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Religious and Spiritual Issues
in Counseling Psychology Training

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To explore the kind of training counseling psychology programs provide with respect to religious and spiritual issues, surveys were distributed to training directors or desig- nated representatives of 69 counseling psychology programs in the United States. Responses were received from 40, or 58%, of the programs. Results indicated that pro- grams offered relatively little in the way of formal course work in religious or spiritual issues. In addition, participants indicated that in their programs (a) religion and spiritu- ality were often but not always considered a diversity issue; (b) knowledge about reli- gious and spiritual traditions was not generally seen as important to the expertise of fac- ulty members, practicum supervisors, and therapists; (c) religious and spiritual issues received variable attention in didactic and practicum training; and (d) there was consid- erable openness to research on religious and spiritual topics. Results are discussed in terms of their relevance to counseling psychology practice, research, and professional identity.

The emergence of multiculturalism as a "force" (Pedersen, 1991) in coun- seling has been accompanied by an increased interest in religion and spiritu- ality as important aspects of culture and cultural identity (Worthington, Kurusu, McCollough, & Sandage, 1996). In psychology as in anthropology, religious values and beliefs have long been considered among the defining elements of culture, reflecting a culture's shared perspectives on ethical and existential issues (Bishop, 1992; Pate & Bondi, 1992). The inclusion of reli- gion as an aspect of diversity in education was emphasized recently at the Melbourne UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) Conference on Education for the 21st Century (Haw & Hughes, 1998), in which training for diversity was specifically linked to the

"multicultural and multi-faith context" (Haw & Hughes, 1998, p. 156) of Pacific societies.

In counseling, the multicultural literature has stimulated a broader conception of religion and the related concept of spirituality (e.g., Bishop, 1992; Mack, 1994; Pate & Bondi, 1992). (The terms *religion* and *spirituality* have overlapping meanings but are not entirely interchangeable. The term *religion* is more applicable to some traditions and value systems than to others; the term *spirituality* is more cross-culturally applicable and more inclusive [cf. Pargament, 1999; Wulff, 1997]. The terms are used together for maximal inclusiveness in this article.) The trend toward recognizing the importance of religion and spirituality as important elements of culture is illustrated throughout the *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling* (Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 1995). For example, Choney, Berryhill-Paapke, and Robbins (1995) stressed the significance of religion and spirituality on the racial identity of American Indians. Leong, Wagner, and Tata (1995) noted the importance of spirituality and church community in the lives of African Americans. More generally, Lee and Armstrong (1995) discussed the centrality of a psychospiritual perspective in the treatment practices of traditional shamanic healers, whose techniques are increasingly being studied and used in certain counseling settings (e.g., Garrett, 1995; Kerr & McAlister, 2000; Topper, 1987). Further reflection of this trend is apparent in a recent special issue of the *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* (Constantine, 1999), which includes articles on African American and Native American spirituality. In addition, the American Psychological Association's (APA's) (1993) "Guidelines for Providers of Psychological Services to Ethnic, Linguistic, and Culturally Diverse Populations" recommended that "psychologists respect clients' religious and/or spiritual beliefs and values, including attributions and taboos, since they affect world view, psychosocial functioning, and expressions of distress" (p. 46).

In adopting a multicultural approach to religion and spirituality, the conceptual literature has focused largely on the relationship between the religious client and the secular counselor (Genia, 1994; Stander, Piercy, MacKinnon, & Helmeke, 1994). The same is true of empirical research. For example, secular counselors are far less likely to be involved in organized religion than their clients are (Bergin & Jensen, 1990; Goud, 1990). This does not necessarily indicate, however, that secular counselors reject a religious client's experience, as is sometimes assumed (Genia, 1994). Indeed, research has shown that counselors are unlikely to challenge the religious views of their clients (Shafranske & Malony, 1990a, 1990b), and furthermore, one study has found that clients actually report greater improvement in relationships where the counselor has dissimilar religious values (Martinez, 1991).

On the other hand, the personal perspectives of counselors about religion and spirituality are linked to their perceptions of and approaches to counseling. In a survey of members of the California State Psychological Association, Shafranske and Gorsuch (1984) reported that "perception of the relevance of spiritual practice is related significantly to the psychologist's *personal* [italics added] orientation" (p. 239). The findings of the study suggest that a client's religious or spiritual material might, in the case of nonreligious counselors, be disregarded as irrelevant or, in the case of religious counselors, reconceptualized within their own religious framework. Martinez (1991) found indirect evidence of the latter in his study, in which perceptions of client improvement by the counselor were related to client convergence toward the counselor's personal religious values. Finally, Worthington and Scott (1983) found that counselors' treatment goals for clients were more likely to reflect clients' religious beliefs if the counselors shared those beliefs (the religious beliefs in this case were conservative Christian). Such findings point to the potential impact of counselors' personal religious beliefs in the counseling process, an impact that may be positive but also negative. For just as there is the risk that religious counselors might impose their religious values on clients, however inadvertently, there is also the risk that counselors who are nonreligious or religiously uninformed might be insensitive to important aspects of client experience. The potential for such negative outcomes has been borne out by other research (e.g., Keating & Fretz, 1990) as well and has led to a concern that counselors be trained to be more competent in dealing with religious and spiritual issues, just as they are trained to be cross-culturally competent with respect to issues of race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability (Genia, 1994; Mack, 1994).

There has been little research on religion and spirituality as a component of training in counseling psychology. Three surveys involving other types of mental health training have examined the importance given to such issues. Sansone, Khatain, and Rodenhauser (1990) surveyed members of the American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training. Respondents were asked to answer, using a 6-point Likert-type scale, questions regarding religion in four content domains: recruitment, didactic program, clinical program, and administrative issues. The researchers found that religion plays an unimportant role in any aspect of psychiatric residency. More specifically, religion is generally not explored in recruitment interviews, residents are rarely exposed to didactic instruction on religion, discussion concerning religion usually does not take place during clinical supervision, and the disciplining or impairment of a resident due to religious issues is rare. Pate and High (1995) administered an extremely brief questionnaire to heads of counseling programs accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of

Counseling and Related Educational Programs. Their survey requested "yes" or "no" responses to seven questions about training practices, as well as open-ended comments. Though their survey appeared designed to elicit surface-level, nonspecific information, their results did indicate that religious and spiritual issues were addressed in the curriculum of 60% of the responding programs and in the practicum of 67% of the programs. However, the study did not indicate how or how much these issues were addressed. In addition, 60% of their respondents believed "counselor's awareness of a . . . [client's] religious beliefs and practices" (p. 3) to be somewhat important, and 24% believed them not to be important at all.

Kelly's (1994) survey of heads of counseling programs was more extensive than Pate and High's (1995) and yielded somewhat different findings. Kelly found that "religious and spiritual issues occur as a course or significant non-course component in fewer than 25% of the programs" (p. 234). He also found that programs in state-affiliated institutions gave significantly less attention to these issues than those in religious-affiliated institutions did. In addition, only half of the counselor educators responding to his survey considered religious and spiritual issues to be important in training, whether didactic or practicum. One drawback to Kelly's study was that only some of his survey items had to do with the state of affairs in training, whereas others had to do with opinions about training. The Kelly study also did not examine research issues or religion as a diversity issue. In addition, many of Kelly's items, including some adapted from Sansone et al. (1990), were structurally complicated and not given to straightforward interpretation.

Though the studies by Pate and High (1995) and Kelly (1994) contributed to our understanding of the perceptions of religion and spirituality in counseling, we felt that they did not (nor were they intended to) provide much detail about the role of religion and spirituality in counseling psychology training. There are several compelling reasons to extend this research into counseling psychology. First, counseling psychology as a specialty has a strong tradition of commitment to cultural diversity, a commitment that is reflected in the conceptual base of the profession as well as in the components of training, including course work, practicum, and research. Because many view religion and spirituality as important aspects of culture, it would be useful to examine how counseling psychologists address these issues in their training. Second, counseling psychologists are heavily involved in the training of practitioners and supervisors in psychology and counseling. The kind of training counseling psychologists receive with respect to religion and spirituality is relevant to the training and supervision that they in turn provide. What is the extent of this training with respect to religious and spiritual issues? Third, given the research emphasis of many counseling psychology programs, the research

training provided in these programs is also likely to influence the acceptability and nature of religious and spiritual research in applied psychology. Finally, because none of the previous studies in this area have examined the several components of training—didactic, practicum, and research—taken together, we wanted to explore training more comprehensively in the present study.

For these reasons, the present survey was conducted to explore the extent and variety of training experiences that counseling psychology programs offer relevant to religion and spirituality. *Religion* and *spirituality* were left deliberately undefined in the study, as in other studies in the area, so that survey respondents could supply their own meanings of these terms. In addition, the survey instrument was different from those used previously in that it contained more items and more specific item content, though some item content overlapped with that of other instruments. Like Sansone et al.'s (1990) survey, the present survey had a largely uniform item format and grouped items into thematic areas. In this study, there were the following four areas of inquiry: (a) inclusion of religion and spirituality as an issue of diversity in the domain of counseling psychology; (b) consideration of religious and spiritual knowledge as part of a counseling psychologist's expertise, especially in teaching, supervision, and therapy; (c) inclusion of religion and spirituality in the didactic instruction and practicum training in counseling psychology; and (d) openness to religious and spiritual topics in counseling psychology research. The first two areas were chosen because they concern the conceptual context within which such training takes place, specifically, cultural diversity and the specialty of counseling psychology. The second two areas were chosen because they constitute the major areas of training.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 40 training directors or representatives of member programs of the Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs (CCPTP), whose institutional members were invited to participate. At the time of data collection, CCPTP had an institutional membership of 69 counseling psychology programs; thus, responses were received from representatives of 58% of the programs. (This number serves as the return rate.) In addition, 36 of the participants represented programs accredited by the APA. They constituted 50% of the 72 counseling psychology programs accredited by APA in 1998. (This accreditation total excludes programs in the process of

being phased out but includes combined programs with a counseling emphasis.)

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was constructed by the researchers with the purpose, as stated in the survey instructions, of "exploring the extent to which religious and spiritual issues are included in the training experience of students" in counseling psychology programs. The instructions also asked participants to consider the terms *religious* and *spiritual* broadly as they completed the survey and not to equate these terms "exclusively with any particular tradition or system of values." By including both the terms *religious* and *spiritual* in the instructions, we followed the example of Kelly (1994), who included both terms "on the assumption that both have potential, related influences on counseling and counselor education" (p. 228). Though we understand the terms to have distinct meanings and connotations, they fall within the same conceptual domain (Hill et al., 2000; Zinnbauer et al., 1997), and the use of both terms, especially when the focus is not on one particular tradition, is common in the literature (e.g., Pargament, 1999; Wulff, 1997).

The first part of the survey used an open response format, in which participants were provided with spaces to indicate (a) the APA accreditation status of the program, (b) the estimated proportion (as a percentage) of faculty members and students in the program who are openly religious or spiritual (two items), (c) the number of courses in the program that have a religious or spiritual theme and that include some religious or spiritual content (two items), and (d) the estimated number of research projects on religious or spiritual topics conducted in the past 2 years. To discourage baseless responses, the estimation items explicitly included an option for participants to indicate that they had "no idea" of the proportion or number being requested.

The remaining 22 items consisted of statements about the participants' training program in counseling psychology. We chose these survey items to represent the four stated content areas of the study, namely (a) whether religion and spirituality are included as a diversity issue in the domain of counseling psychology, as conceived by the program (7 items, reduced to 6 in the analysis); (b) whether religious and spiritual knowledge is considered relevant to a counseling psychologist's expertise in the program (4 items); (c) whether religious and spiritual content is included in the program's didactic instruction and practicum training (9 items); and (d) whether program faculty members are open to research on religious and spiritual topics in counseling psychology (2 items). The content of 21 items ultimately associated

TABLE 1: Response Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations for the Survey Items

Item	Completely False	More False Than True	Total False	More True Than False	Completely True	Total True	M	SD
Religion and spirituality as a diversity issue in counseling psychology								
1. R/S issues are regularly discussed as issues of diversity in the program.	23	46	69	21	10	31	2.18	0.91
2. R/S diversity is considered as important in the program as other kinds of diversity, such as ethnicity or gender.	15	50	65	25	10	35	2.30	0.85
3. Students in the program are encouraged to explore issues related to R/S.	8	45	53	40	8	48	2.48	0.75
4. Students in the program learn about R/S diversity.	18	28	49[a]	43	5	48	2.36[b]	0.84
5. Students in the program seem comfortable discussing their own R/S.	3	39	42	49	8	57	2.63[b]	0.67
6. R/S are accepted as an important cultural dimension in the program.	8	31	39	51	10	61	2.64	0.78
Religious and spiritual knowledge as part of a counseling psychologist's expertise								
7. Faculty members in the program are expected to be knowledgeable about various R/S traditions.[c]	48	43	91	5	5	10	1.68	0.80
8. Knowledge of various R/S traditions is considered an important part of a supervisor's expertise in the program.[c]	33	43	76	23	0	23	1.91[b]	0.75
9. Knowledge of various R/S traditions is considered an important part of a therapist's expertise in the program.[c]	28	44	72	23	5	28	2.05	0.86
10. In the program R/S issues are considered an important part of the domain of counseling psychology theory, research, and practice.	10	48	58	30	5	35	2.34[b]	0.72
Religious and spiritual content in didactic instruction and practicum training								
11. Students in the program learn about R/S development.[c]	33	54	87	13	0	13	1.80	0.66
12. Students in the program are discouraged from including R/S themes in class discussion or written assignments.[c]	35	40	75	25	0	25	1.90	0.78

Item	1	2	Total False	3	4	Total True	M	SD
13. Students in the program learn about the R/S manifestations of psychological disorder.[c]	30	43	73	28	0	28	1.98	0.77
14. Students in the program learn about R/S influences in theories of personality and therapy.	15	51	66	31	3	34	2.21	0.73
15. Students in the program learn how R/S variables interact with other psychological variables in influencing behavior.	18	46	64	31	3	34	2.19[b]	0.76
16. The R/S manifestations of psychological disorders are addressed in the program's practica.	26	28	57[a]	33	6	39	2.19[b]	0.89
17. Approaches to therapy that include R/S components are accepted as legitimate in the program.	3	31	34	51	10	61	2.72[b]	0.68
18. R/S issues are discussed in practicum seminars.	13	18	34[a]	53	13	66	2.65[b]	0.87
19. Practicum supervisors in the program are open to discussing the client's R/S if it seems relevant to the case.[c]	0	23	23	48	30	78	3.08	0.73
Research on religious and spiritual topics in counseling psychology								
20. Faculty members in the program are willing to supervise student research on R/S issues.[c]	3	15	18	48	35	83	3.15[b]	0.77
21. Faculty members in the program are open to research on R/S issues.[c]	0	10	10	45	45	90	3.35	0.66

NOTE: Possible scale responses for each item are 1 = *completely false*, 2 = *more false than true*, 3 = *more true than false*, and 4 = *completely true*. Means and standard deviations are based on this 4-point scale. The total false percentage for each item reflects the sum of percentages of those responding 1 and 2, except where indicated by a footnote; the total true percentage reflects the sum of percentages of those responding 3 and 4. Percentages may not total exactly 100 due to rounding. Though *N* = 40 for the study, *n* = 39 for Items 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, and 17. R/S = "religion or spirituality" or "religion and spirituality" (depending on the context) when the phrase serves as a noun and "religious/spiritual" when the phrase serves as an adjective.

a. The total false percentage for this item reflects an additional 3% of participants who responded 1.5.

b. The mean and standard deviation for this item reflect an additional percentage of those responding 2.5 (the hypothetical scale midpoint); the additional percentage, not listed in the table, was between 3% and 8%, depending on the particular item bearing this footnote.

c. Items that met the criterion of 70% total true or total false.

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with these content areas is presented in abbreviated form in Table 1 by content area; the remaining item, removed from the first content area, is described and discussed separately in the text. Survey items were worded to reflect the current state of affairs in the training program and not attitudes about the way things should be.

Participants indicated the extent to which these statements applied to their programs on separate 4-point scales (1 = *completely false*, 2 = *more false than true*, 3 = *more true than false*, and 4 = *completely true*). The scales had an even number of steps, as recommended by Nunnally (1969), to minimize effects of a neutral response style. Even so, as survey results indicated, participants created and used a neutral midpoint 13 times in responding to the survey; these responses accordingly received scores of 2.5. The survey concluded with a request that participants write any thoughts they had about training in religious or spiritual issues in counseling psychology.

Because there is no theory of training in this area, we developed the survey items with the intention of yielding adequate content representation of each area with minimal overlap among items and, in some cases, to reflect the content of previous surveys in more detail. Specifically, the diversity items paralleled the way other diversity issues (e.g., ethnicity) are typically considered in programs, according to the multicultural training literature (e.g., Ponterotto et al., 1995). The expertise items reflected general knowledge for faculty and clinical knowledge for supervisors, respectively. The instructional items reflected the numerous content areas and activities involved in didactic course work and practicum. The research items concerned the appropriateness of research topics for faculty members and students. We solicited feedback regarding the survey instrument from two faculty members and three student colleagues, whose research interests included religious and spiritual issues and who were knowledgeable about training in this area. Specifically, we asked them about the extent to which the items related to the content areas, possible redundancies in item content, and any ambiguities in item wording. Their feedback led to minor changes in the wording of some items but no deletion or addition of items. They judged that the items reasonably related to the four content areas of the survey.

Because we wished to examine the items by content area, we were additionally interested in the internal consistency of items within each content area. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the content areas in this study were .84 for the first area, religion and spirituality as a diversity issue (six items); .74 for the second area, religious and spiritual knowledge as part of a counseling psychologist's expertise (four items); .80 for the third area, religious and spiritual content in didactic instruction and practicum training (nine items); and .86 for the fourth area, research on religious and spiritual topics (two items). A remaining item, which had to do with whether religious or spiritual

involvements are seen as relevant credentials for applicants to the program, was originally intended as a diversity item and was statistically consistent with other items in the area. Nevertheless, we excluded the item from the area because, on reflection, it did not seem to be as clearly relevant to diversity as the other diversity items. The item does not appear in the table, and we consider it separately in reporting and discussing the results.

Procedure

Data were collected in two ways. First, surveys were distributed to training directors or their designated representatives attending the 1998 Midwinter Conference of CCPTP in Scottsdale, Arizona. Individual CCPTP members attending the conference (that is, CCPTP members who were not training directors or otherwise representing their institutions) were not given surveys. A box was provided throughout the conference for the return of surveys. A total of 53 surveys was distributed at the conference, and 30 were returned.

Second, 2 weeks after the conference, surveys were mailed to all training directors of CCPTP programs who had not been represented at the conference, along with a cover letter explaining the study and inviting them to participate. Surveys were also mailed to all training directors who had attended the conference, along with a cover letter thanking them for their participation if they had returned surveys at the conference or giving them another opportunity to participate if they had not. Surveys were not mailed to the training directors of the 15 CCPTP programs that were represented at the conference by someone other than the training director. We made this decision to avoid the possibility of receiving two surveys from the same program. A total of 54 surveys were distributed through the mail, and 10 were returned. Of course, many of those receiving surveys by mail had already completed them at the conference.

RESULTS

The open response items indicated, first of all, participants' estimates of the extent to which program faculty members and students were openly religious or spiritual. With respect to faculty members in the program, 34 of the 40 participants provided estimates; in general, they indicated that a minority of their faculty members were openly religious or spiritual. Specifically, 16 participants (47% of those responding) estimated the proportion of openly religious or spiritual faculty members in their programs to be 20% or less, and 27 participants (79% of those responding) estimated the proportion of openly

religious or spiritual faculty to be 50% or less. With respect to students in the program, 31 of the 40 participants provided estimates; in general, they indicated that a minority of their students were openly religious or spiritual. Specifically, 16 participants (52% of those responding) estimated the proportion of openly religious or spiritual students in their programs to be 20% or less, and 24 participants (77% of those responding) estimated the proportion of openly religious or spiritual students to be 50% or less.

In addition, participants reported few curricular offerings in their programs dealing with religious or spiritual issues. Of the 39 participants who reported the number of program course offerings with a specifically religious or spiritual theme, 32 (82%) said none. Of the 36 participants who reported the number of program course offerings that included some religious or spiritual content, 12 (33%) said none, 10 (28%) said one course, and 9 (25%) said two courses. Finally, participants estimated a relatively small number of research projects on religious or spiritual topics to have been conducted by program faculty and students in the preceding 2 years. Of the 37 participants who provided estimates, 10 (27%) said none, and 21 (57%) said between one and three.

Response percentages, means, and standard deviations of the remaining survey items (with one omission) are presented in Table 1 by content area. To introduce greater clarity in interpreting the data, we selected a criterion of 70% total true or total false to indicate that the item content was either generally true or generally false, respectively, for counseling psychology programs. With one slight exception (Item 12), these were also items for which the mean departed at least one half of the maximum item standard deviation, specifically 0.46, from the hypothetical scale midpoint of 2.50; one half of a standard deviation is often accepted as a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988). If items did not meet the 70% criterion, we considered their content to be neither particularly true nor false of programs in general but a matter on which programs tended to differ. We stress that this criterion is an arbitrary one; indeed, because the survey was taken of a population and not a sample, the percentage results of all the items, not just those meeting the 70% criterion, may be taken as descriptive of the current state of affairs of counseling psychology programs. So that comparative percentages across items may be easily taken into account, items in the table are listed within each content area in order of descending total false percentage and ascending mean.

In the first content area, religion and spirituality as a diversity issue in counseling psychology, no items met the 70% criterion, and all item means were close to the hypothetical scale midpoint of 2.50. This suggests that from the perspective of training directors and their representatives, counseling psychology programs are variable in the extent to which they incorporate religious and spiritual issues into the concept of diversity in their training.

The second content area concerned knowledge of religious and spiritual traditions as part of a counseling psychologist's expertise. Three of the four items exceeded 70% total false. In the participants' view, faculty members in counseling psychology programs are not expected to be knowledgeable about various religious and spiritual traditions (Item 7, 91% total false), nor is such knowledge considered an important part of a supervisor's expertise (Item 8, 76% total false). Correspondingly, knowledge of various religious and spiritual traditions is not considered to be an important part of a therapist's expertise in counseling psychology programs (Item 9, 72% total false). On the remaining item in this area, programs seemed to vary, in the participants' view, in the extent to which religious and spiritual issues are considered an important part of the domain of counseling psychology.

With respect to the third content area, religious and spiritual content in didactic instruction and practicum training, four out of nine items met the 70% criterion. These items presented a mixed picture with respect to the inclusion of religious and spiritual issues in training. Specifically, according to the participants, students in counseling psychology programs do not learn about religious and spiritual development (Item 11, 87% total false) or about the religious or spiritual manifestations of psychological disorder (Item 13, 73% total false). On the other hand, students in counseling psychology programs are not discouraged from including religious or spiritual themes in class discussion or written assignments (Item 12, 75% total false), and in practicum, supervisors are open to discussing the client's religion or spirituality, if it seems relevant to the case (Item 19, 78% total true). As before, programs tended to differ on other ways in which religion and spirituality are included in classroom and in practicum.

In the fourth content area, which concerned research on religious and spiritual topics in counseling psychology, both items exceeded 70% total true. According to the participants, faculty in counseling psychology programs are open to research on religious and spiritual issues (Item 21, 90% total true) and willing to supervise student research on these issues (Item 20, 83% total true).

Participants responded to the remaining survey item, which had to do with whether religious or spiritual involvements are seen as relevant credentials for applicants to the program, as either completely false (51%) or more false than true (31%) of their programs (82% total false). This indicates that such credentials are not generally considered relevant in counseling psychology admissions.

Fifteen participants wrote comments on the survey. Nine comments expressed a positive attitude about seeing research in this area. Five comments indicated that religious and spiritual topics ought to have greater importance in counseling psychology training than they presently do. Four

comments speculated about barriers to addressing religious and spiritual issues in training.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study, we believe, characterize the current state of affairs in counseling psychology programs with regard to training in religious and spiritual issues, as perceived by training directors and their representatives. First, program faculty members and students who are openly religious or spiritual are seen to be in the minority. Second, program curricula offer few courses with primarily religious or spiritual content; however, programs more often include such content in courses devoted to broader topics. There are curricular gaps, most notably with respect to the religious or spiritual aspects of psychological development and disorder. On the other hand, there are opportunities within the curriculum for students to discuss and write about religious and spiritual issues, as well as to discuss religious and spiritual aspects of their cases in practicum. Third, programs varied as to whether religious and spiritual diversity was considered part of the fabric of cultural diversity, as it is conceived and taught in training programs. Fourth, religious and spiritual knowledge tends not to be seen as important to counseling psychologists' expertise in their roles as faculty, supervisors, and therapists. Finally, there seems to be good opportunity within programs to conduct research on religious and spiritual issues and for students to receive faculty supervision for such research. On the whole, the results reflect a mixed and sometimes contradictory picture about the state of training in religious and spiritual issues.

The findings are consistent with Kelly's (1994) study of counselor education in that in both studies, respondents acknowledged the importance of religious issues, generally, yet also indicated that these issues received variable attention in the curriculum. The findings also suggest that the current state of training in this area, unless it is made more consistent, is likely to perpetuate the current state of practice, which Genia (1994) characterized with the assertion that "many therapists are empathic toward a religious perspective but do not feel competent to address religious issues with clients" (p. 395). There are also some inconsistencies with prior research. Practicing psychologists surveyed by Shafranske and Gorsuch (1984) reported that they considered spirituality relevant to clinical work. Training faculty members surveyed in this study, on the other hand, felt knowledge of religious and spiritual traditions to be outside faculty, supervisor, and therapist expertise. More research would be helpful in establishing whether the state of training concerning religion

and spirituality in counseling psychology is congruent with the realities of counseling practice, as practitioners perceive it.

The inclusion of religious and spiritual issues in conceptions of cultural diversity, as found in some programs in this study, is certainly consistent with the tradition of counseling psychology and, once again, puts counseling psychology at the forefront of acknowledging the importance of cultural factors in understanding and changing behavior. Even though religious and spiritual people may be in a minority in counseling psychology, the survey results do not reflect hostility or even much indifference toward religion and spirituality. Indeed, it is an aspect of cultural sensitivity to be knowledgeable about and responsive to issues of difference from oneself. As counseling psychologists—and psychologists generally—continue to debate, develop, and implement standards for multicultural competence, they will hopefully make efforts to incorporate religious and spiritual aspects of culture into their recommendations. This, in turn, might help place religious and spiritual knowledge, to a professionally appropriate degree, within a psychologist's expertise.

Participants in the study reported that their programs were especially inclusive of religious and spiritual issues in the area of research. One possible interpretation of this finding is that it reflects a certain degree of understanding, on the part of those involved in training, of the relevance of religion and spirituality to psychology in general, at least as a science. The openness of training programs with respect to research topics is also consistent with the openness reported with respect to classroom and practicum activities. Though program faculty may not see religious and spiritual issues as essential psychological knowledge in some respects, they nevertheless tend to be accepting of such issues as raised in the course of training.

The concepts of religion and spirituality in this study were not defined narrowly to refer to a specific tradition or set of values. Rather, participants were encouraged to construe these concepts broadly. This is a significant departure from some of the previous research (e.g., Keating & Fretz, 1990; Worthington & Scott, 1983), which considered religious issues only from within a Christian framework. But, it is quite consistent with current thinking within the psychology of religion (Wulff, 1997) and with cross-cultural constructions of religious life. In addition, the study did not focus primarily on the religious beliefs and practices of faculty and students themselves but rather on religion and spirituality as aspects of human behavior—areas about which psychologists as behavioral scientists might be expected to have some knowledge and about which counseling psychologists as scientist-practitioners might be expected to have some expertise. Finally, the study did not address the value of religion or spirituality in psychological functioning but rather the

practice of including religious and spiritual issues in psychological training and, by extension, in the domain of counseling psychology.

There are several limitations to the study. First, the participants were training directors and their representatives. Although this had the advantage of permitting one person to supply information for each program, these participants may have had limited knowledge about some aspects of the program. A second limitation is the approach to terminology used in the study. Even though the terms *religious* and *spiritual* and their variants were deliberately chosen to be broadly inclusive, they are nevertheless ambiguous terms that can have different meanings and connotations to different people. Third, the study relied on a survey instrument developed especially for the study and previously untested. The survey items had adequate internal consistency reliability in the four content areas and, in the judgment of knowledgeable colleagues, validly represented the content in those areas. Nevertheless, we have not established temporal reliability or construct validity for the instrument, both of which would be useful for further use of the instrument. Finally, the results of the study may be biased by the self-selection of the sample. Though the return rate was adequate, the programs that participated may not fully represent counseling psychology training, and furthermore, individual participants' beliefs about religion and spirituality in training may have affected their decision to participate in the study.

In conclusion, the purpose of this research has been to describe a state of affairs in counseling psychology training and not to advocate a particular direction for training to take. However, we find it hard not to insert a small bit of advocacy. And so, we conclude by encouraging counseling psychologists to consider the adequacy of current training with respect to religious and spiritual issues, especially as these issues relate to the cultural competence of counseling psychologists. Not only do religious traditions and values constitute an integral part of culture, but spiritual experiences and practices have an important place in the psychological reality of many people. Whether and how deeply these issues should be addressed in counseling psychology training are important questions for our specialty to face, and we urge the specialty to face them.

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