were invited to participate in the survey.

As stated in a preceding chapter, middle school counselors were chosen as the target population because of the salient developmental concerns that may arise with adolescents of color, particularly racial identity functioning (Akos, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005a). Although racial identity development is salient for students of all ages, adolescents are acquiring the

cognitive ability to recognize the subtleties and implicit meanings that often accompany behaviors directed toward those who are not members of the dominant cultural group.

Instrumentation

Four instruments were administered in this study. The Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) operationalizes the MCC construct in terms of awareness, knowledge, skills, and relationship. The Broaching Attitudes and Behaviors Scale (BABS) generates information regarding counselors' broaching behaviors. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MC-SDS), short form assesses the extent to which participants' answers reflect the desire to respond in socially sanctioned ways. The demographic questionnaire elicits information regarding personal descriptors, professional experience, and work environment. A copy of the entire questionnaire with author contact information is in Appendix B. The remainder of this section describes the psychometric properties associated with these measures. Information on the instruments is summarized in Table 3.1.

Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI)

Multicultural counseling competencies were measured using the MCI. The MCI is a 40-item self-report instrument developed by Sodowsky et al. (1994) to asses a counselor's competence in working with culturally diverse clients, and takes approximately 8 minutes to complete. The inventory contains four subscales which assess multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge, multicultural skills, and multicultural relationship.

The *awareness* subscale contains 10 items, and examines a counselor's sensitivity to, appreciation of, and advocacy for multiculturalism. The *knowledge* subscale contains 11 items, and assesses understanding of racial and cultural variables, an appreciation of the impact of these variables on the client, and familiarity with utilizing this knowledge in accurate case conceptualization and goal setting. The *skill* subscale contains 11 items, and assesses the ability

Table 3.1
Number of Items and Scale Reliabilities for the MCI, BABS, and M-C SDS

Instrument	Subscales	# of Items	Reliability Studies				
			a	b	c	d	d
MCI	Awareness	10	.76	.77	.79	.83	.80
	Knowledge	11	.78	.80	.81	.79	.80
	Skills	11	.77	.82	.79	.83	.81
	Relationship	8	.70	.68	.74	.65	.67
	Total scale	40				.88	.86
BABS	NA	NA	NA				
M-C SDS short form		13	.70 [e]	.64 [f]			

[a] Ottavi, Pope-Davis, Dings (1994)
[b] Pope-Davis, Reynolds, Dings, & Nielson (1995)
[c] Constantine (2001)
[d] Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, (1994)
[e] Ballard (1992)
[f] Loo & Loewen (2004)

to generate and implement culturally appropriate interventions with the client. Finally, the *relationship* subscale contains 8 items, and assesses the counselors' interpersonal processes with culturally diverse clients, including comfort level and ability to establish a working alliance. The MCI uses a 4-point Likert-type response format (1 = very inaccurate, 2 = somewhat inaccurate, 3 = somewhat accurate, 4 = very accurate), with higher scores reflecting greater MCC. The items are stated in behavioral terms ("I am able," "I use," "I am successful at").

Scores for the MCI were generated by averaging the numerical equivalents of the responses (1, 2, 3, or 4) for each subscale. These subscale scores were subsequently averaged for the total MCI score. The authors recommend reporting a total score which reflects a more general self-perceived multicultural competence as well as a mean score for each subscale, which represents specific multicultural counseling domains (Sodowsky et al, 1994).

Sodowsky et al. (1994) reported Cronbach alphas of .83 for MC Awareness, .79 for MC Knowledge, .83 for MC Skills, .65 for MC Relationship, and .88 for the full scale during instrument development. A second study conducted by the authors and reported at the same time as the first, established the validity of the four factor structure of the MCI with a different sample, assessed factor congruence between the two sets of data, and evaluated the stability of the instrument. A goodness of fit test confirmed the four factor structure. Cronbach alphas for the second set of data were .80 for MC Awareness, .80 for MC Knowledge, .81 for MC Skills, .67 for MC Relationship, and .86 for the full scale thus supporting the internal consistency reported in the first study. These reliabilities are listed in columns four and five of Table 3.1 along with reliabilities computed in additional studies using the MCI. At the request of the author, the MCI cannot be reproduced for inclusion in any reports, and, therefore, does not appear in the appendix.

The MCI was chosen for this study because of its sound psychometric properties, and the inclusion of a relationship subscale in addition to subscales examining the three dimensions of MCC generally accepted by the profession (awareness, knowledge, and skills). As stated earlier, empirical literature supports the supposition that addressing race, ethnicity, and culture enhances the counseling relationship. This study sought to provide quantitative support for this supposition. Therefore, including a multicultural counseling relationship assessment is theoretically consistent and warranted in examining the counselor’s broaching behavior and its impact on providing culturally relevant interventions. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that most of the reliability coefficients previously reported for the relationship subscale are marginal while the other subscale reliabilities are more psychometrically sound.

Broaching Attitudes and Behaviors Scale (BABS)

The Broaching Attitudes and Behavior Scale (BABS) measures the extent to which counselors address race, ethnicity, and culture with clients. Day-Vines et al. (2007) conceptualized broaching behaviors along a continuum from avoidance to advanced styles of broaching. As such, they identified five categories of broaching behavior: avoidant, isolating, continuing/incongruent, integrated/congruent, and infusing. The BABS is a self-report instrument newly developed by Day-Vines (2007a) that contains items representing each of these five categories of broaching behaviors.

Avoidant broaching behavior minimizes discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture because of a belief that it is irrelevant to counseling or is no longer a problem for people of color. A sample item indicative of the avoidant category of the broaching continuum is: Broaching behavior is unnecessary with students of color. *Isolating* broaching behavior acknowledges obvious racial, ethnic, or cultural differences, but fails to comprehend the impact of these factors on more than a surface level. A sample item indicative of the isolating category of the broaching continuum is: I believe school counselors should only broach racial and cultural factors when the student initiates such discussions. *Continuing/incongruent* broaching behavior reflects an intellectual recognition of the salience of race, ethnicity, and culture, but an awkward and often ineffectual effort. A sample item indicative of the continuing/incongruent category of the broaching continuum is: I am committed to broaching racial and cultural factors with students, but I don’t always do it effectively. *Integrated/congruent* broaching behavior recognizes the salience of race, ethnicity, and culture, and processes it effectively in the context of a counseling relationship. A sample item indicative of the integrated/congruent category of the broaching continuum is: I adjust my counseling approaches based on the student’s responses to my broaching behavior. Finally, *infusing* broaching behavior maintains a personal as well as a

professional commitment to broaching, and does so as a way of being. A sample item indicative of the infusing category of the broaching continuum is: If a student is the victim of overt or institutional racism, I act as a change agent and advocate for that student.

In developing the BABS, item stems were generated to reflect each category of broaching, and were worded both positively and negatively. Responses are scored on a Likert-type scale (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree), and scores are generated by calculating a mean score for each subscale. The subscales scores are averaged to generate a total BABS score. Some items are reverse coded so that high scores on the BABS reflect the presence of more highly developed broaching behaviors.

To establish the content validity of the BABS, masters and doctoral level students were given an overview, definition, rationale, and demonstration of the broaching construct and each of the broaching categories. Following the presentation, participants rated 109 items for clarity and the extent to which the item corresponded to a particular category of broaching behavior. Items were retained for the final item pool if there was 80% agreement that the item was clear and if there was 80% agreement on the specific category of broaching behavior that the item represented. Additionally, items remained in the final item pool if the rating on consecutive categories (e.g., avoidant and isolating) was greater than or equal to 80% when the ratings were combined. For example, if 50% of the raters evaluated one item as *avoidant* and 35% of the raters evaluated the same item as *isolating*, the combined rating of 85% qualified the item for inclusion in the final item pool. Feedback from expert evaluations of the instrument was also used to make revisions, resulting in 91 items.

Subsequently, in a preliminary study of counselors’ broaching behaviors, using factor analysis with principal components extraction with varimax rotation, Day-Vines (2007a)

identified 57 items that loaded on three interpretable factors for the BABS. The first factor contained 36 items and seemed consistent with the *integrated/congruent* and *infusing* categories of the continuum of broaching behavior. That is, items loading on factor one endorsed broaching attitudes and behaviors as an important component of individual counseling and supported systemically oriented interventions for use with clients. A sample item indicative of the integrated/congruent category of the broaching continuum is: “I am committed towards helping clients understand how they can develop appropriate reactions to encounters with oppression.” A sample item indicative of the infusing category of the broaching continuum is: “Disagreeing with racial discrimination is not enough because counselors must be willing to engage in advocacy and systemic change effort.

A second factor, containing 14 items and corresponding with the *avoidant* category of the broaching continuum captured counselors’ reluctance to broaching racial and cultural factors because it was deemed unnecessary. Sample items included: “Although broaching can provide some context for counseling clients from diverse backgrounds, it is not a necessary component of the counseling process”. Similarly, another item representative of this category states, “I am not sure that broaching is an effective counseling strategy.”

A third interpretable factor containing 7 items correlated with the *continuing/incongruent* category and captured the counselor’s assessment of her or his broaching behaviors. Example items from this category included: “Sometimes I have difficulty identifying facilitative responses once the client begins to talk about racial and cultural factors’, and “I need a broader range of counseling strategies in order to broach racial and cultural factors more effectively with my clients of color”. Cronbach alphas for these factors were .99, .98, and .97 for factors one, two, and three respectively.

Modifications for the Present Study. The BABS was developed to assess the level of broaching behavior of clinical counselors. Consequently, for the present study involving school counselors, the word “client” in the BABS was changed to “student”, and the word “clinical” was deleted in two items (#32 and #82)**.** Neither of these changes should alter the integrity of the items.

Preliminary analyses were conducted prior to utilizing the BABS scores in the principal analyses, namely, several iterations of a principal component extraction with varimax rotation. Additionally, Cronbach alphas were computed on the resulting subscales to assess the reliability of the BABS in the current study.

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (M-C SDS) – Short form

The full scale Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale was developed to provide a measure that evaluates socially desirable responses in terms of behaviors that are culturally accepted and approved, but unlikely to occur (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Since the development of the full scale Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale in 1960, several shorter versions have been developed and utilized without compromising the reliability or validity of the full scale (Ballard, 1992; Reynolds, 1982; Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972). More recently, Loo and Loewen (2004) compared the full scale and 13 shorter versions. They concluded that all of the shorter versions represented an improvement in fit when compared to the full scale Marlowe-Crowne, and identified Ballard’s composite scale, containing 13 items, as the best among the short versions. The scale takes approximately two minutes to complete.

Ballard’s (1992) composite scale extracts 13 items from the full scale version. Eight questions are scored 1 point for a response of true and 2 points for a response of false (e.g. I sometimes feel resentful when I don’t get my way. F = 2) and five are reversed scored with 1 point for a response of false and 2 points for a response of true (e.g., No matter who I’m talking

to, I'm always a good listener. T = 2). Higher scores represent a greater inclination to respond in socially desirable ways.

Ballard (1992) reported an alpha coefficient of .70 for her composite scale; Loo and Louwen (2004) reported an alpha coefficient of .64 for Ballard's composite scale, and a correlation coefficient of .89 in relation to the full scale. Because the short version compromises neither the validity nor reliability of the original scale, and, in fact, represents an improvement of fit (Loo & Louwen), it was incorporated into the survey.

Demographic Questionnaire

Items included in the demographic questionnaire generated information regarding multicultural and counseling experience, work environment, and personal descriptors. Statements regarding experience included number of multicultural courses and workshops, highest degree earned, and years of counseling experience. A counselor's work environment was operationalized as the school location (urban, suburban, small town, rural), number of students in the school, percentage of ethnically diverse students in the school, and the percentage of ethnically diverse students with whom the counselor works. Personal descriptors included age, sex (coded 0 female and 1 male), and race (coded 0 counselor of color and 1 Caucasian), providing a profile of the participants in terms of the predominant identity dimensions. Optional open-ended items gave participants an opportunity to provide personalized feedback in a less structured format, attend to aspects of MCC and broaching not addressed in the questionnaire, and provide the researcher with a context for understanding the quantitative responses.

Procedures

An electronic data collection method was chosen for this study because of the reduced time, lower cost, and ease and accuracy of data capture (Cobanoglu et al., 2001; Granello & Wheaton, 2004; Pettit, 2002). Efforts to increase the response rate of the on-line survey included

a pre-notification email that contained altruistic incentives and the time required for the survey. Additionally, as recommended by Bosnjak and Tuten (2001), a simple survey format was utilized. Participants were recruited from the American School Counselors Association (ASCA), and almost all (95%) of the target population provided email addresses. Additionally, because participant responses were entered into a data collection site and not returned via email, anonymity was maintained.

Subsequent to IRB approval, the questionnaire was entered into Survey Monkey, an online data collection site at www.surveymonkey.com. Before proceeding with their responses, participants were informed that responding to the questionnaire implied informed consent. The MCI was entered first, followed by the BABS, and the M-C SDS short form in such a way that participants were able to respond with only one answer to each item. The demographic questionnaire was entered last.

Membership in ASCA provided access to the ASCA website and identification of members who designated middle or junior high school as their work site. Names with accompanying email addresses were compiled into an excel spreadsheet, and comprised the pool of participants. The emails were copied into Outlook and the pool of potential participants received a pre-notification email explaining the purpose of the study, stating the anonymous nature of the survey, inviting their participation, and explaining that a $1.00 donation would be made to St. Jude Childrens' Research Hospital for every response. Three days later, a similar email was sent that also contained a hyperlink to the electronic survey site used to collect the data, namely Survey Monkey. A copy of the email message is included in Appendix C. Because the survey contained no identifying information, the entire pool of participants received an email reminder each week for three subsequent weeks thanking those who participated in the study, and inviting participation for those who had not.

Data Analyses

Preliminary Analyses

In order to assess for response bias, data generated from the initial invitation were compared with data generated from subsequent appeals for participation. Statistically significant differences between the sets of responses would indicate that the data are suspect for response bias. Additionally, Cronbach alphas were computed on the scores of the BABS, the MCI total and subscale scores, and the M-C SDS, short form to determine the reliability of the instruments in this study.

Because the BABS is a relatively new instrument, a factor analysis with principal component extraction and verimax rotation was performed to assess the five factor structure conceptualized within the broaching continuum. The resulting number of factors and the total BABS score were used in the subsequent analyses.

Main Data Analyses

To determine the extent to which (a) middle school counselors broach racial, ethnic, and cultural factors with their students, and (b) self-identify as multiculturally competent, descriptive statistics were computed (means and standard deviation) on the total and subscales scores of the BABS and MCI.

To answer the second research question, which examined the relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence, correlations were computed on the total score and four subscale scores of the MCI, and the identified subscale scores of the BABS. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale score was also included in the correlation to assess for response bias. To answer the third research question, i.e. the amount of variance in MCC accounted for by the BABS and certain demographic variables, a series of hierarchical regressions were computed with the full scale and subscale scores of the MCI as the criterion

variable. Consistent with previous research, which has identified a relationship between multicultural counseling competence and *experience* (Constantine, 2001a, 2001b, 2002; Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Ottavi et al., 1994), between MCC and *race* (Constantine, 2001a; Gim et al., 1991; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Sodowky et al., 1998), and between MCC and *training* (Constantine, 2001b; Constantine, Arorash, Barakett, Blackmon, Connelly, & Edles, 2001; Holcomb,-McCoy, 2001, 2005b; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Neville et al., 1996; Ottavi et al., 1994; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Sodowsky et al., 1998), these demographic variables, along with ethnically diverse caseload, were entered into the first step of a hierarchical regression analysis. The MC-SDS was entered into the second step of the regressions to control for social desirability. The BABS subscale scores were entered in the third step of the regression to determine the amount of additional variance in the MCI accounted for by the BABS.

Summary

A web-based survey was used to assess the MCC of middle school counselors with particular emphasis on their willingness and ability to broach the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture with students. The MCI assessed multicultural counseling competence, and the BABS assessed participants' broaching behaviors. A social desirability scale, open-ended questions, and demographic questionnaire were also included in the survey.

Descriptive statistics were computed to demonstrate the extent to which middle school counselors broach the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture with students and self-identify as multiculturally competent. A correlation was computed to identify the nature and extent of the relationship between the four domains of MCC and broaching, and a series of regression analyses demonstrated the extent to which broaching is predictive of MCC.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Findings from the analyses of data collected to examine the relationship between broaching behavior and multicultural competence in a sample of middle school counselors are presented in this chapter. The chapter begins with a report of the response rates, a comparative analysis of respondents from different sampling frames, and a description of the demographic variables. The chapter continues with a report of the latent variable structure of the Broaching Attitudes and Behavior Scale (BABS). Next, the main analyses are reported. That is, results of the extent to which the respondents broach race, ethnicity, and culture is presented first followed by a description of the participants' self-reported multicultural counseling competence. The results of a Pearson product moment correlation are presented to describe the relationship between the BABS and the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI). The chapter concludes with the results of the regression analyses which examined the extent to which counselors' broaching attitudes and behaviors, social desirability, and selected demographic variables were predictive of multicultural counseling competence. The Statistics Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 15) was used to compute all analyses.

As a review, the three research questions investigated in this study are as follows:

1) To what extent do middle school counselors: (a) broach the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students; (b) self-identify as multiculturally competent?

2) What is the nature and extent of the relationship between broaching and MCC?

3) To what extent are the counselor's broaching efforts predictive of MCC, after controlling for selected demographic variables and social desirability?

Participants

Response Rate

Eight Hundred and twenty-five American School Counselor Association (ASCA) middle school counselors who provided email addresses were contacted via the internet to participate in the survey. Of these, 14% of the emails bounced back or were blocked. The remaining 709 resulted in 38 responses (5%) and one request for a paper and pencil copy of the questionnaire.

Subsequent attempts to generate participation in the study included two reminder emails to the ASCA middle school counselors (one and two weeks after the initial invitation), and an invitation to Virginia middle school counselors as solicited from professional relationships, the Fairfax County Schools website, and the National Center for Educational Statistics. Additionally, eleven state school counselor associations were contacted through their websites requesting their assistance in disseminating the questionnaire. The state organizations represented four sections of the United States, namely the northeast, southeast, northwest, and southwest, and included New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina, Wyoming, Colorado, California, and Texas. New York and Tennessee responded that they had forwarded the request to their membership while Virginia responded that their policy dictated that they could not forward the request. The other states did not respond to the principal investigator’s request, thus it is not known whether the survey materials were forwarded to members of the remaining state associations. Because the total number of individuals in the population of these subsequent attempts is unknown, the response rate for this second solicitation attempt could not be calculated. Neither could it be determined if the participants from the state organizations are members of ASCA. However, these combined efforts yielded an additional 124 online responses, and two requests for a paper and pencil version of the questionnaire.

In order to assess for sampling bias, an analysis of variance was run to compare the MCI total score and the BABS total score of those who completed the questionnaire after the initial request (N = 38) with those who responded to subsequent invitations (N = 124). Age and years of experience were also compared. There was no appreciable difference between the two groups; consequently, the data for both sets of respondents were combined for the analyses based on the assumption of no sampling bias.

Of the total 162 respondents who started the online questionnaire, 25 respondents completed only the first page and were, therefore, dropped from the analyses. This yielded 137 usable questionnaires (85% of those who started it). Of the three requests for a paper and pencil version, one was included in the analyses; one was incomplete and one arrived too late to be included. Thus, the final number of respondents was 138.

Personal Demographic Characteristics

Of the 138 respondents, 65 had complete data sets on the MCI, BABS, and MC-SDS items. Therefore, subsequent analyses on these three sets of scales and subscales were done on N = 65. Consequently, demographics are presented in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 for both N = 65 and N = 138. Approximately one-quarter of respondents failed to provide some or all of the demographic information. However, in comparing frequencies and percentages of the data including the number of missing responses, there does not appear to be any systematic differences in the demographic profile between the 65 respondents with complete subscale data and the entire set of respondents. Therefore, the remainder of this discussion will use percentages from the N = 65.

The large majority of respondents were female (83%). The ratio of male to female counselors appears consistent with findings from previous research (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001: 94% female; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005: 83%; Constantine et al, 2001: 84%; and Constantine &

Yeh, 2001: 63%), and approximates the ASCA membership report of 80% female and 20% male.

Approximately three quarters of the study participants were Caucasian (75.4%), 22% were counselors of color, and 3% failed to specify a racial group. Across all racial groups, 8% reported being of Hispanic origin. Ages ranged from 24 to 61 years of age, and the average age of the respondents was 39. More than half (59%) of the respondents were younger than 40 years old. Respondents also represented a wide range of experience levels with a range of 0 to 26 years of experience, and an average of 7 years.

A master's degree is required for people working within the school counseling profession. Predictably, most of the respondents reported having a master's degree (80%), while 14% held a specialist degree, a credential beyond the master's degree which requires additional course work. Three percent (3%) of the respondents had either a doctorate or bachelor's degree. Forty-nine respondents (75%) reported receiving some type of multicultural training, with 41 of those reporting at least one multicultural course. Thirty-one respondents participated in seminars, and 22 participated in staff development addressing multicultural issues. Three respondents specified other methods of multicultural training including personal reading, minority status when working for the state rehabilitation services, and the Nomura Center. Two other respondents specified 'college' and 'My Master's Program' as sources of multicultural training, but these were not included into the percentage because it is not clear whether they had specific multicultural courses or whether issues of diversity were infused throughout their college curriculum. Interestingly, almost one-quarter (23%) reported no professional multicultural training.

Table 4.1
Personal Demographic Characteristics

Variable	**N = 65**	**N = 138**
Gender		
Male	9 (14%)	13 (9.4%)
Female	54 (83%)	88 (63.8%)
Missing	2 (3%)	37 (26.8%)
Race		
Caucasian	49 (75%)	75 (54.3%)
Racial Minority	14 (22%)	24 (17.4%)
Missing	2 (3.1%)	39 (28.3%)
Hispanic origin		
Yes	5 (8%)	9 (6.5%)
No	57 (88%)	91 (65.9%)
Missing	3 (4.6%)	38 (27.5%)
Degree		
BS	2 (3%)	2 (1.4%)
MS	52 (80%)	82 (59.4%)
Specialist	9 (14%)	16 (11.6%)
PhD	2 (3%)	3 (2.2%)
Missing		35 (25.4%)
MCC training		
Yes	49 (75%)	83 (60.1%)
No	15 (23%)	18 (13%)
Missing	1 (1.5%)	37 (26.8%)
Age		
Mean	38.6	39.36
SD	10.46	10.6
Missing	2	37
Years of experience		
Mean	6.8	7.9
SD	6.5	7.5
Missing	3	40

Table 4.2
School Demographic Characteristics

Variable	**N = 65**	**N = 138**
School Location		
City	18 (27.7%)	30 (21.7%)
Suburb	26 (40%)	40 (29%)
Small Town	9 (13.9)	17 (12.3%)
Rural	12 (18.5%)	16 (11.6%)
Missing		35 (25.4%)
Geographic Location		
Northeast	24 (36.8%)	39 (28.2%)
Southeast	22 (33.8%)	34 (24.4%)
Northwest	14 (21.5%)	20 (14.4%)
Southwest	2 (3%)	6 (4.3%)
Missing	3 (4.6%)	39 (28.3%
Racial Minority Caseload		
Less than a quarter	23 (35.4%)	36 (26.1%)
About a quarter	10 (15.4%)	16 (11.6%)
About a third	8 (12.3%)	12 (8.7%)
About half	8 (12.3%)	17 (12.3%)
About two-thirds	6 (9.2%)	8 (5.8%)
About three-quarters	3 (4.6%)	4 (2.9%)
Almost all	7 (10.8%)	10 (7.2%)
Missing		35 (25.4%)
Size of School		
Mean	769.3	758.3
SD	382.8	379.3
Missing	1	36
Caseload		
Mean	324.4	333.8
SD	177.1	174.2
Missing	3	39

School Demographic Characteristics

Respondents represented every category of school location with the majority reporting that their school was located in the suburbs (40%). Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents work in city schools, 19% work in rural locations, and 14% work in small town schools. The majority of respondents (43%) work in schools with student populations ranging from 500 to 999. Those working in smaller schools (30%) and larger schools (27%) were similarly represented. The number of students in the respondents' caseload averaged 324 students with a small percentage (3%) reporting 600 or more students and 11% of respondents having fewer than 60 students.

About half of the respondents (49%) reported that students of color comprised at least one third of their caseload. The remaining 51% reported a racial minority representation in their student caseload of one quarter or less.

Geographic representation of the respondents' schools was divided into the four regions of the country identified earlier in this chapter. The northeast and southeast representation (37% and 34% respectively) comprised almost three-quarters of the responses. Despite attempts to recruit respondents from southwest states assumed to have larger Latino populations, this region had the lowest representation in the data (3%).

Factor Analysis of the BABS

A factor analysis of the original 91 BABS items was run prior to analyzing the data to answer the research questions. Principal component extraction and verimax rotation yielded 27 factors with eigenvalues greater than one and explaining 76% of the variance. Most items loaded on the first two factors with the remaining factors consisting of only 1-3 items. Because the scree plot indicated a viable six factor solution, several exploratory factor analyses were conducted.

Forced six-factor and five-factor solutions were examined, the former based on scree results, and the latter based on the original conceptualization of broaching categories. In each case, separate analyses were conducted using both listwise deletion and mean value replacement of missing values. The four sets of results were compared and items eliminated if they cross-loaded on multiple factors, consistently had loadings less than .40, or didn't load on any of the five or six factors. This process ultimately resulted in 42 items explaining approximately 50% of the variance. These 42 items were then evaluated for content. The items in only three of the factors appeared to be interpretable and meaningfully related to one another. Therefore, additional exploratory factor analyses with forced solutions of three and four factors were conducted, and items evaluated and discarded as described above. The final solution resulted in 22 items explaining approximately 50% of the variance and loading on three interpretable factors. While the results of this factor analysis are encouraging, they must be viewed with caution given that the analysis was based on no more than 84 respondents with complete data sets and 138 respondents with mean replacement of missing values. That is, results are based on less than two respondents per item as opposed to the recommended 5 respondents per item for factor analysis (Gorsuch, 1983).

The three interpretable factors identified in the analysis correspond with three categories of the continuum of broaching behavior. The first factor contains eight items and represents a preference for *avoiding* discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture in a counseling relationship. A sample item is: "I try to help my culturally diverse students recognize that personal problems cannot be blamed on race." The second factor contains six items and represents the counselor's perception that he or she has difficulty translating the intent to broach into facilitative responses, indicating a *skills* dimension. A sample item of this factor is: "Sometimes, I have difficulty translating my broaching efforts into culturally responsive counseling interventions." Factor

three contains eight items and reflects the counselor's commitment to social justice, indicating an *advocacy* dimension. A sample item of this factor is, "As a counselor, I am personally committed to the eradication of all forms of oppression."

These resulting subscales, based on 22 items, appear to represent the dimensions of avoiding, skills, and advocacy with respect to broaching. These are consistent with three of Day-Vines' (2007a) categories:

(1) *Avoidant* category in that it represents counselors who avoid broaching or consider it unnecessary;

(2) *Continuing/incongruent* category of broaching in that the items suggest a desire to broach, but a lack of self-efficacy or skill to do so effectively; and

(3) *Infusing* category in that the items highlight systemic advocacy efforts for ethnically diverse students, and capture the personal and professional commitment to the eradication of oppression.

Cronbach alphas were calculated for these three subscales as well as the total score for the 22 items from the original BABS. Reliability coefficients were .78, .84, .83, and .78 for the *Avoidant, Continuing/incongruent, Infusing* subscales and total respectively. Subsequently, the three subscales were used in further assessing the relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence. Because these are based on a 22-item subset of the BABS, this subset will be referred to as the BABS-22 in the rest of this document. The number of items in each factor and reliability coefficients are shown in Table 4.3.

Broaching Behavior of Study Participants

In responding to research question 1(a) regarding the extent to which middle school counselors address race, ethnicity, and culture, descriptive statistics were calculated on the total BABS-22 score as well as the three broaching subscales identified by the factor analysis. As

Table 4.3
Number of Items and Scale Reliability of the BABS-22

Instrument	Subscales	Number of Items	Reliability
BABS-22	Avoidant	8	.78
	Continuing/Incongruent	6	.84
	Infusing	8	.83
	Total	22	.78

shown in Table 4.4, the mean score for both A*voidant* and *Continuing/incongruent* broaching was 3.1 (SD = .62, and .68 respectively). The mean for *Infusing* attitudes was 4.1 (SD = .53), and for the total broaching score, 3.5 (SD = .4). The BABS is scored on a Likert type scale with a range of 1 to 5. While the BABS was originally conceptualized such that higher scores would represent more advanced broaching attitudes and behaviors, the subscales resulting from the analysis in the current study compel a somewhat different interpretation. That is, higher scores on the *Avoidant* subscale represent a tendency to avoid broaching rather than endorse it. Consistent with the original conceptualization, however, higher scores on the *Continuing/incongruent* subscale represent greater confidence in one's ability to effectively utilize broaching skills, and higher scores on the *Infusing* subscale represent a greater inclination to advocate for systemic change.

Because measures of central tendency can sometimes be misleading, a review of the graphs of the responses from the study's participants gives a more accurate depiction of the range of broaching behaviors reported by the participants. As the bell-shaped curve of Graph 1 in Figure 4.1 suggests, the majority of middle school counselors who participated in this study responded in the mid-range, indicating a response of "neither agree nor disagree" with the avoidance of broaching. The relatively fewer responses at either end of the curve indicate low levels of either strong agreement or disagreement with avoiding to broach racial and cultural

factors. Despite having the same mean as the *Avoidant* factor (3.1), the positive skew of Graph 2 suggests that most respondents agreed that they had average or below average skill levels with regard to broaching. Conversely, the negative skew of Graph 3 suggests that a majority of the participants maintain a relatively strong commitment to advocate for culturally diverse students.

Table 4.4
Mean Scores of Participants' Broaching

BABS-22 Scale	Mean	SD
Avoidant	3.1	.62
Continuing/incongruent	3.1	.68
Infusing	4.1	.53
Total BABS-22	3.5	.4

N = 65
Scoring: 1-5 Likert type scale

Participant Comments Concerning Broaching

Of the 138 participants who skipped various items, but finished the questionnaire overall, 18 responded to the open-ended question concerning broaching. The most frequent response (4) indicated situational broaching, i.e. as needed or if the student initiates the discussion. Five participants indicated a lack of opportunity to broach either because their school is predominantly homogeneous (3) or because the brief nature of school counseling does not lend itself to broaching (2). While not overtly denying the importance of broaching, these nine responses align with the rationalization for not broaching consistent with the *Avoidant* and *Isolating* categories, and may reflect the predominant "neither agree nor disagree" response on the *Avoidant* subscale. Interestingly, three of the comments were directly aligned with the conceptualization of the three broaching categories supported by the factor analysis of the BABS in this study. The comment aligned with the *Avoidant* category and subscale reflects a color-blind attitude: "I think we need to be careful NOT to create problems that don't already exist...

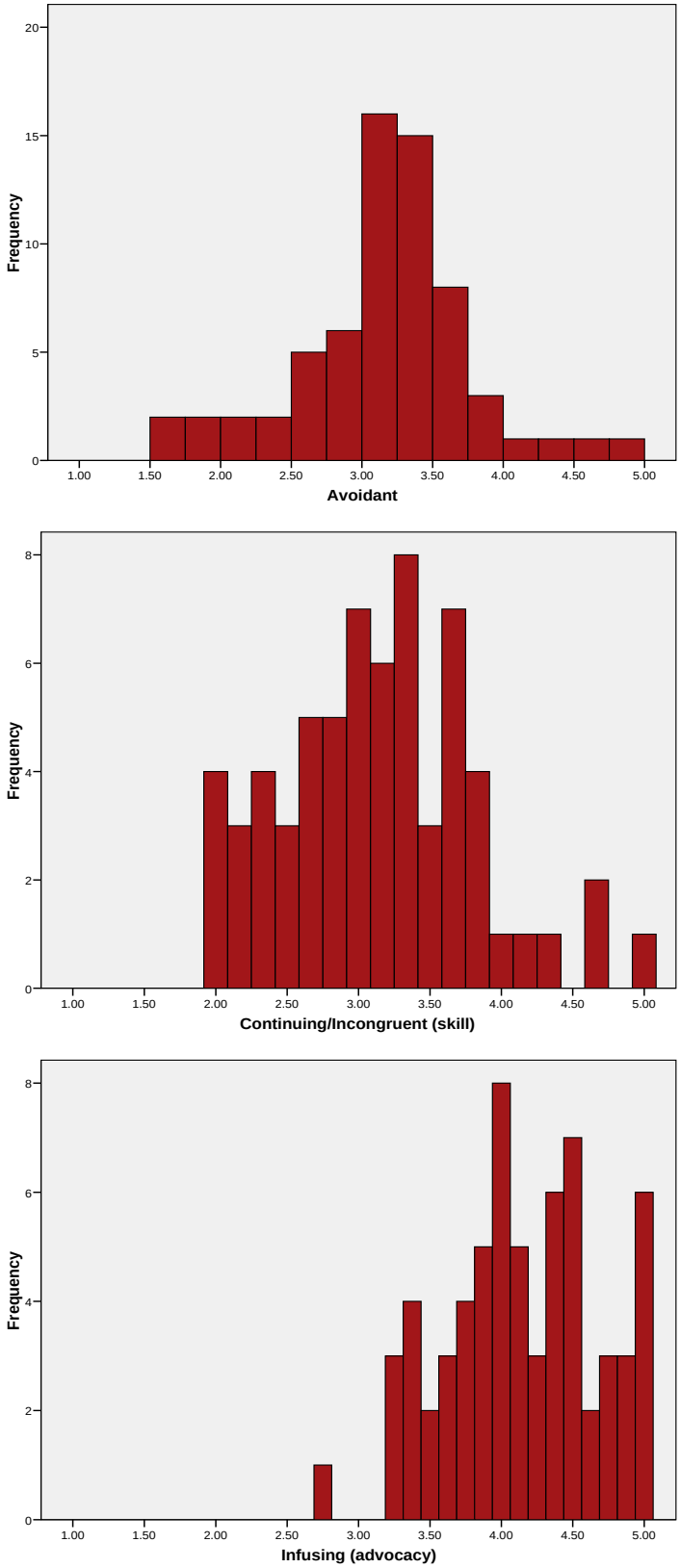

Figure 4.1 Distribution of BABS-22 Subscale Scores (N = 65)

The MAJORITY of the problems my students come to me with have absolutely NOTHING [to do] with race or culture, etc....In many respects "adolescents have common problems & issues just because of their age!" The comment aligned with the *Continuing/incongruent* category and subscale reflects the importance of broaching, accompanied by a lack of confidence in doing so effectively, and the desire for skill development: "It is not something I am particularly comfortable with but I am interested in expanding my understanding and skills. ....a school counselor needs to be an advocate for students [and this role] lends itself to being effective with broaching if I felt more confident in it." The comment aligned with the *Infusing* category and subscale clearly imparts the necessity and effectiveness of broaching: "Working with middle school students of ALL races and cultures, I have found that it is important to reach them where they are at – wherever that might be...because they know when you are not and that is a huge hindrance to the counseling process – ESPECIALLY short term client centered counseling. It causes students of different races and colors to not trust you if they think you don't know where they are coming from. Also – over the years I have experienced students to be more upfront and speak out about the oppression they have experienced...a counselor needs to be prepared for this type of discussion and comfortable with it." While the comments generated in this study are few, they provide anecdotal support for the broaching concept, the categorization of the broaching construct, and a rationale for qualitative investigations of broaching in the school environment.

Multicultural Counseling Competence of Study Participants

Descriptive statistics were computed on the MCI total and four subscales to assess the extent to which the participants self-identify as multiculturally competent. The MCI is scored on a 4 point Likert type scale, with higher scores representing greater multicultural competence. As shown in Table 4.5, as a group, the participants in this study self-identify as above average on

overall multicultural counseling competence as well as on the four aspects of MCC evaluated by the MCI subscales (*Awareness, Knowledge, Skills, and Relationship*). With a mean of 3.2 (SD = .31) for total multicultural counseling competence, participants reported greatest competence on the *Skills* (Mean = 3.4, SD = .35) and *Relationship* subscales (Mean = 3.4, SD = .38). The *Skills* subscale assesses the ability to generate and implement culturally appropriate interventions and the *Relationship* subscale assesses the counselors' comfort level and ability to establish a working alliance with people of color. Respondents reported lower scores on the *Knowledge* (Mean = 3.2, SD = .46) and *Awareness* (Mean = 2.9, SD = .55) subscales. *MCI Knowledge* examines the extent to which counselors are able to assess and utilize cultural variables in relation to their work with ethnically diverse students and the *MCI Awareness* subscale examines a counselor's sensitivity to, appreciation of, and advocacy for multiculturalism. The distribution of the MCI subscale scores are shown in Figure 4.2. Although the graphs of all of the MCI scores reveal a negative skew, the distribution of the *Awareness* subscale shows the inclusion of lower scores not characteristics of the other scales. The mode of 2.5 is the lowest among the scales and unique to this subscale.

Table 4.5
Mean Scores of Participants' MCC

MCI Scale	Mean	SD
MCI Awareness	2.9	.55
MCI Knowledge	3.2	.46
MCI Skills	3.4	.35
MCI Relationship	3.4	.38
MCI Total	3.2	.31

N = 65
Scoring: 4 point Likert type scale

Participant Comments Concerning Multicultural Counseling Competence

Twenty-nine participants responded to the open-ended invitation to comment on MCC. Interestingly, while the mean scores on the MCI indicated above average multicultural competencies, the most frequent comment (33%) involved the need for additional training. These comments ranged from stating that their graduate program did not contain enough multicultural training to the desire for Spanish language training – provided either in the master's program or by the school district. Five respondents indicated that they worked in a predominantly homogeneous environment and, therefore, did not have many opportunities for interaction with students from diverse backgrounds. Two respondents identified class/SES as superceding race in dealing with cultural diversity. The remaining comments were isolated, and included: (a) advocating for all students is important and multicultural counseling is not a big issue; (b) active listening and being present is vital to the counseling relationship; and (c) there is a need for multicultural community resources.

Broaching as it Relates to Multicultural Counseling Competence

Two correlations were run to answer the second research question guiding this study namely, the extent and nature of the relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence. A Pearson product moment correlation was computed with the BABS-22 total score and the MCI total score. Results showed a moderate but statistically significant relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence ($r = .34$, $p < .01$).

A second Pearson product moment correlation was computed to assess the relationship between the three BABS-22 subscales, the MCI total and subscale scores, and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. Results (Table 4.6) illustrated that the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale is related to three of the four MCI subscales: moderately so with MCI *Awareness* (.42) and *Knowledge* (.41), and weakly with MCI *Skills* (.26). The fourth MCI subscale, *Relationship*,

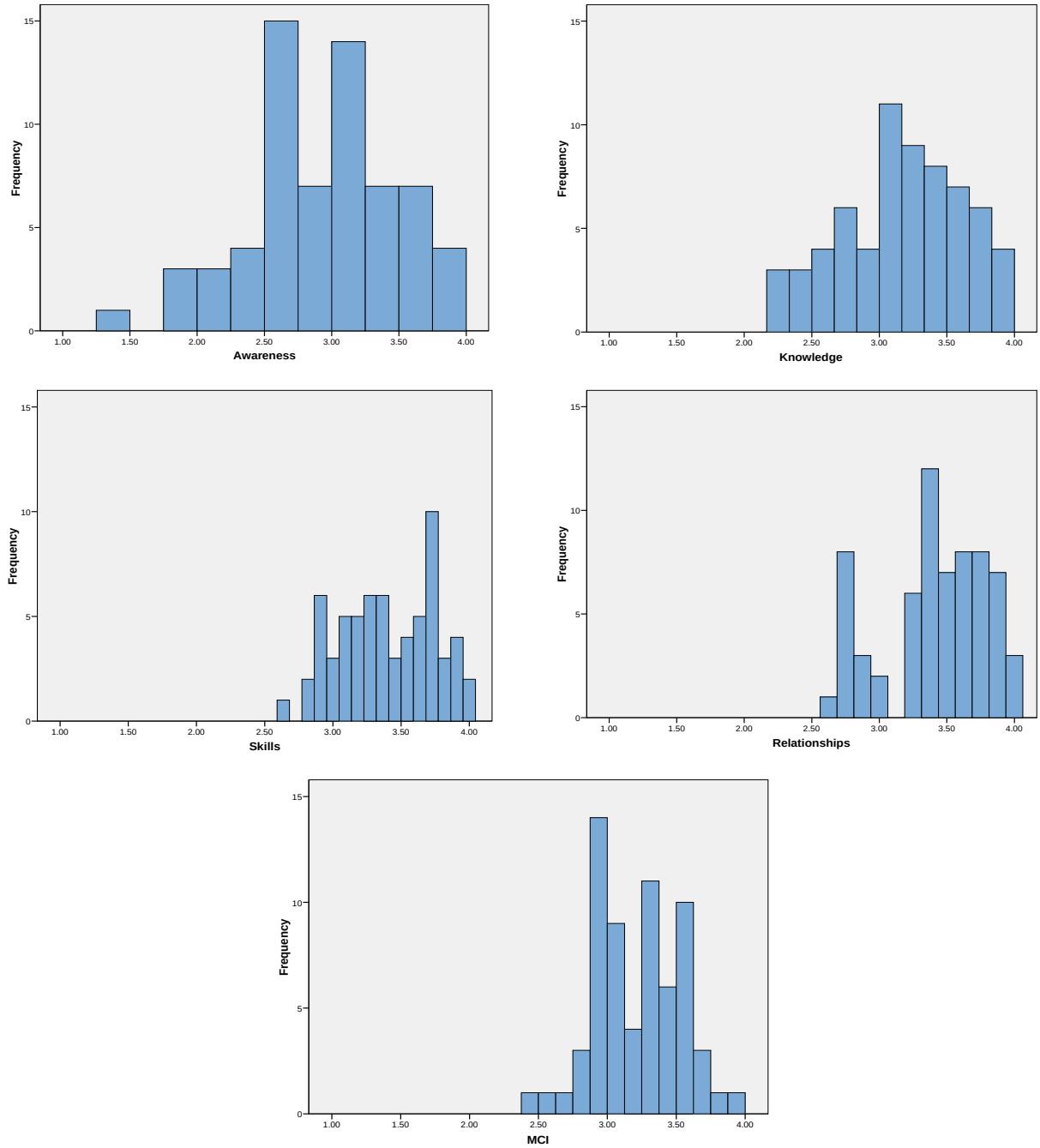

Figure 4.2 Distribution of MCI Subscale Scores (N = 65)

is only related to the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale (.42). Similarly, these two BABS-22 subscales are moderately correlated with the total MCI score. The BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale is related to neither the total MCI nor any of the MCI subscales. Despite the small sample on which these correlations were computed, the results are encouraging and, at a minimum, provide a rationale for continuing the examination of these constructs in relationship to each other. None of the BABS-22 subscales were related. This is significant in that it supports the conceptualization of Broaching into distinct and independent categories. Finally, the only statistically significant relationship involving the Marlowe-Crowne SDS is an inverse relationship between the SDS and the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale. These results give credibility to the findings in that the respondents did not seem to be influenced by the social desirability of their responses.

Table 4.6
Pearson Product Moment Correlation between BABS-22 Subscales, MCI Total and Subscales, and Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. (N = 65)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
BABS-22								
1. Avoidant	(.78)							
2. Continuing/incong.	.11	(.84)						
3. Infusing	.20	.13	(.83)					
MCI								
4. Awareness	-.01	.20	**.42****	(.83)				
5. Knowledge	.05	.10	**.41****	.48**	(.80)			
6. Skills	.02	.22	**.26***	.33**	.58**	(.77)		
7. Relationship	-.18	**.42****	.04	.15	.32**	.21	(.56)	
8. Total	-.04	**.31***	**.42****	.75**	.84**	.70**	.55**	(.88)
M-C SDS	.01	.16	**-.32****	-.22	.03	.07	.07	-.045

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
Values in parentheses are Chronbach alpha reliabilities

Broaching as a Predictor of Multicultural Counseling Competence

To answer the final research question concerning broaching as a predictor of multicultural counseling competence, a series of regressions were run with the MCI total and subscale scores as the criterion variables and the BABS-22 total and subscale scores as the predictor variables.

As shown in Table 4.7, the BABS-22 total score accounted for a statistically significant 12% ($p < .005$) of the variance in the MCI total score. Subsequent regressions on the MCI total using the three BABS-22 subscales revealed that the three subscales accounted for a statistically significant 26% ($p < .001$) of the variance with the *Continuing/incongruent* and *Infusing* subscales making significant contributions (beta = .28, $p < .05$; beta = .41, $p < .001$ respectively). A series of regressions was subsequently run with each of the MCI subscales as the criterion variables and the BABS-22 subscales as the predictor variable. The BABS-22 subscales accounted for a statistically significant amount of variance in all of the MCI subscales ranging from 10% of the variance in the MCI *Skills* subscale to 23% of the variance in the MCI *Relationship* subscale. Included in the variance of the *Relationship* subscale is a statistically significant negative contribution made by the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale. This is noteworthy in that it is conceptually consistent that an unwillingness to address race, ethnicity, and culture with students of color may hinder the development of an effective counseling relationship.

Finally, a hierarchical regression was computed to determine the amount of variance in the MCI total score that is accounted for by the subscales of the BABS-22 while controlling for several demographic variables and social desirability. Fifty-nine participants had complete data sets for all the variables included in this regression. Therefore, this regression was computed with N = 59.

Table 4.7
Regression of the BABS-22 Total and Subscales on the MCI Total and Subscales (N = 65)

Model Summary				
Criterion Predictor	R Squared	F	Beta Coefficient	Significance
MCI Total	.117	8.377		**.005*** **
BABS Total			.343	**.005*** **
MCI Total	.262	7.233		**.001**** **
Avoidant			-.148	.193
Continuing/incongruent			.275	**.016** **
Infusing			.410	**.001**** **
MCI Awareness	.206	5.269		**.01*** **
Avoidant			-.108	.360
Continuing/incongruent			.156	.182
Infusing			.417	**.001**** **
MCI Knowledge	.169	4.128		**.01*** **
Avoidant			-.040	.741
Continuing/incongruent			.051	.670
Infusing			.407	**.001**** **
MCI Skills	.104	2.356		**.081* **
Avoidant			-.051	.683
Continuing/incongruent			.190	.126
Infusing			.244	**.054** **
MCI Relationship	.229	6.053		**.001**** **
Avoidant			-.236	**.044** **
Continuing/incongruent			.441	**.000**** **
Infusing			.028	.812

Significance levels: *.10; **.05; ***.01; ****.001

Demographic variables shown to be predictive of MCC in previous research were controlled for by being entered into the equation first. Multicultural training, racially diverse caseload, race, and experience were entered in step 1. Multicultural training, racially diverse caseload and race were entered as dummy variables. Multicultural training categories represented those who had multicultural training versus those who had not. Racially diverse

caseload was split into categories representing a student caseload with less than one-fourth students of color versus a student caseload with more than one-third students of color. Race was represented as either counselor of color or Caucasian with counselor of color as the reference category. Experience was entered as a numerical variable representing the participants' years of experience. To control for social desirability, the Marlowe-Crowne SDS was entered in step 2. The BABS-22 subscales were entered in step 3. Calculated with an N of 59, results demonstrated that the model was statistically significant. As shown in Table 4.8, the predictor variables together explained a significant 42% ($p < .01$) of the variance in the total MCI. The demographic variables explained 23% of the variance [$F (4, 54) = 3.951$, $p < .007$] and the BABS subscales explained an additional 19% [$F (3, 50) = 5.549$, $p < .002$] of the variance in the MCI total score. The Marlowe-Crowne SDS made no significant contribution to the model [$F (1, 53) = .423$, $p < .518$]. In Step 1, multicultural training and race had the only statistically significant beta coefficients (beta = .344, $p < .008$; beta = -.283, $p < .024$ respectively), and this contribution remained essentially the same in step 2. In step 3, race dropped out as a contributor. Multicultural training remained significant (beta = .314, $p < .009$), and the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale (beta = .378, $p < .003$) and *Continuing/incongruent* subscale (beta = .234; $p < .057$) attained statistical significance. Although ethnically diverse caseload and the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale attained statistical significance at the .10 level, neither made a noteworthy contribution.

It is interesting to note that not all of the demographic variables contributed to the variance in MCC as previous research indicates. However, as Table 4.9 shows, the demographic groupings for this analysis were very small. Only 14 counselors of color were included in the analyses and, from among those, only nine represented the group with multicultural training and only five represnted the group with no multicultural training. Similarly, there were only 9

participants representing the group of Caucasian counselors without multicultural training. With regard to racially diverse caseload, eight participants with no multicultural training had about ¼ or less, and only six had 1/3 or more. Therefore, the results need to be interepreted with caution due to the very small numbers included in the analysis.

Table 4.8
Hierarchical Regression Analysis: MCI Total as the Criterion Variable with Demographics, Social Desirability, and BABS-22 Subscale Scores as the Predictor Variables. N = 59

Coefficients[a]								
Variables	**Betas**							
	Step 1	**Step 2**	**Step 3**	**R^2**	**p-values Step 3**	**R^2 Change**	**F**	**p**
Model 1				.226		.226	3.951	.007
Training	.344***	.362***	.314***		.009			
Caseload	.159	.165	.189		.090			
Race	-.283**	-.286**	-.156		.194			
Experience	-.074	-.089	-.097		.412			
Model 2				.233		.006	.426	.518
MC-SDS		.083	.167		.186			
Model 3				.424		.192	5.549	.002
Avoidant			-.193		.103			
Cont/incon			.234*		.057			
Infusing			.378***		.003			

[a] Criterion Variable: MCI Total
***** significant .10 level; ** significant .05 level; ***significant .01 level

Table 4.9
Demographic Groupings included in the Hierarchical Analysis

	Multicultural Training	**No Multicultural Training**
Counselors of Color	9	5
Caucasian counselors	36	9
¼ or less racially diverse caseload	21	8
1/3 or more racially diverse caseload	24	6

Summary

The results of this study provide some empirical support for the broaching construct as conceptualized by Day-Vines et al. (2007). Three of the broaching categories (*Avoidant*, *Continuing/Incongruent*, and *Infusing*) were supported by the factor analysis. Descriptive statistics indicated that the middle school counselors who participated in the study support their role as student advocates in terms of their willingness to intervene for students in instances of discrimination. Results also seemed to suggest that the participants are somewhat ambivalent toward broaching while acknowledging that they would like training to broach more effectively. In terms of MCC, participants viewed themselves as culturally competent overall with greatest competence in skills and relationships. Two of the BABS-22 subscales were positively correlated with the MCI total and all four subscales. The BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale had no statistically significant correlation with any of the MCI scales. Finally, regression analyses on the MCI total and subscale scores showed that the BABS-22 subscale scores accounted for a statistically significant amount of the variance in the MCI total score as well as in each of the MCI subscales. The BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale made the greatest and most consistent contribution to the model while the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale made only a negative contribution.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Chapter Five contains an interpretation of the analyses assessing the relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence as reported in Chapter Four. It begins with a discussion of the factor structure of the BABS and its relationship to the categories of broaching as conceptualized by Day-Vines et al. (2007). The chapter continues with an explanation of the results as they relate to the research questions, and then identifies limitations of the current study. The chapter concludes with implications for theory and practice.

Interpretation of Results

Factor Analysis of the BABS

Findings from this study support at least three of the categories along the broaching continuum conceptualized by Day-Vines, et al. (2007). More specifically, empirical support was provided for the *Avoidant*, the *Continuing/incongruent* and *Infusing* categories of broaching behavior. The BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale seems to capture the counselor's opposition to broaching when working with ethnically diverse students, and aligns with the color-blind perspective of Day-Vine et al.'s (2007) original conceptualization of avoidant counselors. The BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale appears consistent with the *Continuing/incongruent* category of the broaching continuum in that it taps into the counselor's lack of self-efficacy in addressing race, ethnicity, and culture in facilitating problem resolutions for their students. More specifically, the items in the *Continuing/incongruent* subscale capture the difficulty the counselor experiences in his/her efforts to broach as well as the desire to learn more facilitative culturally responsive interventions. Finally, the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale seems to identify the counselor who is committed to combating oppression as it is manifested both systemically within the school environment and personally involving individual students. In the original

conceptualization, it was presumed that counselors operating at the I*nfusing* level of broaching would be able to exhibit skills on both an individual and systemic level that were effective in implementing the individual and/or systemic change for which they advocated. The BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale captures at least partially the original intent of the *Infusing* category. Specifically, the items in the *Infusing* subscale capture the counselors' willingness and efforts to engage in activities that correct social injustices without assessing the effectiveness of the counselor's efforts.

This study provided no support for the *Isolating* or *Integrated/congruent* categories of broaching. The *Isolating* category captures the counselor's intent to broach at least once. It may be surmised that this effort may be almost indistinguishable from the *Avoidant* category of the BABS-22. Similarly, the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale seems to have captured the counselor's professional commitment to broaching that distinguishes the *Integrated/congruent* category. For a school counselor aligned with the leadership role emphasized in the National Model (ASCA, 2003), a professional commitment to broach would necessitate systemic interventions in terms of teacher/administrator involvement, course selection, culturally relevant assessment, and the like. Consequently, the professional commitment to broaching characteristic of the *Integrated/congruent* category may be captured in the school counselor's advocacy efforts reflected in the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale. Therefore, it seems conceivable that the three factor structure of the current study may represent a convergence of the five categories of broaching behaviors from the original conceptualization into three. Continued work on the BABS will inform and clarify the broaching structure.

Broaching Behaviors

The resulting factor structure of the BABS indicated in this study introduces doubt as to the meaning of a total BABS-22 score. However, in considering the subscales of broaching that

were identified, it seems as though this non-random sample of middle school counselors evaluated themselves as average to above average in broaching attitudes and behaviors.

The bell-shaped curve of the *Avoidant* subscale indicated that the greater number of participants neither agreed nor disagreed with the avoidance of broaching race, ethnicity, and culture with their students. Presumably, the majority of respondents in this study neither totally evades discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture, nor deems it an essential aspect of the counseling relationship when working with ethnically diverse students. Distributions and mean scores alone make a definitive explanation of this ambivalent stance impossible. However, Neville, Spanierman, & Doan (2006) linked avoiding the consideration of race and racism with racial bias and lower multicultural counseling competence. Assuming that the respondents agree with the avoidance of broaching at least occasionally, it follows then that they believe race is an identity dimension one can refrain from processing in the counseling relationship. Whether this color-bind orientation reflects a naïveté concerning sociopolitical realities, a personal bias (Day-Vines, 2007b), discomfort with racially charged discussions, or a concern that one may be perceived as offensive (Cardemil & Battle, 2003), it nevertheless invokes the power dynamic inherent in the counseling relationship, and prohibits the student from assessing the impact of racial group membership on the presenting problem (Day-Vines, 2007b). More specifically, school counselors who make the decision to avoid discussions of race, ethnicity, or culture deny that these factors inherently impact a student's experience and pre-empt the inclusion of the student's perspective on this issue. The American Psychological Association (APA, 1997) strongly refutes this position stating that "we cannot be, nor should we be, color-blind" (p3). Ultimately, an ambivalence toward or an inconsistency to introduce or participate in discussions of race may be the reason why students in previous studies have not utilized school resources in

alleviating stress (Ponterotto, Anderson, & Grieger, 1986) or resisting negative stereotypes (Davison Aviles, et al., 1999).

Despite having the same mean as the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale, the positive skew of the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale appears to represent somewhat of a consensus among the respondents in terms of broaching skills. The graph of responses on this subscale reflected the study participants' lack of self-efficacy with regard to their broaching effectiveness, and a desire for more effective broaching skills. That school counselors would experience some discomfort towards broaching is not inconceivable. Notwithstanding having similar training as clinical counselors in some advanced degree programs, the role functioning of school counselors focuses on academic outcomes, primary prevention, and time limited counseling as opposed to the therapeutic goals of clinical counselors. As such, school counselors may not have had ample clinical experience which could promote broaching proficiency. Schwallie-Giddis et al. (2004), in their study to determine the greatest challenges school counselors face, implied that counselors may experience a certain amount of cognitive dissonance when addressing cultural issues for fear of appearing insensitive. Even among practicing therapists, an uncertainty regarding how or when to initiate such conversations along with lack of comfort discussing race may be possible reasons why mental health professionals do not broach racial and cultural factors (Cardemil & Battle, 2003). Yet, research shows that even awkward efforts to broach have positive results in terms of generating trust within the counseling relationship (Knox et al., 2003). Ultimately, the positive skew of this subscale seems to indicate that although the participants view their broaching efforts as less than optimal, they are attempting cultural interventions, and they desire to learn more effective broaching skills.

The negative skew and above average mean of the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale reflected a personal and professional commitment to advocacy and systemic change among the study

participants. Given a mean age of less than 40, and the relative inexperience in the field (6-7 years), it seems possible that this score reflects the efforts of counselor educators and professional organizations (CACREP, 2001; ASCA, 2003; ASCA, 2004) to emphasize the school counselor's responsibility to advocate for all students and assume a leadership role in effecting systemic change.

Multicultural Counseling Competence

Based on this non-random sample of volunteers, middle school counselors view themselves as above average in cultural competence overall as well as in the multicultural domains of *Awareness, Knowledge, Skills,* and *Relationships*. These findings are consistent with previous research (Holcomb-McCoy 2001, 2005b) in which school counselors self-identified as multiculturally competent. Although the graphs of all the scale scores were negatively skewed, it is interesting to note that the *Awareness* subscale had the lowest mode. Additionally, the *Awareness* subscale was the only scale containing several low scoring outliers. As such, one wonders whether it may be easier for individuals to acquire information and skills than heightened socio-political and personal awareness. Although not part of the research questions guiding this study, a separate regression analysis demonstrated that having more than 30% of ethnically diverse students in one's caseload was predictive of multicultural *Awareness*. This result is congruent with the contact hypothesis assessed by Robinson (1980) who concluded that Whites who lived in closer proximity to Blacks demonstrated greater racial tolerance than Whites who lived farther away from Blacks. Therefore, it seems reasonable that middle school counselors who interact with a greater number of ethnically diverse students would develop a more heightened sense of the sociopolitical impact of racial group membership – both on themselves and on others. When one considers Helms' (2003) theory of interaction within the school system however, the importance of awareness in terms of personal racial identity cannot

be overstated or compromised regardless of the number of ethnically diverse students on a counselor's caseload.

Social Desirability

The fact that there was a moderate but statistically significant inverse relationship between the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale and the Marlowe-Crowne SDS ($r = -.319$, $p < .01$) suggests that counselors who articulated the importance of combating social injustice would be less inclined to respond to the measures in socially desirable ways. This seems consistent conceptually with what one might expect of an individual who espouses multicultural equity. Additionally, the Marlowe-Crowne made no significant contribution to the regression model lending credibility to the responses and subsequent results of the study.

Relationship Between Broaching and Multicultural Counseling Competence

To reiterate, this study investigated the relationship between Broaching attitudes and behaviors and Multicultural Counseling Competence in a sample of middle school counselors. Bi-variate and multivariate analyses were used to assess this relationship, and included Pearson Product Moment correlations, a series of four separate regressions, and a hierarchical regression controlling for demographic variables and social desirability. The Pearson Product Moment correlations revealed statistically significant relationships between the BABS-22 subscales and the total MCI as well as all of the MCI subscales (*Awareness, Knowledge, Skills* and *Relationship).* The regression analyses found that the BABS-22 *Infusing* and *Continuing-incongruent* subscales are predictive of MCI *Awareness, Knowledge, Skills,* and *Relationship,* and that broaching accounts for a significant amount of variance in the MCI total even after controlling for demographic variables and social desirability.

More specifically, the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale was moderately and positively correlated to the MCI total, *Awareness* and *Knowledge* subscales, and weakly but positively

correlated to the MCI *Skills* subscale. As originally conceptualized (Day-Vines et. al, 2007), *Infusing* attitudes and behaviors represent the highest category of broaching, and include a personal and professional commitment to broach racial and cultural factors both within the counseling relationship and on a systemic level. This highest category was, in turn, conceptualized as aligning with higher MCC. The results of this study support this hypothesized relationship between constructs in that a greater commitment to broaching (as indicated by the *Infusing* subscale score) was predictive of MCC (as indicated by the MCI total and subscales scores). This relationship between an infusing orientation and MCC is also consistent with previous research (Atkinson et al., 1992; Gim et al., 1991) which suggests that counselors who expressed cultural sensitivity were rated more culturally competent by the study participants. One might conclude then, that study participants who are personally and professionally committed to recognizing and acknowledging the complexities associated with minority group membership, and who are committed to advocating for culturally diverse students (*Infusing*) also have a greater sensitivity to and appreciation of multiculturalism (*Awareness*), are able to assess and utilize the impact of minority group membership (*Knowledge*), and are more likely to implement culture specific strategies (*Skills*) than participants who are not aligned with a culture specific perspective.

Regression analyses supported the relationships found in the correlations. In a series of four separate regression analyses where the MCI subscales were the criterion variable and the BABS-22 subscales were the predictor variables, the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale accounted for 21%, 17%, and 10% of the variance in the MCI *Awareness, Knowledge* and *Skills* subscales respectively. It seems, therefore, that broaching is an important component of multiculturalism and that multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills are essential competencies when advocating for systemic change. More specifically, this may be suggesting that a school

counselor who is committed to advocating for students of color recognizes that the norms embedded in the educational system may benefit some students while disadvantaging others.

In examining the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale, it is clear that the items captured the personal and professional commitment to broaching but did not capture the degree of expertise of the counselors' broaching behaviors as in the conceptual model. That the items captured the commitment to broaching but without the accompanying effectiveness could be the reason why the relationship between the *Infusing* subscale and the MCI *Skills* subscale was weaker than expected. However, these results also seem to suggest that counselors' broaching intentions and efforts, regardless of their efficacy, translate into cultural competence.

That "good intentions" translate into greater cultural competency is supported by the correlation of the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale and the MCI *Relationship* subscale ($r = .42$; $p < .01$). The *Continuing/incongruent* subscale measured the participants' perception that they have difficulty implementing broaching interventions, and that they desire to learn additional broaching skills. Inherent in this personal awareness of unsuccessful broaching strategies, and the desire for more effective broaching skills, is the fact that the participants are at least attempting to broach, albeit ineffectively. Given the significant relationship between the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale and the MCI *Relationship* subscale, it would seem from the participants' perspective that even undeveloped efforts at broaching interventions are positively related to the counseling relationship. This assumption is supported by the regression analysis. In conjunction with a negative contribution by the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale, the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale (beta = .441; $p < .001$) accounted for a significant 23% of the variance in the MCI *Relationship* subscale. Although the results need to be viewed cautiously because of the small sample size and the moderate reliability of the MCI *Relationship* subscale ($r = .56$) in this study, this interpretation is consistent with previous research involving

broaching and the counseling relationship. Knox, et al. (2003) reported that even those Euro-American therapists who admitted feeling uncomfortable addressing racial issues with clients acknowledged the benefit in terms of enhanced client-counselor trust.

Equally important in examining the relationship between broaching and MCC is the statistically significant inverse relationship between the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale and the MCI *Relationship* subscale. Results of the regression analyses found that the *Avoidant* subscale (beta = -.236; $p < .04$) made a statistically significant but relatively weak negative contribution to the MCI *Relationship* subscale. It seems, therefore, that in addition to the view that avoiding discussions of race is indicative of color blind racial attitudes (Neville, Spanierman, and Doan, 2006) and unethical practice (Sue et al., 1992), the results of this analysis may be indicative that avoiding discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture is detrimental to the counseling relationship. This assumption is consistent with the conclusions of Thompson, Worthington, and Atkinson (1994), who found that African American female clients disclosed more intimately to and were more willing to continue in counseling with counselors who used cultural content interventions as opposed to counselors who avoided culture specific discussions.

To summarize then, given that even awkward attempts to broach racial and cultural factors appear to have positive results, and avoiding culture specific discussions appears to negatively influence counseling efforts, it seems that students would most likely benefit when school counselors are willing to initiate and facilitate discussions concerning race, ethnicity, and culture. This position is consistent with Scott & House's (2005) mandate for school counselors to engage in such discussions as a means of reducing discriminatory stress in adolescents, and Powell & Jacob Ariola's (2003) conclusion which associated such discussions with higher academic achievement, one of the principal domains of school counseling.

To account for the influence of demographic characteristics and social desirability on the above results, a hierarchical regression analysis was computed. The MCI total score was the criterion variable and demographic variables, social desirability, and the BABS-22 subscales were the predictor variables. Entered into the equation first, the demographic variables accounted for a statistically significant 23% ($p < .007$) of the variance in the MCI total. Neither years of counseling experience nor racially diverse caseload made any significant contribution to the model. Multicultural training made a significant contribution (beta = .344; $p < .008$), as did race (beta = -.283, $p < .024$). Using counselors of color as the reference category, this negative beta demonstrates that the counselors of color in this study tended to be more culturally competent than the Caucasian counselors.

The Marlowe-Crowne score was entered into the second step of the regression to control for the tendency to respond in socially desirable ways. Contrary to Sodowsky et al.'s (1998) study in which social desirability accounted for 6% of the variance in the MCI, the Marlowe-Crowne made no significant contribution to the variance in the MCI total; the contributions of multicultural training and race stayed essentially the same.

The BABS-22 subscales were entered into the third step of the regression. The change in R-squared showed that the BABS-22 subscales accounted for an additional 19% of the variance ($p < .002$) in the MCI total score with the BABS-22 *Infusing* subscale (beta= .378; $p < .003$) and the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale (beta = .234; $p < .057$) making statistically significant contributions. Race subsequently dropped out leaving multicultural training as the only demographic variable making a noteworthy contribution to the model's significance.

These results make it difficult to deny the importance of broaching in terms of multicultural counseling competence. Almost one-fifth of the variance in the MCI total score was accounted for by a counselor's advocacy efforts for students of color and even awkward

broaching efforts. These results lead one to speculate that advocating for students of color and engaging in culture specific discussions with students are inherent in being a culturally competent school counselor. While the National Model (2003) addresses the leadership role of school counselors generally, the results of this study seem to support the role of school counselors to effect systemic change around issues of diversity in particular.

In terms of the demographic variables, the results of the hierarchical regression lead one to speculate that, despite a counselor's race, years of experience, or amount of cultural diversity among their caseload, multicultural training has the greater impact on MCC. This result supports previous research (Constantine, 2001a, 2001b; Constantine & Yeh, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Ottavi et al., 1994; Pope-Davis, et al., 1995; Sodowsky, et al., 1998). The consistency with which multicultural training has been associated with MCC commands the attention of counselor educators as well as those providing professional development opportunities to practicing counselors. Multicultural training opportunities appear to be one of the most effective venues for acquiring multicultural competence.

Although the elimination of race as a predictor of MCC in the 3rd step of the regression was somewhat surprising, previous research suggests that race alone does not predict client preference for counselors, but racial identity functioning better approximates client preferences when choosing a counselor (Helms & Carter, 1991). Similarly, Helms' (2003) model of interaction proposes that the racial identity status of a teacher as opposed to his/her race has a greater impact on the racial identity development of students of color. Ultimately, the findings of this study reinforce the importance of multicultural training in terms of multicultural awareness and attention to the implications of one's racial group membership.

Although it would be misleading and unethical to claim that the results of this study impelled school counselors to broach issues of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students of

color, it is appropriate to state that this study has: (1) provided empirical affirmation of a conceptual model linking discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture to cultural competence (Day-Vines et al., 2007); (2) provided empirical support to previous qualitative research concerning the positive influence of broaching racial and cultural factors in terms of the counseling relationship (Fuertes et al., 2002; Knox et al, 2003; Thompson et al., 1994); (3) supported appeals in the professional literature for school counselors to initiate discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture with their ethnically diverse students (ASCA, 2004; Davison Aviles et al., 1999; Powell & Jacob Arriola, 2003; Scott & House, 2005; Schwallie-Giddis et al., 2004); and (4) lay the groundwork for continued investigation of the broaching construct and the role that broaching interventions play in school counseling.

Limitations of the Current Study

Small Sample Size

The number of participants was a concern for both the factor analysis of the BABS and the statistical analyses conducted on the collected data. Gorsuch (1983) recommended at least five responses per item for a factor analysis, requiring a minimum of 455 complete sets of data to perform a statistically meaningful principal components analysis of the BABS. Similarly, the main data analyses were computed on 65 complete data sets for the BABS, MCI, and MC-SDS (far short of the 260 respondents needed for a 95% confidence interval with a $\pm$ 5% error). The questionnaire for this study totaled 144 items on the three instruments, plus 13 demographic items, and 3 open-ended questions. Therefore, the length of the questionnaire may also have contributed to respondent fatigue.

Self Selection

Despite attempts to solicit a broad representation of middle school counselors, it is possible that several factors influenced a counselor’s decision to participate or not participate in the

survey. A minimum level of technological expertise was necessary to participate in the study including the ability to use email to read the invitation, follow the link to the questionnaire and complete it, or request a paper and pencil version of the questionnaire. The topic of the study may also have influenced a counselor's decision regarding participation. Counselors who are more familiar or ideologically aligned with multiculturalism may have been more likely to participate than those who are less familiar with or committed to MCC.

Self Report

As with all self-report instruments there is no assurance that respondents are evaluating themselves objectively although the Marlowe-Crowne provided reliable support to suggest that participants were responding candidly.

Instrument Development

Despite high reliability scores, because the BABS was in the initial stages of development when used in this study, the validity of this measurement needs to be considered when interpreting the results. Certainly more work is warranted on this instrument Perhaps more items need to be developed that capture more specific broaching attitudes (*Continuing/incongruent* subscale) and more effective broaching behaviors (*Infusing* subscale). This may have been difficult to do in part because with few exceptions (Cardemil & Battle, 2003; Fuertes et al., 2002) little is written that documents what broaching looks like. Most of the current broaching scholarship seems to indicate that counselors should broach but devote less time to the actual discussion of what effective broaching looks like. Hopefully, future work on this instrument will tease out the nuances of effective broaching behavior.

Low Reliability of the MCI Relationship Subscale

The low alpha of the *MCI Relationship* subscale warrants caution when interpreting the relationship between this subscale and Broaching. Previously cited studies support the

assumption that broaching enhances the therapeutic relationship, and the MCI was specifically chosen for this study in an effort to examine the relationship between broaching and the establishment of an enhanced working alliance in a sample of middle school counselors. Although study results support a statistically significant relationship between the two constructs, readers are urged to use caution when drawing conclusions.

Implications for Research

Given the exploratory nature of this investigation, the results support the continued investigation of broaching race, ethnicity, and culture as an effective multicultural strategy and correlate of MCC. Repeating this study with a larger sample size could supply additional data needed for the continued refinement of the broaching construct in terms of categories, attitudes, and behaviors. Replication of this study would also help further clarify the broaching attitudes and behaviors of school counselors, and, ultimately, provide valuable input to develop effective broaching strategies.

While continued quantitative research is important, future qualitative research concerning broaching within the school environment would provide in-depth and meaningful information about the specific experiences of broaching (Farber, 2006). Given the feedback Davison Aviles, et al. (1999) generated from Latino high school drop-outs, study participants could include students, former students, staff, administrators, and parents as well as school counselors. Such research could provide a better understanding of the way in which broaching is conceptualized and experienced by different groups within the school environment.

Looking at the relationship between broaching and other variables would help establish the construct validity of the broaching construct. Previous research has shown that racial identity development (RID) is related to MCC (Burkard, Ponterotto, Reynolds, & Alfonso, 1999; Neville et al., 1996; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2000, 2003; Watt, Robinson, & Lupton-Smith, 2002) in that

higher levels of racial identity functioning are related to higher levels of cultural competency. Day-Vines et al. (2007), in their conceptualization of the broaching construct, made the case that lower categories of broaching are related to lower racial identity statuses (and, by association, lower MCC) while higher categories of broaching are consistent with higher levels of racial identity functioning (and greater MCC). Therefore, if a counselor's broaching efforts are predictive of MCC (as evidenced by this study), and RID is predictive of MCC, is Broaching related to RID as conceptualized by Day-Vines et al., or in some other way? The negative relationship of the BABS-22 *Avoidant* subscale with the MCI *Relationship* subscale provided some support for this conceptualization as did the positive relationship between the BABS-22 *Infusing* and *Continuing/incongruent* subscales and the MCI total and *Awareness, Knowledge, Skills* and *Relationship* subscales. Future research can further delineate these conceptualized associations.

Counselor self-efficacy is another variable that may be related to broaching. The score and pattern of responses on the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale indicated a lack of self-efficacy with regard to broaching. It would seem that the profession would benefit from knowing if this score is related to a general lack of self-efficacy among school counselors as determined by the School Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005) or if the BABS-22 identified multicultural self-efficacy. Results of this research would help to clarify the relationship between feelings of counseling competence overall and feelings of culture specific counseling competence. This, in turn, may lead to the development of culture specific interventions that are intrinsic to fundamental counseling skills. Eventually, uncovering the interrelationship of important variables could lead to the development of better training models in school counselor graduate programs as well as professional development experiences for those working in the field.

Finally, it would be important to assess the impact of broaching on the counseling relationship and, ultimately, student outcomes. Continued research in this area could provide evidenced-based models of broaching that answer the call in the literature for counselors to address racial issues individually (Scott & House, 2005) and cultural dissonance systemically (Davison Aviles et al., 1999; Schwallie-Giddis et al., 2004).

Overall, given our increasingly diverse nation, and the continued educational inequality associated with visual racial and ethnic group membership, this study has suggested that understanding and intentionally addressing the complexities of race, ethnicity, and culture is vital to reversing the ongoing disparity in our schools. Research is needed to substantiate or refute this assertion.

Implications for Middle School Counselors

While the statistical analyses conducted in this study provided empirical support for the broaching construct, perhaps at least equally important are the implications for practicing school counselors. Previously referenced research cited the need for culturally competent counselors who are pro-active in addressing issues of race, ethnicity, and culture in the school environment. Scott and House (2005) issued a strong mandate to school counselors to broach issues of race with students of color given that such discussions are linked to the reduction of discriminatory distress. Powell and Jacob Arriola (2003) linked such discussions among African American students to higher academic achievement, one of the principal domains of school counseling. Davison Aviles et al. (1999) reported that Latino American drop-outs requested culturally sensitive school counselors to help reverse the high drop-out rate among Latino students. Phinney and Tarver (1988) demonstrated that racial identity development is a salient issue for both Caucasian and African American adolescents. And, finally, Schwallie-Giddis et al. (2004) reported that school counselors identified their two greatest challenges as: (1) addressing the

dissonance between students and their family when the home and school culture collide; and (2) achieving a level of comfort interacting with linguistic and culturally diverse students and families. The results of this study provide validation for school counselors to actively initiate and engage in culture specific discussions while simultaneously working to increase the efficacy of their efforts. Supported by the positive correlation between the BABS-22 *Continuing/incongruent* subscale and the MCI *Relationship* subscale, school counselors who experience uncertainty about the efficacy of their broaching efforts may feel encouraged that even rudimentary broaching efforts seem to reflect positively in the counseling relationship.

Implications for Counselor Educators

Inherent in the attempts of school counselors to practice and improve culture specific interventions is the need for professional training and supervision to aid school counselors in their efforts. Filling this need appears consistent with the goals of counselor educators. By broaching the topics of race, ethnicity, and culture with students in the classroom as well as during supervision, it seems that counselor educators would be promoting MCC and modeling broaching interventions. Open discussions in all classes would help students evaluate their own values, biases, and assumptions, increase culture specific knowledge by learning from their racially diverse peers, teach that cultural considerations are an inherent part of relationships, and model ways to initiate such discussion with others, including students and/or clients. Additionally, broaching skills can be embedded in the teaching of fundamental counseling techniques, reinforcing the concept that discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture are essential in fully understanding and connecting with clients, and that the power dynamic inherent in the counseling relationship places the responsibility for initiating such discussions on the counselor. Supervision provides an avenue where students can process their use of broaching interventions

with the professional guidance, support and encouragement that promote culture specific self-efficacy.

Given that some counseling professionals are unsure how to initiate culture specific discussions (Cardemil & Battle, 2003), it is conceivable that some counselor educators might lack self-efficacy in broaching skills similar to that reported by this study's participants. However, rather than avoid culture specific discussions, it is hoped that counselor educators will utilize their positions to model broaching efforts, and, ultimately, help develop techniques and skills that empower students to imbue multiculturalism into their personal and professional lives.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the broaching attitudes and behaviors of middle school counselors, and their relationship to multicultural counseling competence. In doing so, this investigation sought to add to the knowledge, understanding, and development of effective multicultural interventions that may, ultimately, enhance academic outcomes for ethnically diverse students. Results of this exploratory study, while interpreted with caution, nonetheless provided some support for the conceptualized relationship between broaching and multicultural counseling competence. It supported the call of authors (Scott & House, 2005), former students (Davison Aviles et al., 1999), and school counselors (Schwallie-Giddis, et al., 2004) to develop and implement broaching strategies as a means to overcome discriminatory stress, increase student retention, promote student empowerment, and increase counselor self-efficacy.

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Appendix A

Table of Broaching Attitudes and Behaviors

STYLE	ATTITUDE	BEHAVIOR
Avoidant	Adopts a posture of oblivion, resistance, and defensiveness. Maintains a race neutral perspective; feels broaching is unnecessary.	Refuses to consider contextual dimensions of race, ethnicity, and culture
Isolating	Expresses apprehension about broaching. Recognizes need but lacks sense of personal efficacy and harbors concern about negative client reactions.	Broaches reluctantly and in a simplistic and superficial manner. May broach only once.
Continuing/ Incongruent	Recognizes the importance of broaching and maintains openness but lacks finesse in doing so.	Broaches mechanically and understands cultural factors from a stereotypical viewpoint. Cannot translate recognition of cultural factors into effective counseling interventions.
Integrating/ Congruent	Values the importance of broaching in order to enhance the counseling relationship, promote relevant student disclosures, and improve counseling outcomes.	Recognizes the complexities associated with race, ethnicity, and culture, and broaches effectively during the counseling session. Can distinguish between culture specific behaviors and unhealthy human functioning. Integrates broaching into their professional identity.
Infusing	Values broaching as a way to enhance counseling outcomes as well as eliminate oppression and promote social justice.	Broaches as a way of being and not as a professional obligation. Broaches as a lifestyle/activist orientation.

Appendix B

Survey Questionnaire

Multicultural Counseling Competence and Broaching Behaviors of Middle School Counselors

This survey assesses the broaching behavior of middle school counselors as it relates to multicultural counseling competence. Essentially, broaching refers to the counselor's effort to determine the extent to which race, ethnicity, and culture are related to the student's presenting problem. The survey takes approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Some questions may appear redundant due to the nature of the instrument. The survey ends with a short demographic section and an opportunity for optional additional sharing. Completing and returning the survey implies your consent to participate.

Note that instruments in this survey may not be reproduced without permission of the authors. If interested in using any part of this instrument, please contact Linda Zegley, lzegley@vt.edu

Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI)

Roysircar-Sodowsky (1993)

The following statements cover counselor practices in multicultural counseling. Indicate how accurately each statement describes you as a counselor when working in a multicultural counseling situation. Give ratings that you actually believe to be true rather than those that you wish were true.

(Contact Dr. Gargi Roysircar-Sodowsky for permission to review the MCI: g_roysircar-sodowsky@antiochne.edu)

Broaching Attitudes and Behavior Scale (BABS)

Day-Vines (2007)

The next set of questions is about the extent to which counselors discuss or broach the subject of race, ethnicity, and culture with their students of color during the counseling process. Essentially, broaching refers to the counselor's effort to determine the extent to which race,

ethnicity, and culture may be related to a student's presenting problem. Using the response scale below, please click on the response that best describes your behavior.

(Contact Dr. Norma L. Day-Vines for permission to review additional items on the BABS: nday-vine@vt.edu)

Strongly Agree [1]	Agree [2]	Neither Agree Nor Disagree [3]	Disagree [4]	Strongly Disagree [5]

1. People's humanity should be the focus of counseling, not their race.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2. Sometimes I have difficulty identifying facilitative responses once the student begins to talk about racial and cultural factors.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3. Disagreeing with racial discrimination is not enough because counselors must be willing to engage in advocacy and systemic change efforts.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Do you have any comments regarding broaching with middle school students?					

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale

Please respond to the following statements as either True **[1]** or False **[2].**

	True	False
1. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	**1**	**2**
2. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.	**1**	**2**
3. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.	**1**	**2**
4. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.	**1**	**2**

5. I can remember “playing sick” to get out of something.	**1**	**2**
6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.	**1**	**2**
7. I’m always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.	**1**	**2**
8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.	**1**	**2**
9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.	**1**	**2**
10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.	**1**	**2**
11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of other.	**1**	**2**
12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	**1**	**2**
13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone’s feelings.	**1**	**2**

Demographic Questionnaire

Please respond to each of the following by inserting the answer in the second column or circling the appropriate number corresponding to your answer.

How long have you been employed as a school counselor?	_____Years _____ Months
What is the highest degree you have earned?	1. Bachelor’s Degree 2. Master’s Degree 3. Specialist Degree (Post-Masters) 4. Doctorate
What was your age on your last birthday?	
What is your gender?	1. Female 2. Male
To which racial group do you belong?	1. African American/Black 2. Asian 3. Caucasian 4. Multiracial 5. Other (Specify)
Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?	1. Yes 2. No
Where is your school located?	1. City 2. Suburb 3. Small town 4. Rural area
In what state is your school located?	
Number of students in your school to the	

nearest 10 (best guess).	
Number of students in your caseload to the nearest 10 (best guess).	
What proportion of your caseload consists of racial/ethnic minority students (best guess):	1. Less than a quarter 2. About a quarter 3. About a third 4. About half 5. About two-thirds 6. About three-quarters 7. Almost all
Have you had any multicultural counseling training?	1. Yes 2. No
If yes, please specify the number of courses, seminars, etc. in which you have participated.	1. Courses 2. Seminars/workshops 3. Staff development 4. Other (specify)
Please add any additional comments you may have.	

Thank you for participating in this important research. A $1.00 donation will be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in appreciation of your effort.

Linda Zegley, M.Ed.

Appendix C

Letter Inviting Participation in the Study

Dear Middle/Junior High School Counselor,

As a member of the American School Counselors Association (ASCA), you are invited to participate in a survey that will help provide the knowledge leading to the development of effective multicultural school counseling strategies. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete, and you can quit at any time. **$1.00 will be donated to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital for every survey submitted** as an additional incentive for you to invest your time in this essential investigation.

Your participation is completely voluntary and confidential. No identifying information is requested. If you prefer a paper and pencil version of the survey, simply reply to this email with the name and address where you would like it sent.

To start the web-based process, simply click on the link below. You will be directed to the questionnaire. Or, you can enter the url into your browser. Participation in the survey implies informed consent. You can stop or skip questions at any time. You can also interrupt your participation, save your responses, and complete the questionnaire at a later time if your web browser accepts "cookies."

If you think you may want to stop and return to the survey at a later time, please be sure to set your browser to allow cookies *before you begin.* In most browsers, this setting is found under the "Privacy" option (Firefox – look under "Tools, Options"; Internet Explorer – look under "Tools, Internet Options", Netscape Navigator – look under "Tools, Cookie Manager"). Note that if you exit the survey and return, your previous answers will not be visible on the screen. Please be assured that they have been saved.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact Linda Zegley at lzegley@vt.edu or 703-538-8494 (work), 703-967-8388 (cell).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Linda Zegley, M.Ed.
Principal Investigator
Professional School Counselor

http://www.surveymonkey.com

Appendix D

Informed Consent

Informed Consent for Participants in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: An Investigation of the Broaching Behavior of Middle School Counselors as it Relates to Multicultural Counseling Competence.

Investigator(s): Linda A. Zegley, M.Ed., Doctoral Candidate

I would appreciate your assistance with this research project entitled, An Investigation of the Broaching Behavior of Middle School Counselors as it Relates to Multicultural Counseling Competence. The study is being conducted by Linda A. Zegley, Doctoral Candidate, at Virginia Tech University, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Counselor Education Program. The research will help me understand counselors' broaching race, ethnicity, and culture with their students. The process of addressing race, ethnicity, and culture during the counseling process is referred to as broaching. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a member of the American School Counselors Association (ASCA).

Returning the completed questionnaire implies your consent to participate. The questionnaire should take approximately 35 minutes to complete. At the conclusion of this investigation, you may contact me, Linda Zegley, at lzegley@vt.edu for a summary of the research results.

There are no known or expected risks from participating in this study, except for the mild frustration associated with answering the questions. You may not receive any direct benefit from this study; however, the knowledge gleaned may help counselor educators with the training and preparation of prospective counseling professionals.

Your identity will be kept confidential as there is no identifying information included in the survey. The results of this study may be published or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, but no identifying information will be provided other than to state that the participants were members of ASCA who self-identified as middle or junior high school counselors.

Your participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Additionally, you are free not to answer any questions.

Should you have any pertinent questions about this research or its conduct, and research subjects' rights, I may contact:

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