How Group Leaders Rate the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the Asgw Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers

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HOW GROUP LEADERS RATE THE FREQUENCY OF PRACTICE AND LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF THE ASGW PRINCIPLES FOR DIVERSITY-COMPETENT GROUP WORKERS

A Dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Philosophy of Doctoral
in the department of Counselor Education
The University of Mississippi

by

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ABSTRACT

The establishment of multicultural counseling competencies evolved over a decade. In 1992, Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis published the influential Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Standards. The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) is one of the counseling professional organizations that incorporated these standards into their own professional guidelines, as well as Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development, AMCD; Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs, CACREP. However, the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers have never been empirically studied to determine whether these multicultural group standards in fact offer helpful information for group workers. Such studies can provide evidence of the utilization and value of these Principles by practicing group leaders in their group leading experiences.

The purpose of this study was first to quantify how group leaders rate the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers based on their group leading experiences. Second was to identify the correlations between the descriptive variables of age, length of group leading experience, gender, ethnicity, and types of groups to the three main composites of the Principles (i.e., Awareness of Self, Awareness of Members’ Worldview, and Awareness of the Intervention Strategy).

Of the 62 participants, 34 participants (54.8%) indicated that they were aware of the Principles and 28 participants (45.2%) indicated that they were not aware of the Principles. Results indicated that group workers practiced the items in the Awareness of Self composite in their group leading experiences more frequently ($p < .001$) and perceived these items more
important \((p < .001)\) than the other two composites (Awareness of Members’ Worldview and Awareness of Intervention Strategy). A significant difference was found between Gender demographic factor and the composites in the rated Level of Importance for Awareness of Intervention Strategies. Another significant difference was found between the Multi-ethnic group and Awareness of Self at the frequency of practice. Finally a significant difference was found between K-12 group and Awareness of Members’ Worldview at the frequency of practice.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In 1977, Sue and Sue published a ground-breaking article that recognized multicultural competency factors as essential for effective cross-cultural counseling. A search of the literature prior to 1977 revealed an absence of publications and research on multicultural competencies, as well as no recognition and/or guidelines for multicultural counseling practices from the professional counseling associations. In the thirty plus years since this initial publication, the counseling professional has endorsed multicultural competencies, as evidenced by the development of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (ASGW, 1999), as well as inclusion in the accreditation standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009). However, a search of the literature provides little empirical evidence of the efficacy of such principles, practices, and standards in the practice of group counseling.

The identification of multicultural competencies in counseling started more than thirty years ago when Sue and Sue published “Barriers of effective cross-culture counseling” (1977). In this article they noted that “racial and ethnic factors” should be considered in counseling (p. 420). The authors reasoned that language, values, and class differences were three factors that have a highly significant impact on verbal and nonverbal communication with minority clients. Without consideration of these factors, it would be difficult to develop conditions in the counseling relationship that communicate trust and respect. In these circumstances, counseling
outcomes would be less effective. In the same article, Sue and Sue presented the notions of culture-bound values, knowledge and understanding of diverse clients, and flexibility as important counseling techniques when working with minority clients. Sue and Sue defined “culture-bound values” as counselors valuing the beliefs, values, and activities of diverse clients (p. 424). In addition, Sue and Sue suggested that knowledge and understanding of minority clients meant that counselors must continuously develop knowledge about clients’ “class, language, and culture factors” (p. 427). They also believed that flexibility in using techniques meant that counselors should not use only one approach on all clients, because every client was unique and different. These three ideas later emerged in the literature as the concepts of beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). These concepts continue to identify the three dimensions of multicultural counseling competencies.

After Sue and Sue’s 1977 publication, others also began to look at these multicultural factors. For instance, the counseling profession began to draw attention to the nonverbal factors in cross-cultural counseling, (e.g., eye-contact and body gestures) that were seldom addressed before 1977 (Rubin & Niemeier, 1992; Sweeney, Cottle, & Kobayashi, 1980). This shift led counselor educators to evaluate diverse clients from a different perspective. The counseling profession also began to seek further guidance in defining multicultural competencies in the area of counselor education (Marks, Kahn, & Tolsma, 1981) and realized there was no guidance available in the existing literature. The response was an increased number of published studies on cross-cultural counseling (Blustein, 1982; Church, 1982; Mason, Hansen, & Putnam, 1982; Pedersen & Marsella, 1982). The increase and interest in scholarly studies related to multicultural counseling competencies demonstrated the importance of the topic that had been generated by Sue and Sue in 1977. Sue and Sue’s 1977 publication elicited a wide range of
reactions among counseling professionals and increased the recognition and importance of multicultural counseling competencies.

In 1982, Sue et al. published a “Position paper: Cross cultural counseling competencies” in the Journal of Counseling Psychology, continuing to address the need for cultural awareness when counseling minority clients. They explored the existing definition of cross cultural counseling competencies by challenging the traditional western white-class dominant counseling theories that valued individuals’ use of language to openly express emotions and concerns. Sue et al. asserted that not all cultures shared values that emphasized the verbal expression of emotions and concerns. They pointed out that the literature contained little guidance on how to effectively counsel clients from diverse cultures. Thus, based on the perspectives of Sue et al., there was a strong need to develop cross-cultural competencies and standards that more effectively addressed the needs of diverse clients. Sue et al. concluded that beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills were three essential characteristics of culturally skilled counselors and should be incorporated into graduate training programs.

As the discussion of multicultural issues continued, its significance for the counseling profession grew. This significance was emphasized in 1990, when Pedersen suggested that multiculturalism should be added as the fourth force in counseling. He stated “multiculturalism tolerates and encourages a more diverse and complex perspective of mental health counseling and communication” (p. 93). Pedersen’s (1990) novel perception explained that two people from different cultural backgrounds could co-exist without one being right and the other being wrong. Multiculturalism embraced all individuals’ cultural differences. According to Pederson, the complexity of multiculturalism can be classified into four categories: ethnography such as ethnicity; demography such as gender; status such as education; and lastly, affiliation such as
membership. Although Pedersen expanded Sue and Sue’s (1977) multicultural definition, he did not define further the existing definition of multicultural counseling competency.

When Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) published “Multicultural counseling competencies and standards: A call for the profession” in the *Journal of Counseling and Development*, multicultural counseling competencies were clearly defined for the first time. The competencies they defined were counselors’ characteristics that included: (1) awareness of their own assumptions, values, and biases; (2) knowledge of the worldview of culturally different clients; and (3) development of appropriate intervention strategies and techniques. Each competency area had three dimensions. These dimensions were beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis). Since the publication of Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis’ article, multicultural counseling competencies have not only become more clearly defined, but integrated by professional organizations such as the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW).

In 1995 the president of AMCD, Thomas Parham, organized a committee to identify multicultural counseling competencies that specifically addressed the needs of specialists in group counseling. The product of this committee was the thirty-seven page article, the “Operationalization of the Multicultural Counseling Competencies” published by Arredondo et al. (1996), which later became the AMCD multicultural counseling competencies. In the first part of this article, authors approached the competencies from *A Dimension* such as “age, gender, culture, ethnicity, race, and language” (p. 47); *B Dimension* such as “educational experience” (p. 52); and *C Dimension* such as “historical, political, sociocultural, and economic contexts” (p. 49). In the second part of the article, Arredondo et al. adapted the three characteristics and three
dimensions of the multicultural counseling competencies developed by Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) and explained each of the multicultural characteristics and dimensions using the

*Dimensions A, B, and C.*

Along with the landmark publications of Arredondo et al. (1996) and Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992), evidence of the power of the multicultural movement was further demonstrated by the evolution of the definition of Social and Cultural Diversity as one of the eight core content areas in the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009). Social and Cultural Diversity was formerly known as Social and Cultural Foundations. In the 1982 CACREP standards, the eight core content areas (human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, helping relationships, groups, life style and career development, appraisal of the individual, research and evaluation, and professional orientation), were designed to promote the quality of graduate counseling programs, develop professional behavior, cultivate program evaluation, and help faculty develop graduate programs. In other words, those core content areas played a significant role in guiding the counseling profession. In this context, the impact of the multicultural movement became evident when the Social and Cultural Diversity core content area incorporated the term *multicultural* in the 1994 version of the standards. The 2001 standards provided further evidence of the impact of multiculturalism in the counseling profession. In this revision, counselor education programs were encouraged to foster the understanding of multiculturally related factors such as “culture, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental and physical characteristics, education, family values, religious and spiritual values, socioeconomic status” (CACREP, 2001, p. 11). Additionally, the 2009 CACREP standards adopted the “attitude” and “beliefs” terminology from the multicultural counseling competencies suggested by Sue, Arredondo, &
McDavis, and emphasized the importance of “multicultural competencies” (CACREP, 2009, p. 11) when working with diverse populations. These changes in the definition of a CACREP core content area represented a significant commitment by the counseling profession to multicultural counseling competencies.

Another product of the counseling profession’s emphasis on the development and demonstration of multicultural competencies occurred in 1999, when Haley-Banez, Brown, and Molina from the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW, 1999) published the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers. The Principles created a set of Multicultural Group Counseling Competencies based on the same characteristics and dimensions used in the Multicultural Counseling Competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). In these Principles, the three characteristics were: (1) Group leaders’ awareness of self; (2) Group leaders’ awareness of group members’ worldview; and (3) Diversity appropriate intervention strategies. Each of the three categories was further defined in three domains: (A) attitudes and beliefs; (B) knowledge; and (C) skills. It should be noted that these Principles were based on professional beliefs as expressed in the literature in the field, and not on empirical research. To date, research on the efficacy and implementation of these guidelines has not appeared in group work research. While these standards were endorsed by ASGW, the helpfulness of these standards for multicultural group leaders is unknown, as well as their implementation in group counseling practices.

Haley-Banez, Brown, and Molina (ASGW, 1999) expressed that the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers aimed to understand “how issues of diversity affect all aspects of group work” (p. 7) and to help understand the diversity of group work and related research, they stated that:
training diversity-competent group workers; conducting research that will add to the literature on group work with diverse populations, understanding how diversity affects settings to increase their dynamics; and assisting group facilitators in various settings to increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills (p. 7).

In other words, the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers were geared towards guiding group workers facilitating all types of groups with diverse memberships.

In addition to the publication of Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (1999), ASGW has published various guidelines and standards for group leader preparation and group work practice. Group training guidelines were guided first by the Standards for Training Group Workers (ASGW, 1992) and group work practice by the Best Practice Guidelines (ASGW, 1998). In the Best Practice Guidelines, “Group Competencies” (Best Practice Guidelines, 1998, B.2.) and “Diversity” (Best Practice Guidelines, 1998, B. 8.) were recognized. Subsequently, the latest version of the Standards for Training Group Workers (ASGW, 2000) was expanded and further defined core training and specialization training. More specifically, these core group work and specialization competencies incorporated the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers. Most significantly, “Diversity-Competent Practice” statements were incorporated in both the core and specialization sections.

While the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers had an important role in guiding group workers, Tennyson and Strom (1986) challenged that professional standards in general carried acknowledgement of the meaning of human moral values, “if professional standards are used simply as prescriptions for making decisions that affect the well-being of others, profound moral issues inherent in counseling engagements will remain in the background” (p. 298). From this perspective, professional standards and moral codes were two
important factors counselors utilized when they made professional decisions. These authors added that the counseling profession was “a moral enterprise” (p. 298) because counselors exercised moral responsibility when their values and beliefs ground their reasoning process. Das (1995) agreed that the counseling profession’s emphasis on multicultural counseling is about “norms and values” (p. 45). In particular, when working with diverse group members, ASGW has advocated that group workers needed to follow the guidance from the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers. Nevertheless, a review of the literature showed that there were no empirical studies illustrating that these Principles in fact had an impact on group workers’ practice, neither that these Principles were valued by group workers facilitating groups with diverse memberships, nor the relation between the practice and belief.

**Statement of Problem**

A review of the literature revealed that the bulk of research in multicultural group counseling is more than two decades old, and mostly voiced the need for group leaders to be aware of members’ different cultures (Lee, Juan, & Hom, 1984). More recently, the Importance of cultural awareness was advocated in literature authored by Leong (1992), and Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992). Similarly, there has been a strong emphasis on the importance of group members’ and group leader’s world views in the practice of multicultural group counseling (Arredondo et al., 2005; Day-Vines, Wood, Grothaus, Holman, Dotson-Blake, & Douglas, 2007; Debiak, 2007; DeLucia-Waach & Donigian, 2004; Haley-Banez & Walden, 1999; Jackson, 1995; Okech & Rubel, 2007; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Thus, most of the authors of the multicultural group competencies focused on the professional values concerning multicultural awareness contained in various group work standards and position statements.
If multicultural group competencies are to have a significant impact on the practice of group work, it is essential that group leaders utilize the Principles and researchers understand the level of importance of the multicultural group competencies for group leaders. It is also imperative that these competencies be grounded in research demonstrating their efficacy in practice in order to maximize the effectiveness of group outcomes. Unfortunately, the current ASGW statement of multicultural group competencies is a further articulation of multicultural competencies endorsed by various counseling professional organizations that originated in position statements that shaped the multicultural movement in counseling. Hansen et al. (2006) challenged the soundness of statements of multicultural counseling competence stating that “little is known regarding clinicians’ actual practice, less is known about what clinicians believed constitutes multicultural competency” (p. 67). While the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers were based on professional values discussed in the group counseling literature, these standards, as well as all the other standards that are based on the Principles, have not been empirically validated from the perspective of group leaders’ experiences.

The research most relevant to multicultural group competencies did not study the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers but explored multicultural counseling competencies in general. In their research, Hansen et al. (2006) surveyed the frequency and importance of multicultural counseling competency for 149 professional psychologists and their opinions about the multicultural psychotherapy competencies. Their findings revealed that among all the multicultural counseling competencies, “personal and professional experiences were most influential, and guidelines and codes least influential, in their development of multicultural competence” (p. 66). A limitation of their findings is that the participants in the Hansen et al. survey were professional psychologists, who were not necessarily leading groups.
The 52-item survey also was not related specifically to the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers.

The Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers are intended to guide group leaders’ practice. These principles are based on values the counseling profession holds in high regard, but these principles have never been studied empirically in terms of group work. The literature does not include research about group leaders’ practice regarding whether and how often these Principles are utilized in their practice, the importance the Principles as a foundation or guide in group leaders’ practices, and the relationship between practices and the importance of the Principles in their group counseling work. Despite the ground breaking article published by Sue and Sue (1977), and the attempt by ASGW to emphasize multicultural competency, no research establishes a relationship between the Principles and the practices and beliefs of group leaders in their group-leading experiences.

In conclusion, the establishment of multicultural counseling competencies evolved over a decade. In 1992, Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis published the influential Multicultural Counseling Competencies and Standards. The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) is one of the counseling professional organizations that incorporated these standards into their own professional guidelines, as well as Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development, AMCD; Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs, CACREP. However, the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers have never been empirically studied to determine whether these multicultural group standards in fact offer helpful information for group workers. Such studies can provide evidence of the utilization and value of these Principles by practicing group leaders in their group leading experiences.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to survey group leaders to determine their practices and beliefs in relation to the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers, the relationship between their practices and beliefs, and to explore how these practices and beliefs might relate to specific demographic variables. The proposed research used survey methodology to quantify group leaders’ frequency of practice and level of importance regarding the Principles in their group leading experiences. According to Creswell (2002) survey methodology can be used to “understand important beliefs and attitudes” (p. 295). Data supplied from survey methodology provided statistical information concerning group leaders’ frequency of practice in utilizing the Principles in their group leading experiences and the level of importance placed on the Principles as a guide to their group work.

Fowler, Jr. (1995) agreed that survey results could capture “people’s subjective states: knowledge and perceptions” (p. 46). In this case, the ‘people’ refers to the group practitioners and ‘the subjective states’ are their perceptions about the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (1999). Most importantly, results are subjective and empirical. This is important because these results not only help to fill the gap in the literature where empirical study about the ASGW Principles is scarce, but also offer “scientifically convincing” empirical data (Miller, 1983, p. 49). In other words, the survey method supported the purposes of this study, to identify how group leaders rate the importance of each of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers in their group leading experiences.

Additionally, because the study was designed to incorporate the maximum number of group workers’ responses, it is very important that the methodology accomplish this purpose. Fowler, Jr. (1984) explained that data that is “consistent across all respondents ensures that one
has comparable information about everyone involved in the survey” (p. 12). A larger participant pool from this survey offers objective and collective data to show whether the Principles are consistent with group workers’ practices and beliefs.

**Research Questions**

1. How often do group leaders utilize the Principles for Diversity Competent Group Workers in their group leading experiences?

2. What is the level of importance of the Principles to practicing group leaders?

3. What is the relationship between utilization of the Principles and level of importance of the Principles in their group leading experiences?

4. What is the relationship between utilization of the Principles, level of importance of the Principles, and specific demographic variables (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, length of experience, geographic location, types of groups)?

**Significance of the Study**

The data generated from this study serve several purposes. First, it provides empirical data that identifies the utilization of the Principles in the group leading experiences of the participants, as well as the level of importance group leaders place on the Principles as a guide or foundation for their group leading practices. Knowing group workers’ frequency of practice of the Principles provides valuable information for determining the nature of future revisions and amendments to these Principles. Pope, Tabachnick, and Keith-Spiegel (1987) provided an additional support for the value of this data when they stated that ethical principles and standards of practice often:

…lack comprehensive, systematically gathered data about the degree to which members believe in or comply with these guidelines. Consequently, such data are not available to
inform either the clinical decisions of individual practitioners or the attempts of the APA
to revise, refine, and extend formal standards of the practice (p. 993).

Similarly, because the literature review showed a lack of “comprehensive and systematically
gathered data” about the utilization of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers
(ASGW, 1999), these data serves to fill a much needed gap in our knowledge in this area.

Second, identifying the level of importance group leaders place on the Principles for
Diversity-Competent Group Workers provides data that may affirm the values and beliefs
outlined in the Principles. This affirmation would provide factual knowledge for group
practitioners, researchers, educators, and group policy makers about the relative importance of
these Principles in group counseling practice.

Third, the data derived from this survey provides valuable informative about the
relationship between practices and beliefs; it adds to our knowledge about whether or not group
leaders practice what they believe is important.

Fourth, the findings could prompt further research in the area of multicultural group
competency, such as reasons for variations in the frequency of practice of the Principles, as well
as why specific items or categories in the Principles are important to group leaders. Such
information can be instrumental in shaping group training, education, and supervision. In other
words, empirical data derived from group leaders could provide important information for the
development of future multicultural group competencies and methods to increase their use in
practice.

**Definition of Key Concepts**

*Diversity* – The difference in individuals and people such as age, gender, sexual orientation,
religion, physical ability or disability (Arredondo et al., 1996).
Frequency of practice – The degree to which the Principles are utilized in the participant’s group leading experiences.

Group leading experiences – The leading of group counseling sessions.

Group workers – Anyone who has a Master’s or higher degree from a CACREP accredited program, and has experience facilitating groups for a minimum of one semester or four months.

Incorporate – To include something as part of a whole.

Level of importance – The degree to which participant’s incorporate the Principles as a foundation or guide in their group leading experiences.

Multiculturalism – The difference in ethnicity, race, and culture (JMCD, 1996).

Multicultural/Diversity Competence – A capacity whereby counselors possess cultural and diversity awareness, knowledge about self and others, and how this awareness and knowledge is applied effectively in practice with clients and client groups (ACA Code of Ethics, 2005).


Utilize – To make practical and effective use of.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The Principles for Diverse-Competent Group Workers (ASGW, 1999) are an important guide for group workers working with culturally diverse group membership. However, a literature review shows that these group Principles, directly derived from the multicultural counseling competencies outlined by Sue et al., (1982) have never been empirically studied. Because these Principles have not been empirically studied, there is no current basis to confirm or disconfirm their value for group workers’ practice

The Need for Multicultural Group Competencies

Counseling groups with members from diverse cultures promote interpersonal and intrapersonal learning (Kline, 2003; Yalom & Leszcz, 2005), which is particularly significant in a multicultural society because such groups replicate the diverse society group members live in and offer a safe environment for group members to practice new interpersonal and intrapersonal related skills. Additionally, Gelso and Fretz (1992) reported that members in groups with heterogeneous memberships “are able to contact a wide range of personalities, and receive rich and diverse feedback” (p. 450). This is because groups with culturally diverse memberships replicate a diverse multicultural campus (Debiak, 2007). Bemak and Chung (2004) further elaborated that “group is contextualized within a cultural framework… the cultural context of the larger levels of macro-systems that exist surrounding the group itself has a constant and changing influence on the group and its process” (p. 34). In other words, groups reflected diverse
environments and their influences. In groups composed of members from diverse cultures, group members could benefit from this replicated social system and practice the interpersonal skills that they need to use outside of their groups (Cornish & Benton, 2001; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992; Yalom, 1985). Even though these authors agreed that diversity was becoming more important and supported the benefit of diverse groups, research on culturally diverse groups is limited. Most importantly, no research is found on the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (1999) to demonstrate the value and efficacy for these Principles for group leaders in facilitating culturally diverse groups.

Generally speaking, although the importance of group leaders’ multicultural competencies is supported in the literature (Alvarez & Cabbil, 2001; Chang & Tharenou, 2004; Chen, Thomas, & Costa, 2003; Greeley, Garcia, Kessler, & Gilchrest, 1992), the competencies themselves represent the values and beliefs of the ASGW Principles committee and have not been empirically examined. Empirical research appears to be essential for establishing or confirming theoretically derived competencies for leaders of multicultural groups. Preliminary studies based on multicultural group competencies identified general competencies for multicultural group leaders but none have specifically addressed the Principles.

For example, Chang and Tharenou (2004) agreed that competencies were needed in managing multicultural workgroups. Through interviewing twenty managers, who managed workgroups with members from diverse populations, they identified four themes that might enhance multicultural workgroup leaders’ competencies. These themes included (1) workgroup leaders needed to be empathetic to members’ culture and “not stereotype members from various cultural groups” (p. 69); (2) learn about different cultures; (3) listen carefully and communicate clearly, use “good technical and managing skills” (p. 69); and (4) have a good sense of self-care.
Clearly, Chang and Tharenou offered suggestions about what work group leaders could do in order to raise their multicultural competency awareness. However, it remains uncertain how these recommendations for workgroup leaders managing workgroup members apply to the work of multicultural counseling group leaders.

In the social work field, Alvarez and Cabbil (2001) identified seven methods that could enhance group leaders’ multicultural development. They suggested that group leaders use exercises to teach group members about the group content, be open to new ideas, recognize group member commonalities, assess group effectiveness, be aware of each member’s different goals, and finally, group leaders should invest themselves in the group (Alvarez & Cabbil, 2001). Although these seven features provided suggestions for the development of social work group leaders’ multicultural competencies, these suggestions represented scholarly opinions that were not backed up by research and were specifically intended to inform social workers rather than group leaders in counseling.

As stated earlier, when the literature search focused on the counseling field, the research on multicultural group leadership competencies was limited. For instance, Greeley, Garcia, Kessler, and Gilchrest (1992) agreed that multicultural group leaders’ competencies were important. They stated “training counselors to be self-aware and to acquire knowledge and skills related to diversity issues is the key to effective multicultural group counseling” (p. 196). Their recommendations supported the necessity of multicultural [individual] counseling competency training and were consistent with other literature in this area. However, without additional empirical support, the value of their findings cannot be established for group leader practice.

In an attempt to clearly delineate group leaders’ multicultural competencies, Chen, Thomas, and Costa (2003) used Yalom’s (1985) concepts to explain group leaders’ multicultural
competencies. When group leaders took roles as “norm shapers” (p. 469), they modeled “intercultural curiosity, sensitivity to diversity, and self-disclosure” for the purpose of developing norms that would be sensitive to all the different cultures in the group. When group leaders took the role of “historians” (p. 469), they aimed at relating members’ experiences in the past so that members emotionally resonated with one another. Finally, when group leaders took the role as “technical experts” (p. 469), they prepared group members for various topics that might be discussed in the group; and emphasized that the interventions used should demonstrate group leaders’ multicultural understanding (Chen et. al.). Although the authors offered potentially useful information for multicultural group leaders, their recommendations were not tested empirically. Most importantly, their suggestions were not specifically related to the Principles for group workers.

To conclude, although the literature supports the importance of leaders’ multicultural group competencies, no studies examined the values and practices of multicultural group leaders as they relate to the Principles. Although, studies on diverse workgroups of managers and social work groups are informative, they do not address the lack of empirical evidence to support the values of the Principles. Thus, there remains a gap in the literature in this important area.

The absence of research confirming or disconfirming the values of the Principles create the need for an empirical survey. A starting place would be to develop an initial understanding of group leaders’ perspectives and experiences in facilitating multicultural groups, and how they rate the importance of the Principles. The collected data would provide information to more clearly define leader competencies for effective multicultural groups. Thus, the study examined how multicultural group leaders rate the level of importance and frequency of practice of multicultural group competency as specified by the Principles developed by ASGW.
Multicultural Competency History

Before exploring multicultural group competency standards, it is essential to first study the history of multicultural competency. In 1977, Sue and Sue first addressed the need to incorporate multicultural awareness in counseling. Their rationales were that racial and ethnic and nonverbal factors would affect counselor-client communication. “Misunderstandings that arise from cultural variations in verbal and nonverbal communication…” would hinder the counseling process (Sue & Sue, p. 420). At the same time, Sue and Sue emphasized that language barriers as well as cultural and class differences play a significant role in the Western concept of counseling. Their article not only raised a sense of awareness for counselors and counselor educators, but also elicited numerous studies of nonverbal counseling factors.

A year after Sue and Sue’s publication in 1977, Tepper and Haase (1978) specifically studied one verbal and five nonverbal cues used to assess the communication styles of fifteen male counselors and fifteen male clients, in reaching the therapeutic conditions of empathy, respect, and genuineness. Tepper and Haase found that “nonverbal cues in the paradigm accounted for significantly greater message variance than did the verbal message” (p. 35). They confirmed Sue and Sue’s suggestion that counseling professionals should be more aware of the influence of nonverbal factors’ on the effectiveness of therapeutic counseling outcomes.

Sweeney, Cottle, and Kobayashi (1980) studied forty seven American and thirty six Japanese counseling students to determine whether or not their different ethnic backgrounds would differentiate their ability in recognizing nonverbal cues. The 120-item instrument was composed of cut pictures of faces, arms, body postures, and whole bodies. The two significant
results of their study were that females offered more accurate readings of nonverbal cues than males, and American participants indicated a more accurate reading of nonverbal cues than Japanese. Therefore, they concluded that “cultural background influences nonlanguage communication of counselors” (p. 151). Marks, Kahn, and Tolsma (1981) supported the findings of Cogan and Noble (1979) that: “The identification and consensual validation of a set of counselor competencies is an essential first step in designing an instructional program that will best meet the needs of the counselor-trainee” (p. 124).

To provide further evidence of the importance of identifying a set of validated multicultural counseling competencies, Marks, Kahn and Tolsma (1981) studied three different articles that addressed various multicultural competency areas, and found three areas that were viewed as particularly important: “professional ethics; personal characteristics and self-awareness; and listening, communication, and counseling skills” (p. 79). These three areas were the only areas for which consensus was reached.

Blustein (1982) agreed with Sue and Sue (1977) that nonverbal factors and culturally bounded values were the important factors that affected the therapeutic outcome of cross-cultural counseling. In order to maximize therapeutic outcomes and consider these nonverbal factors and culturally bounded values in training culturally competent counselors, Blustein suggested using informal groups that consisted of members from diverse cultural backgrounds as a means to enhance counselors’ multicultural awareness. Counselors could observe or participate in these group members’ interactions, and “this would facilitate an increased understanding of significant affective and cognitive factors of a given future culture” (p. 262).

Providing further support for the need for multiculturally sensitive counselors in cross-cultural counseling settings, Mason, Hansen, and Putnam (1982) in their study with American
Indian and Alaskan clients, demonstrated the importance for counselors to “understand and appreciate the culture in which they have chosen to work” (p. 3). If they do not, the authors challenged counselors’ ability to accurately evaluate clients’ needs, as well as the effectiveness of the helping process. In other words, multiculturally sensitive counselors should understand or acknowledge the culture of the clients that they work with in order to be effective.

In a similar argument that counselors need to be trained in order to effectively work with culturally diverse clienteles, Pedersen and Marsella (1982) advocated that counselors and psychologists need to obtain training in working with minority clients. The authors continued that since these minority clients “did not constitute a resounding majority of the client population to be served” (p. 497), it was very crucial for multiculturally competent counselors to learn specifically about clients’ “different religious, racial, ethnic, sexual, and economic groups” (p. 492). Otherwise, it would be unethical for counselors to work with clients with whom they had no specialized training or knowledge.

In their Position paper: Cross cultural counseling competencies, Sue et al. (1982) stated three important reasons that support the need for the development of cross-cultural counseling competencies:

(1) Mental health literature and specifically research have failed to create a realistic understanding of various ethnic groups in America (p. 45);

(2) Western based social sciences have generally prided themselves on the objectivity of research and its findings (p. 46);

(3) Mental health professionals have noticed that racial and ethnic factors may act as impediments to counseling (p. 46).
Using these three reasons as a foundation, the authors suggested a framework for the development of multicultural counseling competencies, structured around (a) beliefs and attitudes; (b) knowledge; and (c) skills. These three factors, according to Sue et al. offered guidelines for developing culturally skilled counselors when working with diverse clientele. The beliefs and attitudes area referred to the importance of culturally skilled counselors’ awareness of their own cultural heritage, values, biases, and their level of sensitivity and comfort with the differences between themselves and their clients. In the knowledge area, Sue et al. clarified that culturally competent counselors should be able to understand the “sociopolitical system’s operation in the United States with respect to its treatment of minorities” (p. 49), to have the knowledge and information about their clients, and to be aware of “institutional barriers which prevent minorities from using mental health services” (p. 49). In the skill area, Sue et al. stated that culturally competent counselors need to “send and receive both verbal and nonverbal messages accurately” (p. 49) and exercise appropriate intervention strategies based on different clients’ needs. These three areas of culturally skilled counselors later served as the foundation for the three major components in the multicultural group counseling competencies developed by AGSW.

The argument for the importance of multicultural counseling competency was advanced when Pedersen (1990) suggested that multiculturalism should be the fourth force in counseling after humanism, psycho-dynamism, and behaviorism. He argued that multiculturalism “tolerates and encourages a more diverse and complex perspective of mental health counseling and communication” (p. 93). The full meaning of multiculturalism crossed the limitation of one specific dominating culture or value, and allowed different perspectives to co-exist without judging them being right or wrong. This multicultural counseling force was essential for
“helping mental health counselors increase their accuracy” (p. 93) and discouraged counselors from projecting their values on clients. Accuracy of interpretation supported suggestions in prior literature that counselors should accurately acknowledge the needs of culturally diverse clients.

In addition to accurately interpreting clients from different cultural backgrounds, Rubin and Niemier (1992) conducted a study about the nonverbal factors in multicultural settings. They stated that the interaction between counselors and clients is usually viewed as a “complex interaction… which is usually the unspoken” (p. 600). They argued that the success of the therapeutic interaction dictated the success of the therapeutic outcome, stating “the ongoing interaction of patient and therapist personality characteristics is an important factor in determining successful therapy outcome” (p. 600). Thus, therapists were encouraged to learn the use of nonverbal techniques, to understand patients’ unspoken cues, and to have a successful interaction in order to achieve successful therapeutic outcomes.

Fifteen years later, Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) published a call to the profession in the Journal of Counseling and Development. They pointed out the statistical fact that American society had become more diverse and there was a need to incorporate multicultural competency standards in counseling. However, the 1981 ethical guidelines in both the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD) and the American Psychological Association (APA) only mentioned that “professionals without training or competency in working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds are unethical and potentially harmful” (Sue et al., p. 480). In other words, there were no tangible multicultural competency guidelines or standards of practice. The lack of guidelines carried over into the ethical standards of AACD in 1988. As a result, Sue et al. developed a multicultural competency framework for counselors. They identified three areas of focus: counselor, client, and
intervention strategies. Each area was further broken down into the three characteristics of attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, and skills.

The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) published *Operationalization of the multicultural counseling competencies* (Arredondo et al., 1996) stating that America is a multicultural society and the five major ethnic groups are categorized as: “African/Black, Asian, Caucasian/European, Hispanic/Latino and Native American” (p. 43). Arredondo et al. supported Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) by stating that counselors should have cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills which are important when working with clients from this multicultural society. Additionally, they introduced Dimensions A, B, and C, three novel areas elaborating the complexity of individuals.

Dimension A consists of the characteristics that come with birth, for example “age, gender, culture, ethnicity, race, and language” (p. 47). One does not have a choice in these characteristics. On the other hand, the characteristics of Dimension C come with a context such as history, politics, socioculture, and economy. Arredondo et al. explained that the experience and perception of persons are shaped by their interaction with the objective environment. For example, “events of a sociopolitical, global, and environmental form have a way of affecting one’s personal culture and life experiences” (p. 49). Furthermore, Dimension B comes from the result of a combination of Dimensions A and C. Unlike Dimension A, characteristics of Dimension B are physically invisible, such as an education. These three Dimensions demonstrated that all individuals are complex and multicultural, “everyone is a multicultural person. The sum is not greater than the parts” (p. 54). This new multicultural perspective led counseling scholars to examine individual as well as group differences.
Arredondo et al. perceived multicultural counseling competencies in three areas: the (1) Counselors’ own cultural values and biases; (2) Counselors’ awareness of client’s world view; and (3) Culturally appropriate intervention strategies. Each of these three areas was presented in the three dimensions of (a) attitudes and beliefs; (b) knowledge; and (c) skills. Their efforts resulted in the operationalization of multicultural counseling competencies of AMCD which adopted the multicultural counseling competencies and standards from Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992).

Expanding multicultural counseling competencies to the group counseling area, the Principles for the Diversity-Competent Group Workers of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) (Haley-Banez, Brown, & Molina, 1999) adopted the same multicultural counseling competencies and standards (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992) for group workers facilitating diverse group memberships. The group Principles centered on three areas (1) Awareness of group worker; (2) Group workers’ awareness of group member’s worldview; (3) Diversity-appropriate intervention strategies. Following the organization of multicultural counseling competencies and standards, each of the three areas in the group Principles was elaborated into (A) Attitudes and beliefs; (B) Knowledge; and (C) Skills.

To demonstrate the close relationship between the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (Haley-Banez, Brown, & Molina) and the multicultural counseling competencies proposed by Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis (1992), a comparison in dimension (A) Attitudes and beliefs under the area (3) Intervention strategies reveals the following similarities:

Diversity-competent group workers value bilingualism and sign language and do not view another language as an impediment to group work (Haley-Banez, Brown, & Molina, p. 11).
Culturally skilled counselors value bilingualism and do not view another language as an impediment to counseling (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, p. 482).

These two statements are worded very similarly except for the targeted helpers and populations; one is “diversity-competent group workers,” the other is “culturally skilled counselors.” In the ASGW group Principles “sign language” has been added.

In conclusion, when Sue and Sue (1977) pointed out that nonverbal factors affect the therapeutic counseling outcome when working with clients from diverse backgrounds, they not only directed counseling scholars toward a new research area (Marks, Kahn, & Tolsma, 1981; Mason, Hansen, & Putnam, 1982; Pedersen & Marsella, 1982; Tepper & Haase, 1978), but also laid a foundation for the development of multicultural counseling competencies (Rubin & Niemier, 1992; Sue et al., 1982). In 1992, the establishment of multicultural counseling competencies and standards (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis) was a milestone in the development of multicultural counseling competencies as evidenced by other professional counseling organizations incorporating these standards into their own guidelines.

**Multicultural Competency Research**

The literature review showed that there was an increase in research about multicultural focus areas after Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis published a call to the profession in 1992. The available studies about multicultural competency can be categorized into five focus areas: clients, counselor, supervision, relationships between competency and self-efficacy, and competency assessments.

A variety of studies focused on clients’ perspectives (Fuertes, BArtolomeo, & Nichols, 2001; Fuertes & Brobst, 2002; Pope-Davis, Liu, Topereck, & Brittan-Powell, 2001). Fuertes et al. (2001) recommended that it was important to include clients’ involvement in assessing
counselors’ multicultural competency level. One year later, Fuertes continued the study with Brobst (2002) to further the research about involving clients in evaluating counselors’ multicultural competency. This was important because clients are the immediate consumers of counselors’ counseling skills. Therefore, their feedback could be an accountable measurement reflecting counselors’ multicultural competency level. The authors specifically studied Euro-American and minority clients’ ratings on their satisfaction about counselors’ multicultural competency in multicultural versus traditional counseling. They found that the minority clients indicated a larger amount of variance in counselors’ multicultural competency than Euro-American clients. The clients’ multicultural competency perspective of another study was conducted by Pope-Davis et al. (2001), although their findings supported the previous two studies about the importance of involving clients in assessing counselors’ multicultural competency, they added that clients’ experiences within the historical context should also be considered during assessment.

In addition to clients’ perspectives, Glockshuber (2005) expanded on the American multicultural competency standards and developed an instrument to assess multicultural competency in the U.K. This study found high correlation rates between beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Sue, Arredondo, McDavis, 1992) especially when counselors self-evaluated their multicultural counseling competencies. During the self-evaluation, counselors’ perceptions of competencies depended on societal factors such as race, class, and patriotism and functional factors such as family, social norms, and groups relating to multicultural competencies.

Some studies connected multicultural competency with supervision and training. Constantine (2003) examined the supervisors’ levels of multicultural counseling competency and
multicultural supervision competency. She found that these two factors affect the supervisory outcomes and processes. Pope-Davis, Reynolds, Dings, and Ottavi (1994) studied 140 doctoral students working in the university counseling center as interns. They found that students had a higher level of multicultural competency awareness after they received multicultural related supervision and attending multicultural workshops.

Studies about the relationship between multicultural competency and self-efficacy were also conducted (Arredondo & Rosen, 2007; Liu, Sheu, & William, 2004). For example, Arredondo and Rosen (2007) administered the Counselor Self-Efficacy Scale (CSES) and the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale: Form B (MCAS: B), using multiple linear regressions to detect the relationship between self-efficacy and multicultural competency. Their findings indicated a statistically significant correlation between self-efficacy and multicultural counseling competency and therefore suggested further future study of the relationship between these two variables. In a similar way, Liu et al. (2004) examined the relationship between multicultural research training and self-efficacy. They web-surveyed one hundred and nineteen psychology graduate students focusing on the environment of research training, self-efficacy, and multicultural counseling competency. Their hierarchical regression showed that multicultural competency, research training, and the multicultural environment were strongly associated with multicultural research self-efficacy.

Several studies focused on multicultural awareness and assessment. There were studies about multicultural competency assessment and counselor training programs (Ponterotto, Alexander, & Grieger, 1995), and about the assessment instruments themselves (Carlson, Brack, Laygo, Cohen, & Kirkscey, 1998; Ponterotto & Potere, 2003; Vereen, Hill, & McNeal, 2008). For example, Ponterotto, Alexander, and Grieger (1995) developed the Multicultural
Competency Checklist (MCC), a checklist that is composed of twenty-two items and six themes: minority representation, counseling practice and supervision, student and faculty competency evaluation, research consideration, physical environment, and curriculum issues. The MCC was designed to assist in evaluating counselor training programs. This checklist can also be used as a program guide for multicultural program development. Their research found that the development of multicultural programs affects the development of counseling training programs, and that directly influences counselors’ multicultural competency awareness.

Carlson, Brack, Laygo, Cohen, and Kirkscey (1998) used the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS) that was developed by D’Andrea, Daniels, and Heck in 1990 to test the relationship between the awareness, knowledge, and skills and the amount of multicultural training graduate students received. The findings indicated that working with minority clients and involving multicultural activities helped to increase graduate students’ multicultural awareness, “Students who have experienced a multicultural activity also perceive themselves to have greater multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills” (p. 84). Vereen, Hill, and McNeal (2008) used the same instrument, MAKSS, and surveyed 700 graduate students. Their findings supported the findings of Carlson et al. that students’ multicultural competency level depended on their exposure to multicultural supervision and experiences.

Additionally, Ponterotto and Potere (2003) attempted to show the strengths and limitations of four instruments: Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCAS), Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scales (MCKAS), Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS), and Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI). The authors concluded that it was best to use the assessments as pretest or posttest instruments when evaluating counseling programs and multicultural competency training development of
students. In addition, the authors discouraged researchers from using these instruments for individual decision, finding them more effective in evaluating student populations and training programs.

In conclusion, the above studies employed the existing multicultural competency models and studied them from five perspectives: clients, supervision, evaluation, relationship between multicultural competency and self-efficacy, multicultural awareness and assessment aspects. However, none of the studies explored how counselors evaluated multicultural group competency standards based on their experiences. One study that came close to evaluating multicultural competency was Hansen et al. (2006). Hansen and his team surveyed 149 professional psychologists based on 52 items of multicultural psychotherapy competencies that were recommended by the literature. The results of the survey showed that “participants did not practice what they preach” (p. 66). Participants reported that the “personal and professional experiences were most influential, and guidelines and codes least influential, in their development of multicultural competency” (p. 66). There are no studies examining counselors’ perceptions of the importance of multicultural competency standards in their group leading experience.

**Multicultural Group Competency History**

The history of multicultural group competency is fairly short compared with the history of multicultural competency in general. According to Haley-Banez, Brown, and Molina (1999) the draft of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers for the Association for Specialists in Group Work was not approved by the executive board until 1998. The *Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers* that were published in 1999 in the Journal for Specialists in Group Work provided guidelines for group workers facilitating multicultural
groups. More specifically, these Principles offer “training diversity-competent group workers; conducting research that will add to the literature on group work with diverse populations; understanding how diversity affects group processes and dynamics; and assisting group facilitators in various settings to increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills” (Haley-Banez, Brown, & Molina, p. 7).

**Multicultural Group Competency Standards**

ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers are similar to multicultural counseling competencies. They focus on three areas: (1) counselors’ awareness of their own cultures and values; (2) counselors’ awareness of clients’ cultures and values; and (3) counselors incorporating this cultural awareness into intervention goals or treatment plans (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Each area contains three categories: (A) “attitudes and beliefs,” (B) “knowledge,” and (C) “skills” (Haley-Banez, Brown, & Molina, 1999, p.8-9). Like multiculturally competent counselors, multiculturally competent group leaders must have (1) Awareness of self (i.e., a clear awareness of their own values, worldviews and perspectives on ethnic diversity); (2) Awareness of group member’s worldview (i.e., an awareness of group members’ values, worldviews, ethnic identities, and languages); and (3) Diversity appropriate intervention strategies (i.e., group leaders must be flexible regarding how these differences evolved or changed group dynamics in the group they led) (Haley-Banez et al.). Each of these three areas is further elaborated into (a) Attitudes and beliefs; (b) Knowledge; and (c) Skills three dimensions. As a result, the definition of multicultural group competencies borrowed directly from multicultural competencies and represented a significant step forward in the field of group counseling.
Multicultural Group Competency Research

Unlike the research on multicultural competency, the research on multicultural group competency is limited. The available research focuses on offering guidelines for conducting multicultural groups (DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Merta, 1995) and helping group facilitators to be more multiculturally sensitive (Conyne, 1998). However, there are no studies which focus on the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers or whether these Principles are in fact aligned with group workers’ beliefs and practices.

Merta (1995) explained multicultural group guidelines through the needs of four different ethnicities: African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Native-Americans. Merta emphasized the importance of multicultural awareness, in that a “group leader must have a general understanding of and an appreciation of the range of culture similarities and differences” (p. 573). While Merta excluded the ethnic category of Caucasian/European in this study, DeLucia-Waack and Donigian (2004) added Chinese, New Zealand Maori, Brazilian, and Latino values and cultures as essential additions to the traditional Eurocentric concepts of culture. They further explained that Western individualism emphasized individual’s thoughts and feelings, or the “I” statement, as compared to the Eastern collectivism which emphasized the feelings and thoughts of a group, or the “we” statement. DeLucia-Waack and Donigian stated that this is an important difference between Western and Eastern cultures and is also an important factor within the group context.

Conyne (1998) adapted Hanson’s What to look for in groups that was published in 1969, using Hanson’s ideas as a tool to observe group processes. Trainees observed the group within “a
fishbowl design.” Conyne concluded that this observation might lead “future group work leaders to become more aware of multicultural issues” (p. 22).

In conclusion, although numerous studies have been published on the overall importance of multicultural awareness and multicultural competency for counselors in general, little has been published in the specific area of multicultural group competency (Anderson, 2007; Conyne, 1998; DeLucia-Waack & Donigian, 2004; Merta, 1995), and no studies can be found confirming or disconfirming the efficacy and value of the competencies outlined in the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (AGSW, 1999). Thus, there exists a gap in the literature about the importance of these Principles and whether or not they are consistent with group workers’ beliefs and practices. In order to fill this gap, it is necessary to collect empirical data related to the relative importance and value group workers place on the Principles and in their group leading experience.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study was designed to measure the frequency of practice and the level of importance of the Principles of Diverse-Competent Group Workers to group leaders in their group leading experiences. Additionally, correlations between demographic variables and frequency of practice as well as the level of importance of the Principles of Diverse-Competent Group Workers to group leaders in their group leading experiences will be examined. This chapter includes descriptions of the participants, instrumentation, procedure, and data analysis that were used.

Methodology

Survey methodology provides data that can examine the participants’ “attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices” (Creswell, 2002, p. 398). According to Creswell, the cross-sectional survey can correlate personal experiences with existing practices or standards. Additionally, Punch (2003) added that “quantitative survey is then to measure a group of people on the variables of interest and to see how those variables are related to each other across the sample studied” (p. 23). Thus, the cross-sectional survey methodology matched the purpose of this study investigating how group leaders rate the importance of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers in their group leading experiences.

This survey was conducted at the end of the Fall Semester, 2010 after receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of The University of Mississippi. The 40-item survey
(Appendix A), the demographic questionnaire (Appendix B), and the informed consent (Appendix C) were sent to participants electronically via Qualtrics. An electronic survey was used instead of the traditional paper-and-pencil method because it was more cost effective and required less time to process the collected data (Granello, 2007; Granello & Wheaton, 2004).

**Description of Subjects**

The targeted population was group leaders in the fields of counseling, social work, or psychology, with a minimum of four months or one semester of experience as group leaders. Initial requests for participation in the study were made to members the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW). Members of this professional association were solicited due to an assumption of their awareness of and familiarity with the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers, which is a requirement for membership. A minimum of four months of group leading experience was considered the equivalent of a semester long supervised training experience, and the minimal amount of experience needed to be able to relate actual practice with the Principles.

A low initial response rate, even after follow up reminders, resulted in an expansion of the population. Following approval for this change from the IRB, requests for study participation were made to members of the Mississippi Counseling Association (MCA), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), American Psychological Association (Counseling Psychology, Division 17), CESNET, (an online forum for counselor educators), and The University of Mississippi Counselor Education program faculty and students’ listserv.

**Return Rate**

Because return rates of questionnaire surveys are highly variable (Creswell, 2002; Fowler, Jr., 1984; Punch, 2003), several methods were used to secure a high return rate. The
researcher first adapted “the good follow-up procedure” (Creswell, p. 410). Using this procedure, the researcher sent a research request to members on the six listservs (ASGW, MCA, ASCA, Cesnet, Counseling Psychology, Ole Miss counselor education faculty and students) with the electronic link to the Qualtrics survey. One week after the original was sent, the researcher sent a reminder email to the nonrespondents. Two weeks after the first email reminder, the researcher sent a second email reminder to nonrespondents.

A second way to ensure a high return rate is “to study a problem of interest to the population under study (Creswell, p. 411). It was anticipated that targeted population would be interested in the topic of how group leaders’ rate the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers based on their group experiences. It was anticipated that this shared interest would motivate participants to return the surveys.

Incentive is a final way to ensure a high return rate (Creswell, 2002). Participants who completed and returned the survey with contact information were placed in a pool for a drawing for one of four $25 Starbucks coffee shop vouchers.

**Description of the Instruments**

The Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (ASGW, 1999) were published in an article format and would be difficult to survey in such a lengthy content. Punch (2003) argues that “small-scale surveys, competently and carefully executed can make valuable substantive contributions” (p. 22). The Principles were therefore carefully studied for content and organization so that they could be assessed using a reduced form. The Principles were organized into three composites (e.g., Awareness of Self, Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview, and Awareness of Diversity-Appropriate Intervention Strategies), with each section containing paragraphs describing an integral area. After studying the Principles, it was found that most
paragraphs contain one central theme. This allowed the researcher to accurately reflect the
Principles by using the exact language from the Principles, eliminating any bias in rephrasing or
rewording. This resulted in a 40-item questionnaire, with each item ranked using a five point
Likert Scale. The values for the Frequency of Practice variable ranged from 1 = Never; 2 =
Rarely; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Often; to 5 = Very Often. The values for the Level of Importance
variable ranged from 1= Never Importance; 2 = Rarely Importance; 3 = Sometimes Important; 4
= Often Important; to 5 = Always Important.

Additionally, the survey contained a definition of a Diversity-competent group worker as well as definitions of two central terms used in the Principles. By providing participants with the
terms and their definitions, the survey could be shorter and more easily accessible to the
participants. Adopting the exact language found in the Principles also insured that participants
were responding to the Principles themselves, and not an interpretation of the Principles by the
researcher.

The following terms and definitions were included in the survey:

(1) DCGW stands for “Diversity-competent group workers”
Since each paragraph from the original Principles started with the words “Diversity-
Competent Group Workers,” and in order to avoid lengthy survey items, these words were
removed from each item and the acronym “DCGW” was placed in each composite as a part of
each heading.

(2) Classes stand for “race, ethnicity, culture, gender, SES, sexual orientation, abilities,
    religion and spiritual beliefs.”
Item construction

Diversity-competent group workers demonstrate movement from being unaware to being increasingly aware and sensitive to their own race, ethnicity and cultural heritage, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), sexual orientation, abilities, and religion and spiritual beliefs and to valuing and respecting differences (ASGW, 1999, p. 8).

This lengthy paragraph was converted into survey item 1 as “DCGW demonstrate movement from being unaware to being increasingly aware and sensitive to their own Classes and to valuing and respecting differences.”

(3) *Minorities* stand for “Indigenous Peoples, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, Latinos/Latinas, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, or transgendered persons and persons with physical, mental/emotional, and/or learning disabilities.”

Item construction

Diversity-Competent Group Workers demonstrate awareness of their stereotypes and preconceived notions that they may hold toward Indigenous Peoples, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, Latinos/Latinas, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, or transgendered persons and persons with physical, mental/motional, and/or learning disabilities (ASGW, 1999, p. 10).

The above paragraph was shortened into survey item 13 as “DCGW demonstrate awareness of their stereotypes and preconceived notions that they may hold toward *Minorities*.”

*A pilot Investigation*

According to Fowler, Jr. (1995) “before a question is asked in a full-scale survey, testing should be done to find out if people can understand the questions” (p. 104). Punch (2003) added that “newly written items and questions need to be tested for comprehension, clarity, ambiguity
and difficulty in responding…. in the sense that people can quickly, easily and confidently respond to them” (p. 34). Granello (2007) agreed that “If researcher-developed instruments are used for the first time, researchers should use review panels and pilot studies” (p. 71). In order to make sure the instrument accurately represents the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers, that the terminologies are clear, and that the sentences are comprehensible, the 40-item survey instrument was reviewed by four group counseling professionals and members of ASGW: Dr. William Kline (JSGW board reviewer and recipient of ASGW Eminent Career award); Dr. Deborah Rubel (Best ASGW group paper recipient 2009); Dr. Jane Okech (ASGW group co-leader relationship expert); and Dr. Lynn Haley-Banez (chair of the committee for the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers, 1999). The researcher consulted with the chair of the dissertation committee about suggestions and opinions derived from the pilot investigation team. Modification of the instrument was made as needed to increase the validity of the instrument.

**Data Analysis**

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS Inc., 2008) was used to generate descriptive statistics. The collected raw data was processed through SPSS to calculate the means and standard deviations of individual items under each of variables, (1) frequency of practice and (2) level of importance. According to Hinkle, Wiersma, and Jurs (2003), the mean is “the arithmetic average of the scores in a distribution” (p. 56) and the standard deviation is “a measure of variation that has the same unit of measurement as the original data” (p. 68). This fulfilled the purpose of this study to obtain descriptive information of how group workers rate the importance of the Principles according to their group leading experiences. The modes and percentages of each item were also inspected, identifying which response was most commonly selected for each item.
The Principles were originally organized into three different categories: Awareness of Self (items 1 through 10), Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview (items 11 to 21), and Diversity-Appropriate Intervention Strategies (items 22 to 40). Composite scores for each of these categories were calculated for each participant by taking the mean of all of the items in the category. These composite scores provided an abstract measure of the importance of that category to the participant. Reliability analyses were performed for each composite measure to determine the appropriateness of aggregating the items (Green & Salkind, 2003). Attempts were made to design composites with a minimum reliability of .7, with a goal of obtaining composites with reliabilities of .8 or higher. After conducting a preliminary reliability analysis, the item-total score correlations was examined to examine how well each item represented the construct being measured. If the overall reliability was too low, poor items would be removed from the scale until a composite with acceptable reliability was obtained. After final versions of the scales were obtained for each group of items, the means and standard deviations of each composite measure were examined.

Next, correlations were computed between the frequency of practice and the level of importance of the Principles.

Then, bivariate statistics were computed to examine the relations between the composite measures and the demographic variables. Correlations were used to test the relations between each of the composite measures and the duration of the participant's group leading experience and age, since the composites and the duration and age were all continuous measures (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). The General Linear Model (GLM) was used to test the relations of each of the composite measures with the participant's ethnicity, gender, and types of group since the composites were continuous measures and ethnicity, gender, and types of group were all
categorical measures (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). Additionally, the Least Significant Difference (LSD) Post-Hoc analyses were used to explore and interpret significant relationships observed in the GLM.

Finally, Factor Analysis was initially to be used to provide evidence of reliability of this survey instrument. According to Hatcher (1994), a confirmatory factor analysis for 40 items needs either 200 subjects or 5 per parameter, whichever is greater. To calculate the parameter, 40 (item loadings) + 3 (factor variances) + 3 (covariances among the factors) equals 46 parameters, which suggests a minimum of 230 subjects. Thus, if there had been 230 or more participants, the researcher could have computed a Confirmatory Factor Analysis on the survey instrument. However, since there were only 62 participants, fewer than the required minimums, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis was not computed.

**Possible Limitations**

Because this survey has never been used before, it was reviewed by experienced group experts in the field. Test-retest validity was not able to be determined, which could be a threat to the validity of the instrument. Additionally, the demographic information is limited to participants’ gender, age, ethnicity, and length of group leading experience. While this does provide a good representation of demographic characteristics, other demographic factors that are not included in this survey may be important but omitted. Therefore, this study does not include all factors that may affect group workers’ ratings on the Principles.

Despite the potential limitations and threats, the results of this survey will provide useful information about the extent to which group counseling leaders agree with the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers. Specific data about which items are or are not aligned with group workers’ practices and beliefs will be particularly informative, especially for the
revision process which is being considered for the Principles (A. Singh, personal communication, June 4, 2010).
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was first to quantify how group leaders rate the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers based on their group leading experiences. Second was to identify the correlations between the descriptive variables of age, length of group leading experience, gender, ethnicity, and types of groups to the three main composites of the Principles (i.e., Awareness of Self, Awareness of Group Members, and Awareness of the Intervention Strategy). This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of The University of Mississippi (Appendix D).

Final Subject Group

A total of 138 unique individuals visited the electronic link connecting them to the online survey. 76 individuals completed two thirds of the survey, and 62 individuals completed the entire survey. The 62 participants who completed the entire survey were included in the data analysis.

Of the 62 participants, 40 (64.7%) were females, 20 (32.3%) were males, and 2 (3.2%) participants did not respond to the gender question. The ethnicity distribution of the participants was: 10 (16.1%) African Americans; 3 (4.8%) Asian Americans; 38 (61.3%) European Americans; 2 (3.2%) Hispanic Americans; 7 (11.3%) were self-identified as other, and 2 (3.2%) did not respond to the ethnicity question.
Regarding their awareness of the AGSW Principles, 34 participants (54.8%) indicated that they were aware of the Principles and 28 participants (45.2%) indicated that they were not aware of the Principles.

Regarding the types of groups lead by the participants, 41 of 62 participants (68.3%) listed International Population groups; 12 of 62 participants (20%) listed Multi-ethnicity groups; half of the 62 participants (50%) listed experience with Members With Disability groups; 22 of 62 participants (36.7%) listed K-12 groups; 39 of 62 participants (65%) had experience with GLBT groups; and 31 of 62 participants (51.7%) had experience with Substance Dependence groups.

The length of participants’ group leading experience ranged from four months to thirty years, with a median length of experience 6 years and a mean of 10.3 years. Participants’ ages ranged from 23 to 63 years of age, with a median age of 41 years old and a mean of 41.82 years old.

**Frequency of Practice**

Frequency of practice was measured for each of the three composites using a five point Likert scale (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Very Often). For Awareness of Self, the mean was 4.06, or slightly more than *Often*, with a standard deviation was .58. The mean for Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview was 3.81, or close to *Often*, with a standard deviation of .67. The mean for Awareness of the Intervention Strategy was 3.83, or close to *Often*, with a standard deviation of .75.

A one-way within-subject ANOVA indicated a significant effect for composites on Frequency of Practice (*F*[2, 122] = 10.22, *p* < .001). Least Significant Difference (LSD) post-hoc analyses showed that the mean Frequency of Practice for Awareness of Self was significantly

44
greater than those for Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview’ and Awareness of Intervention Strategy. The means for Members and Strategies Awareness were not significantly different from each other.

**Level of Importance**

Level of Importance was measured for each of the three composites using a five point Likert scale (Never Important, Rarely Important, Sometimes Important, Often Important, and Always Important). For Awareness of Self, the mean was 4.46, or close to *Always Important*, with a standard deviation was .50. The mean for Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview was 4.30, or slightly higher than *Often Important*, with a standard deviation of .55. The mean for Awareness of the Intervention Strategy was 4.33, or slightly higher than *Often Important*, with a standard deviation of .55.

A one-way within-subject ANOVA indicated a significant effect for composites on Level of Importance ($F[2, 122] = 8.24$, $p < .001$). LSD post-hoc analyses showed that mean Level of Importance for Awareness of Self was significantly greater than those for Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview’ and Awareness of the Intervention Strategy. The means for Members and Strategies Awareness were not significantly different from each other.

**Most and Least Important Composite Items**

**Awareness of Self**

In addition to rating the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the Principles, participants were asked to indicate the most and least important items for each composite. For Awareness of Self (Table 1), 14 participants (23.3 %) rated item # 9 “recognizing the limits of my competencies and: (a) seek consultation, (b) seek further training or education, (c) refer members to more qualified group workers, or (d) engage in a combination of these” as the most
important item. For this same composite, 14 participants (24.6%) rated item # 5 “identifying specific knowledge about my own classes and how I personally and professionally affect my definitions of ‘normality’ and the group process” as the least important item. No participants selected Item #5 as the most important item.

Table 1. The frequency of the most and least important items for Awareness of Self

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Most important</th>
<th></th>
<th>Least important</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness of Self</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Awareness of Group Members Worldview**

For Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview (Table 2), 14 participants (22.6%) rated item # 3 “awareness of my stereotypes and preconceived notions that I may hold towards Minorities” as the most important item. For this composite, 15 participants (25.9%) rated item # 11 “actively involving with Minorities outside of my group work/counseling setting so that my perspective of minorities is more than academic or experienced through a third party” as the least important item. All items were selected at least one time as the most important item, but item #3 was not selected in least important section.
Table 2. The frequency of the most and least important items for Awareness of Members’ Worldview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Most important Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview</th>
<th>Least important Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Awareness of Intervention Strategies

For the third composite, Awareness of Intervention Strategies (Table 3), 20 participants (36.4%) rated item #19 “taking responsibility in educating my group members to the processes of group work, such as goals, expectations, legal rights, sound ethical practices, and the group worker’s theoretical orientation with regard to facilitating groups with diverse membership” as the most important item. Additionally, 13 participants (23.2%) rated item # 17 “an awareness of how sociopolitical contexts may affect evaluation and provision of group work” as the least important item. Nine items (#s 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15) were not selected by participants as the most important item. Additionally, eight items (#s 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 18) were not selected as the least important item.
Table 3. The frequency of the most and least important items for Awareness of Intervention Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Most important-Awareness of Intervention Strategies</th>
<th>Least important-Awareness of Intervention Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability

Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability ranged from .855 to .938 (Table 4) indicating strong internal consistency within each composite. The Item-Total Correlation from the reliability analysis did not show any evidence of specific ‘bad’ items.
Table 4. Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability for each composite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composite</th>
<th>Frequency of Practice</th>
<th>Level of Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>.855</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10 items)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview</td>
<td>.888</td>
<td>.879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 items)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of Intervention Strategies</td>
<td>.938</td>
<td>.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19 items)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlations between the Composites**

All of the composites were significantly correlated with each other (Table 5). The correlations ranged from .47 to .86, all of which would be described as large relations or strongly correlated with each other (Cohen, 1992).

Table 5. Correlations between the composites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-frequency</th>
<th>Self-importance</th>
<th>Members-frequency</th>
<th>Members-importance</th>
<th>Strategies-frequency</th>
<th>Strategies-importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-importance</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members-frequency</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members-importance</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies-frequency</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies-Importance</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All correlations are significant \( p < .001 \).

**Correlations between Age and Group Leading Experience and the Composites**

Correlations were computed for each of the three composites and the two numerical demographic factors, age and group leading experience. None of the correlations was significant (Table 6).
Table 6. Pearson Correlations between age and group leading experience and each of the three composites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-frequency</th>
<th>Self-importance</th>
<th>Member-frequency</th>
<th>Member-importance</th>
<th>Strategies-frequency</th>
<th>Strategies-importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (Sig)</td>
<td>.105 (.44)</td>
<td>-.050 (.716)</td>
<td>.017 (.90)</td>
<td>-.084 (.54)</td>
<td>.016 (.90)</td>
<td>-.003 (.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group leading duration (Sig)</td>
<td>.186 (.18)</td>
<td>.061 (.66)</td>
<td>.000 (1.0)</td>
<td>-.107 (.54)</td>
<td>.118 (.91)</td>
<td>.060 (.98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences between Ethnicity and the Composites

ANOVAs were used to test for differences between the demographic variable of ethnicity and each of the three composites. The p values were equal to or greater than .14, indicating no significant difference in Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance (Table 7) among the five ethnicity variables (African American, Asian American, European American, Hispanic American, and other).

Table 7. ANOVA between ethnicity and the three composites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F(4, 55)</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-frequency</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-importance</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members frequency</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members importance</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies frequency</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies importance</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences between Gender and the Composites

ANOVAs were used to test for differences between the demographic variable of gender and each of the three composites. There was a significant difference in the rated Level of
Importance for Awareness of Intervention Strategies between genders (Table 8). The mean Level of Importance for females \((M = 4.31)\) was significantly greater than that for males \((M = 3.77)\). There were no other significant differences between gender and the remaining composites. There were no significant differences between gender and Frequency of Practice on any of the composites.

Table 8. ANOVA between gender and the three composites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F(1, 58)</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self_frequency</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self_importance</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members_frequency</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members_importance</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies_frequency</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies_importance</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences between Types of Groups and the Composites

ANOVAS were used to test for differences between the demographic variable of types of groups and each of the three composites. There were two effects for Types of Groups on the composites (Table 9). Participants who had worked with Multi-ethnicity groups practiced the Principles in the Awareness of Self composite more frequently \((N = 48, M = 4.15)\) than those who had not \((N = 12, M = 3.72)\). Additionally, those who had worked with K-12 groups practiced the Principles in the Awareness of Members’ Worldview composite more frequently \((N = 38, M = 3.93)\) than those who had not \((N = 22, M = 3.54)\).
Table 9. ANOVAs predicting the composites for Types of Groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Multi-ethnicity</th>
<th>Disabilities</th>
<th>K-12</th>
<th>GLBT</th>
<th>Substance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F[1, 58]</strong> (Significance)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self Frequency</strong></td>
<td>2.92 (.09)</td>
<td>5.68 (.02)</td>
<td>1.39 (.24)</td>
<td>3.27 (.08)</td>
<td>.02 (.89)</td>
<td>.24 (.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self Importance</strong></td>
<td>.17 (.68)</td>
<td>4.28 (.43)</td>
<td>.68 (.41)</td>
<td>.67 (.41)</td>
<td>.00 (.95)</td>
<td>.00 (.97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members Frequency</strong></td>
<td>1.45 (.23)</td>
<td>3.42 (.07)</td>
<td>.06 (.81)</td>
<td>5.06 (.03)</td>
<td>.69 (.41)</td>
<td>.00 (.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members Importance</strong></td>
<td>.27 (.61)</td>
<td>3.83 (.06)</td>
<td>.04 (.84)</td>
<td>.77 (.39)</td>
<td>.61 (.44)</td>
<td>1.38 (.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies Frequency</strong></td>
<td>3.20 (.08)</td>
<td>3.56 (.07)</td>
<td>1.13 (.29)</td>
<td>2.58 (.11)</td>
<td>.00 (.96)</td>
<td>.00 (.97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies Importance</strong></td>
<td>.64 (.43)</td>
<td>2.70 (.11)</td>
<td>.08 (.78)</td>
<td>2.65 (.11)</td>
<td>.76 (.39)</td>
<td>.42 (.52)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was first to quantify how group leaders rate the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers based on their group leading experiences. Second was to identify the correlations between the descriptive variables of age, length of group leading experience, gender, ethnicity, and types of groups to the three main composites of the Principles (i.e., Awareness of Self, Awareness of Group Members, and Awareness of the Intervention Strategy).

Implications of the Research

The Three Composites

Group workers incorporated the items in the Awareness of Self composite in their group leading experiences more frequently than the other two composites (Awareness of Members’ Worldview and Awareness of Intervention Strategies). Awareness of Self was also reported to have higher levels of importance for the participants than the other two composites. The means were 4.06 ($F = 10.22$, $p < .001$) for frequency of practice and 4.46 ($F = 8.42$, $p < .001$) for level of importance. Least Significant Difference (LSD) post-hoc showed the mean for both frequency of practice and level of importance significantly greater in Awareness of Self than the other two composites.

This is not a surprising finding because of the emphasis of “self” awareness over Awareness of Members’ World View and Strategies in the organizational standards and
principles of the counseling profession. For instance, among the three multicultural counseling competent characteristics described by Sue, Arredondo, and Mc Davis (1992), counselors’ awareness is considered most important followed in rank order by awareness of members’ worldview, and the awareness of intervention strategies. The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) starts with educators’ awareness in Professional Identity, Professional Practice in program designing, and then continues to types of counseling (CACREP, 2009).

Further evidence of the importance placed on awareness of self can be found in the supervision literature. According to Stoltenberg (1981), the development of self-awareness marks the beginning of supervisees’ professional growth. An awareness of personal biases, values, and beliefs also is considered an essential element for multiculturally competent counselors (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Consequently, it is not surprising to find that group workers perceive Awareness of Self as more important and more frequently incorporate an awareness of self-emphasis in their practice than in the areas of Awareness Members’ World View and Awareness of Intervention Strategies.

In addition to the organizational standards and principles, studies also support self-awareness as an essential element for the competent practice of mental health counseling (Leach, Aten, Boyer, Strain, & Bradshaw, 2010; Rubel & Ratts, 2011; Williams, Hayes, & Fauth, 2008). Hansen (2009) specifically stated that “The construct of self-awareness is highly valued by the counseling profession” (p. 186). The strong focus on self-awareness found in multicultural counseling can be extended into multicultural group counseling as well.

This finding raises several questions regarding the relative importance of Awareness of Members’ World View and Intervention Strategies when compared to Awareness of Self. First,
if all three composite areas are considered important, with Awareness of Self merely considered “more” important than the other two, this suggests that both educators and practitioners are appropriately applying the Principles in their group leading practice. This provides some evidence of the efficacy and importance of the Principles in the training and practice of multicultural group leaders. This may also indicate a need to clarify rather than extensively revise the Principles. In summary, the results of this study would appear to support the continuing durability and usefulness of the Principles in multicultural group counseling practice.

**Most and Least Important Items**

Based on an assumption that the participants had prior awareness and familiarity with the ASGW Principles and the beliefs and values on which they are based, a concern was that the participants might rate all survey items as important and frequently utilized in their group leading experiences. Wang, Zhang, MrArdle, and Salthouse (2008) explained that when “individuals obtain either maximum or near-maximum scores and the true extent of their abilities cannot be determined” (p. 477). In order to avoid this ceiling effect, participants were asked to identify the most and the least important item for each of the three composites (Table 1. 2. 3).

**Awareness of self.** The item most frequently reported as most important in the Awareness of Self composite was item #9:

“recognizing the limits of my competencies and: (a) seek consultation, (b) seek further training or education, (c) refer members to more qualified group workers, or (d) engage in a combination of these”

The item most frequently reported as least important in the Awareness of Self composite was item #5:
“identifying specific knowledge about my own classes and how I personally and professionally affect my definitions of ‘normality’ and the group process”

Although other items were selected, item #5 was not selected by any participant as the most important item in this composite. This identification of item #9 as the most important item could mean that even after receiving group training, group workers still valued further education and the ability to seek consultation when it is needed. In other words, this provides support for group leading experience being an on-going learning process. Participants identified item #5 as the least important item, and no one selected it as the most important item. This could imply that acknowledging class and its influence is not considered important in their practice. Furthermore, putting the two findings together, one can also imply that as long as group practitioners are open to continue learning, some limitation about specific topic does not restrict they facilitate effect groups.

**Awareness of members’ world view.** The item most frequently reported as most important in the Awareness of Members’ World View composite was item #3:

“awareness of my stereotypes and preconceived motions that I may hold towards Minorities”

The item most frequently reported as least important in the Awareness of Members World View composite was item #11:

“actively involving with Minorities outside of my group work/counseling setting so that my perspective of minorities is more than academic or experienced through a third party”

Although other items were selected, item #3 was not selected by any participants as the least important item in this composite. Since both group and counseling training strongly emphasize
the importance of self-awareness, it is likely that group workers are naturally more aware of how their perceptions may affect the group members. Thus, this item should continue to be included in revision of the Principles. As for item #11, although involvement with members outside the group could increase group leaders’ first-hand information or knowledge about these members, it may also require the availability of the minority members, which is not in the control of group leaders. Thus, this item should be reworded so that group workers will have no difficulty executing what it is suggested to them.

**Awareness of intervention strategies.** The item most frequently reported as most important in the Awareness of Intervention Strategies composite was item #19:

“taking responsibility in educating my group members to the processes of group work, such as goals, expectations, legal rights, sound ethical practices, and the group worker’s theoretical orientation with regard to facilitating groups with diverse membership”

The item most frequently reported as least important in the Awareness of Intervention Strategies composite was item #17:

“an awareness of how sociopolitical contexts may affect evaluation and provision of group work”

A larger amount of items were not selected within this composite than the previous two composites. Nine items (#s 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15) were not selected by participants as the most important item. They are:

2. respecting indigenous helping practices and Minorities and can identify and utilize community intrinsic helping-giving networks.

3. valuing bilingualism and sign language and do not view another language as an impediment to group work.
5. an awareness of institutional barriers that prevent Minorities from actively participating in or using various types of group

7. knowledge of the family structures, hierarchies, values, and beliefs of Minorities, the community characteristics and the resources in the community as well as about the family.

8. an awareness of relevant discriminatory practices at the social and community level that may be affecting the psychological welfare of persons and access to services of the population being served.

9. engagement in a variety of verbal and nonverbal group-facilitating functions, dependent upon the type of group, and the multiple, self-identified status of various Minority group members.

12. having the ability to exercise institutional intervention skills on behalf of my group members.

14. taking responsibility for interacting in the language requested by the group member(s) and, if not feasible, make an appropriate referral.

15. being trained and having expertise in the use of traditional assessment and testing instruments related to group work, and are aware of the cultural bias/limitations of these tools and processes.

Additionally, eight items (#s 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 18) were not selected as the least important item. They are:

2. respecting indigenous helping practices and Minorities and can identify and utilize community intrinsic helping-giving networks.
3. valuing bilingualism and sign language and do not view another language as an impediment to group work.

4. a clear and explicit knowledge and understanding of generic characteristics of group work and theory and how they may clash with the beliefs, values, and traditions of Minorities.

5. an awareness of institutional barriers that prevent Minorities from actively participating in or using various types of group

7. knowledge of the family structures, hierarchies, values, and beliefs of Minorities, the community characteristics and the resources in the community as well as about the family.

8. an awareness of relevant discriminatory practices at the social and community level that may be affecting the psychological welfare of persons and access to services of the population being served.

10. the ability to send and receive both verbal and nonverbal messages accurately.

18. developing sensitivity to issues of oppression, racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, and so forth.

There are two possible reasons why more items were not selected in the last composite. First, participants may have been tired by the end of the survey. Second, there are nineteen items in the last composite, almost as many as the first two composites combined (10 and 11 items respectively). These two factors may have contributed to participants taking less care in completing this part of the survey (Creswell, 2002). Thus, it may be useful for future researchers to be mindful when designing the length of their surveys. However, because of the necessity of preservation the original language of the Principles to avoid subjective interpretation the
researcher chose to risk constructing a lengthy survey instrument, knowing of potential limitations.

To address the possibility that participants may have completed the last composite with less care than the other two and to avoid the possible ceiling effect, the participants were asked to identify the most and least important items for practice and importance for each composite. Since the researcher of this study is currently involved in the ASGW Writing Team revising the existing Principles, it is known that the identified most important items are being considered to be included in the new version of the Principles. At the same time, the identified least important items are being considered not to be included. Thus the findings in this study would appear to lend empirical support for the changes being considered by the revision team. The revision team has also determined that if items were ranked six or above, they will be considered for inclusion in the revision of the Principles. Items with a rank of six or below will be examined for elimination from the revision.

For the least important items, the question is whether or not they should be eliminated from the revision of the Principles because they are indeed not very important, or whether they remain important elements in the practice of multicultural group counseling but need renewed emphasis in training programs, standards, and continuing education. In summary, these study findings are already providing an empirically based foundation for decisions to keep, revise, or remove specific items, as well as providing valuable input for the design and implementation of training courses, the review of professional standards, and overall program design and emphasis.

**Demographic Factors**

It was anticipated that group leaders’ age, length of group leading experience, and ethnicity and would have significant difference on rating the composites. However the results
revealed Correlations between only three demographic factors and the composites: Gender and Multi-ethnic Groups and K-12 Groups. No correlations/differences were found between Age, Length of Group Leading Experience, Ethnicity and the three composites.

Female group workers rated the importance of the Awareness of Intervention Strategies higher than male group workers. No significant differences were found between male and female respondents and Awareness of Members’ World View and Intervention Strategies. Previous studies have established a relationship between gender and writing skills (Roth, Buster, & Barnes-Farrell, 2010), gender and skills in situational interests (Chen & Darst, 2002), and gender and sex role orientation on counseling skills training (Fong & Borders, 1985). Gender differences do seem to affect skill related areas, and have been found to have “a measurable impact on the effectiveness of counselor trainee responses” (Fong & Borders, 1985, p. 108). It would appear that because this composite directly relates to the skills area, female participants considered this composite as more important than the Awareness of Self and the Members’ World View composites. Interestingly, in the same area of gender and skills, when the focus switched from level of importance to frequency of practice, no significant differences were found. This finding implies that even female group workers valued strategies more than males; they did not necessarily practice the strategies more often than males.

However, no research has been done directly on the relationship between gender and group multicultural competency. The closest research available is a study of sexual preference and multicultural counseling competency by Fassinger and Richie (1997). The authors stated that one’s sexual preference dictates one’s awareness towards assumptions, suggesting that “Sex matters. Issues of gender and sexual orientation are core to individuals’ experience of their worlds” (p. 105). They concluded that sex or gender should be included in multicultural
counseling competency training. In the context of multicultural group competency, no study has been done explaining what role gender may play in the area of multicultural group competency, especially in the group skills or strategies context. It is one thing to say *sex matters* and to acknowledge that gender and sexual orientation play an important role in multicultural group competency. It is another thing to determine exactly how gender influences the rating of group strategies as more important than group leaders’ and group members’ awareness as the current findings indicate. Thus, it is vital to continue research on more fully understanding how gender influences group workers, and to incorporate these findings into standards, competencies, and the training of group leaders.

Another significant finding is that the Principles from the Awareness of Self composite were utilized more frequently in the practice of Multi-ethnic group workers than the other two composites. This result echoes existing studies about training group leaders working with ethnically diverse group members. In these studies, the importance of raising group leaders’ awareness of their assumptions, biases, values, cultural backgrounds, and heritages are emphasized (Dowds, 1996; Ibrahim, 2010; Tyson & Flasketud, 2010; Vasquez & Han, 1995). Because of this training emphasis, it is not surprising to have this finding. Group workers can be expected to practice based on their training. What is surprising is the difference in the ratings between the frequency of practice and level of importance for this composite reported in this study. In other words, Awareness of Self is practiced often but is perceived as less important when facilitating multi-ethnic groups. Understanding the reasons for this difference may have strong implications in the training of group leaders, as well as any future examination or revision of the Principles. For example, do group leaders merely practice what they have been taught, or
is there another level of understanding that is not being taught regarding why awareness of self is considered important and how it impacts the practice of group counseling?

An additional area of significance revealed in the study was that K-12 group workers practiced Principles from the Awareness of Members’ Worldview composite more frequently than Awareness of Self or Awareness of Intervention Strategies. A possible explanation for this result is that, similar to the training emphasis of multi-ethnic group workers, school counselors are trained to emphasize student development, which focuses on an awareness of others (i.e., group members). Additional studies confirming this emphasis include a longitudinal study of students performance goal practice in elementary school (Hughes & Wu, 2011); pre-school teachers’ beliefs and attitudes on children’s developmental training (Heisner & Lederberg, 2010); and different methods and intervention strategies for addressing students’ mental health services (Auger, 2011). All of these studies focused on identifying students’ developmental stages and their developmental needs as a way to insure appropriate services are being delivered. Therefore, the results of this study support previous studies about K-12 groups and the awareness placed on understanding student group members and their needs (Auger, 2011; Heisner & Lederberg, 2010; Hughes & Wu, 2011). Perhaps an examination of the CACREP (2009) standards for school counselors will yield valuable information for group counseling instructors regarding the importance or strengthened emphasis of an Awareness of Group Members’ Worldview for all group leaders.

Based on previous studies, it was anticipated that the age of the participants and the length of their group leading experiences would produce significant differences on their frequency of practice and level of importance ratings. Specifically, it was anticipated that older and more experienced group leaders would rank the importance and practice levels of the
Principles significantly higher than younger and less experienced group workers. In studies of age, Carstensen et al. (2010) found that as participants grew older, their emotions became more stable. Similarly, Baker (2010) found that language acquisition stabilizes with experience and O’Connell (2010) discovered a similar pattern of stability over time in the area of motivation.

Contrary to previous findings, in this study no correlations were found between age and length of group leading experience, and the composite rankings. It would appear that frequency of practice and level of importance of the Principles do not change over time or experience for group workers participating in this study. Since both age and group leading experience are time sensitive, the older one gets, the more experienced one may become. While it would appear that group workers may need different guidelines as their age or/group experience accumulates, these study results indicated otherwise. Whether emerging or seasoned group workers, despite their age or years of group experiences, participants in this study practiced and perceived multicultural group competence similarly. This raises important issues regarding the learning and growth expected in the counseling profession as an ongoing process. Are group leaders different from other counseling professionals in the need for ongoing training and development? Are group leaders benefiting from continuing education opportunities to learn and grow? Are continuing education opportunities sufficient to provide for ongoing growth and development? Do current training programs, standards, and the Principles clearly and strongly emphasize the need for career long information and training updating? These issues would be appropriate for professional organizations, such as ASGW, to examine as they review offerings at conferences and workshops, and through revisions of standards and the Principles.

Additionally, no significant differences were found between Ethnicity and the composite rankings. This finding was surprising due to the number of studies suggesting that ethnicity
impacts college students’ usage of communication technology (Junco, Merson, & Salter, 2010); how students judge their professors before meeting them (Bavishi, Madera, & Hebl, 2010); and how individuals perceive health and attractiveness (Yanover & Thompson, 2010). Only one study indicates that ethnicity does not play a role in clients’ perception of therapists’ multicultural competency (Owen, Leach, Wampold, & Rodolfa, 2011). Based on these studies, it was expected that participants would rank the importance and frequency of practice differently based on their ethnicity. But these results differed from this expectation. Because of the extensive training and emphasis on multicultural competency and sensitivity for these participants, it may be that between group differences are less important when facilitating diverse member groups. It could further imply that perhaps within group differences are areas to be explored more than the apparent between group differences that are often emphasized in the group counseling education and supervision process.

The Awareness of the Principles

Slightly more than half (54.8%) of the participants indicated that they were aware of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers. 45.2% indicated no prior awareness of the Principles. There are several possible reasons for this lack of awareness of the Principles, upon which training, standards, and practice in the profession are based. First, the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) may not have promoted the Principles aggressively. This suggests a need for renewed efforts by the organization to promote the training and practice of group workers in the Principles. For instance, a special issue in the Journal for Specialists in Group Work could focus on stimulating professional and scholarly research in more fully examining the ASGW Principles and how they relate to practitioners’ experiences. An additional suggestion is to develop research grants to further encourage further research in this area.
Second, if group workers are not aware of the Principles, it suggests that group workers may have received little or no multicultural group competency training and/or training focused on the Principles. This suggests a need to reexamine group counseling training to determine the extent to which students and faculty are aware of and/or emphasize the Principles in course work. A review of CACREP standards may also result in the specific addition of the Principles as an important foundation for group counseling training. Finally, ASGW can examine and vigorously advocate for inclusion of the Principles in the knowledge base for the National Counselor Examination. This examination is a requirement for most Licensed Professional Counselors and would provide a clear incentive for counselor educators to include the Principles in their training programs.

Third, there may be other principles or standards used in training programs that emanate from different disciplines (e.g., social work, psychology). It is therefore likely that although some participants may have been unfamiliar with the ASGW Principles, they may in fact have training focused on a different, discipline specific set of competencies. This creates a need to examine discipline specific standards or principles with the goal of producing one set of principles that would cross all disciplines, strengthening the practice of multicultural group counseling standards, and producing uniformity and consistency among disciplines. Although a lofty goal, to accomplish such cross discipline consistency would truly be ground breaking.

Limitations of the Research

Although this study has produced data that will be useful in a variety of areas, some limitations must also be acknowledged. First, although there as high internal consistency among the composites (Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability is .86), the survey instrument was not piloted prior to this study. It can be noted that the survey language was used verbatim from the Principles so
as to avoid researcher bias and/or subjectivity that may have resulted from changing the original wording. In addition, test re-test reliability was not computed. Secondly, although 137 participants visited the survey link, only 62 participants fully completed the survey. Despite the fact that data was solicited and collected nationally in the United States, the low participant rate limits generalization of the study results. Third, because of the necessity of expanding the population of participants due to the initial low response rate, the resulting sample consisted of mental health counselors, school counselors, counseling psychologists, and faculty and students of The University of Mississippi. The inability to categorize the participants based on discipline and status is a limitation of the study.

**Conclusion**

The ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers is a set of principles that is designed to guide group workers in facilitating diverse members groups. However, the Principles are not only heavily adapted from the Multicultural Counseling Competency literature (Sue, Arredondo, & Mc Davis, 1992), they have never been empirically studied to determine whether or not they are practiced and viewed as important by group leaders. This study was designed to fill this gap in our knowledge and practice. Do group workers practice what they are trained and what do they believe is important? The results of this empirical study provide some preliminary answers to these questions.

First, there is now solid evidence for the efficacy and pragmatic application of the Principles in the practice of group leaders working with diverse groups. This provides some evidence of the wisdom of the leaders, scholars, and researchers who initially felt the need to raise our sensitivities and develop guidelines for their use in our practices. Second, we now have some evidence of what practitioners and counselor educators may consider important in the field
of multicultural group counseling practice and training. Although there are new questions raised by this study, we now have a more clear direction in which to place our research efforts.

Perhaps most significant is the revision process for the ASGW Principles, which is currently in progress. Researcher of this study is one of four major members on the ASGW Principles writing team, charged with overseeing the revision. This study is providing valuable information to guide this process, information which has not been available before. Without this new information, the revision would, of necessity, be based on the collective professional views of the revision team, rather than empirical evidence. The researcher is pleased to have completed this study in a way that the results can contribute to this important and timely revision.
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APPENDIX A - SURVEY INSTRUMENT
Survey of ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers

Please rate the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the Principles for Diverse-Competent Group Workers in your own group leading experiences.

For each of the survey items, please respond “In my practice, I demonstrate …” when rating Frequency of practice items and “I believe … is important” when rating Level of Importance items.

Note: Ratings: Frequency of Practice, 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often. Level of Importance, 1= never important, 2 = rarely important, 3= sometimes important, 4= often important, 5= always important.

Key Terms - DCGW: Diversity-Competent Group Workers
Classes: Race, ethnicity, cultures heritage, gender, SES, sexual orientation, abilities, and religion and spiritual beliefs.
Minorities: Indigenous Peoples, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, Latinos/Latinas, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, or transgendered persons and persons with physical, mental/emotional, and/or learning disabilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of Self – DCGW</th>
<th>Frequency of practice</th>
<th>Level of importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. the movement from being unaware to being increasingly aware and sensitive to my own classes and to valuing and respecting differences.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. the increased awareness of how my own ethnicity are impacted by my experiences and histories, which in turn influence group process and dynamics.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. recognizing the limits of my competencies and expertise with regard to working with group members who are different from me in terms of classes, values, and biases.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. comfort, tolerance, and sensitivity with differences that exist between myself and group members in terms of classes.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. identifying specific knowledge about my own ethnicity and how I personally and professionally affect my definitions of ‘normality’ and the group process.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. the knowledge and understanding regarding how oppression in any form – such as, racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, discrimination, and stereotyping – affects me personally and professionally.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. the knowledge about my social impact on others. I am knowledgeable about communication style differences, how my style may inhibit or foster the group process with members who are different from myself along the different dimensions of diversity, and how to anticipate the impact I may have on others.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. seeking out educational, consultative, and training experiences to improve my understanding and effectiveness in working with group members who self-identify as Minorities.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. recognizing the limits of my competencies and: (a) seek consultation, (b) seek further training or education, (c) refer members to more qualified group workers, or (d) engage in a combination of these.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. seeking understanding myself within my multiple identities (apparent and unapparent differences), and actively strive to unlearn the various behaviors and processes I covertly and overtly communicate that perpetuate oppression, particularly racism.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Awareness of Group Members' Worldview - DCGW

11. an awareness of any possible negative emotional reactions toward *Minorities.*

12. willingness to contrast in a nonjudgmental manner my own beliefs and attitudes with those of *Minorities.*

13. awareness of my stereotypes and preconceived motions that I may hold towards *Minorities.*

14. possessing specific knowledge and information about *Minorities* with whom I am working.

15. awareness of the life experiences, culture heritage, and sociopolitical background of *Minorities.*

16. an understanding of how classes and other immutable personal characteristics may affect personality formation, vocational choices, manifestation of psychological disorders, physical disease or somatic symptoms, help-seeking behavior(s).

17. an understanding of the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the various types of and theoretical approaches to group work.

18. competency in diversity in groups understand and have the knowledge about sociopolitical influences that impinge upon the lives of *Minorities.*

19. competency in immigration issues, poverty, racism, oppression, stereotyping, and/or powerlessness adversely impacts many of these individuals and therefore impacts group process or dynamics.

20. familiarizing myself with relevant research and the latest findings regarding mental health issues of *Minorities.*

21. actively involving with *Minorities* outside of my group work/counseling setting so that my perspective of minorities is more than academic or experienced through a third party.

Please list one item that you believe is the most important and one item that you believe is the least important in this category:

**Most Important:** _____  **Least Important:** _____

### Diversity-Appropriate Intervention Strategies – DCGW

22. respecting clients' religious and/or spiritual beliefs and values, because they affect worldview, psychosocial functioning, and expressions of distress.

23. respecting indigenous helping practices and *Minorities* and can identify and utilize community intrinsic helping-giving networks.

24. valuing bilingualism and sign language and do not view another language as an impediment to group work.

25. a clear and explicit knowledge and understanding of generic characteristics of group work and theory and how they may clash with the beliefs, values, and traditions of *Minorities.*

26. an awareness of institutional barriers that prevent *Minorities* from actively participating in or using various types of group.

27. knowledge of the potential bias in assessments and use procedures and interpret findings, or actively participate in various types of evaluations of group outcome or success, keeping in mind the linguistic, cultural, and other self-identified characteristics of the group members.

28. knowledge of the family structures, hierarchies, values, and beliefs of *Minorities,* the community characteristics and the resources in the community as well as about the family.

29. an awareness of relevant discriminatory practices at the social and community level that may be affecting the psychological welfare of persons and access to services of the population being served.

30. engagement in a variety of verbal and nonverbal group-facilitating functions, dependent upon the type of group, and the multiple, self-identified status of various *Minority* group members.

31. the ability to send and receive both verbal and nonverbal messages accurately.

32. not tied down to one method or approach to group facilitation and recognize that helping styles and approaches may be culture-bounded.

33. having the ability to exercise institutional intervention skills on behalf of my group members.

34. willingness to seek consultation with traditional healers and religious and spiritual healers and
practitioners in the treatment of members who are self-identified *Minorities* when appropriate.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>35. taking responsibility for interacting in the language requested by the group member(s) and, if not feasible, make an appropriate referral.</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
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<tr>
<th>36. being trained and having expertise in the use of traditional assessment and testing instruments related to group work, and are aware of the cultural bias/limitations of these tools and processes.</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
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<tr>
<th>37. attending to as well as working to eliminate biases, prejudices, oppression, and discriminatory practices.</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
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<tr>
<th>38. an awareness of how sociopolitical contexts may affect evaluation and provision of group work.</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
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<tr>
<th>39. developing sensitivity to issues of oppression, racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism.</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>40. taking responsibility in educating my group members to the processes of group work, such as goals, expectations, legal rights, sound ethical practices, and the group worker’s theoretical orientation with regard to facilitating groups with diverse membership.</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please list one item that you believe is the most important and one item that you believe is the least important in this category:

Most Important: _____

Least Important: _____

Note: Frequency of Practice: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often.
Level of Importance: 1 = never important, 2 = rarely important, 3 = sometimes important, 4 = often important, 5 = always important.
APPENDIX B - DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE
1. Ethnicity: African American
   Asian American
   European American
   Hispanic American
   Native American
   Other______________

2. Gender: Female       Male

3. Length of group leading experience:  _____  _____
   Years  Months

4. Age:

5. What types of groups have you worked with:
   a. international population? Yes/No, if yes, length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
   b. multi-ethnicities? Yes/No, if yes, length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
   c. K-12 students? Yes/No, if yes, length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
   d. GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender)? Yes/No, if yes, length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
   e. members with disabilities? Yes/No, if yes, length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
   f. substance dependents? Yes/No, if yes, length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
   g. other?_______ length of group leading experience with this population  _____  _____
      Years  Months
APPENDIX C - INFORMED CONSENT
The purpose of this study is to survey ASGW members on the frequency of practice and level of importance of the Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers in their group leading experience. The study consists of a 40 item survey and a demographic questionnaire.

**Risks:** No risks are anticipated other than participants may need to reflect on their group leading experiences when rating these Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers. Participants may end their participation in the survey at any time without penalty.

**Benefits:** Data collected from this survey derived directly from group workers’ actual group leading experiences, whether or not these Principles in fact align with their group leading experiences. This empirical data will provide valuable information about the Principles and for future revision or amendment of the Principles.

**Confidentiality:** Participants’ identity will be coded with a number when the electronic survey is returned to the researcher. The data will be kept electronically in the researcher’s computer and an external drive with a secure password for three years. It will then be erased permanently. This study and consent form have been reviewed and proved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Mississippi. Any questions or concerns regarding the rights of research participants should be directed to Ms Diane Lindley, Research Compliance Specialist, the University of Mississippi, 100 Barr Hall, Oxford, MS 38677, 662 915 7482.

If you have questions regarding this survey, please contact the researcher: Daphne H. Ingene at daphox@hotmail.com or 662 607 1732, or the chair of the research: Dr David Spruill at dspruill@olemiss.edu, 662 915 4995.

Proceeding to the Qualtrics website and responding to the survey and questionnaire indicates that you have read and understand this consent form. It also indicates that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this research study. After providing consent, however, you may decide to withdraw at any time without penalty. If you withdraw before completing the survey and questionnaire online, any data you have provided will be discarded.

All participants will be eligible for one of the four $25 Starbucks coffee shop vouchers.
APPENDIX D - IRB APPROVAL
October 8, 2010

Ms. Daphne H. Ingene  
1205 Old Lake Cove  
Oxford, MS 38655  

Dear Ms. Ingene and Dr. Spruill:

This is to inform you that your application to conduct research with human participants, How Group Leaders Rate the Frequency of Practice and Level of Importance of the ASGW Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers (Protocol 11-067), has been approved as Exempt under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Please remember that all of The University of Mississippi’s human participant research activities, regardless of whether the research is subject to federal regulations, must be guided by the ethical principles in The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research.

It is especially important for you to keep these points in mind:

- You must protect the rights and welfare of human research participants.

- Any changes to your approved protocol must be reviewed and approved before initiating those changes.

- You must report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (662) 915-7482.

Sincerely,

Diane W. Lindley  
Coordinator, Institutional Review Board

A Great American Public University  
www.olemiss.edu
Daphne Ha Ingene  
1205 Old Lake Cove  
Oxford, MS 38655  
(662) 607 1732 / Email: dingene@olemiss.edu

EDUCATION
PhD, University of Mississippi  anticipated graduation Spring 2011  
CACREP Accredited  
Dissertation Topic: *Principles for Diversity-Competent Group Workers: group leaders’ experiences.*

M.Ed., University of Mississippi  2004  
CACREP Accredited

B.A. University of Sterling (UK)  1997

LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION
Mississippi Licensed Professional Counselor #1247

National Certified Counselor # 202093

TEACHING EXPERIENCES
Guest Lecture at Itawamba Community College  Fall 2010  
Lecture on the topic of Chinese Art History to 40 art major college students, demonstrated an interactive teaching style engaging with non-counseling major students.

Family Counseling  COUN 682  Spring 2010  
L lectured, graded papers and examinations, facilitated simulated family groups, and exercised the family of origin genogram.

Group Procedures  COUN 643  Spring 2010  
L lectured, supervised group leadership development, facilitated experiential group activities, and graded papers and examinations.

Multicultural Counseling  COUN 570  Fall 2009  
Designed and infused food and culture into assignments for the purpose of raising students’ multicultural competency awareness; developed a rubric, lectured and graded students’ papers and presentations.
DSM –IV TR (an on-line class)  COUN 674  Summer 2009
Moderated on-line chats, graded written work, developed online presentation, communicated electronically with students regarding course material, and exercised on-line technologies.

Crisis Counseling  COUN 595  Summer 2009
Lected an intense two-week long summer course.

Group Procedures  COUN 643  Spring 2009
Lected, supervised group leadership development, facilitated experiential group activities, and graded papers and examinations.

Organization, Administration, and Consultation:

Community Counseling  COUN 685  Spring 2009
Developed and used grading rubric, provided lectures, and evaluated students’ presentations & papers.

Issues and Ethics in Counseling  COUN 672  Fall 2008
Lected, evaluated students’ presentations and examinations.

Practicum in Counseling  COUN 693  Fall 2008
Explored and exercised counseling skills for school track practicum students.

Counseling Skills  COUN 690  Summer 2008
Developed syllabus and course structure, graded, provided lectures, assessed students’ skills on videotaped sessions, supervised students outside class, and developed an assessment tool.

Academic Skills for College  EDLD 102  Spring 2006
Lected, guided, and coached freshman who failed to pass the previous Academic Skills for College class.

Academic Skills for College  EDLD 101  Fall 2005
Lected, guided, and coached freshman who were on academic probation.

SUPERVISION EXPERIENCES

Supervised a Counselor Education Internship student  Spring 2011

Supervised a group leader conducting a multi-ethnic membership group  Fall 2009

Supervised Masters’ level group leaders who facilitated the Academic Skills for College class  Spring 2009

Provided triadic and individual supervision; gave constructive feedback on students’ counseling tapes; addressed students’ needs working in the school setting; explored the dynamics among teachers, students, and school personal for Practicum Masters’ level school counseling students  Fall 2008

Provided group supervision for a Masters’ counseling Internship students  Spring 2008
Supervised Masters’ counseling students in the University of Mississippi Counseling Center

PUBLICATIONS
Ingene, D. (in progress) Multicultural multiethnic groups.


CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS
Food and culture: Contextualizing food-based activities in multicultural counseling courses (in review). National Association for Counselor Education and Supervision ACES Conference, October 2011, Nashville, TN.

Internet surveys: A tutorial explaining the rewards and challenges of conducting a survey using Qualtrics (accepted). National Association for Counselor Education and Supervision ACES Conference, October 2011, Nashville, TN.

Why group counseling is important? Mississippi Counseling Association Conference, November 2010, Jackson, MS.

The Principles for diversity-competent group workers. Mississippi Counseling Association Conference, November 2010, Jackson, MS.

International students studying in US: past and present. The Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision SACES, October, 2010, Williamsburg, VA.

Cook! Eat! Share!: Using food to attend to the needs of international students. The National Convention for Association for Specialists in Group Work, February, 2010, New Orleans, LA.
How multietnic group counseling enhances the international students’ well being. Mississippi Counseling Association Conference, November, 2009, Jackson, MS.

An exploratory study of counselor education doctoral students’ social and political experiences interacting with faculty. National Association for Counselor Education and Supervision ACES Conference, October, 2009, San Diego, CA.


Acculturation and cultural shock. International students’ orientation, University of Mississippi, August, 2009, Oxford, MS.


Helping the international people finding their voices in groups. The 8th Annual Isom Student Gender Conference, February, 2008, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS.

Chinese female acculturative experience in America. The Sarah Isom Center for Women, March, 2006, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS.

WORKSHOPS
Coordinated and facilitated cultural learning through the means of food and hosted cultural dinner-seminar events for the University of Mississippi and Oxford community for the following countries and topics:

American Jewish culture, customs, and history – December 4, 2010, attendees 40

World Spice Cuisine and diversity in Oxford Mississippi – May 1, 2010, attendees 48 (Dr Jones, the Chancellor of University of Mississippi, and his wife were the attendees in this workshop)

Tropical Islands Influence on Trinidad- December 4, 2009, attendees 42

Seven Chinese Regional Tastes and Cultures- October 1, 2009, attendees 56

French Art, Culinary, Music, Wine, and Life- June 16, 2009, attendees 48

Indian Social Structures and Religions- April 24, 2009, attendees 28

East Meets West in Hong Kong- March 28, 2009, attendees 41

Korean Family System- December 4, 2008, attendees 30
**Jordan Culture, History, and Custom** - October 28, 2008, attendees 36

**Japanese Bows and Business Manner** - June 17 & 18, 2008, attendees 64

**Ecuador Mega-diversity** - April 23, 2008, attendees 29

**Brazilian Politics and Colonization** - April 2, 2008, attendees 37

**Thai Spicy and a Land of Smile** - March 5, 2008, attendees 40

**Chinese Hospitality** - November, 2007, attendees 18

**SERVICE**

*Mississippi Counseling Association Executive Board Member*  
April 2010-present
Participated in MCA board meetings and organizational decisions and planning

*Facilitator for Mississippi Counseling Association Group Division*  
Nov 4, 2010
Hosted a group division meeting during the MCA conference, Jackson, MS

*President of Mississippi Association of Specialist in Group Work*  
April 2010-present
Attended and gave a quarterly report at the Mississippi Counseling Association board meeting, November 3, 2010, Jackson, MS  
Attended Mississippi Counseling Association Institute for Leadership Training, July 7-9, 2010, Meridian, MS

*President-elect for Mississippi Association of Specialists in Group Work*  
Nov 2009-April 2010
Facilitated and hosted a round table discussion for MASGW interest group meeting during the Mississippi Counseling Association conference

*Moderator for International Women’s Day Panel Lecture*  
Mar 2010
Led a panel discussion among a Pakistani, an Egyptian, a Brazilian, and a Nigerian woman. Compared women’s rights and status in panelists’ home countries and America.

*Volunteer in ACA conference*  
Mar 2009
American Counseling Association (ACA) Annual Conference & Exposition in Charlotte  
Set up presentation rooms and equipments; monitored presenters’ timeline; ensured the completion of presentation evaluation form at the end of each session; situated the book-faire; directed traffic flow for people who attended the keynote session

*Job search committee*  
Feb 2008
Screened and interviewed candidates for a drug-and-alcohol coordinator position in the University Counseling Center
Job search committee
Screened and interviewed candidates for a part-time counseling position in the University Counseling Center

Supervisor, organizer, facilitator for Cook Eat Share International group
Established a new way of multicultural learning and raising cultural understanding in the local community through dinner and seminar

University Crisis Intervention Team
24-7 on calls for handling crisis situation, such as suicide, rape, drug overdose, hospitalization for University students

Founder & group facilitator for two groups
(1) The International Ladies’ Club for international mothers, wives and female faculties and students;
(2) International Conversation Group for international graduate students

COUNSELING EXPERIENCE
2007 – present
Counselor
Counseled individual and couple; facilitated groups with a focus on diverse populations; assessed clients’ issues and needs. Consulted with related the professionals such as the psychiatrics, Dr Black; faculty and staff members concerning clients.
University of Mississippi Counseling Center

2006 – 2007
School Therapist
Counseled students age 12-14 years old at Oxford Middle School with behavioral problems; documented in-takes for new clients and designed treatment plans; conducted family sessions with parents; collaborated and consulted with school personnel and parents.
Communicare, an agent that was semi-funded by Mississippi State

2004- 2006
Counselor
Counseled individuals with adjustment concerns, individuals having depression, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, low self-esteem, and gender identity issues; counseled couples with relational problems.
University of Mississippi Counseling Center

2002 – 2003
Intern
Interned at the high functioning residents group home at Bruce, MS.
Counseled individuals with behavioral problems and designed treatment plans.
North Mississippi Regional Center
PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
Mississippi Association Specialists in Group Work President-elect (2009 – current)
Mississippi Counseling Association (MCA)

International Group Work Committee (2008 – current)
Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)

ACES-International-interest network Committee (2009 – current)
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)

Graduate Student Committee Southern Region (2008 – current)
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)

AWARDS
2011 Association for Specialists in Group Work - President’s Award
The award recognized the extraordinary service to the Association for Specialists in Group Work. Received the award and was recognized during ASGW luncheon in the American Counseling Association annual conference, New Orleans.

2010 Association for Specialists in Group Work - Barbara Gazda Scholarship
The scholarship recognizes two group workers bi-annually who are interested in group work and are benefited professionally from attending the National ASGW conference. Received a $200 scholarship and was recognized during the conference luncheon.

2010 Association for Specialists in Group Work - Emerging Scholar Award
The award recognizes four new professionals with an interest in conducting research in group work. Received a $150 scholarship and was recognized during the conference luncheon.

2005 University of Mississippi - International Friendship Award
The award recognizes one individual with the exemplary support for the University International Community Office of International Programs.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- American Counseling Association
- Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
- American Mental Health Counselors Association
- Association for Specialist in Group Work
- Mississippi Counseling Association
- Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
- Gamma Beta Phi Society