7-2020

Experiences of Graduate Level Students of Color with Race in Psychology Diversity Courses

Lakesha Winley
National Louis University

Experiences of Graduate Level Students of Color with Race in Psychology Diversity Courses

Lakesha K. Winley

Torrey Wilson, PhD
Chair

Penelope Asay, PhD
Member

A Clinical Research Project submitted to the faculty of The Illinois School of Professional Psychology at National Louis University, Chicago in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology.

Chicago, Illinois
April, 2020

The Doctorate Program in Clinical Psychology

Illinois School of Professional Psychology
at National Louis University

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

_____

Clinical Research Project

_____

This is to certify that the Clinical Research Project of

has been approved by the CRP
Committee on

as satisfactory for the CRP requirement
for the Doctorate of Psychology degree
with a major in Clinical Psychology

Examining Committee:

_____
Committee Chair

_____
Reader

_____
Reader

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

To all who have supported me throughout this academic endeavor, you know who you are and how much you mean to me. Thank you!

In thinking about all the things one can say in an acknowledgement section, the one thing I did not want to do in this section is pretend. Pretend this process was filled with the joys and struggles most doctoral students experience as a part of their journey to the finish line. To do that would be disingenuous and if you know me you know that's not my style. If you know me then you know that in addition to the normative doctoral experience my journey has been compounded with systemic and institutional oppression.

This is what I would like to take a moment to acknowledge. This process did not have to be like this, this process should not have been like this, and I know I will not be the last student who holds identities that get marginalized to have an experience similar to mine. This is unacceptable!

To be told by an administrator that "I am responsible for my subjective experience around race" when simply advocating for an educational experience that is inclusive of those whose ethnoracial identity is not White. To show up day in and day out in an attempt to get an education and walk away feeling like you'd been positioned at the front of the class with your arms extended and professors and your peers were allowed to come up and cut you wherever their hearts desired. This is what I would like to acknowledge. This is why I chose this topic. This is what needs to change. This process did not kill me, but I will never be the same.

Abstract

The ethnoracial makeup of individuals entering fields of study such as psychology continues to change but the experiences of graduate level students of color in these programs is a phenomenon that has received little attention. When attempting to understand these experiences specific to racial content, the literature is almost nonexistent. This qualitative inquiry was designed in an attempt to understand, assess, and depict the experiences of students of color related to experiences of racial content in their American Psychological Association (APA) accredited graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses. The focus was on their reactions (e.g., emotional, physical, somatic) to class discourse, lectures, readings, projects, experiential learning, peers, professors, and videos pertaining to race. The participants included 13 individuals: seven Black, four Asian/Pacific Islander, one Latinx, and one bi/multi-racial. All participants attended an APA-accredited institution and completed a graduate level psychology diversity course within the past 4 years or were enrolled in said course at the time of the study. The results of this study revealed these individuals' experiences were influenced by factors such as the ethnoracial identities of the participants, peers, and professors; the supportiveness of professors and peers; and the level of engagement of peers. Participants also provided suggestions for what components of their graduate level psychology diversity courses need to change in order to provide an educational experience that would address their needs and racial content.

Chapter 1: Introduction

People of color have been trained in the field of psychology since approximately the 1920s (Holliday, 2009). Francis Cecil Sumner, the "Father of Black Psychology," is credited as being the first African American to receive a PhD in psychology (Sawyer, 2000). Following Sumner, additional scholars of color, such as Kenneth and Mamie Clark, Keturah Whitehurst, Inez Beverly Prosser, and James Bayton, began to graduate from doctoral-level psychology programs (Rutherford & Davis, 2008). The activism of African Americans during the civil rights movement opened the doors for other racially marginalized groups, such as Latinx and Asian Americans, to begin advocating for more accessibility and support in the field of psychology. Prior to this, racially marginalized individuals were mainly used as subjects for research on racial differences (Richards, 1997).

Although the field of psychology and the American Psychological Association (APA) have improved with regard to the inclusion of students and professionals of color, resistance can still be found when it comes to the commitment within psychology training programs (clinical, counseling, school) to creating a culturally competent and responsive curriculum for the provision of mental health services (Davis & Buskist, 2007). There have been efforts within some training programs to implement models of training for diversity that include obtaining support from leadership and professors within such programs, making sure there is sufficient financial support (e.g., grants, fellowships, etc.), flexible admissions criteria, having one or more faculty members of color, providing a nurturing and supportive environment, and integrating cultural diversity into all parts of the training program (Davis & Buskist, 2007).

As long as there are efforts to increase the number of students of color who are both enrolling in and completing graduate level psychology programs, it is important to examine the experiences of these students as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches. There is a limited amount of research on the lived experiences of graduate level psychology students of color. More specifically, there is no recent literature investigating the experiences of graduate level students of color as they relate to racial discourse in psychology diversity courses. This study was designed to begin documenting the experiences of these students in the hopes of contributing to an area of research that is often overlooked or under researched.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The number of those identifying as persons of color in the United States continues to increase, thus redefining which ethnoracial groups are deemed the majority population. As of July 2018, it was reported that the U.S. population consisted of 76.5% White identified individuals; 60.4% White, not Hispanic or Latinx identified people; 18.3% Hispanic or Latinx identified individuals; 13.4% Black or African American identified people; 5.9% Asian identified individuals; 2.7% individuals who identified with two or more races; 1.3% people who identified as American Indian and Alaska Native; and .2% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander identified individuals (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). With an increase in the number of people of color in the United States naturally comes an increase in the ethnoracial makeup within higher education. This is important because it also changes the ethnoracial demographics of individuals entering fields of study such as psychology (e.g., clinical, counseling psychology, school, etc.). The purpose of this section is to review the significant literature related to the way in which graduate level psychology courses are currently taught in an effort to gain an understanding of the research that has been conducted pertaining to the experiences of students of color addressing racial discourse in graduate level psychology diversity courses. Last, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss gaps in the literature related to these students' experiences.

Higher education research assessing diversity courses at predominantly White institutions supports that there is no significant change in the well-being or attitudes related to diversity and difference for students who only take one diversity course (Martinez, 2014). Taking two or more diversity courses has been shown to have a greater

impact on an individual's well-being and comfort with difference when compared to taking one diversity course or no diversity courses at all (Martinez, 2014). Although there are data to support this is the case, they do not speak to the content of these courses or whether or not taking multiple diversity courses has anything to do with students' well-being and attitudes toward diversity. There are also no data to show whether the multiple diversity courses must build on each other to have an impact or whether simply taking more than one is sufficient. One must also consider whether there is a true change in attitudes or if the change reflects merely having a greater ability to use diversity language, which could make an individual appear to be better off than one who has never taken a diversity course or who has only been exposed to this type of course once. Bowman (2009) reinforced this point in his study examining the cognitive impact of college diversity courses on students from marginalized and privileged groups. He stressed the importance of how one operationalizes constructs referencing two sources, the first a national sample that defined diversity as simply taking an ethnic studies course and the second a Michigan study that defined this construct as the amount of information discussed in class pertaining to understanding other racial groups, as well as the impact that being enrolled in that course has on one's views toward ethnoracial diversity (Bowman, 2009). Bowman highlighted how the validity of data pertaining to the efficacy of taking two or more diversity courses can change depending on how diversity is defined.

Diggles (2014) stated it is important for curricula to contain a focus on the personal experiences of all students as they relate to racism and racial identity rather than simply studying "other." This is pertinent information, but attention also needs to be

brought to what is meant when "studying other" is mentioned. Often the "other" means racially marginalized individuals and rarely includes studying White students. So even in attempting to follow the suggestions of Diggles, learning is starting from an exclusionary place. It seems White students are the intended audience for curricula; therefore, Whiteness is never examined. This lack of examination leads to an unacknowledged premise of teaching White students how to better interact with cultural others (Treinen & Warren, 2001). This becomes even more problematic when the students being taught are not all White.

The current format of graduate level diversity courses does not adequately account for the fact that those with identities that get marginalized are often more willing and more capable of identifying how the position society has placed them in causes them to be oppressed (Diggles, 2014). Thus, it seems reckless to continue designing diversity courses in a manner that excludes or limits the examination of White identity development and Whiteness, given White students are less likely to possess awareness of their own racial privileges or identity. Literature also supports that current teaching paradigms are lacking when it comes to specific and concrete objectives related to racial justice, as simultaneously focusing on several categories of social difference at once prevents a comprehensive analysis of any one type of oppression or social construct (Diggles, 2014). This is not to say it is not important to focus on the myriad identities that get marginalized, but educators need to consider whether this approach leads to long-term awareness (Murphy, Park, & Lonsdale, 2006). A component of critically examining the long-term awareness fostered by current teaching paradigms is to examine the impact of diversity courses on the individuals taking these courses who hold various identities.

Diversity/Multicultural Curriculum in Psychology

There have been a number of national events, including developments within APA and related professional organizations, that have assisted with providing a historical context for multicultural and cultural-specific guidelines pertaining to ethnoracially marginalized groups (APA, 2003). In 1927, an Office of Minority Research was established by the National Institute of Mental Health. This office was restructured in 1985 to intentionally incorporate research focused on ethnic minority individuals, including justifications for the need for diversity in research populations (APA, 2003). The research produced by this initiative has played a vital role in setting policies specific to ethnoracially marginalized groups. The Vail Conference of 1973 is when those in the field of psychology began to discuss the relevance of cultural diversity in psychological practice (Korman, 1974). As a result of this dialogue, leaders within the field of psychology decided the provision of services to culturally diverse populations without being competent was unethical (Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). Thus, it was suggested that cultural diversity training be included in graduate training programs and continuing education workshops to teach the necessary cultural content (APA, 2003). In 1986, the APA Committee on Accreditation began including cultural diversity as a component of effective training in its *Accreditation Handbook*, presently known as the *Standards of Accreditation for Health Service Psychology* (SoA; APA Committee on Accreditation & Accreditation Office, 1986). It has been suggested that these efforts indicated a recognition of the importance of cultural and individual differences and diversity in the training of clinical, counseling, and school psychologists. This resulted in the training

councils of the aforementioned disciplines incorporating cultural diversity into their program models (APA, 2003).

Parallel to the changes occurring within individual psychology programs, both structural and functional changes within APA also took place with the objective of enabling the organization to reflect the increased emphasis on cultural diversity (APA, 2003). Some of the structural changes included the birth of organizations and committees such as the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs in 1979; the Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs (BEMA) in 1980; Task Force on Minority Education and Training in 1981; Task Force on Communication with Minority Constituents in 1984; the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest in 1990; the Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs in 1990; and the Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training in 1994. The Task Force on Minority Education and Training and the Task Force on Communication with Minority Constituents were formed for the purposes of replacing BEMA under the APA's governance structure (APA, 2003). As a result of the formation of the Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training, a 5-year plan was published as a means to increase the number of ethnoracially marginalized students in psychology programs. In addition to the desire to increase the number of ethnoracially marginalized psychology students, these initiatives laid the foundation for attempting to produce clinicians who are culturally competent in working with individuals from marginalized ethnoracial populations. An area that seems to still be missing in all of this is the critical evaluation and feedback from the students of color these initiatives are attempting to include.

Accreditation Standards, Training, and Guidelines

The *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists* (APA, 2003) were created with four specific goals in mind. The first was to provide justification for incorporating multiculturalism and diversity into education, training, research, practice, and organizational change (APA, 2003). The second goal was to provide psychologists with both data (e.g., basic information, current empirical research, relevant terminology, etc.) supporting the proposed guidelines and information emphasizing their importance. The third of the four goals entailed providing psychologists with references that would assist in the enhancement of ongoing education, training, research, practice, and organizational change methodologies (APA, 2003). Last, the fourth goal of these guidelines was to broaden the purview of psychology as a profession by providing psychologists with the needed models. The guideline that falls under the purview of the current study is education, defined as "the psychological education of students in all areas of psychology" (APA, 2003, p. 377).

Education is the third guideline and encourages psychology educators to incorporate the constructs of diversity and multiculturalism into psychological education. Given that historically psychology has focused on biological determinants of behavior, including sociopolitical constructs (e.g., race, ethnicity, etc.), psychology beginning to focus on diversity and multiculturalism as a component of education was met with those who embraced it as well as those who were skeptical. Some of the skepticism included fear that addressing cultural differences would lead to stereotypes being created, fear of cognitive and behavioral confirmation biases, and feeling uncomfortable discussing the

subject matter as a result of viewing diversity and multiculturalism as difficult and
uncomfortable topics (APA, 2003). Another element of the skepticism was a
phenomenon called *ethnocentric monoculturalism*, which can be described as a "belief in
the superiority of one's own group and inferiority of another's group and the use of
power to impose one's values on the less-powerful group" (APA, 2017, p. 31).

The updated version of these guidelines is titled *Multicultural Guidelines: An*
Ecological Approach to Context, Identity, and Intersectionality. The purpose of this
version of the guidelines is to attend to diversity and multicultural practice in present-day
professional psychology, focusing on intersectionality (APA, 2017). Another difference
is that this version of the multicultural guidelines focuses more on clinical work,
consultation, education, research, and training rather than treatment. The 2017
multicultural guidelines also expand the definition of education to encompass "the
inclusion of multicultural curricula in psychology programs, modeling cultural
competence for students, and providing training and supervisory experiences in diverse
community contexts" (APA, 2017, p. 13). A key component of these guidelines is an
emphasis on the modeling of culturally competent practice by psychologists who work
with students with the goal of supporting student development in this area (APA, 2017).
The guidelines also attempt to attend to the impact of students' sociocultural backgrounds
on receptivity to and engagement in multicultural and diversity training. There are a few
benefits of the changes to the multicultural guidelines and teaching from a culture-
centered perspective. Some of these benefits include an enhanced commitment on the
part of individuals (e.g., trainees, clinicians, etc.) striving toward racial understanding and
at the institutional level creating work environments with greater preparation in cross-

cultural competency and societal benefits in the form of contributing to the body of research and literature focused on gender, race, ethnicity, and other factors (APA, 2017). Though these are important steps and the APA requires multicultural competence to be a part of the curriculum for accredited programs, there is no oversight when it comes to how these courses are taught. This results in vast variability in the most effective and impactful approach to integrating multiculturalism into psychology training programs.

Diversity/Multicultural Courses and Curriculum

There are little data on the nature and frequency of students receiving diversity training in their clinical psychology training programs. It has been suggested that counseling psychology programs may emphasize diversity to a greater degree than clinical psychology programs (D. Green, Callands, Radcliffe, Luebbe, & Klonoff, 2009). According to Vazquez and Garcia-Vazquez (2003), a majority of diversity/multicultural psychology courses take the approach of learning about specific marginalized groups but not examining self with regard to power and discrimination, thus lacking the component of developing an understanding of self in relation to other. Multicultural curriculum designed in this manner typically results in an intellectualized, stereotyped, and superficial understanding of diversity. This artificial understanding has resulted in students who have not learned enough to be competent clinicians but believe they can now competently apply these skills to their work with marginalized populations (Vazquez & Garcia-Vazquez, 2003). Another element that feeds students' perceptions that they are more competent than they are is the manner in which most programs incorporate diversity curriculum. Many institutions continue to take the approach of requiring courses specific to diversity/multicultural counseling without integrating elements of diversity

and multicultural theories throughout the degree program, facilitating a false sense of mastery (i.e., meeting the course requirement gets equated to mastery of content). This approach can cause students to experience either negative feelings for having to take a diversity/multicultural course or negative feelings for not having this content incorporated into all of their coursework and curriculum (Vazquez & Garcia-Vazquez, 2003). In a study conducted by Williams (2008), she described the perspectives of clinical psychology doctoral-level students pertaining to the integration of multicultural topics throughout the curriculum. This topic was introduced as what seemed like a requirement as opposed to something integrated throughout the curriculum and classes presented multicultural issues more frequently at the conclusion of the semester.

When it comes to diversity/multicultural course design and measuring competency, it has been suggested that the development of multicultural awareness occurs through assignments such as readings, journaling, self-reflective papers, experiential activities, and identity development exercises. The difficulty with these types of assignments lies in developing appropriate criteria to assess whether or not students have demonstrated the foundational skills necessary to become a multiculturally aware clinician (Vazquez & Garcia-Vazquez, 2003).

White Students in Diversity/Multicultural Courses

Bowman (2009) proposed two divergent experiences of diversity for White students taking diversity courses. The first view is the *exploration perspective*, which operates from the premise that because students from privileged groups have less exposure to diversity related issues, they should learn more when being taught about issues and experiences that are novel to them. Bowman suggested that when White

students from this perspective are met with new information or experiences related to diversity, they have to either make sense of what is presented using preexisting understandings of the world or adjust their worldviews to make room for these new experiences. Related to new experiences, Smith Goosby (2002) conducted a study exploring the difference between diversity learning and development between Black and White graduate students. In this study, the 33 White graduate students who provided written permission for their diversity class journals to be used showed that they processed the information cognitively and got the most out of the first half of the class because it was novel information. Their Black counterparts reported not benefiting as much from this content because it was more closely linked to their lived experience, causing some of the Black student participants to reexperience ethnoracially traumatic events.

The second view is the *resistance perspective*, which states that privileged students often operate from a place of resistance when required to learn about or seriously consider information in their diversity courses. If they remain in this place of resistance for the duration of the course, they are less likely to experience cognitive growth as compared to marginalized students. Bowman (2009) suggested White students usually go to this place of resistance when they are directly challenged about their own privilege or place in society. When these students are unable to move through this resistance, it can lead to reactions such as describing their diversity course professors as "racist," a "Whitehater," and a "slave-master" when completing final class evaluations (Bowman, 2009). Trainor (2002) reported that in some diversity courses White students react to diversity discourse in a manner that suggests they have a vested interest in justifying their unearned power and privilege.

Case (2007) conducted a study of the effectiveness of an undergraduate course in terms of raising White privilege awareness and reducing racial prejudices and highlighted the experiences of White students taking diversity courses. Results showed the White students in this study appeared to experience more White guilt at the end of the semester (Case, 2007). It was suggested that this guilt could be linked to the realization of their unearned advantages. Another notable finding of this study was that fear of other races increased throughout the semester. This increase was attributed to possible overreporting of the number of cross-race relationships these students had at the beginning of the semester and then providing a more accurate report of their cross-race relationships at the conclusion of the semester. Reasons for this overreporting were linked to the possibility of White students wanting to appear not racist by reporting more relationships with people of color (Case, 2007). When the findings from this study were broken down by ethnoracial identity, levels of prejudice against Arab and Black students were consistent throughout the course whereas the level of prejudice against Latinx individuals increased (Case, 2007). Case used Helms's White racial identity model to conceptualize the behaviors of White students in psychology diversity courses. This model postulates that White individuals start with a lack of consciousness about racism and its importance and hopefully move to a position of heightened consciousness and working toward an anti-racist identity (Malott, Paone, Schaefle, Cates, & Haizlip, 2015). Although the goal is to adopt an anti-racist identity, during the disintegration stage of this model White individuals may experience cognitive dissonance, leading to intentional reduced contact with persons of color. In addition to reduced contact, some White individuals may allow their prejudiced attitudes to justify racial inequalities (Case, 2007)

One White student in the APA-accredited clinical psychology doctoral program at Pepperdine University described their multicultural course as "extremely emotionally charged," highlighting the value of having a professor who fostered a safe environment with their leadership style (Williams, 2008, p. 55). More specifically, the student recounted their experience by stating:

> I really struggled because I'm one of the few White students whose really interested in the multicultural field . . . I had this feeling, "damned if you do, damned if you don't." If I help, I get heat for being out there. If I don't help, I'm gonna get heat for not being a part. And that was an important conversation to have and scary to admit that I was feeling that way. I mean our class was close and a lot of taboo things were touched on and it got really, um, controversial and people got hurt and people got upset. But [the professor] was phenomenal . . . He really picked up on subtleties and made sure that everybody was heard. (pp. 55-56)

Students of Color in Diversity/Multicultural Courses

According to outcome studies of multicultural education, the experiences of students of color in graduate level diversity courses are often disregarded (Curtis-Boles & Bourg, 2010). When these students were included in outcome studies used to determine the effectiveness of diversity courses, ethnicity was not always examined as a factor that could affect these outcomes (Curtis-Boles & Bourg, 2010). When ethnicity was considered in these studies, graduate level psychology diversity courses were shown to disproportionately benefit White students when compared to students of color (Curtis-Boles & Bourg, 2010). Even with students of color gaining an increased understanding of

White privilege, an increased ability to acknowledge blatant racism, and an increased

intersectional awareness, diversity courses as they are currently designed have a greater

impact on White students (Cole, Case, Rios, & Curtin, 2011). Seward (2014) conducted a

grounded theory study on the experiences of 20 master's-level students of color enrolled

in multicultural counseling courses. In this study, Seward reported finding evidence to

support that these students learned from the courses but felt unsatisfied. It appears the

students in this study expected their multicultural course readings and classroom

discussions to go deeper than simply providing overviews of various cultural groups and

terminology (e.g., racism exists), expressing the desire for course depth and complexity

(Seward, 2014). Students of color also reported feelings of isolation and alienation from

their peers, ultimately affecting their learning opportunities (Seward, 2014). These

students viewed their peers as either lacking in cultural knowledge regarding

marginalized racial groups or having knowledge but that knowledge representing an

inaccurate portrayal of marginalized experiences (Seward, 2014). A Black student from

Seward's study described her course as follows:

> It was broad. The professor touched on a lot of different cultures, different ways
>
> of living, and different traditions within cultures. But I think certain things were
>
> left out or glossed over. I think actual real-life interactions, actual past
>
> experiences of groups of people- entire groups- and the history that they may have
>
> went through, and just dealing with those populations in counseling. (p. 69)

Smith Goosby (2002) conducted a study to explore the differences in diversity

learning and development between Black and White graduate students and pointed out

that during the first half of the class Black students filtered the course information

affectively, causing them to revisit and process old experiences. This revisiting of old experiences caused Black students to have strong emotional and painful reactions to discrimination from the past (Smith Goosby, 2002). The study included the assumption that students of color should teach by way of sharing their experiences with the class, often negating the impact this may have on these students of color (Smith Goosby, 2002). Hoskins (2003) stated the danger of placing students of color in a position to teach other students about their experiences is that it can result in putting the learning needs of White students over those of marginalized individuals. This would, in essence, further marginalize students of color.

Qualitative Research Approach

In this study, critical race theory (CRT) was applied as a conceptual foundation for exploring the perspectives of students of color regarding diversity (race) pedagogy. CRT is used to examine analytically the ways in which race and racism affect ethnically marginalized individuals in both subtle and overt manners (Graham, Brown-Jeffy, Aronson, & Stephens, 2011). Some have described CRT as a "race-conscious approach" that aids in the understanding of educational inequality while also lending itself to ascertaining potential solutions (Seward, 2014). According to CRT, students of color are viewed as the holders of unique knowledge that can lend itself to critiquing dominant racial discourse (Zamudio, Russell, Rios, & Bridgeman, 2011). This makes this interpretive framework a useful tool for using students' perspectives to critically evaluate multicultural training (Seward, 2014). There are three primary objectives of CRT: (a) highlight stories of discrimination from the perspective of people of color, (b) understand race as a social construct while understanding its impact and working to eradicate racial

subjugation, and (c) address other matters of difference and injustice experienced by marginalized communities (Parker & Lynn, 2002).

CRT as an interpretive framework takes into account the influence of personal worldviews on students' perceptions and experiences. This encompasses individual beliefs, values, and assumptions about the world (Seward, 2014), as well as remains cognizant of worldviews being not only influenced by race and ethnicity but also additional cultural influences (Sue & Sue, 2013). CRT principles acknowledge that although people may identify with the same racial group, share a common ancestry, or have similar life experiences, they may still form different opinions, beliefs, and attitudes (Buckley & Foldy, 2010). In turn, these factors, in combination with a student's racial identity development, can influence openness to engaging in cultural learning (Buckley & Foldy, 2010) as well as the meaning the student makes of various ethnoracial academic experiences.

Rationale for the Present Study

There is a limited amount of research on the lived experiences of graduate level students of color (Henfield, Owens, & Witherspoon, 2011). When the experiences of these students have been included, there has been more research conducted on the experiences of Black students than any other ethnically marginalized group. In addition, the majority of the literature focused on students of color in counseling master's-level programs. When it comes to training, Black graduate level students have reported there being substantial deficits in the type of diversity training they have received to become multiculturally competent counselors (Seward, 2009). They have also reported a lack of culturally appropriate theory and practice related to counseling as a part of their

curriculum (Haskins et al., 2013). Nonetheless, no recent literature was found that investigated the experiences of graduate level students of color as they relate to racial discourse in psychology diversity courses. This study was conducted to address this gap in the literature.

The purpose of qualitative inquiry is to attempt to understand, assess, and depict the experiences of the participants being investigated (Haskins et al., 2013). CRT was used to understand the essence of how graduate level students of color experienced racial content in their diversity courses. The goal was to offer an in-depth understanding of the experiences being explored as the participants lived them (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Research Questions

This research was guided by one overarching question and nine sub-questions. The overarching question was: What are the experiences of students of color in graduate level psychology diversity courses? The experiences of these students refer to reactions (emotional, physical, somatic) to class discourse, lectures, readings, projects, experiential learning, peers, professors and videos pertaining to race. Sub-questions included (see also Appendix A):

1. How would you describe your overall experience in your graduate level diversity/multicultural course?

2. How was racial content (class discourse, readings, lectures, projects, experiential learning, and videos) addressed in your course?

3. How would you describe your experience with your diversity/multicultural professor?

4. How would you describe your diversity/multicultural professor's ability to manage or facilitate racial content?

5. How would you describe your peer interactions in your diversity/multicultural course?

6. How would you describe your peers' engagement, reactions, and understandings of racial course content?

7. What was your experience of content (class discourse, readings, lectures, projects, experiential learning, and videos) related to White racial identity development, White fragility, or working with White clients in your multicultural/diversity course?

8. What were some strengths and limitations of your diversity/multicultural course as they relate to racial content (class discourse, lectures, readings, projects, experiential learning, and videos)?

9. How has your experience in your diversity/multicultural course affected your navigation of race related topics academically or professionally?

10. Are there any personal experiences that you would like to share?

These questions were designed to investigate what it is like to navigate racial content in graduate level psychology diversity courses as a student of color. This study involved examining the differences and similarities in experiences along with variables that contributed to the student participants being satisfied or dissatisfied with the ways in which racial content was addressed in these courses.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Participants and Procedures

Snowball sampling was used to obtain participants for this study. A benefit of using this method to gather participants is that it allows for access to populations that are not adequately represented in research (e.g., people of color; Atkinson & Flint, 2001). An email requesting assistance disseminating the recruitment email to potential participants was sent by the primary investigator (PI) to professional contacts (i.e., past and present professors, supervisors, and colleagues from practicum and school; see Appendix B). The professional contacts were instructed to forward the recruitment email to individuals in their networks who may have met the criteria for participation. Potential participants then received the recruitment email containing a brief summary of the study, criteria to participate, and a link to the survey. The criteria for participation were as follows: (a) 18 years of age or older, (b) identified as racially/ethnically marginalized or non-White, (c) attended an APA-accredited institution, (d) completed a graduate level psychology diversity course within the past 4 years or were currently enrolled in a graduate level psychology diversity course, (e) not currently enrolled at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology, and (f) did not have a personal relationship with the researcher. Additionally, the identities and institutional affiliations of the participants were unknown, as participation was anonymous. Potential participants were instructed to fill out an online survey consisting of informed consent (see Appendix C), demographic information (see Appendix D), and 10 open-ended questions (see Appendix A). Completion of the online survey was estimated to take approximately 30 to 60 minutes. However, most participants completed the survey in approximately 10 to 30 minutes.

Data Collection and Analysis

   The PI is the author of this research. The PI received Institutional Review Board

(IRB) approval from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology prior to collecting

data. After collecting surveys, each sentence of participants' responses was reviewed to

assess for themes emerging in the narratives provided (e.g., language used to define each

participant's experiences). This was done to gather the essence of the experiences of

students of color. Once this portion of the analysis was completed, a list of emerging

themes was compiled that included examples from the participants in their own voices. In

addition, the PI debriefed by journaling any thoughts or reactions to the transcripts that

were analyzed.

Ethical Considerations

   Recalling experiences of being in a diversity course as a student of color can be

triggering, especially given the sensitive nature of racial discourse. To account for this

and as a way to minimize the risk for the individuals participating in this study, a list of

resources was provided to each participant who completed this study (see Appendix E).

Trustworthiness and Biases

   When conducting qualitative research, it is important for investigators to

acknowledge their assumptions. To accomplish this, the PI's assumptions about the

experiences of graduate level students of color as they pertained to psychology diversity

courses needed to be identified. As a Black genderqueer person who has a background in

teaching and learning about diversity, the potential for the PI to assume that participants'

experiences would be more in line with the PI's educational experience in these types of

courses needed to be acknowledged. The PI's assumption that current diversity courses

are addressing race in the same manner they have over the past decade also needed to be recognized. To increase the trustworthiness of this study, a number of strategies were implemented. First, the PI sought consultation from the clinical research project team to ensure biases did not interfere with the research. Second, an outside reader was recruited to review the data and compare findings as a way to decrease subjectivity.

Chapter 4: Results

Participants

Participants consisted of 17 adults. All participants attended an APA-accredited institution and had completed a graduate level psychology diversity course within the past 4 years or were enrolled in a graduate level psychology diversity course at the time of the study. It should be noted that four participants only completed the demographic portion of the survey, resulting in their information not being included in the final analysis. Thus, the final sample consisted of 13 individuals: seven Black individuals, four Asian/Pacific Islander individuals, one Latinx individual, and one bi/multi-racial individual. Their ages fell between 23 and 41 years: one participant was 23, two participants were 24, two participants were 26, one participant was 28, one participant was 30, two participants were 32, one participant was 35, two participants were 40, and one participant was 41 ($M = 30.8$ years). One participant was enrolled in a clinical counseling program, 10 participants were enrolled in a clinical psychology program, one participant was enrolled in a counseling psychology program, and one participant was enrolled in a school psychology program. Two of the participants in this study reported taking one graduate level psychology diversity course at the time of the study, seven participants reported taking two, three participants reported taking three, and one participant reported taking four courses. At the time of the study, two participants were currently enrolled in a diversity/multicultural course and 11 participants were not. Of the 13 final participants, 11 answered all questions presented to them. Also, some participants were more detailed in their responses than others. Below is a brief

description of the basic demographic non-identifying information for each participant (see Appendix D).

Participant 1 was a 26-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Black individual. They reported being a non-international student in their third year of a clinical psychology program. This participant completed a diversity/multicultural course in the first and third years of their program. The participant reported being enrolled in their second diversity/multicultural course at the time of participation in the study.

Participant 2 was a 35-year-old, female identified, heterosexual, Black person. They reported being a non-international student enrolled full-time in a clinical psychology program. This participant reported completing a diversity/multicultural course in 2015 and in 2017. At the time of the study, the participant reported not being enrolled in a diversity/multicultural course.

Participant 3 was a 26-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Asian/Pacific Islander. They reported being a non-international full-time student enrolled in a clinical psychology doctoral program. This participant reported completing two diversity/multicultural courses during their first year. At the time of the study, the participant reported not being enrolled in a diversity/multicultural course.

Participant 4 was a 32-year-old, cisgender, Black, lesbian. They reported being a non-international clinical psychology graduate student who completed three diversity/multicultural courses between 2012 and 2014. At the time of the study, the participant reported not being enrolled in a diversity/multicultural course.

Participant 5 was a 28-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Asian/Pacific Islander. They reported being an international student from Malaysia. This participant also

reported being enrolled in a clinical psychology graduate program. The participant reported completing two diversity/multicultural courses in 2015 and not being enrolled in this type of course at the time of the study.

Participant 6 was a 24-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Latinx individual. They reported being a full-time, non-international student in their third year of a clinical counseling graduate program. This participant reported completing two diversity/multicultural courses in 2016 and not being enrolled in this type of course at the time of the study.

Participant 7 was a 24-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Black individual. They reported being a non-international full-time student in their second year of a counseling psychology program. This participant reported completing one diversity/multicultural course in 2018. At the time of the study, the participant reported not being enrolled in a diversity/multicultural course.

Participant 9 was a 40-year-old, cisgender, bisexual, Asian/Pacific Islander. They reported being an international student in a school psychology graduate program. The participant endorsed taking two diversity/multicultural courses in 2010. At the time of the study, the participant reported not being enrolled in this type of course.

Participant 10 was a 41-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Black individual. They reported being a non-international part-time graduate student enrolled in a clinical psychology program. They reported taking three diversity/multicultural courses in 2014 and at time of their participation in the study, they were not enrolled in this type of course.

Participant 11 was a 23-year-old, cisgender, bisexual, Black individual. They reported being a non-international student who is full-time and in their second year of a clinical psychology program. The participant indicated they took a diversity/multicultural course during their first year and was enrolled in a diversity/multicultural course at the time of their participation in the study.

Participant 12 was a 32-year-old, cisgender, bisexual, Asian/Pacific Islander. They reported being a non-international full-time student in their first year of a clinical psychology. They reported completing three diversity/multicultural courses during this year. At the time of the study, the participant reported they were not enrolled in this type of course.

Participant 13 was a 30-year-old, genderfluid/genderqueer, androphilia (sexual attraction to men or male gender presentation), and bi/multi-racial individual. They reported being a non-international student in their fourth year of being full-time in a clinical psychology graduate program. They reported taking four diversity/multicultural courses during their time as a graduate student, with the most recent course completed in 2015. At the time of the study, they reported not being enrolled in this type of course.

Participant 15 was a 40-year-old, cisgender, heterosexual, Black individual. They reported being a non-international student enrolled full-time in a clinical psychology program. The participant endorsed taking two diversity/multicultural courses, one in 2016 and the other in 2018. At the time of the study, they reported not being enrolled in this type of course.

Data Analysis and Results

Prior to contacting professional contacts to request assistance disseminating the survey recruitment email to potential participants and prior to analyzing the data collected, the PI engaged in journaling to write about reflections, thoughts, and personal feelings related to the study. This is known as bracketing. This enabled the PI to identify and put aside personal experiences and biases in order to "gain clarity from" any "preconceptions" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 148).

The PI read each participant's responses multiple times, carefully taking notes as each of these transcripts were examined. Significant statements were highlighted, extrapolated, coded, and placed in an Excel spreadsheet. The significant statements and quotations were then placed into clusters of related meaning that were then further reduced to categories and themes. Parameters were established to determine what constituted a theme. For the purpose of this study, a common shared experience that was evident in the statements of at least six (60%) participants was considered a theme.

Research sub-question 1. How would you describe your overall experience in your graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology course?

Emergent themes indicative of the essence of participants' experiences in their graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses included the courses being tailored toward White students, content presentation, and the professor teaching the course. According to the data, the largest factors leading to satisfaction with the overall experience of this type of course were the professor's ethnoracial identity, ability to curate a balanced experience, or a combination of both elements. Based on the data, a balanced experience entailed the ability to address the needs of both students who get

marginalized and White students, as well as content that was thought-provoking, fostered

open and honest dialogue, and was inclusive of clinical application.

Participants 2 and 5 described with the most detail the impact of this type of

course attending to the needs of White students to a greater degree than those of students

who get marginalized.

It was not challenging, oriented towards the growth of White students at the

expense of students of color. Not enough discussion on the readings assigned, not

enough critical questions asked, and intersectionality of topics was dismissed at

the expensive [*sic*] "White tears" and with the facade of "personal development"

for White students. (Participant 2)

My overall experience was confusing as a lot of the materials being taught seem

to focus on making White students learn at the expense of the experience and pain

of students of color. The experience however was slightly better because I had an

excellent professor who was able to manage the discussions that came up.

(Participant 5)

Most participants, similar to Participants 2 and 5, also described feeling

"frustrated" (Participants 4, 12, and 15) and that a focus on "what White people need to

know or do" to work with people who have different ethnoracial identities neglected

"other cultures and their experiences" (Participant 7). Other participants highlighted

additional ways in which they were affected by students who do not get ethnoracially

marginalized: "I felt the more privileged students held back the class because they were

unaware of other's experiences being different to their own" (Participant 12).

In the context of students' responses to this question, it seems that not only did they not feel they were challenged in the way they felt necessary to grow as culturally competent clinicians in training attending to ethnoracial issues, there seemed to be more of an emphasis on attending to the needs of White students in the courses versus the collective needs of all students. It also seemed these students of color had a desire for the course content to move beyond basic overviews of cultural groups and basic concepts. These students longed for a depth and breadth that seemed unattainable as a result of professors seemingly tailoring the course content to the level of understanding their White counterparts needed. This also seemed to lend itself to students of color feeling as though they had to be the voice of their ethnic or racial group while their White counterparts either had a skewed understanding of the lived experiences of racially marginalized individuals or did not contribute to the class discourse.

Participants 4 and 15 described their overall experiences in terms of the emotional impact and some experiences that contributed to this feeling.

> I took three courses and served as a teaching assistant on several occasions for two diversity courses. As a student, my overall experiences were stressful, frustrating, and invalidating. Upon reflection, I internalized those feelings and interpreted them as a need to do more personal work around diversity. Subsequently, I accepted a nomination to become a TA in hopes of having more opportunities to grow and impact the growth of other students.
>
> My overall experiences as a TA were also stressful, frustrating, and invalidating. In that role, I realized those feelings were not unique to me but likely

represented the sentiment of many students of color cycling through diversity

courses in a PWI [Predominately White Institution]. (Participant 4)

My experience was somewhat frustrating due to the fact that non-marginalized

groups were comfortable, gullible, and ignorant of their privilege. It was scary to

see that future psychologist felt a certain way. (Participant 15)

The participants spoke to the emotional labor of being a student of color

navigating their graduate level diversity/multicultural courses. They spoke to the double

consciousness of navigating the internal conflict created when navigating institutions that

systematically valued the needs of White students at the expense of students of color.

These participants described the impact on them in terms of internalizing oppressive

ideals and taking on the burden of trying to learn while also feeling compelled to take on

the burden of trying to fix the problems with these courses to minimal avail.

Participant 3 provided the most detailed descriptions of the ways in which the

professor influenced their overall experience of their diversity/multicultural course: "The

course was well set up to have open and honest discussions about issues of diversity, how

different cultures may perceive issues differently, and how this would impact clinical

practice and approach." Other participants who spoke to the professor's contribution to

their overall experience of the course mentioned the ethnoracial identity of the professors.

"It helped that the courses were taught by a Korean and an African American/Black

professor" (Participant 9). The professor having a "deeper understanding and investment

in his work around diversity and multiculturalism" (Participant 12).

Participants found it important for their professors to be able to present

themselves as knowledgeable about diversity issues from personal experiences, through

presenting meaningful pedagogical approaches to addressing and understanding

ethnoracial topics, and identifying as a person of color.

Research sub-question 2. How was racial content (class discourse, readings,

lectures, projects, experiential learning, and videos) addressed in your course?

Participants responded to this sub-question in terms of the following themes: the

professor's instruction, the curriculum, and perceptions of class participation. Some of

the participants described the professor as handling racial content "with care and

sensitivity while also allowing room to speak freely and openly" (Participant 3), "well"

(Participant 9), and "good for the most part" (Participant 12).

Eight of the 11 participants (72%) who provided a response to this question

described components of the curriculum that addressed racial content. Participants

endorsed this content being addressed in readings (e.g., articles, books, etc.), videos,

immersion/experiential learning, reflection papers, essays, classroom activities, class

discourse/discussion, lectures, group projects, and presentations. Participant 6 provided

their view of how racial content in their diversity/multicultural course was addressed in

terms of all the themes that emerged for this sub-question: "They were addressed through

reading and lectures. The professors, those specifically were very cognizant of what and

how they taught diversity topics. Also, I appreciated that my experiences were with

professors of color." This participant also spoke to the importance of having a professor

of color as was highlighted previously when participants talked about elements of their

overall experience with their diversity/multicultural courses.

In terms of the theme of participation pertaining to addressing racial content in

their diversity/multicultural courses, the "pattern of students of color speaking on the

issues" (Participant 5) emerged. This phenomenon showed up numerous times in participants' responses to various sub-questions. The theme of students of color participating more frequently when it came to race showing up again in participants' response to this question could be indicative of how big of an issue this is for students of color. It could also be indicative of the potential negative impact this dynamic is having on not only the experiences of students of color in graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses, but all the impacts on these students on an individual level. The importance of having a professor of color showing up again in responses to this question could also highlight the importance of having a professor of color for these students and possibly how a negative experience in the course could be mediated to some degree by having a professor they deemed more relatable (i.e., also having an identity that gets marginalized).

Research sub-question 3. How would you describe your experience with your diversity/multicultural professor?

The participants in this study responded to this question in terms of negative aspects of their experiences with their professors, positive aspects of their experiences with their professors, and factors that informed their perceptions of their experiences with their professors. Some of the negative experiences with their professors included intimidating, watered down content, and questioning credibility.

Participant 2 reported the following about their experience with their diversity/multicultural professor: "The discourse centered on blaming individual instead of looking at social structures that created disparities and oppression." Participant 15 stated:

The professor from the first course was able to challenge students and was not afraid to call out someone on their bullshit. The second course was rather frustrating where I questioned the credibility of the professors who taught the class.

Participant 11 had an experience of their professor that was initially negative and transitioned as the course progressed: "Intimidating. Although I wanted to participate more, it was difficult to speak in his presence due to his frequent challenging. This was a new style for me, but I came to accept it and work with it."

It seems some students of color expected their professors to be able to manage course dialogue in a manner that included people being held accountable for either misinformation or oppressive ideals. When professors were able to do this, it seems it resulted in students having a more positive experience with their graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology professors; however, when they were not able to do so, the professors' trustworthiness was questioned. For some students of color it seemed that being challenged on their ways of thinking was difficult to navigate but some were able to find the value in this approach to teaching. Another element of what seemed to contribute to students of color having a negative experience with their professors was having a professor who attended to basic overviews of racial issues and concepts without addressing the systems that have created the ways in which some individuals' experiences get marginalized.

Positive experiences with their professors included, but were not limited to, "amazing," "above average," "thoughtful," "insightful," "helpful," "encouraging," "supportive," "brave," "kind," "welcoming," and "positive." Participant 5 stated:

He was very experience[d] and know how to manage the classroom experience.

He was brave, took risk and taught us early on to sit with our discomfort. He also

ensured there was space to discuss some [of] these things personally to him.

Participant 10 expressed: "My experiences with my professor were always positive. He

was very approachable and willing to address my questions and concerns." Participant 4

described:

I took classes with two different professors and I was a TA for two different

professors. As a student, I recall them both being thoughtful, challenging,

insightful, and intentional. As a TA, I recall my professors as largely helpful,

encouraging, and supportive of my interventions, struggles, and feedback to

students as a TA.

In addition to participants describing positive and negative experiences with their

diversity/multicultural professors, some participants reported several factors that

informed their experiences with their professors. Participant 7 reported: "They are

knowledgeable and kind, they were willing to answer questions but the content of their

classes were very narrow." Participant 3 expressed: "I had an amazing experience with

my professor and felt as though he was able to encourage open and honest conversation

to the benefit of everyone in the classroom."

How approachable the professor was affected students' satisfaction with their

professors of their graduate level diversity/multicultural courses. The ability of the

professors to engage students in class discourse that felt equitable and did not result in

students of color feeling othered was a critical factor in how satisfied students were with

their professors. It seemed important that participants in this study were able to

understand the purpose of various activities implemented in the curriculum and not as though activities were at their expense but rather a part of the larger goal of facilitating racial course content in a meaningful manner that was intentional about not placing the burden on students of color.

Research sub-question 4. How would you describe your diversity/multicultural professor's ability to manage or facilitate racial content?

When inquiring about their professor's ability to manage or facilitate content related to race, the participants seemed to express being pleased or displeased with the professor's ability to do so or noted it was absent. Some of the terms used to describe participants' experiences with their professors included "above average," "handled well," "focused on the wrong things," and "passive."

Participant 4 provided a description of this phenomenon across multiple diversity/multicultural professors:

My experiences with diversity professors was varied but largely positive. They were generally able to manage and facilitate challenging discourse on racial issues with ease. Their styles varied and I appreciated exposure to various styles. This was meaningful to me as a student who was traversing the stages of Black racial identity and trying to figure out where I belonged. My biggest critique of professors would be that aside from one in particular, the other three could certainly have done more to challenge White students to do more authentic and meaningful self-assessment.

Participant 3 stated: "Although at times conversations were triggering and emotionally charged, the professor was able to maintain decorum while also allowing the students to process necessary feelings and emotions with others."

The unequal burden placed on students of color in the classroom when addressing racial content was also highlighted in participants' responses to this question. There seemed to be a deep need for students of color in graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses to have their professors intercede and ensure they were not being expected to engage in the emotional labor of critically examining and discussing their experiences with race without their White counterparts being expected to engage equally. It was also important for professors to be able to facilitate difficult conversations pertaining to ethnoracial identity in a manner that allowed for exploration of thoughts, biases, personal experiences, feelings, and training needs surrounding ethnoracial identity.

Participants who expressed more critical perspectives of their professors' abilities to manage or facilitate racial content in their diversity/multicultural courses expressed a desire for the professors to challenge "other students more on their views, even mine" (Participant 6). Other participants expressed feeling as though "all were great when it came to areas, they were comfortable with (their own life experience)" (Participant 7). Another student expressed not being as pleased with the professor's facilitation of racial content in class, stating, "While he was capable of facilitating and bringing up important points to consider, it seemed he wanted to maintain a peaceful atmosphere in the class and didn't enter into more complex or challenging interactions" (Participant 13).

Last, an example of when participants felt the professor's managing or facilitating racial content in their diversity/multicultural course was non-existent came in the form of a participant seeking out examples of how this content should be managed or facilitated from "knowledge and discourse outside of the classroom" (Participant 2). There was wide ranging experiences and expectation of the professors' abilities to facilitate racial content in their courses. It seemed that ultimately students of color expected all students to be treated in an equitable manner when it came to racial content in their diversity/multicultural psychology courses. They wanted to feel as though their learning was just as important to the goal of the class as that of their White peers. The participants in this study also valued professors who understood that the way in which racial discourse is treated in society may result in discomfort, though that discomfort should not be a barrier for having course readings, discussions, and assignments moving beyond overviews of cultural groups and basic concepts.

Research sub-question 5. How would you describe your peer interactions in your diversity/multicultural course?

Five of the 11 participants (45%) who provided a response to this question included elements of ethnoracial identity as either their entire response or a portion of their response. Nine of the 11 participants (81%) who responded to this question reported negative peer interactions in their diversity/multicultural courses. Three of the 11 participants (27%) who answered this question reported having positive peer interactions in their courses.

Participants who provided the most detail in recounting their experiences with their peers in their diversity/multicultural courses in which they encountered notable ethnoracial peer interactions are included in some of the quotes below.

> I have one vivid memory that pretty much sums up my overall experiences with peers/students in diversity classes. In a required course I took early in my program, several students of color and I completed and shared very thorough and emotionally laborious self-assessments of our bias, prejudices, and growth areas related to diversity. In contrast, the self-assessment of several White students seemed timid, superficial, and blatantly lacking in any real acknowledgement of privilege. I remember sharing my anger/rage with other students of color following the unfortunate experience and I'm pretty sure there were tears at some point to punctuate the absurdity of sharing such intimate parts of myself in the presence of peers who had no real investment in taking any steps toward dismantling their power. This experience was mirrored in courses that proceeded and as a TA, I worked diligently to support students of color and challenge White students to get their shit together—often to no avail. I walked away from those experiences as a TA recognizing that as a woman of color, I don't want the responsibility of educating, supporting, and/or pushing White folks to do what they know is right. I have too much other shit to deal with. (Participant 4) There was an obvious divide in White students who often did not speak up or interact during these conversations for weeks. They had to be prompted and I did not feel there was a meaningful honest exchange surrounding the obvious discomfort for certain students. (Participant 12)

Participants continued to echo the unequal burden placed on students of color navigating race in their graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses. A number of participants in this study used their peers of color as support in navigating experiences in these courses. Some participants' experiences and the ways in which they tried to have a corrective experience resulted in the realization that they did not want to be in the role of attempting to educate their White peers. The responses to this question continued to highlight the emotional burden placed on students of color in these courses. The participants in this study also shared experiences of deciding how much they wanted to participate in class discourse pertaining to race for self-preservation and reducing the impact of racial trauma experienced in academia.

In addition to these responses, Participant 7 spoke to a dynamic that frequently occurred in diversity/multicultural courses when discussing race, stating "the material was Black/White focused." This participant felt that as a result of this dynamic, "the Black students were the most vocal." A few students stressed the importance of graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses evolving beyond Black–White dynamics to incorporate the experiences of all ethnoracial groups present in society.

A few examples of participants who experienced negative peer interactions were as follows:

> I do not feel that many of my peers took the course seriously. As the professor himself stated, most of them left that class the same way they entered it. (Participant 11)

> It seemed that most peers displayed basic level of awareness of oppressed multicultural identities. However, they didn't seem to be as passionate or as fully

engrossed in the topic as I might have expected. Complex discussions did not

occur with these students within the courses. (Participant 13)

It was divisive and non-informative, not educational and it was [led] with

disrespect and non-compassion. (Participant 2)

Most of my peers seemed to be uneasy and unwilling to delve deeply into the

racial content. (Participant 10)

Those participants who reported positive peer interactions "felt as though the

peers in class were open to the experience of a difficult class and were able to engage in

productive conversations" (Participant 3). Thus, informing their experience of having

"some good interactions" (Participant 5) in their class.

Factors that determined whether participants had a positive or negative experience

with their peers in these courses included the willingness of their peers to engage in

discourse about race. It also seemed as though some of the participants in this study had a

desire and perhaps even an expectation for their peers to attend to the complexity of

racial dialogue. This sentiment showed up across a number of the questions in this study.

Research sub-question 6. How would you describe your peers' engagement,

reactions, and understandings of racial course content?

When participants went a step beyond simply peer interaction into their

perceptions of peer engagement, reactions, and understanding of racial content, they

seemed to approach this question from a few different angles. Some participants provided

comments based on level of engagement, reactions, or understanding (e.g., average,

mediocre, lacking, negative, etc.). Others provided their responses based on the

ethnoracial identities of their peers (e.g., students of color or White students). Five of the

11 participants (45%) who provided a response to this question described their peers'
engagement, reactions, and understanding of racial course content as mediocre. Six of the
11 participants (54%) who answered this question described their peers' engagement,
reactions, and understanding of racial course content as lacking or negative. In addition to
this, five of the 11 participants (45%) included language in their responses to this
question that spoke directly to how they felt their peers' ethnoracial identities informed
their engagement, reactions, and understanding of racial course content.

Some of the participants who described their peers' engagement, reactions, and
understanding of racial content as average expressed, "I would say that most of my peer's
understanding of racial course content was at a moderate level after leaving the class,"
"Some were open-minded others were close-minded," and "Everyone was open but I
think that was surface and the professors could have challenged all of us more." A few of
the participants whose responses to this question fell into the lacking or negative category
and were absent of ethnoracial comments were as follows.

> I felt the levels of engagement, reactions, and understandings were significantly
> lacking for many of my peers. However, there was a small number of my peers
> who had a broader understanding of racial content and were willing/able to
> engage more. (Participant 10)
> I think many of them were offended and defensive because they did not want to
> believe such things about themselves. (Participant 11)

There were a number of participants who felt that one's ethnoracial identity (i.e.,
their own, that of their peers, or both) influenced their peers' engagement, reactions, and
understanding of racial content in their diversity/multicultural courses.

I embarked on diversity courses with an initial optimism, hope, and erroneous assumption that the classes and education in general would be essential to making sure marginalized groups received culturally competent care from any/all clinicians (naive . . . I know). Fellow students of color and I were initially engaged, our reactions were earnest and sincere, and most of us had developed very in-depth understandings of racial discourse and content through both personal interest/endeavors, lived experiences, and investment in the course. As mentioned before, our White counterparts, engagement was minimal and shallow. Their reactions tended to perpetuate bias/prejudice, and their understanding of the course content seemed strictly academic—not intended for personal application. (Participant 4)

I felt most peers who were POC [people of color] or belonged to a marginalized group had some idea of the experiences and could relate. I felt many of the White students refused to engage or were evasive. (Participant 12)

I would say I'm mortified for the peers in my class going into [the] real world and causing real harm to patients. They display White fragility and discomfort around issues of race, social class and differences of lived experiences. (Participant 2)

It appeared that reactions were largely dependent on the identities of the student. For students who aligned strongly with an identity or identities that were oppressed and had deeper awareness of racial topics were the ones that wanted more from these courses. (Participant 13)

Majority of White students were not as vocal because they were uncomfortable and afraid to speak out. Most students of color were on the same page and had the same reactions as myself. (Participant 15)

Most participants felt peers who identified as being a person of color or held an identity that gets marginalized were more willing to actively engage in class participation related to race. The participants in this study felt those who held identities that get marginalized were willing to critically evaluate their biases and stereotypes of their own and other ethnoracial identities. Some participants attributed the difficulty their peers had engaging in racial discourse to White fragility and difficulty reflecting on their personal beliefs based on it possibly exposing to themselves and their peers truths they did not want exposed when it comes to race.

Research sub-question 7. What was your experience of content (class discourse, readings, lectures, projects, experiential learning, and videos) related to White racial identity development, White fragility, or working with White clients in your multicultural/diversity course?

The responses to this question seemed to fall into three different categories highlighting the degree (e.g., absent, minimal, or more than minimal) to which content related to White racial identity development, White fragility, or working with White clients in participants' multicultural/diversity courses was present. The participants who felt as though this content was not a part of their experiences in their classes described feeling it was simply "lacking" or that "none of the program was targeted to address that." The participants who felt there was minimal inclusion of these content areas

provided a little more detail in describing their experiences of this content. Participant 4 stated:

> My initial instinct is to say it was non-existent . . . but upon further reflection it
> was peppered into larger discussions, but not attended to nearly as much as it
> should have been. There were occasional reminders about White privilege and
> inclusion of the White racial identity model for review among other non-White
> identity models. Certain professors placed more emphasis on having White
> students more thoroughly examine the impact of their Whiteness on others, but
> this is certainly an area that is lacking within required diversity coursework.

Other participants reported sentiments such as, "I honestly don't remember these topics being discussed a lot, it was more of a skip and jump" (Participant 5), "In my opinion, there was not enough discussion on these matters. Most of the content was more focused on people of color" (Participant 10), and "White racial identity was covered briefly, and White students did not participate with the transparency that students who identified as POC were" (Participant 12).

The following excerpts are from participants who felt content related to White racial identity development, White fragility, or working with White clients was attended to more than minimally:

> These were topics discussed in class and at times it was difficult for me to hear
> the opinions of my White class members. However, through a facilitated
> discussion, I felt that all the student's opinions were heard, and it ended up being
> a productive experience. (Participant 3)

Much of the content did acknowledge the topic of Whiteness from a "White

privilege" perspective and stated the importance of exploring internal biases that

White people are not yet aware of. Having students explore their

privileged/oppressed identities primarily occurred through reflective papers.

(Participant 13)

The majority of the participants in this study felt attention to White racial identity

development and White fragility was relatively absent from their graduate level

diversity/multicultural psychology course experience. It also seemed that when it was

present, the depth of this dialogue was unfulfilling. It seemed participants saw the value

in White fragility and White racial identity being discussed but felt their White peers

either did not see the importance of it or did not engage in discourse pertaining to these

constructs. A few of the participants who were able to experience classes where this was

attended to in a meaningful manner expressed that though it was difficult to hear some of

the views of their White peers, they were able to benefit from having the discussions

facilitated in a manner that held space for all students to be respected and heard.

Research sub-question 8. What were some strengths and limitations of your

diversity/multicultural course as it relates to racial content (class discourse, lectures,

readings, projects, experiential learning, and videos)?

A few participants provided the strengths and limitations of their

diversity/multicultural courses as they related to racial content that captured the essence

of most participants. Those voices are included below.

While my experiences as a student were largely stressful, there can be no doubt

about the impact my emotional work had on White students. Through racial

discourse, I verbalized my frustration, anger, hurt, and rage in those classes (probably for the first time in my life) at the complacency and willful obstinance of "well-meaning" White folks when it comes to racial equality. That for me was a strength. It represented a space (not safe albeit) but a space nonetheless where I could grow and begin to grapple with a longstanding need to externalize issues that weren't in fact mine to internalize.

The weaknesses of the courses came through the ineptitude of my White peers and maybe failure on the part of some professors to promote balance in the amount of vulnerability being shared in those classes. The structure of the courses are set up in such a way that Whiteness is not challenged enough and White students are not held unapologetically accountable for their privilege and relative action/inaction in the service of racial equality. The readings and videos were often thought provoking, but they often simultaneously perpetuated racialized stereotypes. The quality and usefulness of group projects were often a mirror image of the divide between the students who "got it" and students whose investment in diversity was nil. (Participant 4)

Strength was that the course was led by a Black and gay identified professor who does have his own personal experiences of oppression, so he did not negate or minimize when others spoke about it. He explored various aspects and history of racial oppression.

However, a limitation was that he appeared to keep it at the level/complexity that the class was willing to go and avoided making it an

uncomfortable class. The main limitation was the discourse of the class and
limited engagement from peers. (Participant 13)

There was very little on other cultures and their experiences. The course seemed
very historical giving background while I would have liked to have some practical
examples of dynamics that could be present for future counselors and work
through how we would react with our biases. (Participant 7)

Other participants spoke to the design of their courses as a strength as they
"addressed the many stereotypes associated with people of color." Several participants
named having a professor of color as a strength of their diversity/multicultural courses as
it related to their experiences of racial content. In addition to the limitations already
described, there seemed to be a consensus among the participants that their
diversity/multicultural courses "lacked in the discussion of White people," "White
fragility/privilege, [and] White racial identity," and properly addressing "racism in the
class." The strengths and limitations voiced by the participants in this study showed that
although most of the participants experienced limitations in their graduate level
diversity/multicultural psychology courses, they attempted to present a balanced
understanding of their experiences by attempting to also identify strengths. It seemed one
theme found in the limitations of the participants' experiences was the emotional toll of
the way in which their courses were designed. Participants again highlighted the value of
having a professor of color or who held an identity that gets marginalized. Another theme
that emerged as a limitation but was also repeated in the responses to a number of
questions in this study was the desire for White students to participate more and critically
examine the role of Whiteness in racial discourse. The theme of desiring professors to

provide greater depth and breadth when it came to racial discussions in graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses also emerged.

Research sub-question 9. How has your experience in your diversity/multicultural course affected your navigation of race related topics academically or professionally?

The participants' experiences with race related topics in their diversity/multicultural courses resulted in them approaching other academic and professional settings in an array of ways. The participants with the most descriptive responses are included below.

> I believe that much of my continued growth and learning must come from my interactions with knowledgeable peers/supervisors/mentors/professors who are willing to engage in more complex conversation. That is how I see myself experiencing more challenging conversation. I don't see this growth occurring in classrooms. (Participant 13)

> Some days of course I have found it helpful. But it also sometimes makes me want to be more cautious of my safety especially when talking with White folks who are in/graduates of the program. I feel like while I can trust a few White peers, it mostly feels like there isn't any development in terms of their knowledge as a White individual navigating through these systems. (Participant 5)

> I currently serve as the Chair on the Diversity Committee for my agency's pre-doctoral internship program. It challenges me to continue pursuing education, training, and experiential projects that broaden and deepen my understanding of race related issues. As chairperson, I make a point to assess the scope of diversity

training and personal work incoming students have. I attempt to provide

opportunities for students to genuinely examine themselves as cultural beings and

thoroughly understanding the impact it has on others. I don't know if this is

necessarily the right way to go about it, but the emotional experiences around race

that started in my graduate training program (I had others, but those experienced

in academia had unique qualities)—pushed me to grow and develop. I connected

with my first Black professors and mentors through the issues I faced in those

classes. I hope I am able serve as a sense of community and connection for other

students of color. (Participant 4)

Multiple participants expressed the sentiment that after the experiences they had

in their graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses, they no longer felt they

could expect continued growth and learning related to ethnoracial identity to take place in

their academic programs. Some participants shifted their attention to trying to influence

change on a systemic level by getting involved with diversity related endeavors outside

of the academic setting as well as making themselves available to support other students

of color along their academic journeys. It seemed that regardless of participants'

experiences in these courses, they attempted to find ways to heal from or move forward

from their experiences in ways they felt were meaningful.

Research sub-question 10. Are there any personal experiences that you would

like to share?

To this final sub-question most participants indicated they were able to express all

they needed to about their experiences while providing responses to the other sub-

questions. Four participants had additional thoughts and personal experiences they wanted to share.

> Like I shared earlier, it is personally very exhausting to always see the same bunch of people talk about these "uncomfortable" topics in class and again, they would mostly be people of color. Also constantly being made to be the subject or White student's learning experience is harrowing and exhausting. (Participant 5)

> Sometimes when we discuss diversity in relation to race, I sit back and let the majority speak [because] I would like to understand how they conceptualize clients of color and also variation in some of their conservative views. (Participant 6)

> Yes, there is no respect or even attempt to understand the history of colonialism, neocolonialism and experiences of immigrants and refugees in the classroom. You are forced to pick an identity that the system has picked out for you. Sexism is not discussed in this program and the overt, covert ways men use their power to shut you up in the classroom and outside of the classroom promote other White men. (Participant 2)

> There are too many racist incidents which have not been managed by professors to even list. (Participant 12)

In their final comments, some participants found it imperative to once again highlight the emotional toll of participating in racial discourse in their graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses. Participants also felt compelled to provide ways in which these courses could improve that would entail a critical examination and deconstruction of Whiteness as the lens through which diversity courses in the

participants' programs of study were taught. The importance of having professors participate in addressing racist and oppressive incidents that occurred in these participants' graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology courses was again highlighted.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the experiences of students of color with racial content in their diversity/multicultural courses. The study was designed to delve deeper into the impact on students of color when race is discussed in these courses. The results indicated individual experiences were influenced by the ethnoracial identity of the participants, peers, and professors; the supportiveness of the professors and peers; and the level of engagement of peers among a number of unknown variables. The results of this study also highlighted that though there were definite overlaps between the experiences of participants, there were also distinct differences.

The responses of the participants also provided a glimpse into how at least this sample of students coped with their individual experiences. The duality of participants having decent experiences in their diversity/multicultural courses as they related to racial content and still longing for these types of courses to better address the needs of all students was noteworthy. There were also a number of participants who had some ideas about what elements of their graduate level psychology diversity courses needed to change or needed implementation to provide the type of educational experience they deemed pivotal when attending to their needs and addressing racial content. In the next and final chapter, the investigator compares the findings in relation to the literature

review, interprets the findings, and makes recommendation for curriculum, practice, and

further research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations for Future Research

Discussion

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the history of people of color training in the field of psychology. Despite there being research and literature with a focus on the contributions of these individuals to this discipline as well as the evolution in the ways in which people of color have been treated as patients, there remains a lack of information about the experiences of people of color navigating academic programs in psychology. This phenomenological study contributes to the extant multicultural and psychological training literature by describing the lived experiences of students of color in graduate level psychology diversity courses. Participants consistently identified how their graduate level psychology diversity courses failed to address their needs as students of color. Students described key experiences of the needs of White students taking precedent, learning occurring at the expense of students of color, and the unequal burden and emotional labor required.

Haskins et al. (2013), in a phenomenological study investigating the experiences of Black master's counseling students, highlighted that even with the increased enrollment of Black students at institutions, research shows these students continue to have inequitable experiences both in the classroom and with faculty members. Although some students of color in the current study reported there being opportunities for them to learn and expand their multicultural knowledge and awareness pertaining to racial content, this learning lacked depth and complexity and racist incidents went unchecked by professors. This resulted in students of color not only having to combat institutional racism but also having to engage in academic environments that condoned

microaggressions and stereotyping (A. Green, 2016). Condoning microaggressions and stereotyping includes not intervening or addressing when oppression and discrimination occur in the classroom. These slights render students of color invisible, resulting in them needing to engage in efforts to manage their experiences in their diversity courses by making intentional decisions about their level of engagement, investment, and sharing of their racial experiences in the presence of their White peers and certain faculty.

   The second chapter provided a review of the literature most related to the topic of this study. The challenges students of color in this study experienced with racial content in their graduate level psychology diversity courses were consistent with the overall experiences of students of color in their graduate programs of other related disciplines. For example, an outcome study of multicultural education showed the experiences of students of color in graduate level diversity courses being disregarded often (Curtis-Boles & Bourg, 2010). This same study also highlighted the phenomenon of graduate level psychology diversity courses disproportionately benefiting White students when compared to students of color (Curtis-Boles & Bourg, 2010). Seward (2014) found evidence to support that students of color often feel unsatisfied upon their completion of multicultural courses. The sentiment of viewing one's peers as either lacking in cultural knowledge regarding marginalized racial groups (Seward, 2014) was also reported in the results of the present study. The results from this study echoed the research sentiments from articles such as Haskins et al. (2013), specifically the revelation that in comparison to their White counterparts, Black students have different and often more difficult experiences. The findings in this study expand this to students of color having a more difficult and different experience than their peers. Taking this a step further, non-Black

students of color highlighted the way in which graduate level psychology diversity courses marginalized them further by overfocusing on Black–White dynamics, thus excluding them and their experiences.

As it relates to themes in this study, there were both relationships among themes and themes that some may deem conflicting. This is to be expected given two conflicting beliefs can coexist. An example of this was illuminated when results indicated that even when students of color in this study were satisfied with their overall experience in their graduate level psychology diversity course, participants still expressed discontent with the lack of challenging White students to examine themselves. It also was apparent that the professor being a person of color or holding some identity that gets marginalized was an important component of how participants experienced their courses, but they also needed more out of the curriculum structure and content. Other factors that may have influenced students' perceptions of their graduate level psychology diversity courses included the racial climate of their program as a whole and the number of students of color enrolled in the academic program.

Implications

The results from the present study emphasize the need for systemic changes in psychology curricula to ensure students of color are emphasized and mirrored in the curriculum. The lack of critical consideration of the needs of students of color within coursework and curriculum was underscored in this study as a number of the participants (i.e., students of color) described their needs being secondary to those of their White counterparts. Therefore, professors who instruct in psychology graduate level programs should address their individual roles in the further marginalization of students of color

not only in diversity courses pertaining to racial content but in these programs as a whole.

They also need to critically examine their role in upholding the status quo as it relates to

how diversity courses have historically been taught and for whom they have historically

been designed. This also has broader implications for practices, standards, and

accrediting bodies for these educational programs. As Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) argued,

"A central problem of multicultural education involves challenging the universalization

of whiteness" (p. 81). Thus, graduate level psychology diversity courses need to move

away from curriculum that centers the problems of inclusion and racial discourse on

understanding the marginalized other.

Additionally, results support that psychology professors need to address and work

to improve the racial climate of their classrooms, and by extension their programs as a

whole. Fier and Ramsey (2005) noted the need for educators to move away from

monocultural teaching approaches given students of differing cultural backgrounds and

identities have varying ways of conceptualizing and responding to ideas of diversity. The

current study was conducted in 2019 and, according to the results, there has not been

much movement. In addition to the need to increase the number of students of color

attending and completing APA-accredited psychology programs, the capacity to educate

these students in an environment that does not cause harm and that can be intentional and

thoughtful in the ways in which it handles racial content needs to increase.

Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) proposed a theoretical framework with the goal of

enhancing the multicultural perspective that calls for the exploration and deconstruction

of Whiteness as a key component. The idea is to shift White racial identity from being the

universal norm. This approach to developing and implementing a multicultural

curriculum seems to speak to some of the needs that were expressed in the narratives of participants in this study. It seems as though focusing on how to teach clinicians how to work with the marginalized other has been the approach across psychology diversity courses presented in this study without a thorough examination of the systemic structures that created the need for such training. That is, it seems the way in which some graduate level psychology diversity courses are continuing to be taught is treating the symptoms and not attending to deconstructing or examining the root of the problem.

Based on the data provided within this study, there are a number of ways in which training can be improved. One way this can occur is by being more intentional about requiring professors to integrate diversity/multicultural content throughout all curriculum in the program and rethinking the placement of diversity/multicultural required courses in the degree plan. Many graduate level psychology programs require a minimum of one diversity/multicultural course, usually taking place during the first academic year. Adding additional diversity/multicultural course requirements every semester could be another way to fill the void experienced by students of color in these programs. Programs could also add diversity/multicultural courses with an emphasis on ethnoracial identities as a way to critically examine the ways in which ethnicity and race have influenced how students not only view their peers and educators but also their clinical work. It is not enough to simply add a course with an emphasis on ethnoracial identity, as professors teaching such a course should be intentional about addressing systemic racism and Whiteness, viewing people from different ethnoracial identities as the "other," the unequal burden placed on people of color and creating equitable spaces, deconstructing power and privilege, and not only examining stereotypes and biases but incorporating

interventions to move beyond. It could be of tremendous value to implement an anti-racist curriculum into graduate level psychology training programs. Integrating some of these suggestions could address participants' need for "course content to move beyond basic overviews of cultural groups and basic concepts." It could also move away from the participants experiencing these courses as "what White people need to know or do" to work with people who have different ethnoracial identities and neglecting "other cultures and their experiences." This would require professors to obtain a "deeper understanding and investment in work around diversity and multiculturalism." In order to do this, professors would need to invest in understanding the self as an ethnoracial being, their biases, systemic and structural racism and its widespread impact, and developing the ability to be vulnerable with their students. This vulnerability includes acknowledging their limitations and how they are working to be better as an individual, educator, and clinician. It includes holding all students accountable for not showing up in class discussions regardless of the fact that some students may rate them poorly at mid- and end of year evaluations. It includes administrators supporting professors when students do not pass the course given their lack of investment in the course content and participation.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

Several limitations to the present study should be considered. First, given the small sample size in this study, the ability to transfer findings to students of color in other training programs may be limited. The present study reflects students' perspectives of racial content in their graduate level psychology diversity courses. Future research should also be conducted with students of color to examine their experiences with racial content

throughout their entire programs. Second, in an effort to be inclusive of all gender identities, the survey provided an open response box but was not specific in the instructions on indicating demographics to address this question. As a result, some participants endorsed either only identifying as cis- or trans- or only identifying as female, non-binary, or male, inherently creating a limited understanding of participants' full gender identities (e.g., cis-male, non-binary, trans-woman, etc.). Future research should be conducted with this correction. Third, this study was an online anonymous survey with no follow-up with participants. This resulted in some participants providing one-word responses to questions and other participants providing paragraph responses. Future researchers should replicate this study by conducting in-person interviews in an effort to ask participants follow-up questions to garner a more detailed understanding of their experiences. Fourth, when participants selected the "yes" option for being an international student, they did not have to indicate country of origin. This resulted in some participants putting their country of origin whereas other international students did not. In future research, "country of origin" for those who indicate "yes" should be made mandatory. Fifth, the demographic question collecting the enrollment status of each student was not specific in what participants should include when answering this question, creating inconsistency in how participants input their enrollment status. Some individuals indicated their year, full-time, and graduate status, whereas some others only reported one or two components of their enrollment status. Future research should provide an example of the requested information (i.e., year, full-time/part-time, and graduate status). Finally, there was inconsistency in the reporting of what year participants took their diversity/multicultural course. Some participants provided the year

according to the calendar year (e.g., 2017) and some participants provided the year they were in their program when they took a diversity course (e.g., first year). Future research could be more specific about desired information in the form of providing an example of appropriate responses. Future researchers should examine further the curriculum needs of these students in an effort to begin developing curriculum that is constantly adapting to meet the needs of all students, not just White students.

References

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

American Psychological Association. (2017). *Multicultural guidelines: An ecological approach to context, identity, and intersectionality*. Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/about/policy/multicultural-guidelines.pdf

American Psychological Association Committee on Accreditation & Accreditation Office. (1986). *Accreditation handbook*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Atkinson, R., & Flint, J. (2001). Accessing hidden and hard-to-reach populations: Snowball research strategies. *Social Research Update, 33*.

Bowman, N. A. (2009). College diversity courses and cognitive development among students from privileged and marginalized groups. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 2*(3), 182–194. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016639

Buckley, T. R., & Foldy, E. G. (2010). A pedagogical model for increasing race-related multicultural counseling competency. *The Counseling Psychologist, 38*(5), 691–713. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000009360917

Case, K. A. (2007). Raising White privilege awareness and reducing racial prejudice: Assessing diversity course effectiveness. *Teaching of Psychology, 34*(4), 231–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/00986280701700250

Cole, E. R., Case, K. A., Rios, D., & Curtin, N. (2011). Understanding what students bring to the classroom: Moderators of the effects of diversity courses on student

attitudes. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 17*, 397–405. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025433

Curtis-Boles, H., & Bourg, E. (2010). Experiences of students of color in a graduate level diversity course. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 4*(3), 204– 212. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017985

Davis, S. F., & Buskist, W. (2007). *21st century psychology: A reference handbook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Diggles, K. (2014). Addressing racial awareness and color-blindness in higher education. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, Winter 2014*, 31–44. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20111

Fier, E. B., & Ramsey, M. (2005). Ethical challenges in the teaching of multicultural course work. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 33*(2), 94– 107. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1912.2005.tb00008.x

Graham, L., Brown-Jeffy, S., Aronson, R., & Stephens, C. (2011). Critical race theory as theoretical framework and analysis tool for population health research. *Critical Public Health, 21*(1), 61–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2010.493173

Green, A. (2016, January 21). The cost of balancing academia and racism: Researchers say that discrimination at colleges and universities may have negative impacts on Black students' mental health. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/balancing-academia-racism/424887/

Green, D., Callands, T. A., Radcliffe, A. M., Luebbe, A. M., & Klonoff, E. A. (2009). Clinical psychology students' perceptions of diversity training: A study of

exposure and satisfaction. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 65*(10), 1056–1070. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20605

Haskins, N., Whitfield-Williams, M., Shillingford, M. A., Singh, A., Moxley, R., & Ofauni, C. (2013). The experiences of Black master's counseling students: A phenomenological inquiry. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 52*(3), 162–178. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2013.00035.x

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

Henfield, M. S., Owens, D., & Witherspoon, S. (2011). African American students in counselor education programs: Perceptions of their experiences. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 50*(4), 226–242. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2011.tb00121.x

Holliday, B. G. (2009). The history and visions of African American psychology: Multiple pathways to place, space, and authority. *Cultural Diveristy and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 15*(4), 317–337. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016971

Hoskins, M. (2003). What unites us, what divided us? A multicultural agenda within child and youth care. *Child and Youth Care Forum, 28*(2), 319–336. https://doi.org/10.1023/b:ccar.0000004505.45432.64

Korman, M. (1974). National conference on levels and patterns of professional training in psychology: The major themes. *American Psychologist, 29*(6), 441–449. https://doi.org/10.1037/10047-002

Malott, K. M., Paone, T. R., Schaefle, S., Cates, J., & Haizlip, B. (2015). Expanding White racial identity theory: A qualitative investigation of Whites engaged in

antiracist action. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 93*(3), 333–343.

https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12031

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.).

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Martinez, S. (2014). Teaching a diversity course at a predominantly White institution:

Success with statistics. *Journal of College Student Development, 55*(1), 75–78.

https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0005

Murphy, M. J., Park, J., & Lonsdale, N. J. (2006). Marriage and family therapy students'

change in multicultural counseling competencies after a diversity course.

Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal, 28(3), 303–311.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10591-006-9009-8

Ortiz, A. M., & Rhoads, R. A. (2000). Deconstructing Whiteness as a part of a

multicultural framework: From theory to practice. *Journal of College Student*

Development, 41(1), 81–93.

Parker, L., & Lynn, M. (2002). What's race got to do with it? Critical race theory's

conflicts with and connections to qualitative research methodology and

epistemology. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(1), 7–22.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800402008001002

Richards, G. (1997). *'Race', racism and psychology: Towards a reflexive history*.

London, UK: Routledge.

Ridley, C. R., & Kleiner, A. J. (2003). Multicultural counseling competence. In D. B.

Pope-Davis, H. L. Coleman, W. M. Liu, & R. L. Toporek (Eds.), *Handbook of*

multicultural competencies in counseling & psychology (pp. 3–20). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Rutherford, A., & Davis, J. M. (2008). Women and minorities in psychology. In S. F. Davis & W. Buskist (Eds.), *21st century psychology: A reference handbook* (pp. 25–36). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Sawyer, T. F. (2000, May). Fancis Cecil Sumner: His views and influence on African American higher education. *History of Psychology, 3*(2), 122–141. https://doi.org/10.1037/1093-4510.3.2.122

Seward, D. X. (2009). *Understanding students of color in multicultural counselor training courses: A qualitative investigation of student perspectives* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Rochester, Rochester, NY.

Seward, D. X. (2014). Multicultural course pedagogy: Experiences of master's-level students of color. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 53*(1), 62–79.

Smith Goosby, J. E. (2002). *From black, white to shades of gray: Exploring differences in diversity learning and development between Black and White graduate students* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2013). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Trainor, J. S. (2002). Critical pedagogy's "other": Constructions of Whiteness in education for social change. *College Composition and Communication, 53*(4), 631–650. https://doi.org/10.2307/1512119

Treinen, K. P., & Warren, J. T. (2001). Antiracist pedagogy in the basic course: Teaching cultural communication as if Whiteness matters. *Basic Communication Course Annual, 13*, 46–75.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2018, July 1). *Quick facts United States*. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045218

Vazquez, L. A., & Garcia-Vazquez, E. (2003). Teaching multicultural competence in the counseling curriculum. In D. B. Pope-Davis, H. L. Coleman, W. M. Liu, & R. L. Toporek (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural competencies in counseling and psychology* (pp. 546–561). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231693.n34

Williams, A. F. (2008). *Multicultural training in a clinical psychology doctoral program: A template for conducting a cultural audit* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA.

Zamudio, M. M., Russell, C., Rios, F. A., & Bridgeman, J. L. (2011). *Critical race theory matters: Education and ideology*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

1. How would you describe your overall experience in your graduate level diversity/multicultural psychology course?

2. How was racial content (class discourse, readings, lectures, projects, experiential learning and videos) addressed in your course?

3. How would you describe your experience with your diversity/multicultural professor?

4. How would you describe your diversity/multicultural professor's ability to manage and/or facilitate racial content?

5. How would you describe your peer interactions in your diversity/multicultural course?

6. How would you describe your peer's engagement, reactions, understandings of racial course content?

7. What was your experience of content (class discourse, readings, lectures, projects, experiential learning and videos) related to white racial identity development, white fragility or working with white clients in your multicultural/diversity course?

8. What were some strengths and limitations of your diversity/multicultural course as it relates to racial content (class discourse, lectures, readings, projects, experiential learning and videos)?

9. How has your experience in your diversity/multicultural course impacted your navigation of race related topics academically and/or professionally?

10. Are there any personal experiences that you would like to share?

Appendix B: Recruitment Email

Dear Psychology Doctoral Student/Graduate:

I am currently a doctoral student at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology at Argosy University.

I invite you to take part in a study to understand the experiences of students of color in graduate level psychology diversity courses. The experiences of students of color will be generally defined as reactions (emotional, physical, somatic) to class discourse, readings, projects, experiential learning and videos pertaining to race.

You may be eligible to participate if you:
a) are 18 years of age or older
b) identify as racially/ethnically marginalized or non-white
c) attend(ed) an APA-accredited institution
d) completed a graduate level psychology diversity course within the past 4 years or are currently enrolled in a graduate level psychology diversity course.
e) are not currently enrolled at Argosy University
f) do not have a personal relationship with the researcher

Your participation would involve filling out an anonymous questionnaire which includes both responding to demographic information as well as responding with narrative comments to open-ended questions. The entire survey is anticipated to take 30-60 minutes to complete. Please note that participation is completely voluntary, and that you are free to withdraw at any time. This study has been certified by the Argosy University Institutional Review Board, protocol # 1348.

The survey link is included below.

Click Here

Thank you for your consideration.

Warm Regards,
Lakesha Winley, MA
Clinical Psychology Doctoral Student
The Illinois School of Professional Psychology
wk.winleyk@gmail.com

Appendix C: Informed Consent

Experiences of Graduate Level Students of Color with Race in Psychology Diversity

Courses

I understand that I have been asked to participate in the research study, **Experiences of Graduate Level Students of Color with Race in Psychology Diversity Courses.** I was selected as a possible participant because I am/was a graduate student in clinical or counseling psychology and have completed a diversity psychology course in the past 4 years or I am currently taking said course. I am age 18 or over and identify as a student of color. I understand it is anticipated that approximately 15 people will participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of students of color in graduate level psychology diversity courses. The experiences of students of color will be generally defined as reactions (emotional, physical, somatic) to class discourse, readings, lectures, projects, experiential learning and videos pertaining to race.

I understand that if I participate, I will be asked to complete an online survey which will take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete. I understand this survey is confidential and that no uniquely identifying information is being collected. The survey consists of a questionnaire that asks about my experiences in my graduate level psychology diversity course. I understand the data from this study will be anonymous and it will be secured in a password-protected computer file. No words linking me to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published.

I understand that I have a right to choose not to participate at any point in the survey, and I can close my browser at any time without submitting the survey. I understand that my data may not be used if my survey is incomplete. I understand data will be kept in a secured file and destroyed after three years.

I understand are no personal benefits to me if I complete this study. I understand there are minimal risks associated with participating in this survey. I understand that reflecting on experiences in my diversity course may elicit feelings of distress. If I do experience any psychological distress as a result of participation in this study or research related concerns/questions I understand I contact the Principal Investigator, Lakesha Winley, MA at Argosy University, Chicago; 225 N. Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60601; Phone: (910) 231-3725; Email: Lakesha.winley@stu.argosy.edu. I may also contact the faculty Chairperson of this study, Torrey Wilson, Ph.D., at Argosy University, Chicago, 225 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1300, Chicago, IL 60601, by email at twilson@argosy.edu or by phone at (312) 777-7616. For a list of therapists in your local area, enter your zip code in the following link: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board, Argosy University-Chicago. For research-related problems or questions regarding participants' rights, I can contact the Institutional Review Board through Dr. Leah Horvath, IRB Chair, at (312) 777-7681. or lhorvath@argosy.edu.

I have read and understand the above. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. By continuing this survey, I consent to participate in the study. I understand that I am entitled to a copy of this consent form, and I should print out a copy of this page for my records.

Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaires

Please answer the following questions. This information will be used for general description purposes of the study participants.

Age: _____
Gender:
      Gender Non-Conforming
      Transgender
      Cisgender
      Other: _____

Sexual/orientation
      Heterosexual
      Lesbian
      Bisexual
      Other _____

Ethnic/Racial Identity:
      Black _____
      Asian/Pacific Islander _____
      Latina/o/x _____
      Indigenous/Native American _____
      Bi/Multi-Racial _____ (Please Specify) _____
      Other: _____

Are you or were you an international student?
      Yes
      No
      Country of Origin: _____

Program of Study (Counseling Psychology, Clinical Psychology, etc.):
_____

What is your Enrollment Status? (1st year, Graduate, Full-Time, Part-Time, etc.)
_____

What year did you take/complete a Diversity/Multicultural Course? _____

How Many Diversity/Multicultural Courses have you taken/completed? _____

Are you Currently Enrolled in a Diversity/Multicultural Course?
      Yes
      No

Appendix E: Thank You/Resource List

Thank you for your time, participation and willingness to share your experience.

Resources:

For a list of therapists in your local area, enter your zip code in the following link:

https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255

CARES line (Talk with a mental health professional)

1-800-345-9049

National Institute of Mental Health

1-866-615-6464

https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help/index.shtml

What Should You Do if You Have a Complaint About Your Program?

http://www.apa.org/education/grad/apags-complaint.aspx

Minority Fellowship Program

http://www.apa.org/pi/mfp/index.aspx