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## ***Exploring the Relationship Between Universal-Diverse Orientation and Personality***

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the relationship between universal-diverse orientation (UDO), a relatively new concept associated with multicultural awareness that is related to the recognition and acceptance of both similarities and differences among people (Miville et al., 1999), and personality. Participants were one hundred and one college students who completed a measure of UDO, the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS; Miville et al., 1999), and a well-established measure of normal personality, the California Psychological Inventory (CPI; Gough, 1987). Researchers hypothesized that significant relationships would exist between UDO and healthy attributes of personality. Initial results supported this hypothesis; however, post hoc analyses indicated that the demographic variables age and education were also significantly correlated with UDO, and these appear to moderate the relationship between UDO personality. Practical applications and implications for future research are offered.*

Vontress (1988, 1996) suggested that via the confluence of five cultures (i.e., universal, ecological, national, regional, racioethnic), human development produces includes idiographic differences as well as communal traits that transcend individual differences. Vontress went on to propose that an awareness of and appreciation for the differences and commonalities between and among cultures is important for effective human interaction. Miville et al. (1999) put a finer point on this idea. They believe that attentiveness toward and acceptance of group differences is critical for those who work with diverse persons from a variety of social-cultural backgrounds. Influenced by this Vontress, Miville et al. introduced the universal-diverse orientation (UDO) as “an attitude toward all other persons that is inclusive yet differentiating in that similarities and differences are both recognized and accepted; the shared experience of being human results in a sense of connectedness with people and is

associated with a plurality or diversity of interactions with others” (p. 292).

Miville et al. (1999) reported that UDO is theoretically associated with personality functioning and wellness. Initial evidence has surfaced to support this link. For example, preliminary data indicate that UDO is related to attentiveness and responsiveness to others, openness to new experiences, interest and commitment to social and cultural activities of diverse people, and the ability to appreciate the impact of one’s own and others’ diversity (Constantine, et al., 2001; Thompson, Brossart, Carlozzi, & Miville, 2002; Yeh & Arora, 2003). Further, Miville et al. (1999) reported links between UDO and personality variables such as attitudes towards gender, well-being, mental health, autonomy, independence, and empathy--features that seem to be central to effectiveness in social interaction, such as is needed among counselors. Additionally, the UDO was negatively related to ratings of homophobia and dogmatism. Later, Strauss and Connerley (2003) and Thompson et al. (2002) added to the investigation of this hypothesized link. Strauss and Connerley found that the personality variables agreeableness (selflessness, tolerance, helpfulness) and openness to experience were positively and significantly associated with UDO. Thompson et al. also reported that UDO was linked to openness to experience. Together, these studies provide initial support for the Miville et al personality and UDO hypotheses. However, these studies used narrowly defined personality variables. Therefore, additional research is needed to expand and develops the UDO literature base.

Because the UDO provides a framework for understanding and appreciating the foundational similarities and differences central to effective multicultural counseling, additional research is needed to evaluate this important construct. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to build upon and extend the research investigating the theorized relationship between UDO and personality. Specifically, we will examine the relationship between UDO, as measured by the Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS; Miville et al., 1999) and selected variables from a well-established measure of personality traits, the California Personality Inventory (Gough, 1996) in a sample of students enrolled in courses offered in two university departments: counseling and mental health services, and psychology.

### **Methods**

#### *Subjects*

Graduate and undergraduate students (N =104) from departments of counseling and mental health services, and psychology at a large, Midwestern public university were recruited to participate in this study. All participants were briefed, prior to obtaining consent, about the nature and purpose of the study and the instruments included. Upon providing written consent, participants anonymously completed a testing packet that included a demographic data sheet, the M-GUDS, and the CPI. The M-GUDS and CPI were presented alternatively to control for method variance. Three

profiles did not meet criteria for validity and were eliminated from further analyses. The final sample consisted of 85 women (84%) and 16 (16%) men. Participants self-identified ethnic affiliation in the following manner: 74 (73.3%) European American, 12 (11.9%) African American, 7 (6.9%) Hispanic, 1 (1%) biracial, 1 (1%) Asian American, 1 (1%) Native American and 5 (5%) other. The average age of our sample 28.4 years ( $SD = 9.9$ , range = 18-65). At the time of assessment, these students had completed 4.7 ( $SD = 2.3$ , range = 1-12) years college education.

### *Instruments*

#### Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (M-GUDS)

The M-GUDS, introduced in 1999 by Miville et al., operationalizes the UDO. The M-GUDS contains 45 Likert style items each ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (7 points). Standardization of this instrument was completed using a series of studies involving college students; the M-GUDS produced acceptable estimates of internal consistency (.89 - .94), 1 to 2 week estimates of stability ( $r = .94$ ,  $p < .01$ ), evidence of convergent and divergent validity, and resistance to manipulation by respondents’ motivation for social desirability. Recent evidence indicates that the UDO is associated with exposure to multicultural workshops and traits such as awareness of others’ needs, desires, and goals (Yeh & Arora, 2003), and self-reported multicultural counseling knowledge (Constantine et al., 2001). Further, the M-GUDS has received considerable application by those interested in assessing clients’ perceptions of their counselor’s multicultural competencies (Constantine & Arorash, 2001; Fuertes, 1999; Fuertes & Brobst, 2002; Fuertes & Gelso, 1998, 2000).

#### California Psychological Inventory (CPI)

Given that the M-GUDS and UDO are thought to reflect traits associated with healthy personality (Miville et al., 1996), a well-established, multidimensional measure of the normal range of personality was required. The California Personality Inventory (Gough, 1957), has been referred to as “...one of the best personality inventories available” (Anastasi, 1982, p. 508) and described as “an excellent normal personality assessment devise...” (Bolton, 1992, p. 139). The CPI, a 462 item, true/false, paper and pencil assessment, was designed by Gough to measure common and enduring “folk concepts” that are socially relevant and present among various cultures (Van Hutton, 1990). Generally, the time of completion is approximately one hour. The CPI is used for persons over the age of 12. Estimates of the reading level required to complete the CPI vary from fourth-grade (Van Hutton) to sixth-grade (Schinka & Borum, 1994).

Published psychometric estimates for the CPI are generally positive. Median reported coefficient alphas and test retest stability estimates are both around .70 (Gough & Bradley, 1996; Van Hutton, 1990). Evidence of the CPI predictive validity has been established with variables such as high school grades (Gough & Lanning, 1986) and graduation,

college enrollment, intellectual ability, and a variety of social factors across different cultural groups (Van Hutton). The CPI demonstrated good concurrent validity with a measure of college student adaptation (Haemmerlie & Merz, 1991). Evidence of construct validity was established with confirmatory factor analysis by Bernstein, Garbin and McClellan (1983). Additionally, the CPI has been used with a variety of groups, variables, and settings including assessment of overall general maladjustment and psychological functioning (Holliman & Montross, 1984), juvenile delinquency (Gough, Wenk, & Rozytko, 1965), screening of applicants for law enforcement positions (Hiatt & Hargrave, 1994), and the assessment of assertiveness and aggressiveness (Paterson, Dickson, Layne, & Anderson, 1984).

The CPI contains 3 validity scales and 17 additional scales that describe distinct personality characteristics. The validity scales are the Good Impression (GI) scale, which is sensitive to a “faking good” approach to the Inventory, the Well-being (WB) scale, which detects approaches designed to “fake bad,” and the Community (CM) scale, which provides an index of approaches to the items that are markedly deviant from the normative groups’ (Groth-Marnat, 2003). This study employed guidelines provided by Groth-Marnat in evaluating the validity of the participant’s profiles. If a profile is determined to be valid, the GI, WB, and CM scales may then be used to make inferences about normal personality functioning. A brief description of what the GI and WB scales measure follows. The CM scale was not included in subsequent analyses because it is theoretically unrelated to UDO.

A review of the content of each CPI scale was made to determine whether the domain being measured is theoretically related to the UDO. Eight scales were selected for inclusion. These scales were: Capacity for Status (CS), Empathy (EM), Responsibility (RE), Tolerance (TO), Achievement through Independence (AI), Femininity/Masculinity (F/M), Good Impression (GI), and Well Being (WB).

We will briefly introduce each scale, discuss what it purports to measure, and identify the reason for inclusion in this study. The CS scale is associated with social conscience, interest in belonging to diverse groups, and verbal fluency. Social conscious and interest in diversity both appear to be facets of UDO. One’s ability to perceive and understand the experiences of others is measured by the EM scale. Individuals who score high on this scale are described as being adaptable, independent, and effective in interpersonal relationship. This ability to effectively relate to and understand others is the UDO’s basis. The RE scale measures one’s ability to be conscientious and dependable. Individuals who score high on RE tend to feel a “sense of obligation to the larger social structure” (Groth-Marnat, 2003, p. 377). This interest and commitment to social structure may be indicated in the effective interaction with others who are both similar and different. The TO scale measures one’s ability to be accepting, permissive, and nonjudgmental of social beliefs. It

seems that a tolerant and accepting attitude of others is consistent with having a universal-diverse orientation. The AI scale is associated with being able to achieve in settings that are ambiguous or require independent thought and creativity. Such individuals generally have a wide range of interests and are described as independent and insightful. It is this insight and independence in thought rather than reliance on convention that would indicate that high scores on this scale would correlate with UDO (Groth-Marnat, 2003). The F/M scale measures the degree to which persons' thoughts, behaviors and attitudes are stereotypically associated with their gender. High F/M scores for males are reflective of persons who are introspective and possessing a wide range of interests. Women who score high on the F/M scale tend to demonstrate stereotypically feminine characteristics (e.g., high needs for affiliation, dependence, submissiveness). Low F/M scores for both sexes are associated with stereotypical masculine traits (e.g., emotional independence, tough mindedness, selfishness). Above average GI scores are produced by persons who are concerned with social responsibilities. Below average GI scores are associated with persons who are arrogant and have little interest in their impact upon others. Concern for others is central to the UDO. WB scores in the normal range reflect one's level of adjustment and degree of psychological distress. High WB scores are linked with an absence of psychological and physical complaints. Low WB scores suggest an exaggeration of unpleasant personal characteristics. Miville et al. (1999) believe that UDO includes mental wellness.

Based on previous research (Constantine, et al., 2001; Miville et al., 1996; Strauss and Connerley (2003); Thompson, Brossart, Carlozzi, & Miville, 2002; Yeh & Arora, 2003) and rational decision making, the researchers predicted that the CS, EM, RE, TO, AI, GI, WB, and F/M scales would be significantly and positively correlated with M-GUDS scores at  $p < .05$  (adjusted  $\alpha = .006$ ). Previous findings (Miville et al., 1999) suggested that the M-GUDS would be impervious to the social desirability response set (as measure by the GI scale).

### Results

A check of reliability was conducted using Cronbach's alpha (range = .90 - .96). All CPI profiles were reviewed to ensure that the values for the GI and WB scales were within normal limits. Table 1 lists the mean, standard deviation, range of scores and alpha for UDO and each of the included CPI's scales.

To test the hypothesized relationships between UDO and the CPI scales, the researchers conducted a series of one-tailed Pearson product moment correlation coefficient calculations with an a priori alpha of .05 (Bonferroni corrected alpha of .007). The results of these analyses are found in a correlation matrix on Table 2. The results indicate that UDO is significantly and positively associated with scores on all hypothesized CPI scales.

Because age and education level were significantly correlated with UDO and CPI scales, and because many of the

CPI scales were intercorrelated, the researchers were interested in determining the amount of unique variance that personality accounted for over and above that accounted for by age and education level. A regression model was created to answer this question wherein UDO served as the criterion variable, all CPI scales that were statistically correlated with UDO were predictor variables, and age and education were the co-variables. The full model (age, education, CS, EM, RE, TO, AI, and GI) was significant,  $F(8, 90) = 6.0, p < .001$ , and accounted for 34.8% of the total variance. When age and education were removed, the model accounted for 9.6% of the unique variance,  $F(6, 94) = 5.29, p < .001$ . The researchers were next interested in examining each individual CPI scale to determine the degree of unique variance they contributed to UDO variation. A series of multiple linear regressions models were run to isolate the degree of variance accounted for by individual CPI scales. The only CPI personality variable to account for variance over and above that accounted for by age, education, and the other five CPI variables was the Empathy scale,  $F(7, 91) = 6.39, p < .001$ , which accounted for 1.8% of the variance in UDO.

### Discussion

The universal-diverse orientation is described as an essential component of effective human interaction and is hypothesized to be related to personality. Miville et al. (1999) operationalized the UDO construct through the development of the M-GUDS. Early research in this vein is promising; however, additional exploration of this hypothesis is needed in order for practitioners, educators, and researchers to have confidence in its application.

The discussion initiates with comments about the participants' UDO and CPI scores. At present, the literature does not offer guidelines for interpreting mean UDO scores. Thus, the current researchers are left without descriptors to employ when attempting to place this sample's UDO scores in context. Despite this paucity, we offer the following fledgling attempt at an interpretation. Each of the M-GUDS' 45 items has a potential score of 1-6 points which contribute to a total score range of 45-270. Assuming that a nationally representative sample would produce a bell curve, this national sample's mean score would be 157 (i.e., 3.5 points per 45 items). The present study's mean and standard deviation (195.3, 25.6) scores would fall well above the mean and offer the potential interpretation of a better than average amount of UDO. While the above is speculative and premature in the absence of such a nationally representative sample, our data are consistent with those reported by Miville et al. (1999) in four different samples: 93 White (sic) students in an introductory psychology course ( $X = 169.9, SD = 26.6$ ), 110 university students ( $X = 203, SD = 31.3$ ), 153 students enrolled in an introductory psychology course ( $X = 188, SD = 23.6$ ), and, 135 African American university students ( $X = 192, SD = 24$ ). This information supports an initial interpretation that our sample's UDO was similar to what would be found in other samples collected on college

campuses. Further, this study's coefficient alpha (.93) is also consistent with those produced in the above samples (.92, .94, .89, .89), which provides additional support for the instrument's reliability.

All calculated mean CPI scores were less than one standard deviation from that of the CPI reference sample (Gough, 1996). This suggests that the participants in this sample were goal oriented and self assured, possessed insight into the feelings and motives of others, were conscientious and dependable, nonjudgmental, independent and open to the beliefs of others, flexible, autonomous, open to feedback, trusting and understanding of others. These personality qualities seem to be desirable attributes among students interested in becoming counselors.

Previous research (Fuertes, 1999; Fuertes & Gelso, 2000; Millville et al., 1999) reported that scores on the M-GUDS appeared to be free of concerns about social desirability. This is consistent with the findings of our study. When participants' age and education are co-varied, no relationship was found between UDO and the Good Impression and Well-Being scales. This indicates that participants in this study described their UDO without attempting to exaggerate positive points and minimize negative qualities. Taken together, these findings add support to Miville et al.'s claims that the M-GUDS is not subject to participant response manipulation. It appears that under these testing conditions (anonymity), participants generally approached the assessment process in a free and open manner.

In addition to subject response style, the Well-Being scale also provides a rough estimate of adjustment and psychological distress. Miville et al. (1999) hypothesized that UDO would be associated with social attitudes related to mental health. To the degree that the WB scale assesses this domain (Groth-Marnat, 2003), our results failed to provide support for this hypothesized relationship. This finding should be interpreted with caution, however, as the CPI is generally considered a measure of the range of normal personality and not psychopathology. To further this proposed link between the UDO and positive mental health, an instrument that measures both the normal and abnormal range of personality would be required.

Upon review of the correlation matrix it appears that the proposed link between UDO and personality, as measured by the CPI, is supported. However, we also noted that the demographic variables age and education level were also strongly associated with UDO. Wade and Brittan-Powell (2000) also found a relationship between UDO and education in a similar population. As such, further investigation was warranted. The clarity of the relationship between UDO and personality diminished upon such examination. When considered as a whole, personality appears to account for approximately 10% of the unique variance in UDO. This finding is consistent with relationships proposed by Miville and her colleagues. As a group, personality traits that are conceptually related to UDO were indeed statistically associated with UDO. As UDO increased, so did our

participants' degree of social consciousness and interest in diverse groups (CS) and their ability to perceive and feel the inner experiences of others and demonstrate liberal and humanistic political and religious attitudes (EM). The degree to which one feels an obligation to social issues and is committed to social, civic and moral values (RE) is positively related to UDO. Likewise, UDO was related to accepting, permissive, and nonjudgmental social beliefs and attitudes (TO) and the ability to tolerate ambiguity (AI). However, contrary to previous reports (Miville et al. 1999), these analyses failed to uncover a relationship between the degree to which one associates with and accepts or rejects traditionally held gender role stereotypes and UDO (F/M). The predominance of female participants in this sample may have restricted the variability of the data and thus this last finding should be interpreted with caution.

The specific contribution of each particular personality variable is more difficult to estimate. Of the several variables considered, only the Empathy scale accounted for unique variance over and above that accounted for by the other personality variables and participant demographic variables. However, this unique variance accounted for was minimal. What is clear is that UDO, in this sample, is strongly associated with the demographic variables age and education such that older persons and those with more completed years of education produced higher UDO. This suggests that in addition to being associated with certain positive personality traits, UDO is in many cases more strongly accounted for by inflexible personal characteristics such as one's age and, to a lesser degree of flexibility, one's education. It seems that the older and the more educated one becomes, the more one develops an open-minded approach to the similarities and differences among and between people and cultures.

*Table 1*

Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges of UDO, CPI, and Demographic Variables (N = 101)										
UDO	CS	EM	RE	TO	AI	FM	GI	WB		
Mean	195	50	52	46	49	53	47.6	49.2	47.5	
SD	25.6	9	8.7	8.2	10.6	7.6	9.3	8.6	8.1	
Range	147-253	29-69	30-71	20-63	18-68	35-68	28-72	33-66	27-62	
Cronbach's $\alpha$	.93	.93	.93	.93	.95	.94	.94	.90	.96	

Note. UDO = Universal-Diverse Orientation; CPI = California Psychological Inventory; Ed = education attained in years; CS = CPI Capacity for Status scale; EM = CPI Empathy scale; RE = CPI Responsibility scale; TO = CPI Tolerance scale; AI = CPI Achievement via Independence scale; F/M = CPI Femininity /Masculinity scale; GI = CPI Good Impression scale; WB = CPI Well Being scale.

*Table 2*

Pearson Correlation Coefficients and Correlations Between UDO, CPI, and Selected Demographic Variables (N = 101)										
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

UDO Age Ed CS EM RE TO AI F/M GI WB

1. -- .43\* .41\* .40\* .38\* .41\* .39\* .43\* -.09 .32\* .22
2. -- .58\* .24 .16 .41\* .34\* .32\* .05 .46\* .41\*
3. -- .29 .08 .43\* .34\* .38\* -.03 .30 .40\*
4. -- .75\* .47\* .64\* .65\* -.09 .28 .51\*
5. -- .37\* .54\* .59\* -.06 .22 .33\*
6. -- .67\* .63\* .13 .64\* .53\*
7. -- .81\* -.02 .56\* .69\*
8. -- -.09 .52\* .70\*
9. -- .07 -.12
10. -- .61\*
11. --

Note. UDO = Universal-Diverse Orientation; CPI=California Psychological Inventory; Ed = education attained in years; CS = CPI Capacity for Status scale; EM = CPI Empathy scale; RE = CPI Responsibility Scale; TO = CPI Tolerance scale; AI = CPI Achievement via Independence scale; F/M = CPI Femininity /Masculinity scale; GI = CPI Good Impression scale; WB = CPI Well Being scale.

\*  $p < .001$ .

### Implications for Counselor Education and Supervision

Because the UDO is purported to reflect the degree to which one is open to plurality and diversity (Miville et al., 1999), educators who teach courses devoted to or in which the concepts of multiculturalism and/or feminism are central features may be interested in using the M-GUDS as a pre-post-course measure of change in students' acceptance and internalization of these concepts. Pre-assessment of UDO may help instructors tailor their course presentations to meet the students' individual needs. For example, an instructor whose pre-course mean UDO scores were low may wish to present the material in a more basic manner in order to accommodate the students' developmental level. Pre- to post-course M-GUDS scores may help educators evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions.

Clinical supervisors may wish to use the M-GUDS to better understand their supervisee's approach to diversity and openness to differences. Such information could prove useful in the assignment of cases, the recommendation of additional education in the form of readings or continuing education, or in the didactic supervision process. The use of this instrument for such a purpose is especially appealing considering the strong relationship between education and UDO.

### Suggestions for Future Research

Several interesting suggestions for future research arise from this study. This study investigated only one type of reliability—internal consistency. Additional research on the psychometric properties such as temporal stability and predictive validity is warranted. While we observed a relationship between education and UDO and hypothesized that specific multicultural educational interventions, courses, or workshops might serve to increase one's UDO, it is important that future research be conducted using a true experimental design to allow one to test this premise.

Our units of analyses for personality were quite specific and correlated with one another. It may be that the relationship between personality and the UDO should be examined at a broader level of analysis. We recommend that initiation of research testing the relationship between personality and UDO using additional instruments that feature factor and scale constructs. For instance, the Sixteen Personality Factors (16-PF; Conn & Rieke, 1994) contains a number of scales (e.g., Openness to Change, Self-Reliance) that may be related to the Universal-Diverse Orientation.

A sample composed of greater diversity in academic interest would be helpful to determine whether ours and Miville et al.'s (1999) findings extend beyond students enrolled in helping profession related courses. A larger sample would have allowed for construct analysis via confirmatory factor analysis to substantiate the presence of the Relativistic Appreciation, Diversity of Contact, and Sense of Connectedness subscales. Also, a sample that was more evenly balanced between the sexes and included a greater number of persons of color would have allowed between-groups' analyses to determine if the present relationships were consistent across sex and ethnicity.

In summary, it appears that the relationship between UDO and personality is moderated by participant demographic variables. Despite this conclusion, our study does lend additional support for the M-GUDS' usefulness as a measure of UDO and recommends it for use by counselor educators, supervisors, and researchers. The M-GUDS appears to measure many of the personality characteristics that are associated with Miville et al.'s (1999) conceptualization of the universal-diverse orientation. Further, the M-GUDS does not appear to be overly subject to impression management, a facet that provides interpreters with a degree of confidence in their interpretations of the findings.

### Limitations

There are several limitations of the current study that need to be considered when drawing any conclusions about its results. Although our sample was fairly representative of the campus and programs from which it was drawn, the authors recognize that our composition was older than most traditional college students, predominantly female, and mostly European American in background. Such demographic characteristics limit the degree to which generalizations about these findings may be made to other samples. In addition, the sample itself is limited in size. This limitation restricts the power of the analysis and may hide significant relationships that otherwise may have been discovered with the addition of more subjects. Finally, the authors concede that study's design, although favorable due to its external validity, does not provide the opportunity to draw any conclusions about causal relationships between any of the variables.

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