Self-Perceived Spiritual Competence of Mental Health Professionals

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the five scales of the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007). A confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the instrument via structural equation modeling. Further, the spiritual competence of mental health professionals was assessed with this particular instrument and a demographic questionnaire. Additionally, the relationship between spiritual competence and training and education, when participants demographic characteristic were taken into consideration, was examined. A census sample was utilized from American Counseling Association members of the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development and the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling participated in the study (n=367).

The respondents ranged in age from 21 – 78 years old, with an average age of 48 years old. The majority of the sample was female (64.3%). There were 201 participants who possessed master’s degrees and 117 participants who had doctorates. The majority of the study’s participants (40.9%) were currently working as community counselors. Of the participants, approximately 19% were working in community agencies and private practice, respectively, while 28% were working in an academic environment.

Over 60% of the participants had not taken any courses with a focus on spirituality whereas 31% had between one and six courses spirituality focused courses. The mean number of courses taken with spirituality as a focus was 2.10 and those courses taken with a spirituality focus ranged from 0 – 48. Further, the study’s participants had
completed 0 – 60 courses infused with spirituality with a mean of 4.38. Of the participants, 189 had not acquired any training hours after completing their counseling degree programs. The mean number of development hours obtained was 26.56 and there were 15 participants who had over 100 development hours. Toward this end, the sample was overwhelmingly religious and/or spiritual as only 9% of the population reported that they were not religious and/or spiritual. Overall, the sample believed they were spiritually competent. The implications of these results were discussed.
DEDICATION

Dedicated to the Memory of Jean Elizabeth Butler
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for guiding me throughout my life’s journey and providing me with people who have lifted me up and shown me the way. Thank you for the peace afforded to me during the most unsettling of times.

Thank you to my family for being proud of me every step of the way. Thank you, mommy, for demanding excellence, and supporting and loving me unconditionally. You have instilled in me discipline and pride. I love you. Thank you to my sister, Jineea, for reminding me to remain faithful. Thanks to my father who continually teaches me patience and compassion. Thanks to my loving Godparents Robert and Deborah Batchelor who have loved me beyond measure.

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Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey.
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FIELD OF STUDY

Major Field: Education
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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

The relationship between mental health and spirituality and religion has been tumultuous for centuries. Many years ago, Freud (1927) argued that religion is a defense against the confrontation with reality. He predicted that “in the long run nothing can withstand reason and experience, and the contradiction which religion offers to both is all too palpable” (p. 54). Likewise, Albert Ellis (1980/1988) has argued the more religious people are, the less emotionally healthy they will be (Ellis, 1980/1988). Both Ellis (1980/1988) and Freud (1927) equated religiosity with mental illness, which implied that clients’ mention of religious and/or spiritual concerns in counseling was negative. In contrast, Jung (1933) in Modern Man in Search of Soul, wrote:

Among all my patients in the second half of life – that is to say, over 35 – there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook (p. 229).

The emergence of humanistic psychology with its inclusion of a spiritual dimension led to the revitalization of spirituality in counseling (Schultz & Schultz, 2004). Further, this development led to the creation of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology in 1961 and the Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, shortly after, in 1969. The Journal of Humanistic Psychology concentrates on human potential, self-actualization, the search
for meaning, and social change (Association for Humanistic Psychology, 2009). Similarly, the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* focuses on the integration of psychological and spiritual experiences and the transcendence of the self (Association for Transpersonal Psychology, 2009).

The scientific and popular literature reveals very little focusing on spirituality and counseling until the 1950s. In the 1970s, the scholarly literature indicates that the number of publications greatly increased, and this increase continued to the present time (Powers, 2005). The explanation for excluding religion and spirituality from clinical work came from the difference between the scientific perspective of psychology and the transcendent aspects of religion and spirituality (Burke et al., 1999). Despite the ongoing debate between academicians and counseling theorists, both religion and spirituality appear to be an important resource for many people (Pargament et al., 1998).

Furthermore, a zeitgeist is now emerging that supports the integration of spirituality and clinical theory, practice, and research.

### 1.1 Development of the Spirituality Competencies

The Multicultural Counseling Competencies (MCC) were a significant precursor to the spirituality movement. In 1982, Sue et al. published their seminal paper on cross-cultural counseling competencies and thus initiated a long line of theoretical and empirical literature published in the psychology and counseling professions regarding multiculturalism. On behalf of the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), a division of the American Counseling Association (ACA), Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis (1992) published a call to the counseling profession to recognize the diverse representation and varied needs of counseling clientele. They argued that the
counseling profession was insufficiently meeting the needs of its ethnically and racially
diverse clients and asserted what they considered long-overdue standards.

Sue et al. (1992) reported that beginning with Sue et al. (1982), most attempts to
identify cross-cultural counseling competencies divided such competencies into three
dimensions: (a) beliefs and attitudes, (b) knowledge, and (c) skills. Sue et al. (1992)
expanded upon this three-pronged conceptualization of multicultural competence by
positing a 3 (Characteristics) x 3 (Dimensions) matrix to further organize the
multicultural competencies. Further, the authors asserted that there are three
characteristics of a multiculturally competent counselor: (a) awareness of one’s own
assumptions, values, and biases; (b) understanding the worldview of the culturally
different client; and (c) developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques.
Within each of these three characteristics, there are three dimensions: (a) belief and
attitudes, (b) knowledge, and (c) skills. This conceptualization of multicultural
competence has become the basis of training, assessing, and identifying culturally
competent counselors.

Beginning in 1995, a group of ACA members under the endorsement of the
Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) met at
a gathering called the “Summit on Spirituality.” Fifteen individuals from a cross-section
of ACA divisions who had published articles on spirituality in ACA journals or who had
written books on the topic were invited to participate and 13 attended. Four additional
sessions were held after the initial Summit on Spirituality. These sessions were held at
ACA and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) conferences
and attended by 35 to 40 counselors and counselor educators (Miller, 1999).
Ultimately, nine spirituality competencies emerged (Miller, 1999). These competencies for integrating spirituality into counseling addressed four knowledge domains: general knowledge of spiritual phenomena, awareness of one’s own spiritual perspective, understanding of client’s spiritual perspective, and spiritually related interventions and strategies. Recently revised in 2009, these competencies are now referred to as Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling and classified into six categories: (a) culture and worldview, (b) counselor self-awareness, (c) human and spiritual development, (d) communication, (e) assessment, and (f) diagnosis and treatment (Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling, 2009).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The advancements in the measurement of counselors’ multicultural competence have clearly supported the ongoing evolution of the multicultural counseling movement by adding greater scientific validation in assessing this important construct (Cartwright, Daniels, & Zhang, 2008). If it is to be expected to occur with the integration of spirituality and religion into coursework and subsequently counseling, valid and reliable instruments that measure spiritual competence must be developed, administered, and standardized on large and diverse samples.

Addressing methodological issues is a constant challenge to the study of spirituality and religion. This task involves managing varying definitions, sorting through the different measures of religiosity (e.g. affiliation, commitment, beliefs, church attendance), and dealing with the confounding variables and alternative explanations that plague many experimental designs (Frame, 2003). Much of the empirical literature in the
psychology of religion has been correlational. Although correlation studies are useful, they are also subject to a variety of interpretations including causation (Hood & Belzen, 2005). The study of religion is exhaustive on data and short on theory. There is a lack in ideas that cut across the range of topics in the field and serve as comprehensive integrating devices (Paloutzian & Park, 2005).

The scholarly literature suggests that clients regard spirituality as an important component of human development (Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 2003; Ivey, Ivey, Myers, & Sweeney, 2005). Myers and Trulock (1998) found among the 79% of clients surveyed that religious and spiritual values and experiences were important topics to address in counseling. Therein lays the quandary of whether to exclude an entire realm of experiencing from the counseling process that is integral to human growth for many individuals (Steen, Engels, & Thweatt, 2006). Several scholars have asserted that the inclusion of spirituality in counseling is necessary because it affects clients’ behaviors, thoughts, and morals (Blakeney & Blakeney, 1992).

According to ACA’s (2005) Code of Ethics, counselors should “…encourage client growth and development in ways that foster the interest and welfare of clients and promote formation of healthy relationships.” They should “actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the clients they serve” and “…explore their own cultural identities and how these affect their values and beliefs about the counseling process” (p. 4).

Counselors are obligated ethically to attend to client welfare and growth (ACA, 2005). Since spirituality is an essential component used by many to help make sense of life’s experiences, not attending to spirituality may seem a glaring error of omission
Denying a client the right to explore his or her spirituality could be perceived by the client as counselor disdain for the client’s spiritual beliefs (Olson, 2003; Watts, 2001; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000).

Mental health practitioners have an ethical commitment to be reasonably aware of current professional information in the area in which they work as well as make a commitment to be competent in interventions employed in therapy. It is critical that counselors are educated, trained, and experienced in working with issues of religion and able to obtain consultation to most effectively address religious concerns if planning to integrate religious content in counseling (Johnson, Ridley, & Nielsen, 2000).

To this end, mental health professionals are expected to be competent in their dealings with clients to ensure clients’ well-being at all times (ACA, 2005; APA, 2002). Competence should be given primary consideration if the public is to be served well and protected from potential harm from individuals providing inadequate services. Organizations such as ACA and CACREP invest significant effort in publishing codes of ethics and practice and training guidelines, with emphasis on the recognition of and appropriate accommodation of diversity and respect for clients’ rights. Despite this fact, counseling professionals and supervisors continue to grapple with the acceptance of spirituality as an integral part of the counseling process.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present research study was to confirm whether the *Spirituality in Counselor Education & Training Survey* (West, 2007) with minor modifications made by this researcher, would adequately and reliably measure spiritual competence. As the development and use of self-report measurements enable counselors, counselor
educators, and researchers to generate empirical data related to the competence levels of students and practitioners alike. It provides a practical way of empirically assessing the impact of coursework on students’ development. Practitioners may also find these instruments useful in that they can use them to ascertain specific strengths and limitations in their current level of spiritual competence. In doing so, they are better able to plan and participate in future professional development activities.

Also, its purpose was to provide additional data in support of increased formal training for counselors around issues of spirituality and religion. This study investigated the core competencies of spirituality, which were based on the model provided by the multicultural counseling competencies. Further, it captured personal and professional descriptors of individuals included in the sample population and examined relationships between spiritual competence and stand-alone courses in spirituality, spirituality infused courses, and professional development hours in spirituality when participants’ demographic characteristics were taken into consideration.

The knowledge garnered from this research will have direct implications for the training and supervision of counselors and counseling trainees in matters of spirituality and/or religion. Further, the present study is expected to support the importance and impact of multicultural training activities on competence and potentially encourage training programs and continuing education programs to increase the quantity – and perhaps the quality – of multicultural training, specifically as it relates to religion and spirituality.

1.3.1 Research Questions

The study is designed to answer the following research questions:
1. Do the five scales on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence?

2. Is there a relationship between the number of stand-alone spirituality courses and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

3. Is there a relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

4. Is there a relationship between the number of professional development hours in spirituality, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

1.3.2 Research Hypotheses

Based on the purpose of the current study and the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses are presented:

H1: The five scales on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence.

H2: There is a relationship between the number of stand-alone spirituality courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.
H3: There is a relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

H4: There is a relationship between the number of professional development hours in spirituality, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

1.4 Definition of Terms

The following terms are offered for clarification and the reader’s comprehension of this document.

1.4.1 Spirituality

Spirituality is defined as that which is concerned with one’s purpose, value in life, or one’s search for meaning, purpose, and/or value. Spirituality includes one’s beliefs, mission, awareness, subjectivity, experience, sense of purpose and direction, and a kind of striving toward something greater than oneself. One’s construction may or may not include a Supreme Being, God, or Higher Power (Frame, 2003). For many, religion is an expression of their spirituality. Religion and spirituality are interrelated; nonetheless, religion does not comprise the total meaning of the broader concept (Pargament, 1997).

1.4.2 Multicultural

Term denoting the diversity of racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage; socioeconomic status; age; gender; sexual orientation; and religious and spiritual beliefs, as well as physical, emotional, and mental abilities (CACREP, 2009, p. 61).
1.4.3 Counselors

Counselors engage in the application of mental health, psychological, or human development principles, through cognitive, affective, behavioral or systematic intervention strategies, that address wellness, personal growth, or career development, as well as pathology. Counselors practice several different forms of counseling that are similar, but different from other disciplines. These counseling forms include (a) career; (b) college; (c) community; (d) gerontological; (e) marital, couple, and family; (f) mental health; and (g) school (American Counseling Association, 2009).

1.4.4 Counselor Education

Counselor education is an academic discipline that has its roots in education, counseling, and other human services occupations. The primary focus of counselor education is the training and preparation of counselors who will as counselors integrate the counseling theory with practice. Counselor Education programs are accredited by CACREP (Wikipedia, 2009).

1.4.5 Spiritual Competence

Spiritual competence is defined as an ongoing and active process characterized by three interrelated dimensions – a growing awareness of one’s own value-informed, spiritual worldview in addition to its associated assumptions, biases, and limitations; a developing empathic understanding of the client’s spiritual worldview that is devoid of negative judgment; and an increasing ability to design and implement intervention strategies that are appropriate, relevant, and sensitive to the client’s spiritual worldview (Hodge, 2004). It is a set of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that can be developed over time (Hodge & Bushfield, 2006).
1.4.6 Survey Monkey

Online survey tool with SSL encryption and multi-machine backup to keep data secure (Survey Monkey, 2010).

1.5 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. First, self-report was used to measure spiritual competence. In general, self-reports may be inappropriate because aspects of religion and spirituality are often difficult to measure through closed-ended questions. Additionally, the constructs of spirituality and religion may be susceptible to social desirability bias (Hill & Pargament, 2003). Second, methodological issues are often profuse in the study of religion and spirituality. There are a plethora of operational definitions used to measure spirituality in scientific research and evaluative scales. These definitions are not always equivalent, because each only captures a part of the whole or a fraction of the overarching reality. In closing, spirituality is usually taken to be whatever its researchers profess, and attempts to measure it depend on assumptions borrowed from particular religions or spiritualities (Gorsuch & Miller, 1999).

Summary

The evolution of what is now known as ASERVIC, which was founded in the 1950s, contributed to the growing relationship between counseling and spirituality. The multicultural movement also influenced the increase in publications concerning spirituality and counseling. It brought issues of competent counseling care for minorities into the professional consciousness of the counseling field. As a result, the number of books, chapters, articles, and dissertations focusing on counseling and spirituality has increased exponentially over the last 35 years (Powers, 2005).
It can be expected that during the span of their careers, mental health professionals will encounter diverse client populations with a broad range of spiritual and religious backgrounds (Richards & Bergin, 2000). This study was designed to determine whether the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) was a valid and reliable instrument for assessing spiritual competence. Additionally, it was intended to gather an adequate sample of mental health professionals to complete an assessment on their self-perceived spiritual competence.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Religious practices and beliefs are consistently related to greater life satisfaction, happiness, positive affect, and higher morale as well as marital stability and a sense of life purpose. Studies also show persons who are actively involved spiritually are at substantially reduced risk for substance abuse, addictions, and suicide (Koenig & Larson, 2001). For example, a study of over 400 patients served by various mental health facilities in Los Angeles County found the number of years and the proportion of patients’ coping time that drew upon religious beliefs or practices were correlated with less severe symptoms and better overall functioning. Also, a greater number of years of religious coping were linked with lower symptom levels in several areas including obsessive-compulsiveness, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation, psychoticism, and total symptomatology (Tepper, Rogers, Coleman, & Maloney, 2001).

Generally speaking, positive religious coping strategies such as expressing spiritual connectedness, receiving congregational support, and collaborative partnerships with God are related to the lowest rates of depressive symptoms. A combination of religious networks and supports, and current religious service attendance is associated with lower lifetime rates of major depression, generalized anxiety disorder, and substance use disorders (Kendler et al., 2003). Among those previously diagnosed with psychiatric
illnesses, higher levels of religious activity and positive religious coping are associated with lower symptom levels (Baetz, Larson, Marcoux, Bowen, & Griffin, 2002) and quicker recovery (Yangarber-Hicks, 2004).

Patient and community samples alike draw upon spiritual and religious resources to cope with physical and mental illness. Research has identified that these coping mechanisms provide strength to persevere and a greater sense of well-being (Larson & Larson, 2003). Through pathways such as healthier lifestyle choices, access to coping resources, and increased social supports, religious activity may be advantageous for mental health. These studies, and other ones like them, suggest that mental health clinicians who overlook inquiry into spiritual matters are potentially hindering treatment outcomes.

2.2 Development of the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (MCC)

As the United States becomes increasingly diverse, the counseling profession is faced with the challenge of competently meeting the varied needs of clients. The multicultural movement of the past three decades has brought issues of competent counseling care for minorities into the professional consciousness of the counseling field. In 1982, Sue et al. published their seminal paper on cross-cultural counseling competencies and thus initiated a long line of theoretical and empirical literature published in the psychology and counseling professions regarding multiculturalism.

On behalf of AMCD, Sue et al. (1992), relying heavily on the decisive Sue et al. (1982) paper, published a call to the counseling profession to recognize the diverse representation and varied needs of counseling clientele and expanded upon the original 1982 competencies. Like Sue et al. (1982), Sue et al. (1992) argued that the counseling
profession was insufficiently meeting the needs of its ethnically and racially diverse
clients and asserted what they considered long-overdue standards. Sue et al. (1992) cited
the lack of training standards in the counseling field for working with multicultural
populations as unethical and necessitating the development of the multicultural
counseling competencies.

Sue et al. (1992) reported that beginning with Sue et al. (1982), most attempts to
identify cross-cultural counseling competencies divided such competencies into three
dimensions: (a) beliefs and attitudes, (b) knowledge, and (c) skills. The beliefs and
attitudes dimension refers to one’s need to check biases and stereotypes, and the
development of a positive orientation toward multiculturalism. Moreover, it refers to the
counselor’s sensitivity to her/his personal values and biases and how these may influence
perceptions of the client, the client’s problem, and the counseling relationship.
Multicultural knowledge refers to understanding one’s own worldview, as well as having
specific knowledge of cultural groups, and knowledge of sociopolitical influences on
members of these groups. The skills dimension refers to specific skills, strategies, and
interventions needed to work with minority groups (Sue et al., 1992). These dimensions
have become the foundation of multicultural competence and the basis of training,
assessing, and identifying culturally competent counselors.

Sue et al. (1982) established 11 competencies that elaborated on these three
components. Sue et al. (1992) expanded upon the three-pronged conceptualization of
multicultural competence by positing a 3 (Characteristics) x 3 (Dimensions) matrix to
further organize the multicultural competencies. The authors asserted that there are three
characteristics of a multiculturally competent counselor: (a) awareness of one’s own
assumptions, values, and biases; (b) understanding the worldview of the culturally
different client; and (c) developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques.
Within each of these three characteristics, there are three dimensions: (a) belief and
attitudes, (b) knowledge, and (c) skills. Consequently, they developed nine competency
areas and offered 31 competencies within these areas that they deemed important,
although acknowledged they were not exhaustive.

2.2.1 Multicultural Beliefs and Attitudes

The first dimension refers to the need to check biases and stereotypes, and the
development of a positive orientation toward multiculturalism. Furthermore, it refers to
the counselor’s sensitivity to his or her personal values and biases and how these may
influence perceptions of the client, the client’s problem, and the counseling relationship
(Sue et al., 1992). A culturally aware counselor understands that there are different
worldviews and that these worldviews may have an impact in the counseling setting
(Ponterotto, Rieger, Barrett, & Sparks, 1994). Sue and Sue (1990) characterized a
counselor who is culturally competent in the beliefs and attitudes dimension, as one who
is actively in the process of becoming aware of his her own assumptions about human
behavior, values, biases, and preconceived notions.

2.2.2 Multicultural Knowledge

Multicultural knowledge refers to understanding one’s own worldview, as well as
having specific knowledge of cultural groups with whom one works, and knowledge of
sociopolitical influences on the members of these groups (Sue et al., 1992). This
dimension entails the counselor’s knowledge of the client’s worldview and expectations
for the counseling relationship (Ponterotto et al., 1994). A counselor who is competent in
the dimension of multicultural knowledge is one who actively attempts to understand the worldview of his or her culturally different clients without negative judgments (Sue and Sue, 1990).

2.2.3 Multicultural Skills

The third dimension refers to specific skills, strategies, and interventions needed to work with minority groups (Sue et al., 1992). Possessing multicultural skills implies that a counselor is able to intervene in a manner that is culturally sensitive and relevant (Ponterotto et al., 1994). Sue and Sue (1990) characterized a culturally skilled counselor as one who is in the process of actively developing and practicing appropriate, relevant, and sensitive interventions and skills in working with his or her culturally different clients.

2.3 Assessment of Multicultural Counseling Competence

Several studies have explored MCC, as well as examined the relationship of training, experience, and demographic variables, particularly race, with the self-perceived MCC of various professionals and trainees, including school counselors (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001, 2005; Constantine, 2001a), American Counseling Association members (Constantine, 2001b; Constantine & Ladany, 2000; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999), faculty in Counselor Education and psychology programs (Constantine & Ladany, 2000), university counseling center counselors (Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Sodowsky, Kuo-Jackson, Richardson, & Corey, 1998), rehabilitation counselors (Cummings-McCann & Accordino, 2005; Granello & Wheaton, 1998; Wheaton & Granello, 1998), and graduate student trainees in a plethora of mental health training programs (Constantine, 2001c;
While being mindful of variations in instrumentation and procedural and methodological differences in the above noted studies, when considered together, it seems that counselors in diverse tracks (i.e. rehabilitation, school, and mental health), as well as those still in training, consider themselves multiculturally competent. Furthermore, in aggregate, researchers have found that counselors and trainees of color generally report higher MCC than their White peers report, although this is not universally true, and not true for all components of the MCCs (Granello & Wheaton, 1998; Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999; Pope-Davis et al., 1995; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Sodowsky et al., 1998).

Research investigating the relationships between multicultural training activities and self-reported MCC, as well as between experience and MCC, have not been as definitive as findings regarding perceived MCC or the relationship between race and MCC. Constantine (2001a), Constantine (2001b), Constantine (2001c), Holcomb-McCoy (2005), Holcomb-McCoy and Myers (1999), Pope-Davis et al. (1995), and Sodowsky et al. (1998) found multicultural training activities, such as multicultural courses and workshops, to significantly increase self-reported MCC. Additionally, Sodowsky et al. (1998) and Pope-Davis et al. (1995) found support for the significant contribution of experience to higher self-reported MCC. Wheaton and Granello (1998) found partial support for the significant relationship between perceived MCC and the factors of training and experience. Contradicting the findings of these studies, Holcomb-McCoy (2001), in her study of elementary school counselors, did not find training or experience
to relate to perceived MCC in a statistically significant manner. Holcomb-McCoy’s (2001) findings appear counterintuitive and contradictory to a plethora of research; however, it should be noted that she employed a small convenience sample and used the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS), a different assessment than the majority of previously mentioned studies, which has questionable psychometric properties. Nonetheless, the contributions of training and experience to MCC are less clear and in need of further research.

2.4 Development of the Spirituality Competencies

The growth of behavioral health research that has linked spirituality and religiosity with improved health outcomes, greater awareness of the importance of spiritual and religious issues in people’s lives, and the significance of the multicultural competencies have all served as impetus to the spirituality movement (Hage, Hopson, Siegel, Payton, & DeFanti, 2006). Likewise, as the diversity of religious traditions continues to increase, awareness of a client’s religious background is becoming even more important. Currently, more than 160 denominations exist in the United States. Consequently, it is to be expected that mental health professionals will encounter diverse client populations with a broad range of spiritual and religious backgrounds (Richards & Bergin, 2000).

Beginning in 1995, under the endorsement of ASERVIC, a group of American Counseling Association (ACA) members met at a gathering called the “Summit on Spirituality.” Over 2.5 days they developed a description of spirituality and 10 competencies. The competencies addressed four knowledge domains: (a) general knowledge of spiritual phenomena, (b) awareness of one’s own spiritual perspective, (c)
understanding of clients’ spiritual perspective, and (d) spiritually related interventions and strategies. The competencies were considered essential in effectively training counselors in their work with clients’ spiritual concerns. Four additional sessions were held to revise the competencies and eventually, nine competencies emerged (Miller, 1999).

The counselor competencies that address spiritual and religious issues in counseling were as follows: The professional counselor can (a) explain the difference between religion and spirituality, including similarities and differences, and (b) describe religious and spiritual beliefs and practices in a cultural context. He or she (c) engages in self-exploration of religious and spiritual beliefs in order to increase sensitivity, understanding, and acceptance of diverse belief systems. Further, the counselor can (d) describe his/her religious and/or spiritual belief system and explain various models of religious or spiritual development across the lifespan while (e) demonstrating sensitivity and acceptance of a variety of religious and/or spiritual expressions in client communication. To this end, a counselor can (f) identify limits of her/his understanding of a client’s religious or spiritual expression, and demonstrate appropriate referral skills and generate possible referral sources; as well as, (g) assess the relevance of the religious and/or spiritual domains in the client’s therapeutic issues. Ultimately, a counselor is (h) sensitive to and receptive of religious and/or spiritual themes in the counseling process as befits the expressed preference of each client, and (i) uses a client’s religious and/or spiritual beliefs in the pursuit of the client’s therapeutic goals as befits the client’s expressed preference (Young, Wiggins-Frame, & Cashwell, 2007).
Recently revised, the spirituality competencies were categorized into 6 areas: (a) culture and worldview, (b) counselor self-awareness, (c) human and spiritual development, (d) communication, (e) assessment, and (f) diagnosis and treatment. Additionally, there are currently ten competencies for addressing spiritual and religious concerns in counseling (ASERVIC, 2009).

Young and colleagues (2002) surveyed 94 CACREP-accredited counselor education programs and found that counselor educators generally supported the spiritual competencies; however, only 46% believed they were prepared or very prepared to integrate spiritual and religious material into their counseling, teaching, and supervision. In addition, there were significant positive correlations between those who rated themselves highly on the items “I consider myself to be a spiritual person” and “I consider myself to be a religious person” and their ratings of the competencies. Ultimately, the competencies were endorsed by the sample with an overall mean rating of 4.2 on a 5-point scale. Counselors’ opinions regarding the importance of the spirituality competencies were measured once more and all nine of the competencies received greater than moderate support by a random sample of 505 ACA members (Young et al., 2007). These results indicate that in general, ACA members strongly support the importance of the spirituality competencies for effective counseling practice.

2.5 Assessment of Spiritual Competence

Empirical data on self-report and/or observer-rated spiritual competence are virtually nonexistent in the counseling literature. West (2007) created an instrument designed to measure counselor trainees’ agreement of the core competencies of spirituality, the inclusion of the core competencies of spirituality in their education and
training programs, the importance of spirituality in professional practice, and general information. The population for her study consisted of 55 master’s level counselor trainees from three Idaho universities in the final year of their counselor education. Results indicated that high agreement with the Core Competencies of Spirituality scale positively correlated with the four subscales: (a) *Core Competencies of Spirituality*, (b) *Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality*, (c) *Personal Spirituality*, and (d) *Spirituality in Professional Practice*.

2.5.1 Age

An examination of age related to spiritual competence has not been explored in the spiritual competence literature to date. This study is the first to explore the possible relationship between age and self-perceived spiritual competence. Despite this, it is suggested that older adults attend religious services more frequently than their younger counterparts (Chatters, Taylor, & Lincoln, 1999).

2.5.2 Sex

The demographic variable, sex, has yet to be explored in terms of its possible relationship with spiritual competence in the counseling literature. However, the broader psychology of religion literature indicated that the main difference between males and females is the way in which they express their spirituality and/or religion. For instance, women tend to attend church more frequently than men, but men are still accessing their religion, but through more private methods such as prayer (Chatters et al., 1999).

2.5.3 Religious Affiliation

In a meta-analysis on therapists’ integration of religion and spirituality in counseling, Walker, Gorsuch, and Tan (2004) found that therapists’ religious cultural
heritage may have been an especially salient issue for clinical and counseling psychologists, who were more likely to endorse atheism, agnosticism, or no religion than other mental health professionals. Thus, religious cultural differences with regard to denomination (as well as the beliefs and practices associated with being in a denomination) between client and counselor are likely to exist, particularly for clinical and counseling psychologists. Further, they found that personal religiousness on the part of both explicitly religious counselors and counselors from mixed samples was associated with being able to integrate religion and spirituality into several aspects of counseling such as being willing discuss religious issues.

2.6 Spirituality as a Multicultural Construct

Many counseling professionals support the principle of expanding multicultural training to include spirituality and religious aspects of diversity. The multicultural competencies literature has outlined the characteristics of a culturally skilled counselor, which include an awareness of one’s own cultural and religious groups in order to more adequately conceptualize clients’ spiritual beliefs and community (Hage et al., 2006). Spirituality is oftentimes an integral part of culture and needs to be addressed by the multiculturally aware counselor. In multicultural counseling, including issues of spirituality, ethical practice may require counselors to (a) become more culturally aware of biases, values, and assumptions about human behavior; (b) be more aware of cultural values, biases, and assumptions of various groups; and (c) develop culturally appropriate systems and individual intervention strategies. Both spirituality and multiculturalism are “forces in motion,” (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999, p. 66) ever changing within the self. One informs the other in a never-ending “figure eight” (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999, p. 66).
Spirituality has been framed by many as an issue of diversity (Watts, 2001; Zinnbauer and Pargament, 2000). Thus, attending to clients’ spiritual and religious issues is an important aspect of being a multiculturally competent counselor (Constantine, 1997).

2.7 Inclusion of Spirituality in Counselor Education & Training

There is a natural place for spirituality within the multicultural research literature for counselor preparation. With the revitalization of spirituality in counseling, the need for preparing counselors to respond appropriately to clients’ spiritual needs seems to be an increasing reality (Burke et al., 1999; Kelly, 1994; Pate & Bondi, 1992). In mental health settings, many counselors are reluctant to address spiritual issues with clients (Kelly, 1995). Some believe they are unequipped to deal with issues of spirituality because they have not received appropriate training (Genia, 1994). Lack of formal training to supplement therapists’ spiritual values and experiences creates a risk of therapists imposing their own values and/or inappropriately applying religious and spiritual interventions (Walker et al., 2004).

For over a decade, the need to include spirituality in counselor training has been recognized in the counseling literature (Burke et al., 1999; Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999; Pate & Bondi, 1992). Although the numbers appear to be rising, a limited number of programs include religious and spiritual content in their curricula even though many counselors and counselor educators believe religion and spirituality to be important in counselor education (Young et al., 2002). It is essential that counselors obtain specialized knowledge and preparation in spirituality (Richards & Bergin 2000). Yet, few mental health practitioners have received formal training in working with spiritual and religious issues in counseling (Frame, 2003; Schulte, Skinner, & Claiborn, 2002).
Kelly (1994) found that 25% of 341 CACREP accredited and nonaccredited counselor education programs reported that spirituality and religion were included as a course component. Pate and High (1995) found 60% and Kelly (1997) reported slightly more than 50% of CACREP accredited counselor education programs provided some attention to spirituality and religion in their curricula. Young and colleagues (2002) found 69% of 94 CACREP-accredited counselor education programs reported that their programs addressed spiritual and religious issues in their curricula. Based on the findings, the survey participants tended to view themselves as more prepared to train counselors to address issues related to client spirituality than other members of their program faculty, but only 46% perceived themselves as prepared or very prepared to integrate material related to spirituality and religion. In a later empirical study, Young and his colleagues (2007), found that 68% of their survey participants thought it was important or very important that counselors received formal training in addressing spiritual and/or religious concerns and 18% of the respondents had not received training related to issues of spirituality and religion. Further, 21% of the respondents who felt unprepared indicated a need for additional training.

In the research literature, there is a dearth of information that focuses on what counselor education students are being taught. In 2004, Cashwell and Young obtained course syllabi from 14 counselor education programs that offered a course on spirituality and religion. Among these syllabi, there existed a great deal of variation in course content. There were a total of 73 objectives covered in the 14 reviewed syllabi. Not all the spirituality competencies were covered – one syllabus did not include any objectives, three referenced no more than two competencies, four failed to specify objectives
consistent with the competencies, and 3 of the 14 syllabi contained objectives that addressed at least seven of the nine competencies.

The historical underrepresentation of spiritual and religious issues in counselor training programs has resulted in a lack of sensitivity about these issues. These trends have been passed from generation to generation of counselors (Miller, 1999). There is a need for counselor education programs to incorporate the spiritual dimension in a planned, thoughtful, and standardized manner. Either a specific course may be developed (Ingersoll, 1997) or an infusion model may be used (Burke et al., 1999) to introduce content on spirituality and religion. Van Asselt and Senstock (2009) found that counselors’ spirituality training makes a difference in determining their choice of treatment and self-perceived competence to counsel a client with spiritual concerns. The results also indicated that when a counselor is more spiritually aware, his or her ability to recognize a client’s spiritual concerns is also greater. These findings suggest that training opportunities should extend beyond self-awareness components to include conceptual models and intervention techniques.

Given that therapists use their own personal religious and spiritual experiences when integrating religion and spirituality into counseling, it is feasible to believe that training should address how to make appropriate use of one’s religious and spiritual experiences.

2.8 Inclusion of Spirituality in Counselor Supervision

In addition to knowledge and understanding, competence is enhanced, in part, through supervised experience. Supervision is defined as an evaluative relationship between a senior and junior member of the counseling profession. The senior member’s
The purpose is to “enhance the professional functioning” of the supervisee (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998, p. 4). The supervision of counselors has been identified as a necessary component in the development of counseling and conceptualization skills, self-awareness, and professional behaviors (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Supervision is a process of personal and professional development – a dyad in which the supervisor motivates, challenges, and supports a counselor to reach higher levels of competence and complexity (Polanski, 2003). It also serves as an evaluative tool for supervisors as they assess their supervisees’ fitness for the profession (Holloway & Neufeldt, 1995).

Typically, supervision occurs within the context of the supervisory relationship (Holloway, 1997). An essential component of the formation and completion of the supervision process is the relationship between the supervisor (i.e. counselor) and supervisee (i.e. counselor-in-training). In fact, the supervisory relationship mediates what occurs within supervision (Watkins, 1994). The main purposes of counselor supervision include facilitating the counselor’s professional and personal development, advancing the counselor’s competencies, and promoting responsible counseling services (Bradley & Kottler, 2001). In addition to the core qualities of empathy, respect, concreteness, genuineness, and immediacy, a competent supervisor should also possess a concern for the growth and well-being of the supervisee and welfare of the client.

Although counselor education programs have begun to include courses that are designed to enhance the counselor’s knowledge and skills for addressing spiritual and religious issues with clients, spirituality in supervision has received little attention in the literature. Because supervision is a fundamental element of counselor education, it seems to be a vital teaching and learning forum to address spirituality and religion in counseling.
(Polanski, 2003). Goals of supervision include addressing supervisees’ knowledge, skills, and professional functioning. The supervisory process includes examining the influence of counselors’ personal values on their practice (Corey et al., 2003).

Polanski (2003) asserted that the Discrimination Model provides a useful framework for examining how spiritual issues that arise in supervision might be addressed from the perspective of each focus in the model. Further, it is comprised of three supervision foci: (a) intervention skills, (b) conceptualization skills, and (c) personalization skills in addition to three supervisory roles: teacher, counselor, and consultant. The intervention skills focus area attends to the trainee’s skill in delivering an intervention. The conceptualization skills area addresses the counselor trainee’s ability to understand and synthesize the information from the client and distinguish between essential and nonessential information.

The personalization skills comprise the personal traits of the counselor trainee that contribute to the therapeutic relationship. These traits are not limited to the trainee’s personality and cultural background. In order to implement the model, the supervisor identifies his or her role and the focus area that should be addressed.

Many counseling practitioners and counselor educators who serve as clinical supervisors to counseling students have received little or no formal training in incorporating religious and spiritual issues in therapy (Young et al., 2002). In many cases, supervisors do not have the experience necessary to serve as informed and effective role models in multicultural supervision (D’Andrea & Daniels, 1997) including issues of religion and/or spirituality (Miller, 1999). Berkel, Constantine, and Olson (2007) have suggested guidelines that will help supervisors improve their levels of
multicultural competence. These guidelines focus on the need for self-understanding, continuing education, and support, cultural relevance, and exposure as well as the need to address cultural issues, utilize community resources, and initiate discussions of religion and spirituality.

The need for self-understanding requires one to examine and critique his or her religious or spiritual beliefs and values, and then assess how these values, beliefs, and biases influence one’s role as both counselor and supervisor. The continuing education guideline necessitates that supervisors actively and continually seek professional development opportunities designed to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills in religious and spiritual issues. The need for support, cultural relevance, and exposure purports that in order to foster support around spirituality and religious issues, clinical supervisors should examine their own prejudices around these issues. Additionally, supervisors should actively engage in activities that will increase their contact with individuals from diverse religious and spiritual traditions. Addressing cultural issues is necessary because failure to acknowledge and address the potential influence of the religious and/or spiritual beliefs of the client, counselor, or supervisor on the therapeutic and supervisory relationships is inappropriate. The need to utilize community resources includes consulting members of the religious community which increases the knowledge base and provides information about the types of mental health issues with which their communities suffer. Finally, the need to initiate discussions of religion and spirituality asserts that supervisors initiate multicultural discussions with their supervisees which results in increased cultural sensitivity and effectiveness of individual supervision (Berkel et al., 2007).
Additionally, Aten and Hernandez (2004) provided a set of conceptual guidelines for developing supervisee competence as it pertained to working with religious issues and clients. These guidelines are based on the eight domains of the integrative developmental model (IDM): (a) intervention skills competence, (b) assessment, (c) interpersonal assessment, (d) client conceptualization, (e) individual and cultural differences, (f) theoretical orientation, (g) treatment goals and plans, and (h) professional ethics (Stoltenberg & Delworth, 1987). According to the distinctive developmental needs of the supervisee, the supervisor is able to tailor the supervisory environment (Aten & Hernandez, 2004).

Because supervision is an integral component in counselor education, supervisors should be prepared to examine these issues with their supervisees to help them become more competent in addressing spiritual and religious issues with their clients. The supervisor’s position of power suggests that the supervisor’s attitudes toward spirituality will set the tone for how these issues are addressed in supervision. Consequently, this may impact how the supervisee addresses these issues with clients. Being prepared and willing to address these issues with supervisees is essential for supervisors to ensure appropriate client care and enhance the professional development of counselors (Polanski, 2003). By enhancing the counselor supervision process and developing an empirically-based literature to increase dialogue and discussion among counselor trainers, supervisors, and students, it is believed that the welfare of clients can be improved (Bishop, Avila-Juarbe, & Thumme, 2003).
2.9 Inclusion of Spirituality in the Therapeutic Process

As a way of incorporating the spiritual and religious aspects of a client’s life in counseling, it is critical that counselors sensitively address these issues by inviting a discussion. It is also important that they select appropriate terminology and are sensitive to both verbal and nonverbal cues as to not offend the client. Such caution and sensitivity can provide the opportunity for a respectful dialogue between the counselor and client. This, in turn, assures that the counselor does not impose his or her spiritual and religious values on the client (Miller, 2003).

There are three types of integration of spiritual or religious concerns in counseling: (a) implicit, (b) explicit, and (c) intentional. Implicit and explicit integration are at opposite ends of the continuum and intentional integration is a description of the counselor’s process of integration of spiritual or religious concerns. Furthermore, implicit integration refers to activities that are on the covert end of the continuum. At this end of the continuum, values are a part of counseling and clients may discuss concerns related to spiritual or religious perspectives. On the contrary, explicit integration is at the overt end of the continuum.

In a systematic manner, the counselor directly addresses spiritual or religious concerns, and, in doing so, he or she may use resources such as prayer, religious texts and practices, or referrals to religious leaders. Intentional integration is the point at which the counselor decides to use implicit or explicit integration with a client (Tan, 1996). This decision should be made based on the client, his or her needs, the client’s problems, and the counselor’s training. The counselor should retrieve informed consent from clients
before integrating spiritual or religious concerns in counseling in order to preserve the client’s welfare (Frame, 2003).

Assessing the client’s spiritual identity is important. It provides a starting point. A positive spiritual identity can be used to help clients heal and grow (Miller, 2003). To this end, clients come to therapy with an array of religious beliefs that might or might not be central to the way they conduct their lives. In order to understand how clients incorporate their spiritual beliefs and grasp the degree of impact their beliefs have on their actions, counselors should engage in an assessment process. This process also enables counselors to gather relevant information and guard against faulty assumptions, (Frame, 2003). An assessment should be done that includes the client’s secular and religious history (Barnett and Fiorentino, 2000). By learning how clients see their worlds and their places in it, counselors can become more empathic and less biased in their work (Frame, 2003).

Evaluating clients’ understanding of their religious traditions and doctrines can be an important aspect of assessing context. Sometimes, clients are distressed because they have misunderstood the meaning of religious beliefs and practices, or they may be simply uninformed about what their particular faith community believes and values (Gorsuch & Miller, 1999). Also, by using various forms of assessment, counselors are able to determine if clients’ religious beliefs are maintaining or alleviating their distress (Worthington, 1989). It is pertinent that mental health practitioners know their clients’ spiritual beliefs, practices, and experiences, in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of clients’ problems, and design appropriate treatment plans to address these problems.
Mental health counselors are expected to attempt to understand the client’s perspective, regardless of the counselor’s personal views and values, and facilitate the personal development of the client’s spirituality and growth (Corey et al., 2003; Miller, 1999; Watts, 2001; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000). As supported by three decades of literature, the conception of counseling as value-free is mistaken. In addition to counseling being value-laden, counselors do not remain value-free in counseling (Kelly, 1990). Theoretical orienting systems incorporate value-laden assumptions about people, the world, and the process of helping. Furthermore, they serve as roadmaps for counselors in their work with clients and underlie which therapeutic techniques are chosen.

In the counseling profession, many counselors have not received training on how to manage value differences or to deal with spiritual and/or religious issues in counseling. Moreover, they are unable to recognize the potential impact of their own religious beliefs on the counseling process (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000) and given the lack of training regarding the integration of spirituality and religion into counseling, it seems that most integration occurs through intrapersonal integration as a result of therapists’ own religious or spiritual experiences (Walker, Gorsuch, & Tan, 2004).

Based on counselors’ ontological assumptions and views of the role of religion in counseling four approaches to religious and spiritual issues in counseling were identified: rejectionist, exclusivist, constructivist, and pluralist (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000). Central to the rejectionist approach, is the denial of sacred realities that are fundamental to the beliefs of spiritual and religious adherents. Just as religious rejectionism is scorned by religious believers, religious exclusivism is viewed suspiciously by mental health
professionals. Central to the exclusivist approach is a fundamental belief in the ontological reality of a religious or spiritual dimension. The exclusivist is respectful of clients’ religious views, but only within the limits of the exclusivist’s own understanding of reality. The constructivist approach denies the existence of an absolute reality but recognizes the ability of individuals to construct their own personal meanings and realities. Therapeutic work is conducted within the client’s belief system, and counseling techniques are used that incorporate elements of the client’s worldview. The pluralist approach recognizes that spiritual or religious reality is expressed in different cultures and by different people in different ways and acknowledges the existence of a religious or spiritual absolute reality, but allows for multiple interpretations and paths towards it.

The constructivist and pluralist approaches are advocated for by Zinnbauer and Pargament (2000) because these approaches allow for a diversity of clients and religious beliefs and are flexible enough to deal effectively with a variety of religious and spiritual issues in counseling. Ethically, the constructivist approach offers greater appreciation of religious experiences and diversity than the rejectionist or the exclusivist approaches and seems much less likely to impose one particular brand of values on a given client. The pluralistic approach offers flexibility and respect regarding religious and spiritual issues in counseling. It requires a good deal of self-knowledge on the part of the counselor because in order to bring one’s worldview into the therapeutic context, a counselor must be aware of his or her beliefs, biases, values, and experiences. Further, it is important to note that neither constructivism nor pluralism is value-free. Constructivists and pluralists alike must be cognizant of their own values and beliefs about religion, their profession’s ethical positions on religious and spiritual issues, and address the implications of these
values for counseling. As with any categorical system, approaches fall between the categories or combine elements from more than one category. Furthermore, there may be differences between clinicians’ theoretical orientations and their actual practices. Adhering to any of these approaches is not so much a matter of choice but of self-understanding and personal belief (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000).

Richards and Bergin (2000) assert that integrating spirituality and religion into counseling is conceptually similar to the dynamics of more general multicultural counseling attitudes and skills previously advanced by other multicultural researchers. This is evidenced by their 8-point checklist of educational and training standards for professionals who deal with religious and spiritual issues in their work with clients: (a) training in multicultural counseling, (b) reviewing classic works in the psychology of religion and (c) on religious and spiritual issues in counseling, (d) reading current literature on religion and spirituality published in mainstream mental health journals, (e) taking workshops devoted to religion and mental health, (f) studying world religions through reading books or taking classes, (g) acquiring specialized knowledge about those specific religious traditions frequently encountered in therapy, and (h) seeking appropriate supervision when working with clients from traditions unfamiliar to the counselor or when introducing specific religious and spiritual interventions for the first time into treatment (Richards & Bergin, 1997).

Exploring potential spiritual and religious issues with clients may not mean that counselors are formally trained in theology or philosophy; however, it may mean that they have an ability to examine the roles that such issues play in counselors’ own lives. Discussions with religious leaders and clergy from counselors’ own religious or spiritual
traditions may help clarify counselors’ religious and spiritual values. Counselors might also consider entering exploratory or insight-oriented counseling themselves. Careful explication of one’s theoretical orientation and its assumptions regarding religion and spirituality should be conducted during a counselor’s initial professional training and then periodically as his or her counseling approach matures and changes over time. It may also mean that counselors understand how clients’ spiritual or religious worldviews interact with their presenting concerns (Constantine et al., 2000).

Presently, there is a need for counseling approaches that do not pathologize or elevate client religious and spiritual beliefs without clear empirical or clinical justification. Counselors should respect clients’ beliefs and suitably treat legitimate psychopathology. Pluralist or constructivist counselors who possess an understanding of a variety of religious and spiritual beliefs and a persistent awareness of their own reactions to religious and spiritual issues in the course of treatment are best equipped to provide effective mental health services to religious and spiritual clients.

2.10 Summary

Research linking spirituality and religion to improved outcomes, the importance of spirituality and religion in people’s lives, and the significance of the multicultural competencies has all served as impetus to the spirituality movement. The multicultural counseling competencies, and the various lines of research that has emerged from them, provide a framework that is vital to the continued development and validation of the spirituality competencies.

According to Sue and Sue (1999), “In order to be culturally competent, mental health professionals must be able to free themselves from the cultural conditioning of
their personal and professional training, to understand and accept the legitimacy of alternative worldviews, and to begin the process of developing culturally appropriate intervention strategies in working with a diverse clientele” (p. ix).

Counselor training programs that integrate spiritual and religious issues into academic curricula may increase students’ levels of competence in addressing a range of cultural issues with clients. Attending to clients’ spiritual and religious issues is an important aspect of being a multiculturally competent counselor and has vital implications for the ethical delivery of mental health services (Constantine, 1997). Mental health practitioners have an ethical commitment to be reasonably aware of current professional information in the area in which they work as well as make a commitment to be competent in interventions employed in therapy. Counselors should be educated, trained, and experienced in working with issues of religion as well as willing to obtain consultation to most effectively address religious concerns if planning to integrate religious content in counseling (Johnson et al., 2000). Practicing outside the boundaries of competency may hurt clients as well as the integrity of counselors (Chappelle, 2000).
Chapter 3

METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the descriptive methods, confirmatory factor analysis, and regression analyses used to address the research questions. Descriptive methods were used to explore and describe the demographic qualities of the sample. Confirmatory factor analysis via structural equation modeling was used to determine whether the five scales on the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007) measure meaningful different factors of spiritual competence. Last, multiple regression analyses were used to examine the relationships between various variables such as the number of stand-alone courses in spirituality, number of spirituality infused courses, number of professional development hours in spirituality, age, sex, religious affiliation, and current mental health profession.

3.2 Theoretical Foundation

In understanding the effect of training and education on spiritual competence, this study, was informed by the Multicultural Counseling Competency conceptual framework. The philosophy underlying the Multicultural Counseling Competency (MCC) framework is as follows: (a) all counseling is multicultural in nature; (b) sociopolitical and historical forces influence the culture of counseling beliefs, values, and practices and the worldview of clients and counselors; and (c) ethnicity, culture, race, language, and other dimensions
of diversity need to be factored into counselor preparation and practice (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001).

The Personal Dimensions of Identity model was included as part of the MCC conceptual framework to display the complexity of all individuals and the universal definition of diversity, which includes all persons. The model consists of three dimensions labeled A, B, and C. The A Dimension is a listing of characteristics of all people into which they are born and thus, in some respect fixed (e.g. age, gender, culture, ethnicity, race, and language). The C Dimension refers to the historical, political, socio-cultural and economic contexts of persons (e.g. historical period into which someone is born). These contextual factors affect the way people are perceived and treated. Finally, the B Dimension is defined as the intersection of the A and C dimensions, such as issues of access (Arredondo et al., 1996).

The MCC framework was initially divided into three dimensions: (a) beliefs and attitudes, (b) knowledge, and (c) skills. These dimensions have become the foundation of multicultural competence and the basis for training, assessing, and identifying culturally competent counseling. It was further developed to include characteristics of a culturally skilled counselor. First, a culturally skilled counselor actively engages in the process of becoming aware of his or her own assumptions about human behavior, values, biases, preconceived notions, and personal limitations. Second, a culturally skilled counselor is one who actively attempts to understand the worldview of his or her culturally different client without negative judgments. Third, a culturally skilled counselor is one who is in the process of actively developing and practicing appropriate, relevant, and sensitive intervention strategies and skills in working with his or her culturally different clients.
(Sue et al., 1992). Ultimately, each characteristic was described as having three dimensions.

In their review of the widespread ineffectiveness of traditional counseling approaches and techniques applied to minority populations, Sue et al. (1992) indicated that a major reason for therapeutic ineffectiveness was the training of mental health professionals. Firstly, counselors need to recognize that race, culture, and ethnicity are functions of each one of us and not limited to “just minorities” (Sue & Sue, 1990). Next, counseling oftentimes reflects the values of the larger society. As a result, there are two political realities that need to be acknowledged and addressed. The worldview of the counselor and client is ultimately linked to the historical and current experiences of racism and oppression in the United States. Additionally, counseling does not occur in isolation from larger events in society. As such, counselors have a responsibility in understanding the political forces and events that affect our personal and professional lives (Sue et al., 1992). Based on this framework, it was hypothesized that spiritual competence would be positively impacted by training and education – as empirical evidence suggests multicultural competence is affected by these two variables.

3.3 Research Design and Methodology

The researcher used descriptive methods, multiple regression and confirmatory factor analyses, to analyze data gathered from a census sample utilizing an e-mail survey design. Each research question is presented along with the hypotheses, variables, and data analysis for that particular question. Both the null hypothesis and the alternative are stated as a two-tailed test will be used to infer from the data.
3.4 Research Questions

3.4.1.1 Research Question One

Do the five scales on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence?

3.4.1.2 Research Hypotheses

H₀: The five scales on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) do not measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence.

H₁: The five scales on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence.

3.4.1.3 Variables

3.4.1.3.1 Core Competencies of Spirituality. Core Competencies of Spirituality is a variable calculated from averaging items on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey*. Eight items comprised this scale with a 6-point Likert scale that ranged from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The possible mean score for this scale ranged from 1-6. This scale included items such as “I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions and strategies” and “I am aware of my own spiritual perspective and how the perspective is relevant to my life.”

3.4.1.3.2 Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality. Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality is a variable calculated from averaging items on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey*. This scale had a total of six items with a 6-point Likert scale that ranged from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. 
The possible mean score for this subscale ranged from 1-6. Further, this scale measured the degree to which participants’ counselor training programs included spirituality and religion in the curriculum.

3.4.1.3.3 Personal Spirituality. Personal Spirituality is a variable that consists of six items. The six items are measured on a 6-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The possible mean score of this subscale ranged from 1-6. This scale included statements such as “I would characterize myself as a spiritual person” and “I am able to identify my personal spiritual practices/activities.”

3.4.1.3.4 Spirituality in Professional Practice. Spirituality in Professional Practice is a variable measured by six items on a 6-point Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The possible mean score of this scale ranged from 1-6. The items on this scale addressed the importance of the inclusion of spirituality in education, training, and practice, in addition to its relevance to counseling clients.

3.4.1.3.5 General Information. General Information is a variable that consists of 12 items. The 12 items are measured on a 6-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The possible mean score of this scale ranged from 1-6. This scale included statements such as “Spirituality was important in my upbringing” and “My spirituality has impacted my decision to become a counselor.”

3.4.1.4 Data Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to statistically test the significance of the hypothesized factor model. It consisted of the following five observed variables: (a) core competencies of spirituality, (b) inclusion of core competencies of spirituality, (c) personal spirituality, (d) spirituality in professional practice, and (e) general information.
Once a confirmatory factor model was specified, the model was identified. In order to accomplish this end, first, the order and rank condition were assessed. In order to analyze the confirmatory factor model, maximum likelihood estimation was used with a standardized solution to report statistical estimates of the free parameters. In analyzing the confirmatory factor model, the sample variance-covariance data was fit to the specified model. To facilitate better fit, the model was modified until all of the parameters were statistically significantly different from zero (p<.05), and all of the fit indices indicated an acceptable level of fit (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010).

The researcher specified the confirmatory factor model to define the relationships between the latent and observed variables in the study. A structural model was specified once the latent variables were measured well. Relationships among the latent variables were depicted by the direction of the arrows included in the model. The estimation of factor loadings and structure coefficients involved the decomposition of the sample variance—covariance matrix. First, the variance—covariance matrix of the latent independent variables was defined. The second set of variance—covariance terms that needed to be defined was the covariance matrix of the structural equation model for prediction errors. Next, the variance—covariance terms from the measurement error of the model needed to be defined and understood. Ultimately, from the structure coefficient parameters estimated in the structural model, the factor loadings in the measurement model, and all of the variance—covariance terms, a matrix of variance—covariance terms for the overall SEM model was generated (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). Structural equation modeling was done with SPSS Amos 18.0 – an easy-to-use structural equation modeling software.
3.4.1.5 Proposed Model

![Proposed Model of Spiritual Competence](image)

**Figure 3.1**

*Proposed Model of Spiritual Competence*

*Note.* CC = Core Competencies of Spirituality, ICC = Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, PS = Personal Spirituality, SPP = Spirituality in Professional Practice, GI = General Information
3.4.2.1 Research Question Two

Is there a relationship between the number of stand-alone spirituality courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

3.4.2.2 Research Hypotheses

H₀: There is no relationship between the number of stand-alone spirituality courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

H₁: There is a relationship between the number of stand-alone spirituality courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

3.4.2.3 Variables

3.4.2.3.1 Stand-alone spirituality courses. Stand-alone spirituality courses is a continuous ratio variable. Participants were asked to report the number of spirituality courses taken. This question was asked in an open-ended format.

3.4.2.3.2 Age. Age is a continuous ratio variable. In an open-ended format, participants were asked to report their ages in years.

3.4.2.3.3 Sex. Sex is a nominal scale dichotomous variable which was dummy-coded for data analysis. Women were coded as 0 whereas men will be coded as 1. Sex was measured in a forced-choice format.

3.4.2.3.4 Religious affiliation. Religious affiliation is a discrete nominal variable with sixteen levels, which was dummy-coded for data analysis. Presence of a religious affiliation was coded as 0 and absence of a religious affiliation was coded as 1. Religious
affiliation was measured in a forced choice format; however, participants were given the opportunity to provide a religious affiliation different from the choices presented.

3.4.2.3.5 Spiritual competence. Spiritual competence was assessed using a modified version of the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007). It was determined by computing the mean for all items on the survey, which was comprised of five scales: (a) Core Competencies of Spirituality, (b) Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, (c) Personal Spirituality, (d) Spirituality in Professional Practice, and (e) General Information. The survey contained 38 items on a 6-point Likert scale, with possible scores ranging from 38-228. It is worth noting that spiritual competence was a continuous interval criterion variable.

3.4.2.4 Regression Equations

The multiple linear regression model for predicting $Y$ from $p$ predictors $X_{1,2,...,p}$ is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \ldots + \beta_p X_{pi} + a + \epsilon_i$$

where $Y$ is the criterion variable, $\beta$ is the slope, $X$ is a predictor variable, $a$ is the constant and $\epsilon$ is the error included in the model. Therefore, $Y_4 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1(4)} + \beta_2 X_{2(4)} + \beta_3 X_{3(4)} + \beta_4 X_{4(4)} + a + \epsilon_4$ (Moore & McCabe, 2006) where $Y_4$ = spiritual competence, $X_1$ = number of stand-alone spirituality courses, $X_2$ = age, $X_3$ = sex, and $X_4$ = religious affiliation.

3.4.2.5 Data Analysis

Pearson product correlations and Spearman’s rho were computed to establish the strength of relationships between predictor and criterion variables as indicated by the correlation index ($r$ and $r^2$) for each multiple regression equation (Fox, 2007). For each multiple regression equation, the coefficient value that described variance in the criterion variable ($R^2$) was reviewed for significance. The Adjusted $R^2$ value was also reviewed to
determine the strength of the relationship among the predictor and criterion variables in the regression equation, taking into account the number of predictor variables and the sample size. The $b$, specifically the Beta ($\beta$) coefficient, was used to describe the relationship between individual predictor variables and the criterion variable.

3.4.3.1 Research Question Three

Is there a relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

3.4.3.2 Research Hypotheses

$H_0$: There is no relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

$H_1$: There is a relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

3.4.3.3 Variables

3.4.3.3.1 Spirituality infused courses. Spirituality infused courses is a continuous ratio variable. Participants were asked to report the number of spirituality courses taken. This question was asked in an open-ended format.

3.4.3.3.2 Age. Age is a continuous ratio variable. In an open-ended format, participants were asked to report their ages in years.
3.4.3.3 Sex. Sex is a nominal scale dichotomous variable which was dummy-coded for data analysis. Women were coded as 0 whereas men will be coded as 1. Sex was measured in a forced-choice format.

3.4.3.3.4 Religious affiliation. Religious affiliation is a discrete nominal variable with sixteen levels, which was dummy-coded for data analysis. Presence of a religious affiliation was coded as 0 and absence of a religious affiliation was coded as 1. Religious affiliation was measured in a forced choice format; however, participants were given the opportunity to provide a religious affiliation different from the choices presented.

3.4.2.3.5 Spiritual competence. Spiritual competence was assessed using a modified version of the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007). It was determined by computing the mean for all items on the survey, which was comprised of five scales: (a) Core Competencies of Spirituality, (b) Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, (c) Personal Spirituality, (d) Spirituality in Professional Practice, and (e) General Information. The survey contained 38 items on a 6-point Likert scale, with possible scores ranging from 38-228. Spiritual competence was a continuous interval criterion variable.

3.4.3.4 Regression Equations

The multiple linear regression model for predicting $Y$ from $p$ predictors $X_{1,2,...,p}$ is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{i1} + \beta_2 X_{i2} + \ldots + \beta_p X_{ip} + a + \epsilon_i$$

where $Y$ is the criterion variable, $\beta$ is the slope, $X$ is a predictor variable, $a$ is the constant and $\epsilon$ is the error included in the model. Therefore, $Y_4 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1(4)} + \beta_2 X_{2(4)} + \beta_3 X_{3(4)} + \beta_4 X_{4(4)} + a + \epsilon_4$ (Moore & McCabe, 2006) where $Y_4 =$ spiritual competence, $X_1 =$ number of spirituality infused courses, $X_2 =$ age, $X_3 =$ sex, and $X_4 =$ religious affiliation.
3.4.2.5 Data Analysis

Pearson product correlations and Spearman’s rho were computed to establish the strength of relationships between predictor and criterion variables as indicated by the correlation index (r and r²) for each multiple regression equation (Fox, 2007). For each multiple regression equation, the coefficient value that described variance in the criterion variable (R²) was reviewed for significance. The Adjusted R² value was also reviewed to determine the strength of the relationship among the predictor and criterion variables in the regression equation, taking into account the number of predictor variables and the sample size. The b, specifically the Beta (β) coefficient, was used to describe the relationship between individual predictor variables and the criterion variable.

3.4.4.1 Research Question Four

Is there a relationship between the number of professional development hours in spirituality, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

3.4.4.2 Research Hypotheses

H₀: There is no relationship between the number of professional development hours in spirituality, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence as measured by the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007), considering participants’ demographic characteristics.

H₁: There is a relationship between the number of professional development hours in spirituality, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.
3.4.4.3 Variables

3.4.4.3.1 Spirituality professional development hours. Professional development hours in spirituality is a continuous ratio variable. Participants were asked to indicate the number of professional development hours in spirituality completed. This question was presented in an open-ended format.

3.4.2.3.2 Age. Age is a continuous ratio variable. In an open-ended format, participants were asked to report their ages in years.

3.4.2.3.3 Sex. Sex is a nominal scale dichotomous variable which was dummy-coded for data analysis. Women were coded as 0 whereas men will be coded as 1. Therefore, sex was measured in a forced-choice format.

3.4.2.3.4 Religious affiliation. Religious affiliation is a discrete nominal variable with sixteen levels, which was dummy-coded for data analysis. Presence of a religious affiliation was coded as 0 and absence of a religious affiliation was coded as 1. Religious affiliation was measured in a forced choice format; however, participants were given the opportunity to provide a religious affiliation different from the choices presented.

3.4.2.3.5 Spiritual competence. Spiritual competence was assessed using a modified version of the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007). It was determined by computing the mean for all items on the survey, which was comprised of five scales: (a) Core Competencies of Spirituality, (b) Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, (c) Personal Spirituality, (d) Spirituality in Professional Practice, and (e) General Information. The survey contained 38 items on a 6-point Likert scale, with possible scores ranging from 38-228. Thus, spiritual competence was a continuous interval criterion variable.
3.4.4.4 Regression Equations

The multiple linear regression model for predicting $Y$ from $p$ predictors $X_{1,2,...,p}$ is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \ldots + \beta_p X_{pi} + a + \epsilon_i$$

where $Y$ is the criterion variable, $\beta$ is the slope, $X$ is a predictor variable, $a$ is the constant and $\epsilon$ is the error included in the model. Therefore, $Y_4 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1(4)} + \beta_2 X_{2(4)} + \beta_3 X_{3(4)} + \beta_4 X_{4(4)} + a + \epsilon_4$ (Moore & McCabe, 2006) where $Y_4 =$ spiritual competence, $X_1 =$ number of spirituality professional development hours, $X_2 =$ age, $X_3 =$ sex, and $X_4 =$ religious affiliation.

3.4.2.5 Data Analysis

Pearson product correlations and Spearman’s rho were computed to establish the strength of relationships between predictor and criterion variables as indicated by the correlation index ($r$ and $r^2$) for each multiple regression equation (Fox, 2007). For each multiple regression equation, the coefficient value that described variance in the criterion variable ($R^2$) was analyzed for significance. Further, the Adjusted $R^2$ value was reviewed to determine the strength of the relationship among the predictor and criterion variables in the regression equation, taking into account the number of predictor variables and the sample size. The $\beta$, specifically the Beta ($\beta$) coefficient, was used to describe the relationship between individual predictor variables and the criterion variable.

3.5 Participants

3.5.1 Population

In order to effectively study counselors’ self-perceptions of spiritual competence, the researcher used mental health professionals who were members of ACA. Lists of members who belong to at least one of two divisions of ACA (i.e. AMCD and/or ASERVIC) were purchased from ACA.
3.5.2 Subject Description

Of the participants, 111 were members of AMCD, 216 were members of ASERVIC, and 40 were members of both ACA divisions. The respondents ranged in age from 21 – 78 years old with an average age of 48 years old. The majority of the sample was female (64.3%). There were 201 participants who possessed master’s degrees and 117 participants who had doctorates. The majority of the study’s participants (40.9%) were currently working as community mental health counselors. Of the participants, approximately 19% were working in community agencies and private practice, respectively, while 28% were working in an academic environment. The average number of years participants were employed in their current positions was nine.

Over 60% of the participants had not taken any courses with a focus on spirituality whereas 31% had between one and six courses spirituality focused courses. The mean number of courses taken with spirituality as a focus was 2.10 and those courses taken with a spirituality focus ranged from 0 – 48. Further, the study’s participants had completed 0 – 60 courses infused with spirituality with a mean of 4.38. Of the participants, 189 had not acquired any training hours after completing their counseling degree programs. The mean number of development hours obtained was 26.56 and there were 15 participants who had over 100 development hours. Toward this end, the sample was overwhelmingly religious and/or spiritual as only 9% of the population reported that they were not religious and/or spiritual. See Table 3.1 for an actual breakdown of religious affiliation.
<table>
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<th>Religious Affiliation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Agnostic</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
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<td>Buddhist</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1

*Religious Affiliation Frequency*
3.5.3 *Sampling Method*

The sample consisted of mental health professionals who are members of ASERVIC and/or AMCD. After the instruments were prepared for potential respondents, the researcher used a census sampling to make certain all members of ASERVIC and/or AMCD had a chance of participating in the study.

3.5.4 *Sample Size*

The alpha level was set at $\alpha = .05$ which resulted in the researcher falsely identifying a relationship between variables 5% of the time or less. This statistical approach is a standard level in social science research (Moore & McCabe, 2004). A table provided by Kraemer and Thiemann (1987) was used to determine the minimal sample size needed to obtain sufficient power for the study. Based on the information in the table, 257 was sufficient for an alpha level of .05, power of .8 and a medium effect size.

Further, based on statistical research, 100 to 150 subjects is the minimum satisfactory sample size when using structural equation models (Ding, Velicer, & Harlow, 1995). In an examination of published structural equation modeling research, Schumacker and Lomax (2010) found that many articles used 250 to 500 subjects. The researcher received the names of 1,830 members of AMCD and/or ASERVIC. Of these, 1,752 respondents received the survey. Six survey respondents opted out of Survey Monkey research and the researcher’s survey message was undeliverable to 72 e-mail addresses. At last, 367 respondents were included in the study.
3.6 Instruments

3.6.1 Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey

The author of the original Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007) reviewed the survey instrument with a focus group of new professionals who had become Licensed Professional Counselors within the previous five years. The focus group determined that the instrument had face validity and the material was appropriate to the variables being assessed and so it appeared to have content validity as well.

Cronbach’s alpha was also used to analyze the reliability of the Core Competencies of Spirituality scale and the three subscales. Reliability for the Core Competencies of Spirituality scale was alpha .82, which indicated good interim consistency. The reliability for the Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality and Spirituality in Professional Practice subscales was .86 and .82 respectively, which indicated good interim consistency. Reliability for the Personal Spirituality subscale was .92, which suggested excellent interim consistency (West, 2007). In closing, Cronbach’s alpha was not calculated for the fifth subscale, General Information. The original Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007) can be found in Appendix A.

The original Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007) was modified by the researcher to meet item-writing guidelines described by Fowler (2002). The original measure had a considerable number of items that asked more than one question. As a result, the researcher identified those items and either made them into more than one question or simplified the question by eliminating any
extraneous wording. The revised instrument consists of five scales with a total of 38 items. The first scale is the Core Competencies of Spirituality scale, which has eight items. The second, third, and fourth scales are the Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, Personal Spirituality, and Spirituality in Professional Practice, respectively. All three have a total of six items each. The fifth scale is titled General Information and its 12 items are related to respondents’ life experiences and counselor training related to spirituality and/or religion. Respondents rated themselves on the items using a 6-point Likert scale. The six points on the Likert scales range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The modified measure of the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey (West, 2007) can be found in Appendix B.

3.6.2 Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire includes items to obtain demographic information about participants such as age, gender, religious affiliation, highest degree completed, ACA affiliation, and current mental health profession. Information about professional experience was garnered by asking questions about current mental health profession, years in profession, supervisory status, years of experience in specific settings (i.e. community agency, hospice, private practice, etc.), and current work setting. The questionnaire also asked about self-ratings regarding overall counseling competence, graduate courses completed that focused specifically on spirituality and/or religion and graduate courses that included or infused spirituality and/or religion, number of professional development hours in spirituality and/or religion, and self-ratings regarding spiritual competence. This measurement is located in Appendix C.
3.7 Data Collection

The data collection method used was a cross-sectional survey administered to a census sample of mental health professionals who were members of AMCD and/or ASERVIC. Permission to use the *Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) was obtained by the researcher before collecting the data. This documentation can be found in Appendix D. This research was determined to be exempt by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The Ohio State University. The project number and exemption determination can be found in Appendix E.

3.7.1 Procedures for Data Collection

Potential participants were notified that the survey would be arriving via e-mail in a week. After a week, a recruitment e-mail was sent. This e-mail included the purpose of the study, procedures, incentive, and a link to the consent form and study instruments. Survey Monkey, an online survey tool, was used to collect the data. Once participants gave consent and completed the survey and demographic instruments online using Survey Monkey, they were given two weeks to complete the instruments online. A week after the first recruitment e-mail was sent, another e-mail was sent to remind potential respondents that they have a week left to complete the survey. Using the technology of Survey Monkey, after two weeks, potential participants who had not yet completed the survey were contacted via e-mail and given another week to do so. Altogether, potential respondents were given three weeks to complete the survey.

Confidentiality was protected as data was collected and stored. No name or other identifying information appeared on the demographic questionnaire. Individuals’ e-mail addresses were not linked to any of the participants’ responses. Survey Monkey kept
track of who completed the survey by e-mail address, but these addresses were not connected to survey responses. In the event of any publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.

It is worth noting that Survey Monkey utilizes state-of-the-art firewalls and intrusion prevention technologies to make sure data remain private and secure. In spite of these provisions, internet security cannot be fully guaranteed. As a result, there is always a slight risk that internet transmissions can be intercepted by a third party.

3.7.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Procedures for Data Collection

The advantages of the e-mail survey procedure using a census sample is the relative ease of gathering data from a diverse and representative sample of mental health professionals from across the nation. Respondents were able to complete the survey in settings and during times of their choice. Therefore, they were afforded confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy. The disadvantages of using an e-mail survey procedure included the potential for a low response rate. And as a result, an inability to perform data analyses with a sufficient amount of statistical power and consequently, the possibility of a biased sample. The other possible issues with e-mail surveys are misinterpretations of the items, uncertainty of the individuals who complete the surveys, and the researcher’s lack of ability to follow-up with specific respondents. In order to increase survey response rates, the researcher’s contact information was included in the informed consent, a follow-up e-mail was sent to respondents who had not completed the survey after two weeks, and the questionnaire was designed to leverage the advantages of surveying with electronic media (Schonlau, Fricker, & Elliott, 2002).
3.8 Validity

3.8.1 Internal Threats to Validity

Possible threats to internal validity included measurement error. Measurement error occurs for many reasons including survey items not being stated clearly, imprecise instructions, participants responding in a perceived socially acceptable manner or deliberately lying, and the use of invalid or unreliable instruments (Fowler, 2002; Moore & McCabe, 2004). In order to reduce these threats, directions were clearly stated, the survey was pilot tested on a subset of the population similar to the targeted population of this study, and the survey was administered in a way that protected the anonymity of participants. Additionally, administering the survey through e-mail communications without using interviewer-assisted modes may have resulted in an increased number of better quality responses, particularly for sensitive questions (Schonlau, Fricker, & Elliott, 2002).

3.8.2 External Threats to Validity

Possible threats to external validity included (a) sampling error, (b) frame error, (c) selection error, (d) coverage error, and (e) nonresponse error. In order to reduce sampling error, participants were selected for the study using census sampling, which means that everyone in the sample population was asked to participate in the study. To moderate frame and selection errors, a list of mental health professionals without duplications who were members of at least one of two ACA divisions – AMCD and/or ASERVIC. Emphasizing anonymity, enlisting the cooperation of participants who failed to return their materials by the stated deadline, and providing an incentive in the form of
ten $25 gift cards for subjects to participate, all helped to diminish nonresponse error (Fowler, 2002).

3.9 General Data Analysis

The first step in the data analysis was the development of a codebook. The codebook contained the variable description, the variable name, and the value labels with the possible numbers and/or codes (Fox, 2007). This document was used as a reference during the process of inputting data and for the interpretation of the data analysis. Frequency distributions were created to review the data for missing values, outliers, and to verify data entry. Further, descriptive statistics such as range, frequency, mean, median, modes, and standard deviations, were calculated for all of the variables of interest.

3.10 Summary

This study included a population of 1,830 members of AMCD and/or ASERVIC who were invited to participate in this cross-sectional survey through electronic communications. In total, 446 persons responded to this survey; however, 79 surveys were dropped because of missing data. Two instruments were administered to respondents – a spirituality in counselor education and training survey and a demographic questionnaire. Again, data were collected through Survey Monkey. Additionally, confirmatory factor analysis via structural equation modeling and multiple regression analyses were both performed to answer the four research questions.
Chapter 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the current chapter is to provide the results of the statistical analyses performed. Firstly, a confirmatory factor analysis was completed to verify whether the revised *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) was a valid measure. Secondly, multiple regressions were performed to examine the relationships between spiritual competence and counselor education and training, when considering age, sex, and religious affiliation.

The research questions answered in this chapter are:

(1) Do the five scales on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence?

(2) Is there a relationship between the number of stand-alone spirituality courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

(3) Is there a relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?
(4) Is there a relationship between the number of professional development hours in spirituality, and one’s overall self-perceived level of spiritual competence when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration?

4.2 Research Question One

Before conducting the confirmatory factor analysis via structural equation modeling, descriptive statistics were run on the items of each of the five scales of the survey. On the first scale, the Core Competencies of Spirituality, “I am aware of my own spiritual perspective” had the highest mean rating (5.66) whereas “I have used spirituality related interventions…” has the lowest mean rating (3.48). On the Inclusion of Core Competencies Scale, “My counseling training program provided an open atmosphere for the discussion of spirituality” and “My counseling training program provided a stand-alone course(s) primarily on spiritual topics” had the highest (4.02) and lowest (2.68) mean ratings, respectively. The item with the highest mean (5.69) on the Personal Spirituality scale, read “I have an awareness of my own personal spiritual beliefs” and the item with the lowest (5.25) read “I have a personal belief of a transcendent connectedness in the universe.” On the fourth scale, Spirituality in Professional Practice, the item, “Spiritual orientation is a relevant multicultural component” had the highest mean rating (5.61) and “People often find purpose through established spiritual organizations” had the lowest mean (5.14). Lastly, “Spirituality was important in my upbringing” and “My spirituality impacted my decision on which institution to attend for my counseling program” had the highest (4.82) and lowest (2.84) mean rating, respectively, on the General Information scale. These statistics can be found in Tables 4.1 through 4.5 in the form of mean and standard deviation values.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Competencies of Spirituality</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I consider myself competent as a counselor in the area of spirituality</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>1.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of the spiritual phenomena that people often look beyond themselves to find purpose and meaning in life</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my own spiritual perspective</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of how my own spiritual perspective impacts my life, including my counseling</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of clients’ spiritual perspectives</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>.791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of how clients’ spiritual perspectives impact their lives</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>1.131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used spirituality related interventions such as having a client write a spiritual autobiography or complete a spirituality genogram</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>1.566</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1

**Means and Standard Deviations for the Core Competencies of Spirituality Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion of Core Competencies</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program included the core competencies of spirituality</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program provided an open atmosphere for the discussion of spirituality</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program provided a stand-alone course(s) primarily on spiritual topics</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program formally integrated the topic of spirituality into existing coursework</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>1.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion during the practicum/internship components of my education</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion related to how clients’ perspectives of spirituality influence the therapeutic process</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2

**Means and Standard Deviations for the Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality Scale**

*Scale*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Spirituality</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would characterize myself as a spiritual person.</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an awareness of my own personal spiritual beliefs</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a personal belief of a transcendent connectedness in the universe</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>1.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to identify my personal spiritual practices</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>.684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to identify that my spirituality is relevant to the formulation of my worldview</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a defined set of values and beliefs that can be directly identified with my spirituality</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>.771</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3

Means and Standard Deviations for the Personal Spirituality Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spirituality in Professional Practice</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe that spirituality is important in the professional practice of counseling</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People often find purpose through established spiritual organizations</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>.826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality is often a factor in how people make life decisions</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual orientation is a relevant multicultural component</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>.621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it is important to include spirituality in counseling programs</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction in spirituality will prepare counselors to help their clients deal with spiritual issues</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>.859</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4

Means and Standard Deviations for the Spirituality in Professional Practice Scale
Table 4.5 Continued

Means and Standard Deviations for the General Information Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Information</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality was important in my upbringing</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One and/or both of my parents are spiritual</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>1.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, my spiritual upbringing was a positive experience</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spiritual experiences as a child have influenced my spiritual choices as an adult</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>1.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spiritual perspectives have changed from those of my upbringing</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am no longer affiliated with the spiritual institution of my upbringing</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spirituality has impacted my decision to become a counselor</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>1.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spirituality impacted my decision on which institution to attend for my counseling</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would have liked to see spirituality addressed more extensively in my counseling</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt free to express my spiritual perspectives during my counseling training when</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>these perspectives differed from those of my fellow students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt free to express my spiritual perspectives during my counseling training when</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>these perspectives differed from those of my instructors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My institution acknowledged spirituality as an important aspect of multicultural</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis of 38 items with five factors are shown in Table 4.6. It shows the factors, items, loadings, alpha coefficients and average variance explained (AVE) values. When performing the analysis, some of the items did not load on the construct well indicating that these items did not represent the underlying constructs adequately. Following Schumacker and Lomax’s (2010) guideline, the items with factor loadings lower than .40 were removed. This resulted in removing four items from the Core Competencies of Spirituality scale. The entire Personal Spirituality scale
and three items from the *Spirituality in Professional Practice* were removed due to the factor loadings being less than .40. Additionally, five other items were removed from the *General Information* scale for this same reason. Contrastingly, the last item on the *Spirituality in Professional Practice* scale, although loaded at less than .40, was kept because it made theoretical sense to do so. The same is true for the seventh item of the *General Information* scale. All of the AVE values were higher than the recommended .50, which indicates the factors have good construct reliability. In addition, the internal consistency for the General Information scale was lower than the recommended guideline of .70 ($\alpha = .55$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor and Item</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Competencies of Spirituality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider myself competent as a counselor in the area of spirituality</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of the spiritual phenomena that people often look beyond themselves to find purpose and meaning in life</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my own spiritual perspective</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of how my own spiritual perspective impacts my life, including my counseling</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of clients’ spiritual perspectives</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of how clients’ spiritual perspectives impact their lives</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used spirituality related interventions such as having a client write a spiritual autobiography or complete a spirituality genogram</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6

*Factors, Items, Loadings ($\beta$), Cronbach’s Alpha ($\alpha$) and Average Variance Explained (AVE) values for the Modified Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor and Item</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusion of Core Competencies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program included the core competencies of spirituality</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td></td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program provided an open atmosphere for the discussion of spirituality</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program provided a stand-alone course(s) primarily on spiritual topics</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program formally integrated the topic of spirituality into existing coursework</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion during the practicum/internship components of my education</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion related to how clients’ perspectives of spirituality influence the therapeutic process</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Spirituality</strong></td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would characterize myself as a spiritual person.</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an awareness of my own personal spiritual beliefs</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a personal belief of a transcendent connectedness in the universe</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to identify my personal spiritual practices</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to identify that my spirituality is relevant to the formulation of my worldview</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a defined set of values and beliefs that can be directly identified with my spirituality</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spirituality in Professional Practice</strong></td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that spirituality is important in the professional practice of counseling</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People often find purpose through established spiritual organizations</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality is often a factor in how people make life decisions</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual orientation is a relevant multicultural component</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it is important to include spirituality in counseling programs</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction in spirituality will prepare counselors to help their clients deal with spiritual issues</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Continued

*Factors, Items, Loadings (β), Cronbach’s Alpha (α) and Average Variance Explained* (AVE) values for the Modified Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor and Item</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality was important in my upbringing</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td></td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One and/or both of my parents are spiritual</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, my spiritual upbringing was a positive experience</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spiritual experiences as a child have influenced my spiritual choices as an adult</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spiritual perspectives have changed from those of my upbringing</td>
<td>-.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am no longer affiliated with the spiritual institution of my upbringing</td>
<td>-.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spirituality has impacted my decision to become a counselor</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spirituality impacted my decision on which institution to attend for my counseling training program</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would have liked to see spirituality addressed more extensively in my counseling program</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt free to express my spiritual perspectives during my counseling training when these perspectives differed from those of my fellow students</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt free to express my spiritual perspectives during my counseling training when these perspectives differed from those of my instructors</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My institution acknowledged spirituality as an important aspect of multicultural awareness</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Continued

Factors, Items, Loadings (β), Cronbach’s Alpha (α) and Average Variance Explained (AVE) values for the Modified Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey

In addition, the means, standard deviations, and correlations between constructs are shown in Table 4.7. All of the correlations were significant except those between Inclusion of Core Competencies and Personal Spirituality, and Inclusion of Core Competencies and Spirituality in Professional Practice. Furthermore, none of the scales...
were deleted as a result of discriminant validity because none of the correlations exceeded .85 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Competencies</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.197**</td>
<td>.586**</td>
<td>.354**</td>
<td>.319**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Spirituality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Inclusion of Core</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.197**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.530**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies of</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Spirituality</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Personal Spirituality</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.586**</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.453**</td>
<td>.292**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Spirituality in</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.354**</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.453**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.379**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. General Information</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.319**</td>
<td>.530**</td>
<td>.292**</td>
<td>.379**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Scales on the Modified Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey

Note. **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Results from these analyses yielded a reasonably-fitting model (RMSEA = .074; CI = .070-.078; $p_{close} = .000$, $\chi^2$/df = 1955.38/651 = 3.00, GFI = .789, NFI = .755, CFI = .820). The values for GFI, CFI, and NFI were lower than the recommended value of .90; however, according to Cheung and Rensvold (2002), these values are the function of the model complexity. GFI, CFI, and NFI values are depressed when many factors and items are included in the model. An illustration of the structural model with factor loadings is shown in Figure 4.1.
Figure 4.1

*Spiritual Competence Structural Model*

*Note.*  CC = Core Competencies of Spirituality, ICC = Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, PS = Personal Spirituality, SPP = Spirituality in Professional Practice, GI = General Information
4.3 Research Question Two

Statistical inference for Pearson’s r is sensitive to data distribution. Because there were two dummy-coded variables (sex and religious affiliation) present in the model, Spearman’s rho, a nonparametric and less sensitive statistic was examined in tandem with Pearson’s correlation coefficients.

Using Pearson’s r, there is a small statistically significant correlation between spiritual competence and religious affiliation and stand-alone spirituality courses. Additionally, there is a small correlation between age and sex, and stand-alone courses in spirituality, which are also significant. Using Spearman’s rho, there is a larger (medium) correlation between spiritual competence and stand-alone courses in spirituality. Considering both Pearson’s r and Spearman’s rho, the strongest correlation is between spiritual competence and stand-alone courses in spirituality while the weakest is between religious affiliation and sex. Pearson product-moment correlation and Spearman’s rank correlation coefficients can be found in Table 4.8 and Table 4.9, respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>RELAFF</th>
<th>SPFOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPCOMP</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.181**</td>
<td>.255**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.095</td>
<td>.140**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>.195**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.119*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8

Pearson Product Correlation Matrix – Spiritual Competence, Age, Sex, Religious Affiliation, and Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses

Note. ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

Note. SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

Note. The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).
Table 4.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman’s rho</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td>SPFOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPCOMP</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>-.154**</td>
<td>.470**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td>.183**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>.191**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spearman’s Rank Correlation Matrix—Spiritual Competence, Age, Sex, Religious Affiliation, and Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses**

*Note.* ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

*Note.* SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

*Note.* The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

A multiple regression model for spiritual competence was performed with the number of stand-alone spirituality courses taken while considering age, sex, and religious affiliation. It was expected that there would be a positive relationship between the number of stand-alone courses in spirituality completed and spiritual competence when
considering the aforementioned demographic variables. The correlation coefficients in Tables 4.8 and 4.9 indicate that this hypothesis might be true. Stand-alone courses in spirituality while considering age, sex, and religious affiliation account for 9% of the variability in spiritual competence. The $F$-ratio is 8.829 (4, 362), which is very unlikely to have happened by chance ($p<.000$). This indicates that in fact, the model does significantly improve our ability to predict spiritual competence. Resultantly, the null hypothesis should be rejected. Table 4.10 includes unstandardized ($b$) and standardized ($\beta$) coefficients of the model. The standardized regression coefficients represent change in terms of standard deviation in the dependent variable that result from a change of one standard deviation in an independent variable. Accordingly, when a counselor has a religious affiliation, his or her overall spiritual competence will increase by .152 standard deviations.
Table 4.10

Regression Model for Spiritual Competence and Stand-Alone Spirituality

Note. ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05

Note. SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

Note. The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

4.4 Research Question Three

There were two dummy-coded variables (sex and religious affiliation) present in the model. Because statistical inference for Pearson’s r is sensitive to data distribution, Spearman’s rho, a nonparametric and less sensitive statistic was examined in tandem with Pearson’s correlation coefficients.
There is a statistically significant correlation between spiritual competence and spirituality infused courses and religious affiliation; and age and sex, using either correlation statistic. The correlation between sex and spirituality infused courses is statistically significant when using Spearman’s rho only. Lastly, the correlation between spiritual competence and spiritually infused courses grows larger (from medium to large) when using Spearman’s rho instead of Pearson’s $r$. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for spiritual competence, age, sex, religious affiliation, and spirituality infused courses are located in Table 4.11 while Spearman’s rank correlation coefficients can be found in Table 4.12.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>RELAFF</th>
<th>SPINCL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPCOMP</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.181**</td>
<td>.356**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.095</td>
<td>.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.138**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11

*Pearson Product Correlation Matrix – Spiritual Competence, Age, Sex, Religious Affiliation, and Spirituality Infused Courses*

*Note.* ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

*Note.* SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

*Note.* The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).
### Table 4.12

*Spearman’s Rank Correlation Matrix – Spiritual Competence, Age, Sex, Religious Affiliation, and Spirituality Infused Courses*

Note. ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

Note. SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

Note. The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

It was hypothesized that there would be a relationship between the number of spirituality infused courses completed and spiritual competence when considering age, sex, and religious affiliation. The results presented in the previous two correlation matrices (Tables 4.11 and 4.12) indicate that this might be the case as the strongest
correlation was between spirituality infused courses and spiritual competence. The results of the multiple regression model for spiritual competence and the predictor variables, spirituality infused courses, age, sex, and religious affiliation, are in Table 4.13. This model was statistically significant ($F(4, 362) = 15.531, p<.000$) and the model accounted for 15% of the variance in spiritual competence ($R^2 = .146$).

Multicollinearity does not seem to be a problem for this set of variables as the variance inflation factors are all $<10$. Neither age nor sex is a statistically significant predictor of spiritual competence, yet the model indicates that religious affiliation and the number of spirituality infused courses taken are significant. For each spirituality infused course taken, there is a .866 increase in spiritual competence. Ultimately, the null hypothesis should be rejected.
Table 4.13

Regression Model for Spiritual Competence and Spirituality Infused Courses

Note. ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05

Note. SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

Note. The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

4.5 Research Question Four

Statistical inference for Pearson’s r is sensitive to data distribution. There were two dummy-coded variables (sex and religious affiliation) present in the model; therefore, Spearman’s rho, a nonparametric and less sensitive statistic was examined in tandem with Pearson’s correlation coefficients. Unexpectedly, the correlation between religious affiliation and professional development hours in spirituality is not statistically
significant. Also, the correlation between age and professional development hours in spirituality increased slightly when using Spearman’s rho. Utilizing Pearson’s r, the strongest correlation is between religious affiliation and spiritual competence whereas the strongest correlation is between professional development hours and age when using Spearman’s rho. Pearson product-moment correlation and Spearman’s rank correlation coefficients can be found in Table 4.14 and Table 4.15, respectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>RELAFF</th>
<th>DEVHRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPCOMP</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>-.181**</td>
<td>.125*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.095</td>
<td>.171**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.053</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.14

*Pearson Product Correlation Matrix – Spiritual Competence, Age, Sex, Religious Affiliation, and Spirituality Professional Development Hours*

*Note.* ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

*Note.* SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

*Note.* The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).
### Table 4.15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman’s rho</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>RELAFF</th>
<th>DEVHRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPCOMP</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>-0.154**</td>
<td>0.129*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>0.148**</td>
<td>-0.087</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.274**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.030</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.199**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)**

*Note.* SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

*Note.* The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

This regression model included professional development hours in spirituality, age, sex, and religious affiliation as independent variables. The final hypothesis stated that there was a relationship between spirituality professional development hours and spiritual competence. The significant Pearson product and Spearman rank correlation
coefficients between spiritual competence and religious affiliation and spirituality
professional development hours indicate that this hypothesis might be true. Professional
development hours and religious affiliation are statistically significant predictors of
spiritual competence in this model. The model is statistically significant ($F = 4.715 \ (4,\ 362),\ p<.001$) with a $R^2$ of .050. Therefore, it is indicated that the null hypothesis should
be rejected. Although the unstandardized coefficient (b) for professional development
hours in spirituality was slight, it was statistically significant (p<.05). For every hour of
professional development in spirituality, there is a .024 increase in spiritual competence.
The complete results of the regression that examined the relationship between the
dependent variable, spiritual competence, and the independent variables, professional
development hours in spirituality, age, sex, and religious affiliation can be found in Table
4.16.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE (b)</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>1.945</td>
<td>2.053</td>
<td>.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td>-9.727***</td>
<td>2.916</td>
<td>-.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVHRS</td>
<td>.024*</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.16

*Regression Model for Spiritual Competence & Spirituality Professional Development*

*Note.* ***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05

*Note.* RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

*Note.* The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide information about the spirituality competencies and the training and experience of counselors related to these competencies. The study used a census sample of AMCD and/or ASERVIC members from across the nation. This study investigated the core competencies of spirituality, including (a) general knowledge of spiritual phenomena, (b) an awareness of one’s own spiritual perspective, (c) an understanding of client’s spiritual perspective, and (d) an understanding of spiritually related interventions and strategies. It described personal and professional demographic variables of counselors including age, gender, professional experience, current work setting, overall counseling competence and spiritual competence, among others. Also, confirmatory factor analysis was performed on a slightly modified version of the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) – *Core Competencies of Spirituality, Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, Personal Spirituality, Spirituality in Professional Practice, and General Information*. This analysis was done to measure whether the scales measure meaningfully different components of spiritual competence. Additionally, multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the relationships between spiritual competence and courses focused on spirituality, courses infused with spirituality, and
spirituality specific professional development hours when participants’ demographic characteristics are taken into consideration.

The target population for this study was counselors who belong to at least one of two divisions of ACA – AMCD and/or ASERVIC. The total number of counselors in May 2010 who provided AMCD or ASERVIC with their email addresses was 1,830. Of this total number, 72 email addresses were invalid and six opted out of Survey Monkey research. Ultimately, 367 respondents participated in this study.

5.2 Results and Significant Findings

The following is a discussion of the research study results and a summary of significant findings. Implications for future training and integration of spirituality, limitations of the research study and suggestions for future research will also be discussed.

5.2.1 Research Question One

After completing a confirmatory factor analysis it was discovered that several questions on the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) should be dropped. Four items were removed from the *Core Competencies of Spirituality* scale. This resulted in the remaining items addressing one’s own idea of his/her spiritual competence, understanding of spiritual phenomena, and knowledge and implementation of spirituality related interventions. The *Inclusion of Core Competencies* scale remained intact. However, the researcher saw it fitting to change the name of the scale to *Spirituality in Counselor Education* because the statements of this scale refer to one’s counseling training program. The *Personal Spirituality* scale was eliminated altogether since these items had factor loadings lower than .40 and three items were removed from
the Spirituality in Professional Practice scale. The final scale, which was once called General Information, seemed to be a catch-all for ill-fitting survey items. It is now called Personal Spirituality. This change has occurred because the statements that remain on the scale once five items were removed pertain to one’s personal spirituality.

The factors, items, loadings, alpha coefficients, and average variance explained (AVE) values of the revised confirmatory factor analysis are shown in Table 5.1. The alpha coefficients for Core Competencies of Spirituality, Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality, and Spirituality in Professional Practice were good ranging from .73 to .91. The alpha coefficient for the General Information scale was .33 which was below the recommended guideline of .70, but the factor was retained for further analyses. The AVE values of the four constructs are all significantly higher than the recommended value of .50. The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the modified constructs are displayed in Table 5.2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Competencies of Spirituality</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I consider myself competent as a counselor in the area of spirituality</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an understanding of the spiritual phenomena that people often look beyond themselves to find purpose and meaning in life</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have used spirituality related interventions such as having a client write a spiritual autobiography or complete a spirituality genogram</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Spirituality in Counselor Education                                                      |      |    |     |
| My counseling training program included the core competencies of spirituality             | 1.34 | .91| .83 |
| My counseling training program provided an open atmosphere for the discussion of spirituality | 1.18 |    |     |
| My counseling training program provided a stand-alone course(s) primarily on spiritual topics | 1.22 |    |     |
| My counseling training program formally integrated the topic of spirituality into existing coursework | 1.34 |    |     |
| My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion during the practicum/internship components of my education | 1.16 |    |     |
| My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion related to how clients’ perspectives of spirituality influence the therapeutic process | 1.21 |    |     |

Table 5.1

*Factors, Items, Loadings (β), Cronbach’s Alpha (α) and Average Variance Explained (AVE) values for the Revised Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor and Item</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spirituality in Professional Practice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that spirituality is important in the professional practice of counseling</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe it is important to include spirituality in counseling programs</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction in spirituality will prepare counselors to help their clients deal with spiritual issues</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Information</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality was important in my upbringing</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One and/or both of my parents are spiritual</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, my spiritual upbringing was a positive experience</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spiritual experiences as a child have influenced my spiritual choices as an adult</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spiritual perspectives have changed from those of my upbringing</td>
<td>-.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am no longer affiliated with the spiritual institution of my upbringing</td>
<td>-.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My spirituality has impacted my decision to become a counselor</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Continued

Factors, Items, Loadings (β), Cronbach’s Alpha (α) and Average Variance Explained

(AVE) Values for the Revised Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey
A structural model was created to reflect the items dropped. This model achieved a slightly better fit than the initial model with the 38 items. The GFI, CFI, and NFI values of the revised survey are all closer to 1 (perfect fit) than the model that represents the modified survey. Additionally, the RMSEA value and confidence interval for the revised survey is well below .80 which is indicative of a better fit than that of the slightly modified survey. A comparison of model values can be found in Table 5.3.

Table 5.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Competencies of Spirituality</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.956</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.204**</td>
<td>.345**</td>
<td>.266**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality</td>
<td>3.296</td>
<td>1.362</td>
<td>.204**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.143**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Spirituality in Professional Practice</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>.637</td>
<td>.345**</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.310**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. General Information</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>.266**</td>
<td>.143**</td>
<td>.310**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Scales on the Revised Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey

Note. **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).
It might be of great importance to further test the instrument with this revised structure. Additionally, multiple group confirmatory analysis with groups divided by discipline (i.e. community counselors, psychologists, and pastoral counselors), religiosity, race, and region might benefit the overall development of the measure. Ultimately, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed on this instrument to determine whether the number of factors and the loadings of the measured indicator variables conformed to what was expected on the basis of pre-established theory. The results of this confirmatory factor analysis indicated that both the modified 38 and revised 20-item *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* can be greatly improved. Although the revised survey offered a better fit than the modified, an inordinate amount

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Modified Survey</th>
<th>Revised Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2$</td>
<td>1955.38</td>
<td>395.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td>.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>.820</td>
<td>.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>.755</td>
<td>.893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>.070 - .078</td>
<td>.055 - .070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3

*Comparison of Spiritual Competence Structural Models*
of the variability is attributed to error. It might be beneficial for additional items to be developed and tested.

5.2.2 Research Question Two

With spiritual competence as a dependent variable, spiritually-focused courses, age, sex, and religious affiliation were entered into a regression model. Both the Pearson product-moment and Spearman’s rank correlation matrices provide initial support for the predicted relationship between spiritually focused courses and spiritual competence. The presence of a religious affiliation and stand-alone courses in spirituality were statistically significant predictors of spiritual competence (p<.01 and p<.001, respectively), whereas age and one’s sex were not. For every unit increased in the number of stand-alone courses in spirituality, there was a .850 increase in one’s spiritual competence. To this end, the existence of a religious affiliation had the strongest predictive power in the model.

A second multiple regression analysis was conducted with the revised, 20-item version of the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey. The values in the second model were similar to those in the first. Presence of a religious affiliation and spiritually focused courses remain statistically significant, but religious affiliation was significant at the .05 level instead of .01. For every unit increase in the number of stand-alone courses in spirituality, there was a .584 increase in spiritual competence. Both models can be found in Table 5.4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b (SE)</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>b (SE)</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTANT</td>
<td>173.669 (3.762)</td>
<td>.026 (.077)</td>
<td>84.574 (2.453)</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.026 (.077)</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.001 (.050)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>.654 (2.036)</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.816 (1.328)</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td>-8.590** (2.87)</td>
<td>-.152</td>
<td>-3.961* (1.871)</td>
<td>-.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPFOC</td>
<td>.850*** (.190)</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.584*** (.124)</td>
<td>.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F)</td>
<td>8.829****</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.107****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R^2)</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td></td>
<td>.082</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4

Comparison of Regression Models for Spiritual Competence and Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses

Note. ****p<.000***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

Note. SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPFOC = Stand-Alone Spirituality Courses

Note. The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

Note. In Model 1, spiritual competence is based on 38 items; in Model 2, it is based on the 20 items remaining after the confirmatory factor analysis.
Even though counselor educators overwhelmingly agree that spiritual competence is of importance, there is minimal preparation in spiritual and religious diversity and interventions (Hage et al., 2006). There needs to be a concerted effort put forth to introduce counseling students to theories of religious and spiritual development in addition to spiritually related interventions. Researchers have demonstrated that a single multicultural counseling course can positively affect variables related to multicultural competence. In addition, authors have shown that the use of existing theory regarding multicultural counseling instruction is an effective means of designing a course in the areas of spirituality and religion. The provision of a mixture of pedagogical strategies affords students a greater opportunity to develop in all three domains – beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills.

5.2.3 Research Question Three

The number of spirituality infused courses was entered into a regression model with age, sex, and presence of a religious affiliation, with spiritual competence as the dependent variable. The presence of a religious affiliation and spirituality infused courses were both significant at p<.01 and p<.001, respectively. Again, age and sex were not predictors of spiritual competence. As the number of spirituality infused courses increased there was a .866 increase in spiritual competence. So as presumed, the number of spirituality infused courses taken has a positive impact on spiritual competence.

A second model was performed with the same independent variables and the 20-item measure of spiritual competence as the dependent variable. The presence of a religious affiliation was no longer a statistically significant predictor in the model (p=.077). Also, the predictive power of the number of spirituality infused courses
decreased in the second model (.605). The unstandardized and standardized coefficients from the first and second models are shown together in Table 5.5.
### Table 5.5

Comparison of Regression Models for Spiritual Competence and Spirituality Infused Courses

**Note.** ****p<.000***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

**Note.** SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, SPINCL = Spirituality Infused Courses

**Note.** The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

**Note.** In Model 1, spiritual competence is based on 38 items; in Model 2, it is based on the 20 items remaining after the confirmatory factor analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b (SE)</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTANT</td>
<td>171.424 (3.651)</td>
<td>83.01 (2.367)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.021 (.074)</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>1.621 (1.942)</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td>-7.524** (2.78)</td>
<td>-.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPINCL</td>
<td>.866*** (.128)</td>
<td>.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F)</td>
<td>15.531****</td>
<td>16.064****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R^2)</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It might be of greatest benefit to consumers if spirituality and religious issues are explored across the curriculum. For example, content related to spirituality and religion and coping could fit nicely into a wellness course, while spiritual interventions could be infused in clinical skills curriculum. In sum, issues related to spiritual and religious diversity intersect with almost every aspect of counselor education. The cumulative body of knowledge on religion and spirituality has enormous potential to inform and enrich counseling course work and education (Hage et al, 2006). It is important to also note that training need not occur solely in the classroom, but could also be effectively provided in the context of supervision or consultation on therapy cases involving religious and spiritual issues.

5.2.4 Research Question Four

Spiritual competence was entered into the model as a dependent variable and age, sex, religious affiliation, and the number of professional development hours in spirituality were entered as independent variables. The existence of a religious affiliation and one’s number of professional development hours in spirituality were both statistically significant predictors of spiritual competence. The presence of a religious affiliation continued to be the strongest predictor of spiritual competence.

A second model was run with the 20-item measure of spiritual competence as the dependent variable. In this model, the presence of a religious affiliation was the only statistically significant predictor (p<.01). In the first model it was significant at p<.001. In addition, the F statistic (3.282) in the second model was statistically significant at p<.01 whereas the F statistic (4.715) in the first is significant at p<.001. The comparison between models can be seen in Table 5.6.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b (SE)</td>
<td>173.999 (3.854)</td>
<td>84.740 (2.524)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>.037 (.079)</td>
<td>.011 (.052)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTANT</td>
<td>173.999 (3.854)</td>
<td>84.740 (2.524)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>.037 (.079)</td>
<td>.011 (.052)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX</td>
<td>1.945 (2.053)</td>
<td>1.733 (1.344)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELAFF</td>
<td>-9.73*** (2.92)</td>
<td>-4.763** (1.91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>-.172</td>
<td>-.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVHRS</td>
<td>.024* (.012)</td>
<td>.014 (.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.715***</td>
<td>3.282**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6

Comparison of Regression Models for Spiritual Competence and Spirituality

Professional Development Hours

Note. ****p<.000***p<.001 **p<.01 *p<.05 (2-tailed)

Note. SPCOMP = Spiritual Competence, RELAFF = Religious Affiliation, DEVHRS = Professional Development Hours in Spirituality

Note. The reference category for sex was female (coded 0, positive coefficients indicate higher male scores). The reference category for religious affiliation was participants with a religious affiliation (coded 0, negative coefficients indicate higher participants with a religious affiliation scores).

Note. In Model 1, spiritual competence is based on 38 items; in Model 2, it is based on the 20 items remaining after the confirmatory factor analysis.
The provision of mental health care that appropriately addresses the cultural beliefs, values, and worldviews of those seeking services involves complex and dynamic clinical processes. As the absence of skillful and appropriate cultural responsiveness can lead to misdiagnosis, a lack of engagement and retention, and poor clinical outcomes, professional development appears to be a viable avenue for enhancing the spiritual competence of counselors (Delphin & Rowe, 2008). Erroneously, competence is often thought of in terms of attending a workshop and learning a specific set of skills; however, the work of becoming culturally competent, specifically as it relates to religion and spirituality, is an ongoing process. With regard to workshops, one could hypothesize that such abbreviated training might not offer sufficient breadth and depth of the issues to be effective in developing competence. Ultimately, without deliberate efforts to access continuing education and supervision, professionals may lack the resources they need to update their multicultural counseling competencies.

5.3 Implications for Counselors and Counselor Educators

Even though a minority of this study’s participants (n=115) actually provided supervision to counseling trainees, 192 participants considered themselves competent enough, generally speaking, as counselors, to teach others. Additionally, based on the survey analysis, 265 participants were comfortable with their knowledge and skill level. Similarly, 241 participants were comfortable with their spirituality knowledge and skill level, and 162 considered themselves spiritually competent enough to be able to teach others. In this study, 278 participants either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement “I consider myself competent as a counselor in the area of spirituality.” Although one’s personal spirituality may be related to his/her self-perceived competence, one’s personal
spirituality may not offer anything in terms of one’s actual skills which was seemingly evident in the substantially lower endorsements on the items directly related to the knowledge and integration of spirituality related interventions.

The results of the study indicated that training related to spiritual and/or religious concerns was lacking. Although the participants of this study agreed that it was important to include spirituality in counseling curriculum because it prepared them to deal with their clients’ spiritual issues, 226 of the study’s participants did not receive any formal training in spirituality in the form of a specific course. Further, participants failed to endorse the statements “I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions” (μ=4.37) and “I have used spirituality related interventions such as having a client write a spiritual autobiography or complete a spiritual genogram” (μ=3.48). Albeit training content was not addressed specifically within these measurements, participants somewhat disagreed that their counseling training programs included the core competencies of spirituality, which seemed to be central to the notion of the spirituality competencies.

The results of the multiple regression analyses seem to suggest that whether one is affiliated religiously and/or spiritually has the strongest predictive power of spiritual competence. This is not surprising if one considers that being religiously and/or spiritually affiliated might make one more comfortable broaching the topic of spirituality in general. Likewise, the literature suggests that a large part of both spiritual and multicultural competence hinges upon one’s comfort level and ability to simply include these matters in the “work” of counseling. Age and sex were not statistically significant predictors of spiritual competence in any of the models. It seems a bit surprising that age is not predictive in that practically, it takes time for one to acquire professional
development hours. Esoterically speaking, it seems it might take one time to mature in his/her faith development. On the other hand, sex was not necessarily expected to have any predictive power of spiritual competence because the role of a counselor does not differ based on the sex of the counselor and both men and women included in this study were equally religious and/or spiritual (in terms of affiliation – degree of affiliation and/or participation were not examined).

Spirituality focused courses, spirituality infused courses and spirituality professional development hours were all predictive of spiritual competence. These three variables had beta values of .231, .333, and .107, respectively. This means that although small, spirituality infused courses had more predictive ability than spirituality focused courses and spirituality professional development hours. All in all, it makes sense that a “full picture” of the integration of spirituality and religious issues would make more sense to the counselor trainee, than a “snapshot.” Spiritual competence, like overall counseling competence, is a process. These findings may illustrate the notion that one needs a prolonged amount of time to develop spiritual competence and resultantly, counselor complexity.

Development thus far of the Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey has resulted in a more accurate look at spiritual competence. Further development of this instrument should yield important and promising findings in terms of counselors’ spiritual competence and the role counseling training programs play in the development of these attitudes and belief, knowledge, and skills. Also, it is hoped that the rigorous empiricism displayed will serve as an impetus to other researchers in the counseling field.
5.4 Limitations

Several limitations exist within this present research study. Because of the lack of previous quantitative research on this topic, the instruments developed to assess spiritual competence are few. The *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007), which was the sole survey developed to measure counselors’ self-perceived levels of spiritual competence, was used in this study. Moreover, the competencies for integrating spirituality into counseling were recently revised and the survey no longer captures the spirituality competencies in their entirety.

A second limitation to this study was the sample. Although the necessary return rate was achieved to complete the statistical analyses, the study could have been improved by more respondents. The population was comprised of counselors and counselor educators who belong to AMCD and/or ASERVIC. Further, those persons who were members of AMCD or ASERVIC may have had a stronger interest in spirituality and were more likely to participate in this study. Also, over 98% of survey participants had a spiritual and/or religious affiliation. Therefore, a difference may have existed between those who completed the assessment and those who did not. Also, the researcher failed to control for racial and regional diversity which are often the variables particularly related to spirituality. Additional research should use the *Spirituality in Counselor Education & Training Survey* (West, 2007) in studies that include large and diverse samples.

Finally, the last limitation exists due to the self-reporting nature of both the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* and demographic questionnaire. These assessments required respondents to be objective about their skills, knowledge, and
awareness and also to be able to recall specific experiences regarding counselor education and training, and the integration of spirituality in counseling. Conversely, self-reports are likely more subjective; therefore respondents could intentionally or unintentionally misrepresent their competence. To this end, Hill and Pargament (2003) pointed out that self-reports may be inadequate measures because aspects of religion and spirituality, and multiculturalism in general, are often hard to capture through closed-ended questions and are frequently susceptible to social desirability bias.

5.5 Implications for Future Research

Future research has several ways in which to build upon this current study. One suggestion would be to administer the *Spirituality in Counselor Education and Training Survey* (West, 2007) to larger samples in order to norm this instrument and gather additional information on its psychometric properties. Also, prior research has established a relationship between one’s endorsement of a religious orientation and self-perceived spiritual competence, so it might be beneficial to administer this measure on religiously and/or racially diverse samples as well. Additional administrations and further development of this measure may also help researchers to capture information about spiritual competencies in a more useful and practical manner.

Another suggestion includes the investigation of the content and quality of training related to spirituality provided to counselors. This study collected data on the number of courses focused on and infused with spirituality, in addition to professional development hours completed by counselors. However, specific course topics and the perceived benefit of training were not determined.
Also, further research would benefit from the development of assessments used to rate counselors by third-parties including clients. By gathering data from a variety of sources (e.g. client, supervisor), more reliable information about the counselor’s competency to address spiritual and religious concerns in counseling can be ascertained.

Last but not leastly, a qualitative inquiry may provide valuable information on counselors’ personal experiences with religion and/or spirituality and their understanding of how these experiences may impact their work with clients. Based on the results of this study, it seemed that a great deal of participants have completed neither a spirituality focused nor a spirituality infused course, which might indicate that these individuals are relying on their personal notions of spirituality to integrate spirituality into their practice. Further, a qualitative survey may provide participants an opportunity to share about their personal and professional experiences with spirituality. Specifically, it would be interesting to investigate what and how counselors learn about spirituality and/or religion and how they translate this knowledge to their professional work with clients who present with spiritual worldviews.

5.6 Conclusion

The study of spirituality and religion is a relatively new field of interest in counselor education. It is in its infancy in terms of how it conceptualizes and languages itself and its concerns. The creation of useful information in this domain hinges in large part on the extent to which conceptual and terminological consensus exists within the field. Collaboration with other disciplines probably offers the best chance for overcoming the deficits posed by existing methodological limitations. Ultimately, what is needed in the study of religion and spirituality is a fully developed theory that
integrates all aspects of the study, has been well tested and supported by data, and has gained acceptance by scholars who hold a wide range of views. Paloutzian and Park (2005) suggest that mixing quantitative and qualitative methods holds promise for the development of such exceptionally rich theory.

Validated foundational theories reflect a discipline’s viability and reliability. Currently, much of the study of religion and spirituality is descriptive. It fails to specify the structures, mechanisms, and processes that underlie it. It may be premature to expect that a viable foundational theory will soon emerge pertaining to the practice of spiritually oriented counseling. For spirituality oriented counseling to develop and become a respected academic discipline, theorists need to specify its base philosophical premises in addition to empirically validating its premises, constructs and methods.

The use of the MCC conceptual model can possibly begin to provide coherence to the integration of spirituality in counseling. Researchers in spirituality can use the MCC and the empirical literature on the MCCs to further inform the development of the spirituality competencies, and specifically, spiritual competence. Hopefully this shift in paradigm will expand the way in which counselors and counselor educators think about the competencies they need to acquire in order to work effectively, respectfully, and ethically within a culturally diverse society (D’Andrea & Daniels, 2006).

Arredondo and Arciniegra (2001) articulated a rationale for the use of competency-based teaching and practice. First, a competence approach is contrasted with deficit-based, remedial, or pathological models that suggest something or someone needs to be fixed. Next, the competencies (i.e. knowledge, skills, and attitudes) “lead to having adaptive payoffs in significant environments” (Sundberg, Snowden, & Reynolds, 1978, p. 106).
In conclusion, “individuals’ self-perceptions and expectations must be continually fed by a lifelong acquisition of adaptive behaviors, cognitions, and relations” (Masterpasqua, 1989, p. 1366). Although there is little agreement about the most effective strategies for teaching about multiculturalism and diversity, the research has shown that the implementation of competency-based teaching benefits students, faculty, and most importantly, consumers (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001).

Multicultural education that is the focus of a specific course or that is infused throughout the curriculum needs to include content related to spiritual and religious diversity. The counseling literature tends to segment multiculturalism and spirituality; however, an understanding of spiritual processes has significant potential to contribute to multicultural understanding (Fukyama & Sevig, 1999). Spirituality is an important component of culture. The framework of the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (Sue et al., 1992) and the spirituality competencies (ASERVIC, 2009, Miller 1999) complement one another, in that each involves the examination of one’s beliefs or attitudes, expanding one’s knowledge, and developing counseling skills (Fukyama & Sevig, 1999).

With the likely increase in persons seeking counseling that integrates their spiritual worldview, it is important for mental health practitioners to be prepared to effectively work with clients for whom spirituality is an integral part of their identities. The purpose of this study was to gather data on counselors regarding their self-perceived spiritual competence, professional and personal experiences with spirituality and demographic variables including, but not limited to age, gender, and religious affiliation.
This study provided both viable measurement and structural models of spiritual competence.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that spirituality should be more formally incorporated into counseling curricula. Because self-perceived competence is seemingly dictated largely by one’s own religious and/or spiritual affiliation, it seems then that it would be beneficial for one to formally examine their beliefs utilizing empirically validated models within the context of either a stand-alone or spirituality infused course. In addition, it seems that it would behoove counselors to learn specific spiritual interventions as well as the parameters that will allow them to utilize their religious and/or spiritual affiliations in an effective and ethical manner. Although self-perceived spiritual competence does not seem to be affected by the lack of formal education and training on matters of spirituality and/or religion, actual competence may very well be. If practicing clinicians are to integrate spirituality into counseling in an ethical manner, one needs to be adequately trained and supervised in matters of spirituality and/or religion. Addressing clients’ issues requires one to have developed a positive orientation toward multiculturalism, specifically, spirituality and religion, to have knowledge about various spiritual and/or religious systems and possess the necessary skills to assess and treat clients’ concerns.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL SPIRITUALITY IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING SURVEY
Section 1: Core Competencies of Spirituality
1. I consider myself competent as a counselor in the area of spirituality.
2. I have an understanding of the spiritual phenomena that people often look beyond themselves to find purpose and meaning in life.
3. I am aware of my own spiritual perspective and how the perspective is relevant to my life.
4. I have an understanding of clients’ spiritual perspectives and how their perspectives are relevant to their lives.
5. I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions and strategies.
6. I have used spirituality related interventions and/or strategies such as helping the client identify his/her spiritual development and/or having clients write a spiritual autobiography or complete a spiritual genogram.

Section 2: Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality
7. I believe that my counseling training program included components and/or concepts of the core competencies of spirituality.
8. My counseling program provides an open atmosphere for the discussion of spirituality.
9. My counseling program provides a stand-alone course(s) primarily on spirituality topics.
10. My counseling program formally integrates the topic of spirituality into existing coursework.
11. My counseling program incorporates spirituality as a topic of discussion during the clinical components of the program, such as internship and practica.
12. My counseling program incorporates spirituality as a topic of discussion related to the clients’ perspectives on spirituality and how it influences the therapeutic process.

Section 3: Personal Spirituality
13. I would characterize myself as a spiritual person.
14. I have an awareness of my own personal spiritual beliefs.
15. I have a personal statement/belief of a transcendent connectedness in the universe.
16. I am also able to identify my personal spiritual practices/activities.
17. I am able to identify that my spirituality is relevant to the formulation of my worldview.
18. I have a defined set of values and beliefs that can be directly identified with my spirituality.

Section 4: Spirituality in Professional Practice
19. I believe that spirituality is important in the professional practice of counseling.
20. People often find spiritual purpose and meaning through established spiritual or religious organizations.
21. Spirituality is often a factor in how people make life decisions.
22. Spirituality is a relevant multicultural perspective.
23. I believe it is important to include spirituality in counseling education and training programs.
24. Instruction in spirituality will prepare counselors to help their clients deal with spiritual issues.

Section 5: General Information
25. Spirituality/Religion was important in my upbringing.
26. One and/or both of my parents are spiritual.
27. Overall, my spiritual religious upbringing was a positive experience.
28. My religious experiences as a child have influenced my spiritual choices as an adult.
29. My spiritual perspectives have changed from those of my upbringing.
30. I am no longer affiliated with the religious institution of my upbringing.
31. My spirituality has impacted my decision to become a counselor.
32. My spirituality impacted my decision on which institution to attend for my counseling program.
33. I would have liked to see spirituality addressed more extensively in my entire counselor education/training program.
34. I felt free to express my spiritual/religious perspectives during my counseling training when these perspectives differed from those of my fellow students.
35. I felt free to express my spiritual/religious perspectives during my counseling training when these perspectives differed from those of my instructors.
36. My institution acknowledged spirituality as an important aspect of multicultural awareness.
APPENDIX B

MODIFIED SPIRITUALITY IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING SURVEY
Directions: Please read the statements carefully and select answers that best represent your opinions.

_Spirituality is defined as that which is concerned with one’s purpose, value in life, or one’s search for meaning, purpose, and/or value. Spirituality includes one’s beliefs, mission, awareness, subjectivity, experience, sense of purpose and direction, and a kind of striving toward something greater than oneself. One’s construction may or may not include a Supreme Being, God, or Higher Power. For many, religion is an expression of their spirituality. Religion and spirituality are interrelated; nonetheless, religion does not comprise the total meaning of the broader concept._

For questions 1 – 38, the following scale is used:
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Agree

Section 1: Core Competencies of Spirituality
1. I consider myself competent as a counselor in the area of spirituality.
2. I have an understanding of the spiritual phenomena that people often look beyond themselves to find purpose and meaning in life.
3. I am aware of my own spiritual perspective.
4. I am aware of how my own spiritual perspective impacts my life, including my counseling.
5. I have an understanding of clients’ spiritual perspectives.
6. I have an understanding of how clients’ spiritual perspectives impact their lives.
7. I have knowledge of spirituality related interventions.
8. I have used spirituality related interventions such as having a client write a spiritual autobiography or complete a spirituality genogram.

Section 2: Inclusion of Core Competencies of Spirituality
9. My counseling training program included the core competencies of spirituality (e.g. general knowledge of spiritual phenomena, awareness of one’s own spiritual perspective, understanding of client’s spiritual perspective, and understanding of spiritually related interventions and strategies).
10. My counseling training program provided an open atmosphere for the discussion of spirituality.
11. My counseling training program provided a stand-alone course(s) primarily on spiritual topics.
12. My counseling training program formally integrated the topic of spirituality into existing coursework.
13. My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion during the practicum/internship components of my education.
14. My counseling training program incorporated spirituality as a topic of discussion related to how clients’ perspectives of spirituality influence the therapeutic process.

Section 3: Personal Spirituality
15. I would characterize myself as a spiritual person.
16. I have an awareness of my own personal spiritual beliefs.
17. I have a personal belief of a transcendent connectedness in the universe.
18. I am able to identify my personal spiritual practices.
19. I am able to identify that my spirituality is relevant to the formulation of my worldview.
20. I have a defined set of values and beliefs that can be directly identified with my spirituality.

Again, spirituality is defined as that which is concerned with one’s purpose, value in life, or one’s search for meaning, purpose, and/or value. Spirituality includes one’s beliefs, mission, awareness, subjectivity, experience, sense of purpose and direction, and a kind of striving toward something greater than oneself. One’s construction may or may not include a Supreme Being, God, or Higher Power. For many, religion is an expression of their spirituality. Religion and spirituality are interrelated; nonetheless, religion does not comprise the total meaning of the broader concept.

Section 4: Spirituality in Professional Practice
21. I believe that spirituality is important in the professional practice of counseling.
22. People often find purpose through established spiritual organizations.
23. Spirituality is often a factor in how people make life decisions.
24. Spiritual orientation is a relevant multicultural component.
25. I believe it is important to include spirituality in counseling programs.
26. Instruction in spirituality will prepare counselors to help their clients deal with spiritual issues.

Section 5: General Information
27. Spirituality was important in my upbringing.
28. One and/or both of my parents are spiritual.
29. Overall, my spiritual upbringing was a positive experience.
30. My spiritual experiences as a child have influenced my spiritual choices as an adult.
31. My spiritual perspectives have changed from those of my upbringing.
32. I am no longer affiliated with the spiritual institution of my upbringing.
33. My spirituality has impacted my decision to become a counselor.
34. My spirituality impacted my decision on which institution to attend for my counseling program.
35. I would have liked to see spirituality addressed more extensively in my counseling program.
36. I felt free to express my spiritual perspectives during my counseling training program when these perspectives differed from those of my fellow students.
37. I felt free to express my spiritual perspectives during my counseling training when these perspectives differed from those of my instructors.

38. My institution acknowledged spirituality as an important aspect of multicultural awareness.
APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE
Directions: Please take a moment to answer the following demographic questions. Please remember that your answers will not be used to track you individually, but will be used in an aggregate fashion only.

39. What is your age? 

40. What is your gender? (Select one)
   ○ Female
   ○ Male

41. What is your religious affiliation, if any? (Select one)
   ○ Agnostic
   ○ Atheist
   ○ Baptist
   ○ Catholic
   ○ Episcopalian
   ○ Jehovah’s Witness
   ○ Jewish
   ○ Lutheran
   ○ Methodist
   ○ Muslim
   ○ Pentecostal
   ○ Presbyterian
   ○ Protestant
   ○ Seventh Day Adventist
   ○ Other (Please specify)
   ○ None

42. What is your highest degree completed? (Select one)
   ○ Bachelor’s
   ○ Master’s
   ○ Doctorate
   ○ Other (Please specify) 

43. To which of the following American Counseling Association division(s) do you belong? (Select all that apply)
   ○ Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development
   ○ Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling

44. What is your current mental health profession? (Select one)
   ○ Community Counselor
   ○ Counseling Psychologist
   ○ Marriage & Family Therapist
   ○ Rehabilitation Counselor
○School Counselor
○Other (Please specify) ___

45. How many years have you worked in your current profession? ___

46. Are you currently responsible for the supervision of counseling students?
   ○Yes
   ○No

47. In which work setting do you currently work? (Select one)
   ○Academic
   ○Administrative
   ○College Counseling Center
   ○Community Agency
   ○Corrections
   ○Employee Assistance Program
   ○Hospice
   ○Hospital
   ○Private Practice
   ○School
   ○Other (Please specify) ___

48. How many years have you worked in the following settings? (Place a 0 in the space provided if you have not worked in the setting.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>1 yr</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>&gt;20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Counseling Center</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Agency</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee Assistance Program</td>
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<td>Hospice</td>
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<td>Hospital</td>
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<td>Private Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Hospital:                     ____ Years
Private Practice:             ____ Years
School:                       ____ Years
Other: (Please specify) ___   ____ Years
49. Based on your *overall counseling competence*, please select yes or no for the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need to learn a great deal more before I would call myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I still have much to learn in order to call myself competent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable with my knowledge and skill level.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am highly competent…I can teach others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50. How many graduate courses have you completed that focused specifically on spirituality and/or religion?

___

51. How many graduate courses have you completed that included or infused spirituality and/or religious topics?

___

52. Since completing your degree in counseling, how many professional development hours (estimate) have you earned on the subject of spirituality and/or religion?

___

53. Based on your *spiritual competence*, please select yes or no for the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need to learn a great deal more before I would call myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competent.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I still have much to learn in order to call myself competent.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am comfortable with my knowledge and skill level.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am highly competent…I can teach others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

PERMISSION TO USE SPIRITUALITY IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING SURVEY
Re: Spirituality in Counselor Education & Training Survey

Wednesday, July 22, 2009 1:15 PM
From: "Karla West" <kwest@boisestate.edu>
To: "J. Yasmine Butler" <butlermel@sbcglobal.net>

Yes the instrument in my dissertation is the latest. Yes, I do give you permission to use it if you will directly site that you receive written permission from the author. This way in the future others will also honor the copy write.

Thank you, and send me a copy of your work when you finish I would love to read it.

Karla

On Wed, Jul 22, 2009 at 10:57 AM, J. Yasmine Butler <butlermel@sbcglobal.net> wrote:
Hi Dr. West,

I hope this note finds you well. I am writing to follow-up with you regarding getting your permission to use the instrument you developed. Will you give me permission to use your instrument? Also, is the instrument in your dissertation the latest version of the instrument?

Thank you,
Yasmine
APPENDIX E

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION FROM INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD
COUNSELORS’ SELF-RATINGS OF SPIRITUALITY COMPETENCY III

Friday, May 21, 2010 12:57 PM
From: "Pettey, Cheri" <pettey.6@osu.edu>
To: moore.1408@osu.edu
Cc: butler.416@osu.edu

Dear Dr. Moore,

The above project has been determined to be exempt under category 2; the project number is 2010E0343. You may begin your data collection. I’ll send your official letter soon, but I wanted to let you know the status so you could begin if needed.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Good luck with your research!

Thanks,

Cheri

Cheri Pettey, MA, CIP
Senior Protocol Analyst--Exempt Research
Office of Responsible Research Practices
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1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210
phone: 614.688.0389
fax: 614.688.0366
email: pettey.6@osu.edu