Multicultural inclusion: a phenomenological study of men of color who are professional counselors

Kimberly A. Hart

Follow this and additional works at: https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations

Recommended Citation

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research & Artistry at Huskie Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Huskie Commons. For more information, please contact jschumacher@niu.edu.
ABSTRACT

MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MEN OF COLOR WHO ARE PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

Kimberly A. Hart, Ph.D.
Department of Counseling, Adult, and Higher Education
Northern Illinois University, 2018
Suzanne Degges-White, Co-Director
Adam Carter, Co-Director

This research proposal was initiated to present one point of inquiry regarding the manifestations of multiculturalism in counseling in the form of multicultural inclusion among professional counselors. Men of color who are professional counselors were the chosen population of study. Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) Ecology Systems theory was introduced as the conceptual framework for understanding multiculturalism as a contextualized concept for this study. Scholarly literature from the field of professional counseling, counseling related professions, organization theory, and various aspects of multiculturalism were used to frame what was understood about multiculturalism, men of color, and the counseling profession. Specific information on how multiculturalism has been theorized, discussed, assessed, and practiced within the counseling profession was presented. This manuscript is an outline of interpretative phenomenological analysis methods used to investigate lived experiences of multiculturalism in counseling. In particular, data and discussion of the multicultural inclusion experiences of ten men of color who are professional counselors were delineated.
MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MEN OF COLOR WHO ARE PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

BY

KIMBERLY A. HART
© 2018 Kimberly A. Hart

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING, ADULT, AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Doctoral Co-Directors:
Suzanne Degges-White
Adam Carter
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I acknowledge God the Creator and Orchestrator of all that has been manifested through my humanity. I pray that this research be pleasing to and one embodiment of divine purpose.

Second, I want to acknowledge the patience I have been granted and the love I have received from my immediate and extended family; my best and closest friends; and cherished colleagues who have encouraged me, walked beside me, and waited on me.
DEDICATION

To the silenced, unheard, and ignored voices

To the people of color who may be heard more loudly through this work
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF APPENDICES</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING INCLUSION EXPERIENCES FOR MEN OF COLOR WHO ARE PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background of Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism in Counseling as Social Justice</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism in Counseling as Best Practice</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose Statement</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microsystem</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesosystem</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exosystem</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Macrosystem ........................................................................................................... 17
Chronosystems ....................................................................................................... 18
Significance of Study ............................................................................................... 19
Delimitations ........................................................................................................... 22
Definitions of Terms ............................................................................................... 22
Summary .................................................................................................................. 24

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ..................................................................................... 26
Introduction ................................................................................................................. 26
Multiculturalism ......................................................................................................... 27
Men of Color .............................................................................................................. 34
Inclusion and Exclusion ............................................................................................ 39
Organizational Theory .............................................................................................. 46
Professional Counseling ........................................................................................... 48
Why This Study? ....................................................................................................... 54
Multicultural Organizations ..................................................................................... 56
Men of Color Who Are Professional Counselors ....................................................... 57
Summary .................................................................................................................. 61

PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY ............................................................... 63
Research Questions .................................................................................................. 63
Methodology ............................................................................................................. 64
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role of Researcher</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher Reflexivity Statement</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher as the Tool</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Population</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase One</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase Two</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase Three</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmability</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferability</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHENOMENOLOGICAL FINDINGS</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive Data</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Multicultural Definitions and Profession Perceptions</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Factors</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Themes</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme One: Inclusion Is Active</strong></td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors That Influence Inclusion Experiences</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement, Acceptance, and Curiosity</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating Opportunities for Inclusion</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion Sometimes in Some Spaces</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme Two: Inclusion, But Not Necessarily Multicultural Inclusion</strong></td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compartmentalization as a Myth</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion as an Ideal</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme Three: Exclusion as Familiar and Normative</strong></td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections on Exclusion Experiences</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors That Influence Exclusion Experiences</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors That Moderate Exclusion Experiences</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme Four: Engagement Despite and Because of Multicultural Exclusion</strong></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying It Forward</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalized Vision</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self as a Factor</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme Five: A Call for Living the Aspiration</strong></td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement and Outreach</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating Diverse New Leaders</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine Commitment</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic Organizational Change</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness of Participant Disclosures</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher Reflection</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERPRETATIVE DISCUSSION</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice Ecological Framework</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Themes</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme One: Inclusion Is Active</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Two: Inclusion, But Not Necessarily Multicultural Inclusion</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Three: Exclusion as Familiar and Normative</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Four: Engagement Despite and Because of Multicultural Exclusion</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Five: A Call for Living the Aspiration</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Comparison with Literature</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Research Questions</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question One</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Two</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Question Three</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Researcher Reflections</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Study Limitations</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for Practice</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Change</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor Educators</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Practitioners</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Leaders</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for Future Research</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Participant Demographic Identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Participant Pseudonym Meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Summary of Interpretative Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1.</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2.</td>
<td>Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3.</td>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4.</td>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L5.</td>
<td>Religious/Spiritual Affiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L6.</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L7.</td>
<td>Romantic Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L8.</td>
<td>Nation of Birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L9.</td>
<td>Generations of Family Born in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L10.</td>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L11.</td>
<td>Disability/Ability Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L12.</td>
<td>Socioeconomic Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L13. Year of Master's Degree in Counseling Completed</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L14. Master's Degree Accreditation</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L15. Coursework or Training in Multiculturalism and Counseling</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L16. Current Counseling-Related Licenses/Certifications</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L17. Areas of Counseling Specialization/Practice</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L18. Primary Counselor Identity</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L19. Counseling Organization Memberships</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L20. Actively Engaged Counseling Organization Memberships</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L21. Executive Officer Leadership in Any Counseling Organization</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L22. Participant Identities Named During Interviews</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Model of Human Development
LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix                                      Page

A. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: ECOLOGY MODEL                    191
B. AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION DIVISIONS             193
C. RECRUITMENT VIDEO TRANSCRIPT                        197
D. PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM                    199
E. DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE                           203
F. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE                       209
G. FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE                               211
H. INCENTIVE MAILING ADDRESS SUBMISSION FORM            214
I. INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS DIAGRAM     216
J. SCOPE OF ACA PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ETHICS          218
K. CACREP STANDARDS GUIDE                              221
L. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA TABLES                  224
M. THEMATIC FACTORS LISTING                            240
UNDERSTANDING INCLUSION EXPERIENCES FOR MEN OF COLOR WHO ARE PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

Introduction

Given the multicultural nature of humanity and evolving ethnic diversity of the US, counseling professionals’ attention to multiculturalism in counseling (i.e., awareness, curiosity, and sensitivity to cultural diversity) has become increasingly important for effective professional counseling practice (Alexander, 2001; Estrada, Poulsen, Cannon, & Wiggins, 2013; Moodley, 2007; Pedersen, Lonner, Draguns, Trimble, & Scharonn-del Rio, 2016; Sue & Sue, 2016; Vera & Speight, 2003; Wrenn, 1962). Within counseling scholarship, multiculturalism is most frequently discussed through a lens of multicultural competence delineated as knowledge, awareness, and skills (Arredondo et al., 1996; Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2015). Modeling best practices of multicultural competence implies counselors internalized and externalized inclusion of multiple intersecting identities of multicultural individuals (Sue & Sue, 2016).

Implicated through these notions of effective counseling practices is the requirement for a community of practitioners to be equitably comprised of and led by multiculturally diverse individuals who achieved professional status (ACA, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). These counseling professionals would be expected to manifest self-acceptance of their own multicultural identities and the
holistic embracing of their colleagues’ and clients’ multicultural identities (Dollarhide et al., 2014; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016; Vera & Speight, 2003). The relational dynamic of counseling as a profession is why multiculturalism in counseling is vital (Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Background of Study

Counseling is described as a profession of trained individuals who work with humanity and human relationships (ACA, 2014). Professional counselors are to aspire to model holistic wellness through their personal ways of being and chosen behaviors with clients, among professional colleagues, and the general public (ACA, 2014; Nugent, 1981; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016). Contextually, the counseling profession is recognized as a collective community through its professional counseling affiliations (Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Counselors in training, counseling practitioners, and counselor educators refer to ethical codes, (ACA, 2014; ASCA, 2016; CCE, 2016), training standards (CACREP, 2016), and continuing education minimums (NBCC, 2015) to guide professional counseling practices (Remley & Herlihy, 2014).

According to leaders of the profession, counselors are expected to conduct themselves in alignment with the best practice guidelines of counseling (i.e., ethical guides, training standards, etc.; ACA, 2014; NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Counseling leaders acknowledged the human imperfection of individuals who work as counselors. Nevertheless, leaders expect professional counselors to aspire to fulfill the best and most accurate practices of guiding standards, ethics, and laws of the profession (ACA, 2014; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). ACA
leaders have published competency-based guides to support counseling practices and counselors conduct (ACA, 2016; Arredondo et al., 1996; Ratts et al., 2015). Practitioners and research scholars explored and provided additive explanations of best practices in counseling (Pederson, 2008; Vera & Speight, 2003; Williams & Barber, 2004), counselor education (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; Das, 1995; Estrada et al., 2013; Leong & Kim, 1991; Troutman & Packer-Williams, 2014), and assessment of multicultural competence (i.e., awareness, attitudes, knowledge, and skills) for counselors working with diverse clients (Gillem et al., 2016; Hays, Prosek, & McLeod, 2010; Munroe & Pearson, 2006). While training and practice guidelines for professional counselors are implicitly clear, the manifestation of these practices seems to be an ongoing problem of inconsistency, inequity, and inauthenticity (Davis, 2015; Evans, 2013; Smith & Roysircar, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2016; Van de Vijver, Breugelmans, & Schalk-Soekar, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Counseling leaders are guided by published writings and corroborated research about best practices in counselor preparation and implementation of counseling practices (ACA, 2014; Jones-Smith, 2012; Marquis, Douthit, & Elliot, 2011; Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Whiston, 2009). Scholarly findings are published with continued questions regarding if, and how, multicultural inclusion was modeled and practiced among counseling professionals (Evans, 2013; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Marquis et al., 2011; Moodley, 2007; Sue & Sue, 2016). Explicit disparities in references to multiculturally competent practices among counseling professionals were persistent in counseling literature (Evans, 2013; Smith, Ng, Brinson, & Mityagin, 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016). Of the scarce articles published on the topic of multiculturalism in
counseling, even fewer researchers explored the interactions of counseling professionals within their professional counseling communities (i.e., affiliated organizations, places of employment, and training programs; Evans, 2013; Smith et al., 2008; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). Aside from guiding texts, written to describe expectations and best practices in counselor disposition, ethics, training, competency, and continuing education (ACA, 2014; ACA, 2016; CACREP, 2016; NBCC, 2015), few scholarly writings about counselors modeling these aspirational edicts among professional colleagues within the counseling profession had been published (Evans, 2013; Smith et al., 2008).

Men of color who are professional counselors were a readily identifiable visible non-majority population within the counseling profession (ACA, 2015; ACA, 2017; Evans, 2013). Men of color were one of the smallest visible non-majority populations of individuals who retain counseling services when needed (Dunbar, 1999; Evans, 2013; MacLeod, 2009; McCabe, 2009; Smith & Silva, 2011). Researchers suggested an etiological influence for this decreased presence of men of color within the counseling profession that may be attributed to inclusion experiences within counseling professional communities (e.g., preparation programs and counseling organizations; Cox, 1991; Crenshaw, 1989; Davis, 2015; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Hansen, 2010b; Smith & Roysircar, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2016). Scholars interpreted disparities between counseling professionals’ aspirational manifestations of inclusive multiculturalism in the counseling profession and men of color who are professional counselors’ lived experiences of multicultural inclusion were based on: sociohistorical cultural dynamics in the US, contemporary counselor preparation pedagogy, personal lived experiences of counselors when
acting as part of general populations, and evolving competency guidelines for the profession (Chung, Bemak, & Talleyrand, 2007; Howarth & Andreouli, 2012; Winker & Degele, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Within, the last decade, researchers found that counselors of color and men of color who are professional counselors experienced multicultural identity-based marginalization, oppression, and racism (Dollarhide et al., 2014; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). The existing literature regarding the manifestation of professional counselors modeling multicultural inclusion was limited and mostly in the forms of implicit notions conjectured by counseling scholars (Ahmed, 2012; Davis, 2015; Evans, 2013; Labonte, 2004; Salazar, 2009; Smith et al., 2008; Smith & Roysicar, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2016; Wester, 2008). Moving beyond professional conjectures and scholarly implications about the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors to an explicit understanding of their multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession was the purpose of this study.

Purpose of Study

Multicultural inclusion is described as a social justice best practice within the counseling profession (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016). Individuals of social non-majority populations historically experienced higher proportions of social/societal exclusion (AMCD, 2014a; Costello, 2004; Davis, 2015; Salazar 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). Men of color who are professional counselors are one gender and ethnic non-majority population within the counseling profession (ACA, 2015; Evans, 2013). As the researcher, multicultural inclusion among and across all counseling professionals remained a personal and professional passion of mine. Initiating my research journey through investigating multicultural inclusion
experiences of men of color who are professional counselors was one meaningful population to study (Evans, 2013; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). The outcomes of this study are contributions to filling the gaps in scholarly literature regarding the manifestation of multicultural practices in counseling, specifically about men of color who are professional counselors (Evans, 2013; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). This study was one opportunity for increasing scholars’ understanding about the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors among counseling professionals as a larger organizational community. In designing and conducting this study, an integration of multiculturalism in counseling and social justice advocacy was utilized as the guiding theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

Some counseling scholars purported that manifestations of multicultural awareness, multicultural training, multicultural inclusion, and celebration of multiculturalism are vital for contemporary social justice movements within larger society (Sue & Sue, 2016). Scholars believed these manifestations of multiculturalism to be essential within counseling because the profession was perceived as a representative microcosm of larger social structures (ACA, 2016; Ratts et al., 2015). Leaders of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP, 2009; 2016) and the American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014) emphasized counselors’ cultivation and validation of multicultural competencies (i.e., awareness/attitudes, knowledge, and skills). Leaders of these professional counseling entities declared that professional counselors were expected to develop and model multicultural competence as part of increasing social justice practices within professional counseling (ACA,
As a construct of professional practice outlined in the CACREP standards (2016), multiculturalism in counseling should be taught and assessed within counselor education programs. Leaders within the counseling profession described factors of outreach, assessment, and differentiated interventions as well as personal practice and flexible supervisory contexts as essential for addressing multiculturalism in counseling (ACA, 2014). These guidelines were focused around counselors’ attention to enacting multicultural practices with clients. However, literature in which authors addressed manifestations of multiculturalism in counseling as a lived practice of modeling competency among counseling professionals is virtually absent (i.e., counselors’ experiences among counselors; Evans, 2013; Smith et al., 2008).

**Multiculturalism in Counseling as Social Justice**

As more and more counselors embraced the perspective that all counseling is multicultural counseling, positive and destructive practitioner positions emerged (Patterson, 1996; Speight, Myers, Cox, & Highlen, 1991). Counselors’ discussions of the white/black dichotomy of cross cultural counseling were observed as more inclusive in considering client’s additional cultural identities, some of which may be more personally salient than socially constructed racial categories or ethnic heritage (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Bowleg, 2008; Jordan-Zachery, 2007; Nash, 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016). Nonetheless, some counselors’ initial responses to the call to develop cultural competence resulted in compilations of stereotype-based knowledge and standardized implementation of counseling techniques that continued to marginalize and pathologize non-majority and culturally diverse clients (Patterson, 1996). Sue
and Zane (1987) identified that “the major problem with approaches emphasizing either cultural knowledge or culture specific techniques [was] that neither linked to particular processes that result[ed] in effective psychotherapy” (as cited in Patterson, 1996, p. 229).

Das (1995) anticipated positive facets of counselors’ emphasis on cultural competence: presuming that counselors’ increased attention and dialog around culture would be infused into everyday professional counseling vernacular. Simultaneously, Das (1995) feared that conceptualizing all counseling as multicultural counseling would have a negating homeostatic influence in which marginalized populations continued to be poorly served or ignored by counselors. Within this early period of multiculturalism in counseling, the inherent complexity of multiculturalism was misconstrued, underappreciated, marginally accepted, and/or oversimplified by some counselors within the profession (Smith et al., 2008). Patterson (1996) expressed that multiculturally curious counselors were counselors who took on re-humanizing ways of perceiving clients. This notion was echoed by various scholars who stated that counselors’ self-evaluations were required to convey appreciation for cultural differences and counselors’ development of efficacious psychotherapy relationships (Wrenn, 1962; Langman, 1995; Pedersen, 1991; Ratts et al., 2015; Speight et al., 1991; Sue & Sue, 2016). These scholars believed that counseling relationships rooted in client focused respect, counselor genuineness, and authentic client empathy must align with counselors’ adoption of systemic advocate roles with goals to truly create culturally adaptive (emic) interventions. Across counselors’ processes of conceptualizing how to help culturally diverse clients, counselors must pause to consider how they might change themselves as professionals in order to foster client change through
engagement and therapeutic connectivity (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; Patterson, 1996; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Multiculturalism in Counseling as Best Practice

Estrada, Poulsen, Cannon, and Wiggins (2013) agreed that development of cultural competence included awareness, acknowledgement, and confrontation with personal and cultural biases toward culturally different or multiculturally diverse individuals (Estrada et al., 2013). The authors discussed *liberation* notions of individuals being freed from, or having the opportunity and access to free oneself from, macrosystem experiences of oppression, exclusion, and marginalization, as foundational practices in the application of multiculturally oriented counselor preparations.

In 2010, Hays, Prosek, and McLeod researched cultural influences on counselors’ clinical decision-making processes. In their study, cultural biases were operationalized by degrees of counselors’ awareness of oppressions; however, the multicultural paradigm was not explicitly referenced, and the narrowed definition of culture excluded many individuals of non-majority cultural identities from their study and discussion. These researchers deemed counselors’ awareness of clients’ cultural factors as important when diagnosing clients and determining clients’ prognoses (Hays et al., 2010). Several important themes arose from their study; in particular, Hays and colleagues (2010) articulated positive correlations between counselors’ awareness of their own cultural biases and counselors’ reports of more positive client outcomes.

As counselors become more aware of their own multicultural identities and empathically explored the complexity of client’s multicultural identities (including ecological systemic
influences on client’s issues and situation locus of attribution) more accurate rates of clinical
decision making regarding appropriate diagnosis, prognosis, and intervention choices increased
(Hays et al., 2010). Ultimately, counselors’ personal and professional awareness combined with
empathetic curiosity were considered foundational experiences and opportunities for developing
mature multicultural counselors and professional multicultural counseling approaches (ACA,
2014; CACREP, 2016; Estrada et al., 2013; Hays et al., 2010; Ratts et al., 2015; Remley &
Herlihy, 2014; Speight et al., 1991; Sue & Sue, 2016).

This study of the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are
professional counselors was introduced through a social justice theoretical framework indicative
of counseling professionals’ valuing individuals’ context narratives as indispensable to
developing therapeutic rapport and unearthing human experiences (Erickson, 1986; Ratts et al.,
2015; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Aligned with this social justice framework, exploring how men of color who are professional
counselors experience multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession was proposed.
Within this inquiry, participants’ experiences of congruity or incongruity between
multiculturalism as a pedagogical construct and professional manifestations of multicultural
competence in practice were of particular interest. Having articulated the theoretical framework,
the specific purpose of this study is presented next.

Purpose Statement

Implicit in the problem statement, two areas of professional counseling that are not well
articulated by counseling scholars and leaders are (a) how counselors understand, manifest, and
experience multiculturalism and (b) if and how professional organization structures are representative of contemporary inclusionary practices of multiculturalism (Evans, 2013; Smith et al., 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016). Explications of ways in which multiculturalism have been defined, conceptualized, and practiced by scholars and professionals are outlined in the following literature review. This study was designed to explore multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors within the counseling profession and what, if any, influences their perceptions of multicultural inclusion/exclusion had on their engagement in professional counseling organizations. In terms of published counseling research, men of color who are professional counselors were one of the marginally discussed micro-populations of professional counselors (Cornileus, 2013; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Evans, 2013; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). Although scattered, cultural identity related literature regarding professional men (Cornileus, 2013; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Long & Martinez, 1997; Wester, 2008; Yang, Gau, Shaiu, Hu, & Shih, 2004), professional counselors of color (Costello, 2004; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Harley, Jolivette, McCormick, & Tice, 2002; Salazar, 2009; Tinsley-Jones, 2001), and men who are professional counselors (Evans, 2013) had been published, no literature exploring the phenomenon of men of color who are professional counselors multicultural inclusion experiences among professional colleagues in professional counseling communities was uncovered during literature review processes. One hope was that the specific voices of men of color who are professional counselors, and their experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession, could be understood from a social justice lens and framework. Next, the two research questions answered through this study are denoted here.
Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide this phenomenological investigation:

(RQ1) How do men of color who are professional counselors experience multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession?

(RQ2) How do perceptions of multicultural inclusion influence engagement in professional counseling organizations for men of color who are professional counselors?

In support of answering these questions, ways in which multiculturalism has been defined, conceptualized, and practiced by scholars and professionals is explicated. An articulation of organizational theory and the organizational structures of the counseling profession as the context of study are delineated. What is understood about men of color as a larger population and men of color who are professional counselors as the specific population of study is noted.

The aim of this investigation was to gather data about men of color who are professional counselors’ experiences of multicultural inclusion and/or exclusion across various aspects of the counseling profession. This included counselor education training programs, professional organizations, current counseling work positions, and other professional counseling contexts in which men of color encounter counseling professionals. Herein, the conceptual framework for this study of men of color who are professional counselors’ multicultural inclusion experiences is outlined.

Conceptual Framework

Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1977, 1994) Ecological Model of Human Development was
offered as the conceptual framework for this study. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1977) was a 20th century theorist and researcher of developmental psychology. His work focused on shifting developmental psychology models and research from narrowly focused pathology perspectives of human development to holistic systemic conceptualizations of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Through his review of historical human development research, Bronfenbrenner (1977) postulated that human development occurred through complex and reciprocal interactive processes involving various biological, psychological, and social (biopsychosocial) human beings and human systems. Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1994) purported that these reciprocal interactions became more complex as human beings influenced, and were influenced, across more expansive levels of ecology (Appendix A).

Ecology is the science of individual organism’s relationships with itself, its relationships to other organisms, and its relationships to its environments across time (Merriam-Webster, 2016a). Specifically, as a model of human development, these organismic relationships are functions within several influential systems that interact like dual directional ripples in water (Bronfenbrenner’s, 1977). Bronfenbrenner identified five ecological systemic levels: (1) microsystems, (2) mesosystems, (3) exosystems, (4) macrosystems, and (5) chronosystems.

For this study, Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory (1977, 1994) was adapted and applied as a cohesive and symmetrical conceptualization model of the inclusive multicultural self (Hansen, 2010a; Sue & Sue, 2016). As implied through Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) model, individuals experience numerous culture-bound influences. These cultural interactions between self and others, interactional dynamics of multiculturalism, and the interdependent nature these
multicultural system levels are operationally similar to contemporary conceptualizations of the multicultural self (Sue & Sue, 2016). Herein, Bronfenbrenner’s ecology systems theory (1977, 1994) is delineated with exemplars of adaptations for conceptualizing the multicultural ecology system framework of multicultural inclusion utilized for this study (Appendix A).

**Microsystem**

The innermost ecology system, microsystem, represented individual human beings: their biological, psychological, and emotional inheritance (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Included at microsystem levels of development are singular relationships individuals maintained with members of their family of origin, domestic counterparts, and objects in their immediate domestic environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). These are influences on human growth, perceptions, and experiences regarding physiological development, emotional maturity, psychological maturation, spiritual development, personality, and identity development.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1994), each individual human being is the centermost system of each individual microsystem.

In regards to culture and understanding how individuals may experience multicultural inclusion, the microsystem level is representative of the intraindividual (Hansen, 2010a). This is one’s awareness of and acceptance of one’s intersectional identities (i.e., gender and gender expression, spirituality, sex assigned at birth and sexual orientation, religiosity, romantic orientation, emotional intelligence, cognitive development, ethnic identity, nationality, age, class and economic status, and additional identity dynamics). One’s basic sense of self and one’s more complex conceptualizations of self within one’s immediate environments (home,
education, occupation, etc.) were conceptualized as included in the adapted multicultural ecology system. For example, one’s awareness, acceptance, and understanding of self as a man, of a non-White race, as a professional, as a counseling practitioner, and other micro-cultural identities are a part of the microsystem multicultural ecology level. Moreover, if and how the microsystem individual understands his own intersectionality influences his multicultural identity (Crenshaw, 1989; Sue & Sue, 2016) at the microsystem level of the adapted and applied multicultural ecology system.

**Mesosystem**

One systemic level outward from microsystems are mesosystem interactions and influences on individual human development. According to Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1994), mesosystems were comprised of interactions between microsystems: individual's place within one’s family of origin, how that microsystem had reciprocal interactional influences with work and school microsystems, faith community microsystems, various neighbor microsystems, peer microsystems, healthcare microsystems, and other microsystems in which individuals existed and developed. The adapted mesosystem level for multicultural ecology is representative of links and processes between individuals in proximal communities such as families, work settings, schools, and intimate friendships or partners of individuals: how individual’s identities have an influential capacity on one’s multicultural self-awareness and awareness of other individuals’ multicultural identities. How men of color who are professional counselors perceived others view of them had influences on their individual conceptualization of their multicultural inclusivity at the mesosystem level of the adapted and applied multicultural
Exosystem

One systemic level outward from mesosystems are exosystem interactions and influences on individual human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). Exosystems represented direct and indirect connections and processes that existed between one or more human mesosystems and other mesosystems for which individuals were not directly included. Bronfenbrenner (1977) explained that exosystems were manifested through dynamic and reciprocal influences. These influences are simultaneously direct and indirect, structured and unstructured, informal and formal, explicit and implicit, and abstract and concrete (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). These exosystem influences were represented in structures, policies, and expectations that have some secondary or tertiary influence on individuals’ development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). Hypothetically, one's romantic partner’s work schedule and expectations for confidentiality have an influential capacity with one’s school schedule and insecure attachment, which influenced hypothetical time opportunities to spend with that partner, as well as how each communicated with the other.

Exosystems of multiculturalism are represented as relationships and interactional patterns between settings and human networks (i.e., mesosystems). One’s exosystem does not directly include one’s self as a microsystem cultural being. Nevertheless, exosystems have some indirect influence upon one’s worldviews, perceived choices, and interactional patterns. As such one man of color who is a professional counselor may not be directly affiliated with the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD); nevertheless, a reciprocal and
interactional influence on this man’s multicultural identity and other’s perceptions of him as a man of color who is a professional counselor is influenced by the existence of AMCD as a mesosystem at the exosystem level of the adapted and applied multicultural ecology system.

Macrosystem

One systemic level outward from exosystems are macrosystem interactions and influences on individual human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). Bronfenbrenner (1977) explicated macrosystem level ecology as constructed by sociocultural patterns. Macrosystems are representative of interactional influences of cultural and micro-cultural expectations. Bronfenbrenner (1994) claimed that culture-based ideologies and behavioral trends within macrosystem ecological levels effected developmental processes and procedures with and within microsystems. In understanding this conceptual framework, it is essential to remember the pluralistic nature of Bronfenbrenner’s model (1977). More than one macrosystem is conceptualized as existing and reciprocally influencing other macrosystems, and those macrosystems’ exosystems, mesosystems, and microsystems, simultaneously (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994).

Macrosystems of multicultural ecology are observable aspects of overarching patterns of specific cultures and micro-cultures: what Bronfenbrenner (1994) identified as “belief systems, bodies of knowledge, material resources, customs, lifestyles, opportunity structures, hazards, and life course options” (p. 40). Macrosystems are the influential capacities across multicultural identities and experiences of multicultural inclusion (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Sue & Sue, 2016). The sociopolitical cultural of the US, the socialization of boys, and the guidelines for counseling,
as a professional culture, influenced how men of color who are professional counselors perceived multicultural inclusivity and were perceived as multiculturally integrated individuals at the macrosystem level of the adapted and applied multicultural ecology system.

**Chronosystems**

The outermost system level of this ecological model is chronosystem interactions and influences on individual human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994). Each of the previously described complex, pluralistic, and reciprocal ecology system influences (e.g., micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-) are interactions within what Bronfenbrenner outlined as chronosystems (1977). Chronosystems are constructs of time, which referred to consistency and change across individuals’ lifespan and across human history (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). As an exemplary reference, there was a study of children living through the great depression in which the age of children during the onset of the depression influenced what was termed “favorable developmental trajectories” (Elder, 1974 as cited in Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Elder (1974 as cited in Bronfenbrenner, 1994) referenced markedly different developmental trajectories for children born during the great depression versus children born eight years after the depression had resolved (i.e., chronosystem influences).

Chronosystem influences are representative of how family structures, socioeconomic status, micro-cultural norms, opportunity structures, community policies, and other system level patterns and processes shifted or persisted over one’s lifetime (microsystem) or across generations (macrosystem). Across the lifespan of a man of color, his education and movement into professional status as counselor influenced his own and other’s understanding of him as a
multicultural individual. How these influences impacted his multicultural inclusive identity is dynamically individualized at the chronosystem level of the adapted and applied multicultural ecology system. Little evidence was present in existing literature that indicated much changed across generational chronosystems for men of color who are professional counselors in regards to multicultural inclusion (Cornileus, 2013; Davis, 2015; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Evans, 2013; Howarth & Andreouli, 2012; Ratts et al., 2015; Smith & Roysircar, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2016; Winker & Degele, 2011). As such, the significance of this study is corroborated through identifiable discrepancies and unmet needs within professional practices of multiculturalism in counseling (ACA, 2015, 2017; Cox, 1991; Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Significance of Study

Within the US, state-based governing officials differentiated professional status (e.g., different from intern, apprentice, amateur status, etc.) based on specific standards of training, practice, and self-governing processes for various public and private services (ACA, 2012; Nugent, 1981; IDFPR, 2016). One component of professional status manifested in professional organizations was derived to provide supportive services to members of its designated profession (ACA, 2014; Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). The US counseling profession is comprised of various national, regional, state, and local professional organizations, with some international affiliates (ACA, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). The counseling profession was structured to create professional community, stimulate professional unity, and promote high quality practices among individuals granted professional status by respective state governing
officials (ACA, 2016; NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Professional leadership goals include training and support of diverse counseling professionals who represented the diverse clients they served (ACA, 2016; CACREP, 2016; Estrada et al., 2013; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Bronfenbrenner (1994), Sue, and Sue (2016) purported that professional counseling was contextualized within larger social structures and social history of the nation. This implied that social privileges, power differentials, marginalization, and discrimination experienced by individuals living and working in the US is similarly experienced within professional counseling systems (Sue & Sue, 2016; Vera & Speight, 2003). While professional counselors’ responsibilities included social justice advocacy (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015), the evolution of and emphasis on equitable practices, cultural acceptance, and multicultural consciousness occurred alongside public demand for increased wellness and equitable recognition as equally deserving individuals (regardless of diverse identities; Van de Vijver et al, 2007).

In recent decades, shifts in public policies influenced counseling leaders increased emphasis on multicultural sensitivity and multiculturally competent practices within the counseling profession (Arredondo et al., 1996; Cox, 1991; Das, 1995; Wrenn, 1962). These influences translated to focal policies in areas of professional counselor preparation, client assessment, graduation requirements, and new practice/research specializations (CACREP, 2009, 2016; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). An addition, professional counseling organization leaders adopted professional counseling emphases and subordinate organizations (ACA, 2016). These organizational changes were influenced by sociopolitical systemic disparities (ACA, 2016; Sue
& Sue, 2016). Counseling professionals advocated for new professional organization divisions such as the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC), the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD; originally the Association for Non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance), the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), and Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ; ACA, 2016) to help bring multicultural awareness to human populations and needs that were ignored or underemphasized historically.

Over the past two decades, CACREP (2009, 2016) and ACA (2005, 2014) leaders emphasized multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills for working with increasingly diverse populations of individuals in their written standards and codes. CACREP (2009) accredited program administrators required coursework in cultural foundations for the stated purposes of increasing inclusion and competent practices with multicultural clients. As such, these counseling leaders implied the essential nature of counselors’ multicultural competence for effective counseling practice (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016; Wrenn, 1962) and the essential nature of modeling multiculturalism at an individual interaction level (ACA, 2015; CACREP, 2016; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Thus, professional counselors experiencing negative inclusion experiences and/or exclusionary experiences, implicitly indicated dynamically limited professional counseling efficacy across the profession as a macrosystem. By developing a better understanding of men of color who are professional counselors’ multicultural inclusion experiences within the professional counseling community implications for additional social justice advocacy needs were revealed.
Delimitations

This line of inquiry into multiculturalism in counseling was envisioned through scholarly perspectives that all individuals have a multicultural identity (Hancock, 2007; Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016). The political sociohistorical influences of US culture on the sociopolitical manifestations of the counseling profession were specifically acknowledged through this study (AMCD, 2014a; Davis, 2015; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Men of color who are professional counselors are a visual non-majority population within the counseling profession (ACA, 2015, 2017). This phenomenological study will not provide pervasive information about the general population of men of color who are professional counselors’ inclusion experiences within the professional counseling community. Nevertheless, the meaningfulness of studying inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors provided a dynamic window of understanding into gaps in literature regarding counseling professionals modeling of aspirational edicts of multiculturalism in the counseling profession (Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Furthermore, identifying discrete influences on multicultural inclusion experiences for men of color who are professional counselors was a meaningful addition to this topic. Nonetheless, discussion of causal factors of multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors is beyond the scope of this study. Articulation of specific terms used for this investigation are important to understand and differentiate from colloquial meanings of the same words (Smith et al., 2009).

Definitions of Terms

Basic definitions of relevant constructs utilized throughout this study are presented here.
For the purposes of this study, multiculturalism was defined as an awareness of intersecting and mutually influencing self-identified micro-cultures including gender, gender expression, spirituality, ability and disability, sex assigned at birth, religion, sexual orientation, romantic orientation, ethnicity, nationality, race, age, class, education, and economic status that influence one’s self-perception and one’s worldview. Given this definition of multiculturalism used for this investigation, multicultural inclusion was defined as acceptance, valuing, and embracing of one’s multicultural identity and intersectionality. Thus, multicultural exclusion was defined as marginalization, oppression, or discrimination based on one or more mutually constituting self-identified micro-cultures and one’s intersectionality influenced by multiculturalism.

For this phenomenological investigation, multicultural inclusion was the primary construct of study. The word inclusion is sometimes used synonymously and implicitly with other related terms in the English language. However, the construct of inclusion for this study was explicitly differentiated from constructs of engagement, membership, affiliation, presence, involvement, access, and/or belonging. Each of these differentiated words were understood as having intersecting influences on the construct of inclusion at various ecology system levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). For this study, inclusion was defined by internalized and externalized experiences of acceptance, valuing, and embracing in genuine, authentic, and holistic ways of being with self (multiculturally integrated microsystem) and others (developmentally inclusive meso- and exosystems).

Men of color were the population of study for this investigation. Men of color were identified by their intersecting gender and ethnic identities. Men were defined as individual
human beings whose self-identified gender identity was man, including cisgender and transgender men. Of color was defined as individuals whose self-identified and socially constructed racial identity was of any non-White race and non-Caucasian ethnic identity.

The counseling profession was the context of this study. Professional counseling was defined as “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” (ACA, 2014, p. 3). Within this study, counselors were signified as practicing clinicians and/or supervisors of school; clinical; career; or community mental health counseling work, and counselor educators/supervisors with a primary counselor/counselor educator identity. The counseling profession was understood as larger than the collective community of counselors as defined for this study. Though not being studied herein, the counseling profession included master’s level trainees and professionally trained individuals who may not be practicing. The introduction to this study is summarized here before the review of existing literature was delineated.

Summary

This research was introduced through a distinct understanding of the expectations and aspirations for professional counseling and professional counselors. Disparities, incongruity, and marginalization in counseling research were the backdrop of this inquiry. Two research questions were meaningfully articulated for the purposes of filling a gap in current scholarly knowledge. This scholarly inquiry, was one effort to venture beyond wondering, to squeeze pass theorizing, and to contribute to the collective knowledge of how men of color who are professional counselors experienced the type of multicultural inclusion the counseling
profession, professed to manifest. From a definitional point, a man of color who is a professional counselor could be affiliated through membership, being physically present, engaged, and involved with counseling organization business, have a sense of belonging through access to the counseling profession and simultaneously experience multicultural inclusion or exclusion at various intersections of his engagement, membership, affiliation, presence, involvement, access, and/or belonging based on his intersectionality or any intersection of his multicultural intraindividual identities. A synthesis of scholarly contributions is presented next to increase readers’ conceptualization of the context and methodological approach for this phenomenological study.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In this “Review of Literature”, scholarly works related to counselors’ experiences of multicultural inclusion and its influences on counselors’ professional organization engagement are delineated as the scholarly background and point of entry for this study. Articulated first is multiculturalism as a pervasive human experience. Second, what has been written about men of color as multicultural beings is summarized. Third, the construct of inclusion is explored from the perspective of human belonging and holism. Fourth, organizational theory as a sociopolitical thread for professional organizations is articulated. Fifth, the counseling profession is outlined as the specific organizational context for exploring the human experience of multicultural inclusion. Sixth, scholarly history of multiculturalism in counseling is denoted. Seventh, gaps in literature related to men of color who are professional counselors’ multicultural inclusion experiences as counseling professionals are described as rationale for choosing this district population to study. Finally, evidence supporting this proposed research design methods is presented. Herein, discussion of the macrosystem complexities of multiculturalism was chosen to be outlined in an effort to explicate multicultural inclusion as the primary construct of exploration within the context of the counseling profession.
Multiculturalism

Ecologically speaking (Bronfenbrenner, 1994), multiculturalism would be synonymous with macrosystems. As one influence on human development, macrosystems are represented as customs, lifestyle preferences, life trajectory opportunities, systems of beliefs, and patterns of resource access and acquisition: indoctrinated ways of being in the world, in relation to others, which are influenced by group norms (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Sue & Sue, 2016). Accurately discussing this notion of multiculturalism, was predicated on accurately understanding what was meant by culture (Sue & Sue, 2016).

Culture and Micro-Cultures

Culture is manifested through collective ways of thinking, ways of being, traditions, rituals, group ideologies, and group behavioral norms (Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Individuals are identified as a part of cultural groups by their manifestation of recognized cultural norms. Culture is multifaceted and fluid across generations: increasingly so as global migration and systemic globalization evolved (Sue & Sue, 2016; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Even focusing on one socially constructed identified cultural dynamic—race: Every racial group is comprised of micro-cultures, or subcultures, within its larger racial cultural population (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Sue & Sue, 2016). For example, individuals racially identified as Asian, includes various ethnicities such as Korean, Indian, Japanese, or Chinese. Chinese individuals may identify as Cantonese or Mandarin. Exemplifying more broadly, cultural lenses such as religion and gender, the experiences of a Cantonese Chinese Asian Catholic woman are reasonably different from a Cantonese Chinese Asian Buddhist woman: let
alone, a Mandarin Chinese Asian Buddhist man.

Also, individuals who rightfully identify as American experience even greater cultural variations: Guatemalan Americans, Canadian Americans, Mexican Americans, Argentinean Americans, Panamanian Americans, US Americans, and Colombian Americans, for examples. Each of these country-based cultural groups are living as Americans, due to their continental residency. Representative layers of culture, cultural awareness, cultural assimilation, and cultural oppression throughout human history were exemplified in the dynamic differences in traditions, expectations, language, and ways of being for individuals of differing socioeconomic status, individuals identifying as Lesbian; Gay; Bisexual; Transgender; Queer; Questioning; and/or Asexual (LGBTQQA+), and individuals with disabilities (Sue & Sue, 2016).

Individual identity and culture are microsystem/macrosystem reciprocal influences used to understand intersections of cultural identities (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Cole, 2009; Collins, 1998). Articulated by Sue and Sue (2016), identity is a concept concerning collectives of socially constructed intrapersonal categories (i.e., gender, sex assigned at birth, sexual orientation, romantic orientation, nationality, ethnicity, disability, etc.). Interconnected with cultural expectations, cultural identity is signified by ways individuals typically manifested their cultural identity within cultural collectives (Sue & Sue, 2016). These manifestations are dynamic and complex due to individual’s intersectionality, which influences development of multicultural identity.

Intersectionality

In 1989, Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality, which was significant in
vitalizing societal recognition of differences within and across macrosystems. In particular, conceptual intersectionality was used to highlight and discern systemic influences on individual identity, individuals’ sociopolitical position, social access across chronosystems, and social experience narratives (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Crenshaw, 1989; Sue & Sue, 2016). The primary catalyst of Crenshaw’s discussions on intersectionality was based on disconnects between US American feminist movements and differential narratives of Black women in the US (Bowleg, 2008; Crenshaw, 1989; McCall, 2005; Jordan-Zachery, 2007).

Prior to feminist movements, the dominant discourse regarding sociopolitical inequality was centered on freedom of African slaves in the US and persistent racism (AMCD, 2014a; Sue & Sue, 2016). The Feminist movement, in the US, was the entry point for a new social discourse regarding heterosexism: inequality in visibility of, professional access, opportunities for, and recognition of women in comparison to men's visibility, voice and, recognition within sociopolitical spheres (Crenshaw, 1989; Jones-Smith, 2012). However, as the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s gained greater momentum in sociopolitical platforms, recognition that feminist perspectives were limited to White American and Caucasian American narratives of inequality became part of social discourses (Crenshaw, 1989; McCall, 2005).

The term intersectionality was used by activists to identify non-majority narratives of sociopolitical experiences, which were suppressed by individuals operating from racist and heterosexist sociopolitical majority narratives (Crenshaw, 1989; Sue & Sue, 2016). The ever-growing diversification of the US had an amplifying effect on social scholars’ conceptualization of intersectionality as including religious diversity, nation of origin diversity, gender expression...
diversity, and sexual orientation diversity (Falcon, 2009; Hansen, 2010b; Langman, 1995; Rahman, 2010). Theorists and scholars began to recognize these cultural and micro-cultural aspects as significant influences on sociopolitical identity narratives and sociopolitical navigation choices for individuals residing in the US (Falcon, 2009; Rahman, 2010; Shields, 2008; Winker & Degele, 2011). With this operational understanding of culture and intersectionality delineated, the meaning of multiculturalism was chosen for presenting next.

**Perspectives on Multiculturalism**

Van de Vijver, Breugelmans, and Schalk-Soekar (2007) denoted three primary perspectives that individuals maintained in reference to conceptualizing multiculturalism. They noted that in one perspective, individuals referenced multiculturalism as the microsystem demographic identities of human beings. This micro-perspective of identity was specifically orientated around human notions of multiple coexisting ethnic groups living within the same nation and subject to the same national political structures (Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Social scholars signified contemporary chronosystem notions of micro-perspectives of multiculturalism by poly-ethnic individuals with many intersecting culture-bound identities (religion, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, etc.). The second perspective by which individuals defined multiculturalism was generally exhibited through delineated policies about cultural diversity (i.e., legislative mandates or unwritten codes of practice within particular mesosystems and exosystems; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Thirdly, individuals referenced multiculturalism by particular attitudes (acceptance, support, distrust, etc.) toward political ideologies or specific subcultural groups (Van de Vijver et al., 2007).
Since counseling scholars and professional leaders adopted multiculturalism as a focus in counseling, defining multiculturalism continued to be debated across counseling professionals (ACA, 2014; Helms, 1994; Jones-Smith, 2012; Patterson, 1996; Pederson, 1991; Speight et al., 1991; Sue & Sue, 2016; Wrenn, 1962). While some professionals maintained their personal focus on multiculturalism as signifying racial and/or ethnic diversity (Chung et al., 2007), other professionals waded along the definition continuum that included other human identity aspects such as sexual orientation (Pope, 1995). Among professional counselors, there had been little consensus regarding the definition of and identity dynamics that are included in defining multiculturalism (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001). Supporters for sexual orientation to be included within definitions of multiculturalism, particularly for lesbian women and gay men, argued that various health and wellness needs for racial minorities were similar for sexual minorities in many, but not all, instances (Pope, 1995). Theorists presented Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB) identity development phases, multicultural counseling skills considerations, and cultural minority status in society as arguments for including LGB identities as aspects of multiculturalism (Pope, 1995).

Likewise, scholars of multiculturalism excluded Jews from historical multicultural conversations (Langman, 1995). Some social scholars perceived this unfortunate reality was based on fear ridden sociohistorical experiences and internalized oppression (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Falcon, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). Internalized anti-Semitism, sociocultural fears, and vast cultural variance among Jewish populations had diminished Jewish individuals’ abilities to view themselves holistically and uniquely different from non-Jewish, Euro-American, or White-
European populations. Some Jewish counselors perpetuated de-culturalizing practices based on their unaddressed repressions (Sue & Sue, 2016; Wrenn, 1962). Langman (1995) posited that appropriate multicultural integration with Jewish clients’ needs to begin with examining counselor assumptions, biases, and blind spots. He noted that after this self-examination, culturally conscious counselors assisted Jewish clients in doing the same, self-examination and historical examination around clients’ Jewishness, which resulted in integrated multicultural individuals at the microsystem level.

This lack of consensus among multicultural scholars and counseling leaders, contributed to the need for further research around and about multiculturalism. Reiterated here, the literature-based definition of multiculturalism utilized for this study is an awareness of intersecting and mutually influencing self-identified subcultures including gender, gender expression, spirituality, ability and disability, sex assigned at birth, religion, sexual orientation, romantic orientation, ethnicity, nationality, race, age, class, education, and economic status that influence one’s self-perception and one’s worldviews. This operationalized definition of multiculturalism was used to discuss the construct of inclusion; specifically, multicultural inclusion. The inclusion literature presented next was chosen to further explicate the point of entry for this phenomenological study.

Ideological Culturalism

According to writings collected by both Jones-Smith (2012) and Sue and Sue (2016), scholars theorized that attention to diversity provided abundant fluidity, positive evolutions, and balanced progression for the counseling profession with counseling clients. Humanistic
scholars’ perspectives were built upon modernist views: the integration of counselors using empathic response to uncover individual objective truths was stressed (Jones-Smith, 2012). Not until postmodernist models emerged, were subjective interactions between counselor and client, and client and others, explicitly discussed by theorists in connection to cultural understandings of individuals. Postmodernist models included notions of socially constructed, decentered understandings of humanity and human experiences (Jones-Smith, 2012). Yet, these evolving counseling ideologies were insufficient for counselors to give voice to what Crenshaw (1989) termed as intersectionality or what Hansen (2010a) described as intraindividual diversity.

**Internal Multiculturalism**

Intraindividual diversity (Hansen, 2010a) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; Falcon, 2009; McCall, 2005), were different yet similar terms used by social scholars and counselors to articulate descriptions of the center most microsystem experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994) and indivisible sociopolitical influences on individuals’ intrapersonal and interpersonal narratives (Falcon, 2009). Scholars used these constructs to conceptualize what differentiated individuals (Hansen, 2010a) and individual experiences (Falcon, 2009) of those moving through the same or similar meso- and exosystems. Among psychoanalytic theorists, microsystemic psychological conflict of individual cultural experiencing was emphasized (Jones-Smith, 2012). However, psychoanalytic practitioners agreed that intraindividual awareness may not be in conflict (Hanson, 2010a; Jones-Smith, 2012). Counselors who subscribed to non-pathologizing perspectives, such as humanism and multiculturalism (Jones-Smith, 2012; Pederson 1991), emphasized individuals’ awareness and appreciation of their and other’s intersectionality as
important for maintaining wellness and minimizing potential intrapersonal or interpersonal conflict. Social justice counselors purported the importance of empowering clients through empowered counselors who assessed, conceptualized, and addressed multicultural sociopolitical influences on intersectionality conflicts of microsystems through unique points of advocacy (e.g., macrosystem influences on microsystems; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016; Vera & Speight, 2003).

For the purposes of this study, multicultural integration at the intraindividual microsystem level for men of color who are professional counselors and their perceived experiences of multicultural inclusion within their professional counseling related mesosystems were of unique interest. Experiences in which men of color who are professional counselors perceived their intersectionality as being recognized, honored, and embraced was studied. Also, what, if any, influence participant’s experiences of multicultural inclusion had on their engagement choices within professional counseling communities as men of color who are professional counselors. While this study was undergone to investigate the phenomenon of multicultural inclusion of men of color who are counseling professionals within their professional counseling communities, information about the experiences of men of color in other contexts was used to guide this study design and execution.

**Men of Color**

In deciding to study men of color who are professional counselors, a micro-cultural population of professional counselors, available literature about men of color was reviewed. First, information about men of color in counseling and other professional settings was searched
for and reviewed. Findings, emphasized below, helped illuminate why this investigation topic and population were chosen (i.e., insufficiently explored phenomena; Cornileus, 2013; Crockett, Grier, & Williams, 2003; De Freitas, 2013; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Evans, 2013; Harris, Battle, Pastrana, Jr., & Daniels, 2013; McWilliams, 2007; Salazar, 2009; Shore et al., 2011; Smith & Roysircar, 2010; Tinsley-Jones, 2001). Second, information about men of color as a human population within the US macrosystem was explored and delineated. Before men of color became counseling professionals, they were boys and young men of color growing, developing, and navigating spaces of this sociopolitical context in particular ways (Cooper, Cooper, Azmitia, Chavira, & Gullatt, 2002; Dunbar, 1999; Gayles, Alston, & Staten, 2005; Katz, Willis, & Joseph, 2014; Long & Martinez, 1997; MacLeod, 2009; McCabe, 2009; Pedersen et al., 2016; Rosser-Mims, Palmer, & Harroff, 2014; Sánchez, Colón, & Esparaz, 2005; Schwartz, 2014; Smith et al., 2008; Smith & Silva, 2011; Skowron, 2004; Strayhorn, Long, III., Kitchen, Williams, & Stentz, 2013; Turner, 2013; Urias, 2012; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014; Wendt, 2014; Zanoni & Mampaey, 2013). Developmental and psychology scholars declared that early life experiences were significantly formative and informative in accurately conceptualizing how individuals view, experience, and move through the world as adults in various contexts (Dacey, Travers, & Fiore, 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Jones-Smith, 2012). Literature about men of color was summarized into themes regarding diversity, identity, social oppression, and approaches to social engagement.

Diversity

Men of color as a collective are a diverse population of individuals (Mauk, 2014; Sue &
Sue, 2016). The population of men of color is comprised of three broad racial groups and numerous ethnic populations (Mauk, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016). From the socially constructed racial groups, men of color include individuals of African descent, non-white Hispanic Latino individuals, and individuals of Asian/Pacific Islander heritage. Each of these racial groups comprised distinctly identified ethnic cultures with their own micro-cultural diversities regarding gender roles, religious practices, language, and other microsystem and macrosystem ways of being (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Mauk, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Identity Development

Given this inherent diversity of men of color as a collective, to self-identify and/or be identified as a man of color is a dynamic and individualized process (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Dacey et al., 2009; Drayton, 2014; Eguchi, 2011; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). One’s identity development as a man of color is an integration of one’s developmental age (Dacey et al., 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009), ethnic identity development, racial identity development, and gender identity development (Eguchi, 2011; Pedersen et al., 2016; Sue & Sue, 2016). Human development at a biological and neurological level begins at the moment of conception (Dacey et al., 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009). A few developmental theorists would argue that individual and social development begins at that same time (Friend & Bursuck, 2009). Most development theorists agreed that intraindividual and social identity development for human beings was significantly influenced by culture and environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Dacey et al., 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). Men of color have very

Social Oppression

The unique cultural manifestations of men from diverse ethnic cultures and various micro-cultures are uniquely valuable (Sue & Sue, 2016). The rationale for investigating men of color as a collective was influenced by similar sociopolitical experiences men of color in the US endured (Arora, 2013; Harris et al., 2013; Lipscomb, Leavy, & McGrath, 2015; McCabe, 2009; Mauk, 2014; Smith & Silva, 2011; Pedersen et al., 2016; Shore et al., 2011; Tinsley-Hones, 2001; Turner, 2013; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014; Wendt, 2014). What is known about men of color in the US is common and numerous narratives and statistics around racism, prejudice, oppression, marginalization, and tokenism manifested through disparities in education, employment and social services (Ahmed, 2012; Choi et al., 2013; Cornileus, 2013; Crockett et al., 2003; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Dunbar, 1999; Greenwood et al., 2015; Guy, 2014; Han, 2007; Johnson-Baily et al., 2014; Johnsrud & Sadao, 1998; Katz et al., 2014; MacLeod, 2009; McCabe, 2009; Mauk, 2014; Smith & Silva,
In addition, there were shared narratives about men of color regarding their resiliency in survival and moving through discriminatory, racist, prejudiced, oppressive, and marginalized events and social systems (Alexander, 2001; Cornileus, 2013; MacLeod, 2009; Pedersen et al., 2016; Schwartz, 2014; Skowron, 2004; Smith & Roysircar, 2010; Smith & Silva, 2011; Sue & Sue, 2016; Tinsley-Jones, 2001; Turner, 2013; Zanoni & Mampaey, 2013).

Social Engagement

Much of the existing literature regarding men of color and their social/civic experiences focused on engagement: Engagement in the classroom as youth and emerging adults (Cooper et al., 2002; Cooper et al., 2014; McCabe, 2009; Sánchez et al., 2005; Schwartz, 2014; Urias, 2012; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014; Wendt, 2014; Zanoni & Mampaey, 2013), engagement in professional sectors such as medicine; engineering; computer science; and higher education (Ahmed, 2012; Clark et al., 2012; Crocket et al., 2003; Drayton, 2014; Drayton, Rosser-Mims, Schwartz, & Guy, 2014; Salazar, 2009; Shore et al., 2011; Strayhorn et al., 2013), engagement in medical research and mental health services (Choi et al., 2013; De Freitas, 2013; Gayles et al., 2005; Greenwood et al., 2015; Harley et al., 2002; Smith & Silva, 2011; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014; Wester, 2008), and prosocial civic and family engagement (Alexander, 2001; Drayton, 2014; Dunbar, 1999; Guy, 2014; Harris et al., 2013; Katz et al., 2014; MacLeod, 2009). Some common themes regarding the engagement for men of color include low academic success and achievement gaps for black and Latino boys and men (Cooper et al., 2002; Cooper, Jackson, Azmitia, Lopez, & Dunbar, 2014; Rosser-Mims et al., 2014; Sánchez et al., 2005; Schwartz,
Asian boys and men as the model minority (Eguchi & Starosta, 2012), the invisibility of First Nation boys and men (Sue & Sue, 2016), and the hyper-masculinity of boys and men of color (Long & Martinez, 1997; Sue & Sue, 2016; Wester, 2008). This hyper-masculinity is manifested differently across diverse ethnic cultures of men of color (Pedersen et al., 2016; Sue & Sue, 2016). All of these trends are influenced by the socio-political and cultural immigration narratives for diverse men of color in the US (Dacey et al., 2009; Davis, 2015; Drayton, 2014; Harley et al., 2002; Katz et al., 2014; Lipscomb et al, 2015; Mauk, 2014; MacLeod, 2009; Singley & Sedlacek, 2009; Smith & Silva, 2011; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014).

While much of the research and public policies regarding men of color have focused on increasing engagement and performance, this research was designed to increase scholarly understanding the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color. More specifically the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors within the context of their own professional interactions and organizations. As such, maintaining the differential definition of inclusion for this study was of critical importance for understanding the social problem and justice purposes that guided this study (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Inclusion and Exclusion

*Inclusion* is a construct of historical complexity and dynamic conceptual definition (Abrams, Hogg, & Marques, 2005; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). Inclusion was understood, perceived, and approached differently by various individuals and groups across
history (Abrams et al., 2005). Scholars, like Ronald Labonte (2004), described inclusion as a valuable and contemporary term used to label civic inequality reform efforts. Labonte (2004) noted that during the 1990’s, community was the popular sociopolitical term of emphasis, which preceded current social dialogues on inclusion. Reformist used this sociopolitical history of inequality to promote and eradicate various types of socially unjust intrapersonal and interpersonal human experiences (Labonte, 2004). As one contemporary term in social justice dialect, inclusion, and its inherent social construct partner, exclusion, was the lens through which this investigation of multicultural inclusion experiences for men of color who are professional counselors within the counseling profession context was orchestrated.

Differentiating Inclusion and Exclusion

Linguistic scholars signified inclusion as meaning a part of an identified whole and processes or experiences of belonging to a particular entity (Abrams et al., 2005; Merriam-Webster, 2016b). By contrast, scholars signified exclusion as processes or experiences of not being included as part of an identified whole (Abrams et al., 2005; Saunders, 2015). Exclusion can be intentional and unintentional, voluntary and coercive, coincidental and discriminatory (Abrams et al., 2005; Saunders, 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016). Saunders (2015) echoed that social exclusion was much more than individuals’ civic preferences for disengagement. As exemplars of social exclusion:

- Professional engineers are excluded from being identified as professional counselors
- Women are excluded from joining men’s sports teams
- Religious prayer time is omitted from public school practice mandates
• Racially identified People of Whiteness are not considered eligible recipients of scholarships designated for racial minorities.

Beyond basic definitions, inclusion and exclusion are interdependent constructs of social experiences (Abrams et al., 2005; Davis, 2015; Labonte, 2004; Saunders, 2015). Inclusion and exclusion are individuals’ subjective experiences based on affect, beliefs, and observed behaviors (Alexander, 2001; Cox, 1991; Davis, 2015; Labonte, 2004; Saunders, 2015). The work of Bronfenbrenner (1994) and Saunders (2015) supported the understanding that awareness and assessment of inclusion are influenced by macrosystem norms of interdependent cultural and micro-cultural groups. As such, the multicultural nature of the human experience has a subcomplexity of multicultural inclusion and exclusion.

**Multicultural Inclusion**

Facets of rigidity and flexibility with which culturally-identified members are expected to employ those cultural norms is another aspect of culture (Sue & Sue, 2016). One can conceptualize individuals’ cultural adherence, and thus, their identified inclusion as a member of one culture and/or another culture on a continuum (Abrams et al., 2005; Sue & Sue, 2016). This notion of a multicultural inclusion continuum would include messages that correspond to individuals’ acceptable cultural manifestations for maintaining inclusion within one culture and ways of being that group members would identify as manifestations of being “acultural” to the specific cultural group (i.e., messages of complete inclusion through complete exclusion; Abrams et al., 2005; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Here is a conceptual exemplar from an Anishinaabe First Nation perspective: Within this
traditionally matriarchal First Nation, if a male member attempted to supersede female guidance roles within the Nation that would be considered “strange” to Anishinaabe people. In such an instance, Anishinaabe leaders may designate some sort of “correction” for his behaviors. However, this male would probably still be considered Anishinaabe (included as part of the Nation). However, if the frequency and/or intensity of this male’s behaviors was considered extreme (i.e., reprimand to correct or realign with Anishinaabe values was considered useless), at minimum, most Anishinaabe people of the Nation would perceive this male as behaving a-culturally.

Across time, individuals develop and maintain identities with major cultural groups and move through micro-cultures of schools, neighborhoods, occupations, and institutions that shape their worldview, traditions, and ways of being individually and interpersonally (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016). Complete delineation of these cultural influences was beyond the scope of this study. What was considered more important was the cultural intersectionality of one individual and intersections of groups of individuals and populations of people. Understanding these cultural and micro-cultural influences on an individual’s identity is paramount for the scope of this type of investigation.

An individual’s experiences of inclusion/exclusion can influence access to and engagement in social aspects of humanity (Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Saunders, 2015). Aligned with the multicultural adaptations of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecology System of Human Development (1977, 1994), individual’s experience internalized inclusion/exclusion (multicultural microsystems). Based on the definition of multiculturalism used for this study, human beings
individually acknowledge and/or ignore specific aspects of their multicultural identity with varying levels of conscious effort (Sue & Sue, 2016). Likewise, individuals experience validation and/or invalidation of specific aspects of their multicultural identity by others with varying levels of awareness and acknowledgement (Sue & Sue, 2016). Contemporary social theorist articulated conceptualizations of multicultural counseling through contextualizing microsystem identities through intersectional lenses of gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability and disability identities, class, socioeconomic status, religious and spiritual identities, and additional forms of human diversity that influence human wellness (Brady-Amoon, 2011; Sue & Sue, 2016). As noted above, acknowledging intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) in multicultural counseling would mean recognizing the unique micro-cultural identity composition and identity development of each person is the lens of their experiencing.

Sue and Sue (2016) provided references for internalized oppressions and pre-contemplation identity models in which individuals’ self-marginalized aspects of their own identity. More often, these authors gave reference to the invalidation of one or more multicultural identity influences on multicultural individuals. This notion of multicultural inclusion is influenced by the holistic acknowledgement (e.g., inclusion) of one’s microsystem influences on individual development and movement in the world (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016). Aligned with presented literature and definitions used for this study, when one or more aspects of one’s multicultural identity is ignored, invalidated, oppressed, or marginally accepted, that individual is experiencing multicultural exclusion.
Inclusion and Exclusion as Social Agendas

Some political scholars approached social exclusion as “the problem,” with social inclusion declared to be the appropriate response (Davis, 2015; Labonte, 2004; Saunders, 2015). Levitas (as cited in Saunders, 2015) stated that social inclusion was not only complex, but had multidimensional processes. Social exclusion has manifested as individuals’ experiences with deprivation of goods, services, rights, and resources (Alexander, 2001; Davis, 2015). Social exclusion has life-limiting qualities regarding relationship opportunities and self-determination choices for engagement at economic, social, cultural, and political levels (Alexander, 2001; Davis, 2015; Saunders, 2015; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Nevertheless, Saunders (2015) purported that social inclusion through access to the above-mentioned resources, abilities, and rights, has dualistic features of downplaying discrimination and social disorder. Saunders (2015) believed this sort of political response to social exclusion would promote unjust placement of responsibility on excluded populations, instead of emphasizing a priori processes and actions that gave rise to exclusionary experiences and politics.

Personal Impact of Inclusion and Exclusion

Saunders (2015) examined dynamics of exclusion as part of a social inclusion agenda: measuring experiences of inclusion on several indication factors that he agreed were vital for holistic social and civic engagement. Saunders (2015) went on to discuss the importance for scholars to understand exclusion, and the importance for civic leaders to review social influences of exclusion (i.e., evidence of decreased intrapersonal vitality). Abrams, Hogg, and Marques (2005), Davis (2015), and Labonte (2004) recognized the inevitability of social exclusion and
social inclusion maintained as constructs of human similarities, diversities, and differences. Social inclusion scholars promoted individual’s recognition of dynamic and critical distinctions between inadvertent identification of human differences, versus coercive and ambivalent exclusion of individuals from social arenas (Alexander, 2001; Cudd, 1998; Davis, 2015; Howarth & Andreouli, 2012; Labonte, 2004; Marquis et al., 2011; Saunders, 2015; Van de Vijver et al., 2007).

Moreover, Saunders’ (2015) highlighted negative influences on individuals’ subjective wellbeing when experiencing social exclusion. Saunders (2015) reported social exclusion and social inclusion were essential constructs for discerning the phenomena of how social exclusion emerged and evolved at different levels, over time. Saunders (2015) recognized an interplay between poverty and discrimination as irrevocably unfortunate and poisonous aspects of social inequality plaguing discussions of social exclusion. Nonetheless, Atkins (as cited in Saunders, 2015) recognized the importance of deeper explorations of social exclusion, particularly on three dimensions: the relativity, the agency, and the dynamic features of social exclusion. Through his data analysis, Saunders (2015) concluded that individuals with higher exclusion indices experienced less life satisfaction, less happiness, less autonomy, and less of other crucial factors identified as influencing holistic wellbeing.

For this investigation, particular attention was given to counselors’ multicultural inclusion experiences. It should be remembered that whenever inclusion, or exclusion, is specifically referenced, its polar should be acknowledged implicitly (Abrams et al., 2005; Davis, 2015; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Labonte, 2004; Saunders, 2015). Inclusion and exclusion
experiences are interdependent in nature (Abrams et al., 2005; Bronfrenbrenner, 1977; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Labonte, 2004). Of course, this interdependence is conceptualized in proportion to the continuum of inclusion/exclusion experiences discussed above. Exploration of counselors’ multicultural inclusion experiences occurred with participants who were raised and educated in the backdrop of a socio-politically exclusive macrosystem (Pedersen et al., 2016; Sue & Sue, 2016) and who are working within a theoretically based organizational structure (Jones, 2010; Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Shafritz, Ott, & Jang, 2011; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Organizational Theory

In investigating the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors within the counseling profession context, understanding the counseling profession as an organization was useful (Ahmed, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Shafritz et al., 2011). This explication of organizational theory and counseling organizational structures is dynamic and somewhat complex (ACA, 2016; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Rogers, 1975). As described by Nugent (1981), what constitutes the counseling profession as a mature profession is its identifiable community of professional organizations. As a collective, the professional counseling organizations (i.e., associations and affiliate communities) mutually constitute the counseling profession as an organization (Rogers, 1975; Shafritz et al., 2011). Specific scholarly literature about the organizational theory or theories utilized to construct the counseling profession was not accessible for review. Nevertheless, organizational theorists supported the notion that many organizations are created and structured by the actions and behaviors of its members in equitable proportion to its leadership and cultural influences on
the organization's manifestation and functioning (Astley & Van de Ven, 1983; Jones, 2010; Rogers, 1975; Sheth & Eshghi, 1990; Shafritz et al., 2011).

There is no singular model of organizational theory (Astley & Van de Ven, 1983; Jones, 2010; Marion, 2002; Rogers, 1975; Shafritz et al., 2011). Similar to most existing philosophies and sciences, theories within the realm of organizations have evolved, ebbed, and flowed overtime (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Shafritz et al., 2011). The creation of contemporary theories was directly associated with the praises and criticisms of seminal and classical theories about organizations (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Jones, 2010; Shafritz et al., 2011). Astley and Van de Ven (1983) used a four-quadrant matrix to categorize organizational theories on continua of macro and micro levels crossed with deterministic and voluntaristic orientations. Within this four-quadrant matrix, organizational theories were discussed as being derived from leaders’ and members’ views: natural selection views, collective action views, system structural views, and or strategic choice views (Astley & Van de Ven, 1983; Shafritz et al., 2011). Overlaid with this categorization of organizational theories, organizations can be classified from a perspective of closed versus open system organizations (Shafritz et al., 2011). Most contemporary organizational theorists considered organizations to be open systems in which environmental and cultural factors are independent of the organization itself and are influential to the organization’s structure, culture, functioning, and vitality (Blunt, 1983; Jones, 2010; Marion, 2002; Shafritz et al., 2011; Sheth & Eshghi, 1990; Thomas, Plaut, & Tran, 2014). Classical organization theorists who subscribed to closed system perspectives had viewpoints in which organizational functioning, structure, and vitality were considered self-influencing only (Shafritz et al., 2011).
Globalization and diversification of organizations within the United States has influenced organizational theories, ideologies, and practices (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Blunt, 1983; Cox, 1991; Jones, 2010; Marion, 2002; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998; Shafritz et al., 2011; Sheth & Eshghi, 1990; Thomas et al., 2014).

An exhaustive review of organizational theories and perspectives was beyond the scope of this literature synthesis for the purposes of this study. What was of import was the conceptualization of the counseling profession as an organization and its’ subordinate professional organizations that comprise the former. Herein, the organizational structure of the counseling profession is articulated. Given the layered complexity of the counseling profession (ACA, 2016), an integrated theoretical articulation is provided.

**Professional Counseling**

According to Sue and Sue (2016), *professionalism* is understood through culture-bound socially constructed historical dynamics within political structures in which specified professions exist. The structures, polices, and procedures used by society to constitute professions are macrosystem beliefs and processes that shift and persist across chronosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Sue & Sue, 2016). *Professional status* is identified within society based upon microsystem individuals practicing specified tasks (e.g., counseling) within specified social communities (e.g., United States of America). Specifically, Hughes (1965), Toren (1969), and Nugent (1981) described developed professions as consisting of clear distinctions from non-professionals, increased levels of autonomy, and internal policing mechanisms from within professions rather than from external governing mechanisms. Nugent (1981) delineated six
aspects that were essential for maturely developed professional status:

- clearly defined roles and scopes of practice
- unique service provisions that differ from what non-professionals can do
- specified knowledge and training for designated profession
- explicit ethical codes of training and practice
- acquired legal rights and licensure/certification designations for professional practitioners
- ability to self-monitor professional structures, policies, and practices

While professional counselors may work alongside, and even have similar job descriptions, as some other social service professionals, professional counselors maintain unique philosophies, training standards, and professional identities (ACA, 2012; ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Counseling is a distinct mental health social service profession (ACA, 2014). Microsystems of counselors formed collective organizations across chronosystems, which resulted in what can be identified as professional counseling within the US (ACA, 2016). Professional counseling, as it is manifested in the US, does not exist similarly across the globe. In some languages, there is no term for “counselor” (Sue & Sue, 2016). A comprehensive delineation of the history of professional counseling was beyond the scope of this investigation. Nonetheless, brief descriptions of standards of training, ethics, professional structures, and inclusionary affiliation dynamics to further conceptualization of the profession is included in alignment with the scope of this study.

Professional Entities

Public recognition as a counseling professional was achieved through legitimized group association (Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Toren, 1969). Counseling organizations were formed to model and support aspirational practices within the counseling profession
There are a few avenues for individual counselors to be recognized as affiliates of the counseling profession: Education (e.g., CACREP accredited and CACREP aligned), state dictated licensure laws, and certification (e.g., NBCC and specialization specific) are prominent aspects of professional designation (Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014).

Professional affiliation membership was delineated as having additive professional convenience factors such as financial discounts, shared resources, consultation/social networks, continuing education opportunities, and other such benefits (ACA, 2016; Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Professional organization membership has costs above and beyond financial factors of licensure and/or certification that are required for many counselors to practice legally (ACA, 2016; NBCC, 2015). The cost and benefit factors of professional counseling organization affiliation are a sort of a “sustainability balancing act”: membership benefit factors must be significant enough to influence counselors’ willingness to endure cost factors of membership.

Counseling leaders declared the profession to be inclusive of individuals who were uniquely trained (ACA, 2014; IDFPR, 2016; NBCC, 2015; Nugent, 1981; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Governing officials of the profession are expected to exclude individuals who do not meet professional criteria (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; NBCC, 2015). Within mature professions, like counseling, inadvertent lines of inclusion and exclusion persist across professional affiliations, preparation programs, practice settings, professional status, and specializations of practice (ACA, 2016; Cox, 1991; Davis, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). As such, professional identity is recognized as the individualized manifestation of being included in
the counseling profession.

**ACA.** Through processes of becoming a recognized profession, a collective of professional counselors developed what is now known as the American Counseling Association (ACA): considered the premier professional organizing body of professional counselors (Remley & Herlihy, 2014). The ACA is representative of what Hughes (1965) and Nugent (1981) described as an autonomous governing body of uniquely trained individuals. The collective members of ACA are charged with selecting governing officers who help make decisions about structures and practice parameters for individuals seeking membership within its professional organization (ACA, 2014; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). One such practice parameter is professional training standards (CACREP, 2016; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Leaders of what is known today as the ACA Division of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES; ACA, 2014) were critical in the inception of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). CACREP is a body of counseling professionals, and some non-counseling community advisors, who formulate and review minimum knowledge and skill standards for individuals wishing to gain status as professional counselors (CACREP, 2009, 2015, 2016; NBCC, 2014; NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). Ecologically speaking, each of these entities are mesosystems and exosystems comprised of various individuals (microsystems) that formulate, subscribe to, and perpetuate the macrosystem of professional counseling (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

Implicit in its conceptualization, reciprocal influences within the counseling profession as a macrosystem is inclusive of reciprocal influences on and from numerous microsystems of
approximately 55,000 individual professional counselors (ACA, 2015). While counseling, as a profession within the US, has structures and processes that fulfill all six of Nugent’s (1981) criteria for a maturely developed profession, leaders within the profession recognized that there existed implementation inconsistencies across state laws and counselor training program curricula (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; CACREP, 2016; NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016).

**CACREP.** CACREP (2009, 2016) leaders provided standards for counselor preparation program structures as well as counselor in training curriculum standards. However, CACREP leaders designed these guidelines, like ACA ethical codes (2014), to be interpreted by independent program coordinators and coordination teams (CACREP, 2016). CACREP leaders created processes of interpretation to provide flexibility in curriculum design and implementation based on specializations offered (e.g., career, school, family, clinical, addictions, college, etc.), degree level (e.g., bachelors, master’s or doctoral), and variance in state laws for professional counseling (CACREP, 2016; NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014).

**NBCC.** The National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) leaders function as an independent board for assessment of trainees’ readiness for professional practice. NBCC certification of Nationally Certified Counselors has been used by counseling profession leaders to increase portability of professional credentials across states (NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). As of this study report publication date, neither unified state nor federal regulations for counseling practice, professional counselor credentialing, and/or minimum standards of practice existed (ACA, 2012; ACA, 2014; NBCC, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014).
While chronosystem inconsistency and evolutions persist within the counseling profession macrosystems, no identified competing entities of professional counseling collaborators offered combined bodies of alternative practice parameters for professional counseling in opposition to ACA ethics (2014), CACREP standards (2015), NBCC exam processes (2014), and ACA (2016) governing organizations. In opposition to ACA, CACREP, and NBCC, only small and separate exosystems of counselors and counseling instructors were striving to evolve alongside shifting chronosystems of the counseling profession in effort to extend their organizational vitality across time. The collective of counselors as professional affiliates is how the counseling profession and its professional counselors are most often recognized among the general public (ACA, 2014; Remley & Herlihy, 2014).

Professional Identity

Professional counselors work from distinct philosophical perspectives and wellness approaches to help stimulate maintenance of and/or growth for microsystem developmental needs (ACA, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016). Also, professional counselors work as advocates to empower and influence exosystem and mesosystem developmental wellness (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). According to ACA leaders (2014), professional counseling is defined as “a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” (p. 3). As members of ACA and its affiliate organizations, professional counselors value the enhancement of human lifespan development, embracing multicultural approaches, honoring human diversity, socially just actions, competence, ethical practice, and safeguarding professional counseling
relationships (ACA, 2014; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016). These values were outlined by counseling leaders to guide professional counselors in their living principles for service and scope of ethical practices (Appendix G; ACA, 2014). Membership, service, and leadership roles within governing bodies of professional counseling organizations, like ACA and its’ state branches, are significant means of professional counselor identification (ACA, 2016). As a collective profession, counselors are prompted to model health and wellness as coexisting functions of empowering clients toward achieving and maintaining clients’ personal healthy lifestyle and wellness goals (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016). Modeling inclusive practices among individuals identified within the counseling profession is an implied expectation for professional counselors (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016). Conceptually understanding the counseling profession as the context for this investigation was important (Smith et al., 2009). Within this study, professional counselors’ experiences of inclusion were not investigated based on unique professional affiliations, but personal microsystem identities. Understanding how multiculturalism in counseling has manifested was used to focus on the notion that multicultural inclusion is an aspirational necessity for the vitality of the counseling profession (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Cox, 1991; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Why This Study?

The ACA ethics (2014) and CACREP standards (2016) are professional guidelines that counselors use to purport the importance of reflection and ongoing evaluative practices in counseling and counselor education. Much of the emphasis on multiculturalism by counseling researchers focused on ways of measuring multicultural competence or best practices in
multicultural competence training (Smith et al., 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016). Some scholars viewed multiculturalism in counseling as politically reactionary and not based on authentic caring for humanity (Hansen, 2010a; Howarth & Andreouli, 2012; Speight et al., 1991; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Brady-Amoon (2011) and Patterson (1996) noted that counselors’ contemporary efforts in multiculturalism must focus on counselors and counselors in training challenging themselves to focus internally and doing their own critical work (a) to increase their awareness and appreciation of themselves as multicultural beings first, (b) to explore and confront their own cultural biases and blind spots, (c) to approach clients with authentic cultural curiosity; empathy (not sympathy); and respect, and (d) to convey appreciation for clients multicultural identities; worldviews; and sociopolitical influences on client’s options and preferences for creating wellness.

Very few researchers uniquely studied the intrapersonal multicultural dynamics and the between practitioner multicultural inclusion/exclusion behaviors, among counseling professionals (Smith et al., 2008). Of the 460 articles published in the Journal of Counselor Education and Supervision (CES) between 1989 and 2005, only 17% met the content analysis criteria under multiculturalism, diversity, and/or social advocacy (Smith et al., 2008). Most consistently, through 2008, CES authors continued to define multiculturalism as restricted to ethnic minority groups, which was differentiated by ethnicity, race, and narrow conceptualizations of culture (Smith et al., 2008). Although, chronosystem changes have occurred in the acknowledgement of culture in counseling literature (D’Andrea, 2000; Sue & Sue, 2016): the concept of multiculturalism in counseling remains relatively under researched
(Evans, 2013; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Smith et al., 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). As a counseling scholar, I continued to wonder, and found little tangible evidence of, if professional counselors were practicing what the professional edicts and aspirations preached as best practices. In other words, I sought to understand if the trained professional modelers of aspirational human relationships were relating to each other in multiculturally inclusive ways. This inquiry was important because according to organizational change scholars (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Cox, 1991; Hanan & Freeman, 1984), the answer to this question, and related questions, has strong and dynamic influence on organizations’ longevity and vitality. Organizations that do not resemble the multicultural community in which they are housed, and do not support inclusion of its multicultural members, have been assessed as stagnant, with limited potential for long-term vitality (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Hanan & Freeman, 1984). Cox (1991) described multiculturally inclusive organizational structures and processes as essential for organizational vitality.

**Multicultural Organizations**

According to Nahavandi and Malekzadeh (as cited in Cox, 1991) a multicultural organization can be identified by how organizations’ leaders and majority culture members’ valued, encouraged, and utilized cultural diversity. Cox (1991) purported that integration of cultures represented in organizations, in proportion to contextualized community diversity, would be indicative of organizational vitality. In other words, organizations’ strength for sustainability could be assessed by its proportionate cultural demographic representation within organizational membership, across membership levels (entry level through upper management
and owners), in comparison to the demographic diversity of regions in which organizations were located and constituency bases it served. Cox (1991) noted that functional multicultural organizations are organizations identified by its’:

- Pluralism
- Full structural integration
- Full commixture of informal membership networks
- Absence of prejudice and/or discrimination
- Members’ complete identification with respective organization and personal cultural identity groups
- Low levels of intergroup conflict.

Furthermore, multicultural organizations are comprised of multicultural individuals (Cox, 1991).

Within the counseling profession males and counselors of color are two of the largest minority populations (ACA, 2015). Men of color who are professional counselors represented one of the small populations of research participants in professional counseling literature (Smith et al., 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016). There were vast gaps in the literature related to multiculturalism in counseling practices (Smith et al., 2008; Evans, 2013). The existing research findings and lack of literature based on men of color who are professional counselors’ experiences of multicultural inclusion as defined herein provided compelling rationale for conducting this exploration (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

**Men of Color Who Are Professional Counselors**

While theorists and scholars have supported multiculturalism in counseling from individualized and holistically inclusive conceptualizations of multicultural identities (Ratts et al., 2015; Sue & Sue, 2016), research on professionals’ modeling of multiculturalism was sparse (Evans, 2013; Smith et al., 2008; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). Even rarer was research on the
lived experiences men of color who are professional counselors (Cornileus, 2013; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Evans, 2013; Smith & Roysircar, 2010). Evans (2013) revealed that less than 5% of journal articles published between 1981 and 2001 to the Journal of Counseling & Development and the Counselor Education and Supervision journal focused on men in counseling. ACA (2005, 2014) leaders’ emphasis on multicultural competence in its ethical codes increased. This increase emphasis was suggestive of a potential increase in the percentages of articles focusing on multiculturalism and men in counseling. Nevertheless, researchers indicated through their findings about professionals of color, professional men of color, and counselors of color that best practices of multicultural inclusion may not be an experienced reality for men of color who are professional counselors (Cornileus, 2013; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Evans, 2013; Smith & Roysircar, 2010).

Wester (2008) indicated that gender role conflict for men was contextual rather than global. Within the context of the female majority profession of counseling (ACA, 2015; Evans, 2013), male performance and navigation behaviors were moderated by sociocultural dynamics as well as minority male interactive presence in everyday counseling community environments (Sue & Sue, 2016; Wester, 2008). Specifically, within higher education institutions, Salazar (2009) recognized the challenges and conscious strategies counseling faculty of color needed to engage in order to cope with the adversities of persistent racial microaggressions in the macrosystem contexts of higher education spheres. Also, Cornileus (2013) acknowledged the professional challenges and repressive structures of gendered racism. This researcher found that male professionals of African American ethnicity were impacted differently than professional
African American women and men of whiteness counterparts (Cornileus, 2013).

During the same year, Eguchi and Starosta (2012) interviewed professional men of Asian American ethnicity, in which divergence between participants’ authentic identity and “model minority” performance aspects participants engaged were uncovered. Participants acknowledged conscious and subtle choices to engage in inauthentic “model minority” behaviors in order to moderate racially biased expectations (Eguchi & Starosta, 2012). These participants noted explicit and implicit ways in which their multicultural identities were invalidated and/or ignored (Eguchi & Starosta, 2012). Some participants noted internalized invalidation as a way of coping and navigating majority expectations for their professional engagement (Eguchi & Starosta, 2012). Costello’s (2004) findings corroborated this idea of identity dissonance experienced by emerging professionals of color based on expectations for internalizing majority defined identified manifestations of professional appropriateness. Particularly among Hispanic men who were professionals, lower rates of self-acceptance were reported in comparison to non-Hispanic professionals (Long & Martinez, 1997).

Through research conducted with men who were Taiwanese nurses, researchers confirmed the sociohistorical dynamics that hindered professional development for these professional men (Yang et al., 2004). Unlike the nursing profession, which has been predominantly populated by professional women, the counseling profession evolved into a predominantly woman-populated profession (ACA, 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016). Nevertheless, the most significant findings were related to gender expectations of patients/clients (Yang et al., 2004). Similarly, socially constructed and evolving gender norms
for women in the US counseling profession have been implicated as negative factors for male counselors’ personal/professional congruence (Dollarhide et al., 2014; Evans, 2013; Harley et al., 2002; Long & Martinez, 1997; Smith & Roysircar, 2010).

Harley, Jolivette, McCormick, and Tice (2002) discussed the professional positionalities of individuals based on socially constructed race, gender identity, and class. Their research legitimized the constellation of indignities or privileges experienced within professional communities based on sociopolitical cultural divides. These researchers recognized positionality as being influenced by national cultures as well as professional cultural (Harley et al., 2002).

Researchers found that professional school counselors of color experienced both positive and negative racial experiences based on the environment within which they worked (Dollarhide et al., 2014). School Counselor’s negative racial events were accompanied by emotional costs for participants (i.e., self-doubt, anger, frustration, and disempowerment). Eight psychologists of color interviewed by Tinsley-Jones (2001) expounded upon the negative impact of covert acts of racism in the midst of their profession. Allied advocacy from professional counselors of whiteness were found to be protective factors against ongoing negative experiences (Dollarhide et al., 2014). Smith and Roysircar (2010) presented perspectives of men of color who were counseling leaders, specifically African American Past Presidents of AMCD, who described personal traits and external resources as influential factors on their resiliency against adversity within the profession. These leaders also noted that colorism was an influential factor on awareness of social and professional injustices requiring advocacy (Dollarhide et al., 2014).

The lack of research regarding multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession
and the dearth of research on men in the counseling profession was sufficient reason for this particular study of the multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors with other counseling professionals within the counseling profession. Given the very limited and mostly corollary research on this topic, a phenomenological approach was most appropriate to help increase understanding about this particular phenomena, for this particular population, in this specific context (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Summary

Many pieces of political history, social constructions, and professional divides of multiculturalism in counseling were outlined here above. Considerations regarding how well the charge for social justice advocacy of multiculturalism in counseling that has been exemplified and conveyed among counselors was presented. Best practices in counseling and counselor education included educators, supervisors, and seasoned peers practicing multicultural awareness building and modeling these multicultural consciousness ways of being in classrooms, work settings, with colleagues, and with clients (ACA, 2014; Jones-Smith, 2012; Ratts et al., 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Sue & Sue, 2016). Counselors’ contemporary notions of multiculturalism included appreciation for diverse worldviews, cultivating diverse conceptualization lenses, considering diverse approaches to wellness, acknowledging diverse identities as well as embracing diverse practitioners as important behaviors that strengthen professional counselors’ practices (Sue & Sue, 2016).

Scholars noted that there is invaluable utility in personal and professional self-evaluation through various forms of critical inquiry (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Cox, 1991; Choo &
Ferree, 2010; Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Practitioners of all levels could utilize critical inquiries as mechanisms for growth and development towards becoming multiculturally competent professionals working with diverse multicultural clients (Sue & Sue, 2016). Literature synthesized in this “Review of Literature” was supportive of counselors, themselves, first evaluating and attending to multicultural consciousness and multiculturally inclusive practices among each other. Given the complexity of multiculturalism (Helms, 1994; Van de Vijver et al., 2007; Sue & Sue, 2016), challenges in investigating manifestations of multicultural inclusion/exclusion (Bowleg, 2008; Choo & Ferree, 2010; Cudd, 1998), and sociopolitical implications for multicultural inclusion and equity (Cox, 1991; Crenshaw, 1989; Davis, 2015), an initial exploratory approach using interpretative phenomenological analysis research (Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009) was warranted and appropriate for responding to the above research questions. In the “Phenomenological Methodology,” the phenomenological analysis processes utilized for completing this research is described.
PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

As the researcher, I was inspired to investigate multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors based on anecdotal experiences and scholarly literature reviewed. This study was designed to answer two questions related to guiding best practice and social justice principles of the counseling profession. Through this study, an understanding of how men of color who are professional counselors perceive, think, feel, and make meaning around their multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession was interpreted. The methodology and methods utilized for this investigation are outlined herein. First, the research questions for this inquiry are reviewed.

Research Questions

With the investigative goal to understanding how a sample of men of color who are professional counselors experience, engage, and are engaged as multicultural individuals within professional counseling organizations and among professionals counselors was guided by two specific research questions:

RQ1: How do men of color who are professional counselors experience multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession?

RQ2: How do perceptions of multicultural inclusion influence engagement in professional counseling organizations for men of color who are professional counselors?

Interpretative phenomenological analysis was deemed most appropriate in answering these
research questions (Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Responses to these answers help fill a gap in scholarly understanding of men of color who are professional counselors experience multicultural inclusion experiences among other counselors.

**Methodology**

This exploratory research was designed to employ phenomenological interpretation (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was most appropriate for understanding men of color who are professional counselors’ experiences of multicultural inclusion within professional counseling organizations because the research questions were pragmatic ideographic phenomenological inquiries (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is a thorough and systematic approach for conceptualizing participants’ experiences and the meaning participants attributed to their experiences in detail. As an analytical approach, ideography coupled with hermeneutics (interpretation theory; Smith et al., 2009), were vital frameworks for making sense of multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession for men of color who are professional counselors.

Interpretative findings and analytical discussions presented are the results of discerning major and non-major, convergent and divergent themes derived from participant data analysis (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Discussion of data interpretation provides clear understandings of how one particular sample of men of color who are professional counselors experienced multicultural inclusion within the specific context of the counseling profession. Moreover, interpretations helped enhance conceptualizations of men of color who are professional counselors’ engagement choices within professional
counseling organizations. Acknowledging my role, as the researcher and remaining reflexive in my research practices, was indispensable to effective execution of IPA methodological processes (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Role of Researcher

This study, and its procedures, were formulated based on my personal and professional experiences, anecdotal disclosures from colleagues, and scholarly consultations. Plans for this study evolved as relevant and accessible literature was reviewed and critically analyzed in the area of multiculturalism in counseling. As the researcher, I constructed the initial research questions, methodology, and investigative protocols. I executed all aspects of participant recruitment, data collection, interpretative analysis, and information reporting as the sole investigator. I conducted interpretative analyses of participant’s narrative data to provide information necessary to answer the research questions. Consultation with my dissertation research oversight committee was maintained for regular advisement throughout study phases.

I critically reflected and discussed pertinent and beneficial sub-inquiries as they unfold during research processes. I initiated reflexive journaling the first day after I constructed formal IPA research questions of this study. I maintained reflexive journaling practices through the final defense of this research. This study was conceived through the scope of my own professional counselor narrative. As such, I believed it was important to articulate my frame of reference herein, as the researcher and research tool.

Researcher Reflexivity Statement

As a child, I had African, Asian, Caucasian, Black American, Latino, and European
friends in preschool and kindergarten. As a Black American child from the southeast side of Chicago, my sort of ethnically diverse friendship group was rare. After kindergarten, I attended a Catholic parochial elementary school, which added another layer to my early cross-cultural experiences. Being that my entire family had historically celebrated their Christianity under Baptist traditions, my introduction to Catholicism in primary school represented a sort of complexity added to my spiritual identity. While living within the predominantly Black and African American south side of Chicago, I began to experience adversities with community members indicating that I was not “Black enough,” “the White girl,” “eight ball,” and/or “Oreo.” These conjectures were communicated to me be before I had any real idea what being Black was supposed to mean. I experienced more subtle exclusions from “Black,” most of which I did not perceive as malicious by nature: mere consequence of me being interested in different activities than many of my Black peers (e.g., rock music, Spanish fluency, rock climbing, or Catholicism). I eventually “put up my hands,” stopped fighting against others’ invalidations of my ethnicity, and disowned my Blackness as a part of my cultural identity.

Around that same time, I disowned my feminine identity because my father did not approve of my desires to follow in his footsteps as a diesel engineer and truck driver. As “daddy’s little girl,” instead of me choosing a different profession of interest, I committed myself to being as much of a boy as I could muster, at that time. My Catholic/Baptist divide between family of origin beliefs and my school teachings was another influence on my experiences of exclusion that was based on my multicultural identity. These experiences were representations of my own personal inclusion, exclusion, and identity formation as a multicultural being. These
parts of my personal journey influenced my interest in pursuing this study. Nevertheless, this research journey formally began during my counselor preparation program experiences.

During the first year of my master’s program in counseling, I completed coursework in working with exceptional children with unique needs, which included content on professionals’ utilization of *inclusive practices* (Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Villa, Thousand, Nevin, & Liston, 2005). This construct of *inclusion* was pivotal in my undertaking of this investigation of multiculturalism within professional counseling. As a Black US American, sexually open, woman, from inner city Chicago, of Christian spirituality, and an emerging counselor educator and supervisor career identity, I am passionate about holistic human development. As a counselor, I believe human development is comprised of multicultural consciousness and acknowledgement of multiculturalism in all contexts (Sue & Sue, 2016). This includes my dedication to the aspirational expectations for professional counselors to advocate for increased inclusion of multicultural persons with diverse expressions (ACA, 2014; Ratts et al., 2015).

During the 2013 Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Multicultural Interest Network meeting, I noticed various members of different cultural backgrounds, all in the same room, professing their desires to address similar sociopolitical causes. In that moment, I wondered how other counselors perceived, understood, and experienced multiculturalism. I wondered how other counselors conceptualized and experienced manifestations of multiculturalism (e.g., on a continuum of inclusive to exclusive) within professional organizations and across the profession. I wondered if anyone else thought it “strange” that the current ACA structures was comprised concurrently of one division for multicultural counseling
(AMCD) and separate divisions for religion and spirituality (ASERVIC), adults and aging (AADA), children and adolescents (ACAC), and LGBTQQA+ (ALGBTIC) concerns in counseling. I considered this ACA structuring to be particularly striking because of how multiculturalism was operationalized for contemporary counselor preparation programs: inclusive of spiritual, religious, gender, sexual orientation, and age aspects of each person (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; CACREP, 2016; Ratts et al., 2015). I recognize that my current perspectives were shaped by my early identity development experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Dacey et al., 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). I acknowledged and embraced my multicultural identity, worldview, and counselor preparation experiences as influences on how I approached and received as well as how I was approached and received as a research tool.

Researcher as the Tool

As a researcher, I am passionate about connecting theory to universal and phenomenological human experiences through interpretive processes of discovering. I am passionate about expressing empathy, accepting diverse expressions of humanity, and embracing opportunities to increase socially just and inclusionary practices in education and community organizations. I describe my personal identity development as one of integrated self-acceptance: I am a self-embracing Black American woman who is conscious of my dynamic multicultural identities as well as others’ multicultural identities.

I retained considerations and anecdotal presumptions that many counselors of color and counselors of non-majority sexual orientation identities experience higher rates of cultural exclusion in professional counseling organizations than counselors of whiteness or counselors
with heterosexual orientation identities. Observations and organization data was demonstrative of female identified persons outnumbering male identified persons within the counseling profession (ACA, 2015, 2017). As I critically considered influences of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) and multicultural identity as operationalized in this phenomenological study, I knew that study outcomes could not and should not be anticipated. Also, I maintained that the definition of multiculturalism used for this study did not negate the individualized conceptualizations or historically exclusive and oppressive ways in which the term multiculturalism manifested (Sue & Sue, 2016; Van de Vijver et al., 2007).

Regarding methodology, I was biased in believing that singular analytical methods are insufficient for exploring any facet of multiculturalism in counseling. This study was designed to add critical experience information to the body of literature regarding multiculturalism in counseling. This scope of multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors was my first addition to this dearth of information of counselors’ experiences and manifestations of socially just multicultural inclusion. As a novice, female, Black American, counselor of color, emerging counselor educator, urban raised, and with my integrated identity development, I recognized that I was perceived and approached by study participants in variable ways based on their particular identity development. I could not control for this reality, nor did I try to control for this contextual dynamic given the methodological framework used for this study. IPA theorists (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008) suggested that this level of researcher as tool awareness was imperative to ethical and effective engagement with population participants. Having articulated my researcher awareness,
notation about the population sample for this study is presented next.

Sample Population

After affirmation of sufficient proposal delineation was received from my dissertation oversight committee, the application for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for studies with human subjects through Northern Illinois University (NIU) was submitted. No official participant recruitment and/or participant data collection processes for this study commenced until NIU IRB affirmation of study processes was confirmed and sanctioned as ethical research practices (NIU, 2016). In order to recruit a sufficient participant sample, several modalities of convenience snowball sampling were employed (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014; Whinston, 2009). Participants were solicited through ACA’s membership listserv (ACA Connect) and state organization contact Emails. Using social media announcements via LinkedIn and professional organization Facebook group pages, as a secondary recruitment avenue was initiated as was anticipated to be conducive for effective recruitment purposes based on its contemporary functionality of communicating with national and global audiences (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). As a tertiary modality, targeted word of mouth recruitment was conducted as direct contact with some men of color who are professional counselors was feasible given my role as a counselor within the community as well as the principle researcher. Through all recruitment efforts, ethnical practices for participant recruitment were maintained.

In executing snowball sampling, participant invitations were sent using a video recorded introduction to the study purpose, inclusion criteria, risks, benefits, incentives, and participant rights. The video transcript is included in Appendix B and the informed consent statements are
included in Appendix C. Individuals interested in participating in this study were able to provide their consent to participate and contact information for data collection scheduling through a secure data entry platform (Qualtrics, 2016).

IPA theorists suggested sample sizes of four to six participants for conducting rigorous idiographic inquiry (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). My goal was to recruit at least eight participants for this study. I recruited a sample of 11 men of color who are professional counselors for participation in data collection processes. It was anticipated that some men of color who are professional counselors who initially consented to participate in the study may not have complete all phases of data collection based on participant drop out frequency patterns (Whiston, 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Ten of the 11 recruited participants persisted through the essential data collection phases of this investigation.

Data Collection

This study was designed such that the data collection processes and analysis procedures were rigorous and ethical (Smith et al., 2009). Consequent of study design, each participant engaged in multiple data collection mediums. A Qualtrics (2016) survey link was included within electronic recruitment messages. Through accessing the Qualtrics survey link, participants provided their preferred method of follow up communication, requests for audio only or audio/video recorded individual interviews, and potential interview scheduling times. This information was collected via Qualtrics technology as this platform was more secure and confidential than Email technology. It is anticipated that some participants may initiate direct contact via Email to for scheduling. The next process for participants included scheduling
individual online interviews. The goal was to schedule all participant interviews within a two-week window so that the collective of participants would have similar durations of time between their individual interview and the scheduled audio/video recorded online focus group. Recognizing that this preferred time frame may not have been feasible, I planned for and maintained a maximum of time lapse of six weeks after the first interview was completed for scheduling the focus group as aligned with appropriate IPA research standards (Smith et al., 2009). Scheduling of the focus group occurred after the first six participants were recruited and their interviews had been scheduled.

Facilitation of the online focus group occurred after the last individual participant interview is being scheduled. This time frame was sufficient for conducting initial data analyses necessary to construct the focus group schedule prompts. However, due to scheduling limitations not all 10 participants were able to participate in the focus group. IPA scholars (Smith et al, 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008) as well as my research oversight committee were supportive of this focus group size. Given the phenomenological exploratory nature of this study, the definitions of multiculturalism and multicultural inclusion were shared with focus group participants as the last focus group discussion prompt. Participants shared their reactions to this operationalized definition in comparison and/or contrasts to their previous multicultural inclusion experience disclosures as men of color who are professional counselors.

After concluding individual interviews and the focus group data analyses, participants were contacted via their preferred method and requested to review and provide additional comments or feedback to the interpretative themes that emerged from the focus group as well as
comments regarding their individual narrative data collected during their respective in-depth individual interviews. Written and verbal feedback from participants was recorded as evidence of the strength and accuracy of my interpretations of their phenomenological experiences. This final participant data collection engagement process was an important step (Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009). However, IPA theorists (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008) indicated that it is not essential to corroborate the accuracy of themes devised for the rigor of research conducted. As such, participants who declined to provide response were not excluded from data reporting. Seven of the 10 participants provided confirmatory feedback of the accuracy of their individual narratives and interpretative themes derived through the focus group.

Data Analysis

Maintaining alignment with this study’s qualitative methodological philosophy (Smith et al., 2009), analysis of participant in-depth interview narratives occurred across three phases. Implementation of multiple analysis phases allowed for the presentation of accurate interpretations of the multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession as men of color who are professional counselors (RQ1) and any influence their inclusion perceptions had on their engagement in professional organizations (RQ2; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Data analysis phases were implemented and completed for all participants as a collective group in order to minimize potential coding bias. By reading, coding, and notating each participant’s narratives in sequential phases, the potential for narrowly focusing on preliminary analytical findings based on former participant data analysis when studying subsequent participants’ date was lessened. (Erickson, 1986; Pietkiewicz
& Smith, 2012; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Also, before the start of each analytical phase, reflective consultations with the methodology and content experts of my dissertation committee were conducted to minimize bias in coding, thematic pattern creation, and interpretation reporting. The three analytical phases implemented during this study are delineated here.

**Phase One**

In the first phase of data analysis, transcribing of each participant interview was completed, then two readings of each transcription (Smith et al., 2009). During this phase, neither creation of any data codes nor any formal analytical notes was conducted. As the researcher, I maintained reflexive journaling of my thoughts, reflections, feelings, and reactions to participant interviews and raw data. This included consultations with oversight committee members to process reflections and/or biases that emerged.

With this phase, reading of each transcript while making descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual notations was completed. Descriptive notations about participants were easy to locate, yet difficult to choose for inclusion in this report while maintaining confidentiality of participants. Regarding participants’ linguistic patterns, particular attention to repeated words and phrases was important. Participant pauses and quickening of speech was notated within transcriptions. I also re-listened to the interview recordings while notating to pick up vocal quality, tone, volume and related changes. Most of my initial conceptual notes arose in the form of curiosity questions. These questions were used to locate conceptual answers within respective transcripts and as guides for creating focus group schedule (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).
During this first phase of data analysis, I used open coding to construct initial conceptual codes is proposed. An accounting of code frequency and cross referencing of codes with linguistic notes was helpful in formulating preliminary meaning making code groups and coding sub-groups. Within this phase, deconstruction comments of transcription data were created. The deconstruction comments were helpful in exposing concealed suppositions and contradictions within the layered disclosures of verbal and meta-verbal participant data (Smith et al., 2009).

**Phase Two**

In the second phase of analysis, coding and comments from phase one were used to delineate theme creation (Smith et al., 2009). Code frequency is not considered the most rigorous indicator of thematic interpretation on its own (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Nevertheless, code frequency does provide one scope of thematic consideration for interpretative research (Erickson, 1986; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Coupled with this process, I searched through code lists and comment notations, from phase one to decipher and formulate patterns in participants’ narrative disclosures of their multicultural inclusion experiences as men of color who are professional counselors.

This data analysis phase included searching for several thematic pattern types that were emergent (i.e., abstractions, subsumption, polarization, contextualization, numeration, and function thematic patterns; Smith et al., 2009). During this phase, the online focus group was conducted with a sub-group of original. Meaningful focus group questions were devised from the first phases of individual transcription analysis (Smith et al., 2009). Internet-based video conferencing was used to record the focus group. Afterward, the focus group recording was
transcribed and analyzed using the same phases of IPA implemented for analyzing the individual in-depth interview transcriptions (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Subsequent to the analysis of the focus group data, phase three of data analysis was initiated.

**Phase Three**

In the third phase of data analysis, searching the individual and group transcriptions for patterns across participants was conducted. Prior to this phase, neither cross reviewing of participants’ narratives nor cross-development of themes was initiated. This analysis phase was used to explore convergent and divergent understandings of individual men of color who are professional counselors and the collective participant group of men of color who are professional counselors within this study (Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009). This phase was concluded by delineating participant experience interpretations and selecting evidentiary excerpts of data that were evidentiary of the research interpretations (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). All notations, coding, comments, and thematic patterns were reviewed and critically organized (Smith et al., 2009). Through these processes, articulation of specific interpretative statements about individual and collective multicultural inclusion experiences for the men of color who are professional counselors’ participants of this study was possible (Smith et al., 2009). Emerging interpretations were notated for future generalizable research on this topic and population. Completion of this phase lead to finalization of findings from this phenomenological study (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). As noted above, reflexive journal entries and committee consultation was maintained throughout each phase of this research study as processes for supporting the trustworthiness of reported
interpretations (Erickson, 1986; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of IPA research findings is based upon adequate mechanisms and processes of dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Dependability refers to the feasibility with which a study could be repeated with similar findings produced. Credibility is signified by researchers’ confidence in the legitimacy of participants’ data as accurate. Confirmability is denoted by processes implemented for which researcher motivations, assumptions, and biases are externally accounted for in contrast, though sometimes in parallel, to study findings. Transferability is the application of or ability to apply research findings from one study to another population or context. The following sections include denotations of mechanisms of dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability implemented within this study.

Dependability

As part of managing the trustworthiness of this investigation, all data collected was retained on password protected security encrypted online systems. Participant demographic data and participant narrative interview/focus group data were retained in separate secure platforms. These measures were utilized to maintain participant anonymity, to maintain the integrity of data collected, and to avoid third party tampering of data (NIU, 2016; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Adherence to all ethical data handling processes during all phases of participant recruitment, data collection, data analyses, and information reporting was consistent. The delineated phases of data collection and data analysis included above were contributions to the
dependability of this study and findings resulting from this study (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

**Credibility**

In conducting trustworthy research, potential limitations of this study were considered and measures taken to safeguard the integrity of scholarly research processes. (ACA, 2005, 2014; Erickson, 1986; NIU, 2016; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). The integrity of research processes includes the accuracy of data collected (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Particularly through the use of audio/video recording during data collection processes, conducting a focus group, in addition to in-depth individual interviews, and the interview schedule prompts for participants to consider and provide any additional data based on “if they left anything out” in responding to the preceding interview scheduling prompts, was a mechanism of credibility used in this IPA study. Scholars’ (Erickson, 1986; Sue & Sue, 2016) supported the notion that me as a woman of color who is a professional counselor in the role of principal investigator and research tool for this study of men of color who are professional counselors was a benefit to increased credibility. This mechanism credibility is notated at the end of “Phenomenological Findings.”

**Confirmability**

During all data collection and analysis phases, reflexive journals were maintained. As such, readers can reasonably trust the accuracy of interpretations of men of color who are professional counselors’ experiences of multicultural inclusion/exclusion within the counseling profession (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). At the outside of the study, during data collection
and analysis phases, as well as during report writing and preparations for presentation of study outcomes, I created critically reflective spaces, in writing and committee consultations, regarding my reflexive considerations about the phenomena of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession, differentially from conjectures derived from the narrative data collected from the 10 men of color who are professional counselors within this study. The dissemination of individual transcripts and emerging themes to members and receiving their additive and/or confirmatory feedback was a crucial mechanism for confirmability (Smith et al., 2009; Whiston, 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Transferability

In the next “Interpretative Discussion”, I outlined interpretative findings to help better understand individualized multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession for these men of color who are professional counselors. Part of the framework for this study was the socio-political cultural backdrop of the United States within which the counseling profession was cultivated and maintained. As such what is known about men of color in the general population was informative considerations for this study. Based on existing scholarship and theory in the counseling profession and related social science fields, the findings of this study would be considered evidence informed data for populations of individuals who share similarities with the studied participants and/or contexts that are similar in organizational structure to the counseling profession (Erickson, 1986; Whiston, 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).
Summary

Within this “Phenomenological Methodology,” rigorous research phases that were implemented in this Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith et al., 2009) of multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession for men of color who are professional counselors were delineated. These research processes were almost identical to the successfully depended research phases prior to submitting application for IRB approval (NIU, 2016) and initiating data collection. Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2008) emphasized the importance in clearly differentiating researcher interpretations from participants’ disclosures: The subsequent “Phenomenological Findings” and “Interpretative Discussion” are separated to help maintain that demarcation as well as the heading structures and denotations of specific data collected from participants. Study findings are presented next.
PHENOMENOLOGICAL FINDINGS

Introduction

The data collected through 10 in depth individual interviews and one qualitative focus group are presented herein. Analyzed data was organized by convergent themes and respective thematic aspects. Each interpretive theme is followed with evidentiary excerpts from data collection transcriptions of participant narrative disclosures (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Contextualized interpretative evidence of these themes is outlined within this “Phenomenological Methodology.” Within IPA findings reports, descriptive characteristics of each participant are presented first (Smith et al., 2009).

Descriptive Data

The population of interest for this phenomenological investigation was men of color who are professional counselors. This included individuals whose self-identified gender was cisgender or transgender man, whose self-identified ethnic/racial identity was of any non-Caucasian/non-White ethnic and racial identity, who were 18 years or age or older, who completed master’s level degree training in a mental health field, and whose self-identified professional identity was as a professional counselor. The specific sample of participants included in this study is described next.
Participants

This investigation included a sample of 10 men of color who are professional counselors. Eleven men of color responded to the call for research participation. One participant self-selected out of study participation during the initial consent phase by not completing the demographic survey. The remaining 10 participants engaged in one in-depth individual interview. Four of these 10 participants were able to engage in the scheduled focus group. Participant data relevant to inclusion eligibility for this study is included herein Table 1. The full demographic data collected from this participant sample is included in Appendix L.

Table 1
Participant Demographic Identities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant pseudonym</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Primary counselor identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taj</td>
<td>Black, Hispanic</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tybalt</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Counseling practitioner/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taavetti</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahu</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counseling practitioner/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapani</td>
<td>Black, Hispanic</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counseling practitioner/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teijo</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiki</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic Hispanic, Non-White</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilian</td>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>Cisgender male</td>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The counseling profession is relatively small (ACA, 2017). In order to maintain participant anonymity, narrative descriptions of each participant were intentionally kept brief,
while meaningful. Participant pseudonyms were chosen as representative of each participant’s personality presentation during this investigation. Table 2 is a listing of each participant pseudonym, its cultural origins, and its meaning.

Table 2
Participant Pseudonym Meanings

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taj</td>
<td>crown</td>
<td>Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Christian name/twin</td>
<td>Dutch/Hebrew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor</td>
<td>wise</td>
<td>Celtic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tybalt</td>
<td>he who sees</td>
<td>Latin-America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taavetti</td>
<td>beloved</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tahu</td>
<td>pure</td>
<td>Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapani</td>
<td>victorious</td>
<td>Isreal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teijo</td>
<td>righteous, well governed</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiki</td>
<td>he who is fetched</td>
<td>New-Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilian</td>
<td>strives</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chosen pseudonyms for each participant were metaphorically aligned with aspects of their personalities interpreted by the researcher during early data collection phases. Offered here are descriptive quotations chosen to help illuminate the contextual depiction of each participant as a man of color who is a counseling professional.

Trevor (wise)

I feel like I'm me: what you see is pretty much what you get. I don't have any need to be someone else; not particularly, since I got those three little magical letters at the end of my name. I earned that, so, yeah, I don't have to please anybody.
Tahu (pure)

I guess some of the things I'm thinking about, is how much I've learned about myself through my job, through my profession. I learn something every day from students or from other teachers. I learned a whole lot about myself and my own biases. . . . I guess the first thing that people might notice is my race. As I sit here thinking, “why would I feel that way,” cuz I haven't had any direct experience with it: just hearing from friends and family, also what's on the news.

Taj (crown)

I identify as a counselor educator. I don't think I have many more identities outside of that. Whatever comes along with being a counselor educator: I guess that's being a supervisor. Well, I guess I do have more identities than just those two. I guess I'd be a mentor to some people. I would be a considered a leader in the counseling field, too. Personally, I'm a father. I'm a husband and a son. I'm a Black man!

Tapani (victorious)

One part of my identity is being an advocate. So, getting involved, I wanted to make a stronger impact on our profession as far as supporting advocacy. That's one of the reasons why I wanted to be part of [leadership organizations]. It's been going rather slowly as far as membership, connecting, and working on things. . . . Over my experience, I've had many people advocate for me in different instances and it’s really related to social justice. Just being able to make an impact or maybe change some things or change mindsets of how we look at things, how we experience things, how we experience individuals.

Thomas (Christian name)

I really believed in being not only culturally sensitive, but culturally responsive in the work, in the practices that we do. I really believed [and think] “how do I continue to translate that in this way that I'm working with these communities that don't necessarily see help in the way that we sometimes idealize them too. I think feeling not only consolidated and claiming my identities has really ignited my passion, for really understanding who I am as a scholar activist, understanding what kinds of contributions I want to make, how proud I am of my identities, and also how I can share this profession; and not necessarily in a way that prioritizes my narrative over others.
Tilian (strives)

I'm very confident in my racial identity, my gender identity, my professional identity, and I think that in my spiritual identity and in my emotional identity. I think those things have helped me a lot. I think having those answered for me in a solid sense; yeah, I could change and it can move, but for a majority of it, it's pretty solid. I've been working on it for many years. . . . I've had all great counselors. They just really looked after me and for my brothers and sisters. . . . I had a lot of great supportive counselors at every level of my education. . . . The community would look after us. . . . [Regarding counseling as my profession], I really didn't realize that counseling was as a good fit until I took a step towards it.

Teijo (righteous, well governed)

I guess personally, [I] identify most predominantly as a Black male interested in serving his community and learning from his community and the communities that surround me of which I am a member. You know my racial identity is a significant portion of who I am. I spend a lot of time thinking about it. I spend a lot of time thinking about who I am in different spaces and roles that I have in my personal life. . . . I have a fair sense of what I want to investigate and contribute over the long term of our time in the profession. . . . I hope that when it's all said and done, that people can say, 'Yeah, I knew Teijo well. I know Teijo and this is what he did. This is how he contributed to my life, my experience and our community.' That's what I want people to say about me.

Taavetti (beloved)

Okay, I mean African American man in this society without a doubt, that's first and foremost. . . . When I had left the military and got my first psych, social service job as a case manager, I started to learn a lot more about the community. I worked in [the city] and started to learn more about how people end up in poverty, how poverty could impact the psyche; racial prejudice; discrimination, how people end up living in projects. . . . I was always advised to become a social worker by leadership, but I was more interested in the understanding the human development aspect, the impact of the social and cultural dynamic on people. So, I was just naturally interested in counseling. . . . You know, [I have] love for my people. If it wasn't for this profession, I don't think I could have ever developed the love that I have for African Americans.
Tybalt (he who sees)

When you talk about professional identity, your professional identity is just the slice of pizza and not the whole pie. That is who you are and counseling is not a 100% of who I am. There’s so many other facets of it and I have to find a balance of how to learn something from counseling that can apply to a different part of my life, so on and so forth, rather than I'm a counselor; I'm a counselor; I'm a counselor. . . . [Regarding my ethnic identity,] I honestly couldn't tell you if anyone actually knows that piece about me and if they do, I don't know who they are. . . . I'm very ambiguous to a lot of people and I use it to my advantage because that way it creates a really good framework for, “Let's talk about it.”

Tiki (he who is fetched)

After, I did some community counseling and some community group work, I went to my PhD. Got a lot of college counseling experience. We’re actually only required to do one year of internship seeing clients here at the university before you do your internship the last year, but I actually did it the whole time, saw clients. It's really important to my professional identity. I really do identify strongly as a clinician. . . . I identify as a . . . critical multicultural counselor or critical counselor.

Participant Multicultural Definitions and Profession Perceptions

For the purposes of this study, multiculturalism was defined as an awareness of intersecting and mutually influencing self-identified micro-cultures including gender, gender expression, spirituality, ability and disability, sex-assigned-at-birth, religion, sexual orientation, romantic orientation, ethnicity, nationality, race, age, class, education, and economic status that influence one’s self-perception and one’s worldview. Multicultural inclusion was defined as acceptance, valuing, and embracing of one’s multicultural identity. These definitions are critical to understanding the conceptual framework and researcher interpretation mindset through which this study was initiated. Nevertheless, these definitions were not shared with participants during the individual interview phase.
Participants were asked to share their personal definitions of multiculturalism and multicultural inclusion as part of their in-depth interviews. These definitions were essential for conceptualizing participant mindsets and contextualizing participant narratives about their phenomenological experiences of multicultural inclusion as men of color who are professional counselors. As was delineated through literature reviewed for this study (Abrams et al., 2005; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016; Wrenn, 1962), participants’ perceptions of their context, namely the counseling profession and manifestations of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession, influenced their experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession.

Participant perceptions of the profession, expectations as members of the profession, and hopes for the profession were influential in interpretative processes used to interpret meanings derived through this phenomenological study. Participants’ perceptions of the counseling profession, were discussed concretely and implicitly during investigative individual interviews and the focus group. Participant definitions were critical for making sense of participant’s perceptions of the profession. Participant definitions, followed by their perceptual statements, are included here.

Thomas described his definition stating:

I think the first piece is I really don't want to be someone's checklist; . . . especially, because I really have adopted that intersectionality framework as an everyday experience, not just because of my own experiences. I practice what I preach. So, I feel as though we need to explain diversity within and between categories, within and between identities. We really need to understand linkages between those identities as mutually constitutive so that we really help our students understand what privilege and oppression look like; help our students, trainees, supervisees, and counselors access what their privilege and oppression does to them. [Multiculturalism] is not just recursive of just one
type of experience and that's the be-all-end-all. . . . It means that we really have to understand that all of our unique differences are valuable.

I think the other piece with inclusion is obviously not being discriminated against or microaggressed against, . . . not getting this oppression, and not feeling like we're ostracized. . . . I feel like that's such an obvious claim, but I say that that is one of the issues that I feel like we still face in this profession at multiple levels. Whether I see it at the institution or whether I see it in leadership or across different levels. . . . Instead of cultural competence, I tend to use cultural sensitivity or cultural responsivity because I feel like that is more consistent with what we do to really match and meet where our clients and students are at. In terms of multiculturalism, I'm a firm believer that there's a very strong relationship between multiculturalism and social justice. They are interrelated, but they are also distinct. They come with two different sets of values.

(Thomas)

Thomas mentioned that “we can have institutions strongly reflect multicultural inclusion, but that struggle is happening in terms of professional counseling organizations with the leadership in the profession.”

I think certain professional counseling associations have done a better job or had an easier time with that, but there are some that are still struggling. As a whole. I feel like we are struggling as a profession in that capacity. One in the representation piece, but secondly is the piece of how do they really live and practice multicultural inclusion. So, it's both. Sometimes, when I think about one particular system in an institution, it's highly reflective of multicultural inclusion. Then we think about the overall profession, but it might not be there.

Especially with professional counseling organizations, I’ve seen this perspective from the state branch to the division level to the national level and it is really intriguing how each of those different organization levels and contexts really give and hinder, particularly for men of color. And in that space, I think about where Trevor was saying that there are certain divisions that are more welcoming than others. The interesting component is that some of the divisions have this whole message and statement of diversity and kind of talk about that, but then that's all they're doing. We're talking about it and we're not actually living it.

I think people like to compartmentalize what the counseling profession looks like. . . . I really believe that we are counselors and we show up in different settings and contexts: . . . and I think [inclusion has] always been the struggle. . . . The original founders at that table set the rules and anyone that comes to that table has to follow the rules and there's only a limited [number of seats at the] table. . . . I think organizations are, and maybe understandably so, are trying to build new legs and new surfaces for the table. They're trying to just extend the table so nobody has to be pushed out, no one has
to be left out or nobody has to [give up their space]. (Thomas)

Trevor, thoughtfully shared his depiction of multicultural inclusion:

I think [multicultural inclusion is] where as many people who want to be included are included; as many people as want to be at the table of diversity, this table of multiculturalism, are allowed to be there, and are allowed to define themselves, are allowed to have voice. . . . We need to take more of a holistic approach in terms of mind, body, spirit: not being so focused on the disease model of mental illness, if you will. The holistic approach is just getting away from just one model, really considering the whole individual; spiritual, the mental, the physical piece, all that integrated, not just looking at one separate system. . . . So again, we consider not only does everyone have a place at the table, we consider all the individuals’ belief systems, their values, and customs; what they're bringing to the table in terms of their worldview.

We don't exclude anyone whether it be gender, sexual orientation, ableism, or whatever the case might be. . . . [Then] people that don't have voices, are given voices, are allowed to tell their own stories. For me that's what multiculturalism is: those who want to be at the table, to be there and are allowed to tell their own stories, in their own voices. . . . We're still learning it, we're still defining it, we're still trying to get comfortable with it, some people will never, be comfortable with it, some people are just not going along with it. Like it's homogenous, “I like White milk. I don't like no chocolate milk. I don't like no almond milk. I don't like no Silk milk. I want some White milk. I don't like no Lactaid/lactose.” (Trevor)

According to Trevor, “within the counseling profession, [when] we look at the different divisions, I think there are some better, more welcoming than others.”

There's the AMCD. Well there's several. You know that's the one that came off the top of my head as one of the divisions of ACA that's very active. . . . They've focused the conferences [around multiculturalism]. . . . That's their mission, to advance the notion of multiculturalism within the counseling profession: to make sure that people can kind of understand how that relates to the counseling profession as a whole. . . . There's a certain responsibility that each organization has in terms of nurturing and welcoming new individuals into the profession and addressing the needs of membership. (Trevor)

Regarding definitions of multiculturalism and multicultural inclusion, Tahu stated:

When I think of inclusion, I think of the opposite of discrimination; where everything is open to everyone regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, that type of thing. When I think of inclusion at the school, just everyone has an equal opportunity to join whatever club or organization they want to pursue, whatever study they want to take, whatever class, [and] receive the help, aid, assistance or any type of thing without
worrying about being left out. [When I think of multiculturalism.] I would think being able to relate to different cultures, people of different culture, ethnicity, background; being able to work with them, relate with them, being able to establish a rapport, and connect with one another to develop that relationship. . . I think being open-minded and willing to learn, being aware of my biases and some of the assumptions that I might have, but being open enough to kind of challenge that, to learn about others and connect with others.

Holistic [multicultural inclusion] within the counseling profession; I would think just using it as a model, as a way to connect with people and connect with your client. . . . I think of what a school counseling program might look like where you address the fact that multiculturalism, inclusion is important as far as relating with students: just kind of putting that on the forefront. Saying that we have a diverse student body, we have a diverse student population, and we have to utilize different methods and different techniques as far as relating to students, their families, and their issues at home. [This would even be] outside of just the cultural ethnicity, but socioeconomic status is a big piece that kind of influences their behavior and a thought patterns the worldviews: taking all of that into mind. (Tahu)

Tahu’s perception of the counseling profession was framed by the authentic dialog he has been able to create and experience within his micro-community of counseling practice.

I really feel comfortable enough to just tell them, “that might be interpreted wrong, that might be insensitive.” Like, “White people always say this” or “White people always say that.” I can say that to them and also flip the other way: they'll come and ask me, “do all black people say this” or “do all black people say that.” I'm comfortable enough with them. I'm not offended, but I can let them know it's not all of us, it's like some of us, and kinda explain the thinking. It really helped their cultural competency as well as mine cuz I learned from them. (Tahu)

For Taj, defining multicultural incision “is typically like, (e) all of the above:”

I typically want inclusivity to have a feeling [such that] all are welcome at the perceived table. All have a place where they can feel comfortable and all have a voice or an opportunity to manifest their voice; so, that people know that they're being heard. . . . [Multicultural inclusion is] good training, good education, and the ability to be aware of the people in the room and the people who are possibly excluded. I remember Melissa Harris-Perry spoke of her philosophy as a feminist. I don't want to miss quote her, but I probably will. I think she asked, . . . ‘who’s being excluded from the table based on what we’re doing?’ I couldn't do it as well as she, but I always wanted to kind of ask myself, “Are we doing what's necessary so that we're not preventing someone from being here?” So, just that mindset, that everlasting consciousness leads to inclusivity. . . . Multiculturalism is supposed to be an area of counseling that infuses and allows for many
different types of cultures to exist and sometimes to be integrated into either a single thought or many different thoughts so people feel comfortable or able to engage with one another and not feel awkward. Even the processes of doing that so that these different groups of people can engage without any type of serious discourse or discord that cannot be managed.

What it would look like would be various groups represented in the counseling field, in the supervision field, and in counselor education at all stages and levels of the profession. And, wherever these reflections could not be seen, there would be diligent effort to make them present. But, you know, you can't talk about multicultural anything without talking about social justice. So, you can't just be promoting some type of face-value effort. You also have to have some action to go along with these efforts. The efforts need to be more than just, we feed the homeless and have some type of drive for a particular group, but we also do work to where we advocate and partner with communities. That would be, to me, holistic multicultural inclusion. And you know, it needs to be in the mission, it needs to be in the objectives, and it needs to permeate the classes. It would just be everywhere! (Taj)

Taj noted “AMCD and CSJ would be the two [multiculturally inclusive organizations]. ALGBTIC would be another.”

AMCD embodies multicultural inclusion by the very essence of their structure, mission, everything they promote, and also the work that they do. And I'm biased regarding multicultural inclusion, I think the other groups do it too, but they may do it with a [different] lens. CSJ will do it with social justice as the forefront and even ALGBTIC would do it with LGBT in the forefront, but I think all three definitely carry the banner of multiculturalism. (Taj)

Tapani provided several exemplars as he defined multicultural inclusion:

Oh, you can just tell by the way people treat you. The way they engage with you. You know, when you're speaking about something and they'll say, “Well let's explore that.” And they explore it. If after dialogue, they’re like, “well you know, that's kind of broad, maybe we can narrow it down. And, we go ahead and go back and forth and talk about certain things. Not just dismissing what you have to say. I think there's so many different ways you can view it as far as being [me, Caribbean and] American, or whatever because I am a person of color, I am a male of color, I come from a different cultural perspective, and so being able to include that: like, “hey, we need to look at this from this point of perspective;” or, being able to make sure that people are aware of possible cultural biases toward people from the [islands] who have color and whatnot; just being able to have someone say, “we didn't factor that in. Let's go ahead and think about that.” Or while we're moving forward, you can tell when people are really open to what you have to say from their facial expressions, from their level of engagement,
whether they're looking at you or if they're scowling or just frowning.

Multiculturalism is just not particular to race, color, its experience. To see value in every person and being open to those experiences whether you've never experienced it, but being able to be therein the moment with them as someone is talking about experiences of race, color, socioeconomic status, and these different things that they've experienced. . . . We grow up in a world where, from my experience, the world has perspectives, worldviews about people, how they should assimilate to other cultures, but multiculturalism opens the doors to be okay to meet people wherever they are, [whatever] nationality, creed or background they come from, and to be okay with that: Being understanding that this is a person and their experience is valid as well. It's not just about [the] majority of the cultural, “other people’s perspectives should be assimilated to what we're doing here.” No, multiculturalism opens it up where people can be their own individuals and still be accepted and remain: for everything that they experience, are passionate about, love or like, or want to explore. . . . [Multicultural inclusion is] opening those doors; you know we come from a very humanistic profession where we are supposed to allow people in, not judge people based on their past, or based upon one experience; giving allowances that people have bad days or we need to go ahead and be relatable to other people's experiences and relate to them as who they are and where they're at. (Tapani)

Tapani spoke of his perceptions of counseling organizations as mechanisms for connection and change:

I see the role of professional counseling organizations as empowering its members to facilitate change or facilitate thought that might invoke change, within that person or the persons that member comes in contact with. So, whether it's someone who will be teaching students and be impassioned by that specific membership that their affiliated with, to speak on those passions, or to mentor students to take roles, those who are interested in that counseling organization and working with certain populations. I kind of see it as a way of helping one develop professionally. (Tapani)

Tilian was quite direct in his definitions:

Inclusion to me is having the same access without determination of age, height, race, or any kind of things you can put a label on to discriminate against someone, to not give them that access and being offered the same opportunities for whatever it maybe: . . . So multicultural, to me really, is actively taking in the experiences of others, and I don't mean just in your immediate town and state, but I mean internationally what's going on in Syria, what's going on in the Middle East, what's going on in Canada, what's going on in China, what's going on in towns and states that don't look like your states, that are predominantly Mormon, towns that are West Virginian. As a counselor, I feel we have to take a lot in because we never know who's going to walk into our doors. We never know
where we're going to end up. I can move to a predominantly Latino community, but still a Hindu person can walk into my office. . . . I really think that multicultural means taking in many cultures’ historical experiences, historical background, current and relevant background experiences, political issues, religious, and race issues, gender issues: it's a lot and it needs to be taken in. It could be a lot for people to hold, but the awareness should be there. . . . So, I think multicultural is how we hire and how we train, so Miss Johnson can come from Indiana with a rural background, but it doesn't mean she can't work in an urban population. But, she has to be trained to do so and she has to have the want to learn about different cultures and their experiences aside from her own. (Tilian)

Tilian provided a historical perspective along with his self-defined scale of holistic multicultural inclusion manifestations within the counseling profession:

On a one-to-ten scale, I would say, 10-15 years ago, it was probably around three. Forty years ago, it was around a one or two. I think we're hovering around a five or six and progressing because the conversation is being talked about a lot. You know it's being brought up more as the norm. You know we have Arredondo and Sue who really pioneered all that work. I think because the population is becoming more diverse, how counseling has to reflect that. And who else is going to speak up for diverse populations, but helpers: social workers, psychologists, counselors because we directly work with those people. So, if we don't advocate for the diversity of the population, they lose a voice, right. So, I think the counseling profession has really begun to shift with a wave as immigration and the coloring of the United States has really become darker, that has also been the focus. Now, I realize, and I've only been counseling for a little over 10 plus years, that a lot happened. We’ve went from one or two chapters of multicultural issues, now we're constantly talking about it. Which I'm comfortable as hell talking about that, but I can see the older faculty struggle. They're the ones that are struggling the most. That's why our role is very important because we are the wave of keeping multicultural issues alive and vibrant so that it doesn't become one class alone or talked about in designated areas, but it's always talked about in meetings and classrooms, in the hallways.

It's because people like ourselves that not only live the life and have the experience and truly believe that this is truly the way that this should be discussed, we are the ones who are going to spearhead those conversations and make it a comfortable environment to do so: Not the ones that have been in the profession 30 years who are not used to being comfortable talking about [multiculturalism and multicultural inclusion] in person. . . . Counselors go through their personal journey first to be able to understand how other people move in the world. Unfortunately, it happens in the reverse. We teach them how other people work first, before we teach them about their own personal journey. And somewhere along the line they’re like, ‘Oh, I get it. I should work on myself first before I start working on others!’ (Tilian)
Teijo articulated his definitions as ongoing assessment and calls to action:

The way I would define inclusion is being very intentional about trying to assess whose voices aren't being represented in the spaces where I am and that I have the privilege of occupying; and then raising the issue about how come they're not here, how come those voices aren't represented, and what are we losing as a result of not having those voices represented. Because at that point in time we have to acknowledge that there's a deficit. . . Multiculturalism is acknowledging that there are voices, perspectives, experiences that have not been acknowledged and studied from a strengths-based perspective versus a deficit orientation; it's a knowledge that marginalized populations are not represented and taking steps to learn about those populations, those people, those communities to better inform our teaching, our research, our service, and our clinical practice. . . . The inclusion is the act of attempting to include and integrate voices that maybe under-represented, misrepresented, or marginalized. . . . to provide me or other counselor educators with the cultural humility and positioning me to be more culturally responsive to those needs and those voices in those communities cuz I don't know about them.

Inclusion and social justice is taking action toward making those voices, those experiences, those populations, and the strength of those populations; being intentional, being active in honoring them in my pedagogical practice; in my clinical practice; and my supervisory and educational role. So, the multicultural inclusion is a form of social justice advocacy; taking our knowledge base and applying it day-to-day where we have influence. . . . Being brave enough to take those steps in doing it: recognizing the benefit outweighs the risk and raising [the issue], even when people are uncomfortable, including myself. So, the multicultural inclusion is using the knowledge to inform action, which I typically equate to social justice work. (Teijo)

Part of Teijo’s perspectives about the counseling profession included limited opportunities for the distribution of multicultural scholarship:

[I think about] things like submitting proposals to the ACA conference. And, you know my stuff is going to be related to either men or black men, that when those things don't get accepted for presentation: you know the question, “is this about the quality of the proposal or is this about the content of the proposal, and how willingly does our umbrella professional organization want to readily and consistently listen to and learn about the experiences of people of color as a relates to the profession or when the people of color are the consumer or client base that we serve. (Teijo)

In defining multiculturalism and multicultural inclusion, Taavetti noted “that you would have to take into account the disparities:”

Inclusion would mean having services and opportunities available to all people not just to
a few. So, I would say inclusion would mean social justice, allowing people the same access and the same opportunity that everyone has. I'd have to say as a practitioner, inclusion if that means having access in terms of organizations and being part of what they're trying to do, and a presence, value of my opinion kind of thing: inclusion you know, it's been a mixed bag of inclusion about somethings and exclusion about others. At the same time, I understand that if you're given an opportunity then you have to try to ensure that things change: that you're working toward change; that we do activities that are more inclusive of working with the people that have been excluded for so long and continue to be excluded.

Multiculturalism [is] a person's history. I think multiculturalism is speaking to truth about people’s true history, who are they, and what have they been truly doing here. You know, it’s more than just looking at our differences in food and our differences in language; these kinds of things. How we interpret the world around us is multiculturalism. You know, Whites don't interpret the world in the same way that African-Americans do. And, we have to speak to why. The impact of media on creating stereotypes: all of these things, we have to have a true understanding of how we formed cultural identity in this country. And so, that's what I would define multiculturalism as: developing an honest understanding of history, a person's history, and the greater values of the dominant culture that impact them and how it's maintained. How institutions maintain it. Yeah that's multiculturalism. (Taavetti)

Taavetti’s perceptions regarding multicultural inclusivity within the counseling profession were communicated as neutrality and mostly a surface level show of practice.

[My scale,] one being, “Not even close, like it’s not even on our radar or are resenting it.” One would be, “being against it” and 10 would be, “being for it.” I would say we're at three, yeah. Where we’re sort of neutral to it. We put it in our syllabi, CACREP, all of that, but we don't believe in it in any way, shape, form, or fashion. (Taavetti)

According to Tybalt, “multiculturalism is absolutely every little aspect of who you are:”

I don't care if it's the barber shop or hair salon, that's actually part of it. The music you listen to helps actually define your culture and makes you feel like you belong. Believe it or not, just through human interaction, you will eventually be able to find certain parts of what I'm doing to be symbolic. At least, that's my theory. I mean look at multiculturalism as intersectionality: it's everything working together. It's your religious faith, and how [you live] within that religious faith. Every little point goes out and comes down. Like a genogram, but you can do the genogram to you. Now multiculturalism would be to do that genogram, if you will, to everybody. Let's include your goals. Let's include everything, but also let's include your culture.

Inclusion [is about] how to include culture into every piece of anything you discuss. Always keep that in mind. When it comes to counseling, when you're asking a
client a question, however they respond, keep in mind that their responses, even if it's what brings you in today, as vague of a question as that may be, the way in which they respond is an actual representation of their culture. From the difference of saying, “I asked you a question” and “I axed you a question.” It doesn't matter how you say it. It's not right or wrong, it's whatever. It just is. It does have representation of the culture. So, inclusion, it's not just a theory. It's something that you can actually really benefit a lot from. [Considering] how to include culture in every piece, from diagnosis to asking clients if feeling this way is common at home, is it common in your neighborhood, is it common in your community, is it uncommon in your community. I'm not trying to plug Clement Von Trust, but look at culture and dysthymia. You know, when you talk about that, if you read the article, and I'm not saying that anyone has that mild depression, but you're telling me that because of African American or Black experiences in this country, for God knows how many years, you're making a case of raising my awareness that these might be some of the possible reasons to why individuals from that group act the way that they do and react in situations. Wow man! Well that's inclusion, in my head.

That would be intersectionality in its essence: . . . a bunch of different cross-streets. That’s how I’ve come to visualize it. It’s everything. . . . Alright, so, inclusion and multiculturalism: it's how everything works together. Its how you have to include every little street sign from that analogy or metaphor. Everyone’s street sign is included in everything else that exists for you. So, it's never just I’m American (arm gesture like a street) and then just male (second arm gesture as intersecting first arm). Actually, they're always included together, but then you have to add to it: so, heterosexual, abled, right-handed. I know how to read. I know how to write. Multiculturalism is my degree. I have a master's degree. [The state I live in]. That's even my culture. How many bars are actually by your house? How many restaurants? What kind of restaurants? You know all that stuff: That's inclusion. It’s including every little bit of your reality. Whatever your reality looks like, multicultural is a part of it. . . . Then I have to take in mind that the person that I'm speaking to also has however many years of experiences behind you of that individual also being portrayed that way by society, which eventually impacts who you are, how you view the world, and your view of human nature and blah, blah, blah, whatever. The same applies for everyone. (Tybalt)

Tybalt acknowledged dual experiences of professionals talking about multiculturalism and much needed work to be multiculturally inclusive.

So far, every single interaction I've had in this profession, when multiculturalism has come up, I have yet to hear and it doesn't matter who, but no one comes from that whole idea that it needs to be separate boxes anymore and when they talk about it you sense passion. At least people care about it.

What's funny is, if I am the Human Rights Committee President, you are the multicultural division President, and our ideas are similar, but different, instead of us working together and collaborating to further everything, I need to make sure that the
human rights committee gets the credited to do and same as you. We worked against each other and that's what I'm seeing.

I personally think that we have a long way to go and I think, like history always says it, the people at the top don't want anything to change. Why would they? It doesn't matter how philosophically minded you, myself, or anyone else are, if you just look at it pragmatically and objectively; why would the king want to change anything to change his status. It doesn't make sense. I guess unfortunately it may not be in our DNA. So, it has to take the Robin Hood's. It has to take the people in the forest and the people that feel secluded to make change and to demand change. That's what's coming out of this for me. This might not be the biggest step that's going to lead us to the moon and back, but it'll get us on the spaceship. And enough people have to ask these questions otherwise we're not going to move anywhere. We're not we're not going to go forward. We might only go backwards, or the worst of it all, is just staying in one place. (Tybalt)

In defining multicultural inclusion, Tiki noted:

I've been thinking a lot about criticality and multiculturalism and their intersection. The tradition of multiculturalism, I agree with Nancy Fraser, that it kind of essentializes differences. Multiculturalism as it's taught in counseling: I think that in African American studies, in Black studies, in Latino studies, and women's studies and feminist and critical studies; I think they've paid more attention to critiquing multiculturalism as a concept. When it's coined, it was this kind of idea that: we're all different and there's different people around us; so, we have to learn how to respect those differences and be aware of differences. So, there's this evolution of essentializing the differences in between people and stopping there, which is how I think some of us teach multiculturalism in certain contexts. . . I would define multiculturalism as kind of this intricate complexity and diversity: that it's a continuation of what differences and complexities exist in between individuals. No matter who you are or where you're from.

One of the things that I did learn, that was really important to me, was in my master's program, that even if someone comes to you and there are White male, it doesn't mean that they don't have culture, that they're not aware of. That might be why they have these types of ideas that they just have this two-dimensional perspective on themselves, they're just this one-dimensional character of a human. They don't understand their own complexity and their own diversity. But, critical multiculturalism, I would define as an awareness of those complexities and those diversities that continue. Then the structures and systems of inequalities that arise based on those differences: that not everyone's treated the same. Everyone, as a counselor, has to have an equity mindedness to talk to your clients about those things because if you don't, nobody else is going to. We know that nobody else is going to. No one else is going to go at the grocery store to ask, “What's it been like to be a Black man or Black woman in United States?” So, why wouldn't we as counselors introduce those conversations?

I define inclusion as the ability to give up my seat at the table when I know that somebody else could be filling that chair with a more representative voice. . . . Inclusion
is not only we include everyone at the table, but we understand that sometimes we have to give up our space at the table so that other people can take that space and be represented. If there's another Brown Latino man at the table there doesn't have to be two of us; unless there's like four White men. Then there should be more people of color. . . . It’s the necessity of making room at the table and giving up space at the proverbial table so that there is a representation of diversity and complexity. . . . I don't believe it means making room and giving up space for people who represent oppressive ideologies. (Tiki)

Using his own scale, Tiki discussed his perceptions of the counseling profession:

I think if 10 is that ‘we're doing it and we're doing well.’ Then, I would say we're at like a three, okay. But, if 10 is knowing that we need to do it, then I'd say we're around a five because I’ve just seen too many frustrated colleagues of color. I've seen too many queer frustrated colleagues who are White that are like, ‘Why the f***! Don't people get it; that this is a problem? Why is it so hard?’ So, that's why I would say if it's ‘doing it,’ we're probably at three, but if it's ‘understanding that we need to get there, a five. But, I can't give it any higher than that because there's just so many people talking about the fact that it's a problem and that we're not doing [anything substantial to address it]. Counseling today runs all these stories about race relations and intercultural couples, but none of them are about how do we improve, how do we change. (Tiki)

Participant definitions of multicultural inclusion and perceptions of multiculturalism in counseling are influential on participant perceptions of the profession; thus, these influence their phenomenological experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession as men of color who are professional counselors. These men of color who are counseling professionals disclosed some of their perceptions about the counseling profession. Their perceptions are a mix of which were described as positive and some described as disheartening along the continuum of multicultural inclusivity.

**Thematic Factors**

Given the reciprocal nature of inclusion, the emergent themes from this study were interpreted through participants’ overt disclosures, covert disclosures, and to some degree, patterns of non-disclosure (Smith et al., 2009). Participant narratives, in addition to their
definitions and perceptions, were coded and used to determine factors that influenced participants of multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession as men of color who are professional counselors. Included in Appendix M are five umbrella thematic categories and categorical factors that were discerned during data analysis and interpreted under four denoted themes and 12 micro themes.

Overview of Themes

Through conducting 10 individual interviews and one focus group, unique and insightful descriptions of multicultural inclusion experiences of 10 men of color who are counseling professionals were uncovered. Four themes and 12 micro themes emerged through interpretative analysis phases. The two research questions for this study and the interpreted themes are organized within Table 3 following here.

Table 3

Summary of Interpretative Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Query</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1: Experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession</td>
<td>Inclusion is active</td>
<td>Acknowledgement, acceptance, and curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusion, but not necessarily multicultural inclusion</td>
<td>Compartmentalization as a myth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exclusion as familiar and normative</td>
<td>Factors that influence exclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Query</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ2: How do perceptions of multicultural inclusion influence engagement in professional counseling organizations</td>
<td>Engagement despite and because of multicultural exclusion</td>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paying it forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internalized vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self as a factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organically answered RQ3: What men of color recommend for increasing multicultural inclusion</td>
<td>A call for living the aspiration</td>
<td>Acknowledgment and outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultivating diverse new leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Genuine commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Training and practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Systematic organizational change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most prominent theme that emerged from this investigation was that the manifestation of inclusion requires active and intentional behavioral choices in both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains. Regarding the framework of this study, participants communicated that when inclusion was experienced, it was not necessarily multicultural inclusion. Participants narratives were indicative of inclusion experiences being regularly experienced as marginalized inclusion. While participants idealized inclusion, experiences of exclusion were considered “normal,” typical, unsurprising, and anticipated more often, than not. Nevertheless, participant internalized aspirations and professional visions of inclusion were strong influences for participant’s engagement within the counseling profession. Evidence of these themes follows here.
Theme One: Inclusion Is Active

Across participant narratives and experiences, the idea that an effort towards inclusion, particularly multicultural inclusion, required intentional active behavioral choices was evident. Multicultural inclusion is not something that just happens haphazardly. Multicultural inclusion as an active construct was a prominent and pervasive theme communicated through participants’ narratives. As will be discussed further in the “Interpretative Discussion,” multicultural inclusion requires individuals to take intentional action to include. Multicultural inclusion requires allocation of intention, time, resources, and energy. Herein are participant excerpts supporting this theme.

I need to not be complacent. From that ethical standing point, that's really tied into what we believe about multiculturalism. We really need to be active and really see [ourselves] as developmental throughout our entire career. We really do have to work at this and it's not reaching a baseline. . . . At the end of the day, we need to be doing something active that shows within our organizations and our specific contexts that we are doing something for these communities and not just talking about them; . . . create more opportunities, be intentional about the activities that were doing, and steer them towards multicultural inclusion. (Thomas)

As Tilian was preparing to move into a new counselor educator role he noted that “To me it’s like, “okay, this is a big-time opportunity here!” But, it's really what do I do with it!

You can just openly talk about it. It’s constantly in your face, so it's common rhetoric: good, bad, or ugly it doesn't mean it’s right, but you have a platform for open discussion. . . . When I see something ugly, you can engage, as opposed to [saying], ‘I'm going to let it ride cuz this isn't the atmosphere for it. . . . Comfortable / uncomfortable, [we’re] going to have that conversation. (Tilian)

Tybalt described experiencing feelings of excitement when multiculturalism is active, and when he experiences himself as a mentor encouraging active multicultural inclusion: “It’s when I hear student broaching it with a client. I love that stuff and it happens with the students,
like they're doing it because you're up there telling them to do it.” Moreover, in Tybalt’s critique about multicultural inclusion in the counseling profession he described what addressing the need beyond talking about or simple writings about it:

You guys are talking about it, you're writing about it, and I love what you have to say, but isn't it time for us to take the students, isn't it time for us to embody the action piece? Practices need to be spoken about in the research, the publications. . . . But, how are you now applying this at your community center? How does this work in your community? How are you raising awareness? What are you doing outside of putting it up in some journal or presenting it at some conference? (Tybalt)

Other participants had their own conjectures about inclusion as requiring action:

I had a conversation [with a colleague]. We met and I talked with him about social justice and why is there such an emphasis on action in the new competencies. He talked, ‘because it doesn't matter if we're aware, if we have knowledge, and we know behaviors that exemplify social justice, if we're not actually doing anything about it: the action.’ (Tiki)

Including people’s worldview. Giving access, allowing access to the same resources that everyone else has access to. When I see people, who are well-off, or people who have privilege, reaching out to people who don't, that's multicultural inclusion. When I see people taking the power that they have and using it in order to uplift the condition of people who have less, much less, I mean don't even have the same access, that's multicultural inclusion. (Taavetti)

At the end of the day, I mean we could sit up in our offices and conduct research and use technology; and technology can be great because it provides a capacity for access, but at the same time it can be a limitation because you're actually not interpersonally engaged with a person or directly engaged with a person. It's really important because at the end of the day if your research don’t mean nothing, if it's just theoretical in scope and it's not changing people's lives for the better or helping move the needle from one form of functioning to a healthier, better, and more formed way of functioning then what are we doing it for. (Teijo)

Factors That Influence Inclusion Experiences

This study was not designed as a factor analysis. However, participant disclosures were indicative of factors that influenced their individualized perception and experiences of
multicultural inclusion. Some of these emerging factors were the representation of a diverse individuals in leadership, being allowed to share one's own narrative in one's own voice, access to various levels of professional resources, and receiving help that is helpful based on one's individual intersectionality. These factors are communicated through the threads of participants’ narratives. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

[Inclusion is enacted,] one by way of being mentored. . . . Even as a doctoral student, my experiences weren't all bad: even if I'm one of a few voices and faces of color. Folks on my dissertation committee, particularly my chair, him writing letters of recommendation for me, encourage me, and reminding me that basically, “Even though I'm a White man and I may have a different kind of capital than you have or maybe you don't even have it, but your voice is important in this space and so if you're willing to pursue this opportunity then I encourage you to do it and all you got to do is say the word and I'll do whatever I can.” (Teijo)

Positive relationships do contribute a lot to inclusion. It's a significant component of it and if we don't have those positive working relationships I think that it dehumanizes us. . . . One is seeing what has happened specifically with certain leaders who have invited me to table, but really see the value in my work and really value my contributions, my voice. (Thomas)

What makes the feeling great is you can relax, you can be yourself, and you can express yourself without any type of misunderstanding. You can talk about topics that are relevant and relative to your community, they be received, and it's a conversation it's not about, “oh that's nice and kind of move on or brush on to something else. You can talk about trivial things like whether or not LeBron was lazy when they lost the game against the Celtics and really digest that. You can talk about the new Kendrick Lamar album and how he speaking to a very specific group, the ways in which he goes about delivering the message, and how you may want to use some of that in your professional dialogue. And not just bring up the subject, but have really in depth, engaging, conversation about that. Or even on a more stiff level, in meetings you can say comments and people can recognize that you weren't totally understood and they'll pick up on that and piggyback on your comment so that the thought is more palatable. So, it's kind of like I will relay your response for you, so you don't have to carry this on your own. (Taj)

I think the other day when I was at lunch with the students of color in our doctoral program and the professor was there that was a moment that I felt I could just be me, that I didn't have to be careful. I didn't have to be quiet. (Tiki)
Well, you felt like you belonged. You felt like you wanted to be there. You looked forward to the experience. . . . You know, you get those little moments in life like, “Wow, I was really blessed and fortunate to have that experience.” . . . I got a little bit of that when I went up to the ASGW conference. . . . Even though a lot of those folks had known each other for a while, they were eager to welcome new people. Not all groups are eager to welcome new people. (Trevor)

Acknowledgement, Acceptance, and Curiosity

By definition, acknowledgement signifies the act of admitting the truth about someone or confirming receipt of something. Acceptance is defined as the quality or state of receiving something offered or admittance and approval of someone into a group. The significance of curiosity is delineated as the “inquisitive interest in others’ concerns.” The intersection of experiencing these three concepts, acknowledgement, acceptance, and curiosity, was a particular crux of multicultural inclusion. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Tilian professed that, “The more a person knows about cultural issues, the more they can figure out who they are and the more they can figure out how they can and can't be effective as a counselor.” He described acknowledgement, acceptance, and curiosity as an internalized cognitive aspect of being:

Adults live their lives three ways: (1) denying their childhood and childhood experiences, (2) accepting their childhood and childhood experience, or (3) hybridizing and integrating their childhood experience with their present self. Three, I think, is the healthiest. . . . Running away from it is usually conflictual. Accepting it, whether it's healthy or not can be conflictual also because it makes you be rigid and one-dimensional. With hybridization, I think there is flexibility: there it's accepting who we are, who we want to be and realizing that I have room to grow. Knowing I can actually get rid of some things my family told me and not having to be married [to my childhood teachings]. (Tilian)

Similarly, for Taj, active acknowledgement, acceptance, and curiosity is “more of a mindset.

Something I'm reminded of to keep in the back of my head to remember, we serve more than just
our own.” That his curiosity about how to serve the entire group will help move him towards that active inclusion.

I had to always remember that I'm speaking for the group and not for myself or that I am teaching to the group and not to a particular demographic within the group. Well in a similar fashion, just as Barack Obama was the president of the United States and not just the president of Black America, I represent or serve an entire group and not just a particular microcosm within the group. I have to put the group's needs sometimes ahead of my own, many times ahead of my own. I think that I have to do what best serves the entire group. (Taj)

Tybalt emphasized the curiosity component of this thematic triad in the action to learn about an individual as a human being was catalytic for active multicultural inclusion.

If anything, with one gentleman we’re sitting around talking and; so, he asked me, "Where you from?” Anyway, we got in the conversation about [me], and it was nice to see someone just interested in my experiences. Not as a counselor; but, I like that idea of you know, he's already graduated, he’s my elder, he's been in the profession for longer than me, and he’s more interested in my human experience rather than my professional experience. (Tybalt)

Tapani described active multicultural inclusion through acknowledging, accepting, and being curious about “anything that kind of promotes certain aspects of issues or barriers that certain populations face on a day-to-day basis; ostracism or discrimination and different things like:”

Being open to other people cultures, validating their experiences, reaching out to see how or when you can help or assist people who are trying to or seeking to get involved. I think [it’s] just based upon a level of advocacy, mentorship, and promoting those areas so people can feel like it's safe enough, they will be heard, or being valued and mattering even if they come from a different cultural environment or several different cultures; economic status or different population. Giving people the benefit of the doubt that what they're trying to articulate has value and merit. (Tapani)

Taavetti referred to human history as a critical curiosity entry point to be combined with acknowledgement and acceptance:
I learned that history is probably the most important thing that a counselor can learn, how the community is developed. . . . And if you go back far enough, everyone was poor regardless of the color of their skin. If people could just understand how much we have in common, they could maybe work a little harder at trying to advocate to eliminate the status quo of poverty, of rich and poor the way that we see it. (Taavetti)

So, I think that to me that's a form of multicultural inclusion: recognizing that everybody doesn't have your family structure, everybody doesn't have your identity, everybody has a range of roles outside of what we do here, and no one needs to be questioned about those things because we acknowledge that our roles intersect and converge at different points. (Teijo)

Teijo’s example about diversity in individual roles and family structures was another type of multicultural inclusion action opportunity for acknowledgement, acceptance, and curiosity.

Creating Opportunities for Inclusion

Interestingly enough, when participants were asked about their experiences of being multiculturally included, discussions about their actions to create opportunities for others’ inclusion were described. These disclosures emphasized the perspective that inclusion is an active process so much so that participants were reflective about how they have enacted inclusion in conjunction with considering how they have experienced inclusion. More so, there was this implicit drive to create opportunities for inclusion because they themselves have not always felt included. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

For me [multicultural inclusion] means making room, giving up space to ensure that diversity and complexity is represented and that conversations happen around what those differences mean in the everyday lives of the people that matter, the people that are forgotten about, the people that fall through the cracks. . . . [And,] it isn't just increasing the number of people at the table, but understanding that sometimes it means having to give away your position at that table. (Tiki)

I always say, “it's not always about me.” . . . I think it really does require an open conversation about how we would like to go about that process [of inclusion]. Otherwise,
what happens is somebody who's in power, if they get to decide what is [truth] for us, then it just doesn't make sense because then it's almost reinforcing that whole hegemonic relationship of power. . . . You know, it's the real experiences of people, uncloaked and honest about what's actually going on here, what is actually really truly happening here in this country and how it impacts our mental health. (Thomas)

[I think about inclusion as] being able to just give people opportunity to grow. [I think about] mentorship within our [doc] program, and it doesn't even have to be somebody of color. It could be somebody of whiteness that's advocating for you. Just giving you a little bit of encouragement like, ‘hey would you ever think about [this]? We need to give you this opportunity. Hey, I think you'd be perfect for this, or you could possibly do this.’ Giving that little bit of influence, scaffolding, and helping a person develop in their professional role as a counselor educator, as advocate, or as a counselor. (Tapani)

So it's really taking the theories from that Eurocentric model and saying, “Oh Johnny would think existentialism means who I am in this world. Okay, that's the American way, how about in South Africa? Okay, well, look that up!” That to me increases multicultural awareness. I don't want my students to be thinking that, “I have this one picture in my head about what this client is going to look like whenever I think about a situation.” . . . It's the same thing, when you think about bipolar disorder who do you think of, White female, right. Now I've regulated that person as who I'm treating in my head whatever theory or approach I learn in my class. So, if I as an educator don't force you to think about what a Latino male who has a bipolar disorder . . .: Those to me are the important parts about multicultural training: is really stretching. (Tilian)

To my understanding of inclusion, people allow me access because of the color of my skin, tokenism, and I have to use that in order to try to create change for the people that I serve, which is primarily the African American community, middle class and poor people who are very excluded in many ways from participating in the pursuit of liberty and prosperity. . . . I work with a lot of African American professionals and giving them a place to articulate their fear of failure, fear of society; being able to speak to that and then helping them to recognize their triumph. In my classroom, we’re always looking at public policy, at whatever the administration is talking about, and how it will affect families. (Taavetti)

I'm saying, “Hey, I want to introduce you to these particular people and they're all people of color. And this one, because the conference is in his or her home city, they're having a little thing at their house; so, we're going to go.” But then you have other faculty members who happened to be, “Why?” Who said, “We’re all going to go out together.” And well, “No we're not.” “We see y'all every day, so let these students get to networking.” Things like that. . . . “Because they want to connect with people outside of their academic community at their own home institution. And a lot of times, those
connections are with other people of color and I shouldn't have to explain it to you. Why can't you just accept it for what it is? Encouraging it, welcoming it, and perpetuating those kinds of experiences versus again trying to take the norms that exist at our institution and flex them in a different environment because you think things should be the same when they're not. Because their predominant identity in this moment is student, black student who is gay, and they want to go connect with LGBT folks in their community from across the profession who are in different institutions. . . . So, I think those are the spaces: when I'm in my community, even in the profession without apology, without explanation; that we just going to do it and enjoy the value of those times because they're few and far between. (Teijo)

Inclusion Sometimes in Some Spaces

Participants spoke to sporadic experiences of multicultural inclusion in smaller groups or micro-communities of the counseling profession. Experiencing multicultural inclusion throughout all micro-communities of the counseling profession and, thus, the counseling profession as a whole, were not perspectives that were part of participants’ narratives.

Participant experiences of multicultural inclusion were regularly isolated to specific contexts. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Tilian described geographical differences in experiencing multicultural inclusion:

It's so isolative when you live in areas that are rural and I'm speaking for myself that you have to pick the times when to talk about multicultural issues when it's convenient to everyone or when its designated the time we could talk about it. And when it's not designated they're like, “Why are you bringing it up? (Tilian)

Tybalt’s reflection about being included professionally and not acknowledged culturally is something he was aware of and has ignored:

Even at times when I've given cross-cultural [presentations] at different conferences, I've done a lot of culture work, multicultural work, nobody asked [about my identity]. For me, that's fine. It doesn't make my presentation good. It doesn't make it bad, doesn't change the information. It's just a matter of maybe you don't care and maybe that's okay with me that you don't care. (Tybalt)
Taj, Thomas, and Teijo experienced multicultural inclusion most fervently around micro-communities of individuals who embraced and acknowledged their own multicultural intersectionality:

[I experience multicultural inclusion] when I'm in the presence of other people who reflect or embody multicultural principles, when I'm engaged in multicultural discussions, when I do multicultural work. . . . [When I'm around] people who are typically very conscious and very aware, who have a very high multicultural competency: who are very competent in terms of their multicultural identity. That's typically where I feel the most comfortable. . . . When I'm with my multicultural people [multicultural inclusion] happens quite frequently, either directly or indirectly it happens: and it's a great feeling. (Taj)

Sometimes it's like either I'm conditionally accepted or either I'm tokenized or either marginalized. . . . Conferences are where I really live and living in such a way because we get to talk about these issues and we get to resonate with these issues as a part of our daily experiences. Like, “it's happening in your institution? It’s happening in mine. It’s happening where you work? Happens where I work.” (Thomas)

Most frequently, [I experience multicultural inclusion] when I'm with my community in the profession. So, when I'm able to go to conferences and connect with other Black men, other people of color. I find that most rewarding. I find that most fulfilling not having to explain: taking off the teacher role. Like [not] functioning like a teacher to explain to a colleague who doesn't understand why it's important for me not to hang out with y'all, but hang out with the people of color who I don't get a chance to see most frequently. (Teijo)

In a similar vein, Trevor’s most “most welcoming, inclusive, diverse, multicultural experience [he’s] had in a while” was among the ethnic diversity of this doctoral cohort. Tiki corroborated this notion from his own experiences: that where there is diverse representation was where they experienced multicultural inclusion.

When I'm around certain colleagues of mine, you know. I would say our cohort that I was a part of back [in my doctorate], there were 14 of us. There were three African-American males, there were seven black women and one was from [Africa]; one [from the islands]; the other five African American, two Caucasian males, and two Caucasian females. So very diverse. It was probably the most diverse group of cohorts that they
had in a while. I would say that that was really a great experience in terms of feeling welcomed. (Trevor)

I see it being done. I think I see it in small groups like I said about inclusion, “up to a point;” there's multicultural inclusion, up to a point. Then when it starts to make people uncomfortable, it derails because it's there's too much White fragility there. There’s just so much anxiety that it derails the effort. But don’t I see it on an organizational scale, no. . . . I think my biggest experiences of inclusion have been at tables that are populated by predominantly people of color. My best inclusion experiences have been at tables that are not typical orthodox tables; like, it's just people that are an amalgamation of people from margins. That's where I've felt most comfortable. (Tiki)

These excerpts were illustrations of this theme and thematic aspect that manifestations of multicultural inclusion are not something that passively exists or occurs by chance. Manifesting multicultural inclusion requires active intentionality. For these participants, multicultural inclusion experiences were sporadic, marginal, and often inconsistently experienced. There was particular inconsistency among colleagues of Whiteness who have not acknowledged their own multicultural intersectionality or who are not engaged in critical self-reflection about how they perpetuate multicultural oppression and/or exclusion.

Theme Two: Inclusion, But Not Necessarily Multicultural Inclusion

This concept of multicultural inclusion was important to differentiate at the outset of this phenomenological investigation. Each participant spoke to some level of inclusion within the counseling profession by virtue of education and credentialing as counseling professionals. Counseling scholars spoke to the importance of not only being allowed into a community, but the importance of being able to show up and be acknowledged as a multicultural individual with a particular intersectionality as important for truly experiencing inclusion (Abrams et al., 2005; Cox, 1991; Hansen, 2010a; Harley et al., 2002; Leong & Kim, 1991; Mauk, 2014; Moodley,
2007; Smith & Silva, 2011; Sue & Sue, 2016; Wrenn, 1962; Yuval-Davis, 2006). The ability for counseling professionals to actively include multiculturally diverse individuals with a collection of diverse intersectionalities would be multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. Participant experiences of multicultural inclusion were not always present even when professional counselor inclusion was experienced. Herein are participant excerpts in support of this theme and its thematic aspects.

First, an excerpt regarding ethnicity from Tybalt:

No one has ever excluded me. But then again, it goes back to that, a few questions ago, nobody knows [my ethnic identity] anyway. . . . This has happened to me, if I'm standing next to [a Black man], I am a Black man, no if, ands, or buts. If I'm standing next to a White guy, I'm a White guy. If I'm standing with someone who looks Hispanic, I am now Hispanic. . . . So, when it comes to the inclusion and exclusion it's just been, you could say I've been very neutral in both. . . . My biggest fear is actually my dissertation: Whenever, I'm done with it. My biggest fear is that people are going to look at the name and say, “Oh, boy here we go now. We either have an expert or he's has an axe to grind.” It's not about that. It's look at the work, look at what's there. . . (Tybalt)

Second, an excerpt on collectivist cultural differentiation from Tilian:

[Professors] realized themselves they weren't doing a strong job really tapping into what students of color needed to be successful. They thought just admitting them was good enough. . . . That goes a [long way,] but if you don't know . . . that we need that non-cognitive assurance, you're just not going to [ignore] it cuz you're so used to working with a population that doesn't need it. [Such] that when you have to differentiate, you don't know how to . . . Then you lose a lot of students that you admit. (Tilian)

Third, an excerpt regarding majority cultural privilege from Tiki:

My experience has been: there’s inclusion up to a point. People allow me to come to the table. . . . But, after a certain point when you start to make people uncomfortable, then there's no longer inclusion. Like, “you have to come to our table and sit with us at this table, but this is still our table and you have to follow the Robert's Rules of our table, and not make us uncomfortable. . . . That’s the last rule on the fine print, “we reserve the right to kick you off of the table if you don't do it our way!” (Tiki)
Fourth, an excerpt about honoring familial diversity form Teijo:

When I feel like my assertions, my arguments, my recommendations aren't questioned on their merit. And if that doesn't make sense, I'm thinking of a particular instance. When as a guy, who's married with two teenage children, . . . and my kids are at a particular age, right now, when their schedules are pretty demanding and their needs are pretty demanding. And, if I say I can't come to a meeting because I have family needs: I feel like there's a form of inclusion that takes place when people are like, “Cool! Bounce. Do what you got to do!” You know, but when I've been in spaces when other people who have similar family dynamics or similar needs or pulls on their roles outside of counselor education, outside of the faculty role people [have been] like, “Well I'm just taking notice of who's not here/who's here.” And I'm like, . . . is it because they're need outside of their role as a faculty member dictates whether you're going to accept them or accept the reason why they are not here? (Teijo)

Fifth and finally, an excerpt regarding professional interest marginalization from Thomas: Superficially they want to say that they appreciate and the honor diversity. And sometimes I think, “Well I think you're full of crap!” . . . We often make this assumption that because someone is identifying as a man of color, your interest must solely be multiculturalism or that your interest must be social justice. I have conversations with other colleagues where that's not even their area of interest, but people place that assumption on them. As people of color, as people who are reflected in multiple minority communities, it's interesting when people just think that must be your interest and then they didn't even ask. (Thomas)

Compartmentalization as a Myth

Compartmentalization implies the ability to or attempt at separating otherwise unified entities or concepts (Merrian-Webster, 2018). Through compartmentalization, one is able to consider and engage with the segregated entity or constructs in isolation from otherwise connected or related facets. Participant narratives reinforced what Crenshaw (1989) described as intersectionality. The notion that the intersection between facets of identity is where lived narrative experiences of the individual or community are illuminated.

Within this investigation, participants alluded that whenever compartmentalization of multicultural identities was attempted, the impact of being oppressed, marginalized, excluded
was experienced on some level. This myth of compartmentalization was observed two-fold. One reference was the myth of colleagues enacting multicultural exclusion among colleagues and still being able to enact multicultural inclusion with clients or students. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Yes, it's very much a linkage because I think especially for counselor educators who haven't done that critical self-work, they're not going to be able to really recognize and own what happens in their privileges when they work with their clients and students. So, it's very challenging to me when I see that because . . . I can totally see, as a counselor educator, that they might be more aggressive in the classroom and then microaggressive towards clients and students in other contexts. (Thomas)

We see faculty members over talking each other. . . . It's like if you're demonstrating these skills in a simple meeting how must you be in in session with clients and with your teaching your students. You know hopefully they are consistent, but I see inconsistencies. . . . There may be some empirical evidence out there probably dig through the literature about how that sometimes bleeds through into your meetings and interactions with clients, and in the associations. (Trevor)

We're supposed to be the people who are non-judging. We're supposed to be the people that are able to help people move across the bridge from their fears to their quality life. So, if we're not in an atmosphere that people can do so, then how can we expect our clients to go out into the world and advocate for themselves and advocate for others like them if they don't feel they have people they can come to counselors to talk about these issues they're struggling with and how to figure out how they can collaborate so they can get that braveness that they need to go out in the world and live there most quality life. (Tilian)

I am floored at times to watch the interpersonal and group dynamics that exist in our faculty meetings and how little at times our faculty can demonstrate the micro skills that we teach in a techniques course. And I say to myself, “is that how you are in session?” . . . I absolutely think there's an absolute relationship. Now, I don't have anything to validate it empirically, but I think there's an absolute strong relationship and may even be predictive of the ways that we as counselor educators are in roles where we have the opportunity to support students and how open we are, how receptive we are whether that reception is to critical or constructive feedback or praise, acknowledgement, and affirmation; and, how the level of receptiveness is demonstrated in that faculty member’s classroom or in supervision or in their own clinical practice. And, I understand and can acknowledge how we all have to comport for different environments and what those
environments requirement. So, can I come in here and be firm and hard in a faculty meeting and then turn around and be warm and soft and function like I have good listening ears. Yeah, yeah, we can all do that, but when I see consistent behavior that says you really are not demonstrating the skills that we teach in our interaction and it's hard for me to believe that that absolutely changes in a moment when you step into a classroom [or counseling space]. (Teijo)

[Professors] tell us about having unconditional positive regard for our clients and what not. And you listen to that and you like, “wow!” You soak it in. And then when you have this negative interaction with the people who are teaching you; I'm like, “damn, there's something wrong with this. This does not connect. This is supposed to be a profession where we teach these counseling skills and they've even told us this would be reflected in your daily lives outside of this profession. And to see that [negativity] and really meaningful interactions within our profession, within the pedagogy experience [turned oppressive], for me it's very disturbing. . . . There's something wrong with this if this is a person who's supposed to be teaching and being a role model of sorts, how are you facilitating growth by being demeaning or totally shutting someone down when they come to you, when they're looking for you for guidance. When I think about that, it makes me wonder what this person is like in session. (Tapani)

The second reference was the myth of compartmentalization was the idea that when discounting some aspect(s) of one’s intersectionality, one could still be manifesting multicultural inclusion.

It's really intriguing the types of conversations that we do have because it's as if people assume that we're one or the other and we're not. That dichotomous thinking really leads us to really only identify this one identity. It's usually when people see [race] because it's so convenient for them. They always want to see what racial and ethnic diversity looks like and celebrate that, but then they don't understand that this intersection gives me a very unique experience. (Thomas)

And so, I think, as an educator and as a counselor, I have to practice what I preach, which is why I take in a lot of information and awareness of what's going on. I may not be an expert in everything, but I can have a conversation about everything and that's the kind of counselor I want to train. If someone's constantly striving to be aware then you're less likely to say, “I can't deal with a person who comes in my office and they have a disability. I can't deal with a person who believes in gun rights.” You know, the person may believe in gun rights, but they have a mental disorder. (Tilian)
Inclusion as an Ideal

Multicultural inclusion is an implicit ideal delineated in counseling standards and ethical guides (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Sue & Sue, 2016). There is a lack of scholarly research evidence corroborating this notion that multicultural inclusion is being holistically manifested within the counseling profession. For some participants in this investigation, this ideal was just that, a dream they did not expect to come to fruition because the necessary changes that would need to occur were perceived as sacrifices socially privileged professional counselors seemed unwilling to make. Here are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

I honestly don't know; has a conversation really taken place in a professional setting where people actually take the time to ask, “Where you from?” Or like, “That's an interesting name.” . . . As far as my experience as [being of color] anything, there is zero. Well, I guess if I have to really think about it, every now and again, certain colleagues that do know [my ethnicity], try to push me to do something in the field being that there's no one that talks about it. (Tybalt)

That's where I saw a lot of blond hair, blue eyes, fail because they hold on so tightly to their experience that it created more of a gap and distance between the students and the families they worked with versus holding onto their background yet allowing different families to come on into their energy and not feel like their identities [was] being threatened. (Tilian)

We're still very conservative about what we promote. Or I could say timid about wanting to be all in when it comes to multicultural and social justice: that we talk a good game . . ., but when we actually have to do that, then there’s some backpedaling. . . . You know, when Trayvon Martin gets murdered and it's time to go and protest, then if they say, “I don't know if I can really do all that.” Or even if it's time to just have a discussion about how this is right and wrong, there's hesitancy or just flat-out avoidance. . . . That inclusivity in counseling is sometimes an ideal and not necessarily a common practice. (Taj)

So many of the organizations that we tend to be a part of, I feel each one still has a ton of work to do in terms of multicultural inclusion. It speaks to this community: When we think about men of color, when we think about queer men of color, I think the reality that I find to be an issue is that we do play at some of those oppression olympics within the
organizations. So, we think about the overarching community and sometimes what happens is we tend to fight for only the communities that we are a part of. (Thomas)

Tiki noted that his multicultural inclusion experiences were rare. “That they happen in small groups or individually and it sucks not having them. . . . There's inclusion up to a point. I think after that point, they kick you off the table.”

Theme Three: Exclusion as Familiar and Normative

While similar quantities of evidence narratives regarding inclusion experiences are included in this “Phenomenological Findings” as the quantity of exclusion experiences, the quantity and impact of multicultural exclusion experiences were disproportionate on the side of participants experiencing more multicultural exclusion than multicultural inclusion. Regardless of number of years within the profession, all participants experienced some type of multicultural exclusion through typically covert forms of marginalization, oppression, or compartmentalization of their multicultural intersectionality. Here are participant excerpts in support of this theme and its thematic aspects.

Well you know, being from an African-American community, you're always seeing exclusion as a way of life and making sure people are not threatened even by your physical presence. . . . I've learned and adapted, being African-American male and understanding what that means. You're given access, but it's up to you to do with it what you're going to do. And, you have to expect that you're going to get pushed back; especially, if it means advocating for other African Americans. (Taavetti)

From my work and how [people] all just talked about how they have to make space for themselves because other people don't make it for them. . . . Then everyone's like we're counselor educators and that expression has just lost meaning on me because, we're counselor educators; so, we should know better?” (Tiki)

I know because I'm a Black man and because of the work that I’ve done or that I do there are certain tables that I'm not welcome at. I know that there are certain doors that have
either been closed or were never open in the first place. And I think it's strictly because I'm a Black man or because I promote multicultural counseling and education. . . . The trials that I experience are still just as real and as delicate as anyone who is not in academia. (Taj)

I think there are some barriers that I think will persist just because we live in America. Our institutions, our organizations were, at one time, designed solely for the success of a particular group of people and that residue is tangible at every at every turn. . . . I heard a former president of AMCD say, “just because you see more and more people of color, and more and more diverse representations of diverse people in leadership capacities, do not be so quick to assume that barriers still don't exist for the people who assume those positions. . . . Those barriers exist within our profession and as much as we want our programs and our institutions to be accountable for being intentional about being multiculturally inclusive, the same standard of care has to be taken into account, it has to be assumed in the profession. Left to our own devices, without accountability, we will fall into the same practice of excluding people because our preference is for White, straight, male people in leadership. (Teijo)

You're always dealing with this invisible man syndrome. Sometimes by choice, be seen, but not heard and sometimes you're just not seen. . . . [I] realize that while the talk is there; yes, wanting to be inclusive. [We're] wanting to welcome more men into the field, but the walk is not always there on the part of the profession. . . . I learned early on, often times being the token, as a Black man, to be as non-threatening as possible. I had to learn that skill set early on to be non-threatening in my language often times in meetings, when you do speak up it's heard differently or someone will someone else will come behind you who is perhaps White and say the same thing, perhaps differently, but they kind of get the credit for it. So, often times even when you're seen, you're not seen. (Trevor)

My experience has been, again maybe because of the people that I'm around when it comes to tenure and some of the politics that exists. It seems like it's very much a White man followed, by a White woman's world. When it comes to the profession, . . . it seems like the people that are going to have job security forever still look very much like the people who founded some of the theories you and I learned about. (Tybalt)

When I entered institutions and regions where I felt like that [inclusion and diversity] was not the norm and where I felt like I was silenced, where I was my microaggressed, I was discriminated against, that was when I had to be actively resistive and to really actively stand up for what my intersections meant to me. . . . And unintentionally, I know sometimes . . . it's unintentional, but the damage is still done. . . . It's kind of this disparity that that keeps happening. (Thomas)

But being able to see those people [of color] pass me in the hallway, being able to see it is
almost like a longing to see someone who that looks like you that's going to pass by, that you may have a class with, that might be teaching you and things like that. You know, just like damn, it would be nice. Not saying it's the end-all-be-all cuz I've had [one] professor of color that I didn't connect with at all, but . . . I would say every minority I've come in contact with has experienced some form of oppression, racism or they have their views and experiences of adversity at different levels in everyday work environments and they can speak to that, give insights, and broad understanding of things. They can say, “Hey, you're not alone. (Tapani)

These were eight brief narrative excerpts from study participants communicating examples of multicultural exclusion as normative in their professional counseling community experiences. Some critical reflections about participants’ multicultural exclusion experiences are provided next with the goals of clarification and emphasis about this thematic finding.

Reflections on Exclusion Experiences

Inclusion of participant reflections on the phenomenological experiences of multicultural inclusion was perceived as important to include with study findings. This section of participant narratives is used to highlight contributing evidence for investigative interpretations of these men of color who are professional counselors. Herein are some participant excerpts highlighting participant reactions to having experienced exclusion, particularly, multicultural inclusion as men of color within the counseling profession.

First a reflection on age-based exclusion:

I'm 30 now. I'm not a kid, but people assume that I'm a kid when they look at me. So just making that assumption that maybe I'm an 18 / 19-year-old kid, just out, up to no good and not taken seriously when I go out; especially, if I'm dressed a certain way. . . . I make a point of not wearing them at work so I am taken seriously as a professional. I dress up at work. We don't have a dress code and I can wear earrings if I want to cuz other guys do, but just looking as young as I do, and I want to I want people to look at me as a professional, so I make sure I present myself that way physically as far as the way I dress and also the way I talk and interact with them as well. (Tahu)
Second, a reflection on subtle exclusionary separations in the profession:

It was more experiences of like, “That doesn't sit right with me. Why does that feel so weird?” Before I knew about microaggressions, like, “That doesn't sound right.” . . . My hope was certainly that it would be much more welcoming than it has been. . . . I think my hopes were always that it would be more welcoming; that they would be more understanding of the issues that currently exist for minority faculty. That’s another factor: another moment of exclusion was when I realized how true it is that CSJ and AMCD are populated by very different looking people; [and] . . . it's just a very different discourse in CSJ as opposed to AMCD. (Tiki)

Third, a reflection of gender-based exclusion:

The road has been challenging. Yeah: it has not been at all smooth, you know got a few bumps and bruises here and there. I know some people have horror stories. I can't say I have horror stories, but yeah, the journey has not been as easy as I thought it would be. . . . What I've run into is obviously the good old boy network. There's also a certain degree of sexism that I'm finding. Women, in particular, because they have been the recipients of a lot of sexism, they've been the recipients of a lot of discrimination over the years in the workplace. Now that they are at the higher echelons of the academy, . . . it almost seems as though they've taken on the roles of the males that they've been oppressed by. (Trevor)

Fourth, a reflection on limited ethnic representation in leadership and social justice in the counseling profession:

Out of the, I don't know how many ACA presidents we've only had one black male. We've only had I think one, two, three, four; four black female presidents of ACA. I believe there are 50,000 ACA members. I think of those 50,000, I don't know maybe less than a thousand are people of color. I think it took until the 2014 ethics standards to be revised before social justice was added to the preamble. And CSJ came into the fold I think in 1999 . . . , but it still hasn't permeated itself into the curriculum, in literature. I still have students who say, “What does it mean to be a social justice advocate?” So, no, we talk a good game, but we're still not quite there. We're scared to publish to publish real advocacy in our journals. (Taj)

Fifth, a reflection on interdisciplinary and status exclusion:

If your readership is just the people in your discipline then we're preaching to the choir. If I say I want to write for black fathers of children with [specific developmental needs] and I want those people to read it, and the institutions is [saying], “Well now you need to
write your book for clinicians.” Well Nah. Nah, I'm talking to people who look like me who share some of my experiences and the clinicians have the resources to be able to get what they need generally, but the people who don't have the kind of capital to access the resources that I have access to. So, I ain't writing for y'all. At least in some cases, I'm not writing for you. We got conferences to share, our stuff where, we're writing and talking to each other. . . . I keep saying the same things over and over again and I don't see any kind of reception to what I'm suggesting even though we keep getting the same results. I think that's particularly challenging as we try to move the needle towards being more multicultural inclusive. (Teijo)

Sixth, a reflection on personnel commitment and resource allocation exclusion:

I really don't see where we're going to address these issues because if you don't do it at the faculty level, the students are not going to do it when they leave here and become supervisors and directors. So, I realize how important it is cognitively, but emotionally it feels kind of defeating, I guess cuz I know that we're really not going to address these issues. . . . For their ideas, there would be a lot more intensive labor, financial resources, time given to it, and the feedback is much more extensive; you'll have student working on projects and everything else. But, the things that benefit our students the most, they have a very different idea about. . . . In terms of trying to work on some sort of research project right herein [our city], I mean right herein [our community] there's a lot that could be done here, really we don't focus on that. And if you look at exclusion, I would say that's the most glaring: It's our lack of involvement in the community. (Taavetti)

Seventh, a reflection on non-majority cultural normativity exclusion:

There is a barrier to access as far as people misinterpreting my thoughts, my passion, my behavior. You know, when people are not used to other cultures, they're not used to people speaking in a certain way: sometimes I’m misinterpreted from what I'm trying to express. . . . When people of whiteness will be like, “well I don't understand what that means.” . . . Just based upon my cultural reference, I do talk maybe not exact professional jargon, but I do talk very clear so for someone to be like, “I don't really understand,” it's almost like they're not trying to understand. There’s sort of this barrier they want to place up because I'm not talking in the exact scientific verbal communication that they wish me to. . . . Which I think is a little bit strange because my view and my thought from the counseling perspective: we have clients [who we want] to be clear, but to make them break down everything they would say verbatim? I think personally, I can understand what someone is speaking and where they're coming from or what they're talking about if they put it in the right context and I think sometimes you know [people are] such sticklers as far as trying to, “well I need for you to say this in order for me to understand where you're coming from.” And to me, that's a little bit limited as far as accepting people where they are where they come from. (Tapani)
Eighth and finally, a reflection on non-responsiveness and subject bias as exclusion:

[When] we were submitting proposals on like this s*** is f****** hard.” We don't get in. That's been that; and then, the responses from the proposal coordinators were not helpful. One of my proposals got in and it was one that was kind of an anti-microaggressions workshop. So, it's much nicer and where it was interdisciplinary. So that one gets in. The one on, “people are racist in counselor education.” No, that one doesn't get in: “No, we don't want that one. We won't talk about that. (Tiki)

These eight reflections are only a few brief narratives of these participants’ critical responses to experiencing multicultural exclusion within the counseling profession. In work spaces, association spaces, and education spaces, multicultural exclusion was surprising to some degree, not surprising given the societal context within which the profession is nestled, and painful to some degree for all participants. Chronosystem influences were a common factor regarding the level of pain experienced by participants. These were either (a) length of time in the profession, (b) generational identity proximity to racial segregation of the US, (c) time passed since the exclusionary experiences, and/or (d) level of cognitive normalization about these multicultural exclusion experiences within the counseling profession. More precise factors found to have influenced these participant’s multicultural exclusion experiences are communicated next.

Factors That Influence Exclusion Experiences

Various factors that influenced participants’ perspectives and experiences of exclusion within the counseling profession were outlined through their narrative disclosures. The disappointment, disbelief, and feelings of disconnection from counseling professionals were noted by various participants. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.
Taavetti, summed up the primary factor that influenced his experiences of multicultural exclusion as “just being isolated.” Trevor described that similar experience of isolation stating, “That’s been a constant; isolation in some way or another. Even though you're among your population, there's still a sense of isolation that's there.”

I go to different conferences. I don’t feel all that welcomed. I’m not saying by anybody saying, “you don't belong here” type of thing. Maybe, it's you know, you get people who have been together for a long time who know each other and there's some of that cliquishness that exists. . . . It might just be the atmosphere. You can walk into a room. I'm a sensing feeling type. So, if I walk into room and I'm sensing or feeling like the vibe is not conducive for me. It might be the looks. It might be the stares. It might be the feeling of being invisible. Certainly, as an African-American male, I have felt both invisible and visible in a sense of “we're watching you cuz we know you're about to do something.” Still that type of experience is more of being ignored, feeling kind of a little invisible. I can't say that there's been any overt experiences: most of them probably may have been just a little microaggressions here and there. (Trevor)

For Tapani, one factor is a lack of cooperation and collaboration: being given the run around to find answers by professional colleagues:

If you have a question and I may have the answer or I may have access to the answer and I'll be like, “well let me find that out for you and I'll get back to you.” I turn around and get back to you. Then, if I ask you the same and you have access to the information and you don't. And, I know you have access to it and you just decide you really don't have the time for that or you're just like, “I don't know and you just brush it over. To me, I don't think that’s really inclusion. . . . I've literally asked a question and had to go ask other people the same questions that are a little bit more courteous, that might be outside of my department. Then I come back [to the counselor in my department] and put it to them and they'll be like, “oh yeah, that's true. I'll be like, so you had the answer all the time, but you had to make me jump through hoops to find out these answers; different things like that. (Tapani)

Similarly, Taj experienced exclusionary factors as be left in the dark without information that could help him be an active contributor in professional meetings as well as being regulated by stereotypes and majority cultural ways of being:
Have you ever been to a party or gathering and everyone seems to know the joke except for you? Or, everyone knows the person to reference except you. Or, everyone is like, “remember that time when,” except you. I feel like that happens so many times in certain groups. I'm like why am I always the person who just doesn't know? Why doesn't anyone turn to me and bring me up to speed; and say, “hey, we're going to talk about some things and you might be a little dated in your reference, but don't worry, we're going to catch you up.” That's been the level of exclusion that I've experienced enough to agitate me, but again, and maybe this is just the ability to adapt and turn on some skill I find a way to bulldoze myself into these conversations anyway. . . . And, I'm still type-cast, stereotyped. I'm limited by rules. I'm limited by, sometimes, etiquette, and decorum. . . . Sometimes as a Black man, I have black rage, black anger that I want to express in my own black ways and I have to stifle and contain that because there are rules, etiquette, and decorum. (Taj)

For Tiki, the microaggression factor were unexpected within the profession, yet, not surprising.

However, the factors of isolation and denial of equitable access to the profession was infuriating and frustrating:

Never anything overt, of course. . . . In the program here, I had experiences of microaggressions and that subtle discrimination that you experience from day-to-day. On a larger scale with the profession that makes it a little less clear because you're not really sure. You can't really be sure from an email if that's [(multicultural exclusion)] really what’s happening. But, it just seems to be that one experience after another of sending an email out and having a non-response, sending another email and having another non-response. . . . The biggest barriers have been a lack of access: like this wall that I don't really know where the doors is; “Someone tell me where the f****** door is so I can get the key and I can get in!” It feels very isolating. . . . Factors like a lack of awareness from people on the other side of how difficult it can be, of how isolating it can be: just kind of a conceptual awareness, but not a deeply felt one. . . . How desperate it can feel. . . . Kind of a neglect of [recognizing] this as being an issue aside from spaces that are predominantly spaces of color. . . . A lack of institutional conversation, a lack of organizational conversations. (Tiki)

Similarly, for Thomas factors of exclusion include a lack of dialog about what is happening for marginalized non-majority populations within the profession. This factor includes the narrowed acknowledgement of diversity as separate identities and lack of intersectionality acknowledgement.
When we're not having active conversation, we're not transparently discussing what happens, we're not directing any initiatives towards it. Then it becomes a passive part of what we do in the organization. . . . Then there's the other piece between some of the divisions, we do play oppression olympics. . . . Some [organizations] will prioritize one identity and they will not prioritize another. . . . It's almost like you, you're trying to take up that space for me.” It's almost like it re-colonizes everything. (Thomas)

One factor for Tilian was a lack of cultural connectedness and cultural representations within his education environment:

Things like what's our relationship, do I have some social connection, do I have feel comfortable in the community, do I feel like I have someone I can talk to, is there clubs and things I identify with? Those are some of the non-cognitive things that students of color need in order to be academically successful. . . . I made no friends. No one looks like me. I can't find hair products. I can't find clothes. People don't talk like me. There's nothing here to keep me here if I wanted to leave. . . . I was the only black person in the class; so, whenever I spoke up or said something that's kind of divergent it was easily seven [white students] plus the professor, against one. You can't help but feel that sometimes like, “geez I really wanted your opinion, but you felt intimidated. (Tilian)

Several factors were identified by participants as the unpleasant, isolating, and marginalizing experiences that they could label as multicultural exclusion. Participants also communicated narratives that were interpreted as factors that helped moderate the unpleasantness and painfulness of experiencing multicultural exclusion as men of color within the counseling profession. Those factors are presented next.

Factors That Moderate Exclusion Experiences

By definition, to moderate something implies to lessen the impact or to avoid contextual extremes. As such, while participants experienced various quantities and severity levels of multicultural exclusion within professional work settings, professional organization communities, as well as counselor education preparation programs, there were some factors that lessened the negative impact multicultural exclusion. In his reflection on exclusion experiences,
Teijo referenced how some individuals have personality traits for confrontation and advocacy. Even for participants who may not be “wired to confront,” other intrinsic motivations and personal missions aligned with enacting multicultural inclusion were significant in moderating the negativity of exclusion experiences.

Some participants spoke about being active in confronting exclusion; marginalization; and tokenism: advocating for what they needed. Other participants described finding support in other organizations; professional colleagues; or micro-communities of the counseling profession. Participants also described their beloved opportunities to be an inclusive support and mentor, familial support received, and their intrapersonal strengths as moderating factors to experiencing multicultural exclusion. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Tahu and Tilian described instances in which they were able to address the exclusion they had experienced through direct dialog, educating the individuals who perpetrated their multicultural exclusion, and advocate for themselves and their needs in their respective professional counseling communities.

My first year there was a White teacher, she was just out of touch. . . . She asked me to talk with this student that wasn't on my case load because it was a black student. She asked me, just spit it out in the teachers’ lounge, “would you talk to the student cuz you're black and maybe you'll be able to relate to him!” And, then when I talked to him, we had no similar experiences, and he was so confused of why he was talking to me. I was offended and I actually spoke with her. I spoke with her like, “that was offensive to assume that because I'm a black, I'll be able to relate to the student. The other counselor is trained in this, he will be able to relate to him just as well as I am. He actually has more counseling experience than I have. I was able to use that as a moment to try to teach her. I was grateful that she was receptive to it. I held my composure, but was direct with her as well about why that was offensive. Sometimes I feel like how we're taught to advocate for our profession, I have to advocate for my race as well as best I can. (Tahu)
I was able to confidently say, ‘This is what I needed. If I can't get it then, I shouldn't be here. I already have these reasons why I want to leave. I don't feel like the school reflects me. I came from a very diverse background this is a very plain background; so, it does nothing for my professional growth, and the one reason I came for professional growth, which was academics, I'm not getting it. So now I have no reason to stay. ‘So, we need to talk about how to get the academic piece cuz I know you can't change the university, but you can change how you teach me.’ . . . So, I had to have a council with almost every one of them because that's the exclusive, not being included part that I'm talking about. They were so used to teaching a type of student and they're so used to training a type of student, where [students] just come and give their power to the professors and [students] don't question certain things. . . . Then you have a person who's a black male or of color saying, [I'm not learning!] They were so used to most black students not making it, not being proactive with their education, and eventually fading away. I said you know what, I'm going to tell you how to make me be successful and that was what I had to do. (Tillian)

For Tapani and Trevor, being able to enact multicultural inclusion through their own representation as active men of color in the profession: providing supports that they may not have received was a moderating factor:

I would say its other counselors of color. Like I said, I try to talk to everyone and then some of the exchanges, some of the conversations I've had it's almost like a relief to talk to me cuz I experienced some of the same [things] they're experiencing. . . . I've heard people say, “I didn't see any other people like me there” or felt like some people can deal with that where it's also a benefit to have someone that represents [you], looking like you, or who experienced some of the same cultural barriers as you in this field. Being able to go to them and get certain tools or encouragement of how to work through some of the problems that you face. Just having that I think that strengthens a relationship, but [also] fills the gap of what's missing from what was already there that we may face. (Tapani)

Certainly, I like writing those letters of recommendation encouraging students kind of guiding them and saying, “Have you ever thought about thought about this or doing this?” Yeah, I think those are those moments that makes it all worthwhile. . . you're not always able to put those things on your on your CV but certainly those are the personal things that you get out of it that are uplifting. (Trevor)

A moderating factor for Teijo, is standing up and standing strong in his professional convictions regarding the important professional communities where he needs to be present:
Being intentional about which divisions where I'm active and I've been really intentional about that. This past academic year was just trying to be more visible in AMCD, trying to lend support to some initiatives that they're doing, hopefully making some contribution, and orienting doctoral students that I have the privilege of supporting to that same process. Then being open to doing some other stuff like the Winter Roundtable every year. Well nobody put me on to that. That is all people of color talking about mental health and the well-being of people of color. But those are counseling psychologists. And making no apology: Yo like, “I'm going to the Winter Roundtable. I'll be at ACA too, if I can afford it, but I'm making it a priority to go to the Winter Roundtable cuz this conference is entirely dedicated to social justice for under-represented and marginalized populations and I'm not finna make any apologies for it.

(Teijo)

Tiki was not alone in his naming of others outside the profession: personal relationships, other scholars of color who are trying to enhance multiculturally inclusive conversations and practices forward was a moderating factor:

It's kind of that frustration, patience, and compassion towards myself, patience towards others, and trying to keep a center and a mindfulness practice that lets me come home and kind of turn it off. Yeah, that familial, that mom energy of, “don't give up. You can always call me.” And she has no idea how academia works. I'm a first-generation college student, but she's like, “I don't know what the f*** you're doing, but you can call me and I will be there!” And then scholars, like yourself for example, who are doing that work and who are out there: counselor educators who I know exist. When I went to North Central ACES, that was the most diverse conference I think I've been to, the majority of presentations were being given by people of color. That was really rewarding to know that they were out there and I just have to make connections and keep them. (Tiki)

Taj and Thomas spoke directly to this moderating factor as well. Often these inclusive connections had to be created with and maintained through individuals outside of their respective counseling communities. Sometimes these connections had to be sought out from individuals outside of the counseling profession all together:

I think I'm resourceful enough that if I can't tell somebody what I want to say in the moment, I can pick up a phone and call someone who is willing to listen. That may not be in the counseling profession, but I think that's probably one of the spin-offs of being a Black man in counseling is that your circle of support may well be outside of your
institution and more than likely be outside of counselor education. (Taj)

Sometimes it's like, “oh God this is rough, this is rough!” . . . I think about not getting support in my institution [yet] feeling like I have a community out there with people who are just like me and who sometimes face the same experiences in a different way at their institutions or contexts. . . . So, you have to try. I find other people in other parts of the university and in site supervisors that I can align with and get support from; psychological, emotional support that help keep me motivated and realize the change may not happen in my lifetime. I understand that, but what's most important to me is getting students to believe that they can be agents of change rather than having people take that away from them. . . . In certain spaces, I am alone. Then in certain professional counseling organizations, by those connections, because we discovered each other in those professional counseling associations, I don't feel like I'm alone. (Thomas)

Multicultural exclusion as an experiential norm for men of color within the counseling profession was pervasively communicated throughout participant narratives. Only a snippet of examples was presented within these Phenomenological Findings. Participants identified the feelings, actions, responses, lack of response, and limited cultural representation/allowances for cultural representation within various professional counseling spaces. Participants also identified moderating mechanisms, some internal and some external that helped mitigate the negativity, disconnection, and isolation that was created by multicultural exclusion experiences within the counseling profession. These moderating mechanisms were found to be somewhat of a bridge to why these men of color continued to remain in the profession and active in their respective professional counseling communities despite experiencing multicultural exclusion.

Theme Four: Engagement Despite and Because of Multicultural Exclusion

Human beings’ social response to various types of exclusion varies. Responses could include avoidance, acceptance, anger, or retaliation to name a few (Abrams et al., 2005; Ahmed, 2012; Arora, 2013; Choi et al., 2013; Cox, 1991; De Freitas, 2013; Friend & Bursuck, 2009;
Labonte, 2004; Mauk, 2014; Saunders, 2015; Skowron, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 2006). The most common response for participants included in the study was engagement within professional counseling communities. Even though participants spoke about experiencing different types of multicultural exclusion as men of color who are counseling professionals, the most frequent response was to seek out communities outside the counseling profession that were inclusive of their multicultural identity and use themselves as a face/space for multicultural inclusivity within the counseling profession. Herein are participant excerpts in support of this theme and its thematic aspects.

Teijo’s commitment to self and community advocacy influenced his persistence:

If I have to try to articulate barriers to involvement, I think they come primarily with respect to trying to balance out the load as faculty members. So, when your institutional or program norms suggest that service is important, but service is not as important as publication, [that] can be a barrier. I may be inspired to start a new special interest group or develop a community, whether it's informally or formally in a professional division or counseling organization, but having to make, quite honestly, what are discriminating choices like; if I can talk informally you be like, either I'm gone start this new faculty of color interest group or because it's necessary. (Teijo)

Taj spoke with great pride regarding specific opportunities to be immersed in multicultural spaces as a driving influence for his persistence in professional engagement:

I have been in touch and in contact with like minds. I have been able to mentor as well as be mentored. I have been able to be the beneficiary of opportunities where I've gone abroad to do different types of multicultural work. I've been able to mentor young up-and-coming scholars and young up-and-coming practitioners and supervisors. Even more recently, I say within the last four or five years, I've been able to work at a place that's primarily designed to train African American counselors and counselor educators. (Taj)

Participants reflected on how brief and meaningful multicultural inclusion experiences were supportive experiences that helped them remain active in light of experiencing multicultural
exclusion in other spaces. Also, participants described their drive to be supports for other men and women of color who are entering the counseling profession.

I can call recall every single moment when I've had a five-minute conversation that has led to just a beautiful relationship with other people who inspire me on a daily basis. [It] helps me to remember that, one I'm not alone, but that I'm fighting for something that's worth fighting for. . . . That's what's was rewarding, that I was able to find connections through other people who may not be necessarily had the same experiences as I did, but had similar experiences and it was helpful to know that I wasn't alone in that way. And, to know that it's not just AMCD, it's not just CSJ, it's not just ALGBTIC. For me, it is all these other divisions that I'm involved and all these other branches that I'm involved in because that's where I felt like we can make that space and have that contribution to make sure that we are including multicultural inclusion as part of those values for that organization. (Thomas)

I almost worried about how some of the men of color are being treated within the program. Master level students that come to me for guidance. How they're being treated as far as they're being, feel like they're being treated by professors or some of their colleagues. At times, it's disheartening because I hear them saying like, “man I want to pursue a doctoral degree you’ve inspired me, but I don't know if I can do it here.” I would love to help them move into a role and maybe it's not here. . . . I hear them speak and I can hear and understand where they're coming from and in one sense, but I always try to encourage them to open themselves up and pursue their program. At the same token [wondering how are professors] navigating that line between being that sense of encouragement and volunteering understanding of what they're going through. (Tapani)

I try not to think about it too much cuz then I'll become disenchanted. . . . that's really dangerous because if you lose faith in the discipline, you'll just stop [trying]. . . . I'm going to continue working toward it, and having conversations that people want to have. It's nice to know that you're out there. That other people are out there doing this work, building that network. It can be hard to feel like you're the one champion. So, it's nice to know that other people are pushing that, too. (Tiki)

What a responsibility. It can feel burdensome if you allow it. . . . you're this man of color and everyone wants to get to know you and talk to you, come by and see you cuz you're the new kid on the block. So being that new kid on the block and finding that balance with all of your other responsibilities as a faculty member that can sometimes be a challenge and finding your place in all that. (Trevor)
Organizational Culture

Of the four aspects regarding engagement influences for men of color who are professional counselors, the first aspect presented here, is identified as systemic factors within the profession and its micro-communities. This was the notion that the organizational culture of the counseling profession is sometimes supportive for and/or simultaneously challenging to these men of color in their pursuits of being actively engaged counseling professionals. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

My program mentored me not to be engaged with divisions that had a very specific multicultural inclusive orientation: So, AMCD, no; Counselors for Social Justice, no. I was oriented to Chi Sigma Iota. I was oriented to ACES. I was oriented to my region of ACES. Those are largely White spaces. I mean they're all largely White spaces, but they're extra White spaces. So for me, as I found mentors of color in those largely White spaces, I've remained in those spaces even though at times it's been difficult. I've also had to make decisions now as a faculty member, I'm going to go to the AMCD meeting. I'm actually going to go check in with CSJ because they have not been a part of my experience as a doctoral student and now I'm four years out and I'm just now getting oriented to AMCD outside of what may be more widely public opportunities to engage with those divisions. . . . There were norms at my institution as a doc student that informed and influence how I engage in the professional divisions and now I'm having to make decisions based on mentors and becoming more widely acclimated to the opportunities that exist to say I'mma stay in these large White spaces, but now I'm going to make intentional decisions to engage the students that I have the privilege of mentoring and working with to larger White spaces and spaces that maybe a little bit more intentionally multiculturally inclusive and reflective of diversity that exists within our profession. (Teijo)

Taavetti remarked that “the culture of [the association] doesn't really lend itself to participation” and that disproportionate scrutiny of men of color was expected.

Well, there's always the scrutiny of things that you might suggest. That's easy to see that others may not be scrutinized as much. I'll say I've gotten used to being scrutinized more to any suggestion I would make on an organizational level. People want to use you because of the color of your skin to say that they're doing this, doing that, that they're inclusive and diverse when they're not. I see that a lot especially in the university setting:
definitely the scrutiny because the evaluation process is always going to be more difficult, for students themselves even. Often some of the barriers are around, in just my perception, the way I look at counseling, I put a great emphasis on culture, history, social policy, these kinds of things, and tell counselors to look at these things in terms of understanding what is counseling. We have very, very different ways of defining it; so, that becomes a barrier as far as how we communicate what we think should be valued [for] curriculum. (Taavetti)

**Paying It Forward**

This, sometimes, colloquial expression was pervasive implied throughout participant narratives regarding engagement within the profession. While exclusion experiences may have been typical for these men of color who are professional counselors, and inclusion experiences may have been marginalized inclusion more often than multi-cultural inclusion, their drive to contribute to the ripple of positive and validating inclusion opportunities was evident. For some participants, their narrative was explicitly outlined with desires and ways to mentor and advise new counselors through inclusion practices. For other participants it was more covert hopes that those who follow them have better experiences then their own multicultural inclusion experiences as men of color who are professional counselors. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

I've always had women as mentors. I've never had men within the academy as mentors interestingly enough. And not to say that I didn't seek out opportunities for [male mentorship] or maybe I just wasn't in the space that allowed for that. And so, I guess that has probably shaped me and in a lot of different ways in terms of my worldview. . . . They say, “Never say never.” as I get further along the road, I may run across that that male mentor. I definitely yeah have made myself available to be that mentor for a lot of individuals, particularly males. (Trevor)

As far as [being an] African-American male, I find myself involved in a lot of informal meetings and even with leadership and management in order to talk about things where they want to get involved more [with] the African-American community through recruiting students or whatever it might be. People are always asking your opinion.
(Taavetti)

Similarly, I think of mentoring in a couple different ways that have motivated me to engage and hopefully be a force or an influence for multicultural inclusion in the profession with colleagues and one-on-one relationships. . . . One benefit is being able to hopefully recruit and draw black men to the profession whether they wanna be clinicians, be in specific direct counseling roles or if they want to pursue counselor education roles as supervisors or faculty or other roles. So, our doctoral program, where I work has been exceptionally rewarding because we have black males that have been in our program who I have the privilege to do my best to support, not by just way of dissertation committee or advisory committee membership, but also just as they aspire to assume their own faculty roles helping them write and get published so that they can be as competitive in the job market as possible, while making sense of the academy and its challenges and rewards. .

(Teijo)

Particularly when I think about what these positive experiences, thinking about ways that I'm going to give back to the community and to the future of the profession. So, I think about other men of color, other queer men of color who are going to come after me and what does that mean for them. . . . As I keep going on, I'm going to retain and magnify some of the privileges that I carry. “How am I going to help the future?” That's what matters! How I'm going to help them be successful. That's something that in terms of inclusion, what inclusion has done for me is I get to build a space for that. When I think not only about men of color recruitment, but also the diverse identities that we have not attended to. When I think about trans people, when I think about people who are differently-abled, when I think about trans men of color and trans woman of color, what happens for those individuals, for non-binary, non-binary individuals of color, people of color, and I think there's so much of these spaces where that if I experienced that inclusion I'm going to be able to have a lot more power to give that inclusion back.

(Thomas)

Sometimes being able to speak with people about those things that I'm experiencing, so beneficial and so healing in itself. I just realize the power and strength that I have as a male of color for students who want to go ahead and pursue their doctoral degree and just listening and realizing that as a mentor I am a role model to those who want pursue their doctoral degree. . . . At first I didn't really understand the magnitude of my responsibilities [as a man of color who's in the counseling profession]. . . . Intrinsically, it kind of lets other males of color know it's possible to go ahead and be here where I'm at. . . . I've had conversations with the master students of color and they're like, “man you've inspired me to go ahead and go for my doctoral degree. I never really considered it, but now I'm willing to consider it.” I think that's because you see other people of color, someone who interacts with you and someone who like gives you different ways to thinking about things. (Tapani)
Internalized Vision

As noted above, intrapersonal factors were dynamic influences on perceived and experienced multicultural inclusivity. The intrapersonal drive and vision for being a part of a professional community that manifested multicultural inclusion was sufficient reason for participants remaining actively engaged in the counseling profession and its micro-communities. The internalized visions for these men of color who are counseling professionals centered on thoughts of remaining competent practitioners, providing help that was helpful to communities with specific needs, and modeling multicultural inclusivity for their students and supervisees.

Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Saying that multicultural is the tip of [the iceberg]. It’s always on my lips cuz I always speak about it. I always integrate it in my work cuz I don't believe that as a profession we don’t have an opportunity to get out of it. It’s is our profession. We don't deal with one type of person. We deal with people. Whenever counselors come in believing that ethically you may not have to cuz you don't have the training, you know that rubs me wrong: that you don't even want to consider it. . . . I've always seen the importance; now, I'm seeing the heavier importance of the associations, what they can do for me, and how I can hopefully make an impact for them. More importantly, as a person who's going to be training students to be school counselors, it'll be important to build that, to keep that coalition, and to have them have that support so that they don't feel alone in trying to establish their identity and their careers as counselors. (Tilian)

A little after 9/11, not because of 9/11, but I realized I had no goals. I had no plan. I had nothing. So, I dropped out for five years. In those five years, I just spent a lot of time thinking and working: . . . until my father recommended a job for me to work as a nurse's assistance. In doing that job, you don't have a lot of medical knowledge; so, you spend most of your time just [using good] bedside manner and you spend time with patients talking about their families. . . . I had a passion for it. It was something about that human connection that transcended anything I've ever experienced. . . . Sometimes, yeah. I guess I'm an idealist at heart; and, I don't want to just aspire. A life aspiration is fun and it can be very dreamy and romantic in nature, but I love the challenge of doing it. (Tybalt)
So, at every stage of my life, I've felt that my work needed to impact community, people who look like me, and people who are in the greatest need of competent services. I always thought that it was my job to be a person who’d be looked at as a provider of such competent services. I also have a strong belief that people of color are just as eligible for good services as anyone else. I want to make it my business to always to have my work impact these particular groups. (Taj)

I think the networking and learning what other districts are doing learning what other counselors are doing within their schools with their populations and see how I can bring some of that to my school. You know just going to the workshops and different professional developments even that my district puts out, it's always a self-reflection piece like, “how can I do this better or what are some things that we might need to improve on just within our building or within our district?” (Tahu)

What the heck, let me do what I really want to do; and, that was to help people. . . . Understanding the historical development of many of the communities in [the city], I got a chance to learn that first-hand by working as a case manager and working with community-based organizations. . . . I got a chance to participate with several agencies developing networks of counselors and people in the field. I was always advised to become a social worker by leadership, but I was more interested in the understanding the human development aspect, the impact of the social and cultural dynamic on people. So, I was just naturally interested in counseling. (Taavetti)

[One organization] always has been a central part of my identity because it's one [organization] where I felt welcomed. I want to make sure that my contributions are going to serve that community the most. . . . That's why I've always loved it, but I also understand where I'm needed most. I think about these other divisions. That yes, while we can superficially capture the entire profession [in saying] yes we're all about diversity across all these different contexts, some people don't know the practice of what that means. And so, we have to really extend that. We have to really know that sometimes these other leadership roles and organizations do need us. . . . sometimes we have to go to the spaces that need us most and I really believe in that because I know that there’s already so much good work that's happening in other divisions that actively focus or that hone in on diversity as their mission. (Thomas)

Now as a gatekeeper, going to be a supervisor in the counseling field, I know I have all these different responsibilities and not only do I want to be open to men of color or women of color or individuals of whiteness, but you know I want to be open where people will feel comfortable enough to have very grounded, very likeable experiences because I can remember not every experience I had was the best experience. . . . I think the multicultural aspect is not only reflected on the [mission] of the program, but my behavior in how I treat people as well. . . . Multicultural inclusion begins with me. . . .
think being a leader in that aspect and bringing forth this change, this multicultural inclusion that may not be apparent in any of the programs that you're in. But I think it starts, the fire starts with a spark. So being that spark and facilitating that growth for your peers and your colleagues. (Tapani)

I always try, when students write me, write them back. It doesn't matter if they're students of color or not, . . . but whenever, whichever one writes me I try to write a considerate email back, but that doesn't seem to be how other people do it. (Tiki)

I think it's a catch-22. At times, being able to hopefully lend some voice to our community, both our micro-community and my program with my faculty has been helpful and ethically responsible to raise issues, but that also takes a toll. And you know, when you become the pedagogical expert or you have to, when you feel inclined to, or sometimes are forced to speak on behalf of marginalized populations, that can be taxing at times, but you it’s more important to do it and find appropriate ways to care for yourself afterward then to not do it and feel the regret of not using your voice and taking specific action to hopefully open pathways to check and challenge perspectives that are detrimental to folks well-being. (Teijo)

Trevor acknowledged that, “Everybody wants to be heard. Everybody wants a place at the table. We're all fighting for a place at the table.”

Self as a Factor

Multicultural inclusivity is not simply an experience of self with others. Multicultural inclusivity is also a self-awareness, self-acceptance, and intrinsically motivated experience (Sue & Sue, 2016). One could argue that an individual who had not internalized there intersectionality through a positive lens could not accurately perceive multicultural inclusivity from other persons and communities. What is signified in the intrapersonal self as a motivating factor for engagement in the counseling profession can be understood as personality traits and intrapersonal drive for one to live the aspirational edicts for multiculturalism in counseling. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.
First, Trevor articulated the internalized need to have voice and use one’s voice despite having felt silenced as a man of color throughout his professional experiences:

If I walk in and the mood isn't right then I'm going to have difficulty staying or being a part of or joining in. And, certainly that has been the case at certain conferences whether it be certain organizations. . . . There was that book that was written by the Delany sisters, “Having our Say.” So, I've gotten to that point in my life where I've gone along to get along and I don't know that I'm totally satisfied with that. Certainly, you do that when you have mouths to feed and people are depending on you. And so, you eat a little crow because you know you got people who are depending on you. It's not just about you. Now that my kids are all grown, it's all about me. I'm not married and so it’s truly about me, so I can do pretty much or say what I'm going to say and I'm willing to suffer whatever consequences that are a result. So, whenever the Lord says, “the time is up my child, better lay them bones down, try to lay them bones to rest.” I will have had my say and I can say I went feeling like I said some things I wanted to say. If I hurt some feelings, it was not my intention, but I had to have my say. (Trevor)

Second, Tapani and Tybalt described their dedication to learning more about people and the profession. Their dedication to engagement were fueled by their internalized passion for continued knowledge and understanding:

Sometimes we talk about diversity and immersion in this profession as far as being open to different cultural aspects, giving people a chance to get to know a person on a deeper level, and not only that, me, myself, I'm always willing to learn. I'm always looking to explore. So, having a chance to learn about other people to from a professional standpoint. (Tapani)

[My primary professional identity is] student: believe it or not. That's always something I've always said. And it doesn't matter even after you give me those letters that believe it or not I resent, for my own personal reasons, yeah. You’re a student, the second that you believe you're the teacher, uh-oh! You might have to teach in a class, . . . but my professional identity is student of the profession and the second you believe you're above that, is the second I think you're doing a disservice to whoever you interact with. (Tybalt)

Third and finally, Tahu and Tilian, communicated their internalized commitment to self-awareness and self-exploration as ways and internalized motivation for engagement as
multiculturally inclusive counseling professionals:

I think that was the one thing I left out: my own biases or insecurities as far as dealing with other people. I have to look at myself in the mirror often times and just wonder like, “what are my biases? What are my limitations? What am I not seeing about them? What am I not understanding about them? How am I judging them?” Me looking in the mirror and me being honest with myself. (Tahu)

I started looking at myself, so I go, “Alright, these are things that you already know you don't have, but you want to be successful. You have two options: you can say this was a bad decision and bounce out or do what you've always done and teach people how to treat you.” And, I decided to give that a shot; . . . I've got the opportunities and support because I could appear to be the token, which that is my benefit. I choose to maximize that. I'm like if you're going to label me or put me in that token box and give me benefits from it then I'm going to do something with it, right! . . . It really is that experience of you've been given these experiences, these cracks in the wall, now they can become a big kick in the door moment, but that kick in the door moment only comes from what you do with it. (Tilian)

The intrapersonal characteristics, states of being, and internalized commitment to enacting multiculturalism in counseling were self-related factors that influenced these men of color to remain engaged in their respective counseling communities. These engagement choices were despite of, and at times because of, the multicultural exclusion experiences they endured as men of color in the counseling profession. In addition to intrapersonal factors, systems, a sense of responsibility to perpetuate the ripples of inclusion they had experienced, and a personal mission to live out the vision of multiculturalism in counseling were articulated above. Although it was not a specific question at the outset of this study, a fifth theme emerged as what these men of color would recommend as necessary and essential to increasing the manifestations of multicultural inclusion between and among counseling professionals. That thematic finding is articulated next.
Theme Five: A Call for Living the Aspiration

Recommendations for how to address the marginal manifestations of multicultural inclusivity within the counseling profession for men of color who are professional counselors were not explicitly sought-after through this phenomenological investigation. Nevertheless, recommendations and calls to action as responses to this organically derived research question three (RQ3) did emerge through participant narratives. RQ3 has emerged as: What do men of color who are counseling professionals recommend to help increase manifestations of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession? In addition to general recommendations aligned with the themes presented above, interpretive recommendations were organized into eight aspects.

- Acknowledgement and outreach
- Representation
- Cultivating diverse new leaders
- Genuine commitment
- Integration
- Exploration
- Training and practice
- Systemic organizational change

Participant disclosures were an acknowledgement that there is more than one way, multiple avenues, for beginning and maintaining changes towards increasing manifestations of holistic multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. This notion of acknowledgment and outreach, as well as training and practice, were conjoined aspects based around participant communications that inclusion must be active in both knowledge and application; that awareness are comprehension are not sufficient if they are not applied through intentional, genuine, and
committed actions. Herein are participant excerpts in support of this theme and its thematic aspects.

We start going backwards because we’re not allowing people to express and develop an understanding of how the world actually works without being so myopic in their point of view. . . . I look at the Lewis and Lewis models of community counseling and kind of approach things that way. You must talk about social justice, social policy, community education, not just psychotherapy and counseling theories. That’s only a quarter of what we should be doing. . . . We have to take steps in order to integrate what’s happening in the community; and, not just [here], but nationally, internationally, into how we see the world. . . . It’s easy to see ways in which we have to start, as a profession, addressing these things by talking about them on a grassroots level. . . . So, the Bible says, “Where there’s no vision, people perish.” We have to develop vision. (Tavetti)

I think I go back to those four factors [(representation, people, relationships, community)] that we discussed; and, I really feel like that’s my hope. That not only for you as a takeaway, but for everything that emanates from the study, that people will see those four factors and bridge that across so many different ways that we build upon our profession. That we are not just focusing solely on practicing, that we’re not focusing solely on supervision, that we’re not so focusing solely on research or pedagogy as counselor educators, but it’s also leadership. We have to really utilize those all, four factors, really to root, proliferate around and across our profession in these different ways. (Thomas)

I guess multicultural inclusion in the counseling profession would be less drama about what population you belong to and more acknowledging that there is no set equation and no set street sign for any one thing, that everything is different. (Tybalt)

There’s a lot of stuff that we do, the black community, we may do by way of oral tradition and passing on important information about oral tradition by oral methods, but I’m saying there’s some value and utility in empirically investigating this stuff and being able to share it with the readership. (Teijo)

They’re not just one style and that has to be on the tongue of counselors, predominantly counselors or anyone in the helping field, like medicine or what not because you don’t serve just one type of person. I really believe people that are in the helping field need to be able to adapt their lingo, their verbiage, and they’re thinking around multi-options. . . . [Faculty] weren’t aware of the extra pieces needed to be done when you work with students of color. To be successful we needed to be really more hands-on, we need more dialogue, and process because most of us were raised in communities where the community raised us, not just our parents you know. (Tilian)
Acknowledgement and Outreach

Acknowledgement as an implicated recommendation aspect discerned from participant data was noted as expectations for counseling leaders and counselor educators to recognize individualized needs of counselors in training, novice professionals, and seasoned professionals within the organization of professional counseling. Participants spoke most fervently about diversification of pedagogical practices that would holistically include counselors of color, particularly men of color, in counselor education programs. This type of holistic inclusion would require efforts above and beyond initial recruitment efforts. Outreach as a conjoined recommendation aspect was implicated by the request for counseling professionals to not only create announcements about participation and service opportunities within the profession, but to take action in making opportunities within the profession overtly known by means of looking for, asking about, and diversifying their behaviors for connecting with new and culturally diverse counseling professionals. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

I’ll speak for myself; then, it’s kind of like, “why am I here?” I’ve studied that White students don’t need that feedback cuz they were raised in an environment, and I’m generalizing, that was also individualistic and competitive. Their parents or their community didn’t have to say, “How are you doing? Have you made any friends?” It’s more like, “What’s the results? What’s the outcome? ‘What did you produce?’ So they were used to, “here’s the assignment. Get it done. Come back to me with the outcome.” And they would thrive in that environment cuz they were different. But, people color, I’ve found, in my own experience, would always question, “do I belong here? Did I even earn this?” Even though we’re smart enough and we’re good enough we look around and be kind of like, “how did I get here?” And that, faculty isn’t really acknowledging that. Not making that their identity, but [giving] some acknowledgement that alleviates the pressure of [questioning]. . . . Those little pieces, help students of color really feel included, wanted, and that you want me to be successful here. And we don’t get that kind of feedback. (Tilian)

I understand that ACA is one thing: there’s just too many people to have everyone do
something. It’s a professional conference and it’s a professional organization that provides knowledge and expertise to keep practicing in the community, but things like ACES that are smaller, that are for educators and for professionals; If you know that we’re starting as a person of color, a man of color, wouldn’t you have a way to say, “If you’re new, these are the mentors that we have,” for example. “These are people that will answer questions.” (Tiki)

Teijo, supported outreach as one recommendation to increase multicultural inclusion experiences for men of color who are professional counselors.

So that they know what these men are saying; help them secure tenure in their respective institutions. So, having access to the older generations of Black males, cuz it ain’t like 50 of us, and I ain’t even one of them. And trying to get access to them in their diverse voices because cuz there’s a lot their perspectives range across the political spectrum with respect to their convictions. Then engaging other Black man to help me. (Teijo)

That’s important in businesses and professionals have to hire people that are diverse in color and in training, but they also have to recruit. That’s another big piece, looking for potential candidates that are of color: to ask them is this for me, are you interested in the master’s degree, are you interested in the Ph.D. Look for those talents and [cultivate] them and recruit them because I already know from my experience that I may have had a lot of White people in my life to help influence me, to give me the tools, to help me get to where I am, but I can tell you this much, it was the people of color that helped me to see that I could do it! (Tilian)

**Representation**

Representation was an implicit recommendation aspect throughout participants’ narrative disclosures about multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession.

Representation was articulated as a frontline visual communication that men of color were desired and needed within the counseling profession. More so, representation was described as necessary, yet insufficient for manifesting multicultural inclusion. This notion was echoed when representation was practiced as tokenism in particular. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.
I think professionally multicultural inclusion is hiring a diverse staff of counselors. You know, like I said [for] people who come into the helping profession, if a doctor is working in a hospital, he doesn’t get to choose the client who comes into their emergency room or their office; so, hiring diverse employees that represent the community. I saw it too many times in public schools where my Latino and Black students will look at their teachers and they will look nothing like them in external appearance and in background. The teachers, I often felt they were great in their craft, very knowledgeable, but they just couldn’t connect with this kids and that’s where the distance came. . . I look like you and that bridges a lot of gaps for my family’s that I work with and the kids that I work with. So, I saw that the race is a big piece of talking about multicultural issues, training multicultural skills, and recruiting diverse people to be in those roles. I think are a key part to keep multiculturalism alive, but effective: to continue to train predominantly White men and women. (Tilian)

We need to have that visibility. We need to have a face that doesn’t look like other faces that brings a tradition, an intellectual traditions that isn’t just a carbon copy of others. So, what could the profession do to represent or to have more of that multicultural inclusion? (rhetorical statement) Maybe the first step is recognizing that it doesn’t have it now: that more needs to be done to get people in. (Tiki)

We have [four specializations] and it is overwhelmingly White: like overwhelming White. And while that’s not so surprising because that’s generally the profession, we’re in a pretty diverse community and we have access to an even more diverse community, diverse by way of language, lingual diversity, racial and ethnic, sexual orientation, gender expression. It’s folks all around our campus community who should have access to our programs . . . but we can’t seem to get, to draw Black students, LatinX students. So, I’m like, “what’s happening here? What aren’t we doing? Why don’t we seem either appealing to underrepresented students of color, or if we are, what are the things that are taking place institutionally or in our program that are preventing them from being accepted and enrolling? (Teijo)

I think [representation] would help our student population cuz a minority counselor might be better identified with a minority population. You know, as a counselor we are trying to have an open mind and look at other people’s worldviews, preferences, and all that. I also have experienced some of my students they realize that I have some their shared experiences that maybe the White counselors at my school don’t have. . . I think kind of the culture and the way the household is at home. The way I was raised is kind of similar to the way some of my students were raised. . . Through private professional conversations with the other two counselors that are a White male in a White woman, they recognize that limitation as well. That they aren’t able to relate to the students as much as I am; one, I’m younger and another I’m a minority. I think that having a more diverse population would help some students to open up more to receiving counseling
and open it up to getting help with whatever it is that they need. (Tahu)

Cultivating Diverse New Leaders

The call for the cultivation of diverse new leaders within the counseling profession was a unique adage to the notion of representation. Cox (1991) supported the importance of organizational leadership mirroring the representation of its membership. As the nation and the profession has become culturally diversified, the practice of creating accessible spaces for culturally diversified leadership bodies within the counseling profession was recommended for manifesting multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

We need new blood. We need people who are a little more objective and people who want to start where it needs to start. Because it starts with, “I just graduated. I have my Master’s and I took the NCE, what can I do?” (Tybalt)

So, I think what it would look like, as a profession, ACA recognizing those differential experiences that people have and then even some form of initiative, guidelines, task force that talked about how we can diversify and give up [seats] and make room [for diverse voices]. How can we have more circulating opportunities for students, for emerging students, and emerging counselors who are minoritized? How can we have their voices heard better? What system can there be in leadership/mentorship? This emerging leadership program [with ACES, even] they always seem to be so limited, like one or two [minoritized people]. (Tiki)

Genuine Commitment

A genuine commitment to manifesting multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession for men of color who are professional counselors was communicated as requiring multiple active efforts. This recommendation aspect included allocation of time, financial allocations towards grassroots in the community initiatives with counselor coalitions, practices in
critical self-reflection, practices in overt acknowledgement of exclusion behaviors, enacting changes in counselor education program design, shifts in mentoring practices, and acceptance diversification in publication topics in counseling journals/presentation topics at counseling conferences. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Holistic multicultural inclusion in a counseling profession would look like, there would be evidence of a consistent commitment to learning about, honoring, and providing space for people who have been historically marginalized or placed on the outskirts of the profession: not solely by way of our divisions, but in the broader leadership of counseling, of ACA, in the umbrella counseling organization. Maybe in practice, it would look less like task force organizations: like, “Hey here’s this particular issue we have to deal with.” This kind of acute, specific, bound time frame, but this just exists and it’s going to exist and it’s going to have a consistent support of the profession and the profession’s leadership. That if there needs to be forum on Black Affairs all the time, then that’s just going to exist. It’s not just going to be regulated to a particular leader or set of leaders; it becomes systematic, it becomes institutionalized. (Teijo)

We need a consortium especially in the [suburban areas]. We have over a million people out there and once you have your masters and your license you really don’t have the network any longer: organizations that comes together to look at the mental health concerns of the community. They do in [some parts] of the city of course, but not in African American communities. . . . That all starts with a mechanism meaning sitting down and trying to find a way to get things done; and, it takes time. (Taavetti)

Some people have not done their own critical self-work; they haven’t resisted the oppressor within themselves. I’ve seen that within the organizations like, “I can represent one type of intersection then own that as the complete narrative for everybody and that’s not how it has to be. There is a way that we can work together as communities. (Thomas)

Integration

Integration as a recommendation aspect that emerged through this study was an implicit and overt support of intersectionality as a conceptual practice. Participants acknowledged chronosystem shifts in integrating micro cultural aspects of the human experience in professional counseling pedagogy and clinical practices. However, more pervasive and consistent integration
dialogue, writings, teaching, and practices, both clinical and colloquial, were recommended.

Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

So holistic multicultural inclusion [within counselor ed programs] looks like an institutionally developed initiative, initiatives that are institutionally supported overtime without regard to who’s chair, without regard to whose profession charged [the initiative], that allow the space for consideration of who is not represented, who is not served; particularly, on the basis of cultural identity. That comes by way of admissions; that comes by way of case conceptualization; that comes by way of practicum and internship; that comes by way of course content; there’s not solely a multicultural course; there’s not solely a social justice course, but there’s multicultural inclusion integrated in every single form of work and support that we provide students; so that it’s not a second thought, it’s integrated in the way they learn to support clients and students and communities that they’re serving. I guess the point I’m trying to make is that holistic multicultural inclusion looks institutional. And it’s not bound by specific leadership: that because one leader has a particular conviction about multicultural inclusion that when that leader leaves then there’s a different priority that the priority stays. (Teijo)

Professional counseling organizations should really adhere to these principles that really make us who we are as counselors. I think what’s so salient and relevant for our conversation is that it’s not supposed to be like we’re just going to say AMCD, ALGBTIC and maybe CSJ are going to be the only ones that adhere to diversity [principles]. It really should be reflected all across all the divisions, all the state branches that diversity and social justice have always been a part of our fabric, of our profession. They really should be a part of what we do in everyday practice and what we really adhere to. It’s not just supposed to be like I’m only going to show up for multiculturalism and social justice when it’s convenient for me or that I’m only going to do that when it’s going to be helpful to my agenda or to my narrative. (Thomas)

I often didn’t need those additional supports because I wasn’t pro-. I wasn’t pro-this, pro-that; I was just pro-people. You know I’m for my race and I understand the struggles that we have. I’ve always said this, the only political thing I would say in our conversation: I don’t care if you’re pro-Black, pro-White, pro-Asian, pro-anything. You just can’t be pro-something and anti-something else. I’m cool with you being pro-White! You should love your race and your ethnicity. You deserve that as much as a pro-Asian [person]. That’s love of self and love of culture and background! But I can’t be pro-White and anti-Asian, anti-black, anti-anything. It just doesn’t make sense. That’s where you really just cross the line. That’s where you become; I don’t have to delve in it: You get it clearly! Pro- is fine that’s just self-love and community love, when you go anti- to bolster your pro-, we got an issue there, big issue! (Tilian)
Exploration

Expiration as a recommendation aspect was inclusive of professional counselors’ self-exploration of their perspectives, practice patterns, and beliefs regarding multicultural inclusion. Exploration was very much a recommendation for counselors to actively explore the intersectionality of other professional counselors, particularly men of color who are counseling professionals; taking an active interest in non-judgmental learning about each other as human beings, practicing and interacting within the counseling profession organization and its micro communities. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

The other bigger part of what [we do] should be social justice and the impact of the counseling community. So, we should understand things like politics and research, these kind of things, you know. And I mean research into uplifting or advocating for the poor you know and disenfranchised folks. . . . My students, they know who I am, what I stand for, and this is how I try to bring it to them and try to get them to look at [counseling broadly]. (Taavetti)

Professionally speaking, if I was to see you a conference, I’m never going to come up to you and right off the bat ask you, “Hey, how do identify?” Right! That to me is personal. Professionally, that’s not how I ever lead with anything. Only once we have an established relationship or something in life leads us that way, I might very abruptly and bluntly ask you, “excuse my brashness, but you’re a young African American or Black woman, how’s that impacted you? Even in grad school, what has that been like? Have you been able to find a mentor? Do people understand your experiences? When you did your practicum, when you did your internship, when you did all that stuff, did people look at you and say she’s someone I trust or is she going to be late all the time? What stereo type did you experience?” But again, that to me has to happen organically, like unless you’re my client or I’m using you as an example in class, that’s not something I would ever lead with. And I think maybe, you know we are in a counseling profession, people sense that energy coming from me: So, maybe they’re not asking cuz I’m also not asking. (Tybalt)

Training

Training as an emerging recommendation aspect from this study should not be
overlooked neither underemphasized. Training in regards to manifesting multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession was an acknowledgement that counseling professionals with majority identities and majority cultural perspectives have historically been able to ignore the need for multiculturally diversified interventions and inclusion practices. As such, training to learn how to notice, training in acknowledgement, training in embracing, and training in celebrating non-majority ideas; perspectives; needs; and intersectionalities, was recommended to help support increased movement towards the manifestation of holistic multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

Training is very important. Multicultural training is important. I can’t expect someone to just get theoretical aspects of multicultural and the cognitive understanding of it and then say, “go further and work.” Learning about it and doing it are two different things, but I still rather them have training and understanding about it than not. That’s a key part for me with multicultural, training at the higher level: continued training is important, talking about it consistently in every class, and all the conversations as possible. . . . You have the [counseling] skills and training you’ve just been caught up with that “this is how my client should look, act, and think, and when they don’t. I can’t help you cuz I’ve already scripted out how I will help that client based on how they look, act, and think; and you are far from the model. That’s not beneficial to future counselors because if they don’t start thinking tangently on multicultural issues, [their counseling won’t be as beneficial to future clients]. (Tilian)

So many aspects of who I am, I know it provides the opportunity for me to judge, unless I’m aware of it. Then I can negate it and allow it to provide me with more experiences and richness in getting to know people. To get to know someone you must know yourself. It’s fundamental, multiculturalism can work to your benefit or I can destroy you it’s really up to you. You have to be aware of it. You have to be aware of where you’re coming from. You have to be aware of your story, understanding that everyone has their own story. Let’s have a conversation, to get to know each other, rather than to explore how better I am than you. But again, I’m an idealist at heart. Really the only way I know how to make that work is that you have to go out there and do it. (Tybalt)

Systemic Organizational Change

Systemic organizational change was communicated as a non-negotiable recommendation
aspect uniquely necessary for the manifestation of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. Participants acknowledged that the historical socio-political systems, within which the counseling profession was developed, would be an ongoing obstacle to surmount in creating significant systemic organizational changes that could result in manifesting holistic multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. This recommendation aspect was communicated with passion and commitment by these men of color who are professional counselors to do their best in their part of taking on this charge. Herein are some participant excerpts supporting this aspect.

If I can add to the counseling world it’s being able to figure out ways to introduce intuitive helping strategies at a younger age so that children can see it as, “this is the way of life: we tolerate, we accept, and we include all!

I think what I would add too is really trying to introduce these topics earlier in life: . . . . Introducing kids early to diversity as a part of the American [culture] and the world fabric: We have our family values, I’ll give you that, but our family doesn’t live in isolation. If we’re going to live in this country and the world, we have to accept that others do also and in different ways. When that starts earlier, I think tolerance starts earlier, same with intolerance. It doesn’t start at 18, it starts at eight, it starts at eight months. So for me to think that it could make someone less tolerant at the age of eight, I’ll start teaching them about tolerance at the age of 18. I’m fighting against 18 years of intolerance. (Tilian)

There is a lot of useful information that comes from our profession that may not exist in terms of theology. And so, we don’t really benefit from it because we don’t get organized in order to deliver it. You know how accountants or insurance people organize workshops in the community around taxes or retirement or whatever, we should be doing the same thing but around mental health. And we don’t really do that, especially for middle-class African-Americans who are going to work every day. We don’t have that infrastructure and it’s easy to develop cuz I’ve done it in my private practice. I’ve done workshops on diversity and families cuz people are dealing with those issues. The turnout was standing room only, you know, right. So, a mentor would be great!

You have to understand, you have to be honest about your history, who we are, about what people have done, and I think multiculturalism is understanding a person’s not just an individual’s history, but society. As an African-American, my relationship to American society is as a second-class citizen and a laborer. Even my phenotype, the
color of my skin, the width of my nose, all these things: I have to realize that the psychology profession originally had looked for ways to exclude us from participation in society through instruments, intelligence testing, and all these kinds of things. So, I think that multiculturalism, you have to look at what is truth of the history, of where we are now, why people are in the shape that they’re in, speaking directly to that, and then using current research data that is out here now in order to teach people an appreciation for their true history. I always like to say, “How could you have a cultural diversity class and not talk about that, not have students really take a look at what we’re doing.”

(Taavetti)

ACA should represent counseling as a profession. The President should be on the hill or in whatever capacity making sure that your license in Illinois, assuming your practice, you can [go] to DC and open up shop if you like; and, then go to Virginia, then California, and pick a state. However, but [it’s], I need my agendas met. (Tybalt)

Something like ACA, for example, recognizing that there are differential experiences amongst our professional counselors; that we have to diversify and support that diversification. [ACA recognizing] that it can’t just be, “Let’s increase the numbers,” and then watch them all fall out because the system isn’t set up to support them. (Tiki)

I was very hopeful at the beginning, but watching bureaucracy work as bureaucracy does. It was funny how in one full year with me actually being actively involved, nothing got done. Including, like there were a lot of ideas from me to the president. Lots of great ideas; and, I took notes on some of them. I texted and emailed and it was awesome, but then after year; it goes back to that philosophical background. You have to unplug take an objective look, “Well, what did you do? What actually changed? Nothing.” Then you look at ACA, as a whole, and you see every president is there for one term and they get to serve [and do] something that they want to do. . . . That’s what you’re working with. That’s funny because nothing can get done in a year. Look at global politics, nothing is done in four years; and, if it does, it’s usually pretty dramatic and traumatic to the infrastructure. (Tybalt)

Trustworthiness of Participant Disclosures

My use of empathetic response and probing prompts during in depth interviews and focus group facilitation were beneficial in encouraging participants’ sharing of objective truths. In turn, this increased my ability as the researcher to uncover and interpret credible findings. Participants spoke to their ability to be candid and comprehensive in their disclosures during data
collection phases. Teijo commented, “I don’t know that there is anything I left out. (_pause; thinking) I don’t think I left out anything.” Tybalt was intentional in thinking, “How can I be candid yet respectful too.” Additionally, as Tybalt reflected on if he had left anything out of is narrative disclosures, he stated, “Tell the truth, nothing. I probably shared a lot more than I thought I would.” Participants also communicated cautiousness regarding the potential for professional retaliation or unpleasant confrontation if identified as the speakers of these truths:

I don’t think I did [leave anything out]. I think I may have said too much. . . . Well, I just want to make sure I didn’t name, names. I know I walked a tightrope on a few of those questions. I wanted to make sure to be honest, but thinking, “I don’t want to have to walk around with my dukes up!” (Taj)

I feel like I said so much, I don’t know how you’re going to put it in there. And anonymity is so important. I tell you it is! It’s been a variety of different experiences and anonymity is something that I greatly value for a lot of reasons; particularly with the population [I serve] and it being such a very small profession. (Taavetti)

I definitely feel like I’m my authentic-self; although, sometimes I have to turn it down. Cuz every once in a while, I’ll go rogue and say what I really want to say. Kind of like now. Appreciate the opportunity! No, I feel like I’m me what you see is pretty much what you get. I don’t have any need to be someone else, not particularly since I got those three little magical letters at the end of my name. I earned that, so, yeah, I don’t have to please anybody. . . . You don’t want to bash a school or group or whatever. I definitely need to be sensitive to that. . . . But, no I don’t think there’s anything [I left out]. I think I was pretty candid and open. You’re easy to talk to and so I think that helps. And you know there’s some degree of familiarity. So, I was not as guarded as I might have been with another researcher. (Trevor)

Thomas shared, “So I’m very careful about what I say, in a way that still informs the study, but also what I’m careful about is there are people who are going to be like, “was that you?” These excerpts are indicative of trustworthiness and the importance of diligent mechanisms in reporting to maintain participant confidentiality as men of color who are counseling professionals.
Researcher Reflection

The above excerpt of participant data was a snapshot of thematically organized narratives. These snippets of evidence are not holistically indicative of the outcomes of this investigation. While this was not a quantitative investigation, the quantitative aspects of participants’ qualitative phenomenological narrative data were relevant in interpretive analysis processes.

In this investigation of multicultural inclusion experiences for men of color who are professional counselors, 9,765 words across 14 single-spaced one-inch margin pages included 88 narrative statements about multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession. Comparatively, 22966 words across 32 single-spaced one-inch margin pages included 196 narrative statements about multicultural exclusion experiences within the counseling profession. Participants’ narratives included 26 statements about dynamics that moderated the negative and or unpleasant impact of exclusion and Multicultural exclusion experiences within the counseling profession. These moderating dynamics included personal survival and thriving goals, small pockets of inclusive communities, opportunities and spaces in which one could be their authentic self and personally developed resilience.

Additionally, findings from the study included 16 narrative disclosures about the myth of being able to compartmentalize multicultural inclusion practices and 44 narrative statements expounding upon the declaration of inclusion and multicultural inclusion as requiring intentional and active behavior choices. Regarding professional engagement for these men of color who are counseling professionals, 77 narrative statements regarding influences on engagement choices
included 36 statements themed around being a representative of multicultural diversity, creating opportunities for others multicultural inclusion, giving back to the profession, taking up the charge for an acting/modeling multicultural inclusion and a personal sense of responsibility. Other engagement influence statements included being specifically mentored to remain actively engaged with in professional associations and or a personal vision commitment for active engagement beyond professional practice responsibilities of their respective work settings.

Summary

This report of study findings included descriptive data about the participants studied, including contextualized perspectives with which their experiences and perceptions were situated. Four themes that emerged through this phenomenological study of the multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession for men of color who are professional counselors. Each theme and thematic aspects were delineated. These “Phenomenological Findings” were concluded with articulations of thematic recommendations interpreted from participant data, participant-based evidence of trustworthiness of the aforementioned findings, and researcher reflections on study findings as a research tool. Recognizing the thematic outcomes of this study is important. Equally important is understanding the quality and meaning of these findings. An Analytical interpretative discussion of the themes that emerged from this study are communicated next.
INTERPRETATIVE DISCUSSION

Introduction

I found that very few published writings on the topic of multiculturalism in counseling focused on the experience and modeling of multicultural inclusion between and among counseling professionals. Scholarly literature regarding the multicultural needs and best practices with clients were outlined within the “Review of Literature” as a parallelism regarding multiculturalism as a human experience. While some of the roles and responsibilities from counselor to client differ from the roles and responsibilities between counselor colleague and counselor colleague, the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to engage the humanity of multicultural individuals has been investigated as quite similar, if not the same (Arredondo et al., 1996; Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; Dacey, 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009; Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Social Justice Ecological Framework

An adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s (1977, 1994) Ecological Model of Human Development was used for conceptualizing multicultural development as the guiding conceptual framework for this study. From a social justice theoretical mindset, this investigation with 10 men of color who are professional counselors was used to uncover insights regarding the phenomenon of experiencing multicultural inclusion within the context of the counseling profession. Manifesting authentic multiculturalism and multicultural inclusion have been
emphasized as professional counseling aspirations and imperatives (ACA, 2014; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). The persistent social injustices experienced by men of color who are professional counselors are included in the discussion of research questions below. Implications for social justice practices are outlined later. The research questions used to design and guide this study are reviewed next.

**Research Questions**

Two research questions were used to guide this phenomenological investigation. Research question one was, “How do men of color who are professional counselors experience multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession?” Research question two was, “How do perceptions of multicultural inclusion influence engagement in professional counseling organizations for men of color who are professional counselors?” Research question three organically emerged as, “What do men of color who are counseling professionals recommend to help increase manifestations of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession? In support of answering these questions, ways in which participants defined, conceptualized, practiced, and experienced other professional counselor’s practice of multicultural inclusion was investigated (interview schedule prompts are included in Appendices F and G). The organizational structure and culture of the counseling profession was the context of this investigation. What was experienced and perceived by these men of color who are professional counselors was distinguished across various aspects of the counseling profession. This included counselor training programs, counseling work settings, professional associations, and other applicable professional counseling contexts in which men of color encounter counseling professionals. Within this “Interpretative Discussion,” narrative commentary is used to articulate
interpretations of inherent meanings derived from participants’ narrative disclosure through data collection and analysis phases (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). The interpretative responses to these two phenomenological research questions are discussed herein.

Discussion of Themes

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) indicated that the final aspect for implementing IPA is researchers’ report writing including final statements delineating meaning behind participants lived experiences. This “Interpretative Discussion” was organized around the four primary themes that emerged through analysis of participant narratives of their multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession. The meaning signified through specific disclosures and the influence/impact of participant experiences are clarified.

For example, understanding that isolation shows up in various forms: There is physical isolation, emotional and mental isolation, also isolation as the experience of social disconnection even when physically sharing space with individuals. Understanding privilege as the social power in which individuals prioritize their culture and cultural socialization as superior in any way over others’ culture and cultural socialization. The idea of mentorship takes on many forms; both the desire for mentorship and a sense of responsibility to be active and supportive mentors. Also, mentorship being described as encompassing formal and informal guidance, empathy, consultation, direction, encouragement, acceptance, communication over time.

Theme One: Inclusion Is Active

For men of color, their passion to be active in creating opportunities for multicultural inclusion through acknowledgment, acceptance, and curiosity was influenced by the spirit of the
counseling profession, and they articulated their inclusive actions as members of the counseling profession in this area where they perceived and experienced multicultural inclusion as limited or absent. While participants spoke of their enjoyment in being able to congregate within micro-communities of color, it is important to note that this enjoyment narrative was situated in the experiencing of multicultural exclusion or marginalized inclusion. This meaning that these men of color who are professional counselors are longing to be in professional counseling spaces that are multiculturally inclusive. What was discerned from participant narratives, if they were to experience more multicultural inclusivity within majority communities this amplified response to moments and opportunities to commune with non-majority micro-communities would still have its important place and benefit, but would be considered more of an added benefit rather than essential for professional persistence and personal vitality.

Within participants’ hopes for experiencing multicultural inclusion as men of color within the counseling profession, experiences of marginalization, tokenism, and exoticism were communicated. These experiences were differentiated in participants’ narratives as examples of exclusion cloaked in the guise of inclusion. These men of color frequently used themselves as exemplars of what they hoped and would like to experience from and with other colleagues who are counseling professionals. Participants long for a variety of accessible resources to be available to men of color, particularly for men of color who are counselors in training. Thinking about men of color who will become professional counselors, it was understood that professional resources would be devoid of racial barriers, would include financial allocations to support non-majority students, and could continue to increase representation within the counseling profession as active manifestations of multicultural inclusion. Representation matters, but assuming visual
representation is equated to multicultural inclusion or assuming acknowledging one shared cultural identity (i.e., maleness, Blackness, queerness, transness, budhism-ness, etc.) is sufficient for connectedness and inclusivity is faulty in logic and counter to the outcomes of this study.

**Theme Two: Inclusion, But Not Necessarily Multicultural Inclusion**

There was an important distinction between appreciations for ethnic identity versus because of ethnic identity. While men of color who are professional counselors desire to be embraced and acknowledged as multiculturally diverse individuals with their own particular intersectionality, they were not seeking to be tokened or given any unearned accolades. Similarly, men of color hoped the practice of receiving unearned scrutiny based on intersectionality or particular micro-cultural identity aspects would be discontinued. The experience of being physically counted as present or included within professional micro-communities, while not being recognized as a multicultural individual, as a person with a unique perspective, as a person from whom their colleagues could learn and celebrate was related to being included within the profession, but not necessarily experiencing multicultural inclusion.

**Theme Three: Exclusion as Familiar and Normative**

Some participants spoke to their experiences of being tokened, being included because of the visual representation of diversity that they could display, but not being embraced for all of who they are and how they show up in their own authentic personhood and professionalism. Some explicit and some implicit disclosures were indicative of participants being inclined to behave and dress above the typical standard expected within some of the professional counseling micro-communities they were a part of. This was attributed to multicultural exclusion related to
age bias (i.e., youthfulness) coupled with non-majority ethnic identity bias. Even as participants’
spoke about experiencing multicultural exclusion, participants’ empathized with and reasoned
about behaviors of individuals’ who contributed to their multicultural exclusion experiences
within the counseling profession.

Mentoring was one aspect of professional engagement that surfaced throughout this
study. Regarding the unfortunately familiar experiences of multicultural exclusion for some
participants in this study as men of color who are professional counselors, their observed divides
and disparities in mentoring men of color within the counseling profession were evident and
disappointing. Participants’ spoke more to their observations about the disparities between
mentoring women of whiteness, men of whiteness, and women of color in comparison to men of
color as opposed to assumptions about the disparities of cultivating mentorship relationships with
men of color who are professional counselors. Participants did not assume the limited or absent
mentorship of men of color was based on intentional discrimination as much as multicultural
neglect. This multicultural neglect was understood as a lack of attention to, looking for, and
attuning to the unique approaches for mentoring men of color or multiculturally inclusive mentor
needs of men of color. The idea that socio-cultural historical systems of rules, etiquette, and
decorum have a multicultural exclusionary nature was implicated in existing literature about men
of color in the general population and men of color who are professionals (Ahmed, 2012; Choi et
al., 2013; Cornileus, 2013; Drayton et al., 2014; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016).
Such the same notions were explicated through interpretations from this study, as well.

Theme Four: Engagement Despite and Because of Multicultural Exclusion

Self as a factor was a complex aspect of engagement for participants in this study.
Understanding that experiences of tokenism were discussed and acknowledged by participants as avenues of access is important. Equally important to understand is that participants did not discount their competently developed expertise. Participants acknowledged both; gaining access to some micro-communities of the counseling professional through tokenism and using those opportunities to communicate and demonstrate their expertise even when their expertise was not perceived as being the prominent rationale for their invitation to the preverbal table.

**Theme Five: A Call for Living the Aspiration**

The eight emerging aspects of participant recommendations are to be understood through a conceptual as well as applied practice lens for which continued study and research around multicultural inclusion needs to be conducted. A developed vision by the counseling profession as an organization of leaders and members can be implemented. These recommendations were nestled within the notion that inclusion is active. What was most significant was the call for systemic change in leadership structures, counselor preparation programs and their respective higher education institutions, and counseling practice settings. Representation, acknowledgement, and training are not sufficient if they are not applied through intentional and committed actions.

**Thematic Comparison with Literature**

Through this study, scholars’ historical findings related to attributions for the perceived disparities between aspirational manifestations of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession and the lived experiences of multicultural inclusion for men of color within the counseling profession (Chung et al., 2007; Howarth & Andreouli, 2012; Winker &
Degele, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006) were discovered as persistently accurate. Ineffective pedagogical practices were one prominent attribution to disparities in manifesting multicultural inclusion within study findings. Counseling leaders (ACA, 2014) communicated that outreach, assessment, and differentiated inventions were important factors for addressing multiculturalism in counseling. Through this study, these same aspects were referenced and/or implied as important for men of color who are professional counselors.

Conjectures made by counseling scholars in the 90s (Das, 1995; Langman, 1995; Patterson, 1996; Pedersen, 1991; Speight, 1991) were present in interpretative findings from this study: The expectation for increased infusion of cultural curiosity dialogue in the everyday professional counseling vernacular was evident. Participants in this study voiced the importance for counselors’ critical reflexivity in evaluating and enhancing their multiculturally inclusive perceptions and behaviors. Relationships rooted in respect, genuineness, and authentic empathy in which professionals adopted systemic advocacy roles were interlaced comments in interpretative findings from this study. The recommendation for counselors to pause and consider self-changes in order to foster inclusion and connectivity were stated by participants through this study.

Furthermore, findings from this study were corroborative about what scholars (Cornileus, 2013; Davis, 2015; Dollarhide et al., 2014; Eguchi & Starosta, 2012; Evans, 2013; Howarth & Andreouli, 2012; Ratts et al., 2015; Smith & Roysircar, 2010; Sue & Sue, 2016; Winker & Degele, 2011) noted at the start of this study: Not much has changed across generational chronosystems regarding multicultural inclusion experiences for men of color who are professional counselors. Emergent themes from study findings were used to communicate that
participants believed some change has occurred, marginally. Quite similar to what Hayes and colleagues (2010) reported, participants in the study expected, wanted, and recommended that counselors increase their self-awareness and empathetical exploration of others’ multicultural identities and intersectionality in order to increase accurate understanding and intervention choices in teaching, consultation, and everyday colleague interactions.

**Discussion of Research Questions**

The interpretive findings from this phenomenological study were explicit and implicit indications that multicultural inclusivity is not being holistically modeled within the counseling profession. When reflecting about the counseling profession as an organization and micro-communities within the counseling profession that embody multicultural inclusion, findings were indicative of participants’ experiencing marginal manifestations, including limited allocation of finances, time, and resources by the counseling profession organizations as whole. Inclusion was perceived as an ideal, not actively being enacted holistically. Interpretative findings were explicit and implicit exemplars that men of color who are professional counselors are experiencing marginal inclusion among professional counseling colleagues. Specific answers to RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3 are communicated at this juncture of reporting.

**Question One**

In answering the first research question for this study, how do men of color who are professional counselors experience multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession, the interpretive findings regarding this phenomenon were interpreted as denoting men of color are experiencing marginal, oppressive, and segregated experiences of multicultural inclusion within
the counseling profession. These limited experiences of multicultural inclusion were pervasive across micro-communities of the counseling profession in general and individually experienced across participants. Participant individuality, intrapersonal multicultural inclusivity, years within the counseling profession, and variability of engagement across micro-communities of the counseling profession were interpreted as influential on the frequency of multicultural inclusion experiences and the intensity of personal impact for these participants.

Participants like Tahu, who has been in the profession for less than five years, has worked in one counseling setting, and has chosen limited involvement in professional associations beyond his work setting, reported fewer experiences of multicultural exclusion within the counseling profession. Participants like Taj and Taavetti, who have been members of the counseling profession for more than 20 years, have worked in several different professional counseling settings, having numerous interactions with numerous counseling professionals, and have chosen involvement with varied numbers of professional associations beyond their counseling practice settings overtime, discussed more frequent, more pervasive, and more impactful experiences of multicultural exclusion within the counseling profession. All participants acknowledged the historical, as well as normatively expected, experiences of discrimination, marginalization, and multicultural exclusion within general society. Each of the participants spoke to some level of surprise in their initial or early experiences of multicultural exclusion between and among professional counselors. Participants who have been involved in more than one professional field, as well as more than one micro-community or work setting within the counseling profession, spoke about multicultural inclusion/exclusion experiences as
unfortunately normative and contributing influences on their engagement within the counseling profession.

**Question Two**

In answering the second research question of this study, how do perceptions of multicultural inclusion influence engagement in professional counseling organizations for men of color who are professional counselors, it is important to recall that the referent of professional organizations was not limited to professional associations such as ACA and or its state and international affiliate associations. Also, remembering that grammatically, theoretically, as well as specifically for the purposes of this study, experiencing inclusion and choosing engagement were differentially defined and differentially operationalized. This second research question was developed based upon the existing notions that perceptions can influence choices (Dacey, 2009; Friend & Bursuck, 2009). How participants’ perceptions influenced their choices was the focus of study. Findings from this study were indicative of participants more consistently choosing engagement among professional counselors within the counseling profession in response to their limited multicultural inclusion experiences. The types of engagement were variable across participants.

Some men of color, like Thomas and Teijo, attempted to push against the grain of exclusion and chose to remain actively engaged in multiculturally exclusive spaces as advocates and modelers of multicultural inclusion. Participants like Tilian, Tapani, and Taavetti, described intentional efforts to illuminate and develop socially just multicultural inclusion opportunities in their professional counseling work settings and through every day interactions with other counseling and related mental health professionals. Tiki, Tahu, and Taj described engagement
within professional counseling organizations from the mesosystem level in which they actively challenged and provided critically reflective opportunities through direct communication with other professional counselors and counseling partners who enacted some type of multicultural exclusion. Several participants, including Trevor and Tybalt, described professional organization engagement choices including ongoing scholarship creation and active conference participation. Participants in this study were action-minded so much so that they often disclosed ways in which they enacted or were striving to enact inclusion as a responsibility for engagement in the profession. Their examples of manifesting multicultural inclusion were implicit recommendations. Also, these men of color provided recommendations, organically.

Organic Question Three

In answering the organically derived third research question of this study, what do men of color who are counseling professionals recommend to help increase manifestations of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession, multiple modalities for actions and changes in interactions between counseling professionals were interpreted into the eight aspects presented in the Phenomenological Findings. The observation that this question was organically derived was informative in that men of color who are professional counselors have been and continue to actively contemplate how to improve the multicultural exclusionary aspects of or micro-communities within the counseling profession. This was interpreted as an emphatic declaration about the need for change. Moreover, the flexibility of recommendations was apparent. This flexibility is about the benefit of and necessity for multiple modalities of active multicultural inclusion practices. It was not a question of whether counseling professionals should be flexible about if they change their behaviors towards increasing multicultural
Participants’ collectively communicated that individualization in how each member of the counseling profession genuinely committed to multicultural inclusive practices was reasonable and necessary. Answering RQ3 could be summed up by the colloquial expression that not everyone can do everything, but everyone needs to do something. Participants from this study expected and honored the differentiated ways in which their colleagues might actively enact multiculturally inclusive manifestations between and among each other as counseling professionals. In relation to answering these research questions, reflections from me, as the researcher, are discussed next.

Discussion of Researcher Reflections

As the principal investigator of this phenomenological study, my interpretive lens was a research tool for analyzing, discerning meaning from, and reporting these findings. Selecting significant excerpts of evidence to present in the previously delineated “Phenomenological Findings” was difficult because no single piece of evidence, neither the collection of evidence presented above, fully illuminated the significance of participants’ multicultural inclusion experiences within the counseling profession as men of color who are professional counselors. While this study was not a linguistic investigation, the vocal quality, tone of voice, pacing of speech, repetitiveness of key phrases, and nuances in facial expressiveness were influential mechanisms for my interpretive analyses.

Irrevocable evidence was presented in which far more numerous accounts of social exclusion and multicultural exclusion within the counseling profession were experienced by men of color who are professional counselors. Participant’s differentiation between intent and impact
is also qualitatively significant to note. This differentiation between intent and impact included participants’ acknowledgement that some of their experiences of multicultural exclusion were not assumed to be malicious acts of discrimination. Additionally, differentiating intent was signified by participants not assuming that their exclusion experiences were specifically attributed to their intersectionality or unique micro-cultures of their identity. More often than not, participants attempted to take a non-assuming position regarding how to attribute and make sense of their experiences of exclusion. Participant narrative disclosures were analyzed as being in alignment with the constructs of this study and used to categorize and interpret thematic outcomes. As such, even though participants tried to be non-assuming, descriptions of their experiences implicated instances of experiencing exclusion within the counseling profession that was based on their multicultural intersectionality as men of color who are professional counselors. In concluding my researcher reflections, the impact of even micro, covert, and unintentional multicultural exclusion experiences was understood as qualitatively significant.

Discussion of Study Limitations

Potential limitations to this study were considered as part of the study design processes. The actual limitations of this study could not be fully recognized and delineated until all recruitment, collection, and analyses plans have been completed (Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Scholars understand that research limitations do not invalidate the rigor or trustworthiness of findings of the study, but help frame and contextualize the implications and utility of research findings (ACA, 2005, 2014; Erickson, 1986; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Ratts et al., 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008; Whiston, 2009). The limitations to and of this study have been identified herein.
The variable ways in which multiculturalism has been articulated across time were described in “Understanding Inclusion Experiences of Men of Color who are Professional Counselors” and the “Review of Literature.” There remains no single agreed upon definition of multiculturalism among counseling professionals (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; Van de Vijver et al., 2007). Even though a specific frame of understanding was provided for the context of this study, participants’ individualized beliefs in their personal and professional domains added some variance within interpretative processes. Inclusion of participants’ definitions of study constructs and perceptions of the counseling profession as the study context was helpful in maintaining the credibility of study findings.

The use of technology in various aspects of this research was a limitation as technology serves as both a connecting and disconnecting factor in human research (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012). Also, individual knowledge and utility with navigating technologies used in this study created some connecting difficulties and time delays during data collection processes. The requirement to engage with the technologies used for this study remains an unconfirmed potential participation deterrent limitation for this study.

As it relates to comfort and a sense of safety, researcher and participants’ environmental histories were limitations within this study (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Erickson, 1986; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). My identity and approach to data collection had the potential to trigger and/or create unforeseeable and hidden disconnections between participants and their experience reflections (Jones-Smith, 2012; Sue & Sue, 2016; Whiston, 2009). Also, the mere intentionality of research was an influential factor on how and what some participants disclosed (Erickson, 1986; Sue & Sue, 2016; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Participants’ historical experiences
influenced how they perceived me and whether they approached me, as the researcher (ACA, 2014; Erickson, 1986; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Ratts et al., 2015; Remley & Herlihy, 2014; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008; Whiston, 2009): a Black, female, novice professional counselor of color. Notably, this limitation was dually a benefit in this study.

The number of in-depth interviews and time allotted for interviewing were limitations (Erickson, 1986; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). The pre-determined length of the interviews was based on strong researcher recommendations based on findings about human attention span and understandings around critical thinking saturation (Smith et al., 2009). However, some research theorists (Erickson, 1986; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008; Whiston, 2009) purported that researchers’ implementation of two to three in depth interviews for up to two hours could provide increased credibility and confirmability of interpretative findings. Such a practice may be coupled with sacrifices to dependability or transferability of findings. (Erickson, 1986; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Having discussed limitations within this study, practice implications follow.

Implications for Practice

Practice implications derived from this study were cultivated through reviewing existing literature alongside the interpretive findings from this study. Theme five, a call for living the aspiration, was uniquely aligned with this research reporting task. Implications for practice include considerations for counselor educators, practitioners, and, leaders. These implications were focused around training, systemic organizational change, and outreach.
Training

Based on existing literature and recommendations uncovered through this phenomenological investigation, several practice implications emerged. Counseling scholars spoke to the importance in evolving multicultural training modalities and content covered during such trainings (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Estrada et al., 2013; Pedersen et al., 2016; Sue & Sue, 2016; Troutman & Packer-Williams, 2014). Intentional and applied skills and personhood training at all levels counselor development was an emerging recommendation from participant disclosures, also.

Organizational Change

As theorized at the outside of this phenomenological investigation, systemic organizational change was denoted as an important implication for counseling leaders to consider. Systemic structures in education programs, counseling work settings, and nuances of association practices were observed as contributing to limited multicultural inclusion and experiences of multicultural exclusion within the counseling profession by men of color who are counseling professionals. Systemic organizational change within the counseling profession would require a multifaceted, multi-year strategic planning process that would necessitate increase knowledge about the experiences and needs of diverse micro-communities of non-majority counselors within the profession. Organizational change scholars spoke about how systemic change can be a most daunting and challenging recommendation as well as a critical functional for maintaining organizational vitality (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Cox, 1991).
A few different types of outreach were noted as essential practices for enhancing and increasing experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession: (a) authentic efforts in reaching out to diverse individuals and micro communities of diverse counseling professionals, (b) overt acknowledgement of the diverse needs of men of color who are professional counselors and other diverse micro populations of counselors, and (c) the genuine commitment in supporting the fulfillment of these diverse needs. While increasing the identifiable representation of diverse multicultural professionals was discussed as not being sufficient for manifesting multicultural inclusivity, representation and integration of curriculum and continuing education topics that were representative of diverse professional counseling populations and diverse clients were described as vital to increasing the manifestation of multicultural inclusivity within the counseling profession. Alongside this recommendation to increase integrated representation of diverse counseling professionals, the intentional cultivation of diverse counseling leaders in which leaders’ diversity was honored, embraced, celebrated, and integrated into the evolving systemic organizational structures was implied as invaluable and crucial to manifesting holistic multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession.

Counselor Educators

These practice implications are relevant for all levels of the counseling profession from recruitment to retirement. For counselor education programs, implications included the need for faculty and training staff to implement culturally differentiated integrations of pedagogical modalities as well as diversified advisement and mentoring practices. One specific practice
implication was for faculty to attend to and acknowledge the non-cognitive reassurance aspects of non-majority counselors in training.

Non-cognitive dynamics in include aspects of connectedness and belonging in which non-majority students are able to access cultural representations of themselves in the learning environment. Representation is not only in the form of diverse students and faculty that share recognizable identities. Cultural representation includes curiosity about, validation of, and adaptations in pedagogical modalities, texts, theories, counseling exemplars, and other diverse multicultural artifacts and contexts interwoven into learning mechanisms and the larger learning environment. Beyond the cognitive feedback that is communicated through grading feedback, non-cognitive dynamics are explorations and validation about one’s sense of authentic acceptance, caring, embracing, and belonging within counselor preparation programs. These non-cognitive reassurances are important inclusionary mechanisms.

Counseling Practitioners

For counseling practitioners, implications included targeted continuing education training work that not only included the theoretical knowledge regarding multiculturalism in counseling. Counseling practitioners could benefit from experiential, here and now dialogue and processing the lived ism's and varied identity phobias that are perpetuated within counseling practice micro-communities and between counseling colleagues. This implication includes opportunities for counseling practitioners to explore and integrate everyday interaction knowledge into a stronger multicultural curiosity and authenticity with colleagues and clients.
Counseling Leaders

For counseling organization leaders, implications included intentional and genuine actions to seek out practitioners’, educators’, and trainees’ voices within the counseling profession. Technology was implicated as helpful in increasing interpersonal connectivity, increasing interpersonal disconnection, and increasing a sense of interpersonal passivity within the counseling profession, as well as larger society. The call for leaders to physically sit with and talk with its members, specifically non-majority members was an important implication. Also, leaders’ timely response to other forms of communications received from community members, especially non-majority counselors, is needed.

A few participants explicated that they did not expect to witness dynamic improvements in the manifestation of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession across the course of their lifetime. Nonetheless, participants believed progress in developing multicultural inclusion has made some movement across chronosystems. The ongoing need for authentic relationship building as colleagues continue in their practices of genuine curiosity of multicultural personhood is important for inclusionary practices to improve. This implies that counseling leaders and professional counselors with greater social capital need to make genuine personal and professional efforts to act on these recommendations and practice implications, strengthening the collective drive towards manifesting multicultural inclusion in counseling.

Before concluding this research report, alternative and future research opportunities are offered.

Implications for Future Research

Continuing education is a professional expectation and best practice in the counseling
profession (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Remley & Herlihy, 2014). What is known and understood today can be better understood tomorrow. As such, replication of this study and alternative research based on literature presented within this research report, as well as findings from this study were used to provide an outline of implications for future research. The dependability of this study for replication was outlined within the Phenomenological Methodology. This study included 10 men of color who are professional counselors, which was a sufficient sample for an interpretative phenomenological analysis study (Smith et al., 2009). Nevertheless, given that nine of the 10 men of color who were professional counselor participants in this study were specializing in counselor education, future research with men of color from other counseling specializations could of interest and usefulness to better discern nuances between and/or confirm similarities in experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession across counseling specializations for men of color who are professional counselors. The same sort of research could be duplicated with alternative non-majority micro-community populations of professional counselors.

Findings from this study included factors that contributed to participant's experiences of multicultural inclusion/exclusion and factors that moderated the impact of experiencing multicultural exclusion. Factor analysis research could be conducted to provide additional information regarding the validity and significance of these factors. Also the creation of a reliable multicultural inclusion scale, plus the administration of such a scale, could provide generalizable information about the multicultural inclusion experiences of professional counselors between and among counseling colleagues.

This research journey was started with an anecdotal observation and a reflective curiosity
which transformed into eight research questions. Targeted research to answer any or all of these questions could be useful information for better understanding multiculturalism in counseling. These questions for future research for study are (1) How do counselors define multiculturalism?; (2) What factors predict how counselors define multiculturalism?; (3) What is the mean difference between counseling interns, practicing counselors, and counselor educations and how they each define multiculturalism?; (4) What dynamics influence counselors’ membership in professional organization divisions?; (5) How do counselors experience limitations to joining professional organizations?; (6) How do counselors experience inclusive or exclusive practices regarding multiculturalism among professional counseling organizations?; (7) What perceptions do counselors have about professional organizations ability to support contemporary professionals in our diverse society?; and (8) What recommendations do counselors give to increase multiculturally inclusive practices at the professional organization level? This study was focused around a specific micro-community of professional counselors, while many of the above research questions are framed around the experiences of the collective.

The social justice component of this research framework was a call for research consumers to not only increase knowledge, but to spark intrigue and compassion, to encourage action on behalf of non-majority, marginalized, and multiculturally diverse voices of professional counselors and their non-majority, marginalized, multiculturally diverse clients. As the conclusion of this research report follows next, it is my hope for all persons to take up the charge and accept the call for genuine, authentic, multiculturally inclusive actions.

Conclusion

My personal and professional experiences as a multicultural being were catalytic in
developing this exploratory research investigation. As I became aware of professional counseling organizational structures as separate multicultural divisions, I was prompted with curiosity. ACA leaders’ (2014) aspirational charge to honor multiculturalism struck me as limited by ACA’s current organizational structures. The knowledge gained through reviewing other scholars’ writings was used to outline the direction and utility of IPA design for this research study. The ways in which this study may help fill gaps in scholarly literature related to multicultural inclusion for men of color who are professional counselors within the counseling profession was articulated. The relevant constructs of multiculturalism, inclusion, and professional counseling within this study were defined, described, and operationalized. Given the multicultural nature of humanity and evolving demographics of US communities, multiculturalism in counseling was emphasized as imperative practice. Competence multicultural counseling practice, begins with professionals’ manifestation of multicultural inclusion across all micro communities of the counseling profession. Methods for investigating the manifestation of lived experiences and perceptions of multicultural inclusion for men of color who are professional counselors was implemented. Thematic discussions were used to articulate finding outcomes and practice implications. These implications in combination with the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and literature synthesized were used to make conjectures about future research recommendations (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). The final study manuscript was submitted for publication through Institutional Huskie Commons with Embargo. Findings from this study were indicative that counseling professionals were falling short in meeting the expectation to model inclusive practices between and among counseling professionals: We, as professional
counselors, are not holistically practicing what we preach. Based on organizational theory (Astley & Van de Ven, 1983; Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999; Cox, 1991; Shafritz et al., 2011), this finding bodes concern for the vitality of the counseling profession as an organization if multicultural organizational changes are not implemented.
REFERENCES


Han, C. (2007). They don’t want to cruise your type: Gay men of color and the racial politics of exclusion. Social Identities, 13(1), 51-67. doi: 10.1080/13604630601163379

Hancock, A. (2007). Intersectionality as a normative and empirical paradigm. Politics & Gender, 3(2), 248-254. doi:10.1017/S1743923X07000062


National Board of Certified Counselors [NBCC]. (2014). *Important announcement from NBCC*. Retrieved from http://nbcc.informz.net/informzdataservice/onlineversion/ind/bWFpbGluZ2luc3RhbmNl/aWQ9Mzg0MzQxMSZzdWJzY3JpYmVyaWQ9ODEyMzYxMDYy


Urias, M. V. (2012). The impact of institutional characteristics on latino male graduation rates in community colleges. *Annals of the Next Generation, 3*(1), 1-12


APPENDIX A

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: ECOLOGY MODEL
APPENDIX A: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: ECOLOGY MODEL

Figure A1. Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1994) Ecology Model of Human Development

Figure A2. Multicultural Ecology Model: adaptation of Bronfenbrenner Ecology Model of Human Development (1977, 1994)
APPENDIX B

AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION DIVISIONS
APPENDIX B: AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION DIVISIONS

Within the American Counseling Association there are 20 divisions. These divisions enhance professional identity and are organized around specific interest and practice areas. The divisions provide professional strength and satisfy the diverse needs of the counseling community.

Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA) Chartered in 1986, AADA serves as a focal point for information sharing, professional development, and advocacy related to adult development and aging issues; addresses counseling concerns across the lifespan.

Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) Originally the Association for Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, AARC was chartered in 1965. The purpose of AARC is to promote the effective use of assessment in the counseling profession.

Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC) Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling aims to focus on the training needs of counselors who work with children and adolescents, while also providing professional support to those counselors, whether they are school counselors, play therapists, or counselor educators.

Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC) The Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC) is a forum for counselors, counselor educators, creative arts therapists and counselors in training to explore unique and diverse approaches to counseling. ACC's goal is to promote greater awareness, advocacy, and understanding of diverse and creative approaches to counseling.

American College Counseling Association (ACCA) ACCA is one of the newest divisions of the American Counseling Association. Chartered in 1991, the focus of ACCA is to foster student development in colleges, universities, and community colleges.

Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG) Originally the Military Educators and Counselors Association, ACEG was chartered in 1984. ACEG is dedicated to counseling clients and their families in local, state, and federal government or in military-related agencies.

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Originally the National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers, ACES was a founding association of ACA in 1952. ACES emphasizes the need for quality education and supervision of counselors for all work settings.

The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC) AHC, formerly C-AHEAD, a founding association of ACA in 1952, provides a forum for the exchange of information about humanistically-oriented counseling practices and promotes changes that reflect the growing body of knowledge about humanistic principles applied to human development and potential.

Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC)
Educates counselors to the unique needs of client identity development; and a non-threatening counseling environment by aiding in the reduction of stereotypical thinking and homoprejudice.

Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) Originally the Association of Non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance, AMCD was chartered in 1972. AMCD strives to improve cultural, ethnic and racial empathy and understanding by programs to advance and sustain personal growth.

American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) Chartered in 1978, AMHCA represents mental health counselors, advocating for client-access to quality services within the healthcare industry.

American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) ARCA is an organization of rehabilitation counseling practitioners, educators, and students who are concerned with enhancing the development of people with disabilities throughout their lifespan and in promoting excellence in the rehabilitation counseling profession's practice, research, consultation, and professional development.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Chartered in 1953, ASCA promotes school counseling professionals and interest in activities that affect the personal, educational, and career development of students. ASCA members also work with parents, educators, and community members to provide a positive learning environment.

Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) Originally the National Catholic Guidance Conference, ASERVIC was chartered in 1974. ASERVIC is devoted to professionals who believe that spiritual, ethical, religious, and other human values are essential to the full development of the person and to the discipline of counseling.

Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) Chartered in 1973, ASGW provides professional leadership in the field of group work, establishes standards for professional training, and supports research and the dissemination of knowledge.

Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ) CSJ is a community of counselors, counselor educators, graduate students, and school and community leaders who seek equity and an end to oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, counselors, families, communities, schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems.

International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC) Originally the Public Offender Counselor Association, IAAOC was chartered in 1972. Members of IAAOC advocate the development of effective counseling and rehabilitation programs for people with substance abuse problems, other addictions, and adult and/or juvenile public offenders.

International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC) Chartered in 1989, IAMFC members help develop healthy family systems through prevention, education, and therapy.
**National Career Development Association (NCDA)** Originally the National Vocational Guidance Association, NCDA was one of the founding associations of ACA in 1952. NCDA inspires and empowers the achievement of career and life goals by providing professional development, resources, standards, scientific research, and advocacy.

**National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)** NECA was originally the National Employment Counselors Association and was chartered in 1966. The commitment of NECA is to offer professional leadership to people who counsel in employment and/or career development settings.
APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT VIDEO TRANSCRIPT
APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

My name is Kimberly Ann Hart. I am a Doctoral Candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Northern Illinois University. I am inviting you to participate in a phenomenological study of men of color who are professional counselors. Your participation in this study may help counseling professionals and leaders gain knowledge about your experiences of multicultural inclusion and/or exclusion as a man of color in the counseling profession. Your participation would include five to seven minutes completing one written demographic questionnaire, one 60 to 90 minute individual audio or video-recorded interview, one 60 to 90 minute online video-recorded focus group, and follow up fact checking of your transcripts and written interpretations about your experiences.

Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your participation up to the completion of data collection phases. Your involvement in this study has the benefit of increasing professional understanding and may be personally cathartic. There are no foreseen risks for your participation in this study: the data collection questions are designed for you to reflect on your personal experiences, which may stimulate unexpected emotions. Your participation has the potential to increase understandings about men of color who are professional counselors’ experiences of multicultural inclusion and the potential for your individual growth through self-reflection.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participation in this study.
APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM
Informed Consent to Participate in Research

You are invited to participate in an interpretative phenomenological analysis study of men of color who are professional counselors' inclusion experiences within the counseling profession. The study is being conducted by Kimberly A. Hart, Doctoral Candidate within the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Northern Illinois University.

Eligibility Criteria
- Individuals who self-identified gender is man (both transgender and cisgender men are eligible)
- Individuals whose self-identified racial identity is of any non-White race and ethnic identity is of any non-Caucasian ethnicity
- Individuals who self-identified professional identity is as a professional counselor
  - Has completed a Masters level degree in a primary social helping profession (counseling, clinical social work, or psychology) with a primary professional identity as a counselor
  - Are practicing counselors including school, clinical mental health, community mental health, career, and chaplain counselors (licensed or unlicensed), clinical supervisors (ACS and non-ACS), and/or counselor educators (tenured, non-tenured, adjunct, visiting, and/or instructor status at CACREP and non-CACREP institutions)
- Individuals are currently 18 years of age or older with the ability to provide consent for individual participation in research as an adult

Purpose of this Study
The purpose of study is to better understand multicultural inclusion experiences of men of color who are professional counselors within the counseling profession.

Benefits and Risks to Participation
Benefits: Your participation in this study has the anticipated benefit of increasing professionals’ understanding of men of color who are professional counselors' experiences of multicultural inclusion within the counseling profession. Interpretations developed from this research has the potential benefit of informing additional research in the areas of counseling, multiculturalism, professionalism, inclusion, social justice, and/or counselor education.

Risks: There are no pervasive risks anticipated for participating in this study. This study does ask men of color who are professional counselors to reflect on personal experiences that might bring up emotionally charged memories or feelings. If participants experience any such feelings or uneasiness, participants may consider contacting their local mental health provider network. The risk of breach of confidentiality is present, yet minimized by data collection handling procedures.
As with any research, there is also the possibility that you may be subjected to risks that have not yet been identified.

Cost and Payments
Aside from the time involved in your completion of the data collection demographic questionnaire, interviews, online focus group, and fact check, there are no costs for you to participate in this study. Participants who complete all phases of data collection processes will receive a $50 Visa gift card via USPS mail or $50 Amazon gift card via Email.

Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw from the Study
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate in this study and wish to discontinue your participation, you have the right to withdraw from the study without consequence up to the point that data collection phases are completed. Should you wish to contact the researcher regarding your participation in the study or your right to withdraw, please utilize the contact information listed below. Your participation would include five to seven minutes completing a demographic questionnaire, 60-90 minutes for an initial in depth audio/video recorded interview, and 60-90 minutes for the online audio/video recorded focus group within three to four weeks after individual interviews.

Confidentiality
All data will be collected and handled in accordance with IRB ethical research standards. A participant pseudonym of your recommending will be utilized during all data collection phases after providing your legal name for informed consent. Consent forms and participant data will be retained in separate secure software platforms.

Researcher Contact Information
Kimberly A. Hart, MSEd, NCC, PEL:SC, LPC, ACS
Doctoral Candidate: Counselor Education & Supervision
Department of Counseling, Adult, & Higher Education
Northern Illinois University
khart1@niu.edu

Research Faculty Co-Chair Information
Adam Carter, PhD, NC-LPCS, NCC, ACS
Assistant Professor: Counseling
Department of Counseling, Adult, & Higher Education
Northern Illinois University
adamparker@niu.edu
815-753-1448

Statement of Informed Consent to Participate in Research
I agree to participate in the research project titled Multicultural inclusion: A phenomenological
study of men of color who are professional counselors, being conducted by Kimberly A. Hart, Doctoral Candidate at Northern Illinois University. I have been informed of the purpose of the study. I understand that if I agree to participate in this study, my participation would include five to seven minutes completing one written demographic questionnaire, one 60 to 90 minute individual audio or video-recorded interview online, one 60 to 90 minute online video-recorded focus-group, and follow-up fact checking of your interview transcripts and written interpretations about your experiences.

I am aware that my participation is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time without penalty or prejudice, and that if I have any additional questions concerning this study, I may contact Kimberly A. Hart and/or Faculty Co-Chair, Dr. Adam Carter. I understand that if I wish further information regarding my rights as a research subject, I may contact the Office of Research Compliance at Northern Illinois University at (815) 753-8588.

I understand that the intended benefits and risks of this study as described above. I realize that Northern Illinois University policy does not provide for compensation for, nor does the University carry insurance to cover distress or injury incurred as a result of participation in University sponsored research projects.

I understand that my consent to participate in this project does not constitute a waiver of any legal rights or redress I might have as a result of my participation, and I acknowledge that I have retained a copy of this consent form.

☐ I agree to participate in this research

Consent for Audio/Video Recording
In addition to consenting to participate in this research study, I consent to be audio and/or video recorded during the data collection interview and focus group phases. I understand that these recordings will be destroyed after all data analysis processes have been completed.

☐ I agree to video/audio recording for research purposes

☐ I agree to audio recording for research purposes

*Keep a copy of this page for your records. Thank you for your time and participation.

Thank you for your time and participation.
APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE
APPENDIX E: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Questionnaire Items

1. Age (five year ranges)
   • 20-25
   • 26-30
   • 31-35
   • 36-40
   • 41-45
   • 46-50
   • 51-55
   • 56-60
   • 61-65
   • 66-70
   • 71-75
   • 76 or older

2. Race (check all that apply)
   • Asian
   • Black, Hispanic
   • Black, Non-Hispanic
   • Native/Indigenous
   • White, Hispanic
   • White, Non-Hispanic

3. Ethnic identity (check all that apply)
   • African (self-identify countries)
   • Asian (self-identify countries)
   • European (self-identify countries)
   • Native/First Nation (self-identify nations)
   • North American (self-identify countries)
   • South American (self-identify countries)
   • Self-identified ethnicity:

4. Gender identity
   • Please select
   • Transgender Male
   • Cisgender Male
   • Gender Fluid
   • Non-binary
   • Gender non-conforming
   • Self-identify
   • Self-identified gender identity:

5. Religious/spiritual affiliation (check all that apply)
   • Agnostic
   • Atheist
   • Baptist
   • Buddhist
   • Catholic
   • Christian
   • Episcopalian
   • Evangelical
   • Hindu
   • Jewish
   • Methodist
   • Mormon
   • Muslim
   • Pagan
   • Protestant
   • Scientologist
   • Sikh
   • Spiritualist
   • Sunni
   • Taoist
   • Vuduist
   • Wiccan
   • None
   • Self-identify
   • Self-identified religious/spiritual affiliation

6. Sexual orientation (choose identity that best describes your identity)
   • Asexual
   • Bisexual
   • Lesbian
   • Gay
   • Heterosexual
   • Pansexual
   • Two Spirit
   • Queer
   • Straight
   • Open
   • Homosexual
   • Self-identified sexual orientation
7. Romantic orientation (choose identity that best describes your identity)
   - Aromantic
   - Demiromantic
   - Monogamous Heteroromantic
   - Monogamous Homoromantic
   - Polyamorous Heteroromantic
   - Polyamorous Homoromantic
   - Polyamorous Polyromantic
   - Self-identified romantic orientation

8. Nation of birth (i.e., Mexico, Russia, Spain, Egypt, United States, Greenland, etc.)

9. How many generations of your family were born in the United States?
   - I am the first generation of my family born in the United States
   - My parents were the first generation of my family born in the United States
   - My grandparents were the first generation in my family born in the United States
   - Four generations of my family have been born in the United States
   - Five generations of my family have been born in the United States
   - Six generations of my family have been born in the United States
   - Seven generations of my family have been born in the United States
   - Eight generations of my family have been born in the United States
   - Nine generations of my family have been born in the United States
   - 10 or more generations of my family have been born in the United States

10. Political affiliation
    - None
    - Democrat
    - Independent
    - Republican
    - Communist
    - Undecided
    - Self-identified political affiliation

11. Disability/Ability identity (use as many or as few words to describe)

12. Socioeconomic status
    - Master’s degree less than $13,499 annual income
    - Master’s degree $13,500 to 19,999 annual income
    - Master’s degree $20,000 to 49,999 annual income
    - Master’s degree $50,000 to 99,999 annual income
    - Master’s degree more than $100,000 annual income
    - Doctoral degree less than $13,499 annual income
    - Doctoral degree $13,500 to 19,999 annual income
    - Doctoral degree $20,000 to 49,999 annual income
    - Doctoral degree $50,000 to 99,999 annual income
    - Doctoral degree more than $100,000 annual income

13. Year you completed your master’s degree in counseling (or related social service field)?
    - 1970
    - 1971
    - 1972
    - 1973
    - 1974
    - 1975
    - 1976
    - 1977
    - 1978
    - 1979
    - 1980
    - 1981
    - 1982
    - 1983
    - 1984
    - 1985
14. Was your master’s degree in counseling accredited?
   - Unknown/Do not remember
   - No, not accredited
   - Yes, CACREP
   - Yes, Non-CACREP accredited (please specify)
   - Specify non-CACREP counseling program accreditation

15. Have you completed specific coursework or training in multiculturalism and counseling?
   - None
   - One master’s-level course in multicultural education
   - Two or more master’s-level courses in multicultural education
   - One doctoral-level course in multicultural education
   - Two or more doctoral-level courses in multicultural education
   - At least 10 hours of post-degree multicultural education
   - At least 20 hours of post-degree multicultural education
   - At least 30 hours of post-degree multicultural education
   - At least 40 hours of post-degree multicultural education
   - More than 50 hours of post-degree multicultural education

16. Current counseling-related licenses/certifications (check all that apply)
   - I am neither licensed nor board certified in any counseling related practice at this time.
   - Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS)
   - Board Certified Dance/Movement Therapist (BC-DMT)
   - Certified Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (CADC)
   - Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP)
   - Certified School Counselor
   - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC; LCPC; LPCC)
   - Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC)
   - Licensed Clinical/Master Social Worker (LCSW; LMSW)
   - Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT; LCMFT)
   - Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC; LCMHC)
• Licensed School Counselor
• Music Therapist, Board Certified (MT-BC)
• National Certified Counselor (NCC)
• Registered Art Therapist

17. Areas of counseling specialization/practice (check all that apply)
• School Counseling
• Rehabilitation Counseling
• Clinical Counseling
• Career Counseling
• Trauma/Disaster Counseling
• Community Mental Health Counseling
• Substance use/Addictions Counseling
• Group Counseling
• Couples Counseling
• Family Counseling
• Sex Therapy
• Adventure-Based Counseling
• Creativity in Counseling
• Art Therapy
• Music Therapy
• Dance Therapy
• Yoga/Movement Therapy
• Play Therapy
• Counselor Education
• Clinical Supervision
• Self-identified counseling specialization(s)/practice(s)

18. Primary counselor identity
• Counseling practitioner/supervisor (school, community, rehabilitation, addictions, clinical, etc.).
• Counselor educator/supervisor

19. Counseling Organization Memberships (check all that apply)
• None
• American Counseling Association
• Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)
• Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC)
• Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC)
• Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)
• American College Counseling Association (ACCA)
• Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG)
• Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)
• The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC)
• Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC)
• Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)
• American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)
• American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)
• American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
• Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)
• Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)
• Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)
• International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC).
• International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)
• National Career Development Association (NCDA)
• National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)
• space holder do not mark
• Self-identify national membership
• State branch of ACA
• State branch of AADA
• State branch of AARC
• State branch of ACAC
• State branch of ACC
• State branch of ACCA
• State branch of ACEG
• State branch of ACES
• State branch of AHC
• State branch of ALGBTIC
• State branch of AMCD
• State branch of AMHCA
• State branch of ARCA
• State branch of ASCA
• State branch of ASERVIC
• State branch of ASGW
• State branch of CSJ
• State branch of IAAOC
• State branch of IAMFC
• State branch of NCDA
• State branch of NECA
• University branch counseling association
• Chi Sigma Iota
• Self-Identify regional/state membership
• Self-identified counseling memberships

20. In what counseling organizations are you an active member?
21. Have you been an executive officer in any state, regional, or national counseling organization?
   • No, and not interested in pursuing executive officer leadership in any counseling organization
   • No, and considering for the future in a national counseling organization
   • No, and considering for the future in a state counseling organization
   • No, and considering for the future in a university counseling organization
   • Yes, once in a national counseling organization
   • Yes, once in a state counseling organization
   • Yes, once in a university counseling organization
   • Yes, more than once in a national counseling organization
   • Yes, more than once in a state counseling organization
   • Yes, more than once in a university counseling organization
APPENDIX F

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
APPENDIX F: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Schedule Questions
1. How did you learn about this study?
2. Tell me about your personal and professional identities.
3. What influenced you to join the counseling profession?
4. Discuss your professional organization involvement.
   a. What benefits have you experienced as a ______ man through your professional organization involvement.
   b. What limitations or barriers to professional organization involvement have you experienced as a ______ man.
5. How do you define inclusion as a ______ man who is a professional counselor?
6. Talk about your experiences of inclusion within the counseling profession as a ______ man.
   a. . . . within professional organizations?
   b. What factors influence your inclusion experiences as a ______ man?
7. Talk about your experiences of exclusion within the counseling profession as a ______ man.
   a. . . . within professional organizations?
   b. What factors influence your exclusion experiences as a ______ man?
8. How do you define multiculturalism as a ______ man who is a professional counselor?
   a. Where, when, with whom have you experienced multiculturalism in the counseling profession as a _____ man.
9. How do you define multicultural inclusion as a ______ man who is a professional counselor?
10. Tell me about your awareness of professional counseling organizations that embody multicultural inclusion.
    a. How do these organizations embody multicultural inclusion?
11. As a ______ man, describe your perception of what holistic multicultural inclusion looks like within the counseling profession.*
    a. From your perception scale, how closely the counseling profession is in regards to manifesting holistic multicultural inclusion.
12. By whom, where, and when do you feel holistically included as a multicultural individual?
13. Share your reactions or what came up for you as we were talking?
    a. In the course of our conversation, what did you leave out?
    b. What do you want to make sure I understand about your multicultural inclusion experiences as a _____ man?*
       i. . . . as a ______ man who is a professional counselor?

*Note: sub-questions are truncated if participant addresses it in the primary question.
APPENDIX G

FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE
APPENDIX G: FOCUS GROUP SCHEDULE

Welcome
Hello everyone. I am Kimberly Ann Hart, doctoral candidate at Northern Illinois University. Thank you for being a part of our discussion of multicultural inclusion in the counseling profession. We will have about 90 minutes for our discussion today. Please know that I am equally interested in all the positive, negative, and seemingly mundane comments and experiences you've had as men of color in the counseling profession.

Overview of topic
The focus of our discussion is exploratory as I seek to understand your multicultural inclusion perspectives and experiences as men of color who are counseling professionals.

Structure
The group conversation is being recorded. Thus one speaker at a time is helpful. We are on a first name basis during the focus group. Your initials will be substituted within the transcriptions and pseudonyms will be used during data reporting. There are no right or wrong answers, only differing points of view. You don't need to agree with each other, but I ask that we all listen respectfully as others as you each share your views and experiences. If by chance you need to respond to another call or person in your space, please do so as quietly as possible. Please mute your microphone at the bottom of the screen when doing so. Then rejoin us as quickly as you can.
As the researcher, I will maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of each of you. I hope and ask that each of you will do the same for one another. My role is as a moderator to help guide the discussion. As such, I encourage you to consider this a dialog in which you can share and talk with the group as a whole. If a member’s disclosures resonate with you or your own experiences, feel free to share your thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and reactions to each other.

Questions
1. How do you feel about being men of color in the counseling profession?
2. How do you understand the role of professional counseling organizations?
3. Each of you had an opportunity to share your definition and experiences of multicultural inclusion during your individual interviews with me.
   a. Discuss any thoughts or reflections that came up for you since your individual interviews regarding your definition and experiences of multicultural inclusion as men of color who are counseling professionals.
4. As men of color, what is important about multicultural inclusion in the counseling profession?
5. As men of color, what is challenging about multicultural inclusion in the counseling profession?
6. How do your experiences of multicultural inclusion influence your engagement with other counseling professionals and professional counseling organizations?

7. For the purposes of this study, multiculturalism is defined as an awareness of intersecting and mutually influencing self-identified subcultures including gender, gender expression, spirituality, ability and disability, sex-assigned-at-birth, religion, sexual orientation, romantic orientation, ethnicity, nationality, race, age, class, education, and economic status that influence one’s self-perception and one’s worldview. Given the definition of multiculturalism used in this investigation, multicultural inclusion is defined as acceptance, valuing, and embracing of one’s multicultural identity.
   a. How aligned are your experiences of multicultural inclusion with the definition of multicultural inclusion used in this study.

8. Do you believe there is a link between counseling professionals being multiculturally inclusive among each other and being multiculturally competent/responsive with clients?
   a. Discuss your belief or perceptions.

9. What was this online focus group experience like for you?

10. What do you want to make sure I understand about your multicultural inclusion experiences as men of color who are counseling professionals?

11. Today we discussed . . . (I provide a summary of discussion). Do either of you have any final thoughts you would like to close with?

Wrap-up
I want to thank each of you for taking the time to participate in this study and group discussion today. As I wrap-up data analyses, I will be contacting you for a final time to get any feedback or clarification you may have regarding my understanding of your multicultural inclusion experiences as men of color in the counseling profession. Again if you have any questions about the research, you can revisit your informed consent record and contact myself or my research faculty chair. Thank you. Enjoy the rest of your day.
APPENDIX H

INCENTIVE MAILING ADDRESS SUBMISSION FORM
APPENDIX H: INCENTIVE MAILING ADDRESS SUBMISSION FORM

Mailing address for $50 gift card

If you wish to receive the $50 Visa gift card, please provide your Name and mailing address

If you wish to receive the $50 Amazon gift card, please provide your preferred Email address

1. Gift card choice *
   a. Visa Gift Card (physical card sent via USPS mail)
   b. Amazon Gift Card (digital card sent via Email)

2. Mailing address for Visa Gift Card

3. Email address for Amazon Gift Card
APPENDIX I

INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS DIAGRAM
APPENDIX I: INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

Participant recruitment and interview scheduling
Conduct interviews and complete transcription
Reading and Re-Reading of six participant transcriptions
Noting descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comment

Search for patterns across participants
Thematic pattern searching (i.e., abstraction, subsuption, polarizaion, contextualization, numeration, function)
Delineate themes
Coding and deconstruction

Conduct and transcribe focus group
Repeat reading, noting, coding, deconstruction, and pattern searching of focus group transcript
Interpretation creation and evidence search
Reporting for publication
APPENDIX J

SCOPE OF ACA PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ETHICS
APPENDIX J: SCOPE OF ACA PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING ETHICS

The American Counseling Association (ACA) is an educational, scientific, and professional organization whose members work in a variety of settings and serve in multiple capacities. Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals. Professional values are an important way of living out an ethical commitment. The following are core professional values of the counseling profession:

1. Enhancing human development throughout the lifespan;
2. Honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
3. Promoting social justice;
4. Safeguarding the integrity of the counselor–client relationship; and
5. Practicing in a competent and ethical manner.

These professional values provide a conceptual basis for the ethical principles enumerated below. These principles are the foundation for ethical behavior and decision making. The fundamental principles of professional ethical behavior are:

- Autonomy, or fostering the right to control the direction of one’s life;
- Nonmaleficence, or avoiding actions that cause harm;
- Beneficence, or working for the good of the individual and society by promoting mental health and wellbeing;
- Justice, or treating individuals equitably and fostering fairness and equality;
- Fidelity, or honoring commitments and keeping promises, including fulfilling one’s responsibilities of trust in professional relationships; and
- Veracity, or dealing truthfully with individuals with whom counselors come into professional contact.

The ACA Code of Ethics serves six main purposes:

1. The Code sets forth the ethical obligations of ACA members and provides guidance intended to inform the ethical practice of professional counselors.
2. The Code identifies ethical considerations relevant to professional counselors and counselors in training.
3. The Code enables the association to clarify for current and prospective members, and for those served by members, the nature of the ethical responsibilities held in common by its members.
4. The Code serves as an ethical guide designed to assist members in constructing a course of action that best serves those utilizing counseling services and establishes expectations of conduct with a primary emphasis on the role of the professional counselor.
5. The Code helps to support the mission of ACA.
6. The standards contained in this Code serve as the basis for processing inquiries and ethics
complaints concerning ACA members.
The ACA Code of Ethics contains nine main sections that address the following areas:

- Section A: The Counseling Relationship
- Section B: Confidentiality and Privacy
- Section C: Professional Responsibility
- Section D: Relationships with Other Professionals
- Section E: Evaluation, Assessment, and Interpretation
- Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching
- Section G: Research and Publication
- Section H: Distance Counseling, Technology, and Social Media
- Section I: Resolving Ethical Issues

(ACA, 2014, p. 3)
APPENDIX K

CACREP STANDARDS GUIDE
APPENDIX K: CACREP STANDARDS GUIDE

Introduction to the 2016 CACREP Standards

CACREP accreditation is both a process and a status, and denotes a commitment to program excellence. The 2016 CACREP Standards were written with the intention to simplify and clarify the accreditation requirements and to promote a unified counseling profession.

Section 1, The Learning Environment

Standards pertaining to the institution, the academic unit, and program faculty and staff.

Section 2, Professional Counseling Identity

Foundational standards and standards comprising the eight required core curriculum areas.

Section 3, Professional Practice

Standards required for clinical practice, including practicum, internship, supervisor qualifications, and practicum and internship course loads.

Section 4, Evaluation in the Program

Standards addressing evaluation of the program, assessment of students, and evaluation of faculty and site supervisors.

Section 5-A, Entry-Level Specialty Areas, Addiction Counseling

Specialized content for addiction counseling programs.

Section 5-B, Entry-Level Specialty Areas, Career Counseling

Specialized content for career counseling programs.

Section 5-C, Entry-Level Specialty Areas, Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Specialized content for clinical mental health counseling programs.

Section 5-D, Entry-Level Specialty Areas, Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling

Specialized content for clinical rehabilitation counseling programs.

Section 5-E, Entry-Level Specialty Areas, College Counseling and Student Affairs
Specialized content for college counseling and student affairs programs.

**Section 5-F Entry-Level Specialty Areas, Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling**

Specialized content for marriage, couple, and family counseling programs.

**Section 5-G, Entry-Level Specialty Areas, School Counseling**

Specialized content for school counseling programs.

**Section 6, Doctoral Standards for Counselor Education and Supervision**

Standards for doctoral-level program requirements, including the specialized content for the doctoral-level core curriculum, and doctoral-level practicum and internship requirements.

(CACREP, 2016, p. 1)
APPENDIX L

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA TABLES
APPENDIX L: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA TABLES

Table L1

Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table L2

Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Hispanic</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>54.55%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic, Non-White</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table L3

Ethnic Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>9.53%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North American</td>
<td>23.80%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>9.53%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9.53%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>4.76%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table L4

Gender Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please select</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisgender Male</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-identify</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table L5

Religious/Spiritual Affiliation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>50.02%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal energy of peace, acceptance, and love</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table L6

Sexual Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>45.46%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pansexual</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queer</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table L7

Romantic Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monogamous Heteroromantic</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monogamous Polyromantic</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyamorous Polyromantic</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table L8

Nation of Birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Croix, USVI</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table L9

Generations of Family Born in the U.S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please select</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am the first generation of my family born in the United States</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four generations of my family have been born in the United States</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven generations of my family have been born in the United States</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine generations of my family have been born in the United States</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more generations of my family have been born in the United States</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table L10

**Political Affiliation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table L11

**Disability/Ability Identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mild visual impairment</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able-bodied</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table L12

**Socioeconomic Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree $20,000 to 49,999 annual income</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree $50,000 to 99,999 annual income</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree $13,500 to 19,999 annual income</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree $50,000 to 99,999 annual income</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table L13

Year of Master's Degree in Counseling Completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#Participants responded</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table L14

Master's Degree Accreditation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please select</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Do not remember</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not accredited</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, CACREP</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Non-CACREP accredited (please specify)</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#Participants responded</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table L15
Coursework or Training in Multiculturalism and Counseling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One master's-level course in multicultural education</td>
<td>47.06%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One doctoral-level course in multicultural education</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more doctoral-level courses in multicultural education</td>
<td>11.77%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 10 hours of post-degree multicultural education</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 20 hours of post-degree multicultural education</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 40 hours of post-degree multicultural education</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#Participants responded 100% 10

Table L16
Current Counseling-Related Licenses/Certifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am neither licensed nor board certified in any counseling related practice at this time.</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified School Counselor</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC; LCPC; LPCC)</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed School Counselor</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Certified Counselor (NCC)</td>
<td>39.99%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Yoga Therapist (RYT)</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Associate Counselor (LAC)</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGPC</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#Participants responded 100% 10
### Table L17
Areas of Counseling Specialization/Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Counseling</td>
<td>8.89%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Counseling</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Counseling</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma/Disaster Counseling</td>
<td>4.44%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Mental Health Counseling</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance use/Addictions Counseling</td>
<td>2.22%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Counseling</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples Counseling</td>
<td>8.89%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Counseling</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity in Counseling</td>
<td>2.22%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor Education</td>
<td>15.56%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Supervision</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#Participants responded</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table L18
Primary Counselor Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling practitioner/supervisor</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor educator/supervisor</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#Participants responded</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table L19
Counseling Organization Memberships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American College Counseling Association (ACCA)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Counseling Association</td>
<td>16.36%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American School Counselor Association (ASCA)</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)</td>
<td>12.73%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)</td>
<td>5.45%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi Sigma Iota</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Career Development Association (NCDA)</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of ACA</td>
<td>7.27%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of ACES</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of ALGBTIC</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of AMCD</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of ASERVIC</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of ASGW</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of CSJ</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of IAMFC</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State branch of NCDA</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC)</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.04%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table L20

Actively Engaged Counseling Organization Memberships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Division</td>
<td>47.37%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Committee</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Branch of ACA</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Association</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Division</td>
<td>15.79%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Division</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Association</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 100.00% 19

#Participants responded 100% 6

### Table L21

Executive Officer Leadership in Any Counseling Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, and not interested in pursuing executive officer leadership in any counseling organization</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, and considering for the future in a national counseling organization</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, and considering for the future in a state counseling organization</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, and considering for the future in a university counseling organization</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, once in a national counseling organization</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, once in a state counseling organization</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, once in a university counseling organization</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, more than once in a national counseling organization</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, more than once in a state counseling organization</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, more than once in a university counseling organization</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 100.00% 20

#Participants responded 100% 10
Table L22

Participant Identities Named During Interviews

(Participant Qualities/ Experiences that Influence their Identities Are Not Included in this List)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 years old now</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 years old</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>able</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>able-bodied</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>able-bodied person</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abled</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advocate</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American male</td>
<td>3.24%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American man</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American full core faculty</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambiguous</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assistant</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assistant professor</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assistant professor tenure track</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attentive listener</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big Black man</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bigger black male</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black male</td>
<td>3.69%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black male counselor educator</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black man</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black person</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue collar family</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on following page)
Table L22 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blue collar mentality</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book reviewer</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brown</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Latino</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean American</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>certified school counselor</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child of two immigrants</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cisgender man</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clinical background</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clinician</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coach</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colleague</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community-based therapist</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete snob</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conservative background</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counselor</td>
<td>4.15%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counselor educator</td>
<td>4.61%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>critical race feminist</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culturally diverse family</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>director</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctoral student</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educated</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educated male</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>educator</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian-American</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faculty</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on following page)
Table L22 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>faculty member</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>3.24%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first-generation college student</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>former athlete</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good listener</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grad student</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandfather</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group work person</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helpful</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heterosexual</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heterosexual male</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly visible</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>husband</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interpersonal humanist</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know how to read</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know how to write</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership fellow</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>licensed</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lover the arts</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPC</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>2.30%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>managerial background</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marginalized</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marginalized background</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on following page)
Table L22 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mental health counselor</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mentor</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle class</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle-class family</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>military background</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivator</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multi-ethnic</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiple heritages</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not a parent</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oldest</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over achiever</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overweight</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pansexual</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partner</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personality</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practitioner</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private practitioner</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provider</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>psych major</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>queer</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>queer person of color.</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right-handed</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rural area</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scholar</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on following page)
Table L22 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>scholar activist</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school counseling background</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school counselor</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second generation</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solid identity</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spiritual</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>straight cisgender man</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student of the profession</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor of counseling</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talk all right</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>therapist</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>treasurer</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncle</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young black professional</td>
<td>0.92%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>217</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#Participants responded</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX M

THEMATIC FACTORS LISTING
APPENDIX M: THEMATIC FACTORS LISTING

Inclusion is Active
- access
- acknowledgement, acceptance, and curiosity
- allocation of time and money
- being allowed to tell one's own story in one's own voice
- being connected to other men and people of color within the counseling profession
- community/positive relationships/people
- education
- having a seat at the table
- help that is helpful
- mentorship
- opportunity
- pedagogical approaches that would help men of color thrive
- representation matters
- status

Exclusion as Familiar and Normative
- identity politics
- inclusion as an ideal
- oppression olympics
- resiliency

Influences on Engagement
- being a representative
- being the right kind of help
- creating opportunities for others' inclusion (colleagues/clients/community)
- crisis of faith / loosing hope
- empathy for other's exclusion narratives
- exclusion is felt within the counseling profession
- giving back
- having a positive impact
- mentoring
- mentorship
- reasons for joining the profession
- sense of responsibility
- taking up the charge
• vicarious exclusion
• visual representation of other men and women of color in the profession is important

Inclusion, But Not Necessarily Multicultural Inclusion
• compartmentalization
• marginalization
• tokenism

Self as a Factor
• internalization
• internalized multicultural inclusion
• noticing
• personality
• perspective
• privilege
• reaction