

A CRITICAL RACE INQUIRY INTO THE TRAINING EXPERIENCES OF EARLY
CAREER PROFESSIONALS WHO IDENTIFY AS BLACK WOMEN IN COUNSELING
PSYCHOLOGY

by

REISHA ERNESTINE MOXLEY

(Under the Direction of Edward Delgado-Romero)

ABSTRACT

This critical-race grounded theory study examined the process of multicultural competence development for early career counseling psychologists who identified as Black women and trained in predominantly White institutions or programs. The critical analytical lens utilized in this study informed the formation of a learner-based theory for development of multicultural competence. The Process of Development of Multicultural Competence for Black Women in Predominantly White Training Institutions or Programs involves one external event and five internal steps. These are: (1) an Awareness of Subjectivities, Pre-Encounter Expectations of Study in Counseling Psychology (2) an Assessment of Safety, a Confrontation of Biases (3) Accommodation of New Information (4) Adjustment of Subjectivities and, finally (5) an Adoption of an Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence. This process of development and implications for training and research in counseling psychology are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: multicultural competence development, multicultural education, critical-race grounded theory, counseling psychology, APA professional standards, predominantly White institutions

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REISHA ERNESTINE MOXLEY

BS, Middle Tennessee State University, 2005

MEd, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, 2008

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REISHA ERNESTINE MOXLEY

Major Professor: Edward Delgado-Romero

Committee: Kathleen deMarrais
Linda Campbell
Bernadette Heckman

Electronic Version Approved:

Suzanne Barbour
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
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DEDICATION

To all those gone before Grandma Rachel and Paw-Paw that prayed and toiled for me

I feel your dreams and prayers flowing through my veins

It is what sustains my energy

I will continue to dream and pray for all those who will pass this way

On their journey home,

Toward a latter day.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As I look back, I can see that my own lived experience, growing up as an Asian Indian female, shaped my interests and values in activism, social justice, and multiculturalism in psychology... [Subsequently] I chose graduate programs that had at least a minimum level of multicultural training. Now, having finished my doctoral training and licensing, I look toward progressing forward as an early career professional. The salient questions in my professional life are: Has my graduate training in multicultural competence been adequate? Did my internship and postdoctoral training compensate for gaps and help me to consolidate my theoretical, research and clinical experiences into a strong multiculturally competent professional identity? What will be my contribution now and in the future to pushing forward a national and global multicultural vision in psychology? (Patel, 2008, p. ix)

In the foreword to White and Henderson's (2008) edited book on building multicultural competency in psychology trainees, an early career psychologist (i.e. a psychologist in the first seven years of their professional career) posed some very poignant questions. The questions develop as a natural extension of the author's understanding of her intersecting racial/ethnic and gender identities, her stated values in the activist components of multicultural psychology and her transition from a trainee in psychology to the next phase of her professional journey. Patel (2008) not only captured the self-awareness she has of her personal identities, but how these identities came to shape her professional self and values. Patel (2008) pushed this self-awareness forward as she considered the adequacy of her knowledge and the subsequent clinical skills

gained during her training experiences in professional psychology, particularly as they related to the development of multicultural competence.

Multicultural competence is an active process and involves three primary components: knowledge, skills and awareness. This definition was adopted by the American Counseling Association in 2002 and has inspired much research and policy such as the APA multicultural guidelines (APA, 2003). The tripartite model of multicultural competence (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992; Sue, et al., 1982) is based on these three components and is further defined as: an understanding of the worldview of culturally different clients (knowledge); development of appropriate intervention strategies and techniques (skills); and an individual awareness of personal assumptions, values and biases (awareness) (APA, 2003; Ponterotto, Utsey & Pederson, 2006; D.W. Sue & D. Sue, 2008; White & Henderson, 2008). Patel (2008), the early career psychologist in the opening quote, captured the active process inherent in multicultural competence. As Patel (2008) acknowledged her shift from trainee to student, her questions revealed that she was also contemplating the adequacy of her training to address self-identified gaps in her own knowledge, skills and awareness. This reflection, on her intersecting racial/ethnic and gender identities as well as her lived experiences in training, occurred as she considered what impact she would have as a multiculturally competent psychologist at the national and global levels.

As a Black woman, and a Counseling psychology doctoral candidate on the precipice of my next professional development endeavor: my first post-graduate job, I share the curiosity communicated in the opening quote. How do my intersecting identities inform my professional work? Has my training in a predominantly White institution (PWI) allowed full exploration of any gaps in my knowledge regarding multicultural issues? What will be my impact at the

individual and systemic levels, particularly as it relates to my multicultural and diversity related personal and professional values? In this, the initial chapter of my dissertation, I address these questions as they informed my study. I begin with an examination of the changing U.S. population and the mental health disparities for a significant and growing number of the populace. Next, I explore the current and historical response of the major professional association for psychologists in the United States, the American Psychological Association (APA), to these ongoing sociopolitical issues from a critical race theoretical perspective. After this, I introduce grounded theory as the methodology for this study and I briefly explain how I merged this traditional qualitative method with critical race theory, a more contemporary, if not controversial (Oremus, 2012), framework. Following this discussion, I present the research problem and the purpose of this study. This chapter ends with an operational definition of terms used throughout the study and the specific research questions that informed this inquiry.

The questions posed in the opening quote (Patel, 2008) represent a critical analysis as a professional contemplated her readiness to enter a diverse work world. Her questions are even more salient in the context of the changing racial/ethnic demographics in the United States. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau report (2011), the racial/ethnic minority population of the U.S. significantly increased since the last decennial Census in 2000. Specific percentages from the U.S. Census Bureau revealed that 36% of the United States was comprised of racial/ethnic minorities (i.e. individuals reporting any other category than “non-Hispanic White” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011, p. 3)) in 2010, as compared to 31% reported in 2000 (2001; 2011). Projections from the same source indicated that racial/ethnic minorities in the United States will increase to 57% of the country’s population by 2043 ([U.S. Census Bureau, 2012](#)), marking a shift for these individuals from minority status to a collective majority of the U.S. population in

less than 30 years. Despite this demographic shift, the impact of centuries of social, economic and political subordination continue to manifest for racially/ethnically diverse people in the U.S. (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Delgado-Romero, Galván, Maschino & Rowland, 2005).

In light of the substantial growth of the racial/ethnic population in the U.S., research continues to expose the mental health care disparities that plague this group. Examination of these disparities revealed that racial/ethnic minorities face various barriers to access, are particularly susceptible to suboptimal mental health care and are more likely to prematurely terminate treatment as compared to their White American counterparts (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2010; Chu, et al., 2012; Snowden, 2012). These findings remain consistent, even when the studies examining these disparities held other likely contributors constant, including insurance coverage, socioeconomic status, age, gender, and other clinical factors (Cardemil & Battle, 2012; Kim, 2014). Although there are myriad systemic issues likely contributing to mental health care disparities in the U.S. racial/ethnic population (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010; Kagawa-Singer & Kassim-Lakha, 2003) national studies on the topic expose another likely contributor: the cultural competence, or lack thereof, of the mental health professionals providing care (National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI), 2014). Over twenty years ago, leaders in multicultural Counseling psychology also noted that it was “apparent that the major reason for therapeutic ineffectiveness lies in the training of mental health professionals” (Sue et al., 1992, p. 478). Cardemil & Battle (2012) more recently noted that mental health professionals continue to “struggle with attending to issues of culture in the clinical context” (para. 3).

Mental health disparities, specifically those informed by the quality of the multicultural competence of clinicians, have significant implications for psychologists and subsequently the

members of the populace they wish to serve. A 2008 APA report revealed that 92% of early career psychologists indicated practice with racial/ethnic minorities (APA, 2008a; Vasquez, 2010). This finding is consistent with the growing racial/ethnic minority population of the United States and necessitates continued examination of best practices for work with racially/ethnically diverse clients, specifically as it relates to the multicultural competency training efforts for psychologists.

In early recognition of the implications of the changing racial/ethnic minority population of the United States and the disparate mental health care outcomes for this group (Ponterotto & Casas, 1991; Ridley; Espelage & Rubinstein, 1996), scholars in multicultural psychology created a conceptual framework of multicultural counseling competencies for all psychologists (Arredondo et al., 1996; D. W. Sue, 1991; D. W. Sue et al., 1982; D.W. Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). These competencies are organized on domains of knowledge, skills and awareness, and are currently known as the tripartite model of multicultural counseling competence. The efforts of the influential counseling psychologists credited with creating the multicultural competencies and lobbying for their widespread professional implementation (Arredondo et al, 1996; D.W. Sue et al., 1982) set off a chain of events that eventually culminated in APA's publication of a broad set of guidelines applicable to all areas of psychology (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007). The result, known as the *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists* (APA, 2003), herein referred to as the Multicultural Guidelines, was the product of the work of a large group of professionals consisting of three APA divisions, several APA past presidents and a working group convened jointly by three APA governance committees (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007). The Multicultural Guidelines were published in 2003; twenty-one years after the initial

call for culturally competent care (Sue et al., 1982), and were approved by all APA divisions, boards and committees, as well as every state psychological association in the U.S. (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007). Much like the tripartite conceptual framework on which they were built (APA, 2003; Arredondo et al., 1996; Fouad & Arredondo, 2007; D.W. Sue, et al., 1982; D.W. Sue, et al., 1992) the Multicultural Guidelines serve as a blueprint for all professional activities in the field, particularly as it relates to competence with racially/ethnically diverse individuals (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007). Although the advocates pushing for multicultural competency guidelines for the field noted that “resistance was strong” during their multi-decade endeavors (Ivey, 2005, p. xii) their efforts have triumphantly resulted in multicultural competence being identified as the most common training goal in the field of Counseling psychology (Pieterse, Evans, Risner-Butner, Collins, & Mason, 2009).

It is the result of the noted resistance for adoption of culturally centered standards of care at the organizational level and the identification of multicultural competence as the most widespread training goal in the field that calls for a broader systemic analysis. A Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective examining the ambiguous nature of organizational resistance to multicultural competence as a professional standard and the call for this aptitude as a training goal provides useful insight. While a more specific purview of CRT and its interface with higher education will be done in the next chapter, a preliminary definition of CRT and an examination of a core theoretical concept, *interest convergence*, (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) provides a relevant introduction.

Preminent scholars in CRT defined this perspective as a movement that consists of a “collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 3). The definition goes on to

explain that “the movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses take up, but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, context, group-and self-interest, and even feelings and the unconscious” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p.3). In an effort to frame CRT principles within the context of this study, a specific example related to the APA Multicultural Guidelines is provided.

The originators of the multicultural counseling competencies (Sue, Arredondo & McDavis, 1992) noted, “the hope was to have competencies eventually become a standard for curriculum reform and training of helping professionals” (p. 477). They further stated that their intention was to “provide a conceptual framework from which these competencies can be organized and developed and leave the task of tangible translations for future urgent work” (p. 482). While the Multicultural Guidelines certainly represent a tangible translation of the conceptual framework presented by these authors (Sue et al., 1992), they stop short of the intended goal of standardization for curriculum reform and training in psychology. In the Preface of the Multicultural Guidelines, the difference between professional standards and guidelines and a discussion of the implications for professional practice are explicitly stated:

The term "guidelines" refers to pronouncements, statements or declarations that suggest or recommend specific professional behavior, endeavors or conduct for psychologists (APA, 1992). Guidelines differ from standards in that standards are mandatory and may be accompanied by an enforcement mechanism (APA, 2001). They are intended to facilitate the continued systematic development of the profession and to help assure a high level of professional practice by psychologists. Guidelines are not intended to be mandatory or exhaustive and may not be applicable to every professional and clinical situation. They are not

definitive and they are not intended to take precedence over the judgment of psychologists. In addition, federal or state laws may supersede these Guidelines (APA, 2003, p. 378).

This noted explanation of the distinction between professional standards and guidelines is quite salient, particularly when considering the stated need of curriculum reform for multicultural competency educative practices in psychology (Sue et al., 1992). In spite of the mounting evidence of the increasing need for the multicultural competence of professionals in service of racially/ethnically diverse clients, the twenty-one years of advocacy after the first call to the profession resulted in guidelines and not enforceable standards. This is by no means a negative critique of the valiant efforts of the individuals and several APA divisions that have historically and continuously advocated for standardization of culturally competent training and professional practices. However, APA as a professional whole is bigger than the sum of its individual parts (Clay, 2014). A closer look at APA's ultimate decision to make the Multicultural Guidelines a suggestion for practice as opposed to a standard of care at the organizational level, communicates an acknowledgement of the need for a paradigm shift, but falls short of a definitive commitment to change. Leading CRT researchers would conceptualize this lack of organizational commitment to a noted societal need as a failure of interest convergence (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). In other words, from a CRT point of view, until the majority group's needs, as represented in this example by the APA, align with those of marginalized groups, in this example the racial/ethnic minority population of the U.S., standardization of multicultural competencies as a training method and professional mandate will not occur. This hypothesis while controversial provides an opportunity to consider another major tenant in CRT that distinguishes it from more traditional civil rights perspectives. Delgado & Stefancic (2012)

explained, “Unlike traditional civil rights, which stresses incrementalism and step-by-step progress, critical race theory questions the very foundations of the liberal order (p.3).” The implications of this specific example of the lack of an interest convergence between APA as a national professional organization and the needs of marginalized groups impacted by APA is important to consider particularly as it relates to the current state of multicultural competency training practices in psychology.

A survey of the field of multicultural competency training in psychology revealed just how influential the early aspirations for curriculum reform, training and practical implications for work with racially/ethnically diverse populations have been in the profession. A plethora of training models, tools and competency inventories have been developed (see Jones, Sander & Booker, 2013, for an exhaustive list) and the tripartite conceptual model and resultant Multicultural Guidelines have become the benchmark by which to train and monitor the multicultural competence attainment of psychology trainees (APA, 2003; Smith, Constantine, Dunn, Dinehart & Montoya, 2006). On the other hand, an absence of professional standards for multicultural competency in the field of psychology subsequently informs the absence of unifying multicultural competency pedagogy for training in the field (Bergkamp, 2010). This absence has prompted some critical reflection by researchers in the field that a foundation for multicultural competency training instruction has not been fully established (Becvar, 2008; Bergkamp, 2010; Pope-Davis, Liu, Toporek, Brittan-Powell, 2001). Additionally multicultural educational efforts in psychology were not widely accepted until acknowledged, but not standardized, at the organizational and institutional levels (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007). This resulted in demands for educative practices in multicultural psychology at the programmatic level that preceded empirical research on how multicultural competence was evaluated and/or

developed in trainees. Specifically, there is currently limited understanding of how multicultural counseling competencies are learned, as a lived experience, by trainees in psychology (Bergkamp, 2010).

Problem Statement

Although the tripartite model of multicultural counseling competencies and the subsequent Multicultural Guidelines have become the prevailing theoretical structure for multicultural competency training in the field of psychology, there have been ongoing difficulties noted in the transition from conceptual framework, to professional guidelines, to practical training applications (Arredondo et al., 1996; Bergkamp, 2010; Fouad & Arredondo, 2007; D.W. Sue, 1997; D.W. Sue et al., 1992; Ivey, 2005). The noted absence of an apparent unifying multicultural competency training pedagogy, likely influenced by the absence of standardization of multiculturally competent care for professional psychologists, has prompted criticism that the field of multicultural psychology has advanced without sufficient empirical, theoretical, and institutional support (Atkinson & Lowe, 1995; Bergkamp, 2010; Smith et. al, 2006). This organizational matter is further complicated by the lack of research examining the development of multicultural competency in trainees as informed by the trainees themselves. The creation of a pragmatic, learner-based model of the development of multicultural competence in psychology trainees, from the proverbial “ground-up,” is needed.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to develop a comprehensive, learner-based theory of multicultural competency development, grounded in the lived experiences of early career psychologists. This study had a specific focus on Black women and the ways in which they retrospectively described the development of multicultural competency as psychology trainees.

The emergent theory was primarily informed by the participants' description of their developmental processes within a predominately White training institution or program. The overarching research goal was informed by the abundance of multicultural training models, tools and assessments that are rooted in the tripartite model of multicultural competence but the absence of organizational standardization of these models. This study contributes to a noted gap in multicultural competence training literature by examining how trainees actually described the developmental learning process of obtainment of multicultural competence for themselves (Park-Taylor et al., 2009). In an effort to capture the unique experience of Black women and the intersection of their racial/ethnic and gender identities within training programs in which they have historically been marginalized, I utilized a grounded theory qualitative methodology informed by a critical race theoretical perspective. While the utilization of CRT is important for the aforementioned reasons, it did present a challenge within the methodological framework for the study. I address this challenge briefly and devote more specific information about how I addressed this challenge in the subsequent chapters. I begin discussion on the task of merging CRT within a more traditional qualitative design with a brief description of grounded theory as the methodological approach utilized in this study.

According to Strauss & Corbin (1990), preeminent researchers in the grounded theory tradition, a well-constructed and executed grounded theory study can be utilized to explain an interpreted reality and provide a framework for action. I submit that the provision of a framework for action provided by a grounded theory methodology provided a natural connection with CRT informed perspectives. Delgado & Stefancic (2012) explained, "unlike some academic disciplines, CRT contains an activist dimension... [that] tries not only to understand our social situation but, to change it... [and] to transform it for the better" (p.7). Utilization of grounded

theory methodology through a CRT lens allowed me to gain an understanding of the multicultural training experiences of the women in this study while simultaneously situating this knowledge within the institutional and societal influences that impacted their development, and by extension, impacted the racially/ethnically diverse clientele that they learned to serve.

While CRT has not traditionally been used to inform a grounded theory methodology, Malagon, Huber & Velez (2009) have posited a “critical race-grounded theory” (p. 254) that allowed for a more informed integration of the two. These authors developed this approach to address the frustration experienced while “looking for qualitative research methodologies that are critically sensitive in their abilities to situate lived experience within a broader sociopolitical frame, both in the final research product and throughout the entire research process” (Malagon, Huber & Velez, 2009, p. 253). These authors (Malagon et al., 2009) presented a framework for merging grounded theory methodology and CRT perspectives that will be further explored, as it related to the current study, in the following chapters.

The development of a learner-based model of multicultural competence, informed by early career psychologists who identified as Black women trained in predominantly White institutions, will help to inform current training models geared toward the multiculturally competent service provision for racially/ethnically diverse clientele. More informed training practices for psychologists working with this vulnerable population is warranted as the racially/ethnically diverse members of the U.S. population continue to experience mental health care disparities in spite of their substantial presence in the country. A better understanding of how trainees described the tripartite model of multicultural competence as it related to the development of multiculturally competent service delivery will impact current training models by providing feedback about what has been working in current models and what might need to

be reassessed. This iterative process, privileging the voice of former trainees and Black women, will serve to refine training methods and models. At the programmatic level, this study addresses the identified need to translate multicultural counseling competencies into the educational and training efforts of instructors in the field of psychology (Arredondo et al., 1996; Fouad & Arredondo, 2007). At the systemic and institutional levels, this study directly addresses the current lack of unifying multicultural competence pedagogy in the field of psychology with a call for standardization of training curriculum and professional practice at the organizational level. At the individual level, this study addresses the questions that the early career professional (Patel, 2008) posed in the opening quote to this chapter: “Is the multicultural competence training at the doctoral level adequate, particularly as it relates to the development of this core competency for women of color?” Finally, and at an even more personal level to me as a researcher and budding professional, this study provides a glimpse into an intimate answer to Patel’s (2008) final question: “What will *my* contribution be to pushing forward a national and global multicultural vision in psychology?”

Definitions

Critical Race Theory (CRT)- According to Delgado & Stefancic (2012), CRT is a “radical legal movement that seeks to transform the relationship among race, racism, and power” (p.159).

Critical race-grounded theory- According to Malagon et al. (2009) this concept “draws from multiple disciplines to challenge white supremacy, which shapes the way research specifically, and society generally, understands the experiences, conditions, and outcomes of People of Color. It allows CRT scholars to move toward a form of data collection and analysis that builds from the knowledge of Communities of Color to reveal the ways race, class, gender, and other forms

of oppression interact to mediate the experiences and realities of those affected by such oppression” (p. 264).

Early Career Psychologist (ECP)- an individual who has received her doctoral degree in psychology within the past seven years (APA, 2014).

Ethnicity- According to the APA Guidelines (2003):

The term "ethnicity" does not have a commonly agreed upon definition; in these Guidelines we will refer to ethnicity as the acceptance of the group mores and practices of one's culture of origin and the concomitant sense of belonging. We also note that, consistent with Brewer (1999), Sedikides and Brewer (2001), and Hornsey and Hogg (2000), individuals may have multiple ethnic identities that operate with different salience at different times (p. 380).

Grounded Theory- An inductively derived theory, “discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systemic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to” the phenomenon being studied (Straus & Corbin, 1990, p.23).

Intersection of Identities- The interaction between two or more social identities (e.g., race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability status) an individual belongs to and/or self-identifies as personal (APA, 2003).

Multiculturalism and Diversity- According to the APA Guidelines (2003):

The terms "multiculturalism" and "diversity" have been used interchangeably to include aspects of identity stemming from gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, or age. Multiculturalism, in an absolute sense, recognizes the broad scope of dimensions of race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, class status, education, religious/spiritual orientation, and

other cultural dimensions. All of these are critical aspects of an individual's ethnic/racial and personal identity, and psychologists are encouraged to be cognizant of issues related to all of these dimensions of culture. In addition, each cultural dimension has unique issues and concerns. As noted by the Guidelines for Psychotherapy with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Clients (APA, 2000), each individual belongs to/identifies with a number of identities and some of those identities interact with each other...The concept of diversity has been widely used in employment settings, with the term given greater visibility through research...The application of the term began with reference to women and Persons of Color, underrepresented in the workplace, particularly in decision-making roles. It has since evolved to be more encompassing in its intent and application by referring to individuals' social identities including age, sexual orientation, physical disability, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, workplace role/position, religious and spiritual orientation, and work/family concerns (Loden, 1996), (p. 380).

Multicultural Competence- Traditional definitions of multicultural competence were intentionally limited to include only knowledge, skills and awareness as it related to work with the racially/ethnically diverse (Sue et al., 1982; Arredondo et al., 1996). The definition of this term has more recently been broadened (APA, 2003) to include competency in work with individuals with various and intersecting identities including, but not limited to sexual orientation, gender identification, ability status, aging populations, etc. The participants in this study shared a broader definition of multicultural competence. In keeping with the grounded

theory methodology and the CRT lens, the participants ultimately defined this construct for the current study.

Predominantly White Institution (PWI)- A definition of this term is provided as presented in the Encyclopedia for African American Education (Lomotey, 2010):

Predominantly white institution (PWI) is the term used to describe institutions of higher learning in which Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment. However, the majority of these institutions may also be understood as historically White institutions in recognition of the binarism and exclusion supported by the United States prior to 1964. It is in a historical context of segregated education that predominantly White colleges and universities are defined and contrasted from other colleges and universities that serve students with different racial, ethnic, and/or cultural backgrounds (e.g., historically Black colleges and universities, HBCUs). U.S. higher education is rooted in the establishment of the predominantly White college but over time has changed and proliferated (Brown & Dancy, 2010).

Predominantly White Program- A doctoral program in professional psychology that maintains a predominantly White faculty and student body, even when/if the program is housed within a Historically Black College or University (HBCU).

Race- According to the APA Guidelines (2003):

The biological basis of race has, at times, been the source of fairly heated debates in psychology (Fish, 1995; Helms & Talleyrand, 1997; Jensen, 1995; Levin, 1995; Phinney, 1996; Rushton, 1995; Sun, 1995; Yee, Fairchild, Weizmann, & Wyatt, 1993). Helms and Cook (1999) note that "race" has no consensual

definition, and that, in fact, biological racial categories and phenotypic characteristics have more within group variation than between group variation. In these Guidelines, the definition of race is considered to be socially constructed, rather than biologically determined. Race, then, is the category to which others assign individuals on the basis of physical characteristics, such as skin color or hair type, and the generalizations and stereotypes made as a result. Thus, "people are treated or studied as though they belong to biologically defined racial groups on the basis of such characteristics" (Helms & Talleyrand, 1997), (p. 380).

Tripartite Model of Multicultural Competence- This construct is operationally defined as the conceptual framework highlighting the procurement of appropriate knowledge, skills and awareness in work with racially/ethnically diverse populations.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the current study as a means to develop a learner-based theory of multicultural competence procurement for Black women in predominantly White training contexts and to examine the ways in which the intersections of these women's identities were impacted by the structural dynamics within these spaces. I present the research questions as two sets to denote a distinction between the inquiries designed specifically toward the development of a learner-based theory and those designed to examine structural influences on said process of development. The first set of research questions were:

1. How do early career professionals in psychology, who identify as Black women, describe the process of developing multicultural competence during training in predominantly White institutions or programs?

2. What form does the tripartite model of multicultural competency (Sue et. al, 1982) take in the descriptions these participants provide about development of this set of skills?

The second set of questions, informed by CRT and established to inform analysis of the influence of the predominantly White institution or program on the identified intersection of identities for each participant were:

- a. How did issues of race/ethnicity impact training experiences within a PWI?
- b. How did participant's intersecting identities, including but not limited to race/ethnicity and gender, impact training experiences as compared to their colleagues?
- c. What were the training experiences geared toward the development of multicultural competence within a PWI like, particularly as it relates to service provision for the racially/ethnically diverse in a predominantly White country?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH

In this chapter, I begin with a history of key events impacting multicultural competence education in the field of psychology, culminating with the 2002 approval of the Multicultural Guidelines by the APA Council of Representatives. Next, I situate the proposed theoretical lens of critical race theory (CRT) in the context of the current study by providing a brief definition and explanation of CRT's major tenants. While CRT informed the current study related to Black women in counseling psychology programs, it is important to give specific consideration of CRT influences in the field of education in general. Resultantly, a discussion of CRT in higher education with specific focus on multicultural education practices will be examined. This chapter concludes with a discussion of a pilot study I completed examining the training events participants described as most facilitative of the development of multicultural competence. While this pilot study had a particular focus on early career psychologists who identified as Black women, a critical race theoretical lens did not inform it. In an effort to bridge the current gap in literature examining multicultural education in psychology from a CRT lens and to provide an example of the ways in which CRT will be used to inform data analysis (specifically discussed in the following chapter), the results of the pilot study are contextualized by examining them, briefly, within a CRT framework.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, many scholars in the field of multicultural education in psychology critique the development of multicultural competency training as they argue that it has been established without appropriate practical, academic, and institutional

support (Atkinson & Low, 1995; Bergkamp, 2010; Ponterotto & Casas, 1991). This critique is an important one to explore, particularly as it relates to the need for empirical research on the development of multicultural competence in trainees (the purpose of the present study), while simultaneously considering the lack of sufficient theoretical and institutional support for it (rationale for examination through a critical race theoretical lens).

Contemporary History of Multicultural Competence Education in Psychology

Heppner, Casas, Carter & Stone (2000) acknowledged that governmental policies, as well as social, cultural and economic forces all have an influence on the development of professional disciplines, and that this is no different for the field of psychology. The authors acknowledged that while cause-and-effect relationships between sociopolitical events and their subsequent influence on the field of psychology may be impossible to isolate, a historical purview of events are nonetheless an important contextualizing endeavor (Heppner, Casas, Carter & Stone, 2000). A historical account of the professional events leading up to the publication of the Multicultural Guidelines provides a look at the important relationship between professional research and policy change. It is my hope that highlighting these events showcase the tireless nature in which experts in the field have pushed for multicultural considerations in the educative practices of psychologists while simultaneously picking up the mantle toward progression of standardization of multicultural competence training in the field.

In their article discussing the history and implementation of the Multicultural Guidelines, Ivey & Collins (2003) reiterated the reflection of influential multicultural psychologists (Parham & Forest, 2003) with their own recognition that the historical efforts leading up to the publication of the Multicultural Guidelines were the work of over one hundred individuals, in various professional and organizational capacities, over the course of more than 30 years. This

observation provides an opportunity to acknowledge these efforts. A full and detailed history of the events significantly impacting the advancement of multicultural education is beyond the scope of the current study. However, a summary of the important events, as they related to the study of multicultural education in psychology, is provided below. Special attention has been made in selecting events that capture both the sociopolitical and the profession's organizational influences on training efforts in multicultural education primarily for the field of counseling psychology. This specific field is identified as the focus as counseling psychologists, within the broader APA context, are credited with many of the lobbying efforts and research contributing to organizational change (Munley, Duncan, McDonnell & Sauer, 2004). The events and descriptions that follow were gathered from many resources (APA, 2003; Atkinson & Lowe, 1995; Delgado-Romero, Lau & Shullman, 2012; Fouad & Arredondo, 2007; Heppner, et al., 2000; Munley, et al., 2004; Robinson & Morris, 2000, etc.) and synthesized for parsimony.

The movement of the field of psychology towards a professional and training interest in the racial/ethnic minority population of the U.S. developed slowly before the late 1960s. The 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Brown vs. the Kansas Board of Education*, the Civil Rights movement during the 1960s and the subsequent passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 all provide a brief historical context before the more contemporary movement of the present (APA, 2003; Heppner et al., 2000). One of the next most significant moves in multicultural psychology history is the establishment of the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) in 1968, after several Black psychologists across the U.S. challenged the APA in frustration and protest of the limited consideration of minority voices in the organization (Munley et al., 2004; Williams, 2008). In 1972, Joseph White, one of the professionals credited with founding ABPsi, published "Toward a Black Psychology," in the first edition of Reginald Jones' influential book, *Black*

Psychology (Jones, 1972). White's publication was one of the first noted contemporary calls for multicultural competence in the field (Ivey & Collins, 2003). Also in 1972, Derald Wing and Stanley Sue formed the Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA) having been "inspired by the social advocacy of the civil rights movement" and in "solidarity of Black activist psychologists who formed ABPsi" (Alvarez, Singh & Wu, 2012, p. 647). These events, in light of the sociopolitical climate of the 1960s and early 1970s, showcase the importance of self-empowerment through creation of counter-spaces (Schwartz, 2014) within the APA. CRT researchers in education define counter-spaces as same race settings, normally within a larger majority race institution, that serve to affirm a marginalized group's lives and racial experiences (Schwartz, 2014; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Counter-spaces in general can be places of meeting, resistance and healing (Schwartz, 2014; Solorzano et al., 2000). In the case of the creation of these racial/ethnic minority associations within the APA, it is clear that these spaces were crucial in the development of multiculturalism in the field.

In 1974, two years after White's publication and the establishment of the AAPA, APA seemed to respond to concerns about racial/ethnic support within the organization with the establishment of the Minority Fellowship Program. The APA created the program specifically with a goal to recruit and support minority scholarship in the organization. In 1978, another influential ethnic minority psychological association, the National Latina/Latino Psychological Association (NLPA) (formerly the National Hispanic Psychological Association) was formed. The NLPA identified its mission as the advancement of "psychological education and training, scientific practice and organizational change to enhance the overall wellbeing of Hispanic and Latina/o populations" (NLPA, 2014). The NLPA also created a counter-space for its members within the broader context of the APA and signified that lobbying efforts and support for

racial/ethnic psychologists was still needed. The APA established the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs and the Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) shortly after the establishment of the NLPA, in 1979 and 1980, respectively (APA, 2003; Munely et al., 2004). One year after its establishment, BEMA, in one of its first official capacities, created the Task Force on Minority Education and Training (APA, 2003). These varied APA task forces, and committees were developed as an organizational response to repeated “concerns about the limited number of racial/ethnic minority psychologists and students and concerns about major social issues and diversity issues such as racism and sexism” (Munley et al., 2004, p. 255).

Ten years after White’s (1972) influential publication regarding multicultural competence in psychology, Derald Wing Sue et al. (1982), then leader of the Education and Training Committee of Division 17, Society of Counseling Psychology, published one of the first formal descriptions of multicultural counseling competencies. This seminal work in multicultural psychology outlined necessary professional skills to provide care for racial/ethnic minority clients that included 11 minimal characteristics across three broad dimensions: knowledge, skills and awareness (Robinson & Morris, 2000; Sue et al., 1982). In this paper, Sue et al. (1982) also highlighted “the history of oppression, discrimination, and racism experienced by minorities in the U.S. and acknowledged barriers to effective counseling and therapy created by institutional racism” (Munely et al., 2004, p. 256). In addition to the specific multicultural counseling competencies presented, Sue et al. also recommended that these competencies be adopted into APA accreditation criteria (Munely et al., 2004; Sue et al., 1982). Four years later, the APA published the *Accreditation Handbook* (APA, 1986); this document reflected the aforementioned recommendations regarding multicultural training, presented by Sue et al. (1982). Specifically, Criterion II within the handbook stated that “all students should be provided knowledge of ethnic

cultures” and that “psychological treatment should be modified for ethnic minorities” (Atkinson & Lowe, 1995, p. 388). In their discussion of the implications of the 1986 *Accreditation Handbook* (APA, 1986), Atkinson & Lowe (1995) purported that Criterion II, specifically, may have come to serve “as more than an aspirational guideline” as other scholars “pointed out that noncompliance with Criterion II [in the *Accreditation Handbook*] increasingly served as the underlying rationale for negative judgments by the APA Committee on Accreditation,” (p. 389) and that the APA Committee on Accreditation encouraged more emphasis on this criterion in its future endeavors. This example provides a window into the complex nature of the professional and organizational maneuverings that take place at the precipice of a major paradigm shift. Although the APA Ethics Code had not incorporated language mandating multicultural training in the field at the time of publication of the *Accreditation Handbook* (APA, 1986), the APA Committee on Accreditation took a bold stance and effectively began to shift the state of psychological education towards multicultural consideration before the standardization by the Ethics Committee occurred. Although an important opportunity to understand the dynamic nature of professional organizations and the ways in which policy is developed, this also demonstrated the ways in which important political lobbying efforts influenced multicultural competency training efforts, from the top-down before empirical results about ways in which these competencies are developed from the bottom-up, could be discovered. Nonetheless, myriad events, including organizational restructuring, professional activist research efforts and publications were responsible for contributing to the professional zeitgeist, which was being heavily influenced by multicultural issues.

In the late 1980s, *The American Psychologist*, a preeminent journal in the field, published Sue & Zane’s (1987) review of literature regarding the mental health service provision and

treatment practices for the U.S. ethnic population for the twenty years prior to its publication. This influential literature review resulted in illumination of consistent recommendations for the improvement of treatment considerations in service of racially/ethnically diverse clients. The primary suggestions, as reported by Sue & Zane (1987) were (a) a call for a shift in recruitment practices of training programs to include more ethnically/racially diverse therapists, (b) a call for current trainees and professionals to gain knowledge related to various ethnic cultures and communities, and finally (c) recognition that traditional treatment forms and conceptualizations had historically been developed for and by the dominant culture in America and that these professional endeavors should be modified to reflect a more inclusive framework (Atkinson & Lowe, 1995). During the same year as this influential publication, the Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) was also founded. The primary goal of SIP, much like the racial/ethnic psychological associations created before, was “to help better serve Native American people and to facilitate discussion, treatment and scholarship among American Indian psychologists” (Gray, 2012, para 1). The formulation of SIP, rounded out the four major ethnic minority psychological associations that make up representation of the Council of National Psychology Associations for the Advancement of Ethnic Minority Interests (CNPAAEMI), officially formed as a collective in 1992.¹

In 1988, BEMA developed another Task Force to explore the delivery of services to ethnic minority populations in response to the increased awareness about psychological service needs associated with ethnic and cultural diversity” (APA, 1990). The Task Force created and published the “Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services to Ethnic, Linguistic, and

¹ APA Division 45- *Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race*, is also affiliated with the CNPAAEMI. Presidents from Division 45, ABPsi, AAPA, NLPA & SIP make up the CNPAAEMI council.

Culturally Diverse Populations” two years later (APA, 1990). These guidelines put forth the recognition that “there is a need to develop a conceptual framework that would enable psychologists to organize, access, and accurately assess the value and utility of existing and future research involving ethnic and culturally diverse populations” (APA, 1990). One year later the APA Office of Accreditation published a newsletter with updated information on accreditation requirements with a direct impact on all current and future accredited academic and training programs in psychology (APA, 1991). Specifically, Robinson & Morris (2000) identify that the new accreditation guidelines stated that all training entities “should demonstrate clearly a commitment to an affirmative effort to include diversity among faculty, students, curriculum, training and field experiences (APA, 1991, p. 3)” and that “all students in doctoral programs of professional psychology should acquire breadth of knowledge and skills relevant to understanding and working with clients of differing...ethnic and racial backgrounds” (APA, 1991, p.2.). Again, the move by the APA accrediting body, while influential and timely from a sociopolitical standpoint, preceded the slower organizational response in the form of ethical standards. This continued to have an immediate impact on training programs, and significant implications for the quality of multicultural training efforts.

In an effort to provide some clarity for trainers in the field, Sue, Arredondo & McDavis’ published a theoretical expansion of the Sue et al. (1982) foundational paper, in the *Journal of Counseling & Development* (Sue et al., 1992). This paper expanded on the original multicultural counseling competencies by further developing the three broad dimensions of professional care into three broad personal characteristics of counselors themselves. Namely, (1) becoming aware of personal assumptions (2) understanding racially/ethnically diverse clients’ worldview and (3) developing appropriate and necessary skills in service of racially/ethnically diverse clients (Sue

et al., 1992; Robinson & Morris, 2002). During that same year, Hills & Strozier (1992) published a survey of multicultural training, published in the journal of *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*. According to Robinson & Morris (2000), this publication revealed that as of 1989, 87% of APA accredited programs queried offered at least one multicultural counseling course while 59% actually required a course in this content area. A survey conducted during 1990-1991 (Quintana & Bernal, 1995) revealed that these numbers decreased with 73% of the clinical and counseling psychology programs queried and accredited by the APA reporting one or more multicultural counseling course with only 42% of these same programs requiring that a course in the content area be taken by its students (Robinson & Morris, 2000). While the authors giving an account of this survey history acknowledged that the variability reported could be due to the differences in the types of programs surveyed and/or the manner in which the surveys were administered (Robinson & Morris, 2000), it is clear that there was significant vacillation in the styles and requirements of multicultural competency training across disciplines within the field. These differences appear to have been significantly impacted by the lack of standardization for multicultural practice for professionals and training for students in psychology.

In spite of the history of lag time between the changes in accreditation mandates and ethical code updates to reflect these changes, the publication of the 1992 APA Ethics Code occurred within the same year as the accreditation updates. The 1992 APA Ethics Code included a statement that psychologists were expected to be aware of cultural differences related to race and ethnicity, among other variables (APA, 1992, 2003). The 1992 revisions of the Ethics Code also included professional standards of culturally competent care in other professional and training activities including assessment and research (APA, 1992, 2003).

In 1994, the APA Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training was formed. This entity published a report that same year with a five-year plan to increase the number of racially/ethnically diverse trainees in psychology (APA, 2003).

During the same year, Bernal & Castro (1994) published a report of a decade's worth of progress regarding psychologists' preparation for services and research for the racially/ethnically diverse. One of the primary results from this paper was the authors' assertion that cultural proficiency requires complete infusion of multicultural concerns throughout each component of training, from the environment of the academic training program, the classes and practical experiences offered and culminating in the internship placement for trainees (Bernal & Castro, 1994; Robinson & Morris, 2000). One year later, the APA accreditation guidelines were renewed and mandated systemic infusion of multicultural diversity concerns within programs desiring APA accreditation (Robinson & Morris, 2000, p. 244). This move yet again showcased the sensitivity that the APA accrediting board seemed to have regarding response to current literature on best practices for multicultural competence training. Arredondo et al. (1996) also published their seminal work in the *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, in 1996. This article operationalized Sue et al. (1982; 1992) previous work on the tripartite model for multicultural counseling competencies. It also made a clear distinction between definitions for multiculturalism and diversity, which allowed for a more precise definition of the multiculturally competent clinician (Robinson & Morris, 2000). From the Arredondo et al. (1996) operationalization of multiculturalism, "a multiculturally competent professional has specific awareness, knowledge, and skills in the areas of ethnicity, race and culture and is able to utilize these qualities to sensitively engage racial/ethnic minority clients in a manner that is consistent with the needs of the clients being served" (Robinson & Morris, 2000 p. 244). Arredondo et al.

noted that their hope was that the operationalization of the competencies would address continued concerns from trainers in the field who were vocal about a lack of practical tools with which to teach, measure and assess these skills.

A critical analysis of the field of multicultural competence training in psychology, particularly as it related to trainer competence to teach the skills, was an important shift in the late 1990s. Ridley, Espelage & Rubinstein (1996) noted two primary problems facing educators responsible for multicultural competence training: (1) multicultural training and counseling competencies were in its infancy and (2) many counselor educators charged with training in this area were trained during an era in which multicultural and diversity related issues were not an integral part of their own training. These findings illuminated yet another issue regarding standardization of training in this area, as there was no barometer by which to measure the effectiveness of trainers who were now strongly encouraged to infuse multicultural education throughout core curriculum. Taylor (1999) suggested that the experience of trainers in psychology attempting to cultivate skills in multicultural competence without a unifying pedagogy was not an isolated difficulty, as in general, “educators attempting to foster cross-racial understanding face a lack of direction, due in part, to theoretical frameworks that are contradictory, disingenuous or both” (p.181). In spite of, or perhaps because of, the issues discovered regarding educators’ difficulty operationalizing multicultural competence into teachable units, many tools, measures and assessments were created to meet the training needs as outlined by the APA accrediting body. Although the various options assisted educators as individuals preparing courses on multicultural competence, the lack of unified standards continued to persist at the organizational level.

A culmination of all of the direct and indirect efforts of various professional groups and prominent psychologists at the individual level, the Multicultural Guidelines (APA, 2003) were adopted by the APA Council and published in the *American Psychologist* in May 2003. These guidelines were a joint effort between Divisions 17 and 45 of the APA and outlined the multiculturally competent professional activities of psychologists and trainees regarding research, practice education and change at the organizational levels (APA, 2003). More recently, the APA Task Force on the implementation of the APA Multicultural Guidelines (APA, 2008b) provided a brief summary of the professional account of the Multicultural Guidelines since publication. These updates include the continuous publication of articles, books and professional literature in an effort to provide “concrete, specific examples to aid psychologists in the variety of settings in which they work” (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007, p. 8), indicating continued need for unified educative practices.

Currently, the Multicultural Guidelines are under review for revisions and updates and scheduled to be released in 2015 (Delgado-Romero, personal communication, June 25, 2014). Considering the more recent sociopolitical events impacting the field of psychology since the initial publication of these guidelines (e.g. APA response to Abu Ghraib, police brutality directed at Black lives across the U.S., etc.), areas of anticipated and relatively new focus include the movement of the field towards social justice (Ivey & Collins, 2003; Pieterse, Evas, Risner-Butner, Collins & Mason, 2009; Vera & Speight, 2003) especially as it relates to more diverse activism at the systemic level. In an effort to frame the proposed study in a similar fashion, CRT and its major tenets will be examined in the proceeding sections.

Critical Race Theory

In his foreword to the 30th anniversary edition to Freire's (2009) classic work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Shaul (2009) writes:

Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes...the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. The development of an educational methodology that facilitates this process will inevitably lead to tension and conflict...but it could also contribute to the formation of a new man [and/or woman] and mark the beginning of a new era in Western history.

Shaul (2009) captures the danger and triumphant power inherent in the development of educational methods towards transformation. Without change pedagogy, the danger is perpetuation of the status quo. With change pedagogy, the danger is inevitable tension and conflict. On the surface, the choice is not abundantly clear, particularly for those who are comfortable and/or enjoy the privilege of dominant identities within a dominant culture. Discussion of this comfort, as it is described from a critical race theoretical lens provides an opportunity to explore Shaul's (2009) ideas as inspired by Freire (2009), one of the primary influential figures of critical race theoretical thought.

Critical race theory (CRT) has been defined by preeminent scholars in the tradition as a social movement that is made up of activists and scholars, in various traditions, whom are all unified by a desire to study and transform the relationships among race, racism and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The primary tenets of CRT particularly as they relate to the current

study are: (1) Racism is Normal, Not Aberrational, (2) Interest Convergence/Material Determinism, (3) Social Construction Thesis, (4) Intersectionality and (5) the Voice-of-Color Thesis (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). These CRT concepts will be defined and then contextualized within the framework of the current study on Black women being educated in predominantly White contexts.

The first basic concept of CRT is the notion that racism is normal within the U.S. society. Delgado & Stefancic (2012) explain that racism is “normal science” (p. 7) and that it is so ingrained into our society that it is “the common, everyday experience of most people of color in this country” (p.7). The postulation that racism is endemic and ingrained in the American society also means that it goes unacknowledged and is subsequently very difficult to cure. Critical race theorists purport that racism is a part of the air that we breathe, providing unexamined privilege for some and unyielding discrimination and oppression for others.

Interest convergence, another core concept in CRT, is the belief that because racism is the norm, those who are identified as White experience privilege at the material and/or psychological level and typically have little to no vested interest in challenging these benefits. It is only when the needs or desires of those with subordinate identities merge with those in power positions that change occurs. Delgado & Stefancic (2012) offer the initial resistance and eventual acquiescence of elite Whites regarding the civil rights movement of Blacks during the 1960s as an example. These authors explain that there was no popular vested interest in providing or acknowledging equal rights for Black Americans until there was financial and moral pressure as the heartbreaking events during that time period played out on the world stage. From a CRT perspective, cumulative financial and political pressures from other countries and world leaders, as they witnessed the ways in which passive resistance and nonviolent protests were met with

violence and vitriol, resulted in interest convergence that ultimately facilitated overdue change (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Contrary to a popular poet and activist's (Scott-Heron, 1970) assertion during that time, the revolution *was*, in fact, televised. According to critical race theorists, interest convergence, facilitated by what was televised around the world, is what ultimately led to change.

The third CRT concept discussed for the purposes of this study is the social construction thesis, which states that race is a social construct and that this concept does not correspond to any biological or genetic reality (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This thesis highlights the aforementioned concepts in that "races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient" (p. 8) or arguably only when the costs of racism as the norm is too high, resulting in a vested interest in incremental change.

The fourth basic principle of CRT, intersectionality, refers to the idea that "no person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). From this perspective we all have several intersections of identities that inform who we are in our personal and societal contexts. These identities can and are often a mix between subordinate and dominant identities (i.e. racial/ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability/disability status identities). In the current study, participants were asked to consider the ways in which their myriad identities informed the development of their multicultural competence within their training environments as vacillation between and amongst these identities were constant.

The final basic tenant in CRT as a collective movement is the privileging of a unique voice of color, the voice-of-color thesis, which "holds that because of their different histories and experiences with oppression, Black, American Indian, Asian, and Latino/a writers and thinkers may be able to communicate to their White counterparts matters that the Whites are unlikely to

know” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 10). This notion carries over into the qualitative research design common in CRT, as minority status, from this lens, brings an apparent competence to speak about race and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). These counter narratives become catalysts for social change as the racism as norm narrative is challenged and contextualized within the systemic and systematic oppression of communities of color.

Critical race theory in higher education. Landson-Billings and Tate (1995) are credited with introducing CRT perspectives into the field of education, which was, until that point, primarily used in critical legal studies. Critical race theorists in multicultural pedagogy and higher education research tend to focus on three of the six central CRT tenets described above: (a) racism as the norm in education environments, (b) interest convergence in the educational context and finally, (c) the importance of the voice-of-color thesis (Milner, 2007). These core theoretical CRT concepts in education are described and contextualized within the current study.

The CRT tenet that race and racism are ingrained in society at large is extended in education. From this perspective, because racism exists in society, it also prevails in the research endeavors and practice of education (Milner, 2007). In this study, I examined how Black women developed multicultural competency in educational and professional systems with a history of racism and discrimination. The CRT concept of interest convergence in education in this study manifested in consideration of the rate and manner in which policy change for multicultural education and practice occurred, or did not, at the professional and trainee levels. Finally, the importance of the counter-narrative in CRT in education provides an opportunity to privilege the voices of the Black female participants as they were “empowered to tell stories often much different from the ones that have been portrayed about them in the past (Milner, 2007, p. 391). It is with the aforementioned CRT principles in education that the current study is presented. The

results of a pilot study conducted examining the training experiences most facilitative of multicultural competence development in trainees of color, conclude this chapter.

Pilot Study: “I Went in There Thinking That *I* Was Going to Teach.”

The pilot study informing the current research design, was guided by the following research question: What training components (both internal and external to the trainee) do recent graduates of an APA accredited Counseling psychology program identify as most facilitative of the development of multicultural competence during training? The exploration of influential training components, as identified by graduates, addressed the limited empirical research on effective multicultural training strategies from the trainee perspective. This study served to inform training efforts to establish multicultural aptitude as a core competency in psychology education by adding the often-neglected voice of the recipients of this instruction, the trainees themselves.

As the interviews were conducted and participants provided rich descriptions of important training experiences, they also consistently identified individual personality characteristics and values most facilitative of their multicultural training. These characteristics and values were discussed by participants in a manner that revealed that these traits were influential not only in their responses to both positive and negative training experiences, but also in the way that these events informed how participants made meaning about the impact of these events on their personal and professional multicultural competence development. While the original research goal for this study was to examine multicultural competence development for all trainees, that is, no exclusion criteria regarding race/ethnicity were set, Black women (and one man of color) consistently responded to email solicitations. I found that these individuals

were eager to talk about the impact of their training experiences, at the intersection of their identities, on both personal and professional development.

In-class experiences. When describing in-class and clinical training experiences and the impact on their multicultural competence, participants also described the ability to use challenges and adversity during these training experiences as tools for their personal growth. Many of the challenges referenced by participants included opportunities for them to acknowledge their privileged identities in ways they had not been confronted with previously. A participant, given the pseudonym Claire (this pseudonym will be used for all participants' quotes in this section), detailed this experience during one of her classes. When asked about a challenging in-class conversation, Claire stated:

My professor asked me, "So how did you address the fact that you were an educated Black woman in the room?" And I thought to myself, "Why should I have to bend over backwards to acknowledge that?" But I did eventually think about what he said and recognized that, "Yes, Claire, you do need to put that to the forefront, that you are privileged". Initially I didn't want to do that because I worked so hard for that privileged identity. I tried to use that challenge by the professor as a tool for growth. Even if someone doesn't have good intentions in pointing something out to you, it is still an opportunity to self-reflect.

The exploration of "working hard" for privileged identities will be further explored in the presented study. The women were asked to consider the role of their intersecting identities, and being challenged to confront them, in the context of their training environments. These reflections were centered on the development of their multicultural competence within these spaces.

Participants' personal values. Participants in the pilot study also consistently identified personal values as facilitative of their multicultural competence. Common values of participants who self-reported an interest in multicultural growth at the doctoral level of training included personal philosophies about the importance of career-long commitment to multicultural competence skill development. When describing a conversation with a colleague, Claire described the ways in which her personal value of confronting issues directly facilitated a candid exchange. Claire shared the following:

And so I just asked, I wonder what your identity as a White man says about how you are viewing this right now? I was not trying to be mean or disrespectful, but I was trying to make a point: that your ethnic identity could inform the way you see this, like the way in which my ethnic identity is informing the way I'm looking at it. This exchange was consistent with my identity in being able to share my thoughts and my values.

Claire identified her willingness to confront or challenge her classmate as a personal value. As the study progressed, there were several points in which participants identified personality traits as core values in a cultural sense. This distinction will be further explored below.

Participants' personality characteristics as influences on academic growth. Participants consistently described personality characteristics that served to facilitate their multicultural competence skill development. These characteristics included a passion for multiculturalism and diversity related issues, self-initiative to seek sites and supplementary training opportunities with a stated commitment to multicultural competence skill development and an introspective nature that reflected an ability and desire to identify areas for continued growth. Participants who identified individual growth areas also consistently reported a desire to engage others in the

development of multicultural competence at the individual and/or systemic levels. This desire to embody social justice activism was demonstrated in participants' reported involvement in training and/or mentoring activities. Claire described the process she initiated in an effort to gain varied experiences, even as she later identified areas for future growth. She stated:

I was very interested in having culturally diverse clients, outside of my practicum setting, I also worked with women who were homeless and I worked with the LGBT Resource Center seeing students there. I was very invested in finding opportunities to see a diverse clinical population. When I initially went in there, I went in there with the thinking that I was going to teach (I identify as heterosexual) I thought I was going to teach lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals how to be lesbian, gay, bi, and trans. Then I went in there and realized that that was not the case. That's not what I was going to be doing; that was my incompetence and my heterosexist bias.

Claire's decision to work with clients that were culturally diverse and from varied backgrounds was certainly an important one for her professional growth and development. While identification of areas for future growth is by no means an indication of a deficit in multicultural competence, I am interested in the nature of Claire's identified growth edge. Admittedly, this educative process for Black women in predominantly White training context has many layers that presented several parallel processes. However it is the intricacies inherent in these learning environments that I wish to bring to the fore. Did Claire identify areas for growth before she entered the practical training environment? Did Claire feel comfortable exploring this area as she considered the intersection of her identities within her predominantly White academic/training contexts? Exploration of these questions optimistically provides insight into some of the ways

that Black women described development of multicultural competence; in the next chapter, I discuss my research design towards that end.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to develop a comprehensive, learner-based theory of multicultural competency development. The generated theory was grounded in the lived experiences of early career psychologists who identified as Black women. This study had a specific focus on professional Black women and the ways in which multicultural competence was developed within predominantly White training programs. These women were asked to reflect on their academic environments, various training and practical experiences as well as their interpersonal interactions during their graduate training in a counseling psychology doctoral program. The grounded theory that emerged was informed by these accounts.

This chapter describes the methods and procedures utilized in this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of the qualitative research tradition and the merits of qualitative inquiry in the subject area. Next, the grounded theory methodology is introduced and also framed within the field of Counseling psychology and the study of multicultural education. Critical race theory (CRT), the theoretical framework informing this study, is then discussed, particularly as it related to use in this grounded theory study. An introduction to the critical-race grounded methodology then commences and is explained as it informed the components of this study. These components included: the research design, sample selection, data collection and analysis, as well as validity considerations and limitations of this study. The chapter closes with a statement of subjectivity regarding my role as researcher in this qualitative inquiry.

The qualitative research tradition. Qualitative research is a method of exploration that produces findings informed by the individuals being studied and their subjective interactions with the world. The underlying principle that distinguishes this research tradition from positivist approaches is the acknowledgement that reality is not fixed and or measured, but that it is socially constructed by individuals and their interpersonal/intrapersonal interactions within their world and contexts (Merriam, 2002). Another critical distinction to be made regarding qualitative approaches, and one significant to the current study is reliance on process theory to inform explanations of the phenomena being examined. Mohr (1982) explained that process theory “represents a series of occurrences” (various experiences during training in the current study) “in a sequence over time” (retrospective account of the years during graduate training in Counseling Psychology) “so as to explain how some phenomena comes about” (the development of multicultural competence) (p.9). Maxwell (2013) explained that process theory, in qualitative traditions, facilitates research findings informed by “people, situations and events, and the processes that connect these; explanation is [then] based on an analysis of how some situations and events influence others” (p. 29). Process theory is an important component of the research design in this study as I explored how specific situations and events in the training experiences of the participants influenced the development of multicultural competence. The final distinguishing factor of qualitative research as it informed the design of this project is the reflexive process that it required through each stage. Maxwell (2013) explained that this reflexive process occurs simultaneously through all phases of the research endeavor granting the researcher flexibility to identify and address validity threats and adapt findings based on the new information that enters the system. While traditional quantitative researchers are often concerned with the flexibility and adaptability required in qualitative research, it is this tractability that

offsets the legacy of rigidly constructed positivist research in the American cultural context (Bergkamp, 2010).

The call for qualitative research in counseling psychology and multicultural competence.

Qualitative researchers in the social sciences argue that the rigidity and imperialism characteristic of less contemporary Western empirical research traditions have historically allowed the dominant culture to create knowledge and to define truth (Bergkamp, 2010; Smith, 2012). Other influential scholars in the field of Counseling psychology argued that these traditions, namely in the positivist and postpositivist realms are characterized by the espousal of “one true reality, researcher objectivity, emotional detachment from participants, hypothesis testing, and strict control and manipulation of variables” (Ponterotto, 2002, p. 396) and that these qualities have resultantly led to the systematic oppression of the racially/ethnically diverse (S. Sue, 1999). This methodical oppression has occurred and been perpetuated by the report of empirical findings on subordinate cultural values and experiences within a dominant culture framework (S. Sue, 1999). Stanley Sue’s (1999) now classic treatise to the field of social science researchers called for four primary considerations towards development of “stronger researcher knowledge on ethnic minority groups,” including explicit discussion of external validity in quantitative methods as well as utilization and appreciation of qualitative methodologies (p. 1070). In a 2002 article in *The Counseling Psychologist*, a journal published by Division 17 (Society of Counseling Psychology) of the APA, Ponterotto (2002), an expert in the field of multicultural psychology and a researcher trained in traditional quantitative methods, noted his belief that qualitative methodology will ultimately lead to “a radical transformation and paradigm shift in the research-training components of counseling psychology programs” (p.395). In the same article, Ponterotto (2002) went on to recommend a diverse approach to studying

multicultural counseling competence utilizing, among other methods, “qualitative research stemming from postpositivist, constructivist and critical theory paradigms” (p.402). It is with this call for qualitative research in the field of counseling psychology and multicultural education, and the historical context informing it, that the present study and methodology is presented.

This study specifically addressed a critical observation that “the existing body of quantitative research in the field of multicultural competency is, in fact, premature, as we do not understand the underlying theory (Jackson, 1999; Klausner, 1997),” (Bergkamp, 2010, p. 22). In an effort to contribute to mental health research and address gaps in multicultural competence development literature, this study utilized qualitative inquiry informed by a grounded theory methodological approach. Grounded theory as a qualitative approach in general and particularly in the field of multicultural education is explored in the following section.

Grounded theory. In their manual discussing the theory, procedures and techniques of grounded theory, Strauss & Corbin (1990) offered a comprehensive definition of this approach. According to Strauss & Corbin (1990), “the grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomena. The research findings constitute a theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation rather than consisting of a set of numbers, or a group of loosely related themes” (p.24). Although there is an ongoing debate about the inductive nature of the grounded theory approach (Malagon et al., 2009; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012) (discussed in detail in the following section), the emphasis on Strauss & Corbin’s (1990) definition, for my purposes, is that the nature of grounded theory procedures constantly moved this study towards the progression of a theoretical formulation of multicultural competence development in counseling psychology. One of the defining components of grounded theory data analysis is the

constant comparative method, an iterative process of data collection, analysis and theory testing (Strauss & Corbin 1990). This process ensured that the development of the proposed theory of multicultural competence was not a static process, which has been the hallmark of many current theories derived from organizational guidelines down to educators and finally down to trainees. Strauss & Corbin explained, “through [grounded theory] methodology, the concepts and relationships among [the emergent theory] are not only generated but are provisionally tested” (p.24). The ability to conditionally test the theory, even as it emerged, facilitated the overarching goal of this project as “the purpose of grounded theory method is... to build theory that is faithful to and illuminates the area under study” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p.24), in this case a learner-based theory of multicultural competence attainment in counseling psychologists who identified as Black women. The grounded theoretical approach was the methodology most facilitative of the current research goal as Strauss & Corbin highlight that “researchers working in this tradition also hope that their theories will ultimately be related to others within their respective disciplines in a cumulative fashion, and that the theory’s implications will have useful application” (p. 24). This application, optimistically, has significant implications for the field of counseling psychology, particularly as it relates to educative practices geared towards the development of multicultural competence for Black women in predominantly White training programs.

Grounded theory as informed by a Critical Race Theory lens. The grounded theory methodology afforded analytic procedures that allowed for an open and dynamic theory development process. The constant comparative data analysis process boded well for both the qualitative and critical theoretical paradigm called for by multicultural psychology experts (Morrow, Rakhsha, Castaneda, 2001; Morrow & Smith, 2000; Ponterotto, 2002; S. Sue, 1999).

While grounded theory data analysis processes are facilitative of the specific CRT lens utilized, the approach, in its traditional form, did present two specific challenges. Namely, grounded theory does not traditionally allow for the integration of an overarching theory of structural, personal and interpersonal dynamics within the data analysis process, which is important for a CRT researcher. This issue informed the second and final challenge which involved the debate between inductive and abductive forms of theory development (Malagon et al., 2009; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). Inductive forms of theory development allow for the emergence of theory from data in the absence of theoretical presumptions; abductive forms centralize the creative inferential process of hypotheses aimed at the production of new theories (Timmersman & Tavory, 2012).

While Timmersman & Tavory acknowledged that Charmaz and other prominent leaders in grounded theory methodology have recognized the limitations of inductive analysis and subsequently moved towards a “constructivist” grounded theory, this move mentions abduction as a framework for a constructivist theory only secondary to the traditional inductive analysis process (Timmersman & Tavory, 2012). Although Charmaz’s move was an important one, particularly as it related to the emergence of theory informed by broader sociopolitical structures, many researchers argued for “a more radical rethinking of the relation between data and theory construction” (Timmersman & Tavory, 2012, p, 168). These researchers, and others from a CRT framework, proposed analytical approaches that privilege abduction (Malagon et al., 2009; Timmersman & Tavory, 2012).

In further advocacy of a shift to abductive approaches to grounded theory, Malagon et al. (2009) explained the merits in the context of a CRT framework. In their foundational paper towards a critical race-grounded theory, they write: “CRT does not simply treat race as a

variable, but rather works to understand how race and racism intersect with gender, class, sexuality, language, etc. as structural and institutional factors that impact the everyday experiences of People of Color. CRT critically frames race in the research process by including methodologies that expose the structural and institutional ways race and racism influence the phenomena being investigated” (Malagon et al., 2009, p. 256). These researchers pointed out that in order to situate the intersections of race and gender (and the other specific subordinate and dominant identities that the participants identified) within a grounded theory methodology, a CRT framework is needed. This framework allowed me to situate the emergent theory of multicultural competence development in Black women, within the larger institutional structures of predominantly White training institutions and/or programs. This systematic analysis then informed the study’s broadest activist research and professional goals, as these dynamics were explored towards service provision to the racially/ethnically diverse in a predominantly White country. The alterations necessary to sensitize traditional grounded theory methods to a CRT perspective are presented in the context of the current research design below.

Research Design

The goal of this study was to derive a theory of multicultural competence development informed by the lived experience of Black women as they reflected on their training experiences in predominantly White institutions and/or training programs. The primary research questions facilitated the development of a theory of multicultural competence; they are as follows:

1. How do early career psychologists, who identify as Black women, describe the process of developing multicultural competence during training in predominantly White programs?

2. What form does the tripartite model of multicultural competency (Sue et. al, 1982) take in the descriptions these participants provide about the development of this set of skills?

The secondary research questions that I posited informed the analysis of the structural dynamics of the predominantly White training environments on the Black women in this study; these questions were:

- a. How did issues of race/ethnicity impact training experiences within a PWI?
- b. How did participants' intersecting identities, including but not limited to race/ethnicity and gender, impact training experiences as compared to their White colleagues?
- c. What were the training experiences geared toward the development of multicultural competence within a PWI like, particularly as it relates to service provision for the racially/ethnically diverse in a predominantly White country?

The specific research design of this study was a qualitative approach utilizing in-depth interviewing with a semi-structured interview protocol. This design was most facilitative of my research goal. This is because the rich, thick descriptions of the developmental processes for attainment of multicultural competence, from a trainee perspective, provided information currently missing from multicultural education literature in psychology. As previously explained, the conceptual framework informing this study was a critical race theoretical lens. Because qualitative research designs are inherently flexible, this allowed for an iterative and active process during the entire research process (Maxwell, 2013). This adaptive nature also allowed

for the CRT lens, which in turn sensitized the grounded theory research methodology. The next section of this chapter identifies the ways in which the theoretical and methodological lenses merged as related to each design component in this study.

Sample Selection

The critical race-grounded methodology informing the current study did not deviate from classic grounded theory in its approach to sample selection as it accommodated utilization of theoretical sampling. Strauss & Corbin (1990) defined theoretical sampling as occurring on “the basis of concepts that have proven theoretical relevance to the evolving theory” (p. 176). In keeping with the reflexive and active role of the researcher, Strauss (1987) added that theoretical sampling is based on the analytic discretion of the researcher. Subsequently, I was responsible for determining what groups of informants to solicit after each interview. In this manner, the data collection was controlled by the emerging theory and allowed for the theory to emerge “quickly and efficiently” (Strauss, 1987, p. 39). Malagon et al. (2009) advocated for theoretical sampling in critical-grounded race theory for similar reasons and added that this sampling method seeks participants that will “illuminate and define the boundaries and relevance” of data and allows the researcher to be informed by “cultural intuition” (p. 267), which they defined as personal, academic and professional experiences as well as the analytical research process². Ultimately, theoretical sampling allowed me to reach theoretical saturation, or the point in which new data no longer revealed additional properties, in a time effective manner (Malagon et. al, 2009).

In this study, I initiated a theoretical sampling technique by the development of inclusion criteria for potential participants. In order to meet inclusion criteria parameters, participants had to have: (a) graduated from an APA-accredited Counseling psychology program

² Strauss & Corbin (1990) refer to this concept as “sources of theoretical sensitivity,” (p. 42).

within five years prior to data collection; (b) completed an Association of Psychology Practicum and Internship Centers (APPIC) accredited internship in professional psychology; and (d) identify racially/ethnically and gender specifically as a Black woman. It is important to note the shortage of literature in the field capturing the lived experiences of Black women in doctoral training programs in psychology. Even more specifically, there is scarce research on the exploration of racial/ethnic minority experiences in multicultural competence training and these students' perceptions of the training environments (Coleman, 2006; Dickson, Argus-Calvo, & Tafoya, 2010; Mathew, 2011). I recognized the value of contributing to this literature by honoring these voices and present the current study as a response to the limited empirical data currently available.

The initial participants for this study were recruited through the APA Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA). On November 3, 2014, I contacted the Senior Director of the OEMA Public Interest Directorate and received permission to disseminate the Initial Research Study Request Form (see Appendix A for this form) created for this project. Additional means to recruit participants were developed after consultation with my Dissertation Chair. After this meeting, he recommended the names of three experts in the field of counseling and multicultural psychology who were faculty members at various predominantly White institutions or programs across the nation and could potentially identify prospective participants. I contacted these individuals via email and included the Initial Research Study Request Form as an attachment for recruitment purposes. After contacting leading multicultural psychologists as resources for potential participants, I also submitted the Initial Research Study Request Form to four of my personal professional contacts and requested that they disseminate the form to individuals that they thought might be interested in participating in the study. Finally, in keeping with the

analytic discretion afforded as a researcher utilizing a theoretical sampling procedure (Maxwell, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), I also employed a network sampling technique for recruitment efforts after the first 4 interviews. Network sampling was particularly useful during theory development and verification procedures as this technique facilitated access to participants who exemplified each component of my inclusion criteria for this study (Hays & Singh, 2012). My network sampling recruitment efforts entailed asking each participant, after completion of the interview, if they knew other Black women who trained in predominantly White Institutions and/or programs in Counseling psychology and might be willing to participate in the study. The potential participants suggested by individuals that completed the study were encouraged to contact me via email to find out more about the study. The networking sampling technique and email recruitment strategies continued until saturation of data was reached at 12 interviews (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006).

Data Collection and Analysis

An in-depth, semi-structured interview design was the primary data collection method for this study. Interviewing, as a form of data collection, is one of the most widely used formats in qualitative research (Kvale, 2007). It should be noted that the data collection process was iterative as each individual interview informed the next round of data collection as an emergent theory developed and theoretical saturation was reached. For parsimony, I discuss data collection and analysis as it progressed for the two rounds of data collection conducted in this study.

Data collection and analysis for this study commenced on November 11, 2014 and concluded on April 28, 2015. The interviews were initiated after potential participants indicated interest in the study and responded to my follow-up email, which included the study consent form (see Appendix B for this form). Next, I sent an email in which potential participants were

asked to confirm a date and time for a 60-90 minute interview. Depending on the geographical location to me, interviews were conducted either in person or via telephone. The interviews were recorded on two external devices (i.e. my computer and a handheld recorder). During each interview, I concurrently took field notes about the interview process as I considered the data being presented and determined which semi-structured interview question to pose next (Roulston, 2010). After the interview, I transcribed the recorded conversation, and logged field notes as a means to begin interpretation of the data (Charmaz, 2014; Roulston, 2010).

Following transcription of the first interview, I began an open coding procedure, which was informed by the aforementioned constant comparative analysis in grounded theoretical approaches. Open coding is defined as “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 61). This process started with “labeling phenomena” presented in the interview (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 63) and entailed “taking apart an observation, a sentence, a paragraph, and giving each discrete incident, idea or event, a name, something that stands for or represents a phenomenon” (p. 63). This preliminary analysis proceeded in a mixture of sentence and paragraph chunking until the discovery of a category, or a grouping of concepts that pertain to the same phenomena occurred (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Upon completion of this process, a preliminary theory of the process of development related to multicultural competence was created based on the participant’s transcribed words. This individual preliminary theory of multicultural competence development was presented in written format, to the participant via a PDF document. The participant was then asked to review the document for accuracy. This step ensured that the emergent theory was a reflection of the participant’s communicated training experiences, it also addressed validity concerns (discussed in the next session) and finally, it promoted participant involvement as a

collaborator, a hallmark of CRT research methodologies (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Malagon et al., 2009). After feedback from this member validation was incorporated into the emergent personal theory of multicultural competence development, the interview transcript along with my researcher memos and the member validation document were electronically submitted to two members of my doctoral committee. Feedback and discussion from these experts in multicultural psychology and qualitative methodology, respectively, informed the next interview and data analysis procedures as a comprehensive theory of multicultural competence emerged.

Updates and summary information for the first interview was submitted on December 21, 2014. Data was submitted for the next five interviews on February 23, 2015. Discussion of the interview process and review of the data collected up to that point resulted in a revision of the initial interview protocol. During this time, I worked with members of my committee on restructuring the questions asked in order to continue to develop ideas in the emergent theory. The revised semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix C and D for initial and revised protocols, respectively) was completed on March 13, 2015 and initiated with the seventh interview on April 9, 2015. I submitted the transcription for this interview on April 12, 2015 and garnered approval to continue with the revised protocol shortly thereafter. I also began to upload each de-identified transcription to a secure file sharing website with granted access to two members of my committee. These committee members performed another audit of the data collected for interviews number 8 and 9 on April 24, 2015, after which three additional interviews were completed. Dr. deMarrais and Dr. Delgado-Romero determined that the data collected had reached a saturation point at 12 interviews. This was consistent with research in qualitative methodology, which predicted saturation at six to twelve interviews (Guest, Bunce &

Johnson, 2006), particularly considering the homogeneity of the proposed sample as it related to similar professional and training experiences.

On April 30, 2015 an abbreviated coding structure was established under the direction of Dr. deMarrais, an expert in qualitative methodology. This abbreviated analysis format was done with consideration to the prior data analysis that had commenced during the transcription, member validation and memo writing processes. The revised analysis procedure consisted of the creation of a table for each participant, in which their respective transcribed interview was chunked and organized into three columns. These columns were labeled: “What Did She Say?” “How Did She Respond?” and “How Did She Evaluate?” I then filled each column with a chronological ordering of the significant events in each participant’s developmental process. After each table was created, I wrote a brief memo that challenged me to establish a succinct summary of the development of multicultural competence for each woman. Next, I drew a pictorial representation of the process as a means to visualize each step in the emergent process. This procedure was completed for each interview and was uploaded to a secure data-sharing site for review by my committee. I discussed my conceptualization of the collective experiences of development with a member of my committee after completing the abbreviated data analysis process for each participant. After this meeting, I then completed the first draft of the developmental process of procurement of multicultural competence for the participants in my study. I presented this draft to two members of my committee and received edits and suggestions that challenged me to consider each step identified in the process. Finally, after consultation with my committee, the collective process of development was approved and is presented in the following chapter.

It is important to note that in addition to the aforementioned procedures, I was also in email, phone and video conferencing contact with my committee throughout the data collection and concurrent analysis process. During these meetings, we processed the emergent theory and discussed my reactions in an effort to monitor for any threats to validity informed by possible shared subjectivities. It should also be noted that I created a researcher's journal on June 23, 2014 as I began the research design for this study. I added entries to this journal throughout each phase of the current study. This journal was a living document and provided great clarity for me as I scheduled research activities, reflected on the research process and conceptualized the emergent model informed by a critical race-grounded theory perspective.

According to Malagon et al., (2009), "CRT is deeply committed to a pursuit of social justice by affording its users a theoretical tool to eliminate racism as part of a broader effort to end subordination based on gender, class, sexual orientation, language and national origin" (p.255). Resultantly, it was incumbent for me as researcher to constantly consider the broader sociopolitical context even as I engaged my participants and data at the individual and group levels. The act of centering a CRT perspective in the research process, particularly in studies within higher education settings, served to "transform higher education by disrupting the dominant ideologies traditionally embedded in the knowledge production process" (Malagon et al., 2009, p. 258).

Validity and Limitations

Maxwell (2013) discussed the concept of validity in qualitative research by addressing two broad types of threats often raised in qualitative inquiry i.e. "researcher bias, and the effect of the researcher on the individuals studied, often called reactivity" (p. 124). In keeping with Maxwell's (2013) suggestions regarding addressing validity threats in research, I place primary

emphasis on how I did “rule out *specific* plausible alternatives and threats to [my] interpretations and explanations” (p.124). I do this keeping in mind Maxwell’s (2013) assertion that “citations of authorities and standard approaches are less important than providing a clear argument that the approaches described adequately deal with the particular threats in question” (p. 124).

Researcher bias. Researcher subjectivity, or the selection of data that fits my existing theory, goals, or preconceptions and/or data that stands out to me in some way, is commonly referred to as researcher bias (Maxwell, 2013). In the current study, this bias had the potential to manifest as I sought to develop a theory of multicultural competence development in a field that I have been engaged with, in some capacity for over 10 years, and with a group that share two of my primary subordinate identities, i.e. identification as a Black female. Maxwell (2013) pointed out the impossibility of eliminating my theories, beliefs and perceptual lens. In fact, any attempt to eliminate my professional and personal experiences within the context of this study would have also misinformed and incapacitated my ability to utilize a critical race theoretical lens. With this in mind, I did not intend to diminish this validity threat in the current study by stripping myself of CRT analytic tools; instead, I strived to understand how these influences impacted my interactions with participants and the subsequent findings. The manner in which I did this has been explicitly explained in the previous section, but will be highlighted here for clarity.

1. Utilization of Rich Data- The in-depth interview design, in addition to verbatim transcription of interviews, resulted in “rich data,” or data that is detailed and varied enough that it provided a full and revealing conceptualization of what was being communicated (Maxwell, 2013). Rich data countered the threat of observer bias by making it difficult for me to restrict my observations so that I saw only what supported my expectations (Maxwell, 2013).

2. Respondent Validation- The utilization of member checks, in which I synthesized the information contained in each interview and presented the data to each respective participant for their validation, was another method of monitoring researcher bias as a threat to validity. While this method is no more valid than the participants' verbatim responses, it did provide evidence regarding the validity of my account of said responses (Maxwell, 2013).
3. Searching for Discrepant Evidence- Checking preliminary analysis and conclusions with members of my doctoral committee was another valuable tool in identification of any of my biases as well as internal checks to my logic and methods (Maxwell, 2013).

Reactivity, the second and final broad type of validity threat mentioned by Maxwell (2013) is defined and discussed next.

Reactivity. Maxwell (2013) defined reactivity as “the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied” (p. 124). In this qualitative inquiry, the goal was not to eliminate my influence, but to understand this influence and use it productively throughout the study (Maxwell, 2013). My influence on this study is best explained as it relates to the development of my research interests in training and multicultural competence in psychology in general. My reactivity, at the broader professional level and at the level of interactions with my participants, will be more intimately addressed in the final section of this chapter, my statement of subjectivity.

Statement of Subjectivity

This time I went to graduate school differently. I went to [this PWI] with an understanding that this is not a place for me. One of the first things I did was research the

institution. The more I read about the institution I said, "I'm an interloper here. The institution is not set up for me. What I have to figure out is, how can I get what the institution has to offer without being depressed about the fact that the institution can't really meet all of my needs" (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 189).

I was hoping to have a White male clinician. I was hoping to hide. Looking at you as a Black woman makes me look at myself as a Black woman and I feel as though I am peering through a mirror. I was hoping to have a White male clinician (Black Female Client, personal communication, February, 2007).

Reflection on both the above quotes strike deep yet ambiguous feelings for me. To some extent, I can "testify" to both feelings at one point or another throughout time as a graduate student, a licensed professional counselor, and alas, a graduate student again. As I consider Gloria Ladson-Billings' (1999) account of her re-acclimation to graduate school after working in her field as an educator for several years, I am shocked yet, oddly familiar with her assertion. Although my journey through graduate training in psychology has been full of ups and downs, they have all been undergirded through connection with family members, mentors, colleagues and friends who get *it*, or at the very least, get *me*. In spite of, or perhaps because of this reality, I have had to grapple with what it has meant to have the opportunity to make provisions and, in some cases, hide, much in the way the writers of the quotes opening this section described.

Truly, many of the "downs" I mentioned during my graduate training were directly influenced by points in which the intersection of my identities as a Black woman seemingly became the catalyst for other students and colleagues, who did not share these identities, to exercise their privilege and benevolent ignorance, many times and excruciatingly, unbeknownst to them. During these times, I often vacillated from feelings of shock, to empathy, to anger, then

detachment and back again. Whenever I moved through this process, I often emerged determined to “teach.” I facilitated group dialogues and personal conversations ultimately subjecting myself to more microinsults and microaggressions, all in the service of showing others how to acknowledge and work through personal beliefs that served as potential impediments to the multiculturally component care of the racially/ethnically diverse. But the more I taught, the more I realized that there appeared to be little room left for *me* to learn. What about the areas in my life and personal affiliations that served as potential impediments to individuals who do not identify with my dominant identities, namely my identities as a heterosexual Christian woman? I only needed to step outside of the hallowed halls of my predominately White training institution and inside the sacred walls of a local Black church to recognize that I had been socialized within a subordinate culture that persistently diminishes the rights of individuals with other subordinate identities, namely “non-believers” as well as individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. As I worked to unpack my personal and professional beliefs within this social context, that typically did not share my values, I retrospectively recognized that this unpacking did not occur in training contexts with colleagues. I recognized that I kept these discussions out because any vulnerability might have been perceived as a weakness rendering any of my “lessons” as the racial/ethnic disparities “expert” null and void. Had I been able to hide from tough discussions about how to engage my church family and personal associates about their systematic and ironic oppression of others? How much depth was missed in my collegial relationships as I saved those hard discussions for only those I trusted? Those who got *it*? Did I resultantly lose *it* in the process? These questions inspired the current study and offer a natural transition to my statement of subjectivity, as I situate myself simultaneously in my identities as a Black woman, a student and a researcher within a predominantly White training program,

conducting research privileging the voices of Black women, who have also been students and researchers in the same contexts.

Maxwell (2013) outlined the importance of experiential knowledge during the design of qualitative research. This notion, in addition to my reflection on the current study, permits the opportunity for me to “out” myself, not only as a Black woman, student and researcher, but also as a licensed professional counselor and training supervisor in the mental health field who still struggles with issues related to multicultural competence. I have amassed thousands of hours in the direct and indirect provision of mental health services for, and training of, a diverse range of individuals. During my roles as a doctoral candidate and researcher, I recognized the potential for over-identification with participants that stood where I stood. These similarities could have potentially resulted in promoting assumptions about the intersections of our shared subjective realities. As I conducted interviews for the pilot study summarized in the preceding chapter, several participants identified involvement in a non-publicized student group specifically geared towards the personal support of minority and/or underrepresented students in academia, specifically Black women. This point of connection facilitated deeper discussion about the various educational experiences during our training process, but certainly exacerbated tendencies to assume that shared training experiences, as well as similar cultural beliefs, equated shared subjective realities. This revelation paradoxically led precariously close to intersubjectivity and reification, or “the process of treating social constructions as if they were objective and immutable facts of life” (Prasad, 2005, p.16). Ironically, this also led close to perpetuation of a similar limitation in positivist research traditions, that is, making an assumptive declaration about the nature of my participant’s subjective reality. While this assumption was not necessarily

informed by the same imperial beliefs, the outcome of this unchecked bias still had the same potential to compromise any results.

The aforementioned intersections of my identities with those of the participants did, in fact, highlight potential limitations in the current study. These same identities and their intersections also represented positive influences on the research I conducted. My shared identities with participants provided unencumbered access to the population interviewed. My awareness of the potential threat of enmeshment allowed me to offset these possible threats to my study. Because I was a part of the social world that my participants were asked to reflect upon, referred to as reflexivity in qualitative research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Maxwell, 2013), I utilized field notes and frequent discussions with members of my committee to process how I potentially influenced the information shared during data collection. Fortunately, the iterative process inherent in qualitative research design allowed me to incorporate any suggested adjustments to my interview style, data collection and analysis as I worked to avoid over identification and/or became aware of potential blind spots.

In addition to any possible preexisting relationships with participants, I was also aware of being impacted by the nature of the information being discussed. As I previously mentioned, I had several experiences during my graduate training that promoted interest in this topic. In fact, it was my multicultural training experiences and the reflection upon them, both positive and negative that has continued to fuel my interest in this topic. I highlight these prior and ongoing relationships with participants and content not only to reflect my understanding of the complicated interaction between the two, but to also articulate my commitment and investment in multicultural competence training for psychology trainees, both those represented in this study, as well as those of voices not captured. This commitment is ultimately in the service of all

marginalized communities. And so, I move onward and upward, toward the development of a comprehensive model of multicultural competency training, from the proverbial “bottom-up.”

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the development of multicultural competence for early career professionals in counseling psychology who identify as Black women and were trained in programs or institutions that were predominantly White. The developmental process presented emerged from the lived experiences of each participant. The primary research questions informing this study were:

1. How do early career psychologists, who identify as Black women, describe the process of developing multicultural competence during training in predominantly White counseling psychology programs?
2. What form does the tripartite model of multicultural competency (Sue, et al., 1982) take in the descriptions these participants provide about development of this set of skills?

The secondary research questions, informed by a critical race theory (CRT) perspective are:

- a. In what ways did issues of race/ethnicity impact training experiences within a PWI or program for the women in the study?
- b. How did participants describe the impact of the intersection of their identities, including but not limited to race/ethnicity and gender, on training experiences as they compared themselves to their White colleagues?

- c. How did the training experiences geared toward the development of multicultural competence within a PWI relate to service provision for racially/ethnically diverse clientele?

The results of the analysis revealed a shared developmental process for the 12 participants in this study, which I have termed the Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women in PWIs or Programs. The specific steps identified in this process are:

1. Awareness of Subjectivities
(Pre-Encounter Expectations of Study in Counseling Psychology)³
2. Assessment of Safety within the PWI
(Confrontation of Biases)⁴
3. Accommodation of New Information
4. Adjustment of Subjectivities
5. Adoption of Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence.

An important clarifying note regarding the developmental nature of the Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women in PWIs or Programs is that it is iterative in nature and does not indicate a static one-time occurrence. The early career professionals queried in this study consistently maintained that while they have a more broad awareness of their biases and

³ The Pre-Encounter Expectations of Study in Counseling Psychology are a culmination of each participant's subjectivities as a Black woman and is subsequently discussed after the first step in the process, Awareness of Subjectivities.

⁴ The Confrontation of Biases is an external event that usually occurs after (2) an Assessment of Safety within the PWI and necessitates (3) an Accommodation of New Information. This confrontation has a necessary role in the process, but is not identified as a specific step in the process because it is external to the individual. For the purposes of this study, the Confrontation of Biases will be discussed as a significant event during (2) the Assessment of Safety.

areas for further growth currently, they cycle through the identified process upon entry into new predominantly White working environments and/or after a new confrontation of their biases that indicates a need for further growth in their multicultural competence.

In the following sections of this chapter I present the findings and defer, whenever possible, to the voices of the women involved. I begin this presentation with a discussion of relevant demographic information, particularly the identities and experiences that emerged as relevant for the participants during data analysis. Next, I explain the progression through the Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women in PWIs or Programs as revealed by the participants. Although the introduction and summary of each step of this developmental process will be in my words, the course of development is primarily brought to life through the stories and voices of the twelve women interviewed. After presentation of the process that unified these women's training experiences, I then describe an individual experience of one woman in the study that diverged from the typical progression. I do this as a representation of the diversity of experiences within this group of Black women and to maintain that while there are shared experiences that connect Black women in predominantly White training environments, each one of the women are unique and have meaningful experiences that fall outside within group norms.

Participant Demographic Information

The process of multicultural competence development that follows is grounded in the lived experiences of 12 self-identified Black women. Over the course of data collection, many of these women reported one other salient identity and a common educational experience as integral influences on the development of their multicultural competence. These were socioeconomic status (SES), namely identification of a working-class background, and prior educational

experiences at the undergraduate and/or master's level at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), respectively. While I did not previously consider this specific information as an important component in the development of multicultural competence, SES and prior matriculation at an HBCU both emerged as impactful in this developmental process for many of the participants. Table 4.1 contains participant pseudonyms, number of years post-graduation and whether or not the participant identified a working-class background and/or obtainment of an undergraduate or master's degree from an HBCU as salient to their developmental process. Finally, Table 4.1 provides information regarding the participants' current professional setting. It should be noted that I did not include specific demographic questions regarding identification of SES, prior training at an HBCU or current professional setting. Subsequently, this information is not presented for each participant, only those that identified these experiences as important during the interview.

Table 1- Demographic Information

Participant Pseudonyms and Relevant Demographic Information

Participant Pseudonym	No. Years Post-Grad	Working-Class Background	Prior HBCU Education	Professional Setting
Lexi	5	--	Yes	CC
Dane	3	Yes	Yes	VA
Courtney	1	--	Yes	CC
Brenda	5	Yes	--	FTF
Natalie	3	Yes	No	VA
Alice	4	Yes	No	--
Deborah	4	--	No	FTF
Lou	1	--	Yes	CC
Charlie	4	--	Yes	--
Rebecca	1	--	--	CC
Hope	2	Yes	--	--
Faith	3	--	--	FTF

Note. CC = Counseling Center, VA = Veteran's Administration, FTF = Full-time Faculty, -- = Not Reported

Presentation of Process of Multicultural Competence Development

The Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black women in PWIs or Programs entails five internal steps and one external event. These are: (1) an initial Awareness of Subjectivities as a Black woman that results in pre-encounter expectations of study in counseling psychology, (2) Assessment of Safety Within the PWI, an external Confrontation of Biases, (3) Accommodation of New Information, (4) Adjustment of Subjectivities and (5) Adoption of an Aspirational view of Multicultural Competence. A pictorial representation of this process is presented in Figure 4.1 followed by detailed data rich descriptions of each component of this iterative process of professional development and personal growth.

Figure 1- Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women in Predominantly White Institutions or Programs

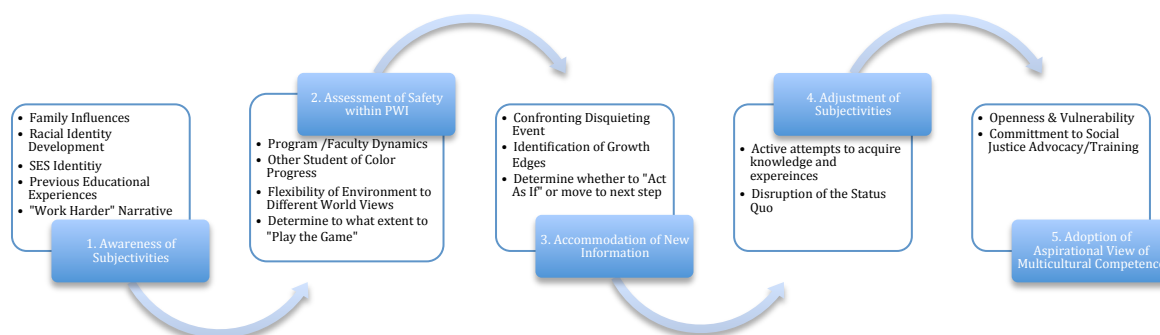


Figure 1. Process of the development of multicultural competence for Black women in predominantly White institutions (PWIs) or programs. The blue squares presented above and below text squares denote each of the five steps identified in the developmental process of multicultural competence in psychology. The text boxes presented above or below each step contain more specific components that inform progression through the process. Arrows found above or below each blue square represent the fluidity of movement through the process and also represent the iterative and ongoing nature of development in this area.

1. Awareness of Subjectivities. Before entering the predominantly White training context, participants had a working knowledge of themselves, particularly as Black women preparing to begin training in a predominantly White training environment. This self-awareness is often

referred to in qualitative inquiry as an individual's subjectivities and informs the ways in which an individual interacts with her environment. In this study, participants revealed their subjectivities were informed by several elements that included but were not limited to: their family of origin's views on racial/ethnic identity; the participant's own racial identity development; the influence of her socioeconomic status, particularly the impact of a working-class background; previous educational experiences at an HBCU and identification with a "Work Harder" narrative. The culmination of these socialization processes and identities informed a faulty initial assumption, for many of the women in this study, that identity as a Black woman in the U.S. represented an inherent professional multicultural competence. Interestingly this assumption, among other variables, seemed to inform specific interest in doctoral training in the field of Counseling Psychology. As noted by several participants, their interest was due to the noted commitment to multicultural and diversity issues advertised by many of their counseling psychology programs and not as prevalent a focus in the other branches of psychology they considered. As the women in this study prepared to enter their respective graduate programs in counseling psychology, they all held pre-encounter expectations of their predominantly White programs informed by many shared subjective experiences as Black women. The origin of many of these subjectivities was established through socialization in each participant's particular family of origin.

1a. Family of origin beliefs about racial/ethnic identity. As participants were encouraged to reflect on their racial/ethnic identity, the majority of the women seemed to naturally connect these reflections to socialization in her family of origin. Nine of the twelve participants openly discussed their family's role in the development of the personal salience of their racial/ethnic

identity. Faith described her family's influence on her view of her Black identity, particularly within predominantly White contexts:

I guess just being Black and knowing that it is not safe. I grew up in a race conscious family, so it is always something that has been primed since childhood. We talked about race a lot and I thought that was normal. Now that I am older I know that a lot of families just don't talk about issues like this as openly or candidly as my family did.

Faith captures the importance of her family's open and candid discussions on her own beliefs about her safety in predominantly White contexts as a Black person. Another participant also described her family's influence on her subjectivities. When I asked Hope to explain how she negotiates being a Black woman in a predominantly White training context, her response revealed her mother's role in shaping her views about identity as a Black woman:

I had a mom who was extremely, extremely open with me and honest about the discrimination that I would experience and so when I did face it, I knew exactly what it was.

Hope's response, similar to Faith's, revealed the candid nature in which her family discussed racial issues and primed her to be prepared for discrimination as a Black woman in predominantly White spaces. As a natural extension of the discussion about familial influences on their subjective reality about race and ethnicity, the participants also described their own racial identity development. The women in this study talked both specifically and broadly about the ways that their development in this area influenced their work as multiculturally competent clinicians.

1b. Individual racial identity development. Each of the women referenced the ways that they navigate their subjective experience of race/ethnicity based on interactions with the dominant culture in a predominantly White training context. The depth or specificity that these women identified their own racial identity development varied from participant to participant but emerged as a parallel process with respect to development of multicultural competence during their training. Lexi referenced her racial identity development very specifically and mentioned a prominent researcher in the field of multicultural psychology as particularly influential:

So for me, the most salient part of my identity is my race. Helms' (1995) Black Racial Identity Development Model really resonates for me.

I followed up with Lexi's statement by asking her to describe the ways her racial identity development impacts her professional activities. Lexi explained that the source of empathy for clients who do not share her worldview shifts depending on where she was on Helms' (1995) People of Color Racial Identity Development Status Model on any given day:

So I could be at different points on that depending on the day. If I am having a particularly "Integrated" day, then it might be easier for me to find points of merging my worldview with the client's that may not be quite as well aligned with my own. If I am having more of an "Immersion" day, then I am probably looking for other points of empathy with the client if we have differing worldviews.

The Integrative Awareness Status that Lexi mentioned refers to her capacity to value her collective identities as well as empathize and collaborate with members of other oppressed groups (Helms, 1995). The Immersion/Emersion Status that Lexi identifies refers to her idealization of her own socio-racial group and disparagement for what she perceives as connected with the dominant culture (Helms, 1995). On days that she identifies being at this

status with respect to her racial identity, Lexi is likely to value her own commitment and loyalty to Black cultural experiences as opposed to expressions of empathy for those outside this frame of reference (Helms, 1995).

Although Lexi was the only participant to specifically identify Helms' (1995) model of racial identity development in reference to her subjectivities, each woman spoke about her racial identity development as influential in a broader capacity⁵. The ways in which the participants described their thoughts and feelings about events in their training revealed what Helms' (1995) termed Information-Processing Strategies that showcase similar shifts between Ego Statuses. During my interview with Courtney, she described the ways in which positive socialization experiences with her White classmates challenged her Immersion Status and pushed her racial identity development toward an Integrative Status (Helms, 1995). She stated:

Before [at an HBCU], I was surrounded by people who looked like me, thought like me and valued similar things as me, so at times, I wasn't challenged in terms of my own awareness and knowledge about things outside of the dimension of race and gender. Being at a PWI provided me with more exposure to people that were different than me across the board. I had conversations with people that were different than me in terms of culture and they challenged me in a way that I hadn't been before because they had a genuine desire to push me to the next level.

Courtney's reflection on the ways that her culturally different classmates challenged her showcased movement, similar to what Lexi described, from an Immersion Status to a more Integrated Status (Helms, 1995). She mentioned this developmental shift in her racial identity as

⁵ Helms' work in racial identity development is a key component of training in many Counseling psychology training programs. The work is considered foundational in multicultural counseling and therefore has broadly impacted the training of counseling psychology graduate students.

facilitated through challenge that also reflected a genuine interest in her growth. Exposure to classmates and clients with different cultural backgrounds proved to be an important catalyst for growth for many of the participants as they were challenged to confront their subjectivities as it relates to various social locations informing their salient identities. One such identity was primed by the participants' socioeconomic background. Specifically, women who identified a working-class background also acknowledged the ways in which this social status impacted their training experiences.

1c. Influence of socioeconomic status (SES). Several of the women interviewed in this study discussed how their SES, specifically those that identified a working-class background, informed their perspective as they entered doctoral training. An interesting dynamic that was revealed with this particular social location was the fluidity with which SES could shift for them as they gained more education and access. Natalie described this upward mobility during discussion of her most salient social identities:

For me, coming from a working-class, being Black and being a woman are the three identities that stood out the strongest, but have evolved over time. I might still struggle in some ways financially, but I am not working-class in the same way that I was growing up. I am referred to at work as "Dr. Natalie," so the way people look at me and speak and react to me has definitely shifted my working-class identity.

In addition to the evolving nature of the salience of a working-class identity, the women who endorsed this background described the ways in which this subjectivity initially impacted their ability to empathize with those who appeared financially privileged. During her interview, Alice described having to reconcile her working-class status with the access to privilege she saw some

of her White clients identify. According to Alice, this was done in an effort to be authentic in her role as therapist. She shared:

One of the things that I think was really important for me was, I come from a working-class background. I was the first person to go to college in my family and thus was the first person to go to graduate school. And so, I had a lot of my own stuff and a lot of assumptions. One was dealing with “privileged” White people and how to connect with clients who, in my opinion, were coming from very privileged backgrounds, which were very different from my experience.

While Alice discussed her SES related to her ability to provide competent care to individuals who seemed to have more economic capital than her, Brenda shared the impact of her working-class background on her ability to integrate her shifting economic status. During this discussion, Brenda also alluded to her perception of the relationship between social class and education:

So, in my own identity I was always trying to work on my tendency to compartmentalize because I was raised very working-class. Now that I have this Ph.D. and throughout that process being a first-generation college graduate and the first person to get a doctorate, how do I merge those two worlds? That’s something I have been trying to work on personally and I feel like I have come to that place a little bit better.

Brenda discussed the ways in which she had to work against compartmentalizing her salient identities in predominantly White training contexts in what she later described as an attempt to accomplish genuineness with her clients. Her discussion revealed the impact that the actual training environment had on her subjectivities. She identified two separate worlds she learned to navigate, one being her background from a working-class family and the other the environment

in which she sought higher education. Several women in the study identified their prior educational environments as important to their self-awareness, particularly those women who identified matriculation through a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) before entering their predominantly White training programs in counseling psychology.

1d. Previous educational experiences at an HBCU. Many women in the current study described obtaining an undergraduate and/or master's degree at an HBCU as a particularly important component of their subjectivities before beginning work towards their Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology. There were myriad positive experiences within the HBCU training context, including being academically exposed to an Afrocentric worldview, interaction with influential Black faculty and educational experiences that emphasized within group similarities as a source of pride, particularly in the face of a racist dominant White culture. There were also some unfortunate negative consequences as a result of this within group focus, particularly related to each woman's adjustment to a predominantly White Institution or program after matriculation through an HBCU. Whether they contributed positively or posed a challenge for acclimation to dominant culture interactions, the educational experiences at an HBCU all contributed to the subjectivities of the participants who shared exposure to an HBCU education in common.

Lexi described her prior training at an HBCU as a formal introduction to the notion that her identity as a Black person would impact how other's viewed her aptitude. She indicated that she was able to transfer this knowledge and self-awareness into her training experiences later during doctoral training at a PWI:

I think there is more to prove in a predominantly White context; there is less [intellectual] competence assumed. I went to an HBCU for undergrad and there

was that understanding that came from being at that undergraduate institution. I took those lessons with me, which created certain awareness once I was at a predominantly White institution for graduate school.

Lexi's HBCU experience prepared her for the possibility of being invalidated in a predominantly White context. For Lou, her prior education at both the undergraduate and master's level at an HBCU focused specifically on an Afrocentric view of psychology and gave her a similar intellectual understanding. However, this prior academic training did not prepare her for the emotional toll of invalidation in a predominantly White context. She described her internal response after entering a predominantly White internship setting and being insulted by a White male colleague, who was also an intern, who was frustrated that she would not take notes for him during a presentation:

He wanted to talk afterwards as to why I said no to him. He was like, "I was really perplexed; I didn't think it was that big of a deal, I asked you." And I said, "I said no multiple times already." And he asked me, "Why did you say no?" and I told him, "I am not your secretary!" And so he apologized and then in the next breath he talked about how the Ku Klux Klan was rising up in the northeast. I mean... I didn't even get how that fit into the conversation.

I asked Lou to continue to reflect on how she felt after that shocking interaction with her White male colleague. She explained how her previous education at an HBCU played into her understanding of racism, but how it could not prepare her for exposure to bigotry in a setting that espoused multicultural competence.

I went through a master's program at an HBCU where all they talked about was Afrocentricity. I learned about race and racism and prejudice and all that. It was

very frustrating that I could not control myself in spite of my prior knowledge. I learned about all of this so you would think I would expect some of this, but I didn't because I was never in an environment like that, so when it finally hit me, I was frustrated with myself a lot. What it did for me was I didn't feel comfortable in environments where the proportion of Black people to White people was not close to even. Whenever we would have to come together as a group, I would be anxious and I was angry and I didn't feel like I had control of my emotions.

While Lou identified her prior training at an HBCU as an overall positive immersion experience, it made her transition into a predominantly White training setting emotionally exhausting as she was exposed to blatant disrespect from a White student that appeared to be racially motivated. Through her own description, Lou explained that she entered each interaction thereafter bracing herself for the possibility of another affront. Each woman who identified a background educational experience at an HBCU also identified difficulty transitioning into a predominantly White program. Dane's unique training experience in a predominantly White training program in counseling psychology housed within an HBCU further highlighted the complexity of navigating these dichotomous training environments.

Dane stated that while her doctoral program was comprised of over 75% White faculty and students, it was housed within an HBCU. She discussed one of the many ironies she experienced in this context, as faculty seemed to have an expectation that she help her White colleagues in their development, seemingly without regard to her direct needs:

I had to keep reminding these White students that while they were at an HBCU, they were not in a HBCU program; they were in a predominantly White program. I was often told to be more understanding of the unique position the White

students were in at an HBCU because they struggle in an attempt to fit in. I was like why are we expected to do that when we are not given that luxury when we go to a PWI? I wanted some equity and we were never going to find that. I was so sick of hearing, “You help them.” These White teachers were looking at these White students, saying “Oh, these poor children! Maybe you Black students, because you know how to do this, maybe you can help them?” I didn’t really have time for that; I was sick of it. I was being told to sidestep my own stuff to help these people feel comfortable because *their* situation was unique.

Dane seemed to be shocked by the notion that she should help White students navigate predominantly Black spaces, although these White students were buffered by the predominantly White program dynamics. Dane was exasperated by the notion that she take on the extra responsibility of helping her White colleagues when this luxury was not provided to her during prior training at a PWI. The notion of taking on extra responsibilities emerged as a theme for the women in this study, regardless of prior education in a HBCU. This extra work was noted particularly in comparison to their White counterparts who may have felt more “at home” in the predominantly White training context.

1e. The “work harder” narrative. The twelve women in this study consistently described a belief that, as Black women in a predominantly White country, they must work twice as hard as their White counterparts to achieve their goals/success. I labeled this theme the “work harder” narrative to reflect the burden of this extra responsibility in that no matter how hard these women worked, they felt as though they must always work harder. This notion was often rooted during the socialization process within the family of origin, as a result of experiences informed by a working-class background, during the development of their own racial identity development

and/or during prior training at an HBCU. Lexi describes her earliest exposure to the notion that she must work twice as hard because her Black racial/ethnic identity excluded her from access to certain privileges:

It was just explicitly stated at various points in undergrad, that you will have to do more, you will have to work harder as a Black person because of the privilege that comes with Whiteness.

While Lexi explained the work harder narrative in the context of White privilege, other participants identified the narrative as a means to offset negative stereotypes about Black people in general, particularly the label of being lazy or shiftless, by working harder. Ironically, by working harder, Deborah may have been reinforcing more positive stereotypes about Black women regarding their strength and resiliency. Deborah described the early origins of her exposure to the work harder narrative. She also introduces the disappointing notion that working double-time as a Black person usually means that she is still only half as successful as her White counterparts:

For me, even if I think back to college and high school, it is always about being more than I presume they think I am. I assume that all White folks think that I don't deserve to be where I am. For good or for bad, it's always just the premise that I operate from, so it is that "John Henry-ism," that striving, "Strong Black Woman" narrative that is always at play. You know, work ten times harder to get half as far kind of a deal.

Deborah, much like many of the other women in the study, took the idea that she must work twice as hard to get access to a fraction of the privilege of her White colleagues as a natural consequence of navigating a predominantly White training space reflective of the dominant

culture in the U.S. While the women regarded the work harder narrative as a result of the intersection of their identities, there were at least two components informing this shared experience. In Dane's example, she was encouraged to work harder in order to take care of the White students in her program, while her needs regarding study in a predominantly White space were not readily acknowledged or attended to by others. In addition to this external expectation to acclimate to the status quo, there was an internalized component to the work harder narrative for the Black women in this study. Deborah's explanation offered both an explicit and implicit endorsement of the narrative as she openly acknowledged her tendency to work harder due to the assumption that White people didn't believe she deserved her position as well as her belief that she must put forth an extra effort in order to gain access to half the success of her White counterparts. In some cases, perhaps as an attempt to find a positive attribute associated with the work harder narrative, many participants endorsed an initial belief at the start of their doctoral training in counseling psychology that they were inherently endowed with more awareness because of their unique cultural experiences as compared to their White colleagues. This assumption of more cultural awareness seemed to naturally inform an early belief that, as Black women, they were ascribed an inherent understanding related to all experiences of diversity.

1f. Initial belief in inherent multicultural competence due to identity as a Black woman.

Many participants described a belief, as they started doctoral training, that they were inherently multiculturally competent by virtue of their identification as a racial/ethnic minority. Participants who acknowledged this sentiment usually discussed this belief within minutes of the start of the interview. Courtney and Lou highlighted this trend as they described their concept of multicultural competence. When I asked Courtney to share her current definition of multicultural

competence, her response revealed an initial belief that her social identities provided access to a deeper understanding of the ways that cultural issues played out for her clients. She stated:

To be fair, at the beginning of my training I am not sure I thought about my multicultural competence in the same way as I do now. I may have assumed that I was competent just based on my racial and gender identities alone. I thought that I had ample awareness about issues that affected cultural minorities, especially being a racial and gender minority.

Lou echoed Courtney's sentiment as she described a similar assumption of multicultural competence based on her prior training. When I asked Lou about her definition of multicultural competence at the start of her doctoral training, she said:

When I thought about multiculturalism during this stage in my training, I thought about African Americans as the token group and a pseudonym for diversity. I thought that I had some advantage or some prior knowledge in that aspect of multiculturalism.

Courtney and Lou's commentary on their initial beliefs about ascribed multicultural competence was reflective of the experience of several women in the study. The assumption of ascribed cultural competence caused both isolation and disconnection from clients. Specifically, these women described feeling isolated from White and/or male clients and disconnected from female clients of color who did not label their racial/ethnic and gender identities as particularly salient. Deborah shared her reaction after being confronted with her assumption of heterogeneity with a Black female client. The woman was significantly older than Deborah and had an extensive and heartbreaking trauma history. After a few months of work with Deborah, the client asked to be transferred specifically to a White therapist. Deborah shared her response:

I was shocked and confused. I assumed that the scarcity of Black therapists would mean that Black clients would be excited to work with a Black clinician. For me, it became about understanding the client's experience. All of the client's doctors at that point had always been White and they had provided her with the best care. The client was more comfortable with them, but there was a racial identity component for the client in that a young, seemingly healthy Black woman was reflecting all of the things that the client was not. It was difficult for the client to be vulnerable with someone who looked like her, but seemed to have a very different lived experience. I recognized my acquired privilege and the responsibility I had to address my power as a perceived authority. It also caused me to understand my Black clients and myself as cultural beings. My interventions and advocacy began to be informed by clients' actual lived experiences, not my assumption of shared worldviews.

Deborah's experience of rejection from a Black female client shocked her and then forced her to recognize that she did not have an automatic inside track to this particular Black woman's experience. Dane provided another example of eventual awareness that the salience of her identity as a Black woman sometimes served as an impediment to understanding her clients' cultural experiences.

Sometimes I can be very aware of my identity as a Black woman and the space that may take up in my own life, but there are other times when my identity clouds my own vision about how to be multiculturally competent as a psychologist. Although I am a Black woman, two of the things that represent being a minority in this country, I realized during my training that I wasn't a

minority in terms of my religious orientation or my sexual orientation. I have to be more keenly aware of that. That awareness comes from spending time with my clients.

Dane's initial assumption that her marginalized/oppressed identities as a Black woman would be facilitative of connections with clients was challenged as she engaged in work with diverse individuals who identified the salience of marginalized identities that she did not share. During her work with these clients, Dane acknowledged a need to recognize her relative privileges in terms of her religious identity and sexual orientation. Dane's acknowledgement of her growth edges related to work with a full spectrum of marginalized identities is reflective of the same awareness in each participant in this study. As Deborah and Dane's experiences illustrated, the notion of inherent multicultural competence was eventually challenged during the educational experiences of each woman who identified this faulty belief. This challenge particularly related to her ability to provide multicultural competent care to individuals that did not share her most salient identities as a Black woman.

The twelve Black women interviewed consistently described working knowledge of their subjectivities related to their family of origin, racial identity development, prior education at an HBCU, SES background, and a work harder narrative. The awareness of these subjectivities often resulted in an initial assumption, before engaging in training in counseling psychology at the doctoral level, that they were inherently ascribed multicultural competence. This faulty preconceived notion was challenged during training, as were other expectations that these women held regarding study of counseling psychology in a predominantly White context. These challenges all seemed to facilitate continued growth and development.

Pre-Encounter Expectations of Training in Counseling Psychology. The culmination of many of the subjectivities identified by the women in this study (e.g., family of origin influences, racial identity development, SES, prior training at an HBCU, a work harder narrative, and belief in ascribed multicultural competence) led to several pre-encounter expectations about training in counseling psychology, specifically in a predominantly White program. From a critical race theory (CRT) perspective, these pre-encounter expectations included the expectation that the predominantly White space would be unsafe and discriminatory but also included expectations of faculty, particularly faculty of color, to offset these harsh realities. These expectations were informed by the aforementioned subjectivities and by belief that pursuit of a doctoral degree in the field of counseling psychology, with emphasis on multiculturally informed training and practice, would counter any of the systemic racism and/or gender bias they were often primed to face in a predominantly White environment. Charlie very candidly discussed this expectation when she described her search for a program in counseling psychology:

When I looked at my program's materials and the vision statement online, multicultural competence was one of the areas they emphasized. That's what they said they were about, so that was what I was expecting. My expectation was high.

While Charlie described her expectation at the programmatic level, Dane described her specific expectation for the only female faculty member of color as she worked to navigate her own personal and professional development:

There were so many things going on in terms of who I was professionally, but also personally. I wanted to stay true to myself, but there were times when I really didn't know who that self was. The only Black faculty member in my program appeared to have no time for helping me to navigate that. It was difficult to relate

to her, even though she looked like me. For as much as she appeared to be connected to Blackness, she felt too disconnected from the Black experience for me and became the person that I did not like. She looked like me, but that was it; she felt like *them*.

Dane later revealed, as did several participants, that she was never quite able to completely reconcile the disappointment of feeling let down by her faculty. She did however showcase throughout the interview how the experience shaped her multicultural development. Deborah provided a more explicit account of her expectations, as she had never had an educational experience with a Black teacher or professor before training at the doctoral level:

I was very excited because it was my first time having a formative educational experience with a Black educator. I expected the experience to be fantastic. I didn't realize the implicit expectation I had of my advisors to be excited, to provide mentorship and to pour into me everything that they knew.

Shortly after getting to know one of her advisors, a male faculty member of color, Deborah described being disappointed because he was not "warm and fuzzy" and did not affirm her in the ways that she expected:

Two weeks into the semester, I literally hated being at my doctoral university. I cried every day for a month. I felt like I had made a big mistake, like I had chosen the wrong program.

Deborah called a meeting with her advisor to tell him she felt unsupported. In that meeting, Deborah's male faculty of color told her that graduate school was not a democracy and that she did not have equal say or an equal voice. He told her it was important for her to recognize that

things will not look the way she expected them to look. Deborah explained her response to this statement:

I realized when I was asking for support, I was really asking for coddling, but the support that he was providing was really instrumental support for me to navigate the terrain that I was embarking on. He was going to set high expectations and he was going to let me fail to meet them and he wasn't going to change the expectation, which was a different experience than what I had with some of my other faculty. That was my first glimpse at really recognizing that advocacy looked different and that I was having a very different training experience than even his other [White] advisees.

Much like Deborah demonstrated after the confrontation of her expectations from her male faculty of color, many of the women indicated that they came to a retrospective realization that their expectations were unrealistic and in some cases served as an impediment to their own growth. The women who reached this awareness noted how influential these confrontations of their pre-encounter expectations of their faculty were to their developmental process. This awareness would set the stage for their openness during other significant confrontations later in their training. Each challenge to unrealistic expectations and faulty assumptions appeared to motivate the women to be more attentive to their respective multicultural competence developmental process. While this attentiveness was often an internal process, as the women prepared to enter their predominantly White context, an external assessment of their environment became necessary.

2. Assessment of Safety within the Predominantly White Institution. The participants in this study described an ongoing assessment of their safety during the application and interview

processes as well as upon entry into their respective predominantly White training environment. Safety, according to these Black women, referred to protection from or the absence of the emotional, psychological and occupational consequences of real and perceived racism. As earlier participant quotes have demonstrated, many of the women described an assumption that their predominantly White institution would be unsafe and/or would discriminate against them based on the intersection of their identities as Black women. This assumption was informed by their subjectivities and reinforced by their lived experiences. The women in this study described specifically applying to programs in counseling psychology because of the field's espoused value and commitment to diversity. The participants' assessment of safety, in this context, occurred as they attempted to balance the assumption that they would be treated unfairly due to their race/ethnic and gender identities in PWIs with the expectation that their specific programs in counseling psychology would spare them from that reality.

During the assessment process, participants described evaluating several program dynamics, including determination of the proposed and actual flexibility of each environment to opposing worldviews. Lexi demonstrated this type of assessment as she compared the receptivity of two separate practical training environments, both of which were predominantly White:

I think the degree to which individual cultural expression is allowed depends on the agency. While my first practicum placement espoused a multicultural viewpoint, in practice, it was very much dominant culture oriented and I think that was implicitly understood. In contrast, my practicum at the women's center allowed much more room for varying worldviews and then therapy practices that flowed from those worldviews. At the women's center, there was a way in which the viewpoints of that diverse staff were attended to and respected in a more equal

way than they were at the counseling center. At the counseling center, I think if a viewpoint didn't fit into the rigid, traditional way of doing things then it really wouldn't have been considered.

While Lexi's assessment was offered retrospectively, it demonstrated the way in which she critically examined and predicted how inclusive and/or accommodating her training environments would be to individual cultural expression. It is important to note that Lexi's evaluation was not limited to a determination of how open the space was to her worldview specifically, but rather to how open the training environment was to nontraditional points of view in general.

Another way the assessment of safety occurred for the participants in this study included observation of other students of color in the training environment. Specifically some of the women described assessing whether or not students of color seemed to be progressing successfully through the program. Hope demonstrated this type of evaluation as she described her observations at the start of her doctoral training:

One thing that stood out immediately was recognizing how many African Americans and non-White students came through my program. Mind you, my program had cohorts that were anywhere between four and six students and you might see one African American or one person that was Middle Eastern in each one. I remember looking at the demographics of who was actually making it out of the program. It became apparent to me very early on who wasn't passing the preliminary and comprehensive exams the first time. I thought it was interesting that African Americans and our Middle Eastern students were not passing these exams; what did that mean? What would it mean if there were some other ways to

evaluate students with different learning styles, backgrounds and forms of expression? I just thought it was interesting that they had such a narrow way of qualifying how competent students are in a field that talks about the importance of diverse ways of analyzing, understanding and even measuring competence.

Hope's assessment revealed a critical examination of students of color in her program as well as a critical questioning of the seeming lack of commitment to multiculturally informed treatment of students undoubtedly implied by her counseling psychology program.

As the women in this study concluded their assessments of safety within their predominantly White program, many of them expressed awareness of a subtle expectation of them as cost of admittance to the historically racially segregated space. Dane described the anxiety she experienced related to the weight of this unspoken expectation:

I felt this obligation to make good on some kind of promise because they were reminding me of my being a Black woman and what that meant. I started to feel like I owed them something. Like I was obligated to live up to some ideal because I didn't want to disappoint them. It caused a lot of anxiety. I felt like I had to talk "right" and walk "right" and there was a certain look, a certain way of being that had to go with that because if these White teachers are believing in you, then you have to do some shucking and jiving or something for them to keep believing in you. I don't want to sound all negative, but there is a level of burden of being Black and being an academic, when you are trying to be the best of Black people.

Dane described that the weight of the expectation she felt to "be the best of Black people" in a predominantly White space resulted in a constant state of anxiety that other women in the study also acknowledged. I asked Rebecca specifically about this tension and if she was resultantly

mindful about the way she presented herself as a Black woman in predominantly White training contexts. She explained:

I subconsciously do that. I think that I know there are certain things I can't get away with as a Black woman. Overall, I would withhold my opinion about certain things because I didn't know how it would be received. It was just like, "I don't want to get in trouble."

As Rebecca reflected on avoiding trouble as a motivation to blend in as best she could to her predominantly White training context, she simultaneously alluded to a theme that was revealed throughout the interviews. As the women considered the results of their assessment of safety in their programs, they discussed to what extent they felt the need to subdue certain characteristics of their most salient identities. This idea serendipitously came up in multiple interviews as "playing the game."

"Playing the game." The women in this study consistently identified a need to compromise or subdue certain characteristics of their most salient identities in order to successfully navigate their education in predominantly White training environments. Navigating their programs in an effort to circumvent negative consequences constituted "the game" for these women and often began as the result of some form of rejection based on their racial/ethnic identity, even before beginning a doctoral program in counseling psychology. Courtney described an interaction during her master's level education in a predominantly White context that precipitated her conscious awareness of the need to subdue aspects of her personality that may have been perceived as too "assertive." She said:

I was part of a research project that required me to do interviews in the community with various people of different backgrounds. I remember one

incident when I went to the home of someone who identified as a White, Jewish female. She had an immediate reaction to me when I got there and actually made a call to the principal investigator requesting that someone else be sent to interview her. When she was questioned about the basis of her discomfort, the gist of it was that she was uncomfortable with the race and assertiveness of her interviewer. The fact that she made a correlation between my racial identity and that part of my presentation made me recognize that other people might make that same connection. I did find myself at times after that being really conscious and aware of how I was presenting myself because I didn't want that to happen again. Logically I knew there was nothing that I did wrong and that there was nothing that I could do to make someone more comfortable with me based on my race or gender, but I did find myself becoming more of a self-monitor and that felt really uncomfortable for me. I can't even pretend like there weren't times were I questioned myself and whether or not I needed to hide parts of my identity and who I was.

Courtney described her reaction to being rejected by a research participant due to her race/ethnicity as an internal analysis of whether or not to bring herself fully into various predominantly White training contexts. Deborah similarly described how she and several of her Black female classmates learned to play the game as they witnessed the difficulties other Black women were experiencing in the program. She explained:

There was some Black female colleagues who were in the cohort above us having a really difficult time in the program with faculty and with their peers. I think we were all really mindful of that. I recognized that I couldn't get out of the program

without several signatures, so I couldn't go burning bridges with White faculty. I recognized that I need you all to sign off on some things and if you hate me, that's going to be a much more difficult task for me to navigate, because you have the power to make my life hell because I was watching them do it to other Black women. I learned to play the game.

Deborah described learning to play the game as she witnessed the difficulties her Black female counterparts endured. Through her account, Deborah showcased her conceptualization of these difficulties as based on her colleagues' race and gender and how she worked to avoid these pitfalls as best she could in order to get her White faculty to "sign off" on various programmatic requirements. While Courtney and Deborah described when and how they became acquainted with "the game," other participants revealed their understanding of the rules for the game as they navigated predominantly White training environments as Black women.

The politics of hair. The women in this study revealed that playing the game required strategic calculations of when and how to suppress physical and emotional characteristics that would draw attention to their race in predominantly White spaces. One of the physical attributes that many participants described altering was their hair. Both Natalie and Hope identified this process as "the politics of hair." Natalie defined and described the political landscape of Black women's hair in a predominantly White context:

One [component of playing the game] that jumps right out to me is the personal one and that is the politics of hair; there are so many layers to that. I think specific for me is this internalization of what a professional Black woman is *supposed* to look like and that contributed to me not feeling comfortable to be naked with my hair. When I went on internship interviews, even when I initially interviewed for

my program, there was a certain frame of reference about what was acceptable and what was not that was internalized before I even walked in the door. And it was validated because people would compliment my hair when I wore extensions, you know? I definitely made sure that, even though I wore a lot of micros [braids] when I was in graduate school, I knew that I wouldn't have those micros in my hair when I went to an APA conference, for instance. I think that was because of a lot of messages that were internalized about what that might mean.

Natalie's account provided a description of how she managed the politics of hair as a means to play the game once she was accepted into her predominantly White program. Hope shared a similar process as she and another Black female colleague prepared to enter doctoral training at a PWI:

We both got interviews to the same program and we both had the same exact question, "What are you going to do with your hair?" It was a big question: "Are you going to straighten it?" We want to get in this doctoral program, so are you going to go up there with your natural hair, or are you going to straighten your hair?" I remember us going back and forth, "Maybe we can straighten it just for the occasion and then once we get our foot in the door, we can wear it back natural again."

As Hope continued her description, she revealed that she ultimately decided to straighten her hair for the interview and that her colleague did not. Hope was then invited to study at the institution; her colleague was not. She explained:

Deciding to straighten my hair was done strategically and politically because I didn't know whether or not I would be rejected and harmed by not doing it. I

navigate any predominantly White professional space by asking myself, “How are they expecting me to show up?” I think of it more so from how I enter until I have gained enough capital to be able to navigate this space without being harmed. I am going to at least get my foot in the door. They are expecting, for you to be successful in this space, that you look stereotypically White. So Whites describe professionalism as “neatly groomed.” I know what Whites mean by “neatly groomed” and it doesn’t mean an Afro. It means you wear your hair tailored to fit into this culture, this context. And so, I did that because it prevented me from having another unnecessary hurdle to climb over to get into a space that already wasn’t designed for me. That space is not really designed for my Blackness; we look at the numbers and we see that we are not who that space is designed for. So, if I already know that I am at a disadvantage walking in undeniably Black, then let me do as much as I can to reduce any other distractions that will prevent you from seeing past my Blackness and seeing my ability to navigate this program.

Hope very candidly described how her hair became a political asset or a casualty, depending on the way that she chose to play the game. Another theme that emerged related to navigation of predominantly White contexts, or playing the game, involved avoidance of stereotypical behavior deemed as possible impediments to success. One of these stereotypes was the trope of the “Angry Black Woman.”

Avoiding the angry Black woman. Several of the women in this study described their attempts to avoid appearing angry as a means to play the game, and remain safe in their predominantly White programs. These Black women consistently stated that appearing to be emotionless, even when feelings of anger were justified, became a means to avoid undue

stigmatization that could potentially threaten their safety in the program. Deborah described the way that she avoided the Angry Black Woman stereotype at the expense of confronting ignorant comments made by her White and/or privileged classmates:

Those of us who identify as underrepresented have to just take some of the comments made by our peers. You just deal with it; you don't necessarily challenge them because I think the reputation was that when you do you get cast in the program as angry, this angry Black woman who is difficult to work with.

Alice described how avoiding the reputation of being angry as a Black woman required her to also avoid raising awareness for classmates who may not understand how or why their comments were problematic. Alice described the way she also avoided this stereotype as a means to play the game:

I silenced myself. I did not speak up for myself. I did not challenge racist, sexist and classist comments. I did not do that because I didn't want to come off as this angry Black woman. I was really trying to figure out how to navigate that stereotype and I don't think that I did it in the best way. I later came to learn that what it took to be a good therapist was authenticity.

As she reflected on her training experiences, Alice recognized that her attempts to avoid being typecast as the Angry Black Woman impeded her ability to gain access to a powerful tool as a psychologist: authenticity. It became clear during the interviews that each participant's ability to play the game contributed to their ability to navigate their predominantly White context with as little disturbance to the status quo as possible. While this helped them to feel safe in these contexts, it appeared to be at the expense of their own professional and personal growth.

The assessment of safety for the Black women in this study involved several common evaluations including examination of the predominantly White training environments' openness to subordinate worldviews as well as appraisal of other students of color progression through their respective programs. As the participants critically considered these elements and found the training environment unsafe, it created significant levels of anxiety for these women as they acknowledged feeling beholden to the institution for granting them access to a historically segregated space. In an attempt to assuage this anxiety, several women described a need to play the game. This process for the Black women in this study entailed subduing physical characteristics and avoiding negative stereotypes often attributed to them in an effort to complete their training with as little difficulty as possible. As the women continued to describe their commitment to playing the game, an interesting dynamic was revealed in that silencing themselves and subduing their personal characteristics cost them their authenticity, a valuable professional tool as a psychologist. As the interviews progressed, each woman in the study described a disquieting event that inevitably forced them to be real with themselves, even as they felt that they could not be real with others in their predominantly White training spaces.

External Event- The Confrontation of Biases. Between the Assessment of Safety within the Predominantly White Environment and the third step in the Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black women in PWIs or Programs, the women in this study consistently described the occurrence of an external disquieting event that disarmed the game and challenged the women to authentically examine a faulty belief or assumption. In many cases, the assumption held by each participant posed a threat to her professional integrity, but was not easily demonstrated as commitment to playing the game often prevented the vulnerability required for other's to see, much less challenge, said assumption. The Confrontation of Biases for these

women were instigated by myriad events in both their professional and personal lives and entailed being confronted about various prejudices. The participants described being challenged by their clients, colleagues, faculty and/or clinical supervisors. Courtney shared a career altering confrontation of her biases after her White female client made a startling admission near the end of their first session together:

The client sat back down and looked me straight in my eye and said, “I am racist.” Even now, I talk about that as being a really powerful and significant moment for me in my personal development and obviously in my multicultural development. I think that my initial reaction was of course to be offended and taken aback and unsure about if I wanted to work with this person who was clearly sharing something that could be a hindrance in our relationship. My second reaction was to explore what it was like for her to share that with me, and then what it would be like for us to work together. I saw her [as a client] for probably a year and a half after that, and up to this day, we had one of the richest therapeutic experiences that I have had with any client. Her willingness to be forthright about something that she wasn’t necessarily proud of but something that was real to her, challenged me to think about her experiences differently. It also challenged me to take my development to another level.

Courtney’s experience with a White client, willing to admit her racism against Black people to her Black therapist, was a game changer for Courtney. She was challenged to reflect on the experience and determine if and/or how she might grow from her client’s admission. Lou discussed a similar choice after being confronted by a classmate regarding her previously held homophobic views:

I don't think I was as open to work with the LGBTQ community. I struggled a lot with my classmates who were open to it, so we would go back and forth about it and I remember saying something that I regret because now I have grown in awareness and have more understanding. But we were going back and forth and I said, "People can choose to not treat a pedophile, why can't I chose not to treat someone who identifies as LGBT?" To compare the two in my head back then...now I think about it and I am like that was stupid as hell! But I got caught up in my on thinking that this identity wasn't right or proper."

I asked Lou what happened next.

My classmate lost her mind. She lost it! She was like, "Oh my God!" She went off. It told me that my thinking wasn't right. Another classmate that witnessed the exchange talked to me immediately afterwards too. She was like, "I know that you feel this way, but think about it. This is what you did when you said this. Just think about it."

Lou's confrontation by two classmates brought her unflinchingly close to her own biased views. Much in the way Courtney described being disarmed by her client, Lou's classmates implored her to critically examine her homophobia and placed Lou at a critical decision point regarding continued growth in multicultural competence and awareness.

Many of the women in this study recounted similar confrontations at pivotal points in their training in counseling psychology. These confrontations caused the women to examine the beliefs that posed a threat to their professional integrity and their own multicultural competence. As demonstrated in the experiences of Courtney and Lou, after the Confrontation of Biases each woman that identified this external event was presented a proverbial pause button on the game as

they were given an opportunity to critically examine their biased opinions. They were challenged to decide whether or not to accommodate the new information and abandon their biases, or to push play and resume the game.

3. Accommodation of New Information. After the Confrontation of Biases, many participants identified their own growth edges but still had to determine whether or not to act as if they had changed their biased views and continue to play the game, potentially subverting the development of their own multicultural competence, or if they would adjust their worldviews in order to accommodate the new information. During the aforementioned confrontation of Courtney's biases, she was faced with a decision about how to respond to her White client's admission that she was racist. Courtney described her internal process shortly after the confrontation:

I had to put my awareness and knowledge about the impact of racism and oppression, not only on the oppressed, but also on the oppressor, and view that in my work with my client. It made me want to work harder at recognizing my own blind spots and also at being forthright about them because I can't imagine how scary that was for her to say that to me. It wasn't something that she was proud of or excited about, but she did it anyway and I just felt like, if she could do that in a way that was so genuine, and being competent is something that we are proud of and talk about all the time in our field, why can't I acknowledge my own limitations and shortcomings and then pledge to work on them?

Courtney's confrontation ultimately challenged her to demonstrate the same boldness as her client with respect to her own biases. Courtney recognized during this exchange, that the consequences for continuing to hide her limitations posed the largest threat to her budding

professional identity and multicultural competence. Lou had a similar decision to make regarding confrontation of her homophobic views after an empathetic classmate explained why Lou's views served to impede her professional growth and challenged her to "really think" about her misguided opinion. Lou described how she responded to her classmate's intervention:

And it was through that conversation that I started to open up. I was like, "Well clearly this is not how I want to represent myself; there is something wrong with the way that I am thinking about this." That experience challenged me to become more open about learning about the LGBTQ community. It was through that experience that I allowed myself to be open and to confront my own issues with it. She didn't make me feel like I was a monster, even though when I look back at the experience, I think I was a monster.

Lou's experience revealed her willingness to be vulnerable with her classmate had opened her up to authentically confront her own faulty beliefs. Lou later described several instances, after this event in her training, in which she constantly pushed herself to confront her own biases through a willingness to be vulnerable and honest about her limitations. This commitment was demonstrated, even in her decision to share the shameful experience with me as researcher and potential judge of her moral and professional character. Both Courtney and Lou exhibited the results of accommodating new information and subsequently making a move towards actively altering the data informing their subjective experiences.

4. Adjustment of Subjectivities. After the women in this study made the decision to accommodate new information regarding their biases, they then took active steps to adjust their previously held beliefs. This, the Adjustment of Subjectivities, is the fourth step in the process of multicultural competence development for Black women in this study and reflects the actions the

participants described taking in an effort to acquire new knowledge and awareness that would then inform their skill development. Courtney described the process that she engaged as she made the decision to accommodate the new information she gained after being challenged by her client's surprising admission that she was racist:

I continued to challenge myself past the domain of awareness and into thinking about how I am putting my awareness into practice. Even up to this point, that's where I continue to challenge myself, by asking: What kinds of beliefs and values did I have that may be contrary to the idea of competence? What does it mean to *me* to be a multiculturally competent practicing clinician? What does that look like in each area of my practice? What areas do I still need to challenge myself in terms of my awareness and knowledge about various domains of multiculturalism?

Courtney's questions revealed an internal cycle in which she constantly pushed herself to consider the ways in which her practice as a psychologist shifts with advanced knowledge and awareness. Charlie described reliance on external, more concrete methods to adjust her subjectivities. She stated:

I wanted to know more, to learn more and to immerse myself in information, experiences, knowledge. I think that year I did a conference at an HBCU focused on students who were aspiring to become mental health professionals. I think I also did a conference on Black women in academia. I also took a course that helped me to understand who I am as a Black woman and how to navigate those identities in these United States of America. It took my idea of my identity, what I am and what I wanted to do, to a whole other level.

Charlie described the ways that she internalized her experiences at professional conferences geared specifically towards topics that represented her most salient identities to inform her subjective experience. Brenda also sought external professional development in an effort to reconcile intersections of her most salient identities:

I had to work through a lot of my own demons and figure out and trust that I had something important to say, but that took therapy; that took grappling with the survivor's guilt of leaving my working-class roots behind and what that means now that I have a Ph.D. in this context and how I have both pieces of my identity still hold true.

In addition to seeking her own therapy, Brenda also discussed several other activities that were important in the adjustment to her subjectivities:

When I think back to what were turning points and important moments in the development of my multicultural competence, it would also be connecting with other Black women professionals and doing a lot of African American outreach at my practicum site. Then on internship something that I really valued was this much more intentional way of integrating issues around culture and diversity throughout training experiences; it was constant and I appreciated that as a way of thinking. Cultural context is always relevant, not just for one hour on Fridays when we do the diversity talk, but all the time. That is what I appreciated too, that helped me grow and that also helped me check my own biases.

Brenda described the importance of connection with other Black women, both in her collegial relationships as well as with her clients as important catalysts for her growth. She added the importance of critical professional conversations about the relevance of culture that went beyond

cursory discussions, as particularly influential. Similarly, Natalie described the ways in which critical thinking and being active in professional development activities designed to challenge her thinking were instrumental for her:

What I realized is that part of my identity as a growing professional was being able to present, travel and connect with people. Also, doing research and doing literature reviews to stay up on current events. I also initiate tough conversations with people who are not psychologists or trainees and this is important for my development as well. Being able to talk about microaggressions with people who are on my research team and study microaggressions is one thing, being able to talk about them with people who are not psychologists who study it is another thing. Being able to talk about it with my cousin who is going to “blah, blah, blah” me, but who also has a stake in this is a whole other thing and all of them are important.

Natalie’s ability to take her role outside of the professional context and incorporate it in her personal life through conversations with her family is an important component of the adjustment of subjectivities. Her actions demonstrated the ways in which she took ownership in raising her own awareness and the consciousness of those that she loved.

As demonstrated by the participant reflections above, personal initiative is a necessary component in the Adjustment of Subjectivities. While being exposed to programmatic attempts to confront biases may also be important components of multicultural competency training in general, for the women in this study, making the decision to find tools for growth that worked with their personal styles seemed to be necessary and more sustainable over time. The women during this phase of the process also demonstrated an expansion of consciousness related to

multicultural related issues. Indicators of this process included disruption of the status quo by active engagement at the individual, community and system levels. The engagement in multicultural/diversity related issues in a manner that goes well beyond professional responsibilities. It demonstrated a personal embodiment of the importance and all-encompassing nature of multicultural competence. This notion is explored more fully in the final step in the process of multicultural competence development as revealed by the women in this study.

5. Adoption of an Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence. As participants described the multiple ways in which they sought training opportunities and personal experiences to facilitate the adjustment of their subjectivities, they also demonstrated an awareness of the dynamic nature of multicultural competence. Namely, these women indicated that they no longer felt as though they inherently possessed multicultural competence because of their identity as Black women, but that this set of skills required constant work to attain new levels of self-awareness and knowledge. With this new understanding, the women in this study each indicated an adoption of an aspirational view of multicultural competence. Participants acknowledged the notion that multicultural competence was a journey, not a destination at this point in their development. They also discussed an openness/vulnerability to new experiences that facilitated further personal and professional growth. Dane described the manner in which she compartmentalized her awareness related to multicultural competence before she adopted an aspirational view and compared it to the openness she now has:

If I had a White, gay or Hispanic client before I reached this point in my development, I could relate to that person and help that person, but I never looked at them in terms of the whole, the totality of what that meant, until I had all of those experiences and I was able to be more open. That openness became

something that now is a part of who I am. When I speak about injustice or about sexual orientation now, it is something that I believe and not what I was taught to believe. It's like a part of the fabric of who I am now. So when I have discussions about feminism with people in my family and they hear me, and they say that I am different, it's not something that I feel like I am ashamed of. Now I don't mind being told by people in my life that I am different because I feel like that is what I am supposed to be. I am not just talking that thing we were taught or that I read about. I am walking that thing. I don't think that I would have come to that had I not had all of the weird, strange, odd, beautiful, ugly experiences that I had leading up to this.

Dane's description of her new level of multicultural competence showcased that she incorporates her knowledge, skills and awareness in every area of her life. She also retrospectively demonstrated an appreciation for all of the difficult components of her training in a predominantly White program as she recognized the utility of the experiences she had in this context towards her own growth and development. In addition to the openness that Dane described, many women at this step in the process also incorporated value in social justice engagement at the systemic level as a natural extension of their ongoing development in multicultural competence. During my interview with Brenda, she described the ways in which she was naturally drawn to grassroots organizing, but explained that she did not see this proclivity as a natural extension of her role as a counseling psychologist until she was exposed to this professional responsibility at a national conference devoted to diversity related issues in psychology:

I went to my first Winter Roundtable in New York. In that conference I heard Beverley Tatum speak about the importance of social justice advocacy in our role as psychologists. She used a metaphor of a caged canary in a room being infiltrated with toxic fumes. The canary coughs, his feathers fall out and he is depressed, as he knows death is near. She said, if we take the current training model in counseling psychology, we would meet with the canary and try to encourage positive reframing of the circumstance and help him find fresh air, but what we need to be doing is stopping the toxic fumes all together.

Brenda described exactly how hearing this helped solidify the importance of an evolving definition of multicultural competence to include social justice advocacy:

Up until that point, my grassroots involvement felt really compartmentalized—I would go to class and learn those things, then I would go to my grassroots organizing social justice group and talk about system change – and it just didn't feel integrated until I heard her say that. Then it all connected to my multicultural competency training as I thought bigger and more about the concept. It is about how to work with people who are different from you, but I also see it as thinking critically about how we address oppressive systems in our role as psychologists.

Both Dane and Brenda's accounts represented the process of development for many women in the study. The participants consistently described a retrospective appreciation for their process of multicultural development in predominantly White spaces in spite of the challenges they faced. They also described active engagement in social change efforts at the systemic level.

Although each woman's developmental process was unique in that their specific areas for growth related to multiculturally competent care were different, the developmental course

appeared to unfold similarly for most of the women in this study. While this similarity was revealed throughout the progression of this study, it is important to note that there were some women who identified experiences that slightly deviated from the collective process.

Divergent Processes of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women

Many of the Black women in this study shared a similar progression related to the development of multicultural competence in their respective predominantly White training programs. However, there were several women who described points of diversion from the collective developmental course. Most frequently, the divergent process occurred if and when a confrontation of biases occurred at an earlier stage in training (prior to entry into a doctoral program in counseling psychology) and/or the confrontation brought the participant face-to-face with the biases of perceived authority figures as opposed to their own. Rebecca's experience of a confrontation with one of her faculty members during earlier training in a predominantly White program provides an example of both these circumstances.

I was alerted to the possibility of a divergent developmental process for Rebecca during the initial phase of the interview as she described that her definition of multicultural competence at the start of her doctoral training was very similar to the definition many of the women provided during the latter phases of their doctoral training. When I asked Rebecca to describe her definition of multicultural competence as she began training in counseling psychology, she stated:

For me, multicultural competency meant that you had a really good understanding of other people's culture and how that might manifest in their presentation. It also meant the ability to use that information in the approach that you took to working with the client. Basically knowing what pace you might be able to take with the

client based on what you might expect from their level of assimilation.

[Multicultural competence] also meant being able to think about what research says versus what that person's own cultural perspective might be and having the ability to balance the two.

I later asked Rebecca specifically if she had experienced an event that facilitated this seemingly advanced level of understanding at the start of her doctoral training. She described an event during her master's level training in which she was asked to write a paper in a family therapy course. Rebecca described the difficulty she had as she provided an honest account of her family's experiences from a cultural context that was not rooted in American values. She explained:

A lot of the people in my family, well the elders—the grandparents on each side of my family—passed away while I was a baby, so I never met them. So, the information that I was getting for my assignment was from my mother and was based off my own experience of my culture and my mother's recall. Overall, Ghanaians are very joyful people, very happy, welcoming, there is a strong sense of communalism, and they really try to support each other. That was my understanding and what my experience had been with my own culture. So, basically, I just wrote about how, yes, my grandfather had multiple wives, but everybody chipped in to take care of the children and there wasn't a lot of conflict and animosity amongst the women. But my teacher, when she graded it, she graded it very low and she commented that she didn't believe what I had written. It was not an open-ended conversation whatsoever; she was basically like, "Nope,

research on polygamy says that there is always conflict within the family.” She was not willing to hear my perspective at all.

Rebecca later shared that she fantasized about how she might resolve the pain she associated with this pivotal moment in her training. Her response demonstrated the ways in which that experience taught her to approach work with her clients. She said:

I thought about writing a letter to that instructor of the family therapy class, I would say, “You didn’t know this and I couldn’t tell you at the time, but now that I am done and earned my Ph.D., I can tell you that I think that what you said was very hurtful, it was disrespectful and it made me question a lot about therapists. It motivated me to be a different type of therapist who is empathic and understanding. While I think about empirical research, I also understand how important it is to recognize someone’s individual perspective and how that can go a very long way in establishing a relationship with your client and helping them through whatever issue that they come with. I wish you had done that with me.”

Rebecca described similar progress through the presented developmental model before and after this event, however there were some interesting and important points of departure. Specifically, Rebecca described a similar process at step one is this process, Awareness of Subjectivities, but likely due to this prior experience with her faculty member, and perhaps informed by her immediate west African cultural connection, her subjectivities did not culminate in an initial belief in her own multicultural competence due to her identity as a Black woman. She also avoided the pre-encounter expectations of egalitarian training in counseling psychology as she had been dismayed by her former professor’s display of ignorance despite this instructor’s supposed expertise in multicultural counseling. Rebecca did indicate that she too performed step

three in the developmental process presented, an Assessment of Safety, and that she also “played the game,” however she did not describe an external Confrontation of Biases. Resultantly, Rebecca did not reveal a specific account that indicated movement through the third and fourth steps of this process, Accommodation of New Information and Adjustment of Subjectivities. It is possible that Rebecca’s previous encounter stimulated the accommodation and adjustment phases during her master’s training and that by the start of her doctoral training, she had already fully integrated an aspirational view of multicultural competence, identified as the fifth and final step in the presented process.

I asked Rebecca to describe her own multicultural competency at the completion of her formal training in counseling psychology. Her response demonstrated a belief in the ongoing nature of development in this area that was similar to the other women in this study. She stated:

I have learned a lot more so it has been strengthened. I think that I have a broader understanding of multicultural issues, but I always think that you can never know enough. I think it is an ongoing process. I learned a lot more during my doctoral training and I think I am more knowledgeable, but there is always more to know.

Rebecca’s response aligned with many of the other women in this study as they adopted an aspirational view of multicultural competence. While Rebecca’s account of the professional training events that led to this level of awareness did not include a confrontation of her own biases, she was deeply confronted with the biases of an influential faculty member that both hurt and incensed her. As a result, Rebecca’s development of multicultural competence was not necessarily catalyzed through a confrontation of her own biases, but instead was borne of her professor’s mistreatment and Rebecca’s subsequent vow to never perpetrate the same offense towards others.

While Rebecca's experience was not the only one in this study that did not follow the same developmental course revealed by many of the women in this study, it does provide a full example representing within group differences. Through her example, it is clear that there are myriad subjectivities or events during training that are unique to the individual that could account for differences in the developmental process. In Rebecca's example, her cultural heritage as a Ghanaian woman and/or a prior training experience that prompted earlier progression through a similar process of multicultural development could potentially be at play. No matter the case, Rebecca ultimately reached an understanding related to the ongoing process of multicultural development by the end of her training that was akin to each of the other Black women studied.

Chapter Summary

The 12 self-identified Black women in this study revealed a five-step process of multicultural competence development while training in predominantly White institutions or programs. The Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women in PWIs or Programs began with an Awareness of Subjectivities as each woman articulated their most salient identities and the experiences that informed their subjective realities. The most consistent subjectivities that emerged during this study included: family of origin influences, individual racial identity development, identification of a working-class background, previous study in an HBCU context and connection with a work harder narrative. In many cases, the most frequently endorsed subjectivities culminated in an initial assumption of multicultural competence as these women began doctoral training. In addition to this initial assumption, the women in this study also endorsed pre-encounter expectations of their training experiences in counseling psychology that were primarily informed by the belief that advanced training in this particular branch of

applied psychology would somehow circumvent the difficulties they had been primed to expect due to their identity as Black women in a predominantly White institutions. As a means to prepare for entry into their new training environments, the women in this study consistently described the need to make an Assessment of Safety, which represents the second step of the presented developmental process. During this step, the women in the study evaluated the flexibility of the predominantly White training environments to subordinate cultural perspectives and the progression of other students of color through their respective programs. As a result of this assessment, the Black women in this study determined to what extent they would play the game, which was revealed as a method to avoid negative consequences associated with their racial/ethnic and/or gender identities. While playing the game certainly served as a means of protection from unwanted negative attention in their predominantly White training environments, it also appeared to have a detrimental impact on the participants' willingness to be open to their own biases. Before the women in this study progressed through the subsequent steps in the development of their multicultural competence, they indicated experience of an external Confrontation of Biases that challenged them to consider their faulty beliefs and assumptions. As the women described reconciling their individually tailored confrontations, they described progression to the third step in this process, Accommodation of New Information. During this phase of their developmental process, the women decided to what extent they would continue to play the game in light of their recently exposed biases. For the women who decided to change their perspectives and discontinue avoidance of their biases, the accommodation of new information necessitated an Adjustment of Subjectivities, the fourth step of the process. During this developmental phase, the women described an active process in which they sought external professional activities, including participation in multicultural related conferences or personal

development activities like engagement in their own individual therapy, to promote introspection and solidification of an adjustment to their previously held beliefs. As a result, many of the women in this study described Adoption of an Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence, the fifth and final step in the process. The women who described this view acknowledged that multicultural competence was an ongoing personal and professional pursuit of knowledge and self-awareness that inevitably impacted their skills as a professional counseling psychologist. Many of the women in this phase also identified a commitment to social justice advocacy that included engagement at the individual, group and systemic levels.

While most of the Black women in this study identified similar progression through the process, there were a few participants that identified a divergent process. In these cases, the women described different catalyzing events that all eventually culminated in the final step of the process, Adoption of an Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence. These divergent accounts are important to note as a representation of the fact that while Black women training in predominantly White contexts do share similar experiences, they are not identical and/or completely predictable in nature.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the development of multicultural competence for self-identified Black women who reported training in predominantly White training institutions or programs. Two sets of research questions guided this inquiry as I sought to examine the intersections of the professional development of multicultural competence for Black women in predominantly White training contexts. The primary set of research questions focused specifically on the process of the development of multicultural competence towards a learner-based theory. The questions guiding this research aim were:

1. How do early career professionals in psychology, who identify as Black women, describe the process of developing multicultural competence during training in predominantly White counseling psychology programs?
2. What form does the tripartite model of multicultural competency (Sue, et al., 1982) take in the descriptions these participants provide about development of this set of skills?

The secondary research questions were informed by Critical Race Theory (CRT) and focused more specifically on the ways in which the Black women in this study described development of multicultural competence within predominantly White institutions or programs. The questions guiding this aspect of the developmental process of multicultural competence were:

- a. In what ways did issues of race/ethnicity impact training experiences within a PWI or program for the women in the study?

- b. How did participants describe the impact of the intersection of their identities, including but not limited to race/ethnicity and gender, on training experiences as they compared themselves to their White colleagues?
- c. How did the training experiences geared toward the development of multicultural competence within a PWI relate to service provision for racially/ethnically diverse clientele?

This was a qualitative grounded theory study informed by a CRT perspective. Specifically, critical race-grounded theory was utilized as an abductive approach that facilitated the intersections of race/ethnicity, gender and the structural factors in predominantly White institutions that impact the lives of the Black women within these contexts (Malagon, et al., 2009). I utilized semi-structured, in-depth interviews, both face-to-face and via phone, as a means to collect data-rich descriptions regarding the development of multicultural competence for the women in this study. A total of twelve women contributed to this study as participants. The 12 individual interviews with these women were conducted over a five-month period, extending from November 25, 2014 to April 28, 2015. The CRT informed grounded theory analysis revealed a five-step process of development of multicultural competence for Black women in predominantly White training contexts, the Process of Multicultural Competence Development for Black Women in PWIs or Programs.

In this chapter, I summarize this study, specifically related to the research problem and the procedures I utilized to complete the inquiry. Next, I summarize the findings in context of the five research questions used to inform this inquiry. The implications of this study follow, as I examine how the findings might impact multicultural competence training in the field of

counseling psychology. The chapter ends with recommendations for further research in the fields of counseling and multicultural psychology.

Study Summary

Preeminent cultural scholars in the field of psychology developed the tripartite model of multicultural counseling competencies during the early 1980s (Arredondo et al., 1996; D. W. Sue, 1991; D. W. Sue et al., 1982; D.W. Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). This model was organized on the domains of knowledge, skills and awareness, which referred to the professional clinical ability psychologists need to provide multiculturally competent mental health care to a growing racially/ethnically diverse U.S. population (Ponterotto & Casas, 1991; Ridley; Espelage & Rubinstein, 1996). The tripartite model was developed as a conceptual framework for psychologists to specifically address the disparate mental health treatment outcomes for individuals who identified as a member of an underserved population (Ponterotto & Casas, 1991; Ridley; Espelage & Rubinstein, 1996). Through the advocacy efforts of many, this model has in fact influenced the development of practice guidelines for all professional psychologists (Fouad & Arredondo, 2007) and culminated in the 2003 implementation of the *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists* (APA, 2003). While these Multicultural Guidelines are the fundamental structure for suggestions on culturally relevant practice for all psychologists, there are currently no associated standards making culturally competent care a mandatory professional directive. The lack of enforceable standards of care regarding multiculturally competent practice in the field of psychology is not a reflection of the distinguished scholars who have tirelessly pursued this effort but, from a CRT perspective, perhaps more reflective of the structural impediments inherent in an organization seemingly making strides to shake the vestiges of a discriminatory

past (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Nevertheless, the lack of standardization of multicultural competence in the field of psychology has resulted in the lack of a unifying pedagogy informing practical training applications for culturally competent professional practice (Arredondo et al., 1996; Bergkamp, 2010; Fouad & Arredondo, 2007; D.W. Sue, 1997; D.W. Sue et al., 1992; Ivey, 2005). Without standardized training geared towards the development of multicultural competence for psychology trainees, scholars advocating for change argue that the field of psychology has not benefited from proper pragmatic academic and institutional support informing training practices (Atkinson & Lowe, 1995; Bergkamp, 2010; Smith et. al, 2006). As an extension of this absence at the organizational level, there is also a noted absence in the literature investigating the ways in which multicultural competence is actually developed by psychology trainees (Atkinson & Lowe, 1995; Bergkamp, 2010; Smith et. al, 2006). This study was conducted as a contribution to research efforts to address these noted gaps in the literature (Bergkamp, 2010), towards the establishment of a learner-based model of multicultural competence development as revealed by former trainees within predominantly White training contexts.

In an effort to facilitate development of a learner-based theory of multicultural competence, I utilized a qualitative grounded theory methodology informed by CRT (Malagon et al., 2009). The critical race-grounded theory informed each phase of this project from sample selection, data collection and analysis and finally, the interpretation and presentation of the findings (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Malagon et al., 2009). Next, I summarize each phase in the study, beginning with sample selection, to demonstrate the ways in which CRT was used to facilitate conceptualization of the theory, as it emerged.

I initially recruited participants for this study via granted access to the APA Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs. I also recruited by contacting several experts in the field of multicultural & counseling psychology as well as my own professional contacts. Finally, I asked participants to identify and contact prospective contributors who met inclusion criteria and were likely to have interest in participating in the study. This was my primary form of recruitment and was informed by a network sampling technique (Hays & Singh, 2012). Each form of recruitment in this study allowed for maximum analytic discretion, which catalyzed constant movement toward theory development (Maxwell, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Data collection and analysis began on November 21, 2014 and ended on April 28, 2015. A total of two semi-structured interview protocols were developed collaboratively with members of the dissertation committee. Each protocol was utilized in this study as a means to facilitate rich discussion towards the constantly emerging process of multicultural competence development. During each interview, I logged field notes about observations that I made during the discussion and on potential areas to develop further as the interview(s) progressed. This is a form of memo writing which Charmaz (2014) noted is of critical importance in grounded theory as this technique facilitated early and consistent data analysis. Next, I completed a verbatim transcription of each interview, logged additional memos and presented this data to committee member co-authors. They confirmed saturation for the data in this study at 12 interviews, which was consistent with qualitative methodologists' predictions (Guest et al., 2006). Specifically, Professor deMarrais guided me through an abbreviated data analysis procedure, which was facilitated by my ongoing analysis of data and themes. In the condensed analysis, each participant's training experiences were chronologically categorized based on their responses and stated evaluation of said training events. After I completed a table with this information for each

participant, I wrote a short memo that captured the developmental process for each woman. Next, I drew a graphic illustration of each participant's stated progression through procurement of multicultural competence in a predominantly White training context. Finally, after consultation with co-authors, my collective theory was derived and we reached consensus on the data analysis.

The Process of Development of Multicultural Competence for Black women in Predominantly White Training Institutions or Programs was developed through an iterative process of data collection, analysis and conceptualization. The process, as emerged throughout the research process entails five internal steps, the first of which culminates in pre-encounter expectations of training in counseling psychology. These expectations were eventually challenged during an external process that challenged the participant's biases. The process, in detail, is as follows:

1. Awareness of Subjectivities- The participants acknowledged self-awareness of their most salient identities before entering the predominantly White training context. This self-knowledge usually included a belief that because they were a person of color in the United States, they were inherently multiculturally competent. Some of the subjectivities that informed this thematic belief included, but were not limited to: family of origin views on racial/ethnic identity, the participants' own racial identity development, previous educational experiences in an HBCU, the impact of a working-class background, and belief in a work harder narrative. This narrative was defined by participants as belief that Black women must work twice as hard as their White and/or male counterparts in order to achieve half the amount of success.

The subjectivities endorsed by participants in this study typically led them to personal and professional interests in counseling psychology because of the field's noted and demonstrated commitment to diversity related issues in training and treatment endeavors. In most cases, this led to several pre-encounter expectations of training in counseling psychology. For the women in this study, these expectations informed a belief that their training experiences would defy and/or offset their previously held notions about the discriminatory nature of education in predominantly White training environments. Some of these expectations included an expectation that faculty of color, particularly Black female faculty, would be a constant source of support and guidance. Whether or not the women endorsed these expectations of training in the field of counseling psychology, they all described an active process of evaluating their predominantly White training environment.

2. Assessment of Safety- Participants described an ongoing assessment of the safety of their training environments. Safety was defined as the absence of discrimination or prejudice at the individual (faculty, fellow students), programmatic and/or institutional levels. During the evaluation process, participants described assessing program dynamics, determination of the proposed and actual flexibility of each environment to opposing worldviews and observation of other people of color in the training environment. The results of the assessment of safety informed to what extent the women chose to play the game. Playing the game was operationally defined as the process of subduing visible characteristics of salient identities as a Black woman in an effort to ensure safety in predominantly White training environments.

The women in this study all described a confrontation of biases at some point in their training that precipitated movement to the next step in this developmental process. These confrontations

were instigated by events in both professional and personal realms and entailed being confronted about various prejudices by clients, colleagues or those in evaluative roles.

3. Accommodation of New Information- Participants acknowledged that their previously held notion of inherent multicultural competence was false during this step in the process. At this point in their development, participants identified their own growth edges and determined whether or not to act as if they had changed their biased views and continue to play the game or if they would continue to progress through the developmental process.
4. Adjustment of Subjectivities- Participants made active steps to acquire new knowledge, skills and awareness at this step in the process and an expansion of consciousness was evident. An indicator of whether or not this process was internalized included disruption of the status quo and/or outward commitment to social justice advocacy.
5. Adoption of Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence- The women in this study discussed openness to feedback and a willingness to be vulnerable with others at this step in the developmental process. Each participant acknowledged the notion that multicultural competence was “a journey and not a destination” and demonstrated active and meaningful attempts to grow and be more engaged in multicultural/social justice issues at both the personal and professional levels.

Conclusions

The primary conclusions for this study are: (a) continued self-awareness is imperative for ongoing growth in multicultural competence (b) there are unique impediments to continued growth in multicultural competence for Black women in predominantly White training

environments and (c) Black women reported developing unique coping strategies to offset these impediments. While these survival techniques were viewed as adaptive functioning in service of matriculation through a predominantly White training environment, when left unexamined, these same skills posed the biggest risk to competent treatment of racially/ethnically diverse clientele. These conclusions are discussed specifically as they relate to the five research questions posited at the start of this inquiry and the ways in which the study conclusions intersect and/or diverge from relevant research in the field.

The first two research questions informing this study were designed to inform the development of a learner-based theory of multicultural competence for Black women training in a predominantly White institution or program. The last three questions were designed to look even more specifically at the ways in which these women described the intersection of their identities within a predominantly White institution. It should be noted that the women in this study identified as early career psychologists (no more than five years post-graduation) who retrospectively described training experiences in predominantly White counseling psychology programs.

The first question informing this study related directly to the developmental process of multicultural competence. It was: how do early career psychologists, who identify as Black women, describe the process of developing multicultural competence during training in predominantly White counseling psychology programs? The women in this study described a five-step process: (1) Awareness of Subjectivities, Pre-Encounter Expectations of Study in Counseling psychology (2) Assessment of Safety, a Confrontation of Biases (3) an Accommodation of New Information (4) an Adjustment of Subjectivities and, finally (5) an Adoption of an Aspirational View of Multicultural Competence. Each step in this developmental

process represents an iterative process that is rooted in the trainee's awareness of her own subjectivities. Buckley & Foldy (2010) commented on the importance of self-awareness in trainees as they described their model for increasing multicultural competence, specifically as these skills intersect with racial issues. These authors noted that awareness of self and others has been a prevailing focus of multicultural competency training since its inception, however "increased attention to self-awareness has increased the affective and emotional demands of multicultural training," (Buckley & Foldy, 2010 p. 693). Increased emotionality connected to multicultural training endeavors can cause student resistance to introspection, which in turn creates difficulty for faculty charged with facilitating self-awareness and can result in avoidance of exploration of resistance by both trainees and faculty (Reynolds, 2011). This difficulty and subsequent avoidance has led to failure of current training models "to provide an integrated and explicit approach to self-awareness and development" (Pieterse, Minsum, Ritmeester & Collins, 2013, p. 190) although self-awareness is a demonstrated catalyst to multicultural competence (Pieterse et al., 2013; Roysircar, 2004).

For participants in this study, expanded self-awareness, facilitated by a confrontation of their personal biases, triggered emotional responses that ultimately resulted in a serious investment in further development of multicultural competency. This was particularly poignant as the Black women in this study described a vested interest in "playing the game" as a coping strategy to avoid expected racist and discriminatory consequences associated with training in predominantly White contexts. These findings, as they relate to extant research, suggest that deliberate, in-depth and consistent training efforts to promote self-awareness (Pieterse et al., 2013) are needed for Black women in predominantly White contexts. According to the Black women in this study, these efforts should include transparency at the faculty/trainer level

regarding their own personal areas for further growth. This would serve to communicate an acceptance of growth edges and acknowledgment that the need to continue to develop multicultural competence is a necessary component of professional development as opposed to a reflection of the presumed incompetence of Black women in predominantly White training contexts (Gutierrez y Muhs, Niemann, Gonzalez & Harris, 2012). More deliberate efforts towards this end would align with these women's expectations of training in the field of counseling psychology and would likely signal less of a need to play the game as these programmatic training efforts signal a safe environment with a vested interest in personal and professional growth.

The second question informing this study was also geared toward a learner-based theory of multicultural competence, but had a more specific purview in that it was designed to examine the ways in which the tripartite model, the primary conceptual model for multicultural competence in the field of psychology, influenced this process. This question was: what form does the tripartite model of multicultural competency (Sue, et al., 1982) take in the descriptions these participants provided about development of this set of skills? The tripartite theoretical model of multicultural competence involves three domains that inform what has become the standard in training for professional skills in counseling psychology (Arredondo & Tovar-Blank, 2014). The model consists of three domains: knowledge of cultural differences, skills to effectively treat diverse clientele and awareness of one's biases and cultural values (Arredondo et al., 1996; Sue et al., 1992). In the current study, there was specific attention to the intersections of race/ethnic and gender identities and the development of multicultural competence as informed by the tripartite model. Chao (2012) examined the tripartite model in multicultural counseling training and the intersection of racial/ethnic identity and gender roles. In

her study of mental health professionals, including some Black women, she found that higher levels of training in multicultural competence did not enhance the level of awareness that respondents reported (Chao, 2012). She went on to note that, “perhaps ‘awareness’ represents an individual’s self-reflection on his or her understanding of sociopolitical forces that rebounds to appreciating the cultural impacts on clients. Such awareness may take more time to develop than it takes for knowledge to form and may need long and reflective training” (Chao, 2012, p. 42). While the tripartite model manifested in the accounts that each participant shared related to their developmental process in multicultural competence, as previously noted, self-awareness appeared to be a primary component of the necessary continued growth in this area. Chao’s (2012) research supported this finding in that knowledge, while an important contributor to skill development at earlier stages of training, did not endure to the degree that continued self-awareness endured. Self-awareness for the Black women in this study necessarily included knowledge of the systemic structures and barriers at play in their education in a PWI or program. This prompted the importance of a critical analysis of those institutional structures.

A critical race theory (CRT) perspective informed the second set of research questions for this study. These questions facilitated an examination of the ways in which systemic institutional racism infiltrated the training experiences of Black female students within predominantly White counseling psychology programs. This matter was complicated by the observation that the latter two entities had varying degrees of interests in dismantling the racist structures within the institution, but, as mentioned in the first two chapters of this study, had to rely on a point of interest convergence (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) before seismic shifts within the institution could take place. The primary conclusions from these questions suggested that while there are unique impediments to continued growth in multicultural competence for Black

women in predominantly White training environments, participants in this study reported developing unique coping strategies to offset these impediments. These adaptive skills, while seen as important to participants' safety in predominantly White spaces initially, when left unchecked, had the potential for the greatest detrimental impact on the service outcomes to the diverse clients served.

The first research question informed by a CRT perspective in the current project was: in what ways did issues of race/ethnicity impact training experiences within a PWI or program for the women in the study? The training experiences within predominantly White training spaces impacted the Black women in this study in a cyclical fashion. Many of these women were socialized, in their family of origin and/or previous educational environments, to expect racist/discriminatory treatment in predominantly White institutions. This expectation primed the participants to assess for their safety, or the level to which they could expect the absence/minimization of racist treatment in their program. In turn, the extent to which these women found the environment unsafe contributed directly to how committed they were to playing the game. Finally, commitment or belief in the necessity of the game reinforced the expectation that they would face racism and discrimination in predominantly White contexts and detrimentally impacted their own growth and development. The game, as defined by the women in this study, entailed deliberate subduing/subversion of physical characteristics or mannerisms (e.g. altering their hair, avoiding racial/gender stereotypes about Black women even to the detriment of displaying their true personalities) in an effort to get through training unscathed by perceived and real racism. In Gutierrez y Muhs et al. (2012) edited book entitled *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia*, Wallace, Moore, Wilson & Hart (2012) discussed this tendency for female faculty of color in predominantly

White training contexts; they shared that studies consistently reveal that Black women in academia “must be especially careful about tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and dress in the classroom because these choices can have direct consequences on their perceived level of competence (hooks, 1981; Collins, 2001; Weitz and Gordon, 1993; Gregory, 2001; Jackson and Crawley, 2003)” (p. 423). The Black women in the current study consistently reported similar care related to the ways in which they expressed themselves both physically and verbally for fear of negative repercussions and was serendipitously identified as playing the game by several participants. Interestingly, the longer each woman who knowingly played the game continued to subdue components of her identity, the longer she was able to avoid opportunities to deepen her self-awareness. As previously noted, the Black women who expressed an unwillingness to be introspective prevented further development of multiculturally competent professional skills. I end this section with the chilling words Kupenda (2012) shared from her mother after she complained of fatigue from playing the game as a Black woman in a predominantly White training environment:

You are so tired because you feel like a clown. You smile when you do not feel like smiling. You bite your tongue and make no sound when you want to speak. You try to make the casual and watchful observers so comfortable with you, but now you are uncomfortable with this false self. You take care of others’ feelings, instead of your own (p. 23).

The second research question in this study informed specifically by a CRT lens was: how did participants describe the impact of the intersection of their identities, including but not limited to race/ethnicity and gender, on training experiences as they compared themselves to their White colleagues? In addition to the salience of identities as Black women, many

participants identified a third and equally significant identity: a working-class background. The participants who identified this socioeconomic background discussed the ways in which the confluence of their SES, racial/ethnic and gender identities combined to create more disequilibrium in predominantly White, typically affluent, institutions. In these spaces, the participants from a working-class background expended valuable energy as they worked to navigate the roles and expectations within both their privileged and oppressed identities, simultaneously. Perhaps as an extension to the additional work it took to manage several salient identities, (i.e. identity as Black, female and working class) participants also described a work harder narrative. This narrative captured the internal pressures these women collectively described from the knowledge that they must perform twice as well as their White counterparts to achieve half the success and the external pressure they described feeling to avoid negative stereotypes about Black women as inherently lazy. One participant described this pressure as an expectation from White faculty to “be the best of Black people.” Ortiz (2015) described contemporary, predominantly White American educational institutions as a microcosm of the broader American society; from this perspective, the work harder narrative for Black women, particularly those from working-class backgrounds, met the interests of dominant cultural social agendas to maintain the status quo inside the PWI, by reifying the social inequality of individuals from these historically oppressed groups. Effectively, there was no escape from the societal burdens of these salient identities and narratives for Black women as this stratification within predominantly White training contexts contributed to maintenance of the American social world order.

Finally, the last question in this study sought to explore the results of multicultural training efforts within the domain for which they were originally designed: competent service

delivery to a dynamic and diverse population. This question was: how did the training experiences geared toward the development of multicultural competence within a PWI relate to service provision for racially/ethnically diverse clientele? Initially, the women in this study assumed that they were inherently able to provide care to racially/ethnically diverse individuals based on their own oppressed identities. Goode-Cross (2011) noted the imminent threat of over identifying with marginalized clients when the counselor and client identify the same racial/ethnic background. This threat denotes how imperative it is for “Black therapists—like all therapists—[to] recognize and manage their own reactions to clients of the same race to work effectively with them” (Goode-Cross, 2011, p. 368). In this study, the participants were only able to recognize and manage their tendency to over identify with their racially/ethnically diverse clients when they were confronted with their biases based on faulty assumptions. As these women were confronted and progressed through training, they recognized that they required additional knowledge and skills in order to provide multiculturally competent care to clients who exhibit all forms of diversity. While the participants’ abandonment of game play in favor of genuine attempts to deepen individual self-awareness ultimately contributed to a better quality of care for racially/ethnically diverse clientele, what happened to clients from other diverse backgrounds before the women committed to their own development? What type of treatment would diverse clientele receive if a woman of color training in a predominantly White program in counseling psychology determined that it was not safe for her to let down her defenses in service of her own growth? The implications of committing to the game are a worthy pursuit and explored more fully, with additional implications for this study, in the next section of this chapter.

Implications

In keeping with the CRT lens utilized to inform this study, the implications of the findings are discussed in service of supporting and investing in the Black women trainees and early career psychologists, represented by the participants. I present the implications as they inform systemic change at the institutional, programmatic and individual levels. The institutional level recommendations are provided for PWIs in general and for the American Psychological Association more specifically. At the programmatic level, special attention is given to counseling psychology programs and their faculty. Finally, the individual level implications are provided as they relate to Black women currently in, or contemplating training in, predominantly White programs in counseling psychology and for the early career psychologists who share these salient identities and have gained capital as new professionals in the field.

Institutional implications. Many of the women in this study described an expectation that the predominantly White institutions they entered would inherently be racist and discriminatory. Abiola & Tavers (2015) noted that institutions who do not make serious efforts to diversify their communities at each level pose a serious impediment to the success of institutional diversity policies and “will reinforce exclusion, deficit thinking, and inequity among people of color” (p. 3). For PWIs interested in changing their reputation for discriminatory practices, these institutions might consider ways in which they can provide a safe environment for students of color. In an effort to support students of color as university assets, PWIs can make a demonstrated commitment to diversifying the campus population at the administrative, faculty and student levels. This would require the systematic hiring of people of color into administrative positions as well as active recruitment and retention efforts for both faculty and students of color. As noted, these changes on the consistent basis would likely promote an

incremental change to the racist reputation of PWIs. However, a radical transformation of these traditionally discriminatory structures, from a CRT lens, requires demolition of the predominantly White institutional context all together. Towards this end, sweeping changes should be made in hiring and admission practices that remove the historical barriers that people of color continue to experience until the institution is no longer predominantly White, but more reflective of the changing U.S. racial/ethnic demographic. If this notion is upsetting or evokes fear in the reader, they may now have experienced a fraction of the distress that people of color, including the women in this study, report in predominantly White university contexts. One way to ensure recruitment of people of color would be to make an investment in the education of individuals from underserved populations throughout each phase of their formative education with programs and funding specifically designed to address the noted achievement gap for minority students as compared to their White counterparts (Cowan-Pitre, 2014). In the absence of an interest convergence that motivates this drastic and fundamental change within the predominantly White institutions themselves, advocacy at the institutional level must be initiated by professional organizations, such as the APA.

The American Psychological Association has the opportunity to provide a significant incentive for institutional change by adopting standards that continue to place political, financial and social pressures on the predominantly White training environments that typically house graduate programs in psychology. Some suggestions would be to adopt and enforce professional standards that support and facilitate the hiring of diverse administrative and faculty members across the university setting. While these efforts are already strongly encouraged by the APA within psychology programs through the accreditation standards, significant change at the institutional level may require that accrediting standards for these programs demonstrate

advocacy and concrete progress for the recruitment, retention, and successful graduation/promotion of diverse faculty and students beyond the silos of the psychology training programs. Radical enforcement of these standards might include APA dis-accreditation of programs in predominantly White institutions that fail to comply with this professional directive.

Programmatic implications. A significant finding from this study is that the Black women who participated had an expectation that their respective programs in counseling psychology would avoid or offset the discrimination they had been socialized to prepare themselves for at the institutional levels. Unfortunately for many of these women, they were disappointed by not only the inability of these programs to counterbalance the broader racist environment, but in many cases, the perpetuation of discriminatory acts within the counseling psychology programs themselves. In response to this disappointment, many women described playing the game in an effort to meet program requirements and avoid painful impediments informed by perceived prejudice and oppression. To meet and exceed the expectations of these trainees, counseling psychology programs should work to understand the phenomena of playing the “game” and the role of program faculty, staff and peers in maintaining inequity or prejudicial treatment. Once programs understand what the game is, they can choose to replace this game with a more authentic training experience that caters to the strengths of Black women and also actively seeks to empower them. This can be done at the programmatic level in a similar fashion as suggested for PWIs, that is, radical recruitment and retention efforts for faculty and students of color and students with other diverse identities well before the collegiate level of education. Retention efforts should include investment in a diverse community by privileging the mentorship efforts by faculty and staff invested in guiding diverse students through academe, as these efforts are usually publically lauded, but privately punished (Kupenda, 2012).

Counseling psychology faculty members should also work to provide positive examples for students of color. Several women in this study discussed their expectations from specific faculty members, particularly faculty of color. Chan, Yeh & Krumboltz (2015) cited significant research that revealed that “ethnic minority students tend to prefer and report more satisfaction with racially homogeneous mentor relationships (Blake-Beard, Bayne, Crosby, & Muller, 2011; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005), but are less likely to find same race mentors (Schlosser, Talleyrand, Lyons, Kim & Johnson, 2011) due to the lack of ethnic minority faculty in doctoral programs (APA Office of Minority Affairs, 2008; Gasman, Hirschfield, & Vultaggio, 2008)” (pg. 1) . In the same article (Chan et al., 2015) the authors reported the mutual benefit of mentor relationships with students of color. Faculty of color might consider the gains of a shared community with students of color as they negotiate the demands of tenure track positions in PWIs. Additionally, as influential as same race mentors are for ethnically/racially diverse students, it should not be incumbent upon faculty of color to be the primary or sole source of support for students of color. White faculty mentors should be compelled to examine their mentee relationships with racially/ethnically diverse students. Careful and honest attention should be paid to student support and advocacy efforts of White faculty that are not consistent across racial/ethnic lines. Finally at the programmatic level, several community building techniques would lend themselves to an inclusive environment. An example includes student led support groups for underrepresented trainees in the program. While it may be complicated or counterproductive for current faculty to be involved in these groups, the involvement of successful alumni of color, or sponsored membership from each of the APA ethnic minority associations, would demonstrate active efforts to develop a supportive community.

Individual implications. As for the potential, current and former trainees in counseling psychology who identify as Black women, the findings of this study support the notion that abandonment of the game is imperative to continued growth in the development of multicultural competence. While the knowledge gained from course work and research are important catalysts for evolution at the initial stages of training, playing the game has a negative impact on these trainees' ability to provide the multiculturally competent care many hope to offer. The findings, by no means, suggest that Black women should stop assessing for their safety, but instead highlights that the system will likely remain unchanged unless the change first occurs within the group collective. This will require a fearlessness that will compel Black women, and other students of color, to forsake the warnings of some of the elders in the hopes that their indelible and authentic footprint in this field will be the very mark that serves to shift the tide. This can best be accomplished as a community effort, reflective of the collectivist culture that informs many of the shared subjectivities that the women in this study endorsed. A careful cultivation of allies within the PWI contexts to include peers, alumni and community university resources, such as departments of Black and women's studies, as well as offices of institutional diversity or multicultural affairs would serve to create needed counter-spaces towards systemic change. Finally, and perhaps most radically, women of color should continue to authentically share their stories. One of the most powerful tools for institutional change that oppressed groups have is their counter-narratives. Hiraldo (2010) explained the power inherent in the amplification of marginalized voices:

Counter-stories are personal, composite stories or narratives of people of color (Delgado Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). The use of counter-stories in analyzing higher education's climate provides faculty, staff and students of color a voice to

tell their narratives involving marginalized experiences. Counter-stories can assist in analyzing the climate of a college campus and provide opportunities for further research in the ways that an institution can become inclusive and not superficially diverse (pg. 54).

I thank each of the women in this study for so candidly and willingly lending their voice in this collective, revolutionary effort for change.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study describe the ways in which former trainees in counseling psychology, who identify as Black women, described their process of development of multicultural competence. This study revealed an internal process that was influenced and challenged by several external factors. A closer examination of the factors identified by the Black women in this study present promising areas for future research in multicultural education and counseling psychology. Further study of these findings, informed by a CRT lens, should be designed to disrupt the dominant discourse and replace it with a discourse that is in the language/culture of the people involved; this language should be co-created, between the researcher and the participants and seek to dismantle systems of oppression (Delgado-Romero, personal communication, June 11, 2014).

Areas for further research include continued examination of the experiences of trainees and faculty from traditionally oppressed backgrounds within predominantly White educational contexts. These studies could include more specific focus on the manifestation of “the game” in predominantly White training environments as described by the women in this study. Research on this adaptive skill for Black women could provide much needed insight on internal characteristics that may thwart training efforts in multicultural competence. Further, while the

Black women in this study identified the game as a specific coping strategy to avoid negative consequences related to their racial/ethnic identity, exploration of the ways in which similar coping strategies might develop for other students of color could also inform training efforts. Research in this area would serve as a means to reflect the deleterious effects of training in environments that do not reflect or support traditionally oppressed groups. These inquiries would contribute to advocacy efforts for needed systemic change.

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APPENDIX A

INITIAL STUDY REQUEST FROM

A CRITICAL RACE INQUIRY INTO THE MULTICULTURAL TRAINING EXPERIENCES
OF EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONALS IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

I am Reisha Moxley, a current doctoral student in the Counseling psychology program in the University of Georgia's College of Education. I am currently conducting a study, under the direction of Dr. Edward Delgado-Romero, examining how early career professionals in counseling psychology, who also identify as women of color, describe the development of multicultural competence within predominantly White training programs. This study is entitled: *"A Critical Race Inquiry Into the Multicultural Training Experiences of Early Career Professionals in Counseling Psychology."*

Potential participants in this study have graduated from an APA-accredited counseling psychology doctoral program within the last 3 years. Potential participants will have also completed at least one multicultural course and successfully completed an APA-accredited internship in psychology as conditions of their graduation. Candidates for participation in this study will also identify as a woman of color. Participation in this study involves one to two face-to-face or phone interviews regarding various aspects of curriculum as a doctoral student in an APA accredited counseling psychology program.

Your organization has been identified as a wonderful potential source for getting the word out to potential participants about this study. I would greatly appreciate your willingness to disseminate my request for participation in this study to your active listservs.

If you have any questions about the study and/or are willing to allow dissemination of my solicitation to participate in our study to your listserv, please let me know by responding directly to this email address: rmoxley@uga.edu. I will then contact you and provide the study email solicitation form to be emailed to your listserv(s) and answer any additional questions that you may have. Thank you so much for your time and consideration; I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,
Reisha E. Moxley, M.Ed., LPC
Doctoral Candidate
Counseling Psychology
University of Georgia

Edward Delgado-Romero, Ph.D.
Professor
Counseling Psychology
University of Georgia

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

A CRITICAL RACE INQUIRY INTO THE MULTICULTURAL TRAINING EXPERIENCES
OF EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONALS IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Principal Investigator: Edward Delgado-Romero, Ph.D.
The University of Georgia
Counseling and Human Development Services

Co-Investigator: Reisha E. Moxley, M.Ed.
The University of Georgia
Counseling and Human Development Services

Researcher's Statement:

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you determine whether or not you would like to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you all the information about the study so that you can make an informed decision. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Be sure to ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you would like to take part in this study. Please retain a copy of this form for your records.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the multicultural training experiences of counseling psychologists who identify as women of color and are 3 to 5 years post-graduation from an APA accredited doctoral program.

Study Procedures:

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- Participate in an interview (via phone or face-to-face) that will last ninety minutes or less and will be audiotaped.
- Answer questions and discuss experiences about multicultural training during your doctoral study in counseling psychology.
- Provide information to the investigator regarding the accuracy of the portrayal of the experiences you described during the interview.
- In the event that you determine that your experiences were not satisfactorily captured, or more information is needed, you may be asked to participate in a follow-up interview (via phone) that will last sixty minutes or less and will also be audiotaped.

Risks and Discomforts:

No risk is expected from participating in this study, but you may experience some discomfort or stress sharing your multicultural training experiences. In the event that you experience some discomfort, please inform the investigators of this study. Any appropriate referrals to mental health resources will then be provided.

Benefits:

There are no direct benefits from participating in this study but your participation may help others in the future. Your participation in this study will help the psychological community have a better understanding of the multicultural training experiences of women of color in APA accredited Counseling psychology doctoral programs.

Audio/Video Recording:

The audio recording of your interview will be used to create transcriptions. These audio recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the study (approximately six to twelve months after the interview).

Privacy/Confidentiality:

Pseudonyms will be used to protect your privacy during this study. Electronic information, including digital voice recordings, transcripts, and personal notes will be maintained on a password-protected computer and will only be accessible by the co-investigator (Reisha Moxley). All information that can be used to identify you will be removed from the research record after data collection has been completed. The researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone, other than individuals working on the project, without your written consent unless required by law.

Voluntary Participation:

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to stop or withdraw from the study, the information/data collected from or about you up to the point of your withdrawal will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed.

For More Information:

The main researcher conducting this study is Reisha Moxley, a graduate student at the University of Georgia. Please ask any questions you have before the interview begins (for face-to-face interviews) or via email (for phone interviews). If you have questions after the interview is conducted, or at any point during the study, you may contact Reisha Moxley at rmoxley@uga.edu or Edward Delgado-Romero at edelgado@uga.edu. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706.542.3199 or at irb@uga.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. If you have been sent a copy of this consent form via email and voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must provide verbal consent to the researcher before the study begins. Your verbal consent

and/or your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form and have had all of your questions answered.

APPENDIX C

INITIAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

A CRITICAL RACE INQUIRY INTO THE MULTICULTURAL TRAINING EXPERIENCES OF EARLY CAREER PROFESSIONALS IN COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. My name is Reisha Moxley and I am a counseling psychology doctoral student at the University of Georgia. The purpose of our talk today is to explore your multicultural training experiences and the development of your multicultural competence as a woman of color in a predominantly White doctoral program. I am very interested in the ways these intersecting identities can support and challenge development in this important area.

Today, I will ask you questions regarding your doctoral training experiences, when answering these questions, I encourage you to consider all components of your training, including your in-class, practicum and internship experiences. I also really encourage you to consider specific stories and/or details about these impactful events. Your participation in this study and the information you provide will be very helpful to this research study, you are welcome at any point during this process to ask me questions about the research in general and/or about our specific discussion.

Before we begin, please review the informed consent document. This will give you information regarding what to expect today, including potential risks to you and the use of audio recording during the interview. This form also includes a statement about your participation in this interview and states that it is entirely voluntary and that you may decline to participate at any time. Please read this document carefully and feel free to ask any clarifying questions before signing the form.

[Allow participant to read the informed consent]

I will be audio recording our interview in an effort to maintain the integrity of what you tell me. Is it ok for me to begin recording now?

[Await response. Begin recording only when participant gives verbal consent.]

I will begin by gathering specific information about your doctoral training requirements as well as some demographic information about you. These questions coincide with the criteria detailed on the invitation to participate in the study emailed to you recently.

In what year did you graduate from an APA-accredited Counseling psychology program?

Did you attend a predominantly White training institution and/or program?

Did you complete at least one course in multicultural competency was during your training?

Did you complete an APA accredited internship as a part of your degree requirement?

How do you identify racially/ethnically?

What is your primary gender identity?

[If participant does not meet inclusion criteria this will be the end of the interview.]

Thank you for answering those questions. Based on the information you provided, you do not currently meet criteria for the current study. Do you have any questions that I can answer for you right now? Thank you so much for your time today. If you have any additional questions or concerns, you may contact me at rmoxley@uga.edu or the principal investigator Dr. Edward Delgado-Romero at edelgado@uga.edu.

[If participant does meet inclusion criteria the interview will continue as follows.]

Okay, now I will ask you to tell me about some of the experiences related to the development of your multicultural competence as a doctoral trainee.

Does any particular experience during your training stand out as influential to your development in this area?

Does any person, whether colleague, supervisor and/or professor stand out as particularly influential to your development in this area?

General Questions

1. What does it mean to you to be multiculturally competent?
2. Do you feel that there were any barriers to your development in this area as a woman of color in a predominantly White training program?

Follow-up question(s):

Can you think of a time in which values from one of both of your most salient identities, as a Women of Color, were subverted during your training?

Did this ever happen in service of a client?

If so, please tell me about a time that this occurred?

If not, what do you think your training program did that most helped to facilitate your development in this area?

3. Tell me about a time that was particularly challenging for you regarding the development of multicultural competence.

Follow-up question:

Do/did you feel that your identity as a woman of color in a predominantly White context played a role or contributed to this challenge? How or Why not?

4. How would you describe your process of developing multicultural competence?

5. How would you describe the differences and/or similarities of this developmental process for you as a woman of color versus someone who did not share these identities during your training?

6. Did you ever feel that your multicultural development was stalled or impeded by anyone or anything during your training? Tell me about that experience.

Closing Questions

Was there anything I missed that you think should be discussed about the process of becoming multiculturally competent as a woman of color in a predominantly White training environment?

Thank you so much for your participation. Please feel free to contact me, or my faculty advisor, if you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this study.

APPENDIX D

REVISED SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Research Purpose: The purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive, learner-based theory of multicultural competency, grounded in the lived experiences of early career psychologists who identify as women of color trained in predominantly White programs.

Research Questions	Interview Questions
1. How do early career professionals in psychology, who identify as women of color, describe the developmental process of acquiring multicultural competence?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Think back to when you entered your doctoral program. Tell me your notion of multicultural competence at that time. 2. How would you describe your multicultural competence now that you have completed your training? 3. Think of a time in your training when you were aware of your learning in multicultural competence. (Could have them give you several such narratives of different specific events). In this question, probe for knowledge, skills, and awareness within each event, but let them describe the event first. 4. Did your understanding of multicultural competence change over the course of the training? Describe how. 5. Describe the most important lesson(s) you learned through this training experience? 6. How do you see multicultural competence now?
2. How do women of color in predominantly White training contexts describe their learning of multicultural competence?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me about a time within your training that you were aware of being a woman of color within a predominantly White training context. (Repeat for several narratives of different times). 2. After having the experiences you described during your training, what advice would you have for other women of color embarking on a similar career?