EXPERIENCES AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES AMONG STUDENT LEADERS

by

IJEOMA CHINWE NWAOGU

(Under the Direction of Pamela O. Paisley)

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study, grounded in the philosophical and methodological foundations of social constructivism and phenomenology, incorporated the use of semi-structured individual interviews to uncover the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies of 10 student leaders involved in culture, diversity, and/or social justice-focused student organizations and programs. Through a phenomenological analysis, five major themes were identified from the data: (a) developing identity, (b) experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes, (c) the significance of othering, (d) surmounting adversity and (e) learning in safe and supportive environments. Suggestions and recommendations for future research and practice were shared.

INDEX WORDS: Multicultural competence, Undergraduate students, Student leaders, Cultural student organizations, Social constructivism, Phenomenology, Culture, Social justice, Diversity, School, College, Bullying, White privilege, Identity development, Student development

EXPERIENCES AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES AMONG STUDENT LEADERS

by

IJEOMA CHINWE NWAOGU

B.A., Georgia State University, 2005

M. Ed., University of Georgia, 2007

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2015

EXPERIENCES AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES AMONG STUDENT LEADERS

by

IJEOMA CHINWE NWAOGU

Major Professor:	Pamela O. Paisley
Committee:	Deryl. F. Bailey
	Natoya H. Haskins

Electronic Version Approved:

Julie Coffield
Interim Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2015

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my children, Adanna and Martin Nwaogu. It is my hope that they grow up to become multiculturally competent citizens of their communities who value diversity, respect cultural differences, and engage effectively in intercultural relationships. This way, they are truly able to delight in the richness and beauty of God's creation of diversity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am thankful to the participants of this study who took time out of their busy schedules to provide me with the invaluable information needed to make this dissertation come to fruition. I am grateful to each member of the Ph.D. Counseling and Student Personnel Services 2013 cohort and faculty. I learned at least one thing from each classmate and professor that has stayed with me and I am thankful to have had the opportunity to learn and grow as a result of my experiences with these individuals. Regarding my dear research team, Vivia Hill-Silcott and Rodney Pennamon. I am thankful to them for their tireless support and encouragement throughout the years. Without their insights, wisdom, and friendship, surviving the doctoral program would have been nearly impossible. Regarding my best friend, Vanessa Graves-Foster, I am thankful to her for her perseverance in being an awesome and inspiring confidant throughout this process. Her constant positivity and wisdom reminded me of the important aspects of life during difficult times. Regarding my dissertation committee, Dr. Pamela Paisley, Dr. Natoya Haskins, and Dr. Deryl Bailey, I grateful for their courage in supporting me, especially during the most difficult times during this journey. Regarding my advisor/major professor, Dr. Pamela Paisley. Her humility, humor, and graciousness gave me the strength and peace that I needed to thrive. For this, I am forever grateful. I am thankful for a family that is as solid as a rock in my life. I am thankful to my parents, Kester and Nmaobi Uzochukwu, who made countless sacrifices to help me to complete my program. I appreciate my siblings and extended family members who have supported me through prayers, gifts, and encouragements. I am thankful to my children, Adanna and Martin Nwaogu, who have unknowingly created

challenging situations that taught me how to multitask, i.e., caring for them while pursuing my academic activities. Without the support of Sofia Bautista Pertuz, finding participants for my study in a timely fashion would have been nearly impossible. I am so grateful that she was placed in my life at the right time and place. My husband Kingsley Nwaogu served as my primary motivator and supporter throughout this journey. I am incredibly blessed to have had him as my number one cheerleader as he helped me in ways that I never could have imagined. Lastly, but certainly not least, I am eternally grateful to God, who has paved the path for me to achieve this mission. I am grateful to God for giving me the strength and willpower to succeed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

LIST OF TABLES

Page

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study purported to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Through phenomenological and social constructivist approaches, this study uncovered the contexts, processes, and outcomes (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989) associated with the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. The findings of this study provide comprehensive insights to the experiences that affected the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. As a result, pre-kindergarten through twelve grade teachers and counselors, as well as postsecondary educators can apply insights from this study to bolster and initiate programs, services, and future scholarship that address the development of multicultural competence among student leaders. To further understand the research topic, the following section defines the key terms and phrases used throughout this study.

Defining Key Terms

Multicultural competence refers to "the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to work with others who are culturally different from self in meaningful, relevant, and productive ways" (Pope et al., 2004, p. 13). Outcomes that characterize multicultural competency can be categorized as development in three domains: cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012).

For this study, the word *competence, competency,* or *competencies* in the phrase *multicultural competence,* operated similarly with terms such as *abilities, capabilities, capacities,* and *efficacies*.

To define contexts that consist of individuals from various cultural backgrounds, I used the terms *culturally diverse, culturally heterogeneous, culturally pluralistic* or *multicultural* synonymously. Moreover, in describing interpersonal relationships among culturally diverse individuals, the terms *intercultural* and *cross-cultural* are used congruently.

Merrill et al. (2012) define *development* as "qualitatively different and more complex mental and psychosocial processes" (p. 356). Similar terms used throughout this study include *advancement, enhancement,* and *growth*.

When referring to the outcomes of development, I utilized the terms *domains* and *dimensions* interchangeably to describe the areas or categories of development.

I used the terms *comprehensive* and *holistic* to describe contexts that consider all possible aspects of a subject matter.

For this study, a *student leader* represented an undergraduate student who held a leadership position (elected or appointed, executive role) of a culture, diversity, and/or social justice-focused student organization or program of a postsecondary institution.

For this investigation, I referred to *culture, diversity, and/or social justice-oriented* student organizations and programs as student groups associated with multicultural programs that focus attention on culture, diversity, and social justice education (Council for the Advancement of Standards, 2012).

Upon the provision of a synopsis and associated terms used throughout this study, the following section includes a background overview to further introduce the topic that has undergone investigation.

Multicultural Competence: An Imperative in a Global Society

The cultural diversity within the social landscape in the United States has consistently increased over time (Ahmed, Wilson, Henriksen, & Jones, 2011; Kumar, Anjum, & Sinha, 2011). With various cultural backgrounds represented in the United States follows the prospect for complications associated with acknowledging and understanding the culture of oneself and others (Ahmed et al., 2011; Kumar et al., 2011). These issues include difficulties communicating with individuals from diverse cultural groups (Ahmed et al., 2011; Kumar et al., 2011). The need to reconcile these concerns validates the pursuit of *multicultural competence*, a concept regarded as one's understanding of him/herself and others, and the ability to relate effectively with diverse individuals and function inclusively within multicultural contexts (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004).

As inferred previously, citizens of this global society must work towards developing multicultural competencies in order to eliminate cultural biases and social inequities (Ahmed et al., 2011; Kumar et al., 2011). These social issues could lead to tensions between cultural groups, (un)intentional discrimination, and ineffective relationships (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). In working towards building multicultural capacities, contexts within society must provide spaces in which multicultural learning can occur (Popov, Brinkman, Biemans, Mulder, Kuznetsov, & Noroozi, 2012). Settings for multicultural education include postsecondary environments whereby educators and student affairs practitioners create and foster learning experiences for college students (Popov et al., 2012). These pedagogical and co-curricular opportunities promote

the necessary awareness, understanding, and abilities for students to flourish as multiculturally competent leaders in a culturally pluralistic society (Miller-Lane et al., 2007; Pope, Mueller, & Reynolds, 2009; Popov et al., 2012). For these reasons, I focused attention on investigating the experiences of student leaders involved in postsecondary, multicultural learning contexts to understand the settings and psychosocial processes that have led to this group's development of multicultural abilities.

Understanding the Development of Multicultural Competence

To obtain a thorough understanding of the development of multicultural competence, I proposed the examining of three areas: *contexts, processes,* and *outcomes* (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989). For this investigation, this framework helped to understand the order in which the development of multicultural competencies may occur.

The contexts that influence the development of multicultural competencies can be explained through the Person-Environment model offered by Strange and Banning (2001). This model explains four types of contexts that influence students in higher education settings (Strange & Banning, 2001). These environments include *constructed, physical, aggregate, and organizational* contexts (Strange & Banning, 2001).

Collective ideas or behaviors shared among individuals within a postsecondary setting make up the constructed environment (Strange & Banning, 2001). Contexts described as supportive, collegial, and hospitable, and activities that demonstrate a value for multicultural education, exemplify constructed environments that have been shown to support the development of multicultural capabilities (Gayles, 2012; Jehangir, Williams, & Jeske, 2012; Lundberg, 2012; Patton, 2006; Waldron-Moore, 2011).

Physical environments provide practical and symbolic spaces for students in the college community (Strange & Banning, 2001). These settings can influence the development of multicultural efficacy through contexts such as cultural centers, and physical materials like artistic displays or other creative objects (Strange & Banning, 2001).

Human aggregate environments, spaces characterized by human interaction (Strange & Banning, 2001), also influence the development of multicultural abilities. Human aggregate contexts grant students exposure to groups of people culturally similar or different from themselves (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Lundberg, 2012). Through exchanges with diverse faculty, mentors, and peers, and participation in group activities, students can develop their multicultural competencies within these contexts (Chavez et al., 2003; Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Gayles, 2012; Jones et al., 2013; Landreman, Rasmussen, King, & Jiang, 2007; Lundberg, 2012; Patterson, 2012; Pope et al., 2009; Waldron-Moore, 2011).

Organizational environments include establishments with collective objectives, protocol, and resources (Strange & Banning, 2001). Examples of organizational contexts that influence the development of multicultural capacities include multicultural programs and services, and student organizations (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Denson & Chang, 2009; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Kuk & Banning, 2010; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Patterson, 2012, Pope et al., 2009).

The second area that represents the development of multicultural competence describes the processes involved in the experience. The processes involved in the development of multicultural competence are characterized by a series of psychosocial occurrences (Merrill et al., 2012). Experiences within multicultural settings can prompt *cognitive, affective*, and *behavioral* processes that lead to the development of multicultural efficacy (Chavez et al., 2003).

Examples of cognitive processes include self-reflection and questioning (Chavez et al., 2003; Jehangir et al., 2012). Questioning refers to the mental process of comparing one's own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to others (Chavez et al., 2003). Affective processes can involve covert and overt emotional responses such as anxiety, frustration, or even positive feelings of anticipation and eagerness (Bresciani, 2008; Chavez et al., 2003; Gayles, 2012). Behavioral processes are regarded as the physical responses that manifest as a result of one's cognitive and/or emotional state (Chavez et al., 2003). Additionally, behavioral processes may involve the undergoing of new experiences or avoidance thereof, depending on one's level of comfort within the multicultural context (Chavez et al., 2003; Jones et al., 2013; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

The final area that describes multicultural competence is comprised of the outcomes that manifest as a result of multicultural contexts and processes. The outcomes can be understood through *cognitive*, *intrapersonal*, and *interpersonal* categories (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). Multicultural competence enhancement can manifest in the form of cognitive development, whereby one gains greater awareness of their experiences and that of others, and possess increased feelings of comfort in diverse settings (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Intrapersonal development functions as another display of multicultural capacity whereby an individual establishes a sense of cultural identity and participates in self-exploration (Jones et al., 2013; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Interpersonal development involves the ability to interact with culturally diverse individuals (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Development in this area could appear in the form of effective negotiating, communication, and advocacy abilities, as well as empathy, trust, and respect for diverse others (Chavez et al., 2003; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Overall, a context-process-outcome conceptualization (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989) helps to understand the development of

multicultural competencies among student leaders. Another topic to consider when exploring the idea of multicultural competence is the concept of leadership.

Multicultural Competence and Leadership Capacity

Authors (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012) have understood multicultural competence to involve development in three areas: cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal. Comparable to multicultural competence is leadership capacity, which is also comprised of development in cognitive (Dugan & Komives, 2007), intrapersonal (Odom, 2012), and interpersonal dimensions (Odom, 2012; Patterson, 2012). The works of researchers (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Odom, 2012; Patterson, 2012) provided inferences to the connections between multicultural competence and leadership. These implications include ideas that the experiences that championed the development of multicultural competence, i.e., exposure to various cultural viewpoints, understanding of self, and interaction with diverse others, also led to leadership outcomes (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Odom, 2012; Patterson, 2012). For this reason, this study explored the development of multicultural competencies among undergraduates involved in leadership roles, in efforts to highlight the importance of examining multicultural competence through the lens of leadership contexts.

Research on Multicultural Competence

Studies have addressed multicultural competence, related topics, and/or elements of multicultural efficacy (e.g., cultural identity development) (Ahmed, et al., 2008; Chavez, Guido-DiBrito, & Mallory, 2003; Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Hipolito-Delgado, Cook, Avrus, & Bonham, 2011; Jehangir et al., 2012; Jones, Sander, & Booker, 2013; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Lichenstein, Lindstrom, Povenmire-Kirk, 2008; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Merrill, Braskamp, & Braskamp, 2012; Nelson-Laird, Bridges, Morelon-Quainoo, &

Williams, 2007; Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012; Pope, et al., 2004, 2009). Specifically, researchers have investigated multicultural competence among undergraduate students (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Golden, 2010; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012) and students of color (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Nelson-Laird et al., 2007; Pizzolato et al., 2012). Likewise, this investigation studied the development of multicultural competence among undergraduate students of color.

Regarding methodological approach, researchers have conducted numerous quantitative studies on matters connected to multicultural competence (e.g., Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Popov et al., 2012), while limited qualitative studies exist (e.g., Harper & Quaye, 2007; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Nevertheless, this study underwent qualitative inquiry to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

Problem Statements

Generally, this study explored the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies of student leaders. However, literature on topics related to multicultural competence development revealed numerous, specific issues, of which I investigated in this study. This way, I was able to address all identified issues connected to the present topic.

As noted previously, the United States is progressively comprised of individuals from various cultural backgrounds (Ahmed et al., 2011). As a result of the increasing cultural heterogeneity in the nation, greater complexities associated with understanding and functioning effectively within a culturally diverse society manifest (Ahmed et al., 2011; Kumar et al., 2011). These complications could lead to challenges in developing multicultural abilities (Ahmed et al., 2011; Bresciani, 2008; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang,

2012). Within postsecondary settings, researchers (Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Inkelas, 2004) agreed that as students experience multicultural learning opportunities, factors within those conditions could complicate the development of multicultural competence. For this reason, this study investigated the experiences of student leaders to gain insights on ways in which these individuals navigate challenges related to the enhancement of multicultural competence in a culturally pluralistic society.

King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) explained the interconnectedness of various domains of development. Similarly, Maramba and Velasquez (2012) emphasized the importance of studying multiple domains of development together; describing that development in one domain mediates the development of other important outcomes that characterize multicultural competence. Although comprehensive approaches (i.e., considering all dimensions of development) help to understand multicultural competence development (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012), Maramba and Velasquez argued that many researchers failed to apply holistic frameworks to explain the development of multicultural abilities. Rather than addressing the development of multicultural competencies comprehensively, researchers have focused solely on one area of development without addressing other interrelated areas of development (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). To address this issue, this study considered various frameworks to attain an all-inclusive, comprehensive understanding of the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

Researchers (Denson & Chang, 2009; Smith, Parr, Woods, & Bauer, 2010) reported that students believed that frequent exposure to diversity or multicultural contexts led to advancements in their multicultural capacities. However, Lundberg (2012) contended the aforementioned finding, reporting that frequent intercultural exchanges led to unfavorable

outcomes whereby study participants recounted less gain from cross-cultural engagements with peers. To address these conflicting reports, this study explored how student leaders perceived the influence that frequency of contact with culturally pluralistic contexts had on their development of multicultural efficacies.

Contrary to positive findings such as enhancements in communications and relationships among groups involved in multicultural higher education environments, Baughman and Bruce (2011) reported the occurrence of segregation between cultural groups in postsecondary settings. Similarly, Hu and Kuk (2003) implied that the likelihood of frequent interaction with individuals ethnically diverse from oneself is reduced as students advance in academic year. By exploring the experiences of upperclass student leaders, this study offered these individuals opportunities to disclose and reflect on accounts of segregation that may have transpired in their experiences.

Landreman et al. (2007) suggested that several participants of their study did not understand their (participants) multicultural experiences until after commencement from college. Landreman et al. presented this proposition as the participants of the study did not respond with actions or behaviors, including social justice advocacy, following their multicultural experiences to demonstrate advancement in multicultural abilities. This study explored with student leaders their understanding of their experiences within multicultural contexts, allowing the opportunity to make sense of any multicultural accounts prior to graduating from college.

Regarding the types of studies that relate to the development of multicultural competence, a considerable number of quantitative studies exist (e.g., Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Popov et al., 2012) while qualitative inquiries on the current topic remain underexplored. This investigation adds to the qualitative body of literature. Also, this qualitative study supports and follows-up with quantitative studies, providing rich and

detailed insights to the experiences affecting the development of multicultural efficacies (Creswell, 2012).

Maramba and Velasquez (2012) also stressed that researchers should focus additional attention on the experiences and processes of multicultural capacity advancement and identity development for students of color. To contribute towards these suggestions, this study examined the developmental processes and the intrapersonal domain of development of student leaders who represent several ethnicities and cultures.

This investigation helps to fill what continues to be a gap in student affairs literature, i.e., studies about the experiences of undergraduates that represent various culture-based student organizations. The body of research remains insufficient on various cultural student groups. Nevertheless, this study gathered information from students who represent various cultural backgrounds and cultural organizations.

In summarizing the views of prominent scholars (Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1990; Greenleaf, 1977; Wren, 1995), Eich (2008) highlighted that our nation remains in a "leadership crisis", one that requires better leadership in all areas of society (p. 176). As inferred in Wilson (2012), multicultural competence functions as a key component of effective leadership. For this reason, the leadership issue presented by Eich could be largely due to the underdevelopment of multicultural competencies among leaders in society. To address this issue, this study generated insights on the development of multicultural competencies, information that could assist in formulating initiatives to address the aforementioned leadership crisis in our nation.

Importance of Study

Overall, this study was important for several reasons. First, the field of student affairs holds a significant obligation to address multicultural issues through the provision of research

(Pope et al., 2009). These scholarly efforts could provide the insights necessary to enhance learning and development opportunities for college students (Pope et al., 2009). Secondly, without the development of multicultural competencies among individuals, social issues such as cultural discrimination and prejudice can prevail, negatively impacting cross-cultural relationships in communities and professional settings (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). To contribute towards the prevention and eradication of the aforementioned social ills, this study provided scholarly support to higher education professionals so that we can shape programs and services that will help to address these issues. These interventions, in turn, support the development of multicultural capacities for college students, allowing them to attain the qualities necessary to thrive as multiculturally competent global citizens, and future professionals and leaders (Jehangir et al., 2012; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Popov et al., 2012). For these reasons, this study purported to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Moreover, the following research question guided this study: *What are the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders?*

Framing the Study

For this qualitative investigation, I explored the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. I considered various frameworks in efforts to attain comprehensive understandings of the experiences of these individuals. Appendix D details the areas for which I inquired to attain full insights on the research topic. The combining of several existing frameworks (Chavez et al., 2003; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012; Strange & Banning, 2001) helped to create a conceptualization that illustrates the development of multicultural competence as understood in this study (Appendix D). I used the developed model to organize parts of the literature review and to inform the interview protocol for this study. I

also reviewed this model when discussing the findings of this study. This allowed me to discuss any similarities and differences between the findings of this study and the model.

The use of a context-process-outcome framework (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989) conveys the order that development occurs. The literature review provides a comprehensive elucidation of this framework. However, the next paragraph provides a synopsis of the conceptualization of the development of multicultural competence in the following paragraph.

To understand the contexts involved in the development of multicultural competence, I applied the Person-Environment model to explain four types of contexts or environments (constructed, human aggregate, organizational, and physical) that influence student development (Strange & Banning, 2001). In exploring the processes involved in the development of multicultural competence, I employed a structure that categorizes developmental processes into three areas: cognitive, affective, and behavioral (as utilized in Chavez et al., 2003). Finally, to understand the outcomes that manifest as a result of exposure to multicultural contexts and the undergoing of developmental processes, I highlighted three domains of development (cognitive, intrapersonal, interpersonal) (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). Overall, I applied a context-process-outcome conceptualization (Godwin & Scanzoni, 1989) to offer an expansive theoretical explanation of the development of multicultural competence. Nevertheless, I identified themes from this study that represent the lived experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies of student leaders.

This qualitative investigation undertook a phenomenological approach to explore the essence of the phenomenon under study i.e., experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders (Creswell, 2012). Social constructivist views and my axiological stance (position within the study) also shaped the philosophical parameters of

this investigation (Creswell, 2012). Social constructivism refers to the concept that individuals hold subjective understandings of their experiences (Creswell, 2012). My axiological stance or position within the study acknowledges ways in which my histories, values, and viewpoints may have impacted the investigation (Creswell, 2012).

Regarding the participants of this study, I utilized a purposive, criterion sample of participants who self-reported that they experienced the phenomenon under investigation. Research participants attended a mid-sized, private, Catholic university located in the Northeast region of the United States. Participants included upperclass undergraduate students who served in leadership positions in culture, diversity, and/or social justice-oriented student organizations. Undergraduate students for this research completed, at minimum, two academic years as college students prior to the study. Moreover, I established a participant-group consisting of student leaders who remained in their leadership positions for at least one semester.

As the researcher, I served as the chief instrument for information-gathering and interpretation. Through the facilitation of one-time, individual interviews, I asked open-ended, semi-structured questions to gather information. A discussion about artifact items, such as tangible objects that represent participants' development of multicultural competency and the multicultural efficacy self-assessment, were facilitated to enhance the depth of each interview. These artifacts were also helpful in ensuring that participants possessed some degree of multicultural competency. Next, I used the data to make interpretations and organize explanations of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Specifically, I created a list of significant statements, and then searched for patterns and themes to contextualize the essence of the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders (Creswell, 2012).

Throughout this investigation, however, I facilitated measures to ensure this study's quality and ethical stance. Through disclosures of my positionality, provision of a detailed methodological description of the study, recognition of the limitations of the study, thorough inquiring, member checks, peer reviews, good-quality recording of interviews, thick descriptions, and reflexive journaling, I upheld the confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability of this study (Creswell, 2012; Seidman, 2006; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). These measures of quality maintain the overall trustworthiness of the study (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Chapter one, I introduced my plan to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Now that I have identified the purpose of this study, this chapter presents a comprehensive review of literature to establish a foundation for the study and to enhance familiarity with the available information on the subject (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Moreover, this chapter highlights the following as it pertains to multicultural competence: significance, definitions, taxonomies, importance of holistic approaches, and connections to concepts of leadership.

This chapter also explains ecological factors associated with the development of multicultural competence, explaining three parts that make up this phenomenon: the contexts, processes, and outcomes. Additionally, I address discrepancies in the literature in hopes of providing a more thorough understanding of issues related to the present topic. Overall, reviewing existing scholarly works regarding the aforementioned areas will provide the necessary backdrop to understand the purpose of this study, as it explored the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

Relevance of Multicultural Competence

Throughout the 21st century, the world has undergone social revolutions that have transformed the current context of the United States (Kumar, Anjum, & Sinha, 2011; Pope, Mueller, & Reynolds, 2009; Stebleton, 2012; Thompson & Neville, 1999). Events such as World War II (Kumar et al., 2011), immigration (Stebleton, 2012) and civil rights movements (Pope et

al., 2009; Thompson & Neville, 1999) have led to dramatic changes to the demographics within the United States. Individuals from various racial and cultural groups inhabited the U.S., leading to a vastly heterogeneous country populated by residents who hold diverse viewpoints and values (Ahmed, Wilson, Henriksen, & Jones, 2011).

Over time, the U.S. social landscape continues to grow in diversity which therefore, potentially complicates the awareness, understandings, and appreciation of one's own culture as well as communication with diverse others (Ahmed et al., 2011; Kumar et al., 2011). The significant increase in cultural pluralism in the U.S. validates the need for citizens to hold better understandings of cultural differences (Ahmed et al., 2011; Bresciani, 2008).

An enhanced comprehension of diversity allows individuals to gain a greater sense of themselves, promotes empathy for others, and increases the likelihood of effective interactions between cultural groups (Ahmed et al., 2011; Bresciani, 2008). In concurrence, authors (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Pizzolato, Nguyen, Johnston, & Wang, 2012) agreed that cultural diversity serves as a catalyst for the development of self-awareness and identity. Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002) and King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) supported that the need for interdependent relationships between diverse individuals remains critical in producing citizens who can successfully engage and relate to others when presented with diversity-related concerns. Consumers have commonly referred to this interpersonal ability as *multicultural competence*, which Pope, Reynolds, and Mueller (2004) defined as "the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to work with others who are culturally different from self in meaningful, relevant, and productive ways" (p. 13). This chapter provides a more detailed description of multicultural competence in the subsequent section.

Just as social movements of the past have intensified the need to develop multicultural competencies in individuals over time, the intercultural tensions that arise from current national and international events urgently suggest the need to develop multiculturally competent citizens (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). In other words, the advancement of multicultural competence remains a social justice imperative (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005), although Waldron-Moore (2011) warned about the arduous responsibility of creating citizens and leaders of a global society.

In explaining the challenging feat of developing multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills, Jehangir et al. (2012) conveyed that advancement in multicultural competence remains a controversial and complex process among global citizens. Similarly, Pope et al. (2009) mentioned that multicultural issues remain unsettled, despite the efforts postsecondary sectors offer to address these matters (Anderson, 2008; Levine & Cureton, 1998). Additionally, the works of scholars have inferred that the development of multicultural capacities requires intent and does not occur automatically. Becoming multiculturally competent citizens of a diverse society requires individuals to undergo the purposeful process of learning (Chavez et al., 2003; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Jehangir et al., 2012; Miller-Lane et al., 2007).

Overall, authors (Chavez et al., 2003; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Jehangir et al., 2012; Miller-Lane et al., 2007; Pope et al., 2009; Waldron-Moore, 2011) have recounted the complexities associated with the development of multicultural capabilities. However, Jehangir and colleagues maintained that the development of multicultural competence among citizens remains a critical undertaking that requires individuals to attain multicultural understanding through education or learning.

Einfeld and Collins (2008) further elucidated the importance of multicultural competence, reporting that deficiency in this area leads to social inequalities, prejudice, and discrimination. Also, multicultural competence allows individuals to cultivate relationships across cultural lines and eliminate cultural biases, which therefore potentially enables reconciliation among groups (Einfeld & Collins, 2008).

To achieve multicultural competence, various establishments work toward cultivating multicultural environments (Popov et al., 2012). Some of these institutions include colleges and universities (Popov et al., 2012). In the postsecondary context, multiculturally competent educators as well as diversity-supporting efforts help to cultivate positive learning outcomes for culturally heterogeneous college students, equipping them with the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to thrive as inclusive citizens of a global society (Miller-Lane et al., 2007; Pope et al., 2009; Popov et al., 2012).

Following graduation from college, many students will enter their respective professions in this increasingly diverse nation and across the world, and will need to demonstrate multicultural skills as they interact with various groups different from themselves (Popov et al., 2012). Further, Popov et al. (2012) argued that graduates should not only be professionally competent, but also skillful in working in culturally diverse groups within professional settings. Popov and colleagues noted one factor to illustrate the need for graduates entering the work force to possess culturally pluralistic abilities; explaining that international group work continues to grow as an important activity in work environments. International group work involves exchanges between members of various cultural groups (Popov et al., 2012).

Overall, the after effects of social movements, the increasing diversity of the nation, and the demands placed on higher education institutions confirm the importance of the development

of multicultural competence among national and global citizens (Ahmed, et al., 2011; Kumar, et al., 2011; Popov et al., 2012; Stebleton, 2012). To further highlight the responsibilities of colleges and universities regarding the development of multicultural competence, the following section discusses the role of postsecondary education regarding these matters.

Role of Higher Education in the Development of Multicultural Competence

Diversity and multiculturalism, regardless of how they have been named, have persisted as institutional goals in higher education for the past five decades and will remain critical objectives prospectively (Pope et al., 2009). Commonly, higher education institutes across the nation give precedence to diversity and multiculturalism as these establishments recognize the need to establish programs and services that will challenge students to better understand and interact with racially and ethnically diverse individuals (Gurin et al., 2002). Landreman et al. (2007) explained that postsecondary institutions provide the fundamental means necessary for students to engage in social contexts that offer various cross-cultural experiences. Cheng and Zhao (2006) described colleges and universities as "fertile ground that fosters student development in many dimensions" (p. 31). These areas can involve multicultural competence development in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains or dimensions (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill, Braskamp, & Braskamp, 2012). Higher education institutions commonly enlist the development of multicultural competence as an institutional goal and a desired collegiate outcome (Gayles, 2012; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Patterson, 2012), and allocate resources to demonstrate their acceptance and reception to ideas and initiatives that support this objective (Cheng & Zhao, 2006).

Scholars continue to communicate the responsibilities and outcomes regarding the intervention of postsecondary education on the development of multicultural competence

(Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Gayles, 2012; Jehangir et al., 2012; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Patterson, 2012; Pope et al., 2009). Einfeld and Collins (2008) reported that American higher education fosters the development of good citizens who practice responsibility, good moral judgment, and productivity. Moreover, Jehangir et al. (2012) indicated that the roles of colleges and universities involve the preparation of global citizens who can effectively engage in an increasingly complex world and examine their own place in the world. King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) supported this idea, reporting that postsecondary institutes require educators to produce graduates who understand themselves and the world in more advanced and empowering ways, and can apply these insights when necessary. To achieve these goals, Pope et al. (2009) instructed that colleges and universities should provide opportunities for intergroup exchanges. These interactions offer outlets for students to acknowledge the presence of social inequities and forms of oppression, and opportunities to make meaning of those exchanges and experiences (Pope et al., 2009). Einfeld and Collins debated that if the goals of postsecondary pedagogy involve education for democratic citizenship and social justice, then higher education professionals must provide social justice education and foster multicultural competence in their students. Also, educators must carefully examine how they design educational experiences, so that they may foster a sense of empowerment and commitment in students that will motivate them (students) to work for social justice (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). Lastly, researchers (Gayles, 2012; Patterson, 2012) summarized that higher education plays a role in preparing graduates for the professional world and for the overall good of society by developing their multicultural competencies.

Within higher education, student affairs professionals have always played an essential part in addressing multicultural issues (Pope et al., 2009). Student affairs professionals in

postsecondary sectors include educators, practitioners, and scholars who bolster institutional goals by supporting the holistic development of students through student programs and services (Komives, Woodard, & Associates, 2003). Also, student affairs professionals have addressed diversity-related issues through the production of multicultural research (Pope et al., 2009). Multicultural scholarship contributes to understanding the dynamic and multifaceted relations between people, past societal events, postsecondary contexts, and culture (Pope et al., 2009). Student affairs practitioners also respond to multicultural issues through the provision of campus spaces, programs, and services, some of which include multicultural student organizations, educational sessions for diversity-related topics, and cultural centers (Pope et al., 2009).

In summary, numerous scholarly works have indicated that higher education and student affairs professionals hold critical positions in developing the multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004) of its constituents and have illustrated ways in which these resources must shape the development of students so that they thrive as effective leaders in a culturally heterogeneous society. To attain a deeper understanding of the presenting issue of this study, the following section details concepts of multicultural competence.

Defining Multicultural Competence

As reported in Pope et al.'s (2009) overview on diversity research in the field of student affairs, Pope and Reynolds (1997) first introduced the concept of multicultural competence to the profession. Hamilton (2006) recounted that multicultural competence originated as a term in the 1980s from counseling psychology literature. Stewart (2008) explained that multicultural competence involves an increase in self-awareness as well as a greater understanding of other culturally diverse individuals. Additionally, Stewart explained that multicultural competence requires one to apply multiple cultural perspectives and insights to avoid ethnocentrism (i.e.,

ideas or feelings of ethnic or cultural group superiority) (Bizumic, Duckitt, Popadic, Dru, & Krauss, 2009) and participate in intercultural interactions and experiences.

Numerous researchers (Bresciani, 2008; Earley & Ang, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Landreman et al., 2007; Merrill, et al., 2012; Miller-Lane et al., 2007; Pizzolato et al., 2012) of related topics have utilized and proposed various terms to describe concepts similar to multicultural competence. Scholars have used terms such as civic multicultural competence (Miller-Lane et al., 2007), critical intercultural consciousness (Landreman et al., 2007), cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012), global competence (Bresciani, 2008; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012), global leadership competence (Manning, 2003), global perspective (Merrill et al., 2012), individual diversity development, intercultural maturity (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005), and self-authorship (Pizzolato et al., 2012).

Cultural intelligence refers to an individual's cognitive, motivational, and behavioral capacity to acclimate and operate effectively in new or culturally heterogeneous contexts (Earley & Ang, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012). Miller-Lane et al. (2007) concluded that civic multicultural competence requires the capacity to embrace social inclusivity and equity. Similarly, Einfeld and Collins (2008) argued that multicultural competence and social justice function interdependently, as multicultural competence moderates one's capacity to work towards social justice. Landreman et al. (2007) asserted that true multicultural competence goes beyond the development of competence. Rather, multicultural competence involves the acquisition of what Landreman and colleagues classified as critical intercultural consciousness, whereby individuals not only transform their views and understandings, and maintain meaningful cross-cultural relationships, but also act as advocates for social justice. Merrill et al. (2012) noted

that gaining global perspective requires one to attain knowledge, attitudes, and abilities critical for cross-cultural exchanges. Global perspective also involves the holistic development of more complex cognitions, self-understanding, and interpersonal affairs (Merrill et al., 2012). Bresciani (2008) defined global competence as the capacity to receive and openly reflect on information expressed by diverse others. Global competence also involves the ability to share one's perspectives and sentiments in a comfortable and assertive fashion while remaining cognizant of other cultural factors that may exist within the presenting contexts (Bresciani, 2008). Pizzolato et al. (2012) simplified the concept of self-authorship, stating that "three key questions represent the unique developmental activities of the three dimensions of self-authorship: Cognitive (How do I know?), intrapersonal (Who am I?), and interpersonal (How am I in relationships with others?)" (p. 656).

Overall, numerous scholars have conceptualized multicultural competence and other similar concepts, despite Hunter, White, and Godbey's (2006) contention regarding the difficulty and lack of consensus in operationalizing concepts related to global competence. Now that this section has conferred the conceptualizations of multicultural competence, the next section highlights various professional fields that have facilitated scholarly works on multicultural competence, uncovering the variety of contexts that address this topic.

Studies on Multicultural Competence

Scholars from various fields have written about multicultural competence and related concepts (Ahmed, et al., 2008; Chavez et al., 2003; Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Hipolito-Delgado, Cook, Avrus, & Bonham, 2011; Jehangir et al., 2012; Jones, Sander, & Booker, 2013; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Lichenstein, Lindstrom, Povenmire-Kirk, 2008; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Merrill et al., 2012; Nelson-Laird, Bridges, Morelon-Quainoo, &

Williams, 2007; Pizzolato, et al., 2012; Pope, et al., 2004, 2009). Jones et al.'s (2013) work pertains to the cultural competence of psychology trainees. Likewise, other authors (e.g., Ahmed et al., 2011; Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Hipolito-Delgado et al., 2011) focused their research on the development of multicultural competence among masters-level students and professionals in the field of counselor education. Lichenstein et al. (2008) concentrated on multicultural competence training for professionals in education and rehabilitation occupations. Within higher education, Chavez et al. (2003) proposed a model for individual diversity development among students and postsecondary educators and practitioners. Also, Bresciani (2008) produced a literature synthesis that examined concepts of global competencies for student affairs/services professionals in higher education. Nevertheless, Pope et al.'s (2004) work on multicultural competence among student affairs educators prevails as a leading voice in explaining multicultural competence in the area of student affairs.

Similar to this study's focus on undergraduate students, scholars have investigated the development of multicultural competence (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005), global perspectives (Merrill et al., 2012), and cultural adaptability (Golden, 2010) among college students. Popov et al. (2012) researched the experiences of college students in multicultural settings, and King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) and Merrill et al. (2012) utilized a holistic framework consisting of cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains to understand the multicultural competence development of this population. Researchers (Jehangir et al., 2012; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Pizzolato et al., 2012) studied the development of ethnic identity or intrapersonal components of multicultural competence. Regarding students of color, scholars have examined the development of ethnic identity (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012) and self-authorship (Pizzolato et al., 2012) among this group. In a study about the campus

engagement of Hispanic and African-American college students, Nelson-Laird et al. (2007) investigated a wide range of outcomes including cognitive development. According to several works (Earley & Ang, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012; Pizzolato et al., 2012), cognitive development operates as one function of multicultural competence and other similar concepts.

Researchers have utilized diverse methodologies to gather information on the topic of multicultural competence. Few studies exist that involved qualitative approaches (e.g., Harper & Quaye, 2007; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012), while, numerous other investigations used quantitative measures to examine multicultural competence (e.g., Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Popov et al., 2012). One example of a quantitative study includes that of Merrill et al. (2012). For this particular quantitative inquiry, the investigators implemented a survey instrument that examined the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal dimensions of development among college students' with the goal of measuring the attainment and development of global perspectives among the participant group (Merrill et al., 2012). Alternatively, one qualitative study utilized in-depth interview methods to discover meanings from student perceptions and reflections of diversity-related experiences (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012).

In summary, researchers from various professional fields, including student affairs, have produced a considerable amount of literature on the topic of multicultural competence. Focus areas of these studies ranged from education to health fields with attention given to varied populations, including students and professionals. Despite the existence of research on multicultural competence, Pope et al. (2009) asserted that the field of student affairs assumes a significant responsibility over multicultural issues and must continue scholarly efforts to gain

insights on ways to enhance and support multicultural learning and development. Overall, this section discussed existing literature from various professional fields regarding the topic of multicultural competence. In an attempt to further explain the mechanisms of multicultural competence, the following section details taxonomies or frameworks used to understand the concept.

Conceptual Models of Multicultural Competency Development

King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) informed that overtime, scholars have applied models and frameworks to provide helpful beginning points for recognizing aspects associated with multicultural competence. Most common, researchers have applied conceptual models that view multicultural competence in the context of awareness, knowledge, skills (e.g., Arrendondo et al., 1996; Bresciani, 2008; Jones et al., 2013; Pope et al., 2004), and advocacy (e.g., Jones et al., 2013). Nevertheless, King and Baxter-Magolda proposed a model that describes three domains different from the commonly used *awareness, knowledge, skills,* and *advocacy* framework. King and Baxter-Magolda created the Three-Dimensional Trajectory of Intercultural Maturity (denoted as the Intercultural Maturity model in this study) and explained that the framework describes how college students become gradually more capable of comprehending and behaving in interculturally responsive and appropriate ways. Additionally, King and Baxter-Magolda explained that the model details how the development of intercultural maturity progresses and manifests in three dimensions. King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) inferred that many scholars have limited their exploration of multicultural competence development by disregarding a focus on multiple, interrelated domains. Rather, numerous studies focused attention exclusively on one domain of development at a time (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). As a result, King and Baxter-Magolda established a multidimensional model to function as a holistic structure that provides a

more comprehensive, integrated, and impactful conceptual framework for understanding and promoting multicultural competence development.

The Intercultural Maturity model manifests in a 3 × 3 arrangement, connecting the three domains of development (cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal) with three levels of development (initial, intermediate, and mature) (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005, p. 575). The authors cautioned that the three proposed developmental levels represent brief, broad descriptions of each benchmark, not exhaustive explanations of capacities at each level (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). For the study, I utilized the model of Intercultural Maturity; however, I intended to gain insights regarding the three dimensions of the framework (i.e., cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal) rather than the three levels of the model (i.e., initial, intermediate, and mature).

King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) informed that they utilized and synthesized various works from college student and adult development literature to establish their operationalization of Intercultural Maturity. More specifically, King and Baxter-Magolda reported that their Intercultural Maturity model mainly derives from Kegan's (1994) model of lifespan development, which integrates three dimensions or domains of development, i.e., cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal.

King and Baxter-Magolda defined the cognitive domain of development as ways in which individuals view the world. The cognitive dimension addresses how individuals construct their views and create a meaning-making system (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Ways in which individuals understand knowledge and how it is gained shape their constructed views (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). Further, the trajectory of the cognitive

dimension describes the ways in which people think about and understand diversity issues (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012).

The second domain, the intrapersonal dimension of development, focuses on how individuals understand their own opinions, principles, and sense of self, and use these conceptualizations to guide their decisions and actions (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). Also, the intrapersonal dimension facilitates how individuals utilize their understandings of diversity to decide on how they perceive their racial and ethnic identities (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Regarding ethnic identity, Maramba and Velasquez (2012) recommended that prospective research focus on experiences and processes that contribute to students' development of ethnic identity. Maramba and Velasquez further suggested that future studies concentrate on understanding the extent to which students of color regard their ethnic identity as a developmental challenge. In short, the intrapersonal domain describes how individuals see themselves (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). However, the third domain, interpersonal development, Kegan (1994) highlights how individuals view themselves in relationship to, and with others (i.e., their outlooks, ideals and actions), and make decisions in social conditions (as summarized in King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

The interpersonal domain of multicultural competence development involves the aptitude to interrelate effectively, work cooperatively, and cultivate relationships with diverse others (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). Interpersonal competence also requires one to demonstrate genuine positive regard and consideration for diverse viewpoints and experiences while maintaining one's own integrity (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) acknowledged that other theorists explained development in the interpersonal domain, noting Chickering and Reisser's (1993) Identity Development model. The Identity

Development model developed by Chickering and Reisser describes the development of mature interpersonal relationships among college students (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Relatedly, King and Baxter-Magolda highlighted that the interpersonal domain (referred to as the mature interpersonal relationships or interpersonal competence vector) in the model of Identity Development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) also focuses on how students come to appreciate differences across social and cross-cultural confines. Simply stated, the interpersonal dimension of development details one's desire and ability to relate to others (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012).

Understanding Multicultural Competence through Holistic Approaches

As described previously, King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) proposed a multidimensional framework to explain intercultural maturity comprehensively. The domains described in the Intercultural Maturity model function interdependently as elements of each dimension require certain qualities found in one or two of the other domains (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). For example, one's views of themselves (intrapersonal dimension) influences how that individual relates to others (interpersonal domain) (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Several scholars agreed that dimensions of development overlap, and therefore, maintained that the application of an integrated framework helps to better understand multicultural competence (Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Bresciani, 2008; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Merrill et al., 2012). Maramba and Velasquez (2012) illustrated the connection between the intrapersonal domain of development and other domains, analyzing that identity development operates as an outcome of student growth and mediates the development of other important outcomes. Similarly, Bresciani (2008) contended that in order to demonstrate global competency, which

incorporates qualities from all three dimensions (cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal), one must first develop an ability to understand oneself.

To further demonstrate the intersecting nature of an individual's cognitive, interpersonal, and interpersonal development, Merrill et al. (2012) expressed that leaders and educators in higher education should guide students in learning about their epistemological processes, social identities, and ways in which they relate to diverse others. These areas of learning address development in all three domains discussed in the Intercultural Maturity model (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Moreover, utilizing holistic viewpoints to understand intercultural maturity could help to recognize the insubstantiality of simpler, surface-level frameworks to multicultural competence that do not incorporate one or more dimensions of development (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

Overall, scholars have embraced holistic approaches to better understand the development of multicultural competence (Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Bresciani, 2008; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Merrill et al., 2012). Likewise, researchers have also explored multicultural competence through leadership-related paradigms, connecting concepts of multicultural competence to leadership capacity (Antonio, 2001; Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Kumar et al., 2011). To explore the linkages between multicultural competence and leadership, the next section discusses ways in which scholars have described the relationship between the two concepts.

Connections between Multicultural Competence and Leadership Capacity

Scholars have linked multicultural competence and leadership ability to one another (Antonio, 2001; Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Kumar et al., 2011). Some researchers refer to multicultural competence and leadership as interrelated concepts (e.g.,

Antonio, 2001) while others refer to multicultural competence as a function of leadership behavior (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2007). Regardless of how one deems the relationship between multicultural competence and leadership, scholars have attested to the association both concepts have to one another (Antonio, 2001; Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Kumar et al., 2011). In Pope et al.'s (2009) review of multicultural research, the authors warned that categorizing multicultural scholarship as a separate area of study thwarts the progression and integration of multicultural research and issues that exist in educational contexts. Pope et al.'s assertion supports the connection multicultural competence has with various other notions, one of which includes leadership ability. Similarly, Dugan et al. (2012) discussed the link between two socially-fashioned concepts, disclosing that race directly influences leadership. Since race shares a connection with culture (American Psychological Association, 2002) and leadership (Dugan et al., 2012), linking leadership capacity to the ability to effectively respond to culture-related factors (i.e., multicultural competence) remains a valid practice (Kumar et al., 2011). Establishing multiculturally competent leaders is of particular importance and prevails as an important issue to address, especially in considering the significant increase in globalization over time (Kumar et al., 2011).

Parallel to multicultural competence, leadership development involves growth in the cognitive (Dugan & Komives, 2007), intrapersonal (Odom, 2012), and interpersonal (Odom, 2012; Patterson, 2012) dimensions of development. In Dugan and Komives' (2007) study on the development of leadership capacity of college students, they found that exposure to diverse cultural views and perspectives added to leadership outcomes. Odom (2012) discussed that continual development of self-awareness influences the development of leadership identity. Regarding interpersonal development, Dugan and Komives discovered that participation in

social exchanges with diverse individuals served as the greatest source of attaining leadership outcomes. In support, researchers (Odom, 2012; Patterson, 2012) approved that interpersonal efficacy, or the ability to develop relationships and work with others in personal and professional settings, plays a significant role in upholding a leadership identity that promotes the successful accomplishment of a goal or positive change. Overall, scholarly works have demonstrated that connections exist between multicultural competence and leadership capacity (Antonio, 2001; Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2007; Kumar et al., 2011).

So far, this chapter explained the relevance of multicultural competence as well as the roles higher education play to support this notion. Also, this chapter elucidated the concept of multicultural competence, associated models, and links between multicultural competence and leadership efficacy. The following section describes additional facets of multicultural competence which include contexts and processes that impact the development of multicultural competence, as well as outcomes that result from these conditions.

Conceptualizing Multicultural Competency Development

Prior to examining the ecological factors associated with the development of multicultural competence, one must consider the relativity of student experiences (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Lundberg, 2012). Authors identified that race and ethnicity (Lundberg, 2012) and developmental stages (Cheng & Zhao, 2006) influence the types of experiences students encounter. Specifically, Lundberg (2012) noted that factors such as race/ethnicity influence ways in which students interact in diverse settings. Cheng and Zhao (2006) explained that differences in multicultural outlooks and actions depend on a student's developmental stage. Both authors (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Lundberg, 2012) implied that factors such as race/ethnicity and stage of development lead to relative and varied outcomes of multicultural competence.

Contexts that Influence the Development of Multicultural Competence

Bresciani (2008) cautioned that competency development becomes unachievable if individuals do not have access to the pathways necessary for the acquisition of those abilities. As a result, this section details the contexts and activities that influence the development of multicultural competence. Specifically, these conditions operate as the means to which individuals undergo experiences that affect their development of multicultural competencies. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the various contexts that influence the development of multicultural competence, this section explains these settings through the lens of a Person-Environment model proposed by Strange and Banning (2001). This ecological framework explains four types of environments that influence students on a college campus. The four contexts include constructed, physical, human aggregate, and organizational environments (Strange & Banning, 2001).

Numerous researchers discussed contexts that support the development of students (e.g., Gayles, 2012; Jehangir et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2013; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Patterson, 2012). Specifically, scholars identified socially constructed components of environments (Strange & Banning, 2001) that influence the development of multicultural competence and leadership abilities (e.g., Jones et al., 2013; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012). Strange and Banning (2001) stated that constructed environments focus on the subjective views and experiences of individuals and is best understood through collective perceptions of the students within them. Waldron-Moore (2011) asserted that positive environments motivate students to learn and grow. To promote positive contexts, scholars (Gayles, 2012; Lundberg, 2012; Patton, 2006; Waldron-Moore, 2011) instructed that educators, administrators, and other personnel must cultivate helpful, inclusive, friendly, and welcoming campus environments that validate student experiences. Additionally,

Jehangir et al. (2012) explained that challenging, supporting, and reaffirming students helped to cultivate their (students) experiences in multicultural learning communities. Other constructed activities that help to bolster one's multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills include (self) reflections, journaling, reading materials, hearing and sharing personal stories or histories, films, quizzes and assessments, experiential activities (such as community service/service-learning), simulation games, and artistic expressions (Chavez et al., 2003; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Gayles, 2012; Jehangir et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2013; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Patterson, 2012; Pope et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2010). Participation in the various activities can influence the development of multicultural abilities in the cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of development (Jehangir et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2013; Merrill et al., 2012; Patterson, 2012). Overall, scholars (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Smith et al., 2010) maintained that multicultural education in general, serves well in developing one's multicultural capabilities.

Researchers mentioned that physical environments (Strange & Banning, 2001) such as cultural centers (Pope et al., 2009), or other spaces that intentionally embrace multiculturalism, can influence the development of multicultural competence. Strange and Banning (2001) described that physical environments involve the design and spaces within the campus community that hold functional and symbolic influences. Within physical spaces, materials such as artifacts and other creative manifestations have demonstrated their usefulness in the development of intrapersonal understanding (Patton, 2006). For instance, African-American students valued the artwork on their campus that acknowledged and celebrated Black culture (Patton, 2006).

The dynamics of human aggregates (Strange & Banning, 2001) also influence the development of multicultural competence. Diverse human aggregate contexts whereby individuals can interact with others different from themselves (Dickson & Jepsen, 2007; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Lundberg, 2012) can impact one's development. For this reason, Baughman and Bruce (2011) stressed the need for ethnic groups to work with other cultural groups to avoid the division that tends to occur between organizations. Other key human aggregate activities for the development of multicultural competence include interactions with culturally diverse mentors (Chavez et al., 2003; Jones et al., 2013), faculty (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Waldron-Moore, 2011), and peers (Patterson, 2012). Within one's social networks and interactions, opportunities that allow individuals to share personal experiences and/or listen to the stories and histories of others help to support the development of multicultural competence (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). Personal narratives may include disclosures regarding experiences with marginalization (Chavez et al., 2003). These oppressive encounters commonly impact the development of one's cultural diversity understanding and skills (Chavez et al., 2003).

Authors explained that individuals cultivate their multicultural abilities through continuous exchanges with diverse others (Gayles, 2012) or intergroup dialogue (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Patterson, 2012; Pope et al., 2009). Lundberg (2012) agreed that diverse interactions enhance learning and growth, but reminded that institutional values and differences in social standing among groups facilitate interactional diversity. Landreman et al. (2007) advised that bringing together diverse groups of students without creating purposeful opportunities for learning to occur can actually prolong the issues exposure to diversity was expected to resolve (p. 294). Regarding intentional and planned efforts, researchers (Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Jones et al., 2013; Patterson, 2012) declared that

participation in leadership trainings and workshops can engage participants in large and small interactive group activities that contribute towards the development of multicultural competencies.

Previous studies revealed that frequent educational exposure to diversity, multiculturalism, a multicultural curriculum, and/or interactions with culturally diverse individuals led to increased multicultural efficacies (Denson & Chang, 2009; Kim & Van Dyne, 2012; Patterson, 2012; Smith et al., 2010). However, one particular study presented conflicting findings. Lundberg (2012) reported that cross-cultural interactions increased the intrapersonal development of Hispanic students, but frequent participation in such exchanges led to unfavorable outcomes for this student group. Explicitly, the Hispanic students reported less gain from engaging in social interactions with culturally heterogeneous peers in comparison to other racial and ethnic groups (Lundberg, 2012). Researchers offered insights that appease this contention about the influence of interactions between diverse cultural groups. Jehangir et al. (2012) and Smith et al. (2010) proposed that although participation in multicultural activities can support an individual's development of multicultural competence, it does not necessarily guarantee growth or an increase in this area.

Studies have demonstrated ways in which organizational environments influence the development of multicultural competence (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Kuk & Banning, 2010). Strange and Banning (2001) defined an organizational environment as a backdrop of collective purposes, decision-making, and resources. Additionally, Strange and Banning indicated that higher education institutions and student organizations typify organizational environments.

College and universities regard student involvement or engagement as vital elements to understanding student learning, development, leadership, and success (Kuk & Banning, 2010;

Lundberg, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Patterson, 2012). As a means for student involvement, postsecondary sectors establish programs and services that support student learning and development outcomes (CAS, 2012; Kuk & Banning, 2010).

Of the various kinds of programs and services offered, higher education institutions create centers or spaces that provide multicultural programs and services (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Patton, 2006; Pope et al., 2009). Colleges and universities establish these resources in order to uphold institutional goals of multiculturalism and diversity (Kuk & Banning, 2010). Patton (2006) described that multicultural centers help to address the needs of historically marginalized students, providing them with a place to engage in multicultural student groups. Also, participation in culture-based organizations on campus offer students platforms to exercise their voice, advocate for marginalized cultural groups, and converse with others regarding diversity-related issues (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Pope et al., 2009). Additionally, scholars have found that student groups or clubs serve as important social peer networks (Kuk & Banning, 2010) that provide opportunities to gain awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity and develop intercultural communication abilities (Harper & Quaye, 2007).

Numerous scholars (Cheng & Zhao, 2006; Denson & Chang, 2009; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Kuk & Banning, 2010; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Patterson, 2012, Pope et al., 2009) agreed that students not only develop multicultural abilities through their involvement in student organizations, but they also develop these competencies through student leadership roles within those organizations. In support, Fakharzadeh & Todd (2012) expressed that the privilege of holding a student leadership position assumes an obligation to acquire the competencies necessary to become an effective leader.

Lastly, previous studies have reported about the influence of frequency of exposure and involvement in multicultural contexts on the development of multicultural competence among students (Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Smith et al., 2010). Smith et al. (2010) discussed that college graduates who recounted more frequent exposure to multicultural learning opportunities reported more multicultural competence (p. 396). Similarly, authors (Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008) reported that a positive relationship exists between the frequency of student participation in diversity activities and the development of multicultural awareness and skills. These findings propose that the more students engage in diverse settings, the more likely they experience increased levels of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and abilities (Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008).

Overall, this section detailed the environments (constructed, physical, human aggregate, and organizational) (Strange & Banning, 2001) that influence the development of multicultural competence. The following segment describes the second aspect of the development of multicultural competence, which involves the processes that may occur as a result of multicultural contexts.

Processes of Multicultural Competence Development

Merrill et al. (2012) described the difference between the process and acquisition of multicultural competence. Development involves qualitatively different and more complex mental and psychological processes whereas acquisition involves an increasing quantitative collection of knowledge, attitudes, and skills/behaviors (Merrill et al., 2012). The subsequent segment discusses the acquired knowledge and abilities that manifest as a result of multicultural contexts and processes, however, this section explains processes researchers have associated with the development of multicultural competence. This section explains these processes by

highlighting three ways in which they transpire: cognitive, affective, and behavioral (Chavez et al., 2003).

Undergoing experiences within multicultural contexts direct individuals through cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes (Chavez et al., 2003). However, Popov et al. (2012) alerted that the viewpoints and challenges about multicultural experiences differ across cultures. In exemplifying a cognitive process, Chavez et al. (2003) described self-reflection, which involves the cross-examination of details from one's own knowledge with the individual's observations and experiences. Individuals involved in multicultural activities may also experience a cognitive occurrence known as questioning (Chavez et al., 2003; Jehangir et al., 2012). Chavez et al. defined questioning as a thought process of comparing one's own perceptions, emotions, and actions to others.

Chavez et al. (2003) also described affective processes, noting that individuals undergo both covert and overt emotional challenges. These challenges often involve feelings or emotional reactions that appear in the form of fear, imbalance, frustration, or anger, when faced with multicultural issues (Bresciani, 2008; Chavez et al., 2003; Gayles, 2012). Individuals may also encounter feelings of disloyalty as they may perceive newly obtained knowledge as incongruent to their own cultural understandings (Chavez et al., 2003). Contrary to the potential challenges that may arise as a result of the development of multicultural competence, Chavez et al. presented that individuals may experience positive feelings of anticipation for opportunities that would allow them to advance their understanding of themselves and other members of society. Despite the nature of the emotional responses to multicultural contexts, Gayles (2012) regarded affective processes as critical components for the development of multicultural competence.

Similar to cognitive and affective processes, behavioral processes involve altering one's thoughts and emotional state (Chavez et al., 2003). Moreover, Chavez et al. (2003) articulated that behavioral processes require individuals to make purposeful efforts to unlearn old teachings and undergo new or underexplored experiences. In other words, the authors implied that a behavioral process requires intentionality to pursue different experiences, perceptions and feelings (Chavez et al., 2003).

Chavez et al. (2003) and King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) described the developmental process of multicultural competence as an uncomfortable experience. Also, these processes include experiences with anxiety (Jones et al., 2013). Jackson (1999) described a form of resistance, whereby individuals may circumvent difficult dialogues by responding in a manner that they believe would reduce or eliminate angst from the situation (as referenced in Jones et al., 2013). Similarly, King and Baxter-Magolda reported that students in their study felt fearful about discussing diversity matters. Also, the students worried that others would misconstrue their comments and regard them as prejudiced or bigoted individuals (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). King and Baxter-Magolda advised that these difficult situations experienced by students could potentially inhibit their willingness or eagerness to attain multicultural education. In Jehangir et al.'s (2012) study on the impact of participation in a multicultural learning community among college students, the researchers detailed a process that students endured to uncover their multicultural capabilities:

> …the process of self-examination pushed them outside their comfort zones, and their disequilibrium in turn empowered them to take actions creating a greater congruence between their choices and their beliefs. In many cases, these choices were not easy and students described a shedding of some aspects of their previous selves. (p. 280)

Jehangir et al. reported that students disclosed feelings of disequilibrium as they encountered new ideas and understandings, which gave rise to them (students) working to understand themselves as well as their relationships. Additionally, Jehangir et al. explained disequilibrium as the beginning point of development where students experience something for the first time. This new encounter required students to make sense of the experience in order to advance in development (Jehangir et al., 2012).

Researchers have utilized developmental frameworks and models to describe ways in which individuals advance their understanding of themselves as it relates to racial and cultural identity and multicultural ability (e.g., Chavez et al., 2003; Hammer et al., 2003; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Landreman et al., 2007). Commonly, developmental models characterize initial stages of development as periods where individuals possess dualistic, rigid, or simplistic viewpoints while subsequent stages typify progressively complex, integrated understandings of self, others, and/or society, as well as social and advocacy abilities (e.g., Chavez et al., 2003; Cross, 1971; Hammer et al., 2003; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Landreman et al., 2007).

Overall, studies (Bresciani, 2008; Chavez et al., 2003; Gayles, 2012; Jehangir et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2013; King and Baxter-Magolda, 2005) have demonstrated that the cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes that emanate as a result of multicultural encounters commonly manifest as arduous or challenging experiences. Similarly, Landreman et al. (2007) and Waldron-Moore (2011) cautioned about the emotional exertion involved in multicultural education and the difficult responsibility of creating global residents and influential figures. Despite the potential hardships associated with multicultural competence development, individuals should engage in learning opportunities and environments that encourage diverse and conflicting perspectives (Landreman et al., 2007; Pope et al., 2009). Moreover, educators must

address institutional ideas that fail to embrace the emotional work involved in multicultural learning (Landreman et al., 2007). By doing so, students may undergo the necessary process of multicultural competence development as needed to secure effective future leaders of a culturally pluralistic society (Miller-Lane et al., 2007; Pope et al., 2009; Popov et al., 2012).

This section offered details regarding the processes individuals experience as a result of multicultural conditions. The following section recounts reported outcomes that manifested as a result of multicultural contexts and developmental processes.

Outcomes of Multicultural Contexts and Processes

Numerous accounts (e.g., Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Jones et al., 2013; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012) attested to the outcomes of multicultural environments and experiences. Authors (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012) explained that the multicultural learning process produces outcomes that may include development in cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal areas. In Maramba and Velasquez's (2012) study on the ethnic identity development of student leaders, the researchers identified cognitive gains from the participants' experiences. The researchers reported that students developed a greater cognizance of the prejudices experienced by members of their respective ethnic populations, grew more critical about their understanding of oppression, and learned more about cultural discrimination that transpires on personal and systemic levels (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Additionally, Maramba and Velasquez elaborated that the students developed their abilities in identifying various displays of discrimination against ethnic groups. Chavez et al. (2003) reported that individuals who experience more than one culture typically feel more comfortable with ethnically diverse groups of people than those who live in settings that consist of culturally-alike

individuals. One's comfort with diverse groups serves as an indicator of the development of multicultural perspectives and abilities (Chavez et al., 2003; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

Along with reports of cognitive development outcomes, scholars (Denson & Chang, 2009; Jones et al., 2013; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012) also explained intrapersonal development outcomes of multicultural experiences. In Maramba and Velasquez's (2012) investigation, the students reported an increase in intrapersonal development and conveyed a willingness to further establish their ethnic identities by learning more about their ethnic groups. Also, Maramba and Velasquez reported an increase in salience of participants' ethnic identity during the students' 4th or 5th year of college. These findings also made a strong impact on the students' sense of competence (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Jones et al. (2013) also detailed intrapersonal outcomes, noting that multicultural activities helped to build cultural self-awareness and increased the likelihood for self-reflection. Self-exploration permitted participants to cross-examine newly acquired knowledge with their own understandings and experiences (Jones et al., 2013). Generally, Denson and Chang (2009) concluded that students who participated in multicultural learning reported greater changes in their intrapersonal understandings in comparison to students who lacked multicultural experiences.

As scholars (Chavez et al., 2003; Denson & Chang, 2009; Jones et al., 2013; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012) detailed the cognitive and intrapersonal outcomes of multicultural environments and experiences, researchers (Chavez et al., 2003; Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012) also described the interpersonal outcomes of such contexts. In Denson and Chang's (2009) study, the students believed that they had advanced their capacity to engage in settings characterized by racial-cultural differences. Harper and Quaye (2007) described these intercultural abilities in their

study, highlighting that the participants learned to work with racially and ethnicity diverse people as a result of their involvement in multicultural environments. Further, Chavez et al. (2003) mentioned that individuals who engaged in multicultural settings developed skills in negotiating with culturally diverse groups of people.

In Einfeld and Collins' (2008) study, participants developed several interpersonal abilities required for positive interactions in multicultural contexts. These interpersonal capacities include empathy, trust, and respect (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). As a result of multicultural learning, participants would take action to improve the current social situations of their ethnic communities (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012), which demonstrates advocacy abilities (Carroll, 2008).

Regarding student leaders of color in particular, scholars (Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Harper & Quaye, 2007) have also discussed the acquisition of multicultural competence among this group. In Baughman and Bruce's (2011) study on student leaders of color, they found that these individuals grew as a result of their participation in leadership positions at their institution. Specifically, student leaders reported advancements in their communication skills in comparison to their first year as undergraduates (Baughman & Bruce, 2011). In Harper and Quaye's (2007) study, each student leader expressed a commitment to their racial-cultural group and dedicated themselves to social justice action and advocacy.

Despite the reported positive outcomes of multicultural contexts (Chavez et al., 2003; Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Jones et al., 2013; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012), researchers (Hu & Kuh, 2003; Landreman et al., 2007) have demonstrated that adverse outcomes may surface even as students engage in diverse environments. Hu and Kuh (2003) informed that upperclass undergraduates interacted less with

students racially or ethnically different from themselves in comparison to first-year undergraduates. Justification for this potentially alarming finding remained uncertain (Hu & Kuh, 2003). Landreman et al. (2007) also presented a concerning finding, recounting that many students did not advance their multicultural understandings and relationships, nor did they pursue social justice advocacy roles until after graduation from college. This discovery implies that students may not interpret or understand their experiences soon after encounters in multicultural contexts or even after they graduate (Landreman et al., 2007).

Researchers (Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Inkelas, 2004) maintained that as students experience multicultural learning opportunities, factors within those conditions could complicate the development of multicultural competence. In Baughman and Bruce's (2011) study, student leaders shared about the disconnect they witnessed between the various student groups and confirmed that segregation occurred in those organizations. Similarly, Inkelas (2004) reported that critics of postsecondary education assume that increases in institutional diversity trigger greater divisions among racially and culturally diverse students, rather than an increased interaction among these groups. Inkelas warned that segregation among culturally heterogeneous student groups harms the educational and developmental opportunities offered by multicultural environments.

Although one may deem the aforementioned adverse reports as unfavorable outcomes, one must recall the explanations provided by developmental theorists such as Cross (1971, 1991, 1995) whose identity development model exemplified that conflicting phases experienced by individuals occur as a natural part of the development process (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). For example, the immersion-emersion stage of Cross's model describes that an individual may disassociate from others racially different from themselves (Evans et al., 1998). Despite this

separation, these individuals can eventually advance to latter stages, whereby they better appreciate diversity and possess the willpower, understanding, and ability to better relate and interact with others different from themselves (Chavez et al., 2003; Evans et al., 1998; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

Overall, both positive and challenging outcomes manifest as a result of experiences in multicultural conditions (Chavez et al., 2003; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Cross's identity development model demonstrates that adverse outcomes such as segregation may not necessarily indicate that a problem or barrier exists in the development multicultural competence (as referenced in Evans et al., 1998). Rather, these outcomes involving disassociation from others different from oneself may operate as natural occurrences whereby individuals may eventually advance in their stages of development as inferred in Cross's model (Evans et al., 1998).

Summary

This chapter presented a detailed literature review to establish the basis for the current study that sought to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies of student leaders. Specifically, elaborating on the significance, operationalization, and ecological elements associated with the development of multicultural capacities, helped to uncover the groundwork for this investigation. The next chapter explains the methodology I employed to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competence among student leaders.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This study explored with student leaders, their experiences that affected their development of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. In that effort, the following research question guided this study: *What are the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders?* Creswell (2012) asserted that researchers must clearly explain the structures and worldviews that influence the research process. Therefore, in this chapter, I discuss the epistemological, methodological, and axiological assumptions applied to this study.

The epistemological assumptions in this study involved the ways in which I gathered knowledge about the research topic (Creswell, 2012). The methodological stance details the protocols used in the research process (Creswell, 2012). The axiological position acknowledges the role my values and suppositions played in shaping the outcomes of this study (Creswell, 2012).

To explain the epistemological, methodological, and axiological assumptions for this study, I discuss the qualitative, phenomenological, and constructive approaches used to contextualize the experiences of student leaders. Then, I describe my position within the research, the participants, and methods for data collection and analysis. Next, I explain the processes and practices that I employed to maintain a trustworthy and ethical study.

Philosophical Structures

For this study, I applied qualitative approaches to gather information about the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Qualitative studies occur in natural settings whereby the researcher collects both verbal and non-verbal information from participants (Creswell, 2012). Following information-gathering activities, the investigator examines the information to make interpretations for the purpose of providing complex insights to a research problem (Creswell, 2012).

As this study purported to attain a detailed and complex understanding of the experiences of student leaders, a qualitative investigation served as a viable option for this study. The qualitative findings gathered from this research follow-up with existing quantitative studies (e.g. Jones et al., 2013; Merrill et al., 2012) to further elucidate the connections in causal frameworks of multicultural competence (Creswell, 2012). As explained in the previous chapters, this study sought to gain a comprehensive account of the experiences of student leaders by gathering information about all possible aspects of the development of multicultural competence. In support, Creswell (2012) discussed the fitting nature of the qualitative approach used for this investigation, as he explained that qualitative research involves the gathering of holistic or comprehensive accounts for the purpose of developing a more complex understanding of a research problem.

Although various approaches to qualitative studies exist, the most appropriate qualitative approach for this study required phenomenological inquiry. In phenomenological research, the investigator describes the meanings for lived experiences shared by several individuals (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). I identified that a phenomenological approach served as the most suitable method for understanding the common experiences affecting the

development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Additionally, the structure of a phenomenological study allows for a more comprehensive understanding of various components of the phenomenon under exploration (Creswell, 2012).

In alignment with phenomenology, social constructivism functioned as the epistemological paradigm for this study. Validating this connection between phenomenology and social constructivism, Creswell (2012) indicated that constructivist approaches manifest in phenomenological scholarship (p. 21). Social constructivism enables the belief that individuals establish subjective interpretations of their experiences, characterized by diverse and wide-ranging meanings to their encounters (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, the social constructivist believes that social and historical factors influence the ways in which individuals develop subjective meanings to their experiences (Creswell, 2012). In other words, people interpret their experiences as a result of socially constructed contexts rather than natural dispositions (Creswell, 2012).

Generally, qualitative, social constructivist, and phenomenological approaches make up the philosophical structures for this study. Likewise, my axiological position exists as an additional philosophical paradigm that I operated under for the present study. Therefore, in the following section, I explain my axiological stance or positionality to further elucidate the philosophical assumptions that guided this investigation.

Positionality

Creswell (2012) explained that constructivist researchers demonstrate reflexivity or self-awareness by acknowledging that their own cultural histories and experiences influence their interpretations and research behaviors. Hays and Singh (2012) referred to this process as bracketing, whereby the researcher examines and sets aside preconceived beliefs, values, and

assumptions about the research topic and proposed research design (p. 417). In efforts to set aside my biases, I reflect on my background and disclose the various perspectives, values, and biases that I hold in order to acknowledge my position for this study (Creswell, 2012).

Today, I consider myself a bicultural person. I identify as Nigerian and Black American. I was born in Nigeria and at the age of five, I relocated to the United States with my family. Growing up in the United States, I struggled to value my Nigerian heritage and culture. This is so as school mates would tease me because of my Nigerian name, nationality, and appearance. I desired for my peers to accept me, so I rejected my Nigerian identity. I internalized many of these experiences which carried over into adulthood. It was when I entered college that I began to value my Nigerian identity. I watched my Nigerian college mates demonstrate their pride for their culture and celebrate it with one another. Observing these positive manifestations made by my peers was validating for me as I gradually developed a curiosity to learn more about my heritage. I eventually came to appreciate my Nigerian identity and realized its value.

Other experiences helped me to embrace my Nigerian identity. Activities such as social justice trainings and academic classes were essential to my growth. Moreover, my involvement in culture-based community groups aided my developing identity, value for my heritage, and development of intercultural abilities. From these experiences, I learned to value other cultures as I always wish for others to respect my own culture. I learned about various cultures including my own. I gained knowledge about stereotypes made about various cultural groups, and oppressive systems that impact marginalized populations. I experienced discrimination and microaggressive acts that have been made against me. As a result of these experiences, I am able to empathize with others who are bullied or discriminated against on the account of their race, culture or other identities.

Overtime, I developed a stronger willingness to interact and work with individuals from cultural backgrounds different from my own. In social settings, I intentionally practice inclusivity by incorporating ideas from individuals who hold diverse perspectives. I have committed myself to support opportunities or contexts that celebrate and appreciate diversity and multiculturalism. Additionally, I have devoted to efforts that permit me to assist others through the process of developing multicultural competencies. For example, during my tenure as a master's student, I served as an advisor for multicultural student organizations. Moreover, I currently work as a full-time administrator in a multicultural affairs office. Generally, I believe that I possess essential multicultural awareness, knowledge, and abilities necessary to work effectively with diverse groups of people. However, I believe that the development of multicultural capacities occurs over a lifetime as new and ongoing experiences have led to both digressing and progressive shifts in my development.

I believe that multicultural competence involves cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal development as suggested in King and Baxter-Magolda's (2005) work. Moreover, I believe members or citizens within culturally pluralistic societies must possess multicultural competencies in order to co-exist and operate effectively with diverse others. I also believe that effective leadership requires one to possess multicultural understanding and abilities.

I believe that participation in culture-based student organizations provide strong contexts for which students can acquire multicultural competencies. I also believe that student leaders, especially those involved in culture, diversity or social justice-oriented student organizations, have significant opportunities to develop multicultural competencies. This is so as I perceive that these individuals are held responsible or accountable to participate in multicultural contexts as a result of their leadership requirements in their organizations. Overall, my value for multicultural

education and competency, and my lived experiences in multicultural contexts, shape my interest and commitment to this study that sought to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

So far, this chapter has described the philosophical structures that frame this research. In the next section, I begin a discussion about the participants of this investigation. These descriptions include a detailing of participant-group characteristics, the research setting, and the recruitment processes for which the study participants underwent.

Participants

This section details the characteristics of the participant-group, sample size, recruitment process, and interview procedures used for this study.

Participant-Group Characteristics

Qualitative research involves the application of purposeful sampling as select individuals can understand and describe the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). For this reason, I selected individuals who have experienced the development of multicultural competencies (Creswell, 2012). To gather a purposive sample, I recruited participants from a mid-sized, private, research university located in the Northeast region of the United States.

The university that I pursued to recruit participants for this study, maintains national rankings for its academic programs. Listed among the various proclamations in the university mission statement are decrees that demonstrate the institution's stance on matters of multiculturalism and diversity. For instance, the university communicates an aim to prepare students for leadership in a multinational, multicultural society. Moreover, the mission of the

university includes statements about guiding students in comprehending and respecting cultures different from their own.

The institution consists of various campuses across the world. However, I recruited participants from two of its most populated campus sites, which are also closest in proximity to one another. These two campuses of the university are located within an urban city in the northeast region of the United States. Both locations functioned as recruitment and research sites for this investigation.

The university as a whole is comprised of an approximate total of 8,000 undergraduate students. Roughly, thirty percent of the current undergraduate student population consists of underrepresented students. To portray the racial demographic of the two campuses, Appendix F provides a breakdown of the ethnic classification for the incoming class in 2014. The graphs in Appendix F distinguish the racial/ethnic demographics of both campuses to illustrate the diversity for each setting. This ethnic breakdown of the student population helps to better understand one of the contexts (i.e., college settings) in which participants underwent experiences affecting their development of multicultural competencies.

Although I would have liked to collect information from student leaders from various institutions across the nation, I recruited participants solely from two campuses under one institution. Creswell (2012) supported that researchers may recruit participants from a single site for phenomenological research as studying participants from one location helps to reduce complications in finding shared experiences and overarching themes for every participant (Creswell, 2012). Another reason I selected the host institution was because I recognized the strong presence of student leaders involved in culture, diversity, and social justice-based student organizations and programs in the university. I identified that student leaders involved in

multicultural student organizations and programs are more likely than not, ideal candidates for this study as the programs and services offered through these organizations cultivate experiences that can lead to the phenomenon under study (CAS, 2012).

This investigation used a criterion sample of participants who can best inform the researcher about the problem under study (Creswell, 2012). Criterion sampling involves the selection of individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Eligible participants of the study included: (1) students who held leadership positions in their respective culture, diversity, and/or social justice-oriented student organization and programs, (2) members who held a leadership position in their organization for a minimum of one semester, (3) undergraduate students who completed at least two academic years (4) students leaders who self-identified as possessing multicultural understandings, identities, and/or abilities as a result of their lived experiences.

Some participants of this study held leadership positions in a peer leadership program in the multicultural affairs office of the institution. The student leaders of this program engage the study body in intergroup dialogue on issues of social justice and oppression and participate in advocacy activities. The multicultural affairs office of the institution promotes inclusivity across both campuses and explores topics in all areas of diversity. Moreover, the multicultural affairs office creates programs and opportunities to enhance intercultural engagement among students.

Participants of this investigation also held leadership roles in the cultural student organizations on the campuses. Cultural student clubs create programs that foster community and celebrate culture. The participants represented Asian, Latino, African-American, and LGBT student organizations. Leadership positions represent roles whereby the student body, organization members, and/or organization advisor elects or appoints individuals to function in

those capacities (Fakharzadeh & Todd, 2012). Examples of leadership roles include chair associates, officers, or board members of a student organization (Fakharzadeh & Todd, 2012). I chose to study students who held leadership positions in their organizations or programs as Fakharzadeh and Todd (2012) stated that holding a leadership role within a student group serves as a quintessential opportunity for students to develop leadership capabilities, of which include multicultural competence (Wilson, 2012).

Criteria for participation in this study required participants to have completed at least one semester of experience in their leadership position within a culture or diversity-based student organization and program to ensure that they have acquired experiences to discuss for this study. Additionally, participants completed at least two academic years as college students prior to this study. This study explored the experiences of upperclass college students in efforts to investigate concerns described in Hu and Kuk (2003), who inferred that the likelihood of students to undergo frequent interactions with ethnically diverse others is reduced as these individuals advance in academic year. Lastly, since the purpose of this study involved the exploration of experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies, participants self-identified as possessing multicultural efficacies.

This study was open to exploring all contexts that led student leaders to the phenomenon under investigation. Student leaders operated within their student organizations; however, they also engaged in other settings such as classroom, familial, residential, work, and societal contexts. As a result, student leaders underwent the development of multicultural competence in any of the various environments in which they participated. While leadership experiences in culture, diversity, and social justice-based student organizations provided multicultural learning

opportunities for student leaders (CAS, 2012), these individuals may have also gained multicultural knowledge and skills through engagements in other settings.

Number of Participants

Regarding the quantity of participants, Polkinghorne (1989) suggested that researchers acquire a sample size of five to 25 participants for phenomenological studies (as mentioned in Creswell, 2012, p. 61). Creswell (2012) articulated that the main idea for a phenomenological study is to describe the significance of an experience for a minimal number of individuals who have undergone it. Similarly, Seidman (2006) explained that even when a researcher collects the stories of few participants, phenomenological studies still have great impact in describing full accounts as a result of the in-depth nature of the approach. Therefore, to gather information from a minimal number (Creswell, 2012) or few participants (Seidman, 2006), I established a sample size of 10 participants for the study.

Although Polkinghorne (1989) argued that researchers may establish a minimum of five participants (Creswell, 2012), I established a sample size of 10 participants, in case these individuals canceled or withdrew their involvement in the study. Additionally, if at any point I realized that I still had much to uncover or learn in the study, or the point of saturation had not been reached (Creswell, 2012; Seidman, 2006), I would have invited alternates to participate in the study. These efforts helped to ensure that a sufficient amount of information is gathered in order to make substantive interpretations (Creswell, 2012; Seidman, 2006).

Recruitment of Participants

I received permission from the appropriate professional staff member (director of multicultural office) to recruit student leaders for this study. Also, the director agreed to aid me in my recruitment efforts by forwarding a recruitment flyer to the student leaders. The flyer

included a description of the study, eligibility requirements, incentives, risks, benefits, timeline, and researcher contact information (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). After receiving approval to conduct this study from the Institutional Review Board of the host institution, I contacted the director to notify her of the IRB approval status of the study and to initiate the recruitment process.

Creswell (2012) noted access issues associated with the recruitment and attainment of participants, which include convincing individuals to partake in a study and establishing trustworthiness at the research location. To address these challenges, I established a relationship with the multicultural office director and communicated my interest in studying the student leaders involved in culture and diversity-based student organizations and programs. The multicultural office director expressed that she would help me secure a participant-group by encouraging student leaders to participate in this study. I believe that my established rapport with the director helped to cultivate an ongoing trust throughout the recruitment process.

To further address issues associated with recruitment of participants, I offered incentives in the form of a $15 University Bookstore gift card to increase participant buy-in. Lastly, I handled each interaction with constituents (student leaders and the director) with the utmost positive regard to enhance comfort level and trust. Nevertheless, I believe that attaining participants for this investigation occurred seamlessly, as a result the recruitment support I received from the director of the multicultural office.

Creswell (2012) suggested for one-to-one interviews, that participants possess a forthcoming attitude in order to speak about their experiences without reservation. Participants in this study demonstrated their willingness by contacting me to express their interest in this study. As a result, most participants provided rich narratives of their experiences. This was helpful to

avoid potential challenges such as the acquisition of insufficient information as a result of reserved participant disclosures (Creswell, 2012).

After student leaders received the recruitment flyer, a two-week recruitment period followed. During that time, students were asked to notify me of their interest in participating in the study via e-mail or phone communication. Upon learning of students interested in participating in the study, I used that point of contact to ensure that they qualified for the study. Eligible participants of the study included: (1) students who held leadership positions in their respective culture or diversity-based student organization or program, (2) members who held a leadership position in their organization or program for a minimum of one semester, (3) upperclass students who completed at least two academic years as college students (4) students leaders who self-identified as possessing multicultural competencies. If the student met all the criteria, I e-mailed this individual an informed consent letter to review. At that time, I also worked with each student to establish an interview date and time. When additional student leaders expressed interest after I secured a maximum number of 10 participants, I informed these individuals that I had reached full capacity in my sample pool and would consider them as alternates if vacancies became available. I ended up not having to use my alternate list of participants for this study.

I secured interview sessions for qualified students according to the order in which they expressed their interest in participating in the study. Nevertheless, I was still able to acquire a varied representation of participants. During my point of contact with qualified recruits, I provided them with an overview of the format for the individual interviews, including timeframe, informed consent, and subject areas of inquiry. The informed consent document detailed information about confidentiality, purpose of the study, potential risks and benefits, incentives

for participation, and contact information of relevant parties/resources (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Upon agreement to participate in the study, each participant signed and electronically or physically submitted their consent forms prior to the interview (Creswell, 2012). Creswell (2012) agreed that participants of research must formally consent to participate in a study. Appendix A provides a layout of the informed consent. During my point of contact with participants, I communicated that they each needed to each bring a tangible object that symbolizes or represents their development of multicultural competency. This artifact was useful in supporting the exploration of the phenomenon studied through this research.

Interview Procedures

Before each information-gathering or interview session, I sent every participant two email reminders about their scheduled interview. The first reminder was delivered approximately one week prior and the second was sent roughly 24 hours before each scheduled session. As instructed by Creswell (2012), researchers must determine the setting for conducting the interviews, one that is without interferences. Therefore, I facilitated interviews at a designated site with quiet surroundings and conveniently located on the host campus, i.e., conference rooms and study rooms on both campuses. I communicated the location of the sessions to all participants through the email notifications.

Upon arrival to the interview site, each participant completed a *Getting to Know You* questionnaire consisting of demographic information as well as a multicultural efficacy self-assessment or scale. The title is indicated as *Getting to Know You* to attract participants and to gain buy-in in completing the questionnaire, as the language exhibits an interest in learning about them. The demographic questions include open-ended inquiries about gender, number of completed academic years as a college student, student leadership position, and organization or

program affiliation. In remaining consistent to the methodological perspectives of this study that embrace the subjective viewpoints of individuals, i.e., constructivist and phenomenological paradigms (Creswell, 2012), I shaped the demographic inquiries in an open-ended, unrestricted format. Open-ended questions consider the subjective truths of participants and allow for more open and organic responses from these subjects (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of a multicultural competency self-assessment or scale. This multicultural efficacy scale was created based on scholarly works that describe multicultural competencies (Appendix E). Moreover, the multicultural efficacy self-assessment helped to gain a sense of how participants described their multicultural capacities. Both the tangible object and multicultural efficacy scale were artifact tools I used to enhance the depth of the interviews. It is important to note, however, that the self-assessment and tangible object were not intended to compare participants to one another or to be considered data for this study. Nevertheless, the results from multicultural efficacy scale would have aided my decision to interview students from the alternate pool if less than seven participants scored at least 21 points on the 42-point scale. I ascribed points to each response on the multicultural efficacy assessment. For each of the 14 questions on the scale, the following points were attributed to each response: never- 0 points; sometimes- 1 point; fairly often/pretty well- 2 points; and always/very well- 3 points.

The *Getting to Know You* questionnaire form included a header for me (the researcher) to input the date, time, and location of the interview as well as the participant pseudonym and assigned participant tracking number (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Following each interview, I completed the information in the header. The participant tracking number is simply based on the order in which the interviews took place. For example, the first participant to

interview with me was assigned the number 1; the sixth participant that I interview was assigned the number 6, and so on. The information on the header is for researcher tracking purposes only and did not require the attention of participants. Appendix B details the *Getting to Know You* questionnaire. Finally, upon successful completion of the required research activities (i.e., signed submission of informed consent, questionnaire, and participation in a one-time, individual interview), each participant of the study received one $15 University bookstore gift card prior to departing from the interview session.

Overall, this section detailed information regarding the various elements associated with the participants of this study. To further elucidate the plan for this study, the following section discusses information-gathering factors used for this investigation.

Data Collection

This section discusses the interview protocol that I used for each interview as well as the plan I employed to collect and transcribe the information gathered from the participants of this study.

Interview Protocol

Authors (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008) explained that researchers must position their studies within the literature in order to support the rationale for the study. Therefore, I developed an interview protocol built around existing literature (Ahmed et al., 2011; Baughman & Bruce, 2011; Bresciani, 2008; Denson & Chang, 2009; Hu & Kuk, 2003; Inkelas, 2004; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Kumar et al., 2011; Landreman et al., 2007; Lundberg, 2012; Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Pizzolato et al., 2012; Smith et al., 2010) that supports the research question of this study.

Of equal importance, I applied constructivist and phenomenological approaches when developing the interview protocol (Creswell, 2012). Creswell (2012) described that constructivist research require the inclusion of wide-ranging or broad questions in order for participants to create their own understanding of an experience. For this reason, the interview protocol includes open-ended questions to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders (Creswell, 2012). Specifically, the interview protocol comprises of inquiries to learn of contexts, processes, and outcomes as it relates to the development of multicultural competencies. In agreement, Creswell described that constructivists address the contexts and processes of human exchanges to understand participant experiences. Appendix C illustrates the interview protocol for this study.

Information-Gathering Processes

In further adhering to constructivist perspectives which support the creation of subjective meanings (Creswell, 2012), I explained to each participant that the study is based on their (participants) own interpretation of their experiences and that there are no right or wrong responses. Hays and Singh (2012) indicated that phenomenological studies involve in-depth interviews with participants whereby the researcher functions as the instrument for information gathering. Seidman (2006) explained that the essence of in-depth interviewing permits the researcher to understand the lived experiences of individuals and the way they interpret those encounters.

In the start of each interview, I presented to each participant, preliminary questions to set the tone for the interview and to promote a seamless transition into the core interview questions that answer the research question of this study. The preliminary questions are listed in Appendix C. The interview protocol consists of a standardized set of questions to maintain focus on the

research topic. Nevertheless, I facilitated a semi-structured format to allow for any necessary exploring or prompting for clearer responses (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Seidman, 2006). Additionally, when participants did not understand a question during their interview, I rephrased the question.

As Creswell (2012) suggested, I followed the necessary interview procedures: (1) reviewed with each participant, in the beginning of the interview, the purpose of the study and information about confidentiality; (2) took notes during each interview to highlight key information, identify any concerns, or record reminders pertaining to the interview questions and responses; (3) memorized the interview questions according to their sequence to reduce the loss of eye contact with participant and to provide more natural verbal and non-verbal transitions from one interview question to the next; (4) attended to confusing, unclear, and contradictory expressions; and (5) prepared and delivered concluding statements that thank participants.

Shenton (2004) explained that member checks help to ensure the accuracy of both collected and analyzed data. In support, Zhang & Wildemuth (2009) verified that member checks help to ensure the accuracy of the researcher's initial understanding of participants' experiences and to gain clarification or feedback on data provided by each participant. For these reasons, I conducted member checks to learn of the accuracy of participants' transcripts and to ensure that their experiences matched the themes I identified in the findings.

Regarding interview timeframe, I allocated 90 minutes for each of the audio recorded interview sessions. Participants who had to attend other engagements immediately after the interview expressed an openness to participating in a second interview to address unanswered questions from the interview protocol. All four participants who scheduled second interviews completed them. One of the participants who completed a second interviews do so via phone

rather than in person due to scheduling conflicts. All participants answered every question from the protocol and interviews lasted roughly between 50 minutes to two hours per session. An average one-time interview was approximately 90 minutes.

Following the information gathering process, I submitted the recordings to two transcriptionists were required to consent to confidentiality through an agreement communicated via e-mail. I instructed each transcriptionist to transcribe all verbal exchanges and indicate pauses and silences in the transcriptions, as Creswell (2012) acknowledged that these typically trivial occurrences can oftentimes indicate important considerations. As I received completed transcripts from the transcriptionists, I checked the accuracy of the transcripts by listening to the corresponding audio alongside reading the transcripts. To further ensure the accuracy of the transcripts, I provided each participant with a copy and requested that they review the document to make certain that their disclosures are accurately represented. I communicated to participants that they had seven consecutive days from the time they receive an e-mail, to review the transcript and follow-up with any concerns or feedback. After the one-week period, I compiled all reported participant feedback, and applied any necessary changes to the transcripts. I received a response from four participants, two of which communicated very small changes to a single word and an acronym. Following these efforts, I then began the data analysis process.

Data Analysis

As the main instrument for data analysis (Creswell, 2012), I interpreted information from the transcripts which included participant responses to interview questions. I completed the horizontalization process which is a phenomenological data analysis technique whereby I identified nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statements in participant's transcripts (Hays and Singh, 2012, p. 424). Specifically, I searched for significant words, or phrases and statements that are

relevant to the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Also, I highlighted meanings or interpretations provided by participants. To better acknowledge significant statements during data analysis, I considered what Creswell (2012) described as "in vivo" codes, whereby I used the exact wording expressed by study participants (p. 153). Moreover, I examined non-verbal expressions, such as silences, to promote a more complete examination of the phenomenon under study. I also incorporated insights gathered through initial member checks to analyze the data. In sum, Creswell (2012) agreed that social constructivists must identify various viewpoints rather than reducing the interpretations to a shorter list of categories. Therefore, I created a list of significant statements and meanings (horizontalization) prior to organizing and condensing the data into themes through a coding process (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Coding required me to identify categories or themes as they transpired in order to uncover the essence of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012). I utilized the themes to generate descriptions of the experiences that affect the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders (Creswell, 2012). First, I described the textural meanings of *what* participants experienced as well as the structural meanings of *how* they experienced the phenomenon under investigation (Hays & Singh, 2012). I described the textural and structural meanings of these experiences through thick, verbatim statements from the participant's interviews. I synthesized the textural and structural descriptions to create a statement that embodies the essence of the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

Throughout the data analysis process, I identified individual and group differences among the participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). However, I also adhered to the focus of this

phenomenological study that purported to describe the fundamental structure of the experience (the essence) for the total participant group (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). As my theoretical framework entails a social constructivist and phenomenological orientation, I ascribed meaning to my participants' experiences while factoring in their own interpretations of their experiences. I kept detailed field notes to maintain an audit trail to records my ideas, reflections and observations about identified themes throughout the data analysis process.

The Findings and Discussion sections (chapters four and five) of this study include descriptive texts of the findings and implications for the study.

Overall, through an analysis or interpretation of information gathered from this study, I uncovered the ontological assumptions or research findings used to understand the essence of the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders (Creswell, 2012). However, the research findings are of no value if measures to ensure the quality of this study were not implemented (Creswell, 2012). For this reason, I identified activities that helped me to maintain the rigor of this investigation.

Quality Assurance

Creswell (2012) referred to rigor as a researcher's attempt to authenticate the accuracy of the study using one or more methods for validation. To uphold the accuracy of the present investigation, I coordinated several measures to help validate the qualitative research criteria named by Lincoln and Guba (1985), i.e., *confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability* (as referenced in Creswell, 2012; Seidman, 2006; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Scholars explained that *confirmability* involves establishing the value (Creswell, 2012) or the internal soundness of the research data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p. 7). Efforts I employed to ensure the confirmability of this study included a

statement of my positionality as it relates to the topic, a detailed methodological description of the study, and the use of a multicultural efficacy self-assessment tool (Creswell, 2012; Shenton, 2004).

Credibility refers to an attempt to accurately describe the findings of a study as best detailed by the researcher and the participants (Creswell, 2012). To preserve the credibility of this study, I avoided guessing or predicting the meanings of unclear participant disclosures (Seidman, 2006). Instead, I encouraged participants to further explore or elaborate on their accounts to gain clarification and understanding of their experiences (Seidman, 2006). Moreover, I incorporated "in vivo" words or verbatim phrases (Creswell, 2012, p. 185) during the analysis process. The use of exact statements enhanced the accuracy of findings and therefore, the credibility of the study. As recommended (Creswell, 2012; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009), I also facilitated member checks and utilized peer reviews to ensure the credibility of this study.

The collected data underwent peer review to uphold the credibility of this study (Erlandson et al., 1993; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Peer reviews offered feedback that challenged my suppositions, and therefore reduced the partiality of my interpretations (Shenton, 2004; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Members of my research team served as the peer reviewers for this study. My research team consists of two doctoral candidates whose professional and research backgrounds address multicultural issues in higher education contexts.

Shenton (2004) stated that *dependability* involves efforts that assist future researchers to repeat a study. This study includes a detailed methodological description that enhances its dependability (Shenton, 2004). Additionally, I used a good-quality recording device for reliable

transcription (Creswell, 2012). Further, I examined non-verbal expressions such as silences and pauses to enhance the dependability of this study (Creswell, 2012).

Transferability refers to the degree to which findings from one study are applicable to other settings (Shenton, 2004; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). I provided thick descriptions of the findings to support the transferability of this study (Creswell, 2012). Shenton (2004) defined thick descriptions as in-depth narratives that promote vivid understandings of the phenomenon under investigation. While Creswell (2012) argued that thick descriptions support transferability, Shenton asserted that thick descriptions support a study's credibility as these detailed explanations provide clear accounts that help to determine the accuracy of the ultimate findings.

Following each interview and throughout the analysis process, I documented my ideas, thoughts, reactions, and questions in a reflexive journal. Shenton (2004) described that reflective commentaries allow the researcher to disclose thought processes regarding the research approaches and procedures as they are applied during the study. Moreover, reflexive journaling maintained the overall quality and trustworthiness of this investigation, as this approach bolsters the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of this study (Erlandson et al., 1993).

To further ensure the quality of this research, I triangulated data by administering two member checks and gathering feedback on transcripts and identified themes from my research team. Triangulation indicates a strategy of trustworthiness that involves using multiple forms of evidence. Moreover, this effort purported to strengthen evidence that a particular theme exists by looking for inconsistencies among these forms.

As this section has discussed the validation procedures that ensure the trustworthiness of the present study, the following section further explains ways in which I upheld the quality of the present study through the application of ethical practices.

Ethical Considerations

I applied several practices to safeguard the ethical position of this study and employed ethical practices throughout the course of this investigation. My efforts included activities that addressed three broad ethical concerns: (1) The relationship between society and science, (2) professional issues, and (3) the treatment of research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 102).

The ethical issues surrounding the relationship between society and science situates around the degree to which societal issues and socially constructed values should guide the way of research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Society appears to dictate areas of research that hold importance according to prevalent cultural values (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). As a result, researchers may avoid other important research topics although these areas of inquiry show need for attention (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). For example, the development of multicultural competence among college students exists as a critical area of exploration (e.g. King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). However, the body of literature regarding the development of multicultural competencies among college students remains limited, possibly because of the sensitive nature of the topic or even the value or priority society places on this subject area (Landreman et al., 2007; Waldron-Moore, 2011). Despite any mainstream perspectives about the current research topic, numerous researchers (e.g. Maramba & Velasquez, 2012; Patterson, 2012, Pope et al., 2009) have acknowledged the importance of the development of multicultural competence among student leaders. As a result, I chose to address the critical topic of the development of multicultural efficacies among student leaders through this research.

The second main ethical concern involves professional issues (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Johnson and Christensen (2008) discussed that American Psychological Association

(APA) writing guidelines provide a helpful framework to avoid professional ethical concerns. For this reason, I structured this research according to APA writing guidelines to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). To avoid any falsification and plagiarism, I reported all necessary information for this study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Also, by adhering to APA writing guidelines and disclosing detailed information pertaining to intent of study, and methods, I achieved honesty and integrity throughout this investigation (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

The third broad ethical issue entails the handling of research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Ethical issues concerning human subjects include treatment of participants, deception, and protection of privacy (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). In all communications with participants throughout the study, I treated these individuals with respect and demonstrated positive regard to ensure their comfort and to establish rapport (Seidman, 2006). Also, I shaped my language and tone to avoid expressions or overtones that could potentially intimidate participants (Seidman, 2006).

As all research involving humans must undergo a review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Johnson & Christensen, 2008), I obtained approval from the IRB of the host institution as well as the University of Georgia prior to gathering information for this study. Also, my research team and I completed the required IRB training courses to ensure our understanding of ethical practices when studying human subjects.

In communicating information about the study to participants, each individual received detailed, non-deceptive information via informed consent letters. This information provided participants with explicit details needed to make knowledgeable decisions about their involvement in the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). I only interviewed students who

submitted a signed and returned consent form (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). For any reason, participants held the freedom to withdraw from the study without consequence (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) as noted in the informed consent. For this study, however, all participants that began the research process successfully completed it.

Although providing anonymity for each participant was impossible for this study, I am maintaining confidentiality for every participant by concealing their identities, making it unknown to the public (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). To achieve this, I assigned a pseudonym to each participant (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) and placed all electronic information containing identifying information in a password-protected computer file. Also, I will permanently delete all files after I have published this study. Overall, I took measure to achieve an ethically sound investigation by adhering to the standards of research throughout the course of this study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Summary

This chapter explained the phenomenological and social constructivist frameworks that I used to explore the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Through the use of individual interviews, I gathered information that underwent a data analysis or interpretation process. The interpretation of information or data involved horizontalization and the highlighting of patterns to identify themes in the data. My axiological stance, trustworthiness measures, and ethical considerations, denote the methodological approaches I used for this study. Overall, by applying the philosophical and methodological structures of this study, I successfully explored the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders of culture, diversity and social justice-based student organizations and programs. The impetus for this investigation was derived from the presumption that educators would apply insights gained from this study to bolster and initiate programs, services and future scholarship that address the development of multicultural competence among student leaders. For these reasons, this chapter presents the apparent findings that were identified from the data.

Through a social constructivist lens, I collected, coded, and analyzed data gathered from ten participants who completed individual, semi-structured interviews. Through these interviews, participants shared about experiences that affected their development of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. The findings from this data provided the information needed to answer the overarching research question: What are the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders? Prior to detailing the findings, the next section describes the participants of this study to showcase the group of student leaders who shared their stories.

Participant Descriptions

As indicated previously in chapter three, all participants are upperclass undergraduate students who served in leadership positions in culture, diversity, and/or social justice-oriented student organizations and programs for a minimum of one semester prior to this study. This

section further describes each participant of this study. Pseudonyms were used to substitute participants' names as a means to protect their identities. Also, participants' ethnic and racial identities, sexual orientation, and gender are also noted. Additionally, participants are identified by the campus they attended. This section also provides a brief description and rationale behind the tangible object each participant brought and discussed during their interviews. Moreover, participants' scores from the multicultural efficacy self-assessment are indicated. Lastly, this section includes brief statements of salient points shared by participants in describing each of their lived experiences.

Ashley identified as a White heterosexual female from the northeast region of the United States. Ashley is a rising junior from Campus 1 and held a leadership role in a peer leadership program that promotes diversity and social justice. Ashley scored a 35 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy self-assessment. To demonstrate her development of multicultural competency, Ashley brought a framed certificate she received after completing a training that focused on LGBT issues. Ashley mainly reported about ways in which her college experiences significantly expanded her worldview. Specifically, Ashley described her heavy and persistent involvement in diversity and social justice activities on campus. In undergoing these experiences, Ashley recalled feelings of hesitation, confusion, and discomfort in learning contexts involving intergroup dialogue.

Brandy is a Black, West-African heterosexual female. Brandy is a rising senior from Campus 1 and a top executive board member of a Black student organization. Brandy scored a 36 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy scale. To symbolize her development of multicultural competency, Brandy expressed that her possession of her country's national flag symbolized her pride for her culture. On the other hand, Brandy noted that the flag represents her

growth from “backwards” thinking to a more open mode of discernment. Brandy also spoke about moving from an unpremeditated sense of self to a more conscious sense of awareness of her racial identity as a result of her experiences as the “other” in predominantly White settings.

Clara is an African-American, West-Indian heterosexual female. Clara is a rising senior from Campus 1 and served in a chief position within a Black student organization. Clara scored a 41 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy self-assessment. Clara reported that a Pandora bracelet she received by her mother represents her development of her identity as a result of her family values. Clara spoke mainly about how her experiences in predominantly White contexts impacted her awareness and development of her Black identity.

Danielle is a Chinese-American heterosexual female and rising junior from Campus 1. Danielle held a top executive board position in a Chinese student organization. On the multicultural efficacy scale, Danielle attained a score of 31 out of 42 points. Danielle told about a jade necklace given to her by her mother when she was in elementary school. To Danielle, the necklace signifies her pride for her Chinese culture. Moreover, Danielle highlighted her initial feelings of shame and lack of understanding about her necklace, but communicated her feelings of pride that she established later in her life. Danielle communicated about being bullied against as a result of her race and physical features. These early experiences with bullying in elementary school motivated her desire to make others feel included and welcomed.

Eva is a Latin-American, heterosexual female and rising junior from Campus 1. Eva served in a chief leadership role in a Latino student organization. Eva scored a 36 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy self-assessment. To represent her development of multicultural competency, Eva brought an award plaque she received for her student leadership efforts. Eva received this recognition as a result of her involvement in an academic support

program for underrepresented students. Eva also spoke frequently about a civil war that occurred in her home country. The civil war was significant to Eva as her father served in combat during this event. To Eva, the war represented a fight for social justice. As a result, Eva's resolve for social justice is inspired by her father's experiences.

Frank is a heterosexual male who identified as a biracial Latino as his biological parents are White and Latino. Frank is a rising senior from Campus 1 and held a leadership position in a peer leadership program that focuses on diversity and social justice. Frank scored a 37 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy scale. To demonstrate his development of multicultural competency, Frank brought a framed certificate he received after completing a training that focused on LGBT issues. Frank shared that exposure to his LGBT peers and interactions with them in a leadership program drove him to better respect and appreciate members of the LGBT community. Overall, Frank verbalized that his heightened awareness of diversity and social justice issues function both as a blessing and a curse.

Greg is an African-American, heterosexual male. Greg is a rising junior from Campus 2 and served as a student leader for a peer leadership program that promotes diversity and social justice in the campus community. Greg scored a 36 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy self-assessment. Greg explained that he frequently wears a Rainbow bandana to demonstrate his solidarity and care for members of the LGBT community. Greg emphasized his passion in utilizing his songwriting abilities for storytelling to raise awareness of multiculturalism and give voice to diverse and underrepresented experiences.

Mel identified as a White, transsexual woman. Mel is a rising senior from Campus 2 and served as a student leader for a peer leadership program that promotes diversity and social justice in the campus community. Mel scored a 36 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy scale.

To demonstrate her development of multicultural competency, Mel shared a picture of her tabling a campaigning event to promote awareness of LGBT issues. Mel communicated an overarching theme of empathy and a strengthened resolve as a result of enduring numerous hostile encounters. Moreover, Mel acknowledged the benefits of presenting as a White male and communicated that she utilizes this privilege to promote social justice.

Jennifer is a Black, West-Indian American heterosexual female. Jennifer is a rising senior from Campus 2 who served in a major leadership role for a Black student organization. Jennifer scored a 37 out of 42 points on the multicultural efficacy scale. Jennifer spoke about a souvenir she received from a student leadership training she completed. This souvenir reminds Jennifer of the information she learned about dominating and subordinated statuses in society. Much of the lived experiences she shared involved encounters whereby she openly communicated her unique perspectives about diversity and social justice matters to her peers who were not always receptive of her views.

Ina is a Latin-American, heterosexual female. Ina is a rising senior from Campus 2 who held a top executive board position for a Latino student organization. On the multicultural efficacy scale, Ina attained a score of 33 out of 42. To demonstrate her multicultural awareness, Ina brought a copy of an image she frequently included on promotional materials for programs and events. The image displayed a multi-colored hand in fist form to symbolize multiculturalism and solidarity between different cultures. Ina communicated her fondness for the image as it is signifies a celebration of the diversity that exists in the world. During Ina's interview, she mainly spoke about her love for interacting with diverse others and programming for cultural events.

In review, Table 1 indicates the self-reported, gender and racial/ethnic classifications of participants. Also, the chart lists the campus, score from the multicultural efficacy scale and tangible object brought by participants.

Table 1

Participants by Variables

Pseudonym	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Campus	Score	Tangible Item
Ashley	White	Female	1	35	Framed certificate for LGBT training
Brandy	Black, West African	Female	1	36	Nigerian flag for cultural pride
Clara	Black, West Indian-American	Female	1	41	Pandora bracelet for sense of identity
Danielle	Asian-American	Female	1	31	Jade necklace for cultural pride
Eva	Latin-American	Female	1	36	Award for leadership achievements
Frank	Biracial, White, Latino	Male	1	37	Framed certificate for LGBT training
Mel	White	Transsexual	2	36	Photo, tabling a campaigning event
Ina	Latin-American	Female	2	33	Multi-colored image added to flyers

Greg	Black, African-American	Male	2	36	Rainbow bandana for solidarity
Jennifer	Black, West Indian-American	Female	2	37	Souvenir received from diversity training

Discussion of Themes

Social constructivism enables the belief that individuals establish subjective interpretations of their experiences, characterized by diverse and wide-ranging meanings to their encounters (Creswell, 2012). For this reason, I facilitated member checks with participants to gain feedback on my interpretation of their experiences.

Member checks maintain its importance as they help to ensure the quality and trustworthiness of the findings (Hays & Singh, 2012). To facilitate member checks, I emailed the themes I identified from this study to all ten participants to learn if they concurred that the findings represented their lived experiences. Out of the ten total participants, nine of them responded. All nine participants indicated that their experiences matched all five themes. I also provided the themes to my research team who shared their thoughts about these salient findings. As a result of the information I received from member checks and peer review, I established the following themes: (1) developing identity, (2) experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes, (3) the significance of othering, (4) surmounting adversity and (5) learning in safe and supportive environments. I illustrate these themes using thick descriptions taken from the interviews. Overall, by reporting the most salient findings of this study, I am able to provide important insights that will promote an awareness and understanding of experiences that affect the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

Developing Identity

The first theme I identified from the data signifies experiences that influenced participants' developing their sense of identity or self. All participants spoke about experiences affecting their self-awareness and identity development. For instance, Danielle described an experience she encountered at an early age that helped her gain a "better understanding" of her cultural identity. Specifically, Danielle told about a necklace she received from her mother at an early age. Danielle began by describing her initial feelings about the necklace:

> … because I had to wear it every day and I'm like, *why am I wearing this red string and this like rock on me and no one else is wearing it?* And I guess I did feel different and I'm like the kids would go up to me and they're like, *what's that red string on you?* And then, I definitely felt like, *oh, oh, you can see that?* And I'd try to hide it because I didn't want people to like constantly ask me, *what was that?* And I would have to explain it to them. Because I didn't really like understand it myself and Mom is like, *wear it, good luck, fends off evil* or something. And I'm like, *okay, I will wear it*, you know.

In reflecting on her original feelings about her necklace, Danielle explained her current thoughts about it, when she proclaimed that, "I have a better understanding of it. I don't think I would want to hide it." Moreover, Danielle expressed, "I'd be proud to wear it. I understand my traditions, and I mean, there's nothing to be ashamed about my culture. Just proud that I am Chinese." Danielle also acknowledged that, "I feel like I'm connected" when highlighting the fact that her "cousins do wear necklaces like that." Lastly, Danielle mentioned that having the necklace brings her back to "the traditions in China and how everyone would wear it."

Like Danielle, Clara reflected on an early school experience that impacted her sense of self. This experience involved Clara being one of "only five Black people" in her "middle

school", a space where she felt "out of place." Clara noted that these experiences led to an "identity crisis" and categorized them as a "struggle", "really rough", and a "real weird out of body experience." To discuss the ways in which she experienced her identity at an early age in comparison to her current processing of her "Black" identity, Clara elaborated as much:

> When you really are just like the one Black person in your class and you will forever be until you leave that school-- it's just a weird experience. I think it really made me think about *who am I? What does it even mean to Black?* And even me not setting the stereotypical Black that everyone in that school conceived me as like-- it was just a weird mind space to be in. I think subconsciously, I struggle with that a lot more. Now that I look back in the day, I noticed-- I realize that I did struggle with that. It was never on a conscious level but it was just as weird trying to figure out who I was. I think that was the real beginning of it for me. Like race, and me actually addressing race like any issues that I felt with race.

Apart from Clara's middle school experiences, Clara also discussed how her involvement as a student leader of a culture-based student organization in college "pushed" and "challenged" her to have a "better" understanding of her racial identity. In illustrating this experience, Clara highlighted that she thought of questions such as, "what does it mean to be Black" and "how do I fit into this Black-ness." Additionally, Clara characterized these situations as an "internal debate, conflict, life struggle." In detail, Clara explained these conditions as follows:

> …because I'm part of the e-board, so we're like looked at as the speakers of the club or just like the head of a club. So you always want to make sure you represent properly for the club. But it's hard to represent if you're still struggling with what it means to be Black and you're the [named student organization]. It kind of complicates it.

Unlike Danielle and Clara, who described ways in which their school experiences influenced their awareness of their racial identities, Frank emphasized that his familial upbringing shaped his sense of self. Mainly, Frank described a situation that molded his identity as a "biracial" person:

> …my mother is Italian. And growing up, they always told-- taught me to describe myself as a Hispanic-Italian. Like what is a Hispanic-Italian? And I-- I would always hesitate or jumble with words, and people would ask me what I am, you know, it's-- it's not always clear. Especially at different times, like in the winter. I'm very light, you know. In the summer, I start to get a little darker, like people get confused. I'm biracial and I'm a biracial Latino.

Frank further explained the reasoning behind the identity he established for himself when he commented as follows:

> I took it because-- I take my father's name and a lot of the culture I've been introduced to has been on his side of things and you know, it's what I've sort of chosen as my identity. And I mean, it's been a real long process, but to summarize, I'm much more comfortable calling myself that now.

Similar to Danielle, who underwent the process of accepting a cultural identity, Ashley described an encounter that introduced her to the idea of claiming a cultural identity for herself as someone she noted as being "part of a more hegemonic, dominant culture":

> I was applying for this-- scholarship. When I was applying, I wrote this essay and I was like, *well I really don't have much culture of my own so I'm very excited to like be in a foreign culture*. And the interviewer was like, *okay, that's not true*. She was like, *you may not see your culture especially because like being part of a more like hegemonic*

> *dominant culture*. Or, you know, my family is Catholic and like, I forget that is kind of, you know, there's a culture there. I've gone to Catholic school my whole life. Like it's not-- it doesn't feel like culture to me, but she (interviewer) was pointing out-- she's like, *but it is*.

Furthermore, Ashley illustrated her reflections as a result of this encounter when she declared, "to go through years of my life without ever realizing that existed and then to come and have people explain it to me and be like, *oh!* ... there's just this like-- this switch and it turned on."

Encapsulating the *developing identity* theme are Mel's disclosures. "Discovering one's self is a seemingly interminable process to begin with. It took me like 17 years to finally realize, *oh, I might be trans*." To further explain this experience, Mel offered the following reflections:

> People say sexuality is fluid. Why not gender identity? I might decide that I'm not trans anymore, one day … Does that mean I'll stop empathizing with other trans people? No. Does it mean that I'll stop advocating? No. Because, I know what it feels like.

Experiencing Internal Challenges in Developmental Processes

A second theme I identified from the data characterizes experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes. Under this theme, students experienced internal challenges such as cognitive dissonance, confusion, and hesitancy to interact with diverse others. Most participants reported experiences whereby they underwent cognitive dissonance and confusion. For example, Jennifer described situations branded by "confusion" upon learning of the gay identities of her childhood peers. Jennifer depicted the context as follows:

> I feel like for a while, I was going through like a moment of crisis. I had friends that I've known for a long time and when we were about to go to college-- one of my good friends-- we've known each other since we were like eleven and we went to the same

> school. And we were about to go to college and [all of a sudden] *I'm a lesbian* and blah blah and I was like, *ooookay*. Like I did not see all that coming.

Jennifer continued by explaining her thoughts and feelings during this experience:

> That was kind of like a challenge 'cause I've known her. I was wasn't mad at her, I wasn't hating her or anything like that, but it was just a shock. And it's the same thing with another childhood friend like that I had that-- and he's a [West Indies native], too and he was a guy and now he's a girl. It just puts you in this weird mindset.

Moreover, Jennifer described her current feelings of "confusion" as a result of this encounter:

> I don't know what to think anymore. I don't know what's right anymore. I don't know what's wrong anymore and I'm like confused. It makes everything weird because like now people are like, *well, I don't identify as female, but I identify as a woman*. And I'm like, *what does that mean?*

Moreover, Jennifer disclosed how her generational upbringing influenced her understanding when she communicated the following:

> …I grew up in the 90s and I'm not a 2000 baby 'cause I think that the 2000s baby understand it better-- I grew up in the 90s. That was a lot more conservative than the 2000s where I grew up looking at *that's a boy* and *that's a girl*. There's is no like-- switching. There is no like, *I'm a boy* and then *I'm a girl* kind of thing. There's none of that. So it was kind of weird.

Jennifer expressed her "struggle" to balance contrasting perspectives on same sex orientations when she verbalized, "I think that's also a struggle for me. Like, I'm dealing with culture that is like against homosexuality, but you're in a school where it's like that populated." As a result of this "struggle", Jennifer reported, "so you're like, *I don't even know any more of what to think…I*

don't care…it's not my problem." Because Jennifer described this experience as "very complicated", she stated, "I decided that anything that has to do with like homosexuality and what I think about that culture- I'm not trying to involve myself." Jennifer communicated the "agreement" she made regarding this matter in efforts to resolve her "cognitive dissonance":

> I don't know all the things but I think that I've come to this agreement in my mind just to like, save myself the cognitive dissonance-- that people can do whatever they want and that everyone is entitled to their opinion. I feel like they can say whatever they want. I think it's valid. So that's why I've come to this-- I don't have to necessarily like, accept everything. I just have to tolerate it, and be polite about it, and respect people's choices and that's how I kind of rectified it and I'm doing fine with that sort of agreement with myself on this matter so-- (laughs). So, I'm not trying to rock the boat, so I'm fine with my agreement with myself about this. That's how I feel like I've handled it.

Comparable to Jennifer, who reported feelings of confusion about her stance on same sex orientations, Frank recounted events where he navigated two conflicting thoughts and feelings. Particularly, Frank felt "upset" and experienced "guilt" concurrently during discussions with his White girlfriend about his Latino family. Frank provided an account of the first of two experiences as follows:

> …during a dinner- and my abuela was there, my aunts, my uncles, my cousins, it was a nice big dinner. And two things happened that kind of like, upset me. The first was when I was listing their names, I was saying-- I was saying Juan, I was saying Marcia. I was like, going through a bunch of-- of different Spanish names. She's (Frank's girlfriend) like, *you know, all those names sound the same*. And I was like-- it was like, *there are a lot of names here in America that sound the same*. It's like Christine,

> Christina, Christian. I'm like, why isn't anything different? She's like, *don't be all upset about that*. I was like, *no*. I was like amply upset about that. I was like, *why would you ever call that out?* I was like that's-- *if you were at a table with my mom's side of the family, that's not something you'd mention in a million years*, you know, like why do all your names sound the same? It's like you see like a different culture and you're like, *oh, they all sound the same*. And she said that in kind of like a sarcastic, you know…

Frank narrated the second encounter:

> And then when we were leaving, she was tired. So she gets in the car and you know, we're saying bye to them. She doesn't come out and so I go in and I was like, you know, *we're saying bye to my family*. And you know, my family at this point was already in the cars and was going. … I was like, *would you ever do that with my mom's family?* I was like, *you were always very engaging with my mom's family*. I was like, *wouldn't you say bye to them? Like we're leaving.* She's like, *oh, I didn't think it was a big deal*. I was like, *why wouldn't it be a big deal?* You know, *it's my other side of the family*. And we got into an argument later on about that. And she apologized and everything…

In processing these two encounters, Frank shared his sentiments on this issue:

> …but it was just like, I pick up on all this now. I feel like I never would have picked up on this or like … I didn't even know if I'm just like … blowing it out of proportion, but I mean, from what I've learned, … I feel like being aware is both like a gift and a curse…

In conclusion, Frank provided the following information about his girlfriend: "She hasn't been through any of that. She's been science, science, science, you know. It's been her professional school." Moreover, Frank added that, "I've been trying to give her small doses of what I know instead of just being very upfront about it."

Like Frank, who navigated two conflicting thoughts, Jennifer spoke about another issue she described as a "struggle" to understand as a result of her contrasting perspectives on the matter. Specifically, Jennifer spoke about a news debate she watched that addressed the topic of Santa Claus' race. Jennifer recounted the experience when she stated, "I remember some news anchor said, *Santa is White*… another woman was like, *I wish they had more pictures of Black Santa,* and the woman was like, *no, but Santa's White*." Jennifer explained her varying viewpoints regarding this debate:

> And all I kept thinking was, *all right, well, she's an idiot for like going on the TV and saying that and not expecting an uproar*. But at the same time, her point is valid in the sense that if you want to get technical, Santa Claus is based off of a person who was White. So if she wants to go around saying Santa is White, it's not that she's incorrect.

This experience led to reflect Jennifer's as follows:

> I think for some people, it annoys them when I say stuff like that, because it's not like they can argue and tell me I'm wrong. But, they don't like it. Like that is the truth. I'm like, but that's what it is, guys. And then it makes you feel like well, you're siding with White people. I always struggle with that. And you feel like you're siding with oppressors, which is stupid, because now you're siding with a person enslaving you.

Because of this "struggle", Jennifer reached the following conclusion:

> So it gets all technical and that's why sometimes I just don't like to talk about certain things- aren't meant to say around the table… This is the kitchen table talk. Like we don't go outside and say what we really think.

To further illustrate the *experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes* theme, participants also reported that they experienced intrapersonal conflict that affected their

interactions with groups of people racially or culturally different from themselves. For instance, Jennifer talked about her internal battle with conformity and discussed how this challenge complicated her ability to remain open-minded to the perspectives of culturally diverse others. To illustrate this experience, Jennifer began by describing her thoughts about her own cultural group:

> I think a lot of cultures come with like-- all like stereotypes of other people. And I think Caribbean people, they are very conservative and they are very one track-minded and they are really arrogant. I think that Caribbean people are very arrogant and ignorant and they don't-- and they sometimes, they don't try to understand anything else. Like it's really rare to find one that's willing to listen to someone else's argument or point.

Jennifer continued by revealing the challenges she faced as a result of her cultural upbringing when she commented that, "I think that's one thing, is coming from that culture sometimes. It's very easy to want to become arrogant, too." Despite these challenges, Jennifer reflected on this experience as much:

> I've learned to like control that and not judge and not jump to conclusions, because that's what my parents were like, sometimes you comment, and then they run from A to Z, and I'm like, why is it at Z, I wasn't there.

Similar to Jennifer, who acknowledged the idea of engaging with others in an open-minded manner, Ashley recognized the importance of interactions that are "communicated properly" during intercultural exchanges. However, Ashley depicted the nature of her "struggle" to engage "effectively" with others:

> …I always have that internal conflict. I feel like that's always been the struggle of my life, is like when to say something, when to speak my views, when not to speak my

> views, when to know when like what I'm going to say is actually going to be effectively heard and communicated properly and like received well and then when it's not. And when I should not even bother saying anything because it's-- not that it's not going to make a difference, or maybe I'm feeling some type of way too much, or whatever I say is not going to be communicated properly.

Additionally, Ashley mentioned that, "I usually get along with people, but I think there's times when I don't really belong in this group and like, *can I contribute again,* like, *do they want to hear what I have to say?*" Ashley exemplified her thoughts by discussing her student leadership involvement in a multicultural office as a White person when she commented that, "people from my background might feel like they don't belong in multicultural affairs because maybe I feel like I can't contribute anything about like talking about my cultural heritage." In elaborating on her viewpoints and its impact on her intercultural exchanges, Ashley described her perceptions and behaviors as follows:

> I know that I've become more hesitant to speak because I feel like my experience is much closer to kind of that hegemonic … experience and that I either can't contribute as much because … my experience is more mainstream and, you know, it's not-- there's not as much that I can say, or that I don't have enough you know, either knowledge, or kind of competency in multicultural competency to not offend people, and that I might say something and people are gonna be like hurt by it, um which would worry me so you know in that case then, I kind of-- *okay*. I feel like I'm not-- I don't want to say something wrong. And I'm not sure if I can say something right, so I'm just not going to say anything.

Mirroring Ashley, who disclosed feelings of worry about making offensive remarks, is Frank, who also shared feeling worried that he "won't say the right things." Frank described this experience:

> I guess internally I'm always like nervous, you know. Like learning about different cultures. Because especially if I'm going to an event, you know. Being at [named college] or outside of [named college]. I guess I'm always nervous, because I feel like I won't fit in or I feel like I won't say the right things or I'm just-- you know. Being from another culture and going to a different culture, I get-- I get worried, you know, and a little anxious.

Like Ashley and Frank, who expressed feeling worried about interacting in culturally different spaces, Danielle shared that she "restricts" herself "when it comes to interacting with in spaces where there are "a lot of them", i.e., White people. Danielle told about these experiences:

> I think it's a lot of internal, just … I am constantly like reminding myself that I'm different and people view me different. Especially-- but then like talking to a person who is like White, I have no like barriers, like just talking to them, hanging out with them. But when it's like a lot of them, I constantly remind myself like, *Danielle, you are different*. *You are Asian, like you are small, you're small, you have black hair, like dark hair and you know-- you look different. You were raised differently*. And so I guess because I'm always reminding myself of that, not even if I want to, it's just been such a-- like it's been a habit, that I think because of that, it makes me, like-- I restrict myself when it comes to interacting with like other people.

Danielle further expressed her thoughts and reflections as it relates to this experience:

> I wish I didn't have this barrier. I wish I didn't feel this way. I wish they didn't view me differently. And then it goes back to *oh*, like-- *why am I Chinese* kind of thing. But like that's like deep, deep, deep down. Where you're like subconsciously thinking like, *I am ashamed of myself,* you know."

Overall, Danielle described this experience as "tough." Nevertheless, she communicated her efforts to address her perceptions about herself in relation to her White peers when she mentioned, "I'm trying to be a little more open."

The Significance of Othering

A third major theme I identified from the data entailed the significance of "othering". I this theme, participants reported about experiences that led an increased awareness of White privilege. Moreover, participants spoke experiences with isolation in predominantly White settings. Most participants provided examples of experiences that revealed or confirmed to them, the existence of White privilege. For instance, Clara, who proclaimed that, "White privilege--yea, it exists" exemplified this assertion when she spoke about an experience she underwent at a convenient store. To begin, Clara detailed her efforts to identify cosmetics suitable for her skin complexion:

> …when you go to Walgreens and you've got colors all over the place when you look at makeup. Why I go to Walgreens, and it only got one color? … I was trying to get this one foundation color. I went to the Rite-Aid and I live in [named city predominantly consisting of African-Americans and Latinos] out here, too. I went to the Rite Aid down the street, the Walgreens, and two beauty supply stores. I had to finally go to the Target that had one color left. Actually it was too dark, too.

Clara continued by describing the landscape of makeup supply in her home city to illustrate the difficult or "hard" nature of "finding makeup" that matched her skin complexion:

> So when I go to the Walgreens back in [named city in Northeast region of the United States], even the Target in [named a suburban area in a city in Northeast region of the United States], which is kind of suburban-ish, so the Target there doesn't have as many colors or as many products as I want. But if I go to the one in the hood, like they got my color, always in the hood. Everywhere else, they have like two Black colors. Like real real light, which is like light skin, that's really like beige, not really black if you ask me. It's really light skin. Or they have real, real dark. And I'm like, I'm somewhere in the middle between that.

Overall, Clara concluded that, "so it's hard for me to find makeup that I want unless I have to go drive and call the Walgreen's to see if they have my color." Moreover, Clara shared her sentiments about this issue when she expressed that, "all the foolishness just to get some foundation." In describing these encounters with shopping for makeup, Clara commented that, "it is very clear to me" when she referred to the existence of "White privilege".

Similarly, Jennifer expressed her awareness of privileges afforded to White folks when she commented that, "I already knew these things happen. Some people didn't, because-- they were White students." To reaffirm these assertions, Jennifer recounted a college class reading:

> I remember reading a piece in class, talking about how people of color-- they have two selves. Where you have the self and then you always have this part of you that always needs to step outside of you and view yourself as the minor. The majority is looking at you. And how White people, or people who are like of the majority, don't have that second self, because they don't need to have that second self.

Jennifer shared her sentiments regarding this matter:

> So for me, it's like, all right, well, I'm more aware, because I have to be. So because I'm more self-aware. It's like almost-- I'm more aware of everybody else, too. So I think I'm more conscious of the diversity and the things that go on in the world that are not fair.

Another participant, Ashley, spoke about observations that mirrored Jennifer's explanation of "White people, or people who are of the majority don't have that second self, because they don't need to have that second self." Specifically, Ashley told about survey questions on demographic information.

> …like on surveys-- how the ethnic option is basically either like Hispanic or not. And like that's the only options and so that I also find very confusing. Because then you have that, and then you have race, and so like I don't know, like it all belongs in there. It's very confusing.

Upon highlighting the "confusing" nature of selecting race/ethnicity options on surveys, Ashley, a White woman, shared her perceptions on this matter when she commented that, "I'm sure there are like other people who have to try to identify. I could just go with *not* and then just move on." Like Ashley, Jennifer also shared her thoughts about racial identity questions on surveys:

> When I applied to high school, and they ask you what race you are and I remember you pick Black, African-American. And then they ask you what kind of Black you are. And I'm like, *okay, like does it matter? Because I don't think you're asking like the White girl what kind of White she is,* she's just White. I mean, I don't know, I didn't click *White,* so I wouldn't know. But like, *I don't think you're asking her that.* So like, *what does it matter what kind I am?*

Comparable to Jennifer and Clara, Ashley also exemplified her own awareness of various occurrences, of which Jennifer regarded as "the things that go on in the world that are not fair." Specifically, Ashley reported that she learned about "redlining", which she described as "the practice of … inner city … development." Ashley shared that she felt "disbelief that this can happen" and acknowledged redlining as events whereby "people in the past have messed up." As a result, Ashley expressed her feelings of "guilt" and her "responsibility" to "help."

Similar to Ashley, who communicated her sense of responsibility to help due to her White identity, Mel, who identified as "transsexual", indicated her sense of "duty" to assist marginalized groups as a result of her "White male privilege." Mel also acknowledged the double "benefits" associated with White male identity and demonstrated her awareness as follows:

> I do not want to encounter any of the misogyny that is rife within our society. And I feel that … I have to use White male privilege as much as I can as long as I can, because it's … it really is a tool that I can use.

Participants' feelings of isolation in predominantly White settings also exemplify the *significance of othering* theme. Most participants suggested that they encountered feelings of isolation in settings consisting mostly of White peers. Specifically, participants reported situations where they felt "watched" and "out of place", and experienced "loneliness and depression" in primarily White school environments. For example, Eva recounted one experience in her high school class where she was "one of two Latinos" and felt that she was "watched" by others at the school. Moreover, Eva expressed, "I didn't connect what they-- White people in my classroom, you know. I connected more with like the Latinos." It was through this experience that Eva reported an awareness of her "difference"-- a description corroborated by

Ashley, who mentioned the idea of "othering" or making one feel as though they are "different". In reflecting on these situations, Eva proclaimed that, "I wasn't frequently exposed to a group of diverse students like I am now and that definitely leads to awareness, knowledge and skills, which I don't think I had."

Akin to Eva's feelings of disconnectedness with her White peers, Clara discussed that being in "primarily White" schools during her tenures in elementary and middle school were the "main reason" for her feelings of "loneliness and depression." As a result, Clara communicated that she felt "out of place in that space" when referring to her experiences as "a minority in a White institution." Despite these feelings of "loneliness", Clara acknowledged that these experiences would have been "detrimental" had she not been connected to friends. To illustrate this notion, Clara offered the following sentiments:

> …if I didn't find … if I didn't have friends, or I didn't have um-- if there wasn't anyone who looked like me who I could connect with, then I feel like I wouldn't be the same person I am today.

Regarding this experience, Clara further indicated that, "I feel like I still have the lingering effect of just feeling so out of place in that space."

Comparable to Eva's awareness of her "difference" in predominantly White settings, Clara also shared a recollection of her friend's opinions about their college's prevalence of White students. Clara narrated the conversation she had with her friend:

> I asked her how she's liking [named college]. And she's like, *ugh, there are too many White people*. And I'm like, *yea, there is, but this is the real world*. *Like believe or not, like you are the minority when it comes to like venturing outside of [named college] and*

> *leaving to go to maybe like a business setting or to different types of fields, wherever you want to go towards. You may still be the minority.*

Clara explained her stance on this matter:

> Being at [named college] just really makes me really aware. Makes me more competent of probably other people's ignorance. Like I think that's just a real world thing. Being in an environment where there are so few of you just makes you aware. And not really in a bad way per se, but just like able to handle the real world. Because the real world is not going to look like a million of me and like one was a White person.

Mirroring Clara's statement about her awareness of "other people's ignorance", Brandy described an experience that led her to comment that, "I've learned to acknowledge ignorance." In detailing this experience, Brandy began by illustrating the context:

> I ran for [top leadership position in a major student organization]. Color was never an issue for me, I never saw it. Like I just, I've always been an international student, so I never saw anyone—so my color, I was just like, *oh yeah, my name's Brandy*. But, throughout my experience of running for [named leadership title], my color became more of-- it became more of a thing. … the girl that would have been my [named leadership title for running partner], she's from somewhere in [named continent, not North America] She is of color, and I am of color, so there is a ticket, and we are both of color. And people would come up to me, and be like, *you know the chances of [named college] allowing like two people of color to win [named major student organization] election is really low. Like, it's a White school.*

Upon hearing the comments from others about her leadership pursuits as a person of color, Brandy expressed, "that's not the kind of thing—like, I don't want to hear that I won't win

because of my color." In addition to mentioning her interactions with other students regarding this matter, Brandy also spoke about her encounters with staff. In doing so, Brandy articulated that, "I know there were some administrators who just asked like, *so why did you decide to run*?" Brandy continued expressing her sentiments about observations she made during these experiences and verbalized them as follows:

> You know that someone is not following the rules, why are you turning a blind eye to it? Like I am playing so fairly. I know that if I had done the same thing, you would have been so quick to be like, *oh, Brandy you're disqualified*. But if other people are not doing the right thing-- I just-- I didn't get it.

In reporting the impact of these "hard" encounters, Brandy offered the following sentiments:

> …working with administration after that was kind of hard because I feel like if you look at me, administration wouldn't want to say, that's the [named leadership role] of our [named major student organization]. That's the sense I got. But things were done, and I saw them with my own eyes. It just made me uncomfortable like, now I'm uncomfortable going to certain offices, whereas I wasn't before. I don't show them that I'm uncomfortable. But I am uncomfortable.

Brandy continued to share her views about this experience and communicated and began by telling about the ways in which these encounters affected her views about her college:

> At the elections, a lot of things are said and a lot of things happen that made me – I used to be in love with [named college]. I'm no longer in love with my school. Like, I like it. It's cool. It's allowed me to grow, but people are very two-faced, and it's because of my color. Like I'm sorry, but I'm not really sorry. And I'm glad that I didn't win. Because if I did win, those are the people I would have been working with, and that's not okay.

As a result of these experiences, Brandy reported her reaction as much:

> I was very upset and I didn't know who to trust, so I decided not to talk to anyone. And then I sent my [named an academic support program that counsels students of color] advisor this really long email, and he was like, *you developed*.

Moreover, Brandy offered additional reflections about the impact of this experience:

> I've learned to acknowledge ignorance. I've realized that my color's a thing, so I'm not blind to it anymore. But it sucks, because now, I'm conscious of it. Like before, I wasn't. I've tightened my friends-- the people I trust. I trusted a lot of people.

Brandy continued describing her views about her experience when she voiced the following:

> …like if I question it, and I end up being right, people are going to have hostile feelings, you know? I don't want to have to deal with that. I can make a difference without having to be on [named major student organization]. Because I was like, if these are people who are supposed to be supporting you-- don't.

Overall, Brandy concluded that, "I grew from it, and I've moved on."

Surmounting Adversity

The fourth theme, *surmounting adversity*, highlights the effects of adverse encounters on participants' awareness and resolve. This theme captures participants' experiences in various hostile situations, such as bullying and other divisive situations. As a result, participants conveyed a heightened awareness in various regards and a strengthened resolve towards promoting inclusion and social justice.

Under the *surmounting adversity* theme, students reported experiences with bullying that affected the development of multicultural competencies. Most participants reported experiences with bullying as a factor that impacted their sense of identity and commitment to social justice

and inclusion. For example, one participant, Danielle, described her experiences being bullied in school. Specifically, Danielle categorized her elementary school experiences with bullying as "terrible." Moreover, Danielle added that these encounters were "difficult and traumatizing." Danielle also recounted experiences whereby a classmate would "make fun" of her eyes by imitating what Danielle termed as "chinky eyes." Additionally, Danielle reported that a schoolmate called her a "Chinese staircase" during a class activity that involved the making of lanyards. As a result of these encounters, Danielle recalled feeling "really, really, really offended" and expressed her thoughts during that experience: "Like, *you're not making fun of like anyone else, but you know, you're like picking on me because I'm Chinese and stuff*." Danielle further explained how being bullied affected her at the time and discussed her current thoughts about this experience:

> …after that experience; I definitely like wished that I was White. …sort of like everyone else, or at least mixed, so I could still have like my Chinese part, but then I'll be White, so it wouldn't be as bad. But definitely like growing up, I just like I started to accept that I didn't want to change, like I'm glad to be the person who I am and like full Chinese and so on. I guess it just, after like that time where it was traumatizing, I sort of just didn't want to be Chinese.

Danielle continued to illuminate how being bullied impacted her when she stated, "I became a stronger person. Because I persevered through it and I began to do critical thinking and just think like, *oh, I'm different, but that's okay*."

Like, Danielle, who reported being made fun of because of her race, Brandy detailed an early school experience where she was aware that a "racist remark" was made about her:

> …the British are very cold people, and they're very um-- what's the word? Like they say what they think, they say it how it is, they don't try to-- yeah, very blunt. And it's only now that I reflect on it back, and I'm like, wow, that was probably a racist remark, but I didn't know it because I was young, and when I was in [named Middle Eastern country] for like three, four years, I went to a British school. And I don't know, my teachers were always just complaining about me. And there was nothing to really complain about. I guess I talk a lot, yeah, but everyone talks a lot, and like-- okay, my hand would be up, and it'd be like, *okay, there are no questions*, but my hand is up kind of thing. But I didn't recognize it then, it's only now that I'm like, *oh that wasn't right*.

Brandy reflected on her thoughts during this experience when she commented that, "my parents have always taught me to love Nigeria, but I didn't know why I was loving it. It was hard to love it when I felt like I was being attacked because of it." Nevertheless, Brandy reported about the impact changing environments had on her when she communicated the following:

> But, it was when I moved to [named a small island country] and I said I was [West African country native] and it was like, *whoa, you're [West African country native], like what's it like?* And when people asked me *what's it lik*e, I wanted to know what it was like, too!

Parallel to Danielle and Brandy's encounters with bullying in school, Mel also reported that she was bullied during her high school tenure. Nonetheless, contrary to Danielle and Brandy, who reported being bullied because of their race and ethnicity, Mel mentioned that he was bullied on the account that he "tried to be more feminine." Mel provided a detailed narrative to further describe this experience:

> Everything was terrible in high school. I mean, I tried to be more feminine in high school, but everyone bullied me and hit me, even the butch lesbians. They'd pour cold water on me on the streets and stuff like that, and call me names. So no one liked me and I didn't like myself. So I tried to fix myself by becoming macho and masculine. And I was like this-- I was like the stereotypical Polish-like refrigerator meathead, like you know, with my really skinhead haircut. I didn't wear glasses, and stuff. I didn't like gay people either, because I-- you know, I was confused. Very, very confused. And I just did not care and I hated myself. I mean, and it was not a nurturing environment at all.

Moreover, like Brandy, who mentioned that, "my teachers were always just complaining about me, and there was nothing to really complain about", Mel also reported a hostile response she received from a faculty member when she described that, "I remember the one time I went to a teacher. She was like, "stop being a bitch." Mel described her reaction to these events:

> I was going through a lot. The students were unkind to me and I just stopped caring about myself and everything. So, I had C's, and D's. And even one D… I smoked cigarettes, too. It was a very confusing period of my life and just high school, in general. I still don't like talking about it.

Like high school, Mel also experienced bullying during her time in college. Mel described these situations when she commented, "he tried to rape me" and "I've received death threats in the past on account of my being a transsexual. I've received some more about two weeks ago." Mel shared about the impact of these experience when she stated, "this event, these death threats, actually precipitated my coming out to a lot of-- more professors, and people. So this has only enlarged and strengthened my network of support. So I just got more allies now." Mel further affirmed the outcome of these encounters when she expressed that, "situations like

this only remind me of what I ought to be fighting for. If anything, it really reinforces my sense of duty about this. All it's done is really stiffen my resolve." To explain her interpretations of her being bullied, Mel offered the following sentiments:

> … if an incident like this can happen to an exceptional student like me, who has all the … benefits of presenting as a White male, then, if someone else who does not have this institutional privilege behind them, someone else who does not have all these professors behind them, how must they feel when being faced by this sort of situation? It's really just a sense of duty. These individuals have no one else to help them. It would be an act of criminal negligence if I did not do whatever I can. It has to be done.

Unlike Danielle, Brandy, and Mel, who provided accounts of being bullied, Frank spoke about how witnessing his school peers being bullied affected him. In detail, Frank commented that the "openly gay kids" in his high school were "picked on a lot" and in "sometimes violent ways." Frank voiced that although he "never actually made fun of them", he also "never did anything about it" and "just saw it [bullying] on the sidelines." Moreover, Frank shared that he "sort of went along with the crowd just like when it came to my [his] religious views or the views against the religions" and "was sort of uncomfortable around them [gay schoolmates]." Nevertheless, Frank remarked that his experience as a student leader for a diversity and social justice-based program "changed that for me." Frank clarified that, "it tore down all these-- all these misconceptions I had." Frank explained how his student leadership experiences affected his "misconceptions" when he said, "just being a [named leadership position] and having openly gay [named leadership position] at our training weekends, I think was huge for me, you know, just to be in the same room and to interact."

Under the *surmounting adversity* theme all participants reported experiences whereby they navigated divisive situations that perpetuated contentious messages. For instance, Greg reflected on two of his interests, music and Japanese anime, to exemplify this theme. Specifically, Greg expressed that the "culture" of music is "perpetuated … in a negative light" and "fucked up." Moreover, Greg asserted, "you have the music industry, who exploits women, especially the music industry." Greg continued to highlight the music industry as "a real deterrent" that "affects everyone." "Regarding Japanese anime, Greg described it as "very flawed" and communicated that, "the amount of fan service pandering to the males is kind of annoying, in a sense, considering the fact that they sexualize and fetishize young Japanese women." As a result of the "negative" elements propagated through music and Japanese anime, Greg specified the following about a music television station, "BET": "I stopped watching it like my sophomore year of high school, because I felt like it was just not for me. As for the "flawed" components of Japanese anime, Greg acknowledged that, "it's kind of something that I have to overlook when I'm watching some anime, but I still can't deny it." Despite the negative characteristics associated with music and Japanese anime, Greg explained that, "I just feel like I just wanted to take other-- the positives of some culture and help that make me into a positive person." Greg illustrated that taking the "positives" from rappers, for example, involved identifying ways in which these musical artists told "personal" and "explicit" "stories." Greg reaffirmed this when he stated, "I'm not saying I want to be like Tyler the Creator, I just want to like tell my stories in the same vein as like the Notorious B.I.G." Lastly, Greg concluded with the following commentary:

> I feel the stories that I have to tell and that I wanted to tell, are very, very-- are quite multiculturally rich. I'm telling not only my stories, but stories of people who have lived

> long ago. Or at least I want to tell stories of people who lived long ago, people who are suffering hardships that I've never had to suffer.

Comparable to Greg, who navigated the "negative" aspects of music and Japanese anime culture, Brandy described her cultural upbringing as "backwards" and spoke about how she "realized" her need for growth. Brandy narrated this experience as follows:

> "… I used to be very homophobic, extremely. But I didn't know why. I lived in the Middle East for eight years, so being [named West African nationality] and living in Middle East, it kind of taught me to be backwards, I should say."

Despite these circumstances, Brandy shared about the impact of her relocation to the United States:

> So I came here with my ideas, and was shut down, like *no, that's not right*. And eventually I realized that I had a lot of growing to do and I think that made me multicultural competent. Because if I wanted, I feel like if I didn't come with the views I had, then no one would have questioned me, or challenged it, and then I would have just not grown.

Similar to Brandy, whose surroundings and upbringing "taught her to be backwards" and "homophobic", Mel elaborated that members of her previous community, including herself, had to "present" a "super-male macho" persona. Mel depicted these contexts as much:

> … we had several students killed by other kids. Because we-- our political science is right next to [named her former high school], which is supposed to be a so-called ghetto school. Like I've had a few friends beaten within an inch of their life by these [named high school] kids. One kid was pushed off the train and fell to his death, by [named high school] kids. Because he was going to [named an esteemed high school], he wasn't

> Black enough. So they killed him. And like that kind of stress every day, and like you know, people, students and everyone like all the guys, like felt they had to present like … as like super-male macho, because they're all scared of getting jumped, getting beaten to death. And so that was just not a very nurturing atmosphere for me.

Upon reflecting on these hostile encounters, Mel shared her conclusions as well as the impact of these conditions:

> So I've really surmounted all these obstacles, because given the low level of diversity and the manner in which it was diverse, and like the negative impacts of this particular milieu and this particularly dynamic and the institutionalized, and personal oppression felt by these individuals, and performed by them against me, has really only stiffened my resolve. Because knowing that I come from this sort of place and seeing how it's changed-- somewhat for the better.

Unlike Greg and Mel who described experiences they witnessed or endured routinely, Ashley reported about an encounter she underwent within an infrequent voluntary learning session. Specifically, Ashley spoke about an intergroup dialogue, in which she participated. Regarding this dialogue, Ashley highlighted the following about the experience: "It was a really difficult situation and that's definitely something that's really affected me." Ashley further explained why the dialogue was "difficult" when she expressed, "because it was me speaking from my experience and it was someone else speaking from their experiences, and they were very different." Ashley further noted why the dialogue "really affected" her when she restated a comment made by a dialogue participant about her [Ashley]: "She hoped that I had learned my lesson." As a result, Ashley voiced that the statement made about her was "really damaging" and further shared her views about it:

> I was speaking from my experience. What lesson was I supposed to learn from that and I think, I know because my experience is very different from hers like I think she was very hurt by my comments but I was very hurt by her comments and so it was just not a great experience…

Moreover, Ashley described her emotional response a result of this experience:

> I just remember being coy like an emotional wreck after. During the training, I was crying and it was very… because we were talking about a very personal experience that was very um, emotional and I felt you know, I did feel kind of attacked in a way by the way people were like taking sides and so it definitely-- I felt like I had tried to contribute to the conversation and tried to share and that it had gone really really badly. And so on one hand it made me more hesitant to share and it and it just you know-- it was really upsetting.

Regarding the climate of the intergroup dialogue, Ashley shared that, "people were taking sides" and commented that, "a lot of people from my [named service-learning/social justice-oriented student program] were there. They were telling me they felt like I was being singled out."

Moreover, Ashley described the activity she "felt" created an "atmosphere of *us* and *them*":

> … the facilitators … one of the people in charge who worked in the office was the one who brought it back up and so they [Ashley's team members] thought that it was almost like an attack so they were very defensive of me…

Ashley explained her thoughts and feeling about her team members' responses:

> …it was really, really sweet in some ways but then also, to me, it was like *no, no I don't want there to be sides or anything*. On one hand, I felt safe because I knew that I wasn't alone and that people were supporting me, but I also kind of felt this like guilt or like--

> that I was causing this sort of rift-- like kind of the wanting to run away, but also the same time, the wanting to explain myself.

Ashley continued to elaborate on her feelings about her experience when she added that, "I definitely feel uncomfortable when that topic is brought up and then I don't want to um-- I don't contribute to the conversation in that topic anymore." Despite the "damaging", "difficult" and "uncomfortable" elements associated with this dialogue, Ashley indicated that, "it definitely made me more aware of how I phrase things" and added that the experience "made it easier to share in some contexts." Moreover, Ashley concluded that, "these things are going to happen and you just keep moving forward" and that, "it gets easier because it can't get that bad again."

Like Ashley, who took part in a voluntary activity, Frank spoke about an encounter he underwent during a conference he voluntarily attended. To begin, Frank explained the context of an experience he defined as an "assault".

> …as the [name of organization] president, I took a group of students to a … conference and we encountered a speaker-- the whole purpose of … [name of organization]-- it's a national organization, it really came out of the whole push for affirmative action in general. We entered this session and … he's a lawyer, a JD, MD. Like this is a very knowledgeable guy and he sort of laid it out in front of us that he didn't agree with Affirmative Action and he felt like it wasn't helping us at all. But we were at a conference that was sort of like-- that was, you know-- the whole reason for that organization existing was because of Affirmative Action.

As a result of this experience, Frank communicated that he became "very emotional" and he "carried that around" with him. Frank also mentioned that, "I couldn't get it off my mind". Frank explained his feelings, when he expressed that, "because it was like-- I'm benefitting from these

programs … I feel like this kind of helps minorities." Moreover, Frank shared his thoughts when he commented that, "he's a very knowledgeable person, so like, you know, it was a sort of confliction for me. I felt like he was just tearing it down." Because of his reaction to this experience, Frank reached out to his academic support program advisor, a Latino male, who also functioned as his mentor. Frank reported that his mentor encouraged him to "speak up and say something in the moment" for situations that he felt strongly about. After receiving counsel from his mentor, Frank felt "grounded" and ended up taking action to address the issue. Frank affirmed as much when he stated, "so I ended up contacting the [named academic support program] National Organization and they were shocked that this man was even saying points against Affirmative Action." Moreover, Frank noted that the organization representatives communicated that they were "very happy" that he was "the first person to step up" to report the issue. Frank acknowledged why he felt "grounded" following his conversation with his mentor who encouraged him to take action:

> I felt like this [grounded] because of [name of advisor] sort of bringing me back down and … saying like, *it's better to do something about it [rather than] just vent*, you know, and like get all frustrated. I felt like that resolved things. I would have carried that around with me for who knows how long, and that would have affected just like everything in my life, my course load and everything.

Learning in Safe and Supportive Environments

The fifth theme I identified from the data describes participants learning in safe and supportive environments. While most findings under the previously reported themes consist of elements of *learning* for participants, this theme differs from the aforementioned themes as the findings discussed do not involve significant intrapersonal conflictions and striking adversity as

was the case for some other themes. For this theme, all participants reported that they gained knowledge and greater insights about diversity or social justice as a result of exposure to safe learning contexts, and involvement with various supportive individuals. This theme classifies experiences involving simpler and more direct outcomes of learning. For instance, Frank shared that the combined experience of his involvement in an academic support program and his leadership role on campus helped him to reach an understanding of "systematic oppression" and "social justice." Frank began by describing the academic support program: "[Named academic support program] was created in part because of Affirmative Action. They want to increase matriculates of historically underrepresented individuals in the STEM professions." Additionally, Frank noted the following about his experiences with the program: "That was really my first introductory experience to social justice" and "they certainly contributed to my development." Despite Frank's positive reports about the program's impact on his development, Frank also disclosed his initial feelings about the program when he stated, "I remember pretty well being very put off by it. Coming from that mindset I had in high school, and then entering into like this intensive, five week program."

Frank further narrated his initial views about the program and underscored the context that influenced his changed perspective:

> …and that [five-week program] was probably the first instance I heard about systematic oppression. But I think it was just way too over my head. I think I just neglected it completely, you know, until I became a [named diversity/social justice-based student leadership position]. I remember being with my roommate and we were both in the seminar, both talking about it afterwards, and saying like, you know, we didn't believe in any of it. Like it didn't seem like some big conspiracy-- people in our group felt like that.

> That was like, getting my feet wet. It was sort of hitting the ground running and I guess in the long run, that must have laid the basic blocks…

While Frank detailed that his participation in an academic support program "contributed" to his "development", Ina indicated that her advisor exposed her to an understanding that "hadn't crossed her my mind" about racial subgroups. Ina commented about the experience:

> [Advisor name] mentioned having a talk between like Blacks, but African Blacks and Caribbean Blacks, and like the different-- that was just something that made me think with my Jamaican friend. We talk a lot about like the Caribbean because we're both from the Caribbean and like we connect a lot like that. But it's [racial subgroups] just something I would not have thought about. I didn't think about before, like hadn't crossed my mind. I was like, *that can be an interesting discussion*."

By the same token, Eva told of an experience where she gained a similar awareness of distinctions between ethnic/racial identities. To describe the experience, Eva began by sharing what she "learned" during a Latino student conference she attended: "There are these like seminars and discussions you go to and I went to one. It's called Afro-Latinos. And I went, and then I learned about Afro-Latinos. I've never heard of that term before."

Eva shared her thoughts during the conference session when she mentioned, "I was like, *but is that someone, you know, like the daughter of someone from Africa and someone who is Latino?*" Overall, Eva characterized the experience as "eye-opening" and further elucidated what she had learned through the leadership conference session:

> I learned what Afro-Latino meant. I learned about the tension between people-- let's say that are Dominican and I just like-- Dominicans, like Latinos. And some people that recognized were Africans, right, you know. Africans were here in the Dominican

> Republic and so we are of African descent. And how the other people just don't accept that or self-conscious of that.

While Ina and Eva spoke about expanding her cognition by acquiring new knowledge, Brandy expanded her cognition by changing her attitude about LGBT individuals. Specifically, Brandy reported about an experience with a classmate to which she stated, "made me more accepting of everyone." Brandy provided an account of this experience:

> I wrote a paper on why gay couples should not be allowed to adopt. My paper was just about how it's unhealthy. Not like internally unhealthy, just generally unhealthy for a child to grow up with two parents of the same sex. And I argued that it's probably healthier for a child to grow up with one parent than two of the same. The friend, the gay friend I have who I'm very close to now-- I met him in that class, he wrote his paper against mine. So, this paper was an onset to mine.

Brandy disclosed her sentiments regarding this matter:

> …it's hard to have been taught something your entire life and then have it questioned. Just because if you've been taught something your entire life, something-- you don't even know like why it's what you think. So when you're questioned, you look like an idiot because you don't know how to defend it. And yeah, that was really hard for me to-- just 'cause I don't know why I thought the way I did, but I thought it was right. And he [classmate] shut me down real quick.

Moreover, Brandy further processed her perceptions regarding this matter when she commented that, "like I respect him [classmate] as a person, I still wrote that paper knowing the kind of person he was. In highlighting her new insights from this experience, Brandy articulated the following: "To be a leader, you need to be accepting of everyone, and I couldn't. Because I

wasn't. I've always been a leader, but I didn't realize that I was not accepting of everyone." To exemplify her new understanding of acceptance, Brandy explained the following: "Like you cannot be an orientation leader, and not be accepting because you don't know what kind of freshman group you'll be given." As a result of her exposure to a gay peer, Brandy acknowledged the impact of this experience: "That situation made me more accepting of everyone. My views on it now, I'm very liberal. I still have issues. I accept it [same sex relationships] for other people, but it's not something I would accept for myself." Moreover, Brandy further declared the following:

> Like even if I somehow got married to a woman, I could never-- I would feel guilty. I don't know why, I couldn't do it. So, for myself, no. I would never feel like that's right for me. But for other people, free spirited.

While this encounter occurred within the context of a classroom, Brandy also highlighted that her college culture contributed to her new perspective on "same gender" relationships:

> I feel like, yes, this is what [name of college] has done to me. They really were accepting that like love comes in different shapes and sizes, and that it's very possible for two people of the same gender to fall in love, and to get married, and to have a family.

Despite her contentions on same gender relationships for herself, Brandy proclaimed the following about her relationship with her "gay friend": "I know if I am not the godmother of one of his kids, I will have something to say. Yes, I will take it personally. Because I think we've grown from each other so much since Freshman year."

While Brandy discussed a classroom experience that expanded her acceptance of gay individuals, Mel told about a conversation she had with a professor who helped her to expand her advocacy approach for trans- folk:

> I had lunch with a dear professor of mine and we were talking about the-- because I held a trans identity panel and I mentioned my stoicism on how I do not feel the need to transition because I do not want to encounter the glass ceiling. I do not want to encounter any of the misogyny that is rife within our society.

Mel described her stoicism and provided an example to depict the concept: "So if you're born a certain way, you have to stay that way for the rest of your life. But you just have to have internal virtue and like, you know, *suck it up*, and *be virtuous*."

Upon reflecting on her personal paradigm for navigating her trans-identity with her professor, Mel realized that her approach "might be harmful to others." Particularly, Mel offered the following sentiments:

> I never really examined and computed the intellectual downside of stoicism, especially its determinism and it's really, let's say, inhumane, approach to suffering. It's not very good in assisting with other's oppression. And that's not the best way of going about things, especially since I hope to be an advocate for others. Now, I'm very concerned that my articulation of this particular stoic discourse might be harmful towards others. And that's really-- that's really food for thought and something that I do have to consider further.

As a result of Mel's new insights gained through her interaction with her professor, she told of her plan to "rethink" her "model" for "coping with individual oppression." Moreover, Mel voiced her intentions to improve upon her advocacy efforts:

> I do have to rethink that stoicism, and I think that really does also enhance my cultural awareness, because I have to think about how I present myself, because if I hope to be an advocate for change, that means a lot of eyes will be on me, and I need to make sure that I'm presenting a positive model for other people.

Lastly, Mel explained her viewpoints on reconsidering her coping approach when she expressed that, “because people out there are in a lot more pain than I am, since I am not in as much pain as they are, and since I can have some impact in mollifying-- no, ameliorating that pain, then it really is my duty to do so.”

Synthesis of Experiences

After identifying the units of meaning or clusters of themes from the participants’ experiences, the final stage of data analysis for a phenomenological study involves the synthesis of the experiences to encapsulate the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2012). In this study, I sought to identify the meaning attributed to the phenomenon of experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. In phenomenology, the researcher purports to discover the essence of the phenomenon by narrowing the textural (what) and structural (how) meanings of the experiences to a brief description that captures the experiences of all participants of the study (Creswell, 2012). For this reason, I present a synthesis of all the participants’ experiences in this section.

Textural Descriptions of Themes

In providing textual descriptions of participants’ experiences, I identified that they underwent both involuntary and voluntary experiences in various settings and with different individuals. Participants underwent experiences whereby they volunteered their time and energy to engage in activities or with others. To name a few, voluntary activities included intergroup dialogues, student organizations involvement, and conversations with peers, advisors, and educators. Involuntary experiences involved observations and adverse encounters, of which included bullying. Participants also discussed experiences occurring in secondary and postsecondary school settings and in their domicile. Although most experiences shared by

participants befell within school settings, participants underwent experiences in their geographical communities as well. Also, participants' experiences span over their lifetime, which indicates the ongoing or life-long encountering of experiences that affect their development. Overall, *what* student leaders recognized as affecting their development of multicultural competencies included their undergoing of both unintended and intended/planned experiences that occurred in various contexts and with different individuals and groups over time.

Structural Descriptions of Themes

In presenting the structural meanings of participants' experiences, I identified that they underwent experiences characterized by positive or negative properties. Examples of positive effects described by participants included descriptions of learning as "mind-blowing" and "eye-opening." As reflected in the themes, participants also reported negative effects such as internal conflict, cognitive dissonance, confusion, and isolation.

The Essence of the Phenomenon

Ultimately, the purpose of a phenomenological study is to identify the essence of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). By identifying the textural and structural meanings of participants' experiences, I was able to synthesize and reach the essence of the phenomenon being examined. As a result, I present the essence of the phenomenon under study: The essence of the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders signifies the intentional and unintentional undergoing of challenging, enlightening, and life-long exposure to various individuals and milieus.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a summary of the previous chapters and discusses the findings from this study in light of current literature related to the topic of experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Lastly, this chapter addresses limitations of this investigation as well as considerations for future research and practice.

Summary of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the purpose of this study. This investigation purported to explore the experiences that affected the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Next, significant terms and phrases used throughout the study were defined in efforts to enhance one's understanding of the research topic. Moreover, the importance of multicultural competence was explained and an outline of the processes involved in the development of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills was illustrated. Additionally, the connections between multicultural competence and leadership capacity were emphasized to highlight the imperative for development in this area. Also, a brief overview of current research on multicultural competence was detailed. Moreover, chapter one noted the problem statements addressed through this investigation. Next, the research question for this study was communicated. The research question is as follows: *What are the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders?* Additionally, I drew attention to the significance of this study, then defined the methodology used for this inquiry. In mentioning the framework used, I described the phenomenological and social constructivist

approach I used to gather participants' experiences. Moreover, I noted that the findings from this research will provide comprehensive insights into the experiences that affect the developmental of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Lastly, chapter one concluded that postsecondary educators can apply knowledge acquired from this study, to bolster and initiate programs, services, and future scholarship that will address the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders.

In Chapter 2, a comprehensive account of existing scholarly works to establish the necessary backdrop for understanding the topic of this study was provided. In doing so, chapter two highlighted the following as pertains to multicultural competence: significance, definitions, taxonomies, importance of holistic approaches, and connections to concepts of leadership. Chapter two also explained ecological factors associated with the development of multicultural competence by providing three parts that make up this phenomenon: the contexts, processes, and outcomes. Lastly, the discrepancies in the literature were addressed in hopes of providing a more thorough understanding of issues related to the present topic.

Chapter 3 discussed the epistemological, methodological, and axiological assumptions applied to this study. The epistemological assumptions in this study indicated the ways in which knowledge pertaining to the research topic was gathered (Creswell, 2012). The methodological stance signifies the protocol used during the research process (Creswell, 2012). The axiological position acknowledges the role personal values and suppositions played in shaping the outcomes of this study (Creswell, 2012). To explain the epistemological, methodological, and axiological assumptions for this study, the qualitative, phenomenological, and constructivist approaches employed to contextualize the experiences of student leaders were described. Then, I described my position within the research, participant criteria, and the methods used to collect and analyze

data for this inquiry. Chapter three also elaborated on the processes and practices utilized to maintain the trustworthiness and integrity of this investigation.

In Chapter 4, the apparent findings from the data collected from ten participants in the semi-structured and individual interviews were discussed. As provided, Table 1 shows the racial/ethnic and gender classifications for each participant while referring to them according to their assigned pseudonym. The five themes identified as most salient in the data are as follows: developing identity, experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes, the significance of othering, surmounting adversity, and learning in safe and supportive environments. Thick descriptions taken from participants' interviews exemplified each of the themes. The chapter was concluded with a synthesis of participant experiences. In doing so, there were descriptions of the textural and structural meanings of the identified themes. In synthesizing the structural and textural descriptions, the essence of the phenomenon under study was revealed. The essence of the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders involves the intentional and unintentional undergoing of challenging, enlightening, and life-long exposure to various individuals and milieus.

Relation to the Literature Review

In a phenomenological investigation, the researcher returns to the literature review to distinguish her findings from prior research (Moustakas, 1994). Therefore, I discuss the relationship between the literature review and the themes that were identified from the data of this study. Moreover, I compare the findings from this investigation to conceptual frameworks described in Chapter 2.

Comparing Themes to Literature

The salient findings from this study share many parallels and some degree of variance with those in the literature review. A prevalent finding from the *surmounting adversity* theme, bullying, did not manifest in the literature, and therefore, indicative to the gap in literature on this issue as it relates to experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies. While this study identified experiences with bullying as missing in the body of scholarly works, findings related to this topic support Einfeld and Collins' (2008) study. Einfeld and Collins specified that participants developed qualities that are required for positive interactions in multicultural contexts, such as empathy and respect for others. Exemplifying this is Frank's narrative which detailed the respect he gained for LGBT folks after interacting with them through student leadership trainings. Frank noted that his interactions with his gay peers "tore down" all the "misconceptions" he held about this group. Moreover, Frank implicated that his experiences as a bystander, watching his schoolmates bully "openly gay kids", was a memory that aided his ability to empathize with his gay peers.

While the topic of bullying in general is not prevalent in the literature on multicultural competence, it is widespread when discussed alongside other issues such as microaggressions and discrimination (e.g., Hall, 2015). The findings from this study support this connection between bullying and various social ills as exemplified through participant's experiences. In other words, participants described experiences whereby racist and homophobic acts were made against them for the purposes of bullying. For instance, Danielle reported that racist remarks were made about her such as "chinky eyes" and "Chinese staircase". Moreover, Mel communicated that she was physically attacked and threatened on numerous occasions because of her gender expression and identity as a trans person.

All in all, many of the other salient findings from this inquiry support the literature review of this study. First, scholarship supports findings under the *developing identity* theme. Odom (2012) discussed that continual development of self-awareness influences the development of identity. Moreover, Patton (2006) reported that materials such as artifacts and other creative manifestations have demonstrated their usefulness in the development of identity. In support of Odom and Patton's findings are Danielle's experiences whereby she indicated the symbolic importance of a Chinese necklace she received from her mother. Danielle proclaimed that the necklace helped her to "understand her traditions." Secondly, Fakharzadeh and Todd (2012) expressed that the privilege of holding a student leadership position assumes an obligation to acquire the competencies necessary to become an effective leader. Clara's experiences match this literature as she discussed how her leadership role in a culture-based organization "pushed" and "challenged" her to have a "better" understanding of her racial identity.

Scholars noted that individuals involved in multicultural activities experience cognitive and emotional occurrences known as questioning (Chavez et al., 2003) and disequilibrium (Jehangir et al., 2012). Both questioning and disequilibrium involve elements of comparing or understanding one's own thoughts and emotions to that of others. The findings under the *experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes* theme maintain Chavez et al. (2003) and Jehangir et al.'s (2012) claims as students reported thoughts and feelings that conflicted with other opinions and societal views. Specifically, Chavez and her colleagues noted that challenges of dissonance and introspection were faced during developmental processes and that understanding the dynamics of dissonance is critical to a framework of diversity development (p. 456).

King and Baxter-Magolda (2005) reported that students in their study felt fearful about discussing diversity matters. Also, students worried that others would misconstrue their comments and regard them as prejudiced or bigoted individuals (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). King and Baxter-Magolda advised that these difficult situations experienced by students could potentially inhibit their willingness or eagerness to attain multicultural education. Behavioral processes may involve the undergoing of new experiences or avoidance thereof, depending on one's level of comfort within the multicultural context (Chavez et al., 2003; Jones et al., 2013; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Findings from the *experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes* theme echo these claims as participants disclosed that they oftentimes "hesitate" to engage, and even remain silent in settings where they are among a majority of individuals who are racially or culturally different from them.

Findings from the *significance of othering* theme highlight experiences whereby participants grew aware of White privilege. These findings support Maramba and Velasquez's (2012) research which found that students grew more critical about their understanding of oppression and learned more about cultural discrimination that transpires on systemic levels. Ashley's experiences exemplify Maramba and Velasquez's report as she recounted learning about a systematic practice that disadvantages people of color. In addition, findings from *the significance of othering* theme included experiences whereby participants underwent feelings of isolation in predominantly White settings. These findings support Maramba and Velasquez's study which established that students developed their abilities in identifying various displays of discrimination against ethnic groups. Brandy's experiences during her pursuit of a major leadership position at a predominantly White college institution supports Maramba and

Velasquez's claim as Brandy communicated that she was discriminated against because of her race.

Inkelas (2004) reported that critics of postsecondary education assume that increases in institutional diversity trigger greater divisions among racially and culturally diverse students, rather than an increased interaction among these groups. Moreover, Inkelas warned that segregation among culturally heterogeneous student groups harms the educational and developmental opportunities offered by multicultural environments. In support, findings described in the *surmounting adversity* theme detailed experiences participants had with navigating divisive conditions. For instance, Ashley spoke about her participation in an intergroup dialogue where she witnessed a "rift" between student groups and felt that the diversity of opinions led to an "us and them" type of environment. Moreover, Ashley communicated that her intergroup dialogue experiences were "harmful", and "damaging." Nonetheless, Ashley implicated her plan to continue engaging in difficult dialogues with the belief that they will be better experiences.

Bresciani (2008) cautioned that competency development becomes unachievable if individuals do not have access to the pathways necessary for the acquisition of those abilities. The findings under the *learning in safe and supportive environments* theme validate Bresciani's report. This is so as participants' statuses as college students gives them access to positive learning spaces and opportunities. For instance, Ina and Eva mentioned that they gained new knowledge about different subgroups existing within larger ethnic groups as a result of their involvement in culture-based student organizations. Moreover, Cheng and Zhao (2006) described colleges and universities as "fertile ground that fosters student development in many dimensions" (p. 31). Findings under this theme demonstrate that Cheng and Zhao's statement as

most of the participant's learning in a safe and supportive settings occurred within the context of their college.

Comparing Findings to Conceptual Frameworks

In the previous segment, five themes identified from the findings of this study were reflected upon in light of existing literature. Nevertheless, I compare the findings from this investigation to the conceptual model I proposed in Appendix D, which conveys a theoretical framework that suggests ways in which the development of multicultural competency occurs. In describing the model illustrated in Appendix D, I also associate a three-pronged framework of the development of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills proposed by Pope and her colleagues (2004). Overall, all findings of this study support the various domains discussed in the conceptualization of multicultural competency model (Appendix D) as well as the awareness, knowledge, and skills framework discussed in Pope et al. (2004).

The Person-Environment model (Strange & Banning, 2004) describes four types of environments as detailed in chapter two. Greg's experiences navigating divisive conditions illustrate ways in which the *constructed environment*, i.e., culture of sexism perpetuated in music and entertainment, affected his development of multicultural competencies. Danielle expressed that a necklace symbolized her pride in her Chinese identity, which speaks to the press of her *physical environment* on her identity development. Both positive and negative *human aggregate environments* were discussed by participants. For instance, Mel spoke about surviving in hostile and dangerous contexts consisting of sexist, racist, and homophobic individuals in his neighborhood and school settings. Also, Ina and Eva reported experiences in positive *human aggregate environments* whereby the learned about cultural subgroups in safe and supportive

contexts. Clara shared how her leadership position within an *organizational environmen*t, i.e., her student organization, forced her to develop a strong sense of racial identity.

Regarding the *process* component of the model proposed in Appendix D, a theme from the findings of this study, i.e., experiencing internal challenges in developmental processes, highlighted this domain. The process domain consists of three categories: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Many participants exemplified the *cognitive* domain of processing through their reports of experiences such as cognitive dissonance. Also, participants reported *affective* responses in developmental processes, such as guilt, anger, worry and anxiety. Participants also described behavioral processes that manifested in the forms of avoidance, silence, and self-isolation.

The *cognitive* outcomes domain (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005) mirrors the *awareness* and *knowledge* categories described in Pope et al's (2004) framework. For example, Frank's newfound awareness of systemic or institutionalized oppression as well as Ina's newly acquired knowledge of the various subgroups existing within broader cultural groups in society embody cognitive outcomes or acquired awareness and knowledge. The developing identity theme identified in the findings of this study support the *intrapersonal* outcomes domain. Of the various components described in the conceptual model, the *interpersonal* outcomes domain or acquired *skills* (Pope et al., 2004) were infrequently spoken about as an ability students developed in comparison to the other categories of the framework. Nevertheless, Frank, for instance, noted the empathy and respect he developed for his gay peers. In support, Maramba and Velasquez (2012) explained that interpersonal development could appear in the form of Empathy and respect for diverse others. Moreover, the interpersonal domain of multicultural competence development involves the aptitude to interrelate effectively, work cooperatively, and

cultivate relationships with diverse others (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005; Merrill et al., 2012). Contrarily, some participants expressed their discomfort in settings whereby members of a cultural group different from their own outnumbered the amount of individuals from their same racial or cultural identity. This finding implicates the need for student leaders to develop their interpersonal abilities so that they may effectively engage with others diverse from themselves.

Lastly, in support of Jones and her colleagues' (2013) consideration of advocacy as a component of multicultural competency, Mel reported that reevaluating her approach to coping with individual oppression was an important step to improving her advocacy efforts. Overall, participants reported fewer experiences involving their development of interpersonal and advocacy abilities. However, findings from this study fully support the conceptual frameworks discussed in this section.

Limitations

Several limitations must be considered in terms of this study. First, my cultural background and racial/ethnic appearance may have influenced the outcomes of the study (Seidman, 2006). For example, a participant's inclination to participate in the study, ease of establishing rapport, and openness in disclosing experiences could be influenced by a shared cultural characteristic with the researcher, or lack thereof. (Seidman, 2006). To address these potential concerns, I formed appropriate researcher-participant relationships that allowed me to authentically explore with participants while remaining mindful of potential biases associated with interviewing student leaders with shared and different cultural viewpoints and identities (Seidman, 2006).

While my racial and cultural identity might have played a role in the researcher-participant relationship, the context and the participants of the study may have also limited the

research findings. The conclusions derived from this study's participant sample could vary with other populations, such as students who attend two-year colleges. Additionally, the university campus culture and environment may have influenced the experiences of the participants of this study (Tsui, 2000). Further, multicultural contexts may manifest differently on other campuses as every institution holds its own unique campus culture (Tsui, 2000).

The experiences of the student leaders in this study could have been influenced by their geographical location as a result of environmental conditions and colloquial views and practices for that particular area. Examples of these circumstances include the political, legislative, demographical, cultural, and physical contexts for that geographical area (Strange & Banning, 2001). Cultural norms and principles could have affected participants' thoughts and feelings about their experiences to an extent of over- or underreporting (Seidman, 2006). Also, length and frequency of involvement in multicultural contexts may have shaped the types of experiences encountered by the participant group and the degrees to which development occurs (Denson & Chang, 2009; Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Smith et al., 2010).

This investigation only represented a subgroup of the student leader population, i.e., student leaders involved in culture, diversity and social justice-oriented organizations and programs. The participants for this study likely share similarities to other student leaders, yet their stories are unique to their experiences. For instance, the leadership experiences of the student leaders of this investigation could have manifested differently from student leaders of organizations outside of multicultural programs or other institutions. Gender was somewhat limiting as female-identifying participants outnumbered the male-identifying participants. Seven participants were female and two were men out of the ten total participants. Nonetheless, one participant out of the ten identified as transsexual.

This study relied on retrospective recall, which raises concerns about possible inaccurate recollections (Seidman, 2006). To address this issue, I shaped the interview protocol in ways that do not involve asking participants to *remember* or *recall* experiences as Seidman (2006) suggested. Seidman inferred that asking participants to recall an experience creates room for inhibited recollections of experiences. As much as I intended to abstain from using the words *remember* and *recall*, along with their variations, I mistakenly used these terms occasionally when asking unplanned questions during the semi-structured interviews. Despite the occasional slip ups, I recognized this mistake and worked towards reframing my following questions. In reflecting on the interviews, I do not believe the use of the words *recall* or *remember* led to inaccurate recollections of encounters from participants as they provided thick descriptions of their experiences. Shenton (2004) supported that thick descriptions strengthen a study's credibility as these detailed explanations provide clear accounts that help to determine the accuracy of the ultimate findings.

Another limitation is that participants self-reported that they possess multicultural competencies. To leverage this issue, participants completed a multicultural efficacy scale to assess their possession of multicultural competence. Also, participants brought a tangible object that symbolized or provided evidence of their possession of some degree of multicultural competency. One last possible limitation is that one interviewer completed the second part of her interview via phone. This may have weakened the dynamic of the interview being that we were not able to observe one other's nonverbal communications. To address this concern, I monitored my tone to ensure that I exuded a positive regard. Also, I asked the participant to elaborate on disclosures whereby she expressed affective responses.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the limitations discussed in the previous section of this chapter, I have several recommendations for future studies on the development of multicultural competencies of student leaders. Future studies could focus on a participant group consisting of males and trans-folk as they were underrepresented in this study. Students of community colleges function as a participant group researchers could investigate as the participants of this study attended a four-year, research institution. Researchers can also study students from various institution types and cultures as these distinctions could influence the types of experiences reported. Investigations can explore the colloquial influences of geographical locations on the development of multicultural competency.

Future research should examine all student leaders of all student organizations, not just culture, diversity, and social justice-based groups. This is important to ensure that all future leaders are undergoing experiences that enhance their diversity awareness, knowledge, and skills. Researchers should continue to examine the experiences of students of color in efforts to give voice to this underrepresented and marginalized group. Moreover, researchers should continue to produce qualitative works on the experiences of multicultural competency development to provide rich insights in understanding this phenomenon. I recommend that scholars pursue investigations to examine differences between precollege and college experiences as it pertains to students' development of multicultural competencies.

In regards to the future use of the artifacts as applied to this study, i.e., a multicultural efficacy scale and a tangible object to provide evidence or symbolize multicultural competency development, researchers may find it to be useful to engage in greater discourse with interviewees.

Lastly, and most importantly, *bullying* functioned as a salient finding in this study. Surprisingly, bullying in general is not represented in the literature as an experience that affects the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. For this reason, research should deeply focus on the topic of bullying and its effect on one's development of multicultural competencies. As a result, a focus on the effects of bullying on multicultural competency development can close the gap in literature.

Suggestions for Practice

Based on the salient findings of this study-- related to the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies of student leaders, I share my suggestions for practice in this section. First, predominantly White colleges and universities (PWIs) should seek to diversify all constituents of these institutions, i.e., students, faculty, and staff. Varying the human aggregate will help to address issues associated with feelings of isolation and sense of belonging and community. Also, incorporating a diversified faculty and staff can allow students to identify authority figures who could serve as mentors and agents of support.

PWIs should also offer distinct orientation sessions to prospective and admitted international students and students of color. Student affairs professionals responsible for developing these sessions should partner with offices that specifically work to address diversity and inclusion needs. Student affairs professionals could also consider hosting orientations sessions that cater to affinity groups (e.g., African-American students, Latino students, LGBT students). These efforts will help to ensure that incoming students feel hopeful that the institution they wish to attend will consist of peers who share commonalities. As a result, students may matriculate with greater confidence that they will find community and achieve a sense of belonging. In other words, establishing a sense of belonging could aid in minimizing feelings of

isolation experienced by many students of color in PWIs. By finding community with similar others, students of color may form a greater pride in their racial/ethnic identity, which could expand the likelihood of their accepting the identities of others and celebrating diversity.

The findings of this study showed that experiences from students' upbringing and domicile affected their development of multicultural competencies. Since parents will continue to play important roles in their student's lives, higher education staff could also use orientation days as opportunities to educate parents about diversity and inclusion. In doing so, higher education professionals could facilitate parent sessions, whereby trained staff would share basic diversity principles and concepts with parents. Educating parents is done with the hope that they will carry over these insights or awareness in their communications with their students. To have greater impact when sharing insights with parents, educators should align these diversity and inclusion teachings to the mission, objectives, or values of the institution. As a side note, if the mission and goals of institutes of higher learning do not convey the importance of diversity and inclusion in their mission and value statements, then these establishments must strongly reassess their stance to incorporate these standards. Institutions must make its values parallel to the principles of diversity and inclusion in order to correspond to an increasingly global society.

Numerous student affairs offices plan and implement programs that enhance knowledge-base and sense of community for students. To educate about diversity and social justice, student affairs professionals must create opportunities for students to explore various topics related to these issues. Most importantly, student affairs professionals must maintain ongoing and sustainable programs. This is critical as understanding topics related to diversity and social justice are typically multifaceted and require ample time to unpack various elements to achieve learning. Additionally, student affairs professionals must incorporate intergroup dialogues into

the student programming agenda. Intergroup dialogues function as important learning spaces where students can share personal stories and histories, communicate their perspectives, and think critically about social issues affecting groups in society.

Both academic and student affairs advisors must establish opportunities for students to participate in cultural excursions that will expose them to unfamiliar contexts and cultural settings. Encouraging students to travel and study in different countries could expand their opportunities to gain firsthand experience in another culture and learn a different language. This sort of exposure will help to enlarge ways in which they understand the world. In programming for students, considering various styles of teaching and using sources from literature and media will be useful in addressing the diverse learning needs of students. Incorporating counter-narratives and critical race viewpoints into liberal arts curriculums will allow college students to receive a formal education on matters pertaining to social justice. This way, students can gain substantial insights that could aid in their development of multicultural competencies.

Many participants of this study reported encounters with college peers that affected their development of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. For this reason, student affairs offices like multicultural programs and services should create and sustain peer mentorship programs. These types of programs can help students maintain meaningful relationships with positive figures who would support them throughout their developmental journey. Upperclass students who value diversity and inclusion should serve as mentors to first-year students who desire to connect with peer mentors. Student affairs officers who are trained to address diversity matters could publicize their counseling and consultation services to students who wish to discuss and process their experiences with a helper.

Student affairs practitioners and student leaders must undergo early and continuous training to acquire the multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to support and educate students on issues related to diversity. Student affairs practitioners must maintain patience with themselves and with students throughout the lifelong process of developing multicultural competence. Meeting students where they are developmentally is important to avoid responses that may potentially cause unwarranted harm to students. Student affairs professionals must be mindful of demographic questions they design for assessments and surveys. This is important as students of this study communicated the "othering" effects of demographic questions on survey questions. All personnel working with students should complete ongoing diversity and social justice trainings in order to serve students most effectively and inclusively. These trainings should guide trainees in identifying their own personal biases. Remaining mindful of these prejudices could help practitioners remain intentional in avoiding discriminatory practices, and to abstain from performing overall disservices to students. Student affairs professionals must undergo training to develop or advance their group facilitation skills. This is important in order for professionals to guide intergroup dialogues and address diversity issues in a sensitive manner. In doing so, facilitators are able to maintain fully constructive opportunities for students to learn and develop.

Not only must student affairs educators complete diversity and social justice training, they must create these training opportunities for students as well. Practitioners advising student groups must train them on how to create inclusive and culturally sensitive promotional materials for their programs. Additionally, student affairs practitioners should help students to develop interpersonal abilities necessary to engage with diverse others most appropriately.

Often, White students do not consider themselves as cultural beings or possessing an ethnic identity as evidenced in Ashley's disclosures. For this reason, faculty and staff must educate all students, including White students that they are cultural beings and that ethnicity is not limited to persons of color. Educators must inform all students that identity development can be an ever-evolving process. Many students in this study reported feeling out of place in spaces where they are outnumbered by members of a cultural group different from their own. As a result, student affairs advisors should encourage students step outside of their comfort zones to explore cultures and settings whereby they are not among individuals who share their race or culture. Perseverance in this way could have a conditioning effect, whereby students can eventually become comfortable in spaces outside of their usual environment.

Lastly, all participants spoke about the effects of experiences occurring during their early stages in life, most of which took place in P-12 contexts. Many students reported that they were bullied against by both teachers and students due to their race and gender expression. As a result, many of these adverse encounters fueled participants resolve and commitment to diversity, inclusion, and social justice. However, personnel in these P-12 schools must undergo training to learn how to address the various forms of bullying that manifest in the forms of racism, homophobia and other discriminatory displays. Moreover, school teachers, principles, and counselors should prepare to educate their students about acceptance, diversity and inclusion. This will help to construct and foster an anti-bullying environment in schools.

In this section, I offered numerous suggestions for practice for both P-12 and postsecondary workers. Moreover, I shared ideas for student programs and services as well as feedback for training for students and professionals. Irrespective of the pedagogical setting, all personnel working with students must cultivate positive spaces and opportunities for students to

gain multicultural competencies in an early, intentional, and continual manner. Additionally professionals must always return to models and frameworks used to understand the development of multicultural competencies to design initiatives and support students most effectively. By doing so, educators and administrators are more deliberate and comprehensive in their approach to improve the development of multicultural competencies among the students they serve. Lastly, participants of this study shared that the opportunity to deeply reflect on their lived experiences for this study raised their awareness of their understanding of themselves and their histories. Because of this, I assert that a balance of experience and reflection provide the challenge and support (Sanford, 1967) students need to learn and develop.

Conclusions

What a privilege to have had the opportunity to study individuals who have inspired me with their stories riddled with hardships and decorated by triumphs. I believe that understanding one's journey towards the development of multicultural competencies is a stepping stone to become not just leaders, but *effective* leaders of an increasingly diverse world. As someone who is incredibly passionate about leadership development, I believe that one cannot function as a leader without understanding one's various identities, how one's identities relate to that of others, and how to effectively engage with individuals different from oneself. For this reason, my mission was to highlight the connection between multicultural competence and leadership capacity. To my pleasure, one of the research participants, Brandy, shared sentiments that simply, yet exquisitely illustrate my ideals for this study when she proclaimed as much: "To be a leader, you need to be accepting of everyone, and I couldn't. Because I wasn't. I've always been a leader, but I didn't realize that I was not accepting of everyone."

As evidenced through the essence of the phenomenon explored in this study, one can see that multicultural competency development is not always attractive or experienced with ease. More often than not, it is uncomfortable. It is painful. It is traumatic. But, it is necessary. This increasingly global society remains in a leadership crisis (as mentioned in Eich, 2008) and depends on leaders who are capable of inspiring change and empowering others through their ability to understand, validate, empathize, and communicate effectively with various individuals.

Overall, I am proud that I successfully guided students through the invaluable journey of self-reflection in order to become deeply cognizant of their developmental experiences prior to graduation. It is my hope that all college students will reflect upon and use their lived experiences, both positive and challenging, as tools to inspire and advance the agenda of creating a more inclusive world for all.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, S., Wilson, K. B., Henriksen, R. C., & Jones, J. W. (2011). What does it mean to be a culturally-competent counselor? *Journal for Social Action in Counseling & Psychology, 3,* 17-28.

American Psychological Association. (2002). *Guidelines on multicultural education, training, research, practice, and organizational change for psychologists*. Washington, DC: Author.

Antonio, A. L. (2001). Diversity and the influence of friendship groups in college. *Review of Higher Education, 25,* 63-89. doi:10.1353/rhe.2001.0013

Antonio, A. L. (2001). The role of interracial interaction in the development of leadership skills and cultural knowledge and understanding. *Research in Higher Education, 42*(5), 593-617.

Antonio, A. L., Chang, M. J., Hakuta, K., Kenny, D. A., Levin, S., & Milem, J. F. (2004). Effects of racial diversity on complex thinking in college students. *Psychological Science, 15*(8), 507-510.

Arredondo, P., Toporek, M. S., Brown, S., Jones, J., Locke, D. C., Sanchez, J. & Stadler, H. (1996). *Operationalization of the multicultural counseling competencies*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development.

Baughman, K. N., & Bruce, J. (2011). The unique leadership needs of minority student populations: Crafting a leadership identity. *Journal of Leadership Education, 10*(2), 97-115.

Bresciani, M. L. (2008). Global competencies in student affairs/services professionals: A literature synthesis. *College Student Journal, 42*(3), 906-919.

Bizumic, B., Duckitt, J., Popadic, D., Dru, V., & Krauss, S. (2009). A cross cultural investigation into a reconceptualization of ethnocentrism. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 39*(6), 871-899. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.589

Chavez, A. F., Guido-DiBrito, F., & Mallory, S. L. (2003). Learning to value the "other": A framework of individual diversity development. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(4), 453-469. doi: 10.1353/csd.2003.0038

Cheng, D. X., & Zhao, C. M. (2006). Cultivating multicultural competence through active participation: Extracurricular activities and multicultural learning. *NASPA Journal, 43*(4), 13-38.

Carroll, D. W. (2008). Toward multiculturalism competence: A practical model for implementation in the schools. *The psychology of multiculturalism in the schools: A Primer for practice, training, and research,* 1–15.

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (2012). *CAS professional standards for higher education* (8th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). Qu*alitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). California: Sage.

Day, D. V. (2000). Leadership development: A review in context. *The Leadership Quarterly, 11*(4), 581-613. doi:10.1016/S1048-9843(00)00061-8

Delgado-Romero, E. A., Hernandez, C. A. & Montero, H. (2004). Mapping the development of Hispanic/Latino/a student organizations: A model at The University of Florida. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 3*(3), 237-253.

Denson, N., & Chang, M. J. (2009). Racial diversity matters: The impact of diversity-related student engagement and institutional context. *American Educational Research Journal, 46*(2), 322-353.

Dickson, G. L., & Jepsen, D. A. (2007). Multicultural training experiences as predictors of multicultural competencies: Students' perspectives. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 47,* 76-95.

Dugan, J. P., & Komives, S. R. (2007). *Developing leadership capacity in college students: Findings from a national study. A Report from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership.* College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.

Dugan, J. P. (2011). Students' involvement in group experiences and connections to leadership development. *New Directions for Institutional Research,* 17-32. doi: 10.1002/ir.414

Dugan, J. P., Kodama, C. M., & Gebhardt, M. C. (2012). Race and leadership development among college students: The additive value of collective racial esteem. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 5*(3), 174-189.

Earley, P. C., & Ang, S. (2003). *Cultural intelligence: Individual interactions across cultures*. California: Stanford University Press.

Eich, D. (2008). A grounded theory of high-quality leadership programs: Perspectives from student leadership development programs in higher education. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 15*(2), 176-187.

Einfeld, A., & Collins, D. (2008). The relationships between service-learning, social justice, multicultural competence, and civic engagement. *Journal of College Student Development, 49*(2), 95-109. doi: 10.1353/csd.2008.0017

Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L., Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., Guido DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fakharzadeh, C., & Todd, M. (2012). *Student organization leadership: Starting, running, and improving a student group* (2nd ed.). Conshohocken, PA, Infinity.

Gayles, J. G. (2012). Multiculturalism on campus: Theory, models, and practices for understanding diversity and creating inclusion (review). *Journal of College Student Development, 53*(2), 364-366. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0023

Geelhoed, R. J., Abe, J., & Talbot, D. M. (2003). A qualitative investigation of U.S. students' experiences in an international peer program. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(1), 5-17. doi: 10.1353/csd.2003.0004

Godwin, D. D., & Scanzoni, J. (1989). Couple consensus during marital joint decision-making. A context, process, outcome model. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 943-956.

Golden, K. A. (2010). *The development of cultural adaptability including relevant experiences and perceptions of traditional college students: A perspective from a small, private liberal arts university.* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 3403190).

Guidelines on multicultural education, training, research, practice, and organizational change for psychologists. (2003). *American Psychologist, 58*(5), 377-402.

Guiffrida, D. A. (2003). African American student organizations as agents of social integration. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(3), 304-319. doi: 10.1353/csd.2003.0024

Gurin, P., Dey, E. L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on student outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review, 72*(3), 330-366.

Hamilton, J. (2006). Multicultural competence in student affairs (review). The *Journal of Higher Education, 77*(6), 1110-1112. doi: 10.1353/jhe.2006.0047

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 27*, 421–443.

Harper, S. R., & Quaye, S. J. (2007). Student organizations as venues for Black identity expression and development among African American male student leaders. *Journal of College Student Development, 48*(2), 127-144.

Hays, D. G., & Singh, A. A. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry in clinical and educational settings.* New York: Guilford Press.

Hall, J. (2015). Racial microaggression: Stress and health effects of subtle interpersonal violence in narratives of African American adults. In *Society for Social Work and Research 19th Annual Conference: The Social and Behavioral Importance of Increased Longevity*. Sswr.

Hipolito-Delgado, C., Cook, J. M., Avrus, E. M., & Bonham, E. J. (2011). Developing counseling students' multicultural competence through the multicultural action project. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 50*(6), 402-421.

Howard-Hamilton, M. F. (2000). Creating a culturally responsive learning environment for African American students. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning,* (82), 45-53.

Hu, S., & Kuh, G. D. (2003). Diversity experiences and college student learning and personal development. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(3), 320-334. doi: 10.1353/csd.2003.0026

Hunter, B., White, G. P., & Godbey, G. C. (2006). *What does it mean to be globally competent? Journal of Studies In International Education, 10*(3), 267-285. doi: 10.1177/1028315306286930

Inkelas, K. K. (2004). Does participation in ethnic cocurricular activities facilitate a sense of ethnic awareness and understanding? A study of Asian Pacific American undergraduates. *Journal of College Student Development, 45*(3), 285-302. doi: 10.1353/csd.2004.0037

Jehangir, R., Williams, R., & Jeske, J. (2012). The influence of multicultural learning communities on the intrapersonal development of first-generation college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 53*(2), 267-284. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0035

Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. B. (2008). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Jones, J. M., Sander, J. B., & Booker, K. W. (2013). Multicultural competency building: Practical solutions for training and evaluating student progress. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology 7*, 12-22.doi: 10.1037/a0030880

Kegan, R. (1994). *In over our heads: The mental demands of modern life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kim, Y. J., & Van Dyne, L. (2012). Cultural intelligence and international leadership potential: The importance of contact for members of the majority. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 61*(2), 272-294. doi:10.1111/j.1464-0597.2011.00468.x

King, P. M., & Baxter-Magolda, M. B. (2005). A developmental model of intercultural maturity. *Journal of College Student Development, 46*(6), 571-592. doi: 10.1353/csd.2005.0060

Komives, S. R., Woodard, D. Jr., & Associates (2003). *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Komives, S. R., Owen, J. E., Longerbeam, S. D., Mainella, F. C., & Osteen, L. (2005). Developing a leadership identity: A grounded theory. *Journal of College Student Development, 46*(6), 593-611. doi: 10.1353/csd.2005.0061

Kuh, G. D. (1995). The other curriculum: Out-of-class experiences associated with student learning and personal development. *Journal of Higher Education, 66*(2), 123-55.

Kuk, L., & Banning, J. (2010). Student organizations and institutional diversity efforts: A typology. *College Student Journal, 44*(2), 354-361.

Kumar, R., Anjum, B., & Sinha, A. (2011). Cross-cultural interactions and leadership behaviour. *Researchers World: Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce, 2*(3), 151-160.

Landreman, L. M., Rasmussen, C. J., King, P. M., & Jiang, C. X. (2007). A phenomenological study of the development of university educators' critical consciousness. *Journal of College Student Development, 48*(3), 275-296.

Lichtenstein, D., Lindstrom, L., & Povenmire-Kirk, T. (2008). Promoting multicultural competence: Diversity training for transition professionals. *Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 30*(3), 3-15.

Lundberg, C. A. (2012). Predictors of learning for students from five different racial/ethnic groups. *Journal of College Student Development, 53*(5), 636-655. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0071

Maramba, D. C., & Velasquez, P. (2012). Influences of the campus experience on the ethnic identity development of students of color. *Education and Urban Society, 44*(3), 294-317. doi: 10.1177/0013124510393239

Merrill, K. C., Braskamp, D. C., & Braskamp, L. A. (2012). Assessing individuals' global perspective. *Journal of College Student Development, 53*(2), 356-360. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0034

Miklitsch, T. (2005). *The relationship between multicultural education, multicultural experiences, racial identity, and multicultural competence among student affairs professionals* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 3185290).

Miller-Lane, J., Howard, T. C., & Halagao, P. E. (2007). Civic multicultural competence: Searching for common ground in democratic education. *Theory and Research in Social Education, 35*(4), 551-573.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: http://dx.doi.org.avoserv.library.fordham.edu/10.4135/9781412995658

Nelson-Laird, T. F., Bridges, B. K., Morelon-Quainoo, C. L., Williams, J. M., & Holmes, M. S. (2007). African American and Hispanic student engagement at minority serving and predominantly White institutions. *Journal of College Student Development, 48*(1), 39-56. doi: 10.1353/csd.2007.0005

Odom, S. F., Boyd, B. L., & Williams, J. (2012). Impact of personal growth projects on leadership identity development. *Journal of Leadership Education, 11*(1), 49-63.

Pascarella, E., & Terenzini, P. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Patterson, B. (2012). Influences of student organizational leadership experiences in college students leadership behaviors. *e-Journal of Organizational Leadership and Learning, 10,* 1-12.

Patton, L. D. (2006). The voice of reason: A qualitative examination of Black student perceptions of Black culture centers. *Journal of College Student Development, 47*(6), 628-646. doi: 10.1353/csd.2006.0068

Pizzolato, J. E., Nguyen, T. K., Johnston, M. P., & Wang, S. (2012). Understanding context: Cultural, relational, & psychological interactions in self-authorship development. *Journal of College Student Development, 53*(5), 656-679. doi: 10.1353/csd.2012.0061

Pope, R. L., & Mueller, J. A. (2005). Faculty and curriculum: Examining multicultural competence and inclusion. *Journal of College Student Development, 46*(6), 679-688. doi: 10.1353/csd.2005.0065

Pope, R. L., Mueller, J. A., & Reynolds, A. L. (2009). Looking back and moving forward: Future directions for diversity in student affairs. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(6), 640-658. doi: 10.1353/csd.0.0097

Pope, R. L., Reynolds, A. L., & Mueller, J. A. (2004). *Multicultural competence in student affairs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Sanford, N. (1967). *Where colleges fail: A study of the student as a person*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information*, *22*(2), 63-75.

Smith, H., Parr, R., Woods, R., Bauer, B., & Abraham, T. (2010). Five years after graduation: Undergraduate cross-group friendships and multicultural curriculum predict current attitudes

and activities. *Journal of College Student Development, 51*(4), 385-402. doi: 10.1353/csd.0.0141

Stewart, D. L. (2008). Confronting the politics of multicultural competence. *About Campus, 13*, 10-17.

Strange, C. C., & Banning, J. H. (2001). *Educating by design: Creating campus learning environments that work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Thompson, C. E., & Neville, H. A. (1999). Racism, mental health, and mental health practice. *The Counseling Psychologist, 27*, 155-223. doi: 10.1177/0011000099272001

Waldron-Moore, P. (2011). Seeking a just and humane world: Motivating minority students to become global citizens. *Journal of Political Science Education, 7*(2), 224-239. doi: 10.1080/15512169.2011.564918

Wilson, A. B. (2012). Redefining the role and practices of leadership educators: The relationship between multicultural competence and the use of the social change model of leadership development. *CSPA-NYS Journal of Student Affairs, 12*, 36-64.

Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2009). Qualitative analysis of content. In B. M. Wildemuth (Ed.), *Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science* (pp. 308-319). Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

The Development of Multicultural Competencies among Student Leaders

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not you would like to take part. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this consent form.

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this study is to explore the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders. Multicultural competence refers to one's awareness, knowledge, and skills in one's understanding of the cultural identities of him/herself and others, as well as the ability to effectively apply multicultural understandings when relating to others (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004). With the information gathered from student leaders, student affairs professionals can shape programs and services to support student leaders through these experiences and educate higher education professionals on this topic.

Who is eligible to participate?

Eligible participants must meet the following requirements:

- Self-identify as having experiences whereby you have undergone the development of multicultural competencies
- Willingness to describe experiences regarding the development of multicultural competencies
- Hold a leadership position (appointed or elected, executive role) in a student organization within the multicultural programs office
- Held leadership position in organization for at least one semester
- Completed two academic years as a college student

What will happen during this study?

You will participate in one in-person interview. Upon your initial contact to express interest in participating, you will select the interview date and time that is most suitable for you. The location will be in a conveniently located, designated area on campus. You will be asked a series of questions related to your experiences regarding your development of multicultural competencies. Also, you will complete a brief *Getting to Know You* questionnaire so that the researcher may gain a sense of how you describe yourself. Demographic questions include academic classification, gender, number of semesters involved as a student leader in organization, name of organization, and contact information.

Are there any benefits to me?

You will receive a $15 gift card to the University's bookstore following the interview and a thank you gift bag for your participation.

Potential societal benefits include:

1) Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers will gain insights on the development of multicultural competence among student leaders. This knowledge can be used to support programs, services, and future research on the topic.

2) Student leaders may feel validated by gaining awareness of their experiences regarding their development of multicultural competencies.

Are there any risks/harm to me?
There are no foreseen risks or harm associated with participation in the study.

How long will I be in this study?
90 minutes will be allotted for the one-time interview. Following each interview, the researcher will briefly review your disclosures to ensure the accuracy and/or to make corrections. The interview session will not exceed 90 minutes; however, the interview may last shorter than the allocated timeframe.

Following the study, the researcher will contact you via e-mail to provide you with the transcript of your interview. The researcher asks that you review the information to ensure the accuracy of the information and/or to add insights if necessary. Reviewing your transcript will take a few minutes of your time. If you wish to provide feedback, it must be submitted within seven days after the day you receive the transcript.

May I change my mind about participating?
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide to not begin, or to stop the study at any time. Your declining to participate will have no negative consequences on your leadership position or student status. Any information provided to the researcher would be permanently deleted immediately if you decide not to move forward with the study.

Will there be any costs to me?
No more than 90 minutes of your time during the interview and some brief time to review your transcript days after the interview at your leisure.

Will video or audio recordings be made of me during the study?
I will audio record the interview so that I can be certain that your responses are detailed accurately.

Will the information that is obtained from me remain confidential?
Yes, the only persons who will know that you participated in this study will be the researcher. Your records will remain confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications resulting from the study. It is possible the Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) that supports this research study will want to review your information. If they wish to contact you, a copy of the information may be provided to them but your name will be removed before the information is released.

You will be assigned a pseudonym for the interview process and for transcription purposes. Individually-identifiable information about you, or provided by me during the research, will not be shared with others. The recorded interviews and transcripts will be kept in a password-protected file, and then permanently deleted after the study is published.

Who can I contact for additional information?
You can obtain further information about the research or communicate any concerns about the research by calling the researcher Ijeoma Nwaogu, Ph.D. Candidate at (404) 313-8663. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, have general questions or concerns or would like to provide feedback about the research and cannot reach the researcher, or want to speak with someone other than the researcher, you may call the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia (706-542-1812) or the Primary Investigator Dr. Pamela Paisley (706-542-4142). You may also contact The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; by email irb@uga.edu or visit http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso/.

Your Signature
By signing this form, I confirm that I have read the information in this form, that the researcher has explained the study to me, that my questions have been answered and that I agree to participate in this study. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form. I am aware that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

_____
Name (Printed)

_____ _____
Participant's Signature Date signed

Statement by person obtaining consent
I certify that I have explained the research study to the individual who has agreed to participate, and that he or she has been informed of the purpose, the procedures, the possible risks and potential benefits associated with participation in this study. Any questions raised have been answered to the participant's satisfaction.

Dr. Pamela Paisley
Name (Printed)

_____ _____
Primary Investigator's Signature Date signed

Ijeoma Nwaogu
Name (Printed)

_____ _____
Researcher's Signature Date signed

Please sign and return to researcher.

Banks (2010); Espino (2008); Prescott College (2007)

APPENDIX B

MULTICULTURL EFFICACY SCALE AND DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Researcher use only
PN:_____ Psdnm:_____ Date:_____
Time:_____ Lctn:_____

Getting to Know You

Directions: Place a mark in the column that best describes you.	Never	Sometimes	Fairly Often/ Pretty Well	Always/ Very Well
1. I value and appreciate cultural human differences.				
2. I am aware of oppression and cultural discrimination on personal levels.				
3. I am aware of oppression, cultural discrimination on systemic levels.				
4. I am able to identify various displays of prejudice and discrimination against ethnic groups.				
5. I am comfortable working with diverse groups.				
6. I am able to describe my ethnic identity.				
7. I reflect on information about diversity and culture and cross-examine it with my own understandings.				
8. I am able to effectively engage in settings characterized by racial-cultural differences.				
9. I am able to negotiate with culturally diverse groups of people.				
10. I am empathetic towards individuals from diverse cultures.				
11. I trust individuals from diverse cultures.				
12. I am respectful to individuals from diverse cultures.				
13. I take action to improve the current social situation of my ethnic communities.				
14. I am committed to my cultural group and dedicated to social justice action and advocacy.				

Participant Name:_____

Gender: _____

Number of completed academic years:_____

Student Organization:_____

Leadership position: _____

Number of semesters completed in leadership position: _____

Phone 1: _____ Phone 2 (if applicable):_____

E-mail 1: _____ E-mail 2 (if applicable): _____

Mailing address: _____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

Research Question:

What are the experiences affecting the development of multicultural competencies among student leaders?

Pre-Interview disclosures:

- Say: "I am not looking for right or wrong answers. I encourage you to voice whatever thoughts come to mind as they are valid and needed for this study in ways you probably cannot imagine. If you need me to clarify anything, I will be more than happy to do so."
- (Provide existing descriptions of multicultural competence to participant).

Icebreaker Question:

- Tell me about yourself and why you decided to pursue your student leadership position?
- What does multicultural competence mean to you?

Interview Questions:

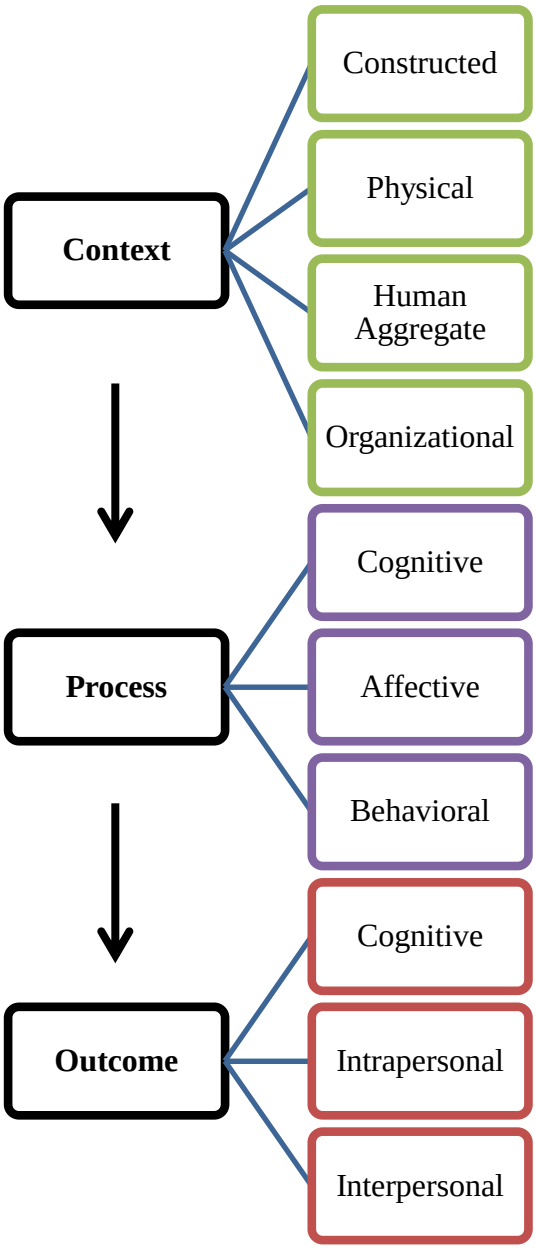
1. Did you bring an item that represents your possession of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills? If so, what did you bring? Please describe why you chose this item and what it represents.
2. Can you tell me about an experience you had where you believe that you developed multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skill? Experiences can be informal, formal, settings, interactions, relationships, observations, etc. Any situation that comes to mind. There is no wrong answer.
    a. Can you elaborate more about the situation?
    b. Can you describe more about how you believe you were influenced by those events or environments? Influence can be good, bad, or neutral.
    c. When you reflect deeper on your experience during or after the encounter, can you describe your thought process, feelings, and/or behaviors?
        i. Example:
            1. (Activity) I take a writing class
            2. (Process) I feel anxious about my writing (feelings), I tap my pencil repetitively (behavior), and I think that the writing is hard but that I can get it done (thoughts).
            3. (Outcome) I become a better writer.
3. I am interested in learning about additional experiences. Do you have other experiences where you believe that you developed multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills? (repeat questions a, b, and c from question number one).
4. (Review multicultural self-assessment with participant to discuss the areas and how they describe themselves on the assessment).

    a. Tell me more about your thoughts on…
    b. How would you describe your ethnic identity?
5. How would you describe the conduciveness of your environment and activities in developing your multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills?
6. Describe your thoughts about ways in which you wish you could develop multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills. Remember, multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills involves development in cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains.
    a. Can you describe any internal (self) or external (environmental, situational, systemic) barriers that interfered (or interfere) with achieving those abilities. Barriers can be anything you think of, including personal anxieties, group attitudes, policies, space, etc.
7. (If any) please describe ways culturally diverse settings may have complicated your development of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills?
8. Can you describe ways in which frequency of exposure to diversity or multicultural settings has impacted you?
9. As a student leader for a multicultural student organization, can you describe any experiences you had with observing or experiencing division or lack of unity within and/or between the cultural organizations?
10. When you compare your multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills of pre-college life vs college life, how would you describe any differences or similarities?
11. Based on your observations or experiences, in what areas do you believe the multicultural awareness, knowledge, and/or skills of student leaders should to be enhanced?
    a. How do you believe this goal can be achieved?
12. How have your experiences made you think or feel about going out into the world after college to contribute as an effective multicultural competent leader?
13. Do you have any closing thoughts or reflections that you would like to share?

APPENDIX D

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY

Conceptualization of the Development of Multicultural Competency



Chavez, Guido-DiBrito, & Mallory (2003)

Godwin & Scanzoni (1989)

King & Baxter-Magolda (2005)

Merrill, Braskamp, & Braskamp (2012)

Strange & Banning (2001)

APPENDIX E

MULTICULTURAL EFFICACY SCALE QUESTIONS WITH SUPPORTING LITERATURE

Multicultural Efficacy Scale Questions with Supporting Literature

Literature	Question
Maramba and Velasquez (2012) reported that students developed a greater cognizance of the prejudices experienced by members of their respective ethnic populations, grew more critical about their understanding of oppression, and learned more about cultural discrimination that transpires on personal and systemic levels.	1. I am aware of oppression and cultural discrimination on personal levels. 2. I am aware of oppression, cultural discrimination on systemic levels.
Maramba and Velasquez (2012) elaborated that the students developed their abilities in identifying various displays of discrimination against ethnic groups.	3. I am able to identify various displays of prejudice and discrimination against ethnic groups.
One's comfort with diverse groups serves as an indicator of the development of multicultural perspectives and abilities (Chavez et al., 2003; King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).	4. I am comfortable working with diverse groups.
"Capacity to engage in meaningful, interdependent relationships with diverse others who are grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences" (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 8).	5. I value and appreciate cultural human differences.

Maramba and Velasquez (2012) reported an increase in salience of participants' ethnic identity during the students' 4th or 5th year of college. These findings also made a strong impact on the students' sense of competence (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012).

6. I am able to describe my ethnic identity.

Jones et al. (2013) also detailed intrapersonal outcomes, noting that multicultural activities helped to build cultural self-awareness and increased the likelihood for self-reflection. Self-exploration permitted participants to cross-examine newly acquired knowledge with their own understandings and experiences (Jones et al., 2013).

7. I reflect on information about diversity and culture and cross-examine it with my own understandings.

In Denson and Chang's (2009) study, the students believed that they had advanced their capacity to engage in settings characterized by racial-cultural differences.

8. I am able to effectively engage in settings characterized by racial-cultural differences.

Landreman et al. (2007) classified as critical intercultural consciousness, whereby individuals … maintain meaningful cross-cultural relationships.

9. I maintain meaningful relationships with others culturally different from myself.

Chavez et al. (2003) mentioned that individuals who engaged in multicultural settings developed skills in negotiating with culturally diverse groups of people

10. I am able to negotiate with culturally diverse groups of people.

In Einfeld and Collins' (2008) study, participants developed several interpersonal abilities required for positive interactions in multicultural contexts. These interpersonal capacities include empathy, trust, and respect (Einfeld & Collins, 2008).

Miller-Lane et al. (2007) concluded that civic multicultural competence requires the capacity to embrace social inclusivity and equity.

As a result of multicultural learning, participants would take action to improve the current social situations of their ethnic communities (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012), which demonstrates advocacy abilities (Carroll, 2008).

Landreman et al.(2007) classified as critical intercultural consciousness, whereby individuals …act as advocates for social justice.

In Harper and Quaye's (2007) study, each student leader expressed a commitment to their racial-cultural group and dedicated themselves to social justice action and advocacy.

11. I am empathetic towards individuals from diverse cultures.
12. I trust individuals from diverse cultures.
13. I am respectful to individuals from diverse cultures.
14. I embrace social inclusivity and equity.
15. I take action to improve the current social situation of my ethnic communities
16. I am committed to my cultural group and dedicated to social justice action and advocacy.

APPENDIX F

ETHNIC CLASSIFICATION BY CAMPUS CHARTS

Ethnic Classification for Incoming Class for Fall 2014 Semester by Campus