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Publication Guidelines. APA Guidelines (6th edition) should be followed throughout for format and citations. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of references, tables, and figures. Manuscripts should be no more than 25 pages in length, including references, tables, and figures.

Title: A separate first page of the document should include the title, author(s) name, and institutional affiliation of all authors (if not affiliated with an institution, city and state should be listed).
Abstract: Please include an abstract describing the article in 50-100 words.

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*Counselor Education Graduate Students'
Experiences with Multiple Roles and
Relationships*

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Abstract
Counselor Education graduate students participate in multiple roles and relationships during their programs (Dickens, Ebrahim, & Herilhy, 2016). The purpose of this quantitative investigation was to explore counselor education graduate students' awareness of and experiences with multiple roles and relationships through the development of a self-report scale. Building on previous qualitative studies, the authors constructed a 41-item survey – the Multiple Roles, Relationships, and Responsibilities (M3R). Exploratory factor analysis was applied to data from a sampling of counseling students (*n* = 140) yielding an 8-factor solution accounting for approximately 63% of the variance. Implications for faculty are discussed and programmatic recommendations are offered.

Dual relationships have been a controversial ethical issue in mental health professions for several decades (Lazarus & Zur, 2017; Remley & Herlihy, 2016). Various labels have been used interchangeably to denote a secondary relationship that exists between client and counselor, including *dual relationship*, *multiple relationship*, and *nonprofessional relationships* (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Corey, Corey, & Corey, 2019; Moleski & Kiselica, 2005; Lazarus & Zur, 2017). Multiple relationships occur when counselors participate in two or more professional roles and relationships with a client (e.g., counselor and supervisor), and/or blend their professional role and relationship with a nonprofessional role (e.g., counselor and friend) (Corey et al., 2019). Initially, researchers discouraged counselors' participation in multiple roles and relationships with clients, due to the potential for harm and possibility of counselors' misusing their power (Herlihy & Corey, 2015). Over time, however,

practitioners and ethics boards have acknowledged the potential benefits for clients of some nonprofessional interactions and dual relationships and addressed these in updated ethical codes (Corey et al., 2019; Herlihy & Corey, 2015; Lazarus & Zur, 2017).

Similarly, the existence and complex dynamics of multiple roles and relationships in counselor education training programs continues to be a relevant topic among students and faculty (Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Dickens et al., 2016; Kolbert, Morgan, & Brendel, 2002). Multiple relationships include relationships between students (e.g., master's and doctoral) (Oberlander & Barnett, 2005; Scarborough, Bernard, & Morse, 2006), faculty and students (Dickens et al., 2016; Herlihy & Corey, 2015), supervisors and students (Sullivan & Ogloff, 1998), and administrators and students (Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Dickens et al., 2016; Holmes, Rupert, Ross, & Shapera, 1999; Kolbert et al., 2002). Students enrolled in counselor education programs

are expected to participate in roles and subsequent responsibilities in which they are required to interact with faculty, clinical supervisors, and other graduate students (e.g., master's and/or doctoral students). Researchers have analyzed multiple relationships and nonprofessional interactions in counselor education faculty-student relationships and doctoral-master's student relationships, focusing on supervision (Kolbert et al., 2002; Schwab & Neukrug, 1994; Sullivan & Ogloff, 1998), advising (Barnett, 2008), friendships (Biaggio, Paget, & Chenoweth, 1997; Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Kolbert et al., 2002), mentoring (Barnett, 2008; Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Holmes et al., 1999; Johnson & Nelson, 1999; Protivnak & Foss, 2009), monetary interactions (Kolbert et al., 2002), and romantic or sexual relationships (Bowman & Hatley, 1995).

A review of studies on multiple relationships in counselor education reveals an acknowledgement of the lack of program emphasis on teaching students about setting and maintaining boundaries with faculty and fellow students (Biaggio et al., 1997; Blevins-Knabe, 1992; Bowman & Hatley, 1995, Kolbert et al., 2002; Schwab & Neukrug, 1994). Additionally, despite acknowledgment by students and faculty that multiple relationships exist in higher education, students still struggle to navigate the dimensions of these relationships (Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Dickens et al., 2016; Holmes et al., 1999; Kolbert et al., 2002). Although literature regarding multiple relationships may be sparse in comparison with other programmatic aspects of counselor education, there are salient themes which have emerged. Common findings include a high prevalence of multiple relationships between students and faculty and between doctoral and master's students, differing opinions between

students and faculty regarding the nature of certain multiple roles and relationships within counselor education, and a lack of education for students regarding how to evaluate and navigate various types of multiple relationships (Biaggio et al., 1997; Blevins-Knabe, 1992; Dickens et al., 2016; Bowman & Hatley, 1995, Kolbert et al., 2002; Schwab & Neukrug, 1994). Despite researchers discussing the influence of the power differential and its potential to affect students' ethical decision-making processes (Dickens et al., 2016), a remaining concern has been expressed regarding the potential for future counselors and counselor educators to succumb to the slippery slope phenomenon after participating in multiple relationships while enrolled as graduate students (Barnett, 2008; Kitchener, 1988; Sullivan & Ogloff, 1998).

Blevins-Knabe (1992) described the mentoring effect and noted the potential for harm if early mentoring relationships are characterized by poor boundaries between professor and student. By contrast, the multiple relationships involved in mentorship were consistently cited as an important theme connected to doctoral student success in programs and professional development (Barnett, 2008; Bowman & Hatley, 1995, Holmes et al., 1999, Protivnak & Foss, 2009). Such findings from previous research on multiple roles and relationships support the need for increased education for students regarding multiple relationships in counselor education, along with teaching viable ethical decision-making models to assist in navigating boundary issues that may arise.

Dickens et al. (2016) conducted a qualitative study using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to explore the experiences of counselor education graduate students who participated in multiple

relationships during their doctoral program. The analysis yielded four superordinate themes: power differential, need for education, transformation, and learning from experiences. The researchers indicated that a need exists for quantitative feedback from counselor education students regarding their experiences with various types of multiple roles and relationships within their training programs.

The purpose of this study was to develop a self-report survey protocol based on literature and qualitative studies. Such an instrument may help gain further insight through a quantitative lens into graduate students' experiences with multiple roles and relationships while they were enrolled in their counselor education programs. Though previous studies highlighted the existence and complicated nature of multiple roles and relationships for counselor education graduate students, no instrument was available to assess students' perceptions of multiple roles relationships. Thus, it was posited that the development of a self-report survey demonstrating adequate psychometric properties would aid counselor educators in ethically and meaningfully addressing the multiple roles and relationships graduate students experience. Building on the qualitative investigation of Dickens et al. (2016), the authors developed a self-report survey instrument, investigating: (a) participants' level of awareness of the phenomenon of multiple roles and relationships; (b) whether and how participants were affected by the power differential inherent in some multiple roles and relationships (e.g., faculty advisor and master's student); and (c) participants' experiences with boundary issues that may have occurred as a result of engaging in multiple roles and relationships.

Method

Sample

Prior to initiating the data collection process, permission was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the researchers' university. Participants were recruited through posting on counselor education listservs after receiving permission from organization leadership. No incentives were offered for participation. Additionally, the researchers directly emailed program directors of CACREP-accredited counselor education training programs (approximately 320) about the study. As there was no requirement for program directors to state whether or not they forwarded on the information to students, it is unknown how many graduate students were made aware of the study. However, a total of 140 participants responded to the email invitation. The majority of participants reported their age in the late twenties/early thirties ($M = 31$) and identified as White or Caucasian (64.3%) and female (70.7%). The majority respondents reported being masters-level students (68.6%) with the remaining identifying as doctoral students. The majority of participants reported being enrolled in Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited programs (96.5%).

Instrument

The primary research question guiding instrument development was: how do counselor education graduate students experience multiple roles, responsibilities, and relationships with counselor education faculty/supervisors? Approximately 34 items were initially created by the authors based on existing literature addressing

multiple roles and responsibilities, and more specifically the qualitative work done by Dickens et al. (2016). These items initially aligned with the broader themes of power differential, need for education, transformation, and learning from experiences with multiple roles and relationships. The authors then reviewed the items and made revisions, yielding an increase in total items to 41. These items were then placed within a protocol piloted by a small pool of graduate students (approximately five). Of note, graduate students chosen for the pilot were intentionally not enrolled in the authors' graduate program, thereby minimizing potential influence of multiple roles/relationships. Based on the pilot experience, the 41 items were retained with minimal editing and revisions. Items were then used to create an online survey instrument utilizing Qualtrics. The resulting instrument was titled The Multiple Roles, Relationships, and Responsibilities instrument, or M3R.

Procedures

The researchers distributed the M3R instrument to participants via an introductory email containing the Qualtrics survey link. The link was provided as both hyperlink-enabled URL as well as QR code (inserted/attached image). The email (as well as introductory page of the Qualtrics survey) introduced the researchers, the focus of the study, IRB approval information, and contact information for the researchers. Additionally, the email affirmed participation was voluntary, participants could withdraw from the survey at any time, and that participants' data would be kept confidential with no identifying information retained in the dataset. The survey was kept open for active collection of data for approximately five months. After that time,

based on declined participants responses, the researchers closed the survey link and began data analyses.

Results

Preliminary analysis investigated descriptive statistics for the sampling. This analysis reviewed basic measures of central tendency, range, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. All data were found to be within tolerable limits of normality. While some items presented skewness and/or kurtosis statistics outside the general "rule of thumb" of $|1|$, all functioned with the broader parameters required for factor analyses (Fabrigar & Wegener, 2012; Field, 2018). During this process, missing data were discovered and addressed utilizing expectation maximization (EM) procedures. Expectation Maximization (EM), one of the third-generation techniques for missing data imputation, is efficient, nimble, robust and superior to many first-generation methods such as Listwise Deletion, Pairwise Deletion, or Mean Substitution (Karanja, Zaveri, & Ahmed, 2013). Prior to implementing EM, Little's MCAR test was found non-significant, suggesting no systematic cause for the missing data. Missing data were replaced using EM and the resulting dataset was once again reviewed. As before, descriptive statistics were found within tolerable limits of normality. Secondary analyses reviewed mean, median, and mode values for individual survey items as well as cumulative mean averages for each of the factors (derived from literature and previous qualitative work) comprising the instrument. These results are presented in Table 2 by individual item. Mean averages for items ranged from 2.99 (Item 21: *Discussion on multiple roles is initiated by my faculty/supervisor*) to 4.26 (Item 29: *I recognize how challenges shape my*

development as a future counselor/counselor/educator). The majority (80.6%) items' mean average scores fell within a range of 2.99 to 3.94 with 6 items scoring 4.00 or higher. Interestingly, items 18, 29, 30, and 31 fell within this range (i.e., higher than 4.00) with each item addressing some facet of students' individual awareness of multiple roles/relationships.

Final analyses investigated the dataset for appropriateness for factor analysis. Review of inter-item correlations found low values but still within acceptable limits. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found significant, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) was .806. These results suggested factor analysis was appropriate for the dataset. As this study was an initial development of the instrument, the authors chose Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) versus Principal Components Analysis (PCA). PAF was then applied to all 41 items, yielding an initial 9-factor extraction. The authors reviewed the scree plot and item loadings, eventually deciding to drop ten items which did not align with the 9 factors but instead remained independent. PAF was applied to the remaining 31 items and an 8-factor solution was extracted. As the authors believed the factors underlying the experience of multiple roles and relationships were related, oblique rotation was employed (Fabrigar & Wegener, 2012). Specifically, rotation was applied to the PAF extraction using Direct Oblimin ($\delta = 0$). The resulting rotated 8-factor solution continued to demonstrate a significant value for Bartlett's Test, produced a KMO of .824, and accounted for 62.629% of the variance. Consulting previous research and literature surrounding multiple roles, relationships and responsibilities, the researchers reviewed the items composing each of the 8 factors and

chose names best describing the themes represented. See Table 1 for factor names, item loadings, and cumulative variance.

The resulting themes (and specific items within) were as follows: Faculty Interactions (15, 16, 14, 28, 20, 21); Defining Identities & Boundaries (23, 22, 24, 13); Individual Awareness (31, 29, 30, 18); Individual Resilience (10, 27, 2, 19); Ethics of Multiple Roles & Responsibilities (7*, 6, 8); Implementing & Maintaining Boundaries (26*, 25*); Roles & Responsibilities (9*, 12, 11, 17); and Expression & Opinion (3*, 4*, 1*, 5). Note that items marked with an asterisk were reverse-coded. Variance accounted for by factors ranged from a high value of 33.38% to a low of 2.38% in the following rank order: Faculty Interactions (33.38%); Defining Identities & Boundaries (7.27%); Individual Awareness (5.20%); Individual Resilience (4.57%); Ethics of Multiple Roles & Relationships (3.92%); Implementing & Maintaining Boundaries (3.04%); Roles & Responsibilities (2.88%); and Expression & Opinion (2.38%). Combined these eight factors accounted for 62.63% of the cumulative explained variance.

Discussion

Multiple roles and relationships may be a relevant concern for students and faculty within any graduate program of study. However, considering the importance of acknowledging and attending to such relationships as demonstrated by professional codes of ethics (ACA, 2014; American Psychological Association, 2017; American School Counseling Association, 2016; National Board for Certified Counselors, 2016), counselor educators are arguably called to a higher standard. Researchers who have investigated multiple relationships in counselor education have

noted the failure of some programs to emphasize the importance of creating and maintaining boundaries, or even to provide students with information on what constitutes an acceptable relationship and how to handle boundary violations (Barnett, 2008; Dickens et al., 2016; Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Holmes et al., 1999; Kolbert et al., 2002; Scarborough et al., 2006). This lack of training is especially problematic considering that many counselor educators believe multiple relationships are essential to the growth and development of future counselor educators (Barnett, 2008; Biaggio et al., 1997; Blevins-Knabe, 1992; Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Holmes et al., 1999; Kolbert et al., 2002). Intentionally and diligently demonstrating awareness of and attending to such relationships requires accurate assessment of students' perceptions of multiple roles.

Reviewing the literature on multiple roles, relationships and responsibilities of graduate students enrolled in counselor education programs, the authors created a 31-item survey. Factor analyses extracted 8 distinct factors accounting for approximately 63% of the variance aligning with previous qualitative work (Dickens et al., 2016). The eight factors were named: Faculty Interactions, Defining Identities and Boundaries, Individual Awareness, Individual Resilience, Ethics of Multiple Roles and Relationships, Implementing and Maintaining Boundaries, Roles and Responsibilities, and Expression and Opinion.

Review of participants' responses suggest that overall participants had a healthy conceptualization of multiple roles and responsibilities. Items were worded from a positive health perspective (e.g., "I feel comfortable reaching out to faculty/supervisors for professional support"

(21)) with negative items reverse-coded (e.g., "I am often confused about the expectations of me in my multiple roles and responsibilities" (9)). All survey items demonstrated mean averages greater than or equal to 3.00 except for item 15 (e.g., "Discussion on multiple roles is initiated by my faculty/supervisor"). Similarly, all items demonstrated median and mode values greater than or equal to 3.00.

Furthermore, of the eight factors comprising the instrument, "Individual Awareness" demonstrated the highest cumulative mean average (4.20) while "Implementing & Maintaining Boundaries" yielded the lowest (3.25). These findings align with previous results from Dickens et al. (2016) that demonstrated students' heightened awareness of multiple roles and relationships as a common part of being a counselor education graduate student. The results from the current study suggest that participants recognized the value of establishing boundaries due to the intricacies of the multiple roles and relationships in which they participate, further aligning with findings from Dickens et al. (2016).

These findings suggest that the Multiple Roles, Relationships, and Responsibilities (M3R) instrument functions as a reliable tool for assessing the perceived multiple roles and relationships experienced by graduate students enrolled in counselor education programs. Furthermore, these results parallel previous literature evidenced by factor alignment with qualitative superordinate themes (Dickens et al., 2016). Interestingly, the results from this investigation found "Faculty Interactions" as the most prominent factor constituting more than half of the variance accounted for. In light of these results, the authors suggest three implications for counselor educators and counselor education programs.

Implications

Counselor-in-Training Monitoring

As outlined in the literature review, while some investigations have emerged in answering the call for ethical self-monitoring and examination in regard to multiple relationships (Bowman & Hatley, 1995; Herlihy & Corey, 2015; Kolbert et al., 2002), there remains a need for a quantitative instrument specifically addressing counselor education students. This seems especially pertinent as counselor education students, or "counselors-in-training," enter into their practicum and internship field experiences where there may exist greater opportunities to experience multiple roles and relationships. The M3R can serve as a resource available to counselors-in-training as they navigate an ethical decision-making model to objectively evaluate their situation (Younggren & Gottlieb, 2004).

Programmatic Implementation

In addition to serving as a tool for individual practitioners (and/or counselors-in-training), the M3R can aid counselor educators programmatically in terms of evaluation and instruction. Current accreditation (i.e., CACREP) and licensing agency standards call for regular assessment and evaluation of program stakeholders, surveying various aspects of the program. Representative of this focus, Burns and Cruikshanks (2019) explored the impact of ethical decision-making resources faculty consult when addressing potential boundary violations with students. The results suggested although faculty may be reticent in employing various models and/or frameworks, 100% of participants reported using the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) for past and future situations. However, while

such results are encouraging and support counselor educators integrating discussions of multiple roles and responsibilities into their programmatic work, the focus (i.e., perspective) remains explicitly faculty-centric rather than incorporating student voice.

The M3R, whether used as a stand-alone instrument or embedded within other program surveys, can add further context to comprehensive evaluation of the program through assessing multiple role/relationships as experienced by counselor education students. Recent graduates may be surveyed as well to further address potential bias from responders who are currently enrolled students. While applicable to all counselor education programs, such evaluation would arguably seem even more pertinent for programs incorporating graduate/research assistantships for students enrolled within their program.

The M3R might also be employed for instructional purposes by counselor education faculty. The instrument might be used within an ethics class to create student awareness of multiple role/relationships within counselor education. Revisiting the instrument at a later time during the program (i.e., practicum, internship) could facilitate more critical inquiry, given students' increased knowledge and experience, and might be viewed with more relevance by the counselors-in-training.

Faculty Influence/Responsibility for Change

Lastly, it is noteworthy that in the current study the factor "Faculty Interactions" was responsible for 33.38% of the variance. Much of the literature approaches multiple roles and responsibilities from the graduate student perspective, as does this instrument; for

example, graduate students' *self*-reported perceptions, education *for* graduate students, navigating role ambiguity/confusion, and support *for* graduate students, etc. Yet results from this investigation point to the central role faculty themselves play in creating, permitting, or minimizing multiple role/responsibilities with graduate students. Whereas items from other factors addressed graduate student autonomy ("I feel confident setting boundaries between my personal and professional identities"), past experience ("My experiences with multiple roles and relationships have increased my resiliency"), and programmatic resources ("I know where to find additional information about my roles and responsibilities"), items within the "Faculty Interactions" factor allude to the influence of faculty and their personal/professional interactions with graduate students. Items within this prominent factor refer to direct actions initiated by faculty (e.g., "Discussion […] is initiated by my faculty"; "My faculty discussed…") as well as climates created by faculty behaviors (e.g., "I feel comfortable reaching out") aimed towards successful navigation of multiple roles and responsibilities with graduate students.

This clearly aligns with previous work (Bowen & Hatley, 1995; Holmes et al., 1999; Kolbert et al., 2002) illustrating the emphasis on the role faculty play towards minimizing the effects multiple roles and responsibilities may have on graduate students' experiences and development. Burns (2019) found that counselor education students often fear negative repercussions from speaking out against boundary crossings and violations with faculty, and are commonly encouraged to stay silent (whether implicitly or explicitly); sometimes even by other counselor educators. As faculty and students are well aware of existing power differentials, counselor

educators should endeavor to initiate conversations about multiple roles and incorporate models of how students can navigate ethical dilemmas. Counselor educators may also discuss ways they personally have navigated multiple relationship situations in the past, including helpful resources used.

These results illustrate the pivotal role and responsibility of faculty within counselor education and supervision programs. Faculty possess the ability and autonomy to mitigate the harmful effects of multiple roles and responsibilities, not only in their individual interactions with students but on a programmatic level as well. It is vital for faculty to recognize the power differential between themselves and students, and to positively model how to navigate multiple roles and relationships for their students.

Limitations and Recommendations

This study was not without limitations, including the limited sample size. Although the sample size of 140 may be considered adequate for an initial exploration, some researchers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012) advise a minimum sample size of approximately 300, or a ratio of 10 participants to each initial item (Pett, Lackey, & Sullivan, 2003). The participants in this study were majority White, female, master's-level students. A larger, more diverse sample could provide a more inclusive perspective on the experience of being a graduate student involved in multiple roles and relationships. Finally, as with any self-report measure, social bias must be considered. This may be even more pertinent to the current study given the potentially sensitive nature of the topic (Dickens et al., 2016). Although statistical review of the dataset (i.e., Little's MCAR

test) suggested no external systematic effect upon the data, the potential for social bias arguably remains high with an instrument asking participants (i.e., graduate students) to consider possible negative outcomes associated with faculty/supervisor relationships.

Further research is needed to explore how graduate students perceive and experience multiple roles and relationships. In validating the factor-structure and application of the instrument, future studies might also address concerns of sample size, demographics, and social bias. Additionally, concurrent validity may be explored through mixed-method studies. Quantitative methods might include utilizing instruments measuring similar constructs, and qualitative methods might involve interviewing select participants. It is the authors' hope that this initial development of the M3R will aid in such endeavors.

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Table 1

Extracted 8-Factors & Variance

Factor	Items	Loading	% Variance
Faculty Interactions			33.38
	15	.82	
	16	.80	
	14	.61	
	28	.38	
	20	.37	
	21	.34	
Defining Identifies & Boundaries			7.27
	23	1.00	
	22	.61	
	24	.56	
	13	.39	
Individual Awareness			5.20
	31	.94	
	29	.79	
	30	.51	
	18	.45	
Individual Resilience			4.57
	10	.65	
	27	.64	
	2	.53	
	19	.43	
Ethics of Multiple Roles & Relationships			3.92
	7[*]	-.74	
	6	-.72	
	8	-.48	
Implementing & Maintaining Boundaries			3.04
	26[*]	.78	
	25[*]	.45	
Roles & Responsibilities			2.88
	9[*]	-.45	
	12	-.45	
	11	-.41	
	17	.35	
Expression & Opinion			2.38
	3[*]	.86	
	4[*]	.83	
	1[*]	.62	
	5	.52	
Cumulative Variance			62.63

Note. * denotes reverse-coded item

Table 2

Factor & Individual Item Descriptive Statistics

Factors & Items	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Skew	Kurt	Min	Max
Faculty Interactions								
Discussion on multiple roles is initiated by my faculty/supervisor. (15)	2.99	3.00	3.00	0.82	-0.05	0.25	1.00	5.00
My faculty/supervisors discussed the potential impact of multiple roles and responsibilities with me. (16)	3.20	3.00	3.00	0.90	-0.35	-0.19	1.00	5.00
My faculty/supervisors facilitate continuous dialogue regarding my multiple roles and responsibilities. (14)	3.01	3.00	3.00	0.86	0.04	-0.14	1.00	5.00
My experiences with faculty/supervisors have improved my ability to balance multiple roles and responsibilities. (28)	3.80	4.00	4.00	0.80	-1.01	1.26	1.00	5.00
I feel comfortable reaching out to faculty/supervisors for personal support. (20)	3.33	3.00	3.00	0.94	-0.33	0.15	1.00	5.00
I feel comfortable reaching out to faculty/supervisors for professional support. (21)	4.12	4.00	4.00	0.69	-1.35	4.22	1.00	5.00
Defining Identities & Boundaries								
I feel confident setting boundaries between my personal and professional identities. (23)	3.74	4.00	4.00	0.77	-0.73	0.38	2.00	5.00
I feel confident in my ability to separate my personal identity from my professional identity. (22)	3.69	4.00	4.00	0.84	-0.82	0.43	1.00	5.00
I feel confident creating boundaries between my multiple roles and responsibilities. (24)	3.78	4.00	4.00	0.71	-0.87	1.01	2.00	5.00
My roles and responsibilities are defined similarly by faculty/supervisors and me. (13)	3.71	4.00	4.00	0.76	-1.81	3.68	1.00	5.00
Individual Awareness								
I am aware of potential challenges of participating in multiple roles and relationships. (31)	4.22	4.00	4.00	0.45	0.86	0.02	3.00	5.00
I recognize how challenges shape my development as a future counselor/counselor educator. (29)	4.26	4.00	4.00	0.53	-0.13	1.34	2.00	5.00
I am aware of potential benefits of participating in multiple roles and relationships. (30)	4.11	4.00	4.00	0.52	-0.48	3.61	2.00	5.00
My experiences with multiple roles and relationships have increased my level of self-awareness. (18)	4.22	4.00	4.00	0.54	-0.43	2.97	2.00	5.00

Table 2 continued

Factors & Items	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Skew	Kurt	Min	Max
Individual Resilience								
I can clearly identify and describe the definitions and duties of my multiple roles. (10)	3.81	4.00	4.00	0.64	-1.14	2.06	2.00	5.00
I am able to balance my multiple roles and responsibilities. (27)	3.84	4.00	4.00	0.49	-1.12	2.68	2.00	5.00
I feel encouraged to express my views even if they differ from the views of faculty/supervisors. (2)	3.73	4.00	4.00	0.90	-1.14	1.10	1.00	5.00
My experiences with multiple roles and relationships have increased my resiliency. (19)	3.94	4.00	4.00	0.55	-0.81	2.83	2.00	5.00
Ethics of Multiple Roles & Relationships								
I fear addressing ethical issues with faculty/supervisors will result in negative consequences. (7*)	3.91	4.00	4.00	0.83	-1.13	1.48	1.00	5.00
I feel comfortable addressing ethical issues with faculty/supervisors. (6)	3.93	4.00	4.00	0.84	-1.14	1.86	1.00	5.00
I feel encouraged to address ethical issues with faculty/supervisors. (8)	3.94	4.00	4.00	0.80	-1.25	2.94	1.00	5.00
Implementing & Maintaining Boundaries								
I struggle to implement personal boundaries. (26*)	3.25	3.00	3.00	0.79	0.15	-0.41	2.00	5.00
I experience difficulties maintaining boundaries between my multiple roles and responsibilities. (25*)	3.25	3.00	3.00	0.71	0.08	-0.24	2.00	5.00
Roles & Responsibilities								
I am often confused about the expectations of me in my multiple roles and responsibilities. (9*)	3.34	3.00	4.00	0.89	-0.53	0.18	1.00	5.00
There are clear boundaries that delineate where the responsibilities of one role ends and another role begins. (12)	3.05	3.00	3.00	0.78	-0.36	-0.06	1.00	5.00
I know where to find additional information about my roles and responsibilities. (11)	3.74	4.00	4.00	0.68	-1.14	2.22	1.00	5.00
My experiences with multiple roles and relationships have fostered my growth as a counselor/counselor educator. (17)	4.13	4.00	4.00	0.49	0.29	0.80	3.00	5.00

Table 2 continued

Factors & Items	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Skew	Kurt	Min	Max
Expression & Opinion								
I am hesitant to express my opinion for fear of academic consequences. (3*)	3.75	4.00	4.00	1.05	-0.82	0.01	1.00	5.00
I fear expressing my opinion will result in future negative interactions with faculty/supervisors. (4*)	3.35	3.00	3.00	1.06	-0.11	-0.49	1.00	5.00
I am hesitant to vocalize my opinion to faculty/supervisors if my opinion is different from theirs. (1*)	3.29	3.00	3.00	0.92	0.08	-0.63	1.00	5.00
I feel comfortable addressing perceived or real conflict with my faculty/supervisors. (5)	3.19	3.00	3.00	0.90	0.04	0.01	1.00	5.00

Note. Item number in parentheses; * denotes reverse-coded item

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Abstract
Multicultural competency is a necessary component of counselor supervision. However, when ingrained and unquestioned biases tied to personal identity arise, it may feel impossible to have important conversations in a professional and safe way. The authors propose a conceptual framework that provides a navigational toolkit for these difficult conversations. A brief case example highlights a possible scenario and path to resolution.

The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) has emphasized the necessity of enhancing awareness, knowledge, skills, and action when counseling clients from different backgrounds (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, & McCullough, 2015). Increased attention on the multicultural counseling competencies has directed research and practice towards recognizing and addressing needs of various cultural groups (Ratts et al., 2015; Vera & Speight, 2003). These competencies help researchers, clinicians, and counselor educators to effectively understand and attend to the experiences of individuals who belong to diverse cultures (Ratts et al., 2015). This positive movement has resulted in increased advocacy for clients from underrepresented populations (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2003), and the understanding that cultural identity encompasses much more than race and ethnicity (Hays, 2008).

The most recently updated multicultural competencies (Ratts et al., 2015) include a structured multicultural and social justice praxis. This praxis includes multiple layers of important considerations, including (a) counselor self-awareness, (b) client worldview, (c) the counseling relationship, and (d) counseling and advocacy interventions. The idea behind this praxis is that attitudes and beliefs influence the knowledge acquired, which determines the skills and skill levels developed, which finally determines the actions that a counselor will take with their clients in advocacy positions. Additionally, clients and counselors will fall in different places on the spectrum of privilege and marginalization, resulting in a variety of experiences, awareness, and understanding of others (Ratts et al., 2015).

However, the emphasis on multicultural competencies should not stop at the client-counselor relationship. Counselor supervision is another setting in which it is essential to consider and ensure the practice of multicultural competencies and advocacy (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Multicultural interactions occur in many places outside of the counseling relationship, but supervision is an important focus because of the processes that take place

within the supervisory relationship. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) identified the supervisee as the "pivot point" (p. 65) within the triad of counselor/supervisee, supervisor, and client. Therefore, it is likely that what the supervisor models for the supervisee will be implemented within the counseling relationship. Additionally, the phenomenon of parallel process is likely to help the supervisee adopt attitudes and behaviors toward their clients that the supervisor has demonstrated toward them.

Counselor Supervision

Clinical supervision is a well-established and longstanding practice used within counselor education programs and for licensure purposes (ACES, 2011; CACREP, 2016; Lum, 2010). Additionally, supervision is an ethical requirement set forth by the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014), and an accreditation requirement from the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016). Supervision is expected to facilitate development, provide opportunity for practice, and provide a space to assess clinical skills (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

The supervisory relationship is paramount, as both supervisors and supervisees are required to place trust in the other and communicate openly and honestly throughout the supervision process (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Full trust, though, can be challenging, as supervision is inherently a power disproportionate relationship. Power dynamics are further highlighted by any dominant or marginalized identities held by either individual. Open discussion of such dynamics are necessary to have an understanding of the perspectives and needs of both parties, and to enable them to work

collaboratively to manage issues of power (Murphy & Wright, 2005).

Supervisory Dimensions

Within supervision there are various dimensions to which the supervisor may need to closely attend. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) presented a model of intertwined domains that supervisors may consider addressing. These domains include (a) intrapersonal identity, (b) interpersonal biases and prejudices, (c) cultural identity and behaviors, and (d) social and political issues.

Intrapersonal identity. The intrapersonal dimension holds concepts of identity and a sense of self in relation to other people (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Identity may be personal or professional, and while it is an intrapersonal dimension, it has origins within interpersonal relationships. Cooley (1902) introduced the concept of the looking-glass self, a theory that highlighted the ways an individual's sense of self is based on the perceptions of others which are reflected back at the individual. Based on this theory, identity values can be developed through interactions and experiences with others. Supervisors can benefit from addressing this domain in themselves and their supervisees.

Interpersonal biases and prejudices. Biases and prejudices are a natural part of interpersonal interactions (Hays, 2008). All individuals develop expectations, positive and negative, of diverse populations based on prior experiences and interactions. These expectations, or stereotypes, help individuals to better understand the world around them, but stereotyped groups may fear being reduced to that label (Steele, 1997). The activation of stereotypes in the brain depend

on past experiences and the learning history of the perceiver, and this happens largely outside of conscious awareness (Krieglmeyer & Sherman, 2012).

Cultural identity and behaviors. This dimension includes the influence of culture on expected social roles. For example, the enactment of traditional gender norms and roles are driven by societal expectation (Hays, 2008). However, if a client, supervisee, or supervisor does not identify with the majority culture and does not adhere to expected social roles, certain interactions with others may hold interpersonal biases. The conversation around cultural identity, and understanding its importance, is crucial for supervisees and supervisors. Not only will this cultivate a better understanding of each other, but it will likely facilitate increased understanding of others as well.

Social and political issues. Social and political issues are rooted in systemic structure, and strongly influence levels of marginalization and oppression (Collins, 2000). Society defines subgroups within the population, often driven by social and political initiatives. The messages that define Westernized ideals for success, beauty, intelligence, and various other adjectives are established through controlling images. These controlling images determine what is and is not acceptable, and they play a powerful role regarding how people act and how relationships are formed and navigated (Collins, 2000; Miller, 2008). Both supervisors and supervisees are subject to such images and the force they exert within daily life, and would benefit from discussion of this influence.

These supervisory dimensions are integral to the supervision relationship.

Supervisors need to be sure that all of these dimensions are attended to throughout the supervision process, as they help cultivate awareness of issues from the intrapersonal self to the greater culture surrounding the individual. Additionally, discussion of these dimensions helps to generate greater understanding of others' experiences.

Common Challenges in Supervision

Common challenges may arise out of the supervisory dimensions. Challenges may be around intrapersonal identity, interpersonal interactions, cultural expectations, or social and political happenings. Most likely, challenges will involve some combination of these dimensions.

Blind spots. Many students and supervisees struggle to be aware of their own blind spots, particularly when addressing issues of power and privilege (Hays, 2008; Jordan, 1991, 2001). Privilege is often invisible to the person who has it, as it is obtained through situations in which social identity is normative and is not questioned by others in the same group environment (Hays, 2008). However, both supervisees and supervisors must be prepared to work with individuals who are different from themselves in a variety of ways.

Professional-personal identity incongruence. Personal identity begins developing early, and often has a solid foundation by the time an individual reaches the point of graduate school and counselor training. Personal identity may be rooted in family values, cultural foundations, personal experiences, and issues of power and privilege (Berzonsky, 1989; Hays, 2008; Marcia, 1966). Professional identity, though, is first cultivated during a few short years of

graduate school, and may not always align with personal values. Despite potential misalignment, personal values must be set aside during interactions with clients and supervisees, and professional values must take precedence. This prioritization of professional values is often easier said than done, and being able to move personal values to the periphery is a skillset that must be learned in training and reinforced throughout supervision.

Unaware of presentation and perception. Some individuals may struggle to look outside of themselves and see how they present to, and are perceived by, others. This may be a particular challenge for those who have typically identified with a privileged population and not had many, if any, experiences with marginalization or discrimination (Hays, 2008). Thus, they are accustomed to seeing their status as the norm. However, when confronted with educators, supervisors, or supervisees who are situated in a marginalized space, this status quo can be perceived as arrogance or a stance of power-over rather than power-with (Jordan, 1991, 2001). The lack of awareness surrounding power differential and privilege can be problematic in a variety of ways, but especially so when developing a strong therapeutic relationship between client and counselor, and a strong working relationship between supervisor and supervisee.

Difficulty seeing "–isms" as systemic issues. Issues of racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, ableism, and other "-isms" are all systemic problems (Hays, 2008). However, some individuals struggle to take this perspective, thinking that if they do not directly contribute to the problem that it does not have an effect within their life. If, within a supervisory relationship, one party does not view these marginalizations as part

of a systemic framework, there is a high risk for defensiveness when encountering such issues.

Supervision pairings. A final challenge within supervision is the supervisor-supervisee pairing. Pairs who come from opposite ends of the privilege spectrum may struggle to understand each other or communicate with one another effectively. Understanding the other's worldview, just as the multicultural counseling competencies ask the counselor to understand the client's worldview, is essential to an effective working relationship (Hays, 2008; Ratts et al., 2015). Just as problematic is when two individuals come from the same perspective. The risk in this relationship is that they may not venture outside of their scope of the world without intentionally developing ways to do so. While there are challenges within each of the pairings, potential benefits may also emerge.

All of the common challenges identified are rooted within self- and other-awareness, and many involve the usurping of personal identity over professional identity. Professional identities develop later in life, and overlay already established personal identities and values. Ideally, professional and personal identities dovetail easily, with differences that are complementary rather than conflicting—but this is not always the case. In some instances, professional identity and values and may be at odds with personal identity, creating internal dissonance for counselors-in-training and presenting a great challenge for educators and supervisors.

If supervisors and educators are able to understand which identity style the supervisee is working from, they are likely to have greater insight regarding the

supervisee's awareness and understanding of self and others. Understanding identity style development may provide a useful framework for addressing deficits in multicultural counseling competencies within the supervisory setting. Effective interventions can be crafted to meet the supervisee where they are in their identity style and begin instilling multicultural competency.

Identity Style Theory

An understanding of identity style and development may assist counselor educators and supervisors in development of interventions or approaches to address common challenges that can arise within the supervisory relationship. Multicultural researchers have long placed an emphasis on the importance of identity development (i.e., Cross, 1971; Sue & Sue, 2013) and the challenges faced by individuals as they work through various stages of conforming, resisting, and integrating their own cultural identity. It makes sense that counselors-in-training are likely to struggle with the possible dissonance between their own personal identity and their new counselor identity. Berzonsky (1989, 2011) posited identity style theory, which includes three primary identity styles that individuals adopt. It is important to note that while individuals are likely to assume a dominant style, everyone moves through these three styles in different situations and environments.

Diffuse-Avoidant

An individual who is using a diffuse-avoidant identity style will often put off making any major decisions about identity until environmental pressures force them to do so (Berzonsky, 1989). This style demonstrates a positive relationship to

Marcia's (1966) concepts of identity diffusion and identity moratorium. Identity diffusion is an identity stage in which an individual has not yet explored nor committed to any areas that may begin to define identity or sense-of-self (Marcia, 1966). Identity moratorium is a crisis stage of identity development in which an individual is exploring options for identity, but is not making any commitments. This moratorium is often accompanied by a great deal of anxiety as the individual attempts to create predictability and organization of their intrapersonal world (Marcia, 1966).

Individuals using a diffuse-avoidant style are prone to using immature defense styles, and tend to paint dramatically distorted pictures of reality in an attempt to alleviate their own anxiety. Similarly, they are likely to utilize avoidant coping mechanisms when confronted with problems and stressors (Berzonsky, 1989). Pointing out blind spots, while necessary to the training and supervision process, may evoke a sense of failure for someone working from this position. This can lead to rationalization or self-handicapping to shift the blame to something or someone else, rather than being willing to acknowledge and address areas that need growth.

Normative

Individuals who are using a normative identity style are likely to conform to standards of identity that have already been established by important significant others. For example, a supervisee who has never knowingly interacted with or sought out information about the LGBTQ community, but has a negative bias toward this group because her family espoused negative views, may be using a normative identity style. Normative styles are positively correlated with values of tradition,

security, and conformity, and demonstrate a positive relationship to Marcia's (1966) concepts of identity foreclosure and identity achievement.

Identity foreclosure is an identity stage in which an individual does not explore alternatives, but instead makes a commitment to follow the path set by others (usually family; Marcia, 1966). This often means values, career choices, and beliefs are pre-defined rather than pro-actively developed. Generally, these individuals are closed to information that may threaten core areas of the self. Normative styles depend on what they have been taught (their environmental norm) without question (Berzonsky, 1989). Therefore, if a supervisee has personal identity that directly conflicts with professional identity, it may be difficult to have them critically assess their personal values or to set these aside within a counseling session.

Informational

Finally, those individuals using an informational style of identity take the time to gather and consider information that may be related to their identity prior to making decisions (Berzonsky, 1989). For example, a supervisee may realize a negative bias about a certain group of people and decide to read scholarly information about that group or seek out time to spend with people from that group, before making any decisions about the validity of their bias. They may come to the conclusion that one negative experience with a member of a group may not have anything to do with group membership, but instead with that particular person's personality or circumstance, or even with their own personal perception. They are likely to take the time to examine multiple viewpoints, including exploring areas that

may challenge their personal beliefs, before coming to a decision (Berzonsky, 1989).

An understanding of these basic identity styles may be helpful in navigating the challenges that can arise within supervision. Insight into how a supervisee forms their opinions and judgements, how they may respond to evaluative feedback, and how they cope with stressors, based on their own identity formation, can help supervisors and educators decide how to intervene or address common challenges in an effective way.

Intervention Framework

The following sections comprise a non-linear framework for addressing multicultural awareness and competence, starting with the lens of identity development and then moving into the exploration of biases and assumptions held by both supervisor and supervisee.

Address Identity Development

As outlined above, identity development and style may play an important role in the way supervisees view and address various multicultural issues. Bringing discussions around personal and professional identity into the supervision space for exploration can be beneficial. This can aid in understanding of both the supervisor's and supervisee's developmental process and identity style. Further, if either person believes that knowing their current identity style may be useful, the supervisor may consider obtaining a copy of Berzonsky's identity style inventory (ISI-5; 2013) and using the results to facilitate further conversation around the influence of identity style on ability to demonstrate multicultural competence. Developing an understanding of identity style may help

supervisors more easily navigate the remaining suggested interventions.

Initiate Discussions of Privilege and Marginalization

As the person holding the power within the supervisory relationship, it is imperative for the supervisor to initiate discussions of multiculturalism, privilege, and marginalization from the outset of supervision (Bernard and Goodyear, 2014). These initial discussions, even if they are brief, can set the stage for the supervisee to feel comfortable approaching such topics in the future. Additionally, supervisors must maintain an awareness of biases and values—belonging to themselves and to their supervisees—to be sure they are not perpetrating microaggressions.

The supervisor may consider use of the multicultural supervision scale (MSS) to assess their own supervisory skills, supervisors' attitudes and beliefs, and stereotypes toward diverse populations (Sangganjanavanich & Black, 2011). This may increase intrapersonal understanding of biases and areas of growth. Initiating discussions that acknowledge and examine biased thoughts and actions within the supervisee can be challenging, as many individuals, and particularly those who know they are being evaluated, become uncomfortable addressing this topic. The next intervention, the SPANS model, may be a useful tool for beginning these conversations with supervisees.

The SPANS model. The scripted prejudice-awareness narrative strategy (SPANS) model (Rowell, 2009) was developed with three specific goals in mind: 1) to develop counselor awareness of their own biases, 2) to help supervisors understand their supervisees' biases and the

conflicts that may arise from them, 3) to target specific areas for intervention around cultural competence. The model, particularly when used with understanding of identity style, addresses each of the dimensions of supervision identified by Bernard and Goodyear (2014). The model consists of nine questions across three different areas. The areas include early recollection; adolescence, social messages, and identity development; and reflective thinking on the current self and the influence of cultural differences within the supervisees' lives.

The questions around early recollection are:
1. Describe the influential people in your childhood and include as many details as possible.
2. How did your ethnic, religious, cultural, gender, familial, and/or financial circumstances influence your childhood?
3. Describe early memories when you felt different, ridiculed, or alone. What were the factors or attitudes of others that prompted these feelings? (Rowell, 2009, p. 46)

The questions regarding adolescence, reinforced social messages, and identity development are:
1. As an adolescent, did you ever take a stand (or felt as if you could have) on issues on ethnic, religious, cultural, gender, familial, and/or financial difference? Describe the experiences in detail.
2. Describe some values of people you admired as an adolescent. Which of these values did you adopt as your own?
3. As an adolescent, did you ever wish you could change something about your ethnic,

religious, cultural, gender, familial, and/or financial background? If so, describe what you would have changed and how? (Rowell, 2009, p. 46)

Questions regarding introspection of the current self and impact of cultural differences are:

1. How are you different from people of other ethnic, religious, cultural, gender, familial, and/or financial backgrounds?
2. What aspect of your ethnic, religious, cultural, gender, familial, and/or financial background has had the biggest impact on your life and why?
3. Describe in detail how people of differing backgrounds would exist together in your ideal world. (Rowell, 2009, p. 47)

Once the narrative is complete, the supervisee searches for themes within and across questions. The supervisor also identifies themes within and across questions. Comparing and revisiting identified themes throughout the supervision process can provide a springboard for more in-depth exploration of values and biases and their effect on personal and professional relationships.

An additional benefit to this exercise is that it can be used with supervisees in any identity style. Those in the diffuse-avoidant style may struggle because they are trying to avoid having to provide a firm stance on questions such as these, but the exercise can force them to begin identifying important influences in shaping their values and belief systems. Supervisees may benefit from supervisor support and constructive feedback that helps them to focus and narrow their answers. Similarly, those in the normative style may be uncomfortable with

some of the questions asked, as they might challenge the normative beliefs that feel safe to the individual. However, their answers may provide useful information to begin deconstructing some of their normative values. Supervisors can gently encourage these supervisees to continue taking inventory of where their beliefs come from, and which of them they have experienced first-hand versus what has been passed down to them. Supervisors can provide support and validation for supervisees' difficult emotions while still challenging them to closely examine their values. Finally, those coming from an informational style are likely to find this exercise interesting as it requires them to self-reflect and think critically, which is something they are likely already doing.

Take an Emic Approach

It may seem simplistic, but holding an emic approach to supervision facilitates an open, empathic, and curious mindset. Seeking to understand and appreciate differences can aid in lowering others' defenses and allow for genuine exploration of beliefs and values. Additionally, approaching supervisees with humility can further cultivate an attitude of positive multicultural interactions. Humility has been found to be associated with positive cross-cultural and intercultural engagement (Drinane, Owen, Hook, Davis, & Worthington, 2017; Mosher, Hook, Farrell et al., 2017; Paine, Jankowski, & Sandage, 2016). Specifically, humility has been found to help individuals develop stronger relationships with others who are culturally different (Hook et al., 2013; Owen et al., 2014), prevent engaging in cultural ruptures or microaggressions toward racial/ethnic minorities (Davis et al., 2016; Hook et al., 2016), improve attitudes and behaviors toward religious out-group members (Hook

et al., 2017), and buffer against missing cultural opportunities in therapy (Owen et al., 2016). This not only acts upon the supervisory relationship, but models for the supervisee what they can implement in their client-counselor relationships.

Case Example

The fictional supervisor and supervisee used in this case example serve to represent some of the interpersonal dynamics and common challenges that can arise during the supervisory process. The following will outline how the interaction between identity, power, privilege, and sociopolitical issues can make for a complex supervisory relationship. Additionally, the intervention components outlined above are integrated to demonstrate how supervisors might maneuver this challenging terrain in a manner that is ethical and prioritizes multicultural considerations.

A 60-year-old White male supervisor named Abram is taking the supervision class offered by his Counselor Education and Supervision doctoral program. He is assigned to work with a 30-year-old female supervisee for the semester. Originally from Indonesia, Olive is in the practicum stage of her master's program in clinical mental health counseling. She is in the United States to complete her graduate work, after which she will return home to Indonesia where her family lives in a highly matriarchal society. Abram was raised in a military family in the United States, and patriarchal principles were strongly encouraged. In the past, his family has made it clear they view him as "weak" and "less of a man" for seeking a career in counseling, but Abram tends to suppress his conflicted feelings around his career and his family's values. Both Abram and Olive feel uneasy working with one another because they are

not sure what to expect from the other or how they will find ways to connect.

Depending upon the combination of supervisor and supervisee, a variety of challenges can arise during the supervision process. Common challenges in supervision occur when the supervisor and/or supervisee have blind spots or areas in which they are lacking in self-awareness. Olive and Abram will need to work through their respective and collective blind spots so that their supervisory relationship can be a place of support that encourages development and practice and allows for assessment in a safe way.

Abram has quite a few blind spots to address in his role as Olive's supervisor. First, he has not fully acknowledged the incongruence between his personal and professional identities. He has also not recognized the power and privilege he has as a White male in the United States, nor how the power and privilege Olive experiences is likely vastly different than his own. Furthermore, because he has not acknowledged his power and privilege, he is lacking in awareness when it comes to how he presents to others. Finally, he has not given thought to the Western ideals that influence his way of communicating and being with others.

Olive's primary blind spot comes from being a practicum student and not knowing what purpose supervision is supposed to serve. She has not yet realized the impact coming from a matriarchal society has had on her values both personally and professionally and how these values can influence a supervisory relationship. Additionally, she can feel the power and privilege Abram projects when they meet; she experiences his demeanor as entitled and somewhat condescending. She

does not realize that this will absolutely influence the trust and safety that needs to be built between them. She also has not recognized that she will need to provide some education about her Indonesian culture so that she and Abram can better understand the others' perspective.

In addition to acknowledging blind spots and their influence on a supervisory relationship, recognizing supervisor and supervisee identity style can also be beneficial to understanding the dynamics of a supervisory pairing. Such discussions around personal and professional identity provide exploratory space for increased understanding of self and other. In the aforementioned fictional scenario, Abram has a primarily normative identity style. The normative style is based in tradition and often pre-determined; in Abram's case he abides by his family's idea of what it means to be a White, American male. Due to his normative identity style, he experiences difficulty assessing his personal values versus his familial values, and at times struggles to set these aside during sessions.

In contrast, Olive usually leans towards an informational identity style, particularly when feeling safe in her environment. Individuals with informational identities are more likely to take the time to examine multiple viewpoints and more willing to explore areas of personal attitudes and beliefs than the normative style. This is an excellent quality for Olive to have as a supervisee, but she is restricted in her ability to explore in this manner because she does not feel accepted by or trusting of Abram in the early stages of their relationship. However, by choosing an appropriate intervention, Abram and Olive can discuss their blind spots and identity styles in a manner that builds rapport, safety, and

understanding, ultimately strengthening the supervisory relationship.

Choosing a supervisory intervention specific to the needs of the supervisee and the supervisory relationship can help to address issues of power and privilege. By conversing about newly acknowledged biases and prejudices, supervisory pairs can increase awareness of the other, develop trust, and more safely confer about sociopolitical issues relevant to supervision. The SPANS model (Rowell, 2009) is a collaborative intervention used to help initiate discussions surrounding the spectrum of privilege. This inventory focuses on awareness, biases, and cultural competence; therefore, it is an appropriate choice for Abram to implement in session with Olive. By working through the prompts collaboratively, a discussion surrounding the nuances of privilege and of previous life experiences emerges. This dialogue presents the opportunity for Abram and Olive to explore their values and biases more in-depth, resulting in increased understanding of self and other, as well as a safer supervisory relationship. While these conversations do allow some risk for microaggressions to occur, they are also an opportunity for perspective taking, encouraging the supervisory pair to connect in a more genuine and intimate manner.

As Abram is aware of his normative identity style, he is likely to benefit from seeking consultation from a peer or his own supervisor to be sure that he is stepping outside of his normative parameters and moving further toward the informational style when in session with Olive. This may also help to adjust the demeanor of entitlement observed by Olive, as Abram increasingly develops his own awareness and understanding of his privilege and

makes adjustments to be more multicultural competent.

Ultimately, the use of the SPANS model (Rowell, 2009) in conjunction with understanding identity styles and their influence on problem solving, emotional intelligence, and willingness to step outside of areas of comfort, is an effective way for supervisory pairs to navigate growth edges and strengthen multicultural competence. Additionally, use of these interventions in session is a practical method to model for supervisees how to initiate difficult conversations surrounding culture and privilege with clients in a professional and ethical way.

Conclusion

The case example of Abram and Olive is just one of many scenarios that may present regarding supervisory pairings, challenges, and identity styles. However, with any situation, the suggestion intervention framework can provide navigational tools for educators and supervisors to move through difficult conversations and into heightened awareness and understanding. As the multicultural competencies point counselors and counselor educators toward social justice and advocacy, interventions such as these are becoming increasingly important to the field of counseling and counselor education. It is not enough just to be aware, but having the skills and ability to advocate for both self and others in a variety of settings is a necessity.

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Abstract
This study investigated whether maintaining confidentiality influenced members' self-disclosure and perceptions of benefitting from group experience in the context of an instructor-led experiential graduate-level training group. Participants were 31 counselors-in-training in a 60-credit master's degree program in mental health counseling enrolled in an experiential group dynamics class. The findings indicate that maintaining confidentiality is positively associated with increased self-disclosure among group members as well as perceived benefit from the group. The implications of these findings for educators as well as practicing counselors and researchers are discussed.

Overview of Confidentiality & Experiential Groups

Confidentiality is essentially an ethical construct that requires a professional counselor to safeguard the information shared by the client in order to protect client's privacy. Maintaining confidentiality in a counselor-client relationship helps establish a trusting relationship between the two parties and thus promote client growth (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014). Within the context of group counseling, maintaining confidentiality is important, but made more difficult, because there are not only client-counselor interactions but also multiple member-to-member interactions involved. The overarching importance of confidentiality is examined in this study within the context of an experiential training group for mental health counseling graduate students.

Experiential groups within professional training programs are inherently prone to issues of confidentiality due to dual relationships (Pepper, 2004). For instance, the course instructor is often the leader of the group. Moreover, members may already be familiar to each other as classmates or friends prior to the group. Nonetheless, experiential groups are widely used in counselor education programs and are perceived as valuable for the preparation of counselor trainees (Shumaker, Ortiz, & Brenninkmeyer, 2011). The researchers of the present study were interested in understanding the effects of confidentiality on group members' behaviors and experiences in experiential training groups.

Ethical Standards and Guidelines Relevant to Confidentiality and Experiential Groups

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2015) requires training activities that "contribute to personal and professional growth" in counseling students (Standard II.C, p. 10). CACREP has set a minimal standard for such training experiences. This standard, pertaining to the preparation of counselors in the area of

group counseling, states that part of such preparation should include "direct experiences in which students participate as group members in a small group activity" (CACREP, 2015, p. 13). The professional training standards of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW, 2000) also require, as part of their core training standards, an experience of at least 10 clock hours. The standards also recommend 20 clock hours of observation and supervised participation in a group experience as a group member and/or as a group leader. Thus, experiential training groups are an integral component of counselor training.

Confidentiality is not only a therapeutic imperative but also an ethical mandate (International Association of Group Psychotherapy [IAGP], 2009). The accountability for clearly describing confidentiality and its limits rests on the part of group leaders (Wheeler & Bertram, 2008). Section B.4.a of the American Counseling Association code of ethics states that, "in group work, counselors clearly explain the importance and parameters of confidentiality for the specific group" (ACA, 2014, p. 7). Section A.7.d of the best practices guidelines of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (Thomas & Pender, 2008) recommends that the group leader should clearly state confidentiality as well as its limitations to the group members. For instance, this includes describing the ethical and legal obligations by the counselor to safeguard the information shared as well as circumstances under which the confidentiality is broken, such as risk of harm to self or others. Although this legal obligation does not apply to group members, ASGW guidelines strongly recommend that group leaders discuss with the members the effects of maintaining, as well as costs of

revealing, confidential information shared by the peers in their group.

Research on Confidentiality in Groups

Experiential training groups in counseling programs consist of elements such as exploring personal issues related to the focus of the group while providing counselor trainees with knowledge about the group processes and skills (Kiweewa, Gilbride, Luke, & Seward, 2013). Experiential training groups have been found to have beneficial effects including powerful learning in a practical sense and personal development of the counselor trainees (Kajankova, 2014; Ohrt, Ener, Porter, & Young, 2014; Smith & Davis-Gage, 2008). In a qualitative study of 22 professional counselors, Ohrt et al. (2014) found that counselors reported several key learning outcomes in their own training groups. These included the opportunity to practice leading a group, observing an experienced leader, receiving feedback, and their "experiential group participation." One study of a 10 hour personal growth group showed that students who were enrolled in this group as a part of their masters' level counselor education curriculum, gained knowledge of such group processes as group development, therapeutic factors in group, and personal growth (Young, Reysen, Eskridge, & Ohrt, 2013). While the use of group counseling has long been a mainstay of counseling practice (Scheidlinger, 2000; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005) and while many aspects of the group counseling process have been examined, there is relatively little empirical research in the area of confidentiality in experiential training groups, in particular. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to understand the effects of confidentiality on members' behaviors such as self-disclosure and feedback exchange as well as experiences such as

perceived benefits within an experiential training group.

Research indicates that maintaining confidentiality in a group can be difficult for group leaders (Welfel, 2006). Absolute confidentiality in any counseling group is difficult because of the intense nature of group interactions and the number of participants involved (Pepper, 2004). This may be particularly applicable within professional preparation training groups because of the ongoing relationships among students. Lasky (2005) found that 34% of the 315 practicing group leaders whom she surveyed reported that one or more of their group members broke the confidentiality of a member during the most recent two years of their practices. Lasky (2005) also reported that 63% of the surveyed group leaders felt that addressing confidentiality as well as its limits may actually positively affect self-disclosure. A study by Roback, Ochoa, Bloch, and Purdon (1992) found that of 300 experienced group leaders about 54% felt that group members had violated confidentiality. Of the surveyed group leaders in this earlier study, only 57% of the group leaders had discussed the costs of violating confidentiality.

It is important to note that the members of groups, in contrast to group leaders, are not ethically bound by confidentiality (Rapin, 2004; Roback, Moore, Bloch, & Shelton, 1996). Lasky and Riva (2006) asserted that group members' beliefs that possible violations of confidentiality have occurred during a group have the potential of minimizing the central counseling process of self-disclosure, which in turn may decrease therapy outcomes.

Confidentiality and its Effect on Self-disclosure and Perceived Benefits in Experiential Groups

Kiweewa et al. (2013) defined self-disclosure as a growth factor where members disclose personal information or/and experiences in the group consisting of past or present thoughts, actions, behaviors, feelings, etc. Since the interaction among group members is a defining component of group counseling, mutual self-disclosures are very important (Welfel, 2006). Hough (1992) stated that self-disclosure and confidentiality conjointly operate in the dynamics of a meaningful counseling group. He asserted that self-disclosure is an asset without which the members of the counseling group could not make significant gains and progress. Kiweewa et al. (2013) reported that the group members in their study experienced cathartic benefits from the group by expressing aspects of their lives and by observing others self-disclose. Group members, therefore, directly benefit from the mutual self-disclosure within an emotionally safe environment that is greatly supported through confidentiality.

Shumaker et al. (2011) reported in their survey of counseling training programs that approximately 90% of programs utilize experiential training groups. An emphasis on confidentiality and emotional safety within such groups is important because it acknowledges and highlights the sensitive nature of these experiences. Robson and Robson (2008) asked student counselors about their experiences in an experiential training group and found that safety was the dominant theme. Confidentiality is essential to promoting a sense of safety in group experiences.

In a study involving 82 instructors, Shumaker et al. (2011), reported that 28% believed that there were problems with

students' violations of confidentiality in their groups, and 8% believed that there were instructor violations of confidentiality. Pierce and Baldwin (1990) highlighted the importance of addressing privacy in the training of counseling students. They offered a set of nine suggestions for professional training programs; four of these points involve confidentiality. These include being sensitive to students' privacy needs, guiding appropriate participation, guiding appropriate self-disclosure, and assisting students to select topics for self-disclosure. Kiweewa et al. (2013) studied growth factors using a critical incident questionnaire with master's level counselor trainees enrolled in an experiential training group. They found twelve growth factors, including self-disclosure, that accounted for the majority of reported critical incidents which affected students' personal growth. Finally, while absolute confidentiality is impossible to guarantee, it is reasonable to assume that the degree to which members maintain some agreed upon level of confidentiality will have effects on the degree to which members feel safe to participate, to self-disclose, to give feedback to others, and to benefit from the group in personal and professional domains.

Confidentiality should be addressed in the beginning of any counseling group. Effectiveness of a group depends on multiple factors, but the two most salient are adherence to confidentiality by both group leader and members and also the degree of mutual self-disclosure (Roback et al., 1996; Shumaker et al., 2011). However, the literature addressing the relationship between these variables is limited. Therefore, we attempted to address this gap in the literature by studying the relationship between maintaining confidentiality and perceived outcomes of maintaining confidentiality including increased self-

disclosure and perceiving the benefits in an experiential training group. Several studies have shown that participating in an experiential group facilitates trainees' growth and development as counselors (Anderson, Gariglietti, & Price, 1998; Hensley, Smith, & Thompson, 2003; Luke & Kiweewa, 2010).

In this study, we hypothesized that: (1) There would be a significant increase in the importance that group members attach to confidentiality by the end of their groups; (2) There would be significant correlations between the group members' recognition of the importance of confidentiality and the outcomes of both benefiting from the group and of the processes of engaging in self-disclosure and exchanging feedback; and (3) Group members who were tempted to break confidentiality at pre-group would disclose less and benefit less from the group experience.

Method

In the present study, students in a required "Group Dynamics" course in a master's-level training program in mental health counseling took part in an 8-session experiential training group. The first-session included a detailed discussion of confidentiality. Every group then came to a specific consensus (details included in section describing training procedures) about the confidentiality within their particular group before any other activities were initiated.

Participants were asked to complete measures of perceived importance of confidentiality both pre-group and post-group. Participants also responded to an outcome measure inquiring about self-disclosure within the group as well as their

self-perceived benefits from the group experience.

Participants

The researchers obtained approval from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Fifty-two counselors-in-training in a 60-credit master's degree program in mental health counseling at a mid-sized university in the Northeast United States participated in this study. Because we added certain post-test measures at a later point, 31 students are considered in our final statistical analyses. Students over the span of five semesters participated in one of the five Group Dynamics sections offered during that time. Each group consisted of no more than 10-11 participants. All groups were led by the same group leader who also was the professor for the course. The students were not asked to identify their ages or their genders because such identification could easily compromise their anonymity in such small groups. However, since every student in the program enrolls in this course, we used the population numbers of students in the program and took the total enrollment numbers during those academic years as reasonable estimates of the student distributions in our groups. During this timeframe, 23 students were women and 8 students were men. Of the 31 respondents, 23 students were between the ages of 22-35 and 8 students were over 35. The participants were in the first year of a 60-credit master's program in mental health counseling. In terms of ethnicity, 18 participants were White/Caucasian (non-Hispanic), 4 participants identified as African American/Caribbean (non-Hispanic), 4 identified as Latino/Hispanic, 1 participant was Asian (or Pacific Islander), 1 identified as non-resident alien, and finally 2 participants reported their ethnicity as multi-racial.

There were no penalties for declining to participate and no rewards for participating in the study. Volunteers were treated in accordance with the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014), the "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" ("2010 Amendments to the 2002 'Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct'," 2010; "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct," 2002).

Training Group Procedures

When the groups met on the first day of class, each student in the study agreed to participate by way of written informed consent which included a description of the procedures and a statement that they may choose to not participate in the data collection while still remaining in the group. Then, at the start of the first group meeting, students completed a set of questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered again at the end of the last group session as a post-group measure.

The bulk of the first class session was devoted to a discussion of the overall structure of the training group and of confidentiality in particular. The group leader stated that participation in this group did not require anyone to talk about personal issues. The overall trajectory of the group would consist of structured exercises as well as some less-structured portions in which a here-and-now focus would be emphasized. The group leader then indicated that the group would work toward reaching a consensus on the rules of confidentiality for their specific group. The group would not proceed until everyone had asserted their opinions. The group leader then explained the importance of confidentiality and the risks inherent in members' breaking

confidentiality. The group leader then presented three models of confidentiality: 1) strict ("what is said in this room stays in this room"), 2) laissez faire ("anything goes" or "no limits"), and 3) a modified or middle-of-the-road approach that allowed members to speak of group events with people outside the group without using identifying information. The group leader presented the possible advantages and limitations of each model. The last approach (middle-of-the-road) was ultimately chosen by consensus in all of the groups. Members discussed the definitions of possible circumstances surrounding such talk as agreed to by the group at this time. Possible circumstances included such questions as: who could be used as a confidant (e.g., no staff, no faculty, and no students outside of this course), where such talk should occur (e.g., specific places on campus, often-frequented places off campus, or any form of "social media"), and the definition of "identifying information" (e.g., no use of names or personal pronouns which could identify the gender of who would be included in any discussion of a group experience). The group did not proceed until unanimous agreement on a set of summarized conditions of confidentiality was reached. The range of times for such consensus to be reached by the groups was 1-1.5 hours. Finally, the leader made a brief statement about the ethically required breaches by the leader (e.g., descriptions of harm to self or others).

The total number of training group sessions was eight. Each session was approximately three hours long. The development of the overall group was organized through a combination of both structured activities and open discussion so as to parallel the stages of a typical therapy group's life as outlined in *Theory and Practice of Group Counseling* (Corey,

2012). The typical set of activities included more structured exercises in the early sessions and less structured activities in later sessions. Structured activities (and their usual session) included: "Who am I?" in the initial stage/session 1 (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1973); setting goals (initial stage/session 1 or 2) identifying fears and conflicts regarding the group (transition stage/session 3); the Orpheus exercise (early working stage/ session 4) (Spira, 1997); "Johari Window" (working stage/session 5) (Luft, 1970); student led sessions (working stage/session 5, 6, 7); "Coins: Symbolic Feedback" (ending stage/session 8) (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1973) and reviewing the group (ending stage/session 8).

The instructor was a tenured professor in the program with over ten years of group experience including addictive settings and loss and bereavement counseling. He has taught the Group Dynamics course at least once a year for over ten years. His theoretical orientation is integrative, with an existentially-humanistic focus.

Measures

Importance of confidentiality. The participants responded to five questions intended to measure the level of importance that they attach to confidentiality at pre-training group and also at post-training. The questions asked were as follows (worded in the past tense in the post-training version):

1. I think I will feel (felt) tempted to break confidentiality at some point during the life of the group.
2. I may break (broke) the rules of confidentiality inadvertently / by accident.
3. I will adhere (adhered) to the rules of confidentiality.

4. Confidentiality is (was) very important to me.
5. Other group members will adhere (adhered) to our rules of confidentiality.

Following the suggestion by Clark and Watson (1995), the first step in developing a scale such as this is a sound theoretical model. The items for this measure were based on issues highlighted in the best practice guidelines of ASGW articulated by Thomas and Pender (2008) as well as in the guidelines for ethical and legal practice in counseling and psychotherapy groups outlined by Rapin (2004). Five items were used, based on the representativeness of the issues as judged by two of the current researchers. The dimensionality of the five items was analyzed using principal components factor analysis utilizing data from an unpublished pilot study of 209 individuals. Two criteria were used to determine the number of factors to rotate: the a priori hypothesis that the measure was unidimensional and the scree test. The scree plot indicated that our hypothesis of uni-dimensionality was correct. The total scores on this scale reflect a single "Importance of Confidentiality" scale. The Cronbach's alpha in the present study was .52.

Outcome measures. The participants responded to six statements that measured the perception of group members' own outcomes as well as their perceptions of other group members' outcomes. The items for this scale were derived from a theoretical foundation based on practice-based evidence (Siefert & DeFife, 2012) and were related to earlier published measures of counseling outcomes which focused on process and on outcome (e.g. Pascual-Leone & Yeryomenko, 2017; Sarracino & Dazzi, 2007). The present measure utilized a 5-point Likert-type rating scale indicating participants' level of agreement with each item. This outcome measure was administered immediately following the last session of the training group. The Cronbach's alpha for the items in this measure was reported in an earlier study as .77 (Robak, Kangos, Chiffriller, & Griffin, 2013). The Cronbach's alpha in the present study was .78. The dimensionality of the 6 items was analyzed using principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation, using data from a pilot study of 209 individuals. Three criteria were used to determine the number of factors to rotate: the a priori hypothesis that the measure was two dimensional, the scree test, and the interpretability of the factor solution. The rotated solution yielded two interpretable factors: process (self-disclosure and feedback) and benefiting (from the group). The process factor accounted for 44.9% of the item variance and the benefiting factor accounted for 17.03% of the item variance. These six items are reported as two subscales:

Process outcome. This sub-scale consists of the following items on self-disclosure and feedback:
1. Overall, I self-disclosed in this group.
2. Overall, others self-disclosed in this group.
3. Overall, I gave others feedback and support.
4. Overall, others gave me feedback and support.

Benefited outcome. This sub-scale consists of the following two items:
5. Overall, I felt that I benefited from this group experience.
6. Overall, I felt that others benefited from this group experience.

Results

We compared the pre-group and post-group scores on the importance of confidentiality measure. A paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to evaluate whether group members tended to rate the importance of confidentiality more highly following the group than before the group. The results indicated that the mean importance-of-confidentiality score after the group ($M = 23.96$, $SD = 1.19$) was significantly greater than the mean before the group ($M = 16.93$, $SD = 0.92$), $t(30) = 24.76$, $p = .001$. The paired *t*-test results showed a significant increase in importance of confidentiality at post-group.

In order to examine how the importance of confidentiality and the process and the benefiting outcomes related to one another, Pearson product moment correlations were calculated and analyzed. All correlations reported below are based on an *n* of 31. There was a significant correlation between the importance of confidentiality at pre-group and the benefiting outcome at post group ($r = .43$, $p = .01$). The correlations between the members' post-group importance of confidentiality and benefiting outcome ($r = .51$, $p = .002$) was also significant. Finally, the correlation between the post-group importance of confidentiality and the process outcome ($r = .48$, $p = .003$) was also significant.

Not surprisingly, the two outcome measures of process (self-disclosure and feedback) and benefiting were highly correlated ($r = .65$; $p = .001$). In addition, at the item level, the self-disclosure question ("*Overall, I self-disclosed in this group*") yielded some interesting results. Self-disclosing in the group was strongly associated with the perception that other members ("*Overall, other self-disclosed in this group*") were self-disclosing as well ($r = .70$; $p < .001$). Self-disclosure was significantly correlated with the perception of receiving feedback and support ("*Overall, others gave me feedback and support*") ($r = .41$; $p = .01$). It is noteworthy that there was also a strong correlation between receiving feedback and support (*"Overall, others gave me feedback and support"*) with self-perceived benefits ("*Overall, I felt that I benefited from this group experience*") ($r = .84$; $p < .001$).

Specific correlations (Table 1) at the item level showed that simply thinking about the possibility of breaking confidentiality ("*I felt tempted to break the rules of confidentiality…*") was significantly correlated with less self-disclosure in the process outcome subscale ("*Overall, I self-disclosed in the group*") ($r = -.39$, $p = .02$). Individuals who were tempted to break confidentiality at pre-group ("*I think I will feel tempted to break confidentiality at some point during the life of the group*") were less likely to perceive benefits from the group experience for themselves (*Overall, I benefited from the group*) ($r = -.41$; $p = .01$). These individuals showed a negative (although not significant) correlation between anticipating being tempted at pre-group and the benefiting outcome at post-group ($r = -.22$; $p = .23$).

Discussion

The importance of confidentiality is a critical factor associated with perceived benefits in group counseling. Our study provided support for this claim. We also found that the importance of confidentiality can increase for counselor trainees over the course of an experiential training group.

Our findings indicate that it is productive to initiate a group with an in-depth discussion of confidentiality. That discussion should include the members' consensus about the detailed definition of confidentiality. Such an intervention can enhance the process outcomes, i.e. self-disclosure and provision of feedback to other members as well as the self-perceived benefit outcomes of the group experience. This is in line with previous research. Lasky (2005) found that a large majority of surveyed group leaders reported that discussing confidentiality led to greater self-disclosure by the group members. Welfel (2006) asserted that mutual self-disclosure among group members is important because it facilitates interaction and feedback. It may be that a first-session discussion and consensus regarding confidentiality is effective because it fosters cohesiveness and is a way for a group to begin to create an overarching group narrative as described by research as that of Travaglini, Treadwell, and Reisch (2012).

We noted a number of impacts of the importance of confidentiality on group members' experiences. First, the groups showed a significant increase from pre-group to post-group scores on the "Importance of Confidentiality" measure. In addition, we found a strong association between the importance of confidentiality to members and positive outcomes in both process (self-disclosure and feedback) and in self-reported benefiting from the group experience. Group members who reported being tempted to break confidentiality were less likely to report benefiting from the group experience. Furthermore, members who agreed with the importance of adhering to the rules of confidentiality were more likely to engage in self-disclosure.

Confidentiality is a complex, yet an important component of the overall group counseling process (Younggren & Harris, 2008). Our findings illustrate that when members embraced confidentiality by adhering to the rules, they self-disclosed. These findings are clearly consistent with Lasky & Riva's (2006) argument that confidentiality helps ensure the facilitation of trust and self-disclosure. Moreover, self-disclosure was associated with a number of benefits. Self-disclosure was significantly positively correlated with both the members' perception of receiving feedback and support and of ultimately benefiting from the group experience. Indeed, the relationship between receiving feedback and support and benefiting from the group was so high ($r = .84$) that the two variables seem to go hand-in-hand. It may be that we cannot have one without the other.

Groups work best when members feel safe enough to share and receive constructive feedback in the process. In a study by Luke and Kiweewa (2010), safety was one of the 30 identified factors as being significant to counselor trainees' personal growth and awareness within participation in an experiential group. In our study, findings suggested that the group experience worked best for all members when members were disclosing and receiving support for doing so. Self-disclosure and providing feedback are clearly important to a group's process because they have been said to be related to increased group interaction (Welfel, 2006).

In considering the importance of these findings, the following limitations should be kept in mind. The present study's analyses are based on a relatively small sample of participants. This smaller number not only limits statistical analyses, but also makes it more difficult to generalize

findings. Future research should include larger samples so that predictive factors of outcomes might be studied via regression analyses. Multiple regressions may have offered insight into the predictive relationship between variables such as maintaining confidentiality and such outcomes as self-disclosure and benefitting from the group. Second, direct behavioral observation in addition to self-report of the group members might be included in further research. Finally, while we relied on quantitative forms of data collection and analysis, a qualitative methodology of asking the participants to provide subjective responses of their experiences within the experiential group might also provide valuable personal insights into the overall group experience by the counselor trainees.

Even with these limitations in mind, the findings of the present study are of practical significance in that they can help serve counselor educators, researchers, and practicing counselors in the future. Our findings show that merely thinking about the possibility of breaking confidentiality was associated with less self-disclosure. For educators, having trainees understand the importance and complexity of confidentiality early in their group training experiences can enhance students' willingness to deal directly with confidentiality in their own practice. Given the fundamentally important role that a group dynamics/group counseling course plays in all counselor training programs, it would behoove educators to institutionally implement assessment measures within their group courses in order to better understand how changes in students take place over time.

The findings of the present study reinforce that confidentiality and disclosure are essential components of successful training experiences. Our results indicate that spending time on the rules of confidentiality positively correlated with the dynamics of the experiential group training. The current study provides empirical evidence for the importance of confidentiality to counseling group processes in general, although considerably more research is still needed to add to the knowledge base. Future studies could replicate our findings to reinforce the importance of confidentiality and its effects on group processes as well as outcomes. More prospective studies like the current one will allow researchers to understand how confidentiality contributes to therapeutic outcomes. Future researchers are also encouraged to use qualitative methodologies for in-depth exploration of counselor trainees' perceptions of confidentiality and related growth factors in an experiential group setting. Further research, utilizing regression analyses, is needed to examine if there is a predictive link between the importance of confidentiality in experiential groups and personal development outcomes. In conclusion, the findings of this study lead us to recommend the explicit verbalization of confidentiality as a valuable practice because this activity was significantly associated with higher levels of both process (self-disclosure and feedback) outcomes and benefiting outcomes.

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Table 1

Correlations between Post-Training Confidentiality and Self –Reported Outcome Measures

Confidentiality & Self-Disclosure scores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.Tempted to break confidentiality	-										
2.Broke confidentiality by accident	.65*	-									
3.Adhered to rules of confidentiality	-.24	-.07	-								
4.Confidentiality was important to me	-.06	.11	-.15	-							
5.Felt that others adhered to rules	.03	.04	.13	.01	-						
6.I self-disclosed in this group	-.39*	-.19	.35*	.13	.16	-					
7.Others self-disclosed in this group	-.30	.00	.52*	.01	-.01	.70*	-				
8.I gave others feedback and support	.00	.02	.15	-.26	.09	-.15	.06	-			
9.Other gave me feedback and support	-.27	-.31	.07	.06	.25	.41*	.22	.27	-		
10.I felt that I benefitted from this group	-.41*	-.51*	.06	-.07	.27	.47*	.21	.05	.84*	-	
11.I felt that others benefitted from this group	-.40*	-.44*	.09	.03	.06	.32	.26	.18	.67*	.77*	-

Note. n = 31, *p < .05.