

2012

Does Intercultural-Based Professional Development have an Influence on Employees of a Multicultural Urban College

Richard Everett Webb

Follow this and additional works at: <https://idun.augsburg.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Vocational Education Commons](#)

Does Intercultural-Based Professional Development have an Influence on
Employees of a Multicultural Urban College

Richard Everett Webb

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in Educations

AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

2012

MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Action Research Final Project of

Richard Everett Webb

Has been approved by the Review Committee, and fulfills the requirements for the Master of Arts in Education degree.

Date of Symposium: 6-28-12

Date Completed: 8-1-12

Committee:

Ticki L. Olson
Adviser

Elizabeth Maden Amberg
Reader

Acknowledgements

This paper was completed with the guidance and support of many people. I would like to thank my readers Elizabeth Ankeny, and Advisor Vicki Olson. Vicki, it was you who heard my voice, listened and pushed me in the direction I needed to go. Along with my readers and advisor, my biggest thank you goes out to Mary Beth Kelley. I appreciate your unflinching commitment to the educational field and your continuous support of me through my pursuit of this degree.

Abstract

Intercultural Professional Development:
Impacts on Student Affairs Staff in an Urban College Setting

Richard Webb

06/28/2012

Action Research (EDC 586-7) Final Project

Abstract

This study was created to determine if intercultural professional development influences intercultural competence scores among higher education staff through the use of the Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) and Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The participants in the study included a small group of higher education staff working in the Office of Student Affairs at a small urban college in the central Midwest. The structure of the study included pre-testing using the IDI, 6 hours of professional development, personalized feedback and IDI post-testing. The professional development was customized based on framework of DMIS and was further modified based on the individual and group orientation stage results. The study concluded that professional development that is based on the Intercultural Development Inventory and the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity theories, positively impacts the intercultural competence scores on the Intercultural Developmental Inventory.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	4
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	11
Chapter 4: Findings.....	22
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations.....	41
Chapter 6: Self-Reflection.....	49
References.....	54

Chapter 1

Introduction

Intercultural competence has traditionally been studied using a variety of conceptual models (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Cui & Awa, 1992). Intercultural competence is vitally important particularly as our society is becoming so diverse. While researchers have investigated intercultural competence and intercultural effectiveness (Kealey & Protheroe, 1996), adequate understanding of intercultural competence in the context of multicultural teams has not been sufficiently understood or developed in the world of business or education (Wiseman & Shuter, 1994). Specifically, in the field of education, multiple terms including multicultural competence, cultural proficiency, culturally relevant teaching, and culturally responsive teaching are used interchangeably; however there is no consensus on how the terms are accurately defined or utilized. As our nation continues to shift demographically and as we continue to face the complex challenges that accompany this shift, it is critical that we develop a common understanding of the definition, application, and impact of being interculturally sensitive and interculturally competent.

For the purposes of this study, the terms intercultural competence and intercultural sensitivity will both be used. Intercultural competence is defined as an individual's skill set that is utilized in culturally similar and different situations (Hammer & Bennett, 2001). Intercultural sensitivity is simply a mindset that is defined as how sensitive a person is to cultures (including their own) and how they experience these cultural differences in various interactions and settings

(Bennett, 1993, 2004). This model suggests that as a person experiences cultural difference in depth, they become able to adapt to different cultural settings.

Importance of Study

The following information was collected through informal interviews and anecdotal data. The multi-cultural staff at an urban community college in the Midwest expressed concerns that they lacked skills and confidence to effectively meet the diverse needs of their current student population. The small staff, which consists primarily of academic advisors, tutors, and counselors, works in the Office of Student Affairs. Some have expressed fear and frustration due to this perceived inability to meet student needs. The following examples illustrate scenarios, which were currently happening on campus and caused the staff to realize that situations were not being handled well.

One example involved a student of color who doesn't know how to navigate the system because he/she is the first person in their family to attend college. After being assigned to remedial courses as a result of earlier testing, the student comes to speak to an advisor because he/she doesn't understand why the courses are required. The student is frustrated with feelings of being inferior and the staff member doesn't recognize this feeling but reacts to the student's frustration only. The advisor is left questioning the admissions policy based on assumptions that this student might not be successful at this college instead of recognizing and addressing the cause of the frustration.

Another example of a scenario occurring on campus is a tall black male student who seeks the assistance of an academic advisor to change classes in his

schedule. After the academic advisor reviews the class schedule, which includes calculus, honors chemistry, advanced writing and creative art, she says, “You must have the wrong class list; most of the athletes on scholarship take the wellness class and coaching 101. Make sure to have your coach sign off for your books. We are so glad to have you here on our basketball team.” The student responds to the academic advisor shouting a derogatory comment and walking out of the office slamming the door shut. The fact is the advisor made an assumption based on physical appearance - this student is not on the basketball team nor does he play any sports - and was not able to successfully help this student with the class changes.

As clearly illustrated by these two unfortunate (and avoidable) examples, teachers’ and staff perceptions and lack of cultural responsiveness can result in student psychological discomfort and low achievement (as cited in Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson, & Bridgest, 2003). Ladson-Billings (2001) argued that some students of color might become alienated from the schooling process because in school they are often asked to be something or someone other than who they really are. All collegiate staff should receive culturally responsive training to avoid the possibility of alienating students of color, even if it is by accident.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following section of this paper provides a summary of literature relevant to the study of professional development using tools such as the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) specifically in education facilities. Successful studies demonstrating the importance of professional development that is culturally relevant as well as studies using the IDI as a tool to measure and assist in staff development will also be discussed.

Need for Interculturally Relevant Professional Development

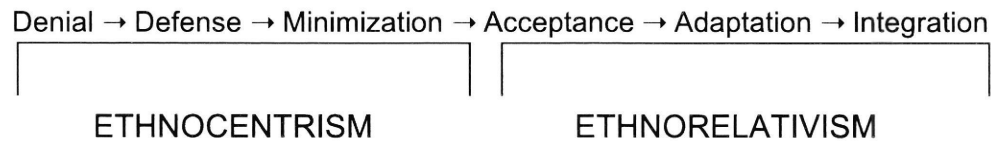
According to Upcraft (1993), the student affairs field within higher education has historically focused on theories and beliefs taken from psychology, sociology, organizational development and management, philosophy and ethics. Pope, Reynolds & Mueller (2004) also cite human development as a content area that has influenced student affairs. The student population has dramatically evolved over the past twenty years causing the US educational community to seek new theories – including those that focus on cultural relevance - to guide their work. Many educators still struggle with acceptance of the new theories. Some believe that these new theories still do not effectively or appropriately address issues or concerns of multiculturalism (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Regardless of whether or not one accepts a given theory, the reality of the change in student populations means that ongoing cultural training is necessary for these staff to adequately work with their students.

Model for Interculturally Relevant Professional Development

There are multiple suggested models and theories that can be used to develop intercultural training. For this study, the use of Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) and the Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) will be used. The IDI is an empirical measure of intercultural sensitivity as conceptualized by Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Hammer & Bennett, 2001). The IDI is the assessment utilized to measure a person's intercultural sensitivity by indicating the capacity for exercising intercultural competence and helps identify issues that limit or facilitate development of intercultural competence (Landis, D., Bennett, J. M., Bennett, M. J., 2004). The DMIS is a tool used for intercultural training and education. The DMIS was developed by Bennett (1993) and explains how people interpret cultural difference along a continuum of development. Bennett's model has influenced the continuum that is generated after individuals/groups take the administered IDI. The model has been used to guide professional development for a variety of groups as well as to develop learning experiences focused on cultural differences. The model consists of three ethnorelative (acceptance, adaptation, integration) and three ethnocentric stages (denial, defense, minimization). (See Figure 1) According to Bennett (1993), ethnorelativism is defined as experienced in the context of other cultures. In other words people in the ethno-relative stage see other cultures as worthwhile and can accept that the other culture is legitimate regardless of beliefs, values, etc. On the other hand, according to Bennett (1993), people in the ethnocentric stage experience and understand reality through the

lens of their own culture and may make comments such as “everyone is the same or I’m not biased, I’m just color blind.”

Figure 1



Although there is not a lot of research completed using this model, what has been done on the IDI and DMIS (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009) has been completed primarily in public schools with teacher participants or study abroad programs at the higher education arena. Mahon (2006) completed a study using 155 Mid-western teachers across all grade levels in rural, urban, and suburban schools. A sample of teachers was selected to complete the IDI and interviews were also completed. As a group, 60.7% of the teachers assessed scored in Minimization orientation of cultural difference which is seen in an overemphasis on the individual’s own cultural reality. For example, individuals in this orientation would view all people with having the same needs, interests, and goals in life as themselves. They might make comments such as, “I treat others like I want to be treated” or “it’s a small world after all,” meaning no matter what their culture, people are motivated by the same ideas and beliefs.

Significant differences within the group, consisting of age, ethnicity, and travel, were found in the demographic information (Mahon, 2006). The 51-60 year old age group was found to be in the minimization orientation. They tended to agree there is cultural difference and perceive that they have the ability to be

culturally appropriate in different cultural experiences, which in actuality may or may not be true. While they can see cultural difference they tend to minimize its importance.

Additionally, Mahon (2006) found that white teachers in this group scored more on the ethnocentric denial stage, meaning they denied that there is cultural difference within individuals. Non-white teachers were found to agree more with the ethnorelative scales, meaning they were able experience culture in broad, complex ways. This ethnorelative scale includes ideas of acceptance and adaptation. It is important based on these results that we help staff understand that “not seeing color” is ignoring someone’s identity (Mohan, 2006, p. 401).

DeJaeghere & Cao (2009) analyzed pre- and post- test data from the IDI completed by 86 teachers in 7 different elementary schools over a 4-year period of time. Professional development was customized based on the results of the IDI. The researchers' results found that the group score significantly changed between the pre- and post- test in a positive direction towards intercultural development. For example, the group moved collectively from the minimization stage to acceptance stage. This study supports the idea that customized professional development based on IDI scores can make a significant difference. Through the professional development created by the researchers, these teachers were able to move along the continuum of minimization while developing ethnorelative worldviews and changing personal approaches to cultural similarities and differences (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009).

Westrick & Yuen (2007), using 4 secondary schools in Hong Kong, also assessed teachers using the IDI. These schools included locally born students and immigrants, mostly from Mainland China. There were 160 teacher participants, representing 78% of the total staff size within the 4 schools. Interestingly, 52.5% were males and 45.6% were female; typically there are more females than males in education systems. Researchers found that as a group of teachers they scored in minimization stage, similar to Mahon's study.

The researchers continued to specifically break down each of the four school's results and provide suggestions for customized professional development. "School One showed 63% of its teachers in transition between the denial and defense stage. Researchers suggested that these teachers learn to recognize cultural differences that are escaping their notice, become more tolerant of differences and try to recognize similarities among people of different cultures"(p. 140). School Two showed the staff to be in minimization stage and showed the smallest gap between perception and actual experience. Researchers suggested that these teachers learn about their own culture and avoid projecting that culture onto other people's experience. School Three showed most of their staff being in transition in the denial/defense stage, meaning they have the largest gap between perception and actual experience. Researchers suggested that these teachers learn more about their own culture. School Four showed the highest level of overall and stage scores on the IDI in minimization stage, meaning they were the farthest along the continuum of all four schools. Researchers suggested that these teachers continue to learn about their own culture and the perceptions they

might bring to the classroom through reflection of their life experiences (Westrick & Yuen, 2007).

Overall, this study showed a strong correlation between living in other cultures and having IDI scores that are further along the continuum. The length of time teachers lived within other cultures was found to have a strong, positive relationship with an IDI score further along the continuum. This relationship suggests that increasing teachers' experiences with other cultures might increase their intercultural sensitivity. The researchers note that the experience alone within another culture is not enough; there needs to be a purposeful and intentional examination of self within that new experience (Westrick & Yuen, 2007). Additionally, the researchers found that the scores the teachers had on the IDI ranged varied across schools, which suggests that a "one-size-fits-all approach" to professional development would not be effective (p. 142). Westrick & Yeun (2007) found that to "effectively raise scores of intercultural sensitivity, professional development needs to:

- Be targeted to specific stages of the DMIS and Intercultural Development continuum
- Provide a range of learning activities designed to assist individuals resolve their own issues associated with the different stages of intercultural sensitivity
- Integrate experience with difference and the cognitive meaning-making necessary for the development of intercultural sensitivity" (p. 142).

Similar to the research highlighted in this literature review, the purpose of this study is to utilize the Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) to assess change in intercultural competence among Student Affairs staff members within a

single college and understand the extent of change in their intercultural competence as a result of participating in professional development based on Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009). Specifically, this study will target specific stages of the DMIS, provide a range of learning activities designed to assist group and individuals address and resolve their own cultural perceptions, values and behaviors associated with the different stages as well as to integrate experiences through reflection necessary for the development of intercultural sensitivity and competence.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Overview

The primary focus of this study was the impact of customized professional development based on an intercultural assessment. As America's educational institutions become more diverse, developing the skills to work between cultures or becoming interculturally competent is vital for success in the 21st century. This study seeks to determine the potential impact of professional training that is developmentally appropriate based on intercultural assessment results for culturally diverse staff in a culturally diverse work setting.

The research design used for this study was action research. Mills (2011) defines action research as:

Any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn (p.5).

He goes on to state that the purpose of action research is fulfilled when:

...information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved (p.5).

All data gathered for this study was quantitative in nature and comes in the form of assessment scores for the Intercultural Development Inventory.

Descriptive statistics, only, are used to present results. Quantitative analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect (Babbie, 2001).

Setting

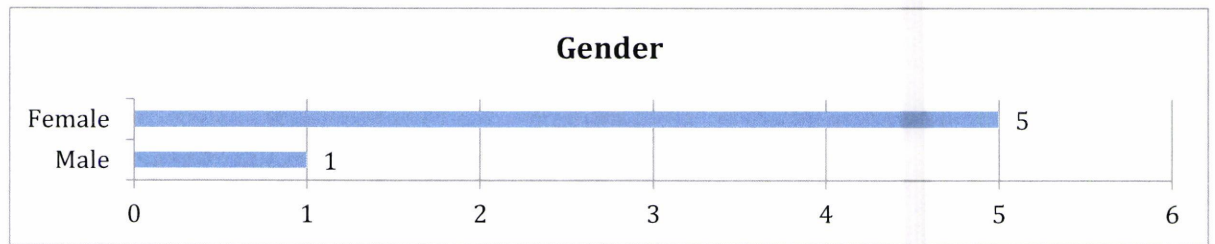
This study was conducted at an urban college in the Midwest. This school has six campuses located throughout the state, however this study focused on one of the urban campuses. This school attracts degree and certificate seeking adults for their 100+ different programs and certifications. The overall student population in 2010 - 2011 academic year was 5,500 students with almost twice as many female to male students. Within that 5,500 students, about 3000 are white, 1300 are black, and the remaining are Asian, American Indian, Hispanic, and other. Students come from all over including countries such as Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Germany, Kenya, Brazil and others making the student body diverse (College student profile, 2011).

Participation

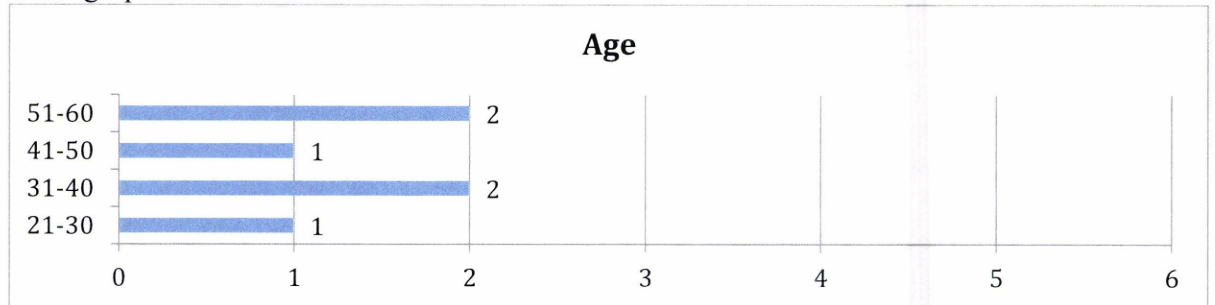
The researcher administered the IDI to eight staff members that work in the Office of Student Affairs. The researcher gathered the assessment results and developed 6 hours of professional development that was customized based on the individual and group results of the IDI and presented over the course of one academic year. Participation in the research was voluntary and as a result, only six of the original eight staff members elected to complete this project. Demographic information on the participants including age, gender, nationality

and ethnic background, years of work experience, educational level, and amount of time living in another culture was collected by demographic information from the Intercultural Development Inventory and is graphically shown below:

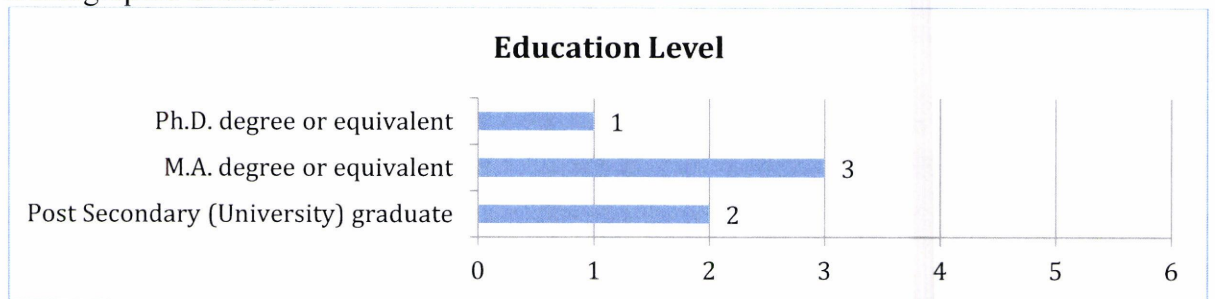
Demographic Chart 1



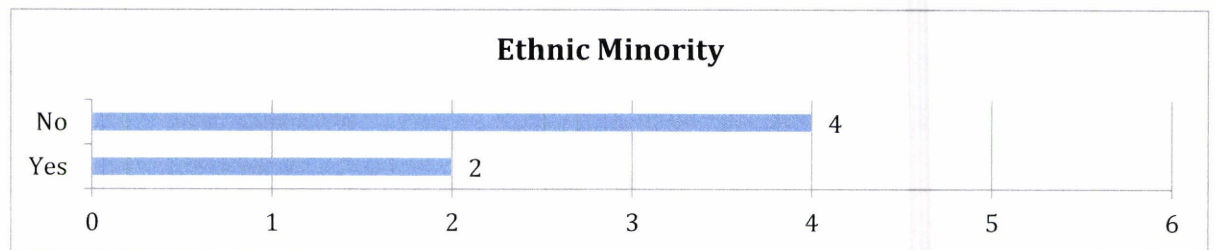
Demographic Chart 2



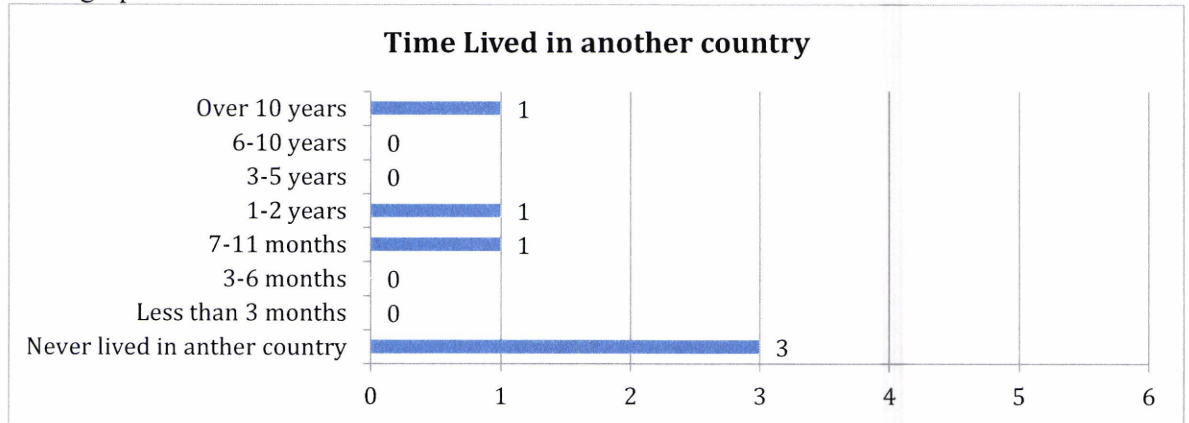
Demographic Chart 3



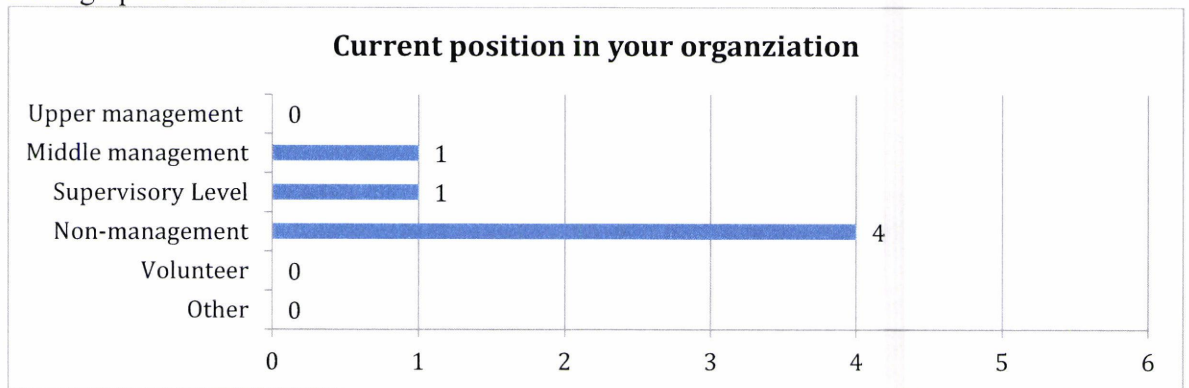
Demographic Chart 4



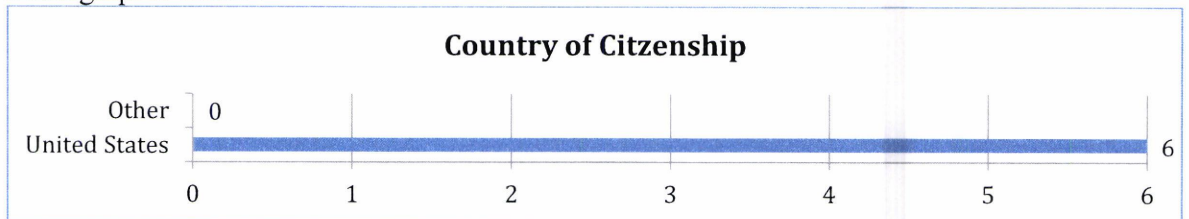
Demographic Chart 5



Demographic Chart 6



Demographic Chart 7



Materials

Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI). The IDI was developed by Hammer & Bennett (2001) to measure individuals' sensitivity to of cultural difference based on a continuum of worldviews. The instrument has been tested on diverse populations and shows high reliability and construct validity. "There has been a recent re-analysis of more than 4000 respondents which found a continued robustness in the scales,"(DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009, p. 438). The IDI has been found to be an effective assessment to measure teachers and staff in schools because of its opportunity for specifically designed professional development (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009). The IDI is a fifty question multiple-choice assessment where individuals complete it online at their convenience. This instrument empirically measures five orientations developed by Bennett (1986, 1993, 2004) to determine orientations towards cultural differences.

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). As mentioned earlier, the DMIS was developed by Bennett (1993) and explains how people interpret cultural difference along a continuum of development. Bennett's model has influenced the continuum that is generated after individuals/groups take the administered IDI. The model has been used to guide professional development for a variety of groups as well as learning experiences to help learn cultural differences in a more complex manner. The model consists of three ethnorelative (acceptance, adaptation, integration) and three ethnocentric stages (denial, defense or polarization, minimization). (See Figure 2)

DMIS States and Stages (Bennett, 1986)	Stages	Examples of how one might experience the stage:
Ethnocentric States	I. Denial	A. Isolation
		B. Separation
	II. Defense or Polarization	A. Denigration
		B. Superiority
		C. Reversal
	III. Minimization	A. Physical Universalism
		B. Transcendent Universalism
Ethnorelative States	IV. Acceptance	A. Behavioral Relativism
		B. Value Relativism
	V. Adaptation	A. Empathy
		B. Pluralism
	VI. Integration	A. Contextual Evaluation
		B. Constructive Marginality

Figure 2: Adapted from Bennett, 1986, p.32

According to Bennett (1993), ethnocentrism is defined as seeing one's culture as central to a personal understanding of reality or that one's own culture is seen as reality. The three stages under ethnocentrism are denial, defense, and minimization. In the denial stage a person is unable to make distinctions of difference between their own cultures and/or other cultures; any distinctions they do make are vague or superficial. In the defense stage a person is able to differentiate between cultures but views these cultures as inferior to their culture

(they tend to view their culture as superior). In the minimization stage, a person recognizes cultural differences, but in the final analysis believes that all people are essentially the same regardless of differences.

According to Bennett (1993), ethno-relativism is defined as an individual's ability to understand his/her own culture in context. The three stages under ethno-relativism are acceptance, adaptation, and integration. In the acceptance stage, one's own culture is understood as one of many valid other cultures. A person in this stage recognizes that behaviors and values of others are affected by culture and differences are worthwhile, they are as meaningful as their own culture. In the adaptation stage, a person behaves appropriately in situations where other norms, values or practices are required by appreciating their own culture as well as appreciating and adapting successfully to other cultures. Integration is the final advanced stage in which a person has an identity positively rooted in multiple cultural values and traditions.

The DMIS (Bennett, 1986) was developed for intercultural training and relates to theoretical work by intercultural researchers who had attempted to understand how individuals perceived cultural difference. The continuum is used to ascertain a person's view of cultural difference and suggests how one understands other people's culture in relation to the difference from one's own culture. The results from the IDI, both group and individual, are what were used to develop the customized professional development.

In the context of this study, participants were assessed on the level of intercultural sensitivity they possessed at the time working within an urban

college setting in the central Midwest. Data was obtained through the results of the administered IDI, individual meetings to discuss IDI assessment results, and during the professional development sessions based on the assessment results. The IDI provided a quantitative evaluation of a person's or groups developmental orientation toward cultural similarities and differences as shown on the Intercultural Development Continuum.

Design

The study uses a quantitative approach and methods to sufficiently answer the research question. Quantitative research has been pursued because it is “typically written from a third person point of view. This impersonal view removes the writer from the picture and helps create a sense of objectivity and distance from the researcher and that being researched”(Creswell, 1994, p.43). This approach is ideal for this study because it attempts to reduce any impact of the racial and cultural demographic features of the researcher. Quantitative data was collected through the IDI assessment. The staff members in the Student Affairs department at the urban college completed the IDI assessment two times - prior to and following the training. The results from the questionnaire were then compared to assess change both individually and as a group. This study attempted to collect data that once studied, would lead to understanding the potential impact of professional development in an urban college setting that was guided by an instrument assessing intercultural development.

Procedure

The researcher has been a trained, certified administrator of the IDI for the past 5 years. The researcher met selected department leadership of the Office of the Student Affairs and provided a brief overview of the research study. Following department leadership approval, the researcher then attended a thirty-minute meeting with all of Student Affairs staff members and provided a brief overview of the research study and solicited participation. Participants were notified that participation in this study was voluntary. Participants, who agreed and signed consent, participated in a 1.5 hour professional development presentation providing an in-depth analysis of the group assessment. The researcher then met with each individual participant for thirty minutes to provide individual results. The researcher compiled the IDI results and determined customized professional development programming based on both individual and group IDI assessment results. These results were used in conjunction with the DMIS as the researcher created individual and group activities that were developmentally appropriate for the participants.

The customized professional development occurred after the IDI pre-test was administered between Fall 2010 and Fall 2011 with a targeted amount of a total of six hours of participation by Student Affairs members. At the conclusion of the six hours, the researcher re-administered the IDI to determine the effectiveness of the customized professional development based on appropriate DMIS specifically identified activities. The researcher then conducted the final

workshop giving the group and individual results summarizing the study as well as giving an optional individual feedback for each participant interested.

Professional Development

Session One. The first professional development session was created based on the group results from the pre- test on the IDI. The goals for the group were to do the following: 1. Introduce the DMIS and IDI continuum; and 2. Show the group where they scored on the continuum and explain what that means; and 3. Explain each of the stages on the continuum; and 4. Participate in a self-awareness activity to prepare for the individual feedback in the next session. This session was 1.5 hours.

Session Two. The next professional development activity was to meet with participants and provide their individual feedback. The goals for this training were to do the following: 1. Distribute individually each IDI report; and 2. Further explain their score on the IDI and what that score means; and 3. Answer any questions the respondent had as well as assist in decreasing any anxiety or fear that may be associated with the assessment and results. This session was approximately 30-45 minutes per each participant for his or her feedback session.

Session Three. The third professional development activity was to meet again as a group. The goals for this training were the following: 1. Build general cultural knowledge by participating in team building activities and reflecting on similarities and differences they noticed in each other; and 2. Build knowledge about their own culture by doing activities as well as a cultural biography; and 3. Focus on developing listening skills by doing activities in class that required them

to actively listen to another person; and 4. Set up group for the re-assessment of the IDI. This session was 2 hours. IDI Post-Training Re-Assessment. After these trainings, the respondents received a link to the IDI assessment via email and were instructed to take the assessment again.

Session Four. The group met for the final professional development training. The following were the goals: 1. Build on knowledge of personal culture that was started and 2. Continue participating in team building activities and 3. Explain the post- assessment results; and 4. Offer additional individual feedback sessions for those respondents that were interested. This final session was 1.5 hours.

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter focuses on the findings of the research that emerged from the pre - and post - assessment results of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). It was through the interpretation of these results that developmental movement of the group and individuals along the intercultural development continuum was visible. Although the sample size is small, the results for this group were still encouraging.

Through the assessment of the inventory results, five themes emerged, including:

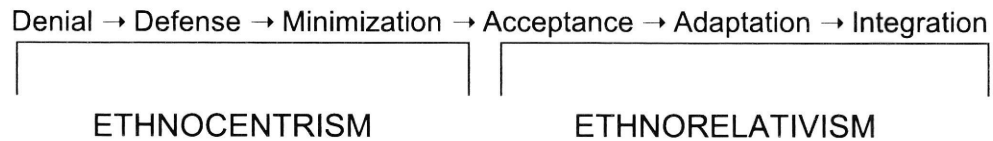
1. Increase in overall perception score in both assessments
2. Growth in actual development orientation
3. Decrease in orientation gap between pre- and post-assessments
4. Positive movement in trailing issues
5. Cultural disengagement score increase

The purpose of this study was to determine if there would be any impact from customized intercultural professional development with undergraduate academic advising and counseling personnel through the use of the IDI and DMIS. To understand this quantitative process, participants completed an online questionnaire, participated in both a large group feedback session and an individual feedback session, and as the final part of the pre- assessment, participated in a group, customized professional development session that was based on the assessment results. A post- assessment was then completed with one

final group feedback session comparing the results from the pre- and post-assessments.

The question for this research study was: *Does professional development that is consistent, customized, and based on assessment results influence the score of the group and individual score on the IDI?* The participants in this study were student services personnel at an urban college located in the central Midwest. Once the IDI is completed, the IDI assessment tool analytic structure generates an individual (and group) graphic profile of the participants' overall positions on the DMIS. According to Bennett (1986) there is a possibility of scoring as a group in one of the following scales on the continuum of the DMIS based on the assessment results of the IDI. The first three stages are considered ethnocentric, and the last 3 stages are considered ethno-relative (see Figure 3). The IDI profile shows a group how they respond to cultural differences and similarities. The results will include group pre-assessment/post-assessment first followed by each individual respondent's pre-assessment/post-assessment results. Individuals complete an assessment, which is computer scored and generates an individual or group profile of the respondents' overall position on the continuum of intercultural development. This group's profile shows a quantitative measure of placement where the group places themselves on the Intercultural development continuum.

Figure 3



The IDI then breaks down into how the group perceives themselves as assessed by the answers of the participants on the IDI called the perceived orientation. Then, the results from the IDI show the primary developmental orientation, or where the group actually is scoring on the continuum, not their perception as assessed by the instrument. Next, the results from the IDI show the orientation gap, which is the difference along the continuum between the perceived and developmental orientation. If a group shows a gap score of seven points or higher it means there is a significant difference between the group places itself and how the group and the group's primary orientation positions itself toward cultural differences and similarities. If the gap score is less than seven points, then the group is underestimating the primary orientation towards cultural similarities and differences (Bennett, 1986).

A group can also show trailing orientations. These are similar to reflexes in the sense that when a person experiences a situation they may revert back to old habits or responses. Lastly, the IDI assesses how connected or disconnected a group feels toward their own cultural community as defined by each individual within the group which is referred to as cultural disengagement. This cultural disengagement score is not a dimension of intercultural competence along the

developmental continuum but rather a separate dimension of how disconnected or detached people feel towards their own group (Bennett, 1986).

Group IDI Results: Pre-Assessment Focus

Below is a visual of the group scores for both pre-assessment and post-assessment results:

Group	Perceived Orientation Score	Developmental Orientation Score	Orientation Gap Score	Trailing Orientation Score	Cultural Disengagement Score
Pre-	124.42	101.04	23.38	3.85	3.60
Post-	128.74	113.27	15.36	3.35	4.40

Each of these scores will be discussed further for the pre-assessment and post-assessment for the group.

Pre-Assessment Perceived Orientation Score

The group perceived orientation score for the pre assessment on the IDI shows the group places itself within the acceptance stage as their perceived score with a score of 124.42 (IDI v.3 group profile report, 2010). This indicates that the group thinks or perceives that as a group they understand and appropriately adapt to cultural differences and similarities within acceptance. They believe they reflect an orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and similarities in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions and behaviors. For example, as a group they may perceive that they can meet all the needs of their diverse students as well as appreciate all the cultural differences represented in their college community.

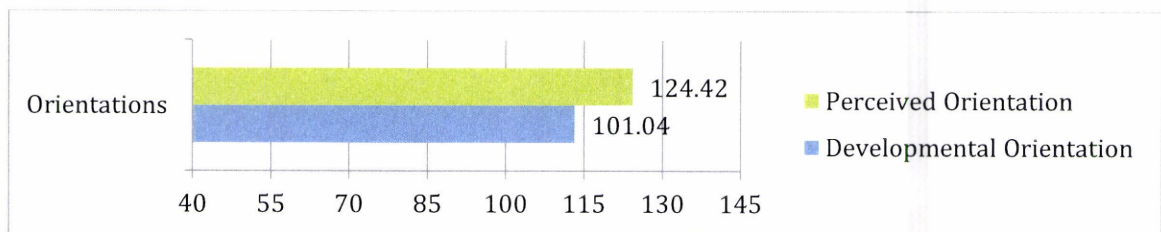
Pre-Assessment Developmental Orientation Score

However, their actual developmental orientation score places them within the minimization stage with a score of 101.04 (IDI v.3 group profile report, 2010). This indicates that the group's primary approach towards cultural differences reflects a tendency to highlight commonalities across cultures that can mask significant cultural differences in values, perceptions and behaviors. For example, as a group they may minimize students' cultural differences, values, perceptions and beliefs and may respond to them in a manner that could be discriminatory. In the instance of a student coming in who needs to take a day off due to a religious holiday, if the staff member doesn't celebrate or value this holiday, they may disregard the holiday or request from the student.

Pre-Assessment Orientation Gap

The next area discussed is the orientation gap. The orientation gap is the difference between the perception orientation score and the developmental orientation score.

Figure 4: Orientation Gap (OG)



The orientation gap measures the distance between how the group perceives itself approaching cultural difference and how the IDI assessed the groups' approach - in this group their gap score was 23.38 points (see Figure 4). Again, a gap score that is over 7 points is considered a meaningful difference

between where a group places itself and where the IDI results place the group (IDI v.3 group profile report, 2010). The meaningful difference, as assessed by the inventory, shows that the group significantly overestimates their level of intercultural competence and may be surprised that the IDI did not result in a higher developmental orientation score. For example, as a group they may react and not understand when a student reacts negatively to a comment they have made and ultimately as a group may blame the students for not understanding. Another example might be when staff has explained the steps in filling out financial aid forms, and due to language barriers a student fills out the forms incorrectly, and then they blame the student for not knowing English. Intercultural competence is the capability to accurately understand and adapt behavior to cultural difference and commonality. Within the work place, intercultural competence reflects the degree to which cultural differences and commonalities in values, expectations, beliefs, and practices are effectively bridged, an inclusive environment is achieved, and specific differences that exist in the organization are approached from a mutual adaptation perspective (IDI v.3 group profile report, 2010).

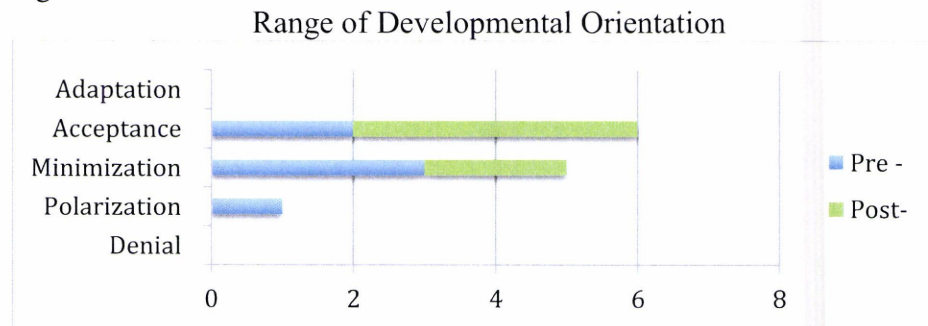
Pre-and Post-Assessment Range of Developmental Orientation

The range of developmental orientation is where each individual fell on the continuum. It's how close their scores are to one another on the continuum, which plays out in how they respond to cultural difference in the work setting.

Figure 5 identifies the number of each respondent whose developmental orientation falls within each of the stages for both the pre- and post- assessment.

As you can see from the figure, in the pre- assessment, the participants are further apart on the continuum with some being in acceptance (ethnorelative stage) and others being in defense or polarization (ethnocentric stage).

Figure 5



Number of Respondents in each stage

A wider range of orientations within the pre-assessment, (e.g., from denial or polarization through acceptance or adaptation) within the group reflects a lack of consensus on how the group makes sense of and adapts behavior to cultural differences and commonalities. Because of the wider orientation, the staff as a group may cause disagreement within the group as they experience cultural differences. For example, in regards to a student with English as a second language, one staff member may say and believe that the student needs to learn English, a different staff member who is in a different orientation may be offended at this comment and get upset with their co-worker.

In effect, the group has both mono-cultural mindsets and inter-cultural mindsets at work. Without customized and targeted intercultural competence development for the members of this group, it is likely the group will find it difficult to achieve a “shared vision and focus” for meeting educational objectives in a culturally diverse environment. It is also noted that the participants within

these primary orientation scores, have a tendency towards being in the defense and reversal orientations. This shows that the group tended to approach differences with an “us” versus “them” mentality supporting a mono-cultural mindset to cultural differences.

Pre-Assessment Trailing Orientation Score

Trailing issues are orientations that are in back of the group’s developmental orientation on the intercultural continuum that are not resolved. When the issue is not resolved, this previous orientation may be used to make sense of cultural differences at particular times, around certain topics, or in specific situations. For example, in the instance above where the staff member believes that the student should learn English, the trailing orientation (or when a person reverts back into some old habit) plays out by the staff member trying to get support from their other colleagues to join their belief that all students should learn English. This conflict has potential to reinforce dualistic thinking and actions within the team. This trailing issue has the possibility having “starting/stopping feelings” around different initiatives the group may be involved in. The group trailing issue as assessed by the IDI is in reversal, where the group approaches cultural difference and similarity with a dualistic mentality where the group outside the primary cultural group is perceived to be superior in cultural values, perceptions, and behaviors.

Pre-Assessment Cultural Disengagement Score

Cultural Disengagement is a sense of disconnection or detachment from one’s cultural group. Scores less than 4.00 indicated the group is not resolved and

is experiencing detachment to some degree as a lack of involvement in core aspects of being a member of a cultural community. The group is unresolved as assessed by the IDI (IDI v.3 group profile report, 2010). Because of this unresolved area, the group may be unclear or disconnected with the college's overall mission, vision and values as it relates to cultural differences and similarities.

A possible blind spot for this group could be that the group's efforts at establishing common goals, policies and practices in the organization may not attend as deeply as needed to cultural differences and integrating those differences in generating solutions. It is likely that the group will struggle with making decisions and solving problems when cultural differences arise that demand creative solutions in ways that value the differences. The group's minimization level of intercultural competence suggests they will likely be challenged to identify cross-culturally adaptive policies and practices that can guide common efforts across differences (e.g. a one size fits all practices). However, after four customized professional development sessions spread out over the course of a year, it is hoped that their group score will change.

Group IDI Results: Post-Assessment Focus

The group completed individual feedback sessions and professional development workshops based on the IDI results. After completing this, each participant was reassessed with the IDI. As a reminder, here is a visual again of their scores:

Group	Perceived Orientation Score	Developmental Orientation Score	Orientation Gap Score	Trailing Orientation Score	Cultural Disengagement Score
Pre-	124.42	101.04	23.38	3.85	3.60
Post-	128.74	113.27	15.36	3.35	4.40

Although in the table shown above, some of the incremental changes numerically may look small, the movement along the intercultural development continuum is very significant. The numbers in the table show that participants moved from ethnocentric to ethnorelative stages. The group results from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) pre- assessment to post assessment show an increase of 4.32 points in perceived orientation (PO) score and 12.23 points in developmental orientation score (DO). Both numbers reflect a positive increase and orientation change on the continuum and yet have very different meanings and implications. When the perception orientation score moves, it is basically demonstrating where the group wants themselves to be. This is actually a strength in that the group *wants* to be further along the continuum than they actually are. The weakness of this perception is that generally when a group perceives themselves farther along than they actually are on a continuum they may not feel they need any professional development. When developmental orientation score moves, it is basically the group moving from minimizing the values, beliefs, and behaviors of the culturally different to accepting and appreciating the values, belief, and behaviors of the culturally different.

Post-Assessment Perceived Orientation Score

After participating in the hours of customized professional development sessions, the group perceived orientation score increased to 128.74. The group moved an entire orientation from acceptance to adaptation on the intercultural development continuum. As a group, they perceived themselves as appreciating and respecting patterns of cultural differences within the work place within different cultural settings and then they moved to a different level of perception. This new level of perception is to believe they deeply understand their own culture along with other cultures and how to change their perspective and behavior in different cultural settings.

The increase in the perception orientation of 4.32, while a small number increase. This number is significant because it was enough to cause the group's perception of themselves to move to a different orientation. Although this gain could potentially be damaging because participation in the professional development pushed them further on the continuum causing the group to be excessively confident in their sense of intercultural confidence in the work setting. The gain can also potentially make them blind to the cultural differences around them causing them to feel like they do not need further cultural development or evaluation, make them resistant to change, as well as increase the likelihood that they will marginalize people who are culturally different. Individuals may marginalize others because they see the growth on the scale and feel as though they are confident in their perceived cultural sensitivity.

Post-Assessment Developmental Orientation Score

The group's actual developmental score moved from being in minimization with a score of 101.04 to acceptance with a score of 113.27 after participating in the customized professional development sessions. The group also moved an entire orientation from minimization to acceptance on the Intercultural Continuum. This movement signified that the group developmentally moved from a place of minimizing cultural differences in values, perceptions, and behaviors to recognizing and appreciating these patterns of cultural similarities and differences.

This movement indicates that the staff moved from minimizing other patterns of cultural differences and similarities and projecting their own culture to appreciating and respecting patterns of cultural differences and similarities. For example, in the example of the student needing a day off for their religious holiday, the group now may change the school calendar to reflect this holiday demonstrating their appreciation for cultural differences. This score demonstrates an early orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions and behaviors.

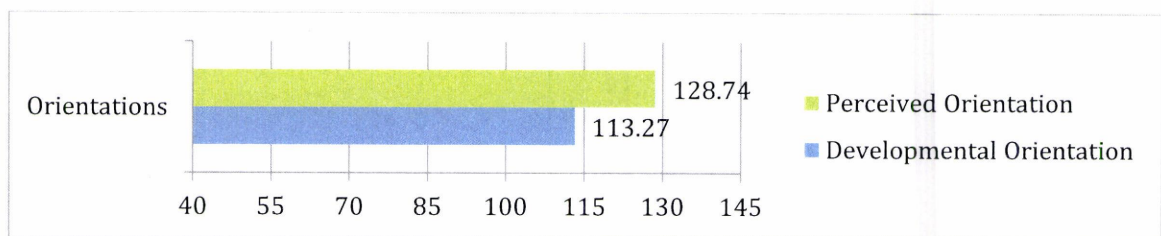
The increase in the developmental orientation of 12.23 is significant because they made a noteworthy jump from minimization to acceptance. When compared to their perception score, the developmental score shows a more important advancement in terms of their actual development. This is important because they are narrowing the gap between perceived and actual development, which possibly is helping them use the professional development in a more

effective and efficient way to meet organizational goals. As the gap narrows, the group tends to think similarly and react in the same way as opposed to a wider gap, which can create conflict among a group. This is evidenced by the orientation gap.

Post-Assessment Orientation Gap

The Orientation Gap shows the distance between where the group places itself (based on their perception) and the group's actual developmental orientation - this group's Orientation Gap was considered statistically significant at 15.46 points because it is higher than 7. This group's perceived orientation is over 15 points higher than the developmental orientation, which means that the group overestimates their intercultural competence. Additionally, the larger the gap, the more puzzled the group may become by the difference between how they perceive themselves and how they actually approach cultural similarities and differences in the work place (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Orientation Gap (OG)

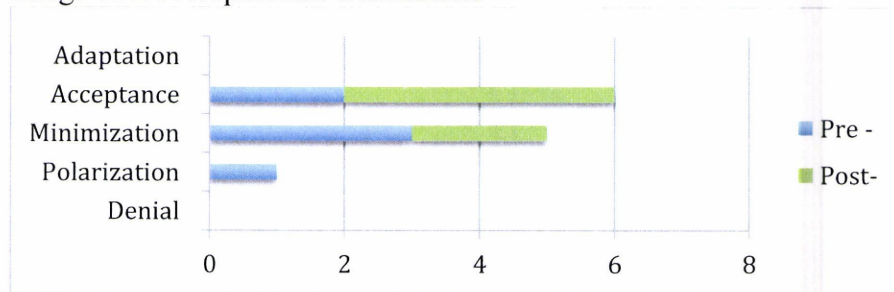


Pre-and Post-Assessment Range of Developmental Orientation

The next figure (figure 7) shows the number of each respondent whose developmental orientation falls within each of the stages for both the pre- and post- assessment as mentioned earlier in the chapter. As you can see from the figure, in the pre- assessment, the participants are further apart on the continuum

with some being in acceptance and others being in defense or polarization. In the post- assessment, the group participants are not as far apart on the continuum and they are also more towards the advanced stages of cultural competence within the ethnorelative stage on the IDI continuum.

Figure 7
Range of Developmental Orientation



Number of Respondents in each stage

As a group there is less variability in orientation and more individuals within the acceptance stage. This means as a group, they are closer in agreement and more likely to respond together with less disagreement in how they respond to students. They would likely have a consistent perspective when confronted with cultural differences. With the example of a student not speaking English, the group may work together to set up a translator and/or provide additional resources for the student rather than just respond with the comment of the student needing to learn English.

This decrease in orientation gap score is very encouraging because it means that the professional development positively impacted the group perception and reduced the overestimation of intercultural competence by the group in cross cultural settings. In other words, the group moved closer to actual reality of cultural experience and less fiction. These results should also be approached

cautiously also because the group still overestimates itself and the inflated mindset could be potentially damaging for the group because they reject the opportunity to their pursue needed voluntary or formal professional development that would help them serve the multicultural population they service on a daily basis. The group is operating with an inflated perception which was further driven forward by the professional development; as a result their belief that their worldview is compatible with those of other cultural groups and may suggest an unacknowledged need for intercultural growth.

Post-Assessment Trailing Orientation

Trailing issues for the group as assessed by the IDI have moved to the minimization stage from the defense or polarization stage. As defined earlier, trailing issues are orientations that are in the back developmentally of the group or unresolved issues for the group. At certain times, or within certain topics or situations, the group may revert back to minimization, which is an orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may mask acknowledgement of significant cultural differences. This can take one of two forms: a.) Highlighting a similarity that dismisses equal recognition of cultural differences due to less cultural self-awareness, more commonly experienced among dominant group members within a cultural community, or b.) Highlighting commonalities that mask acknowledgement of significant cultural differences that function as a strategy for navigating values and practices largely determined by the dominant culture more commonly experienced among non-dominant group members within a larger cultural community. The groups' sense

of disconnection or detachment from one's cultural group indicates that the group is resolved (IDIv3).

During a specific time or type of cultural experience, the group makes sense of the situation utilizing an unresolved cultural perspective that is a previous orientation on the intercultural development continuum. The group regresses to less-developed orientation of intercultural competence to rationalize cultural similarities and differences in the work place or responding similar to stages in ethnocentric continuum.

When reviewing the results of this study, it is clear that the group also showed positive movement in the trailing orientation as a result of the professional development. They moved from a dualistic approach to cultural similarities and differences to a “one size fits all” approach as seen in the results in the chart above. The group moved from an “unresolved” 3.85 in a polarizing (reversal) orientation, which became “resolved” with positive movement to the right, and then moved into the next orientation and ended at an “unresolved” level of 3.35 in the minimization orientation. The move is unresolved because they have not reached the benchmark of 4.0

Cultural Disengagement

The cultural disengagement score shows how connected or disconnected a person feels toward their own cultural community as assessed by individuals in the group. The dimension is not shown on the intercultural development continuum, but it is considered an additional data point as to how connected the group feels to their own cultural identity.

The group was disconnected from what they defined as their primary cultural group as seen in the score of 3.60 in which half of the group felt disconnected to their primary cultural group. After the professional development and post-assessment, the group showed improvement by increasing the score to 4.40, which is considered, resolved. In the post assessment, the number of participants that felt disconnected to their primary culture changed from half the group feeling disconnected to only one person within the group feeling disconnected.

Group Summary

In summary, the professional development shows a strong correlation to positive movement for each data indicator on the intercultural development continuum.

Individual Profiles

The following is a graph of all the respondent's scores:

Individual	Perceived Orientation Score Pre-	Perceived Orientation Score Post-	Developmental Orientation Score Pre-	Developmental Orientation Score Post-	Orientation Gap Score Pre-	Orientation Gap Score Post-	Trailing Orientation Score Pre-	Trailing Orientation Score Post
Respondent 1	129.52	128.23	119.05	116.33	10.48	11.90	3.22	2.67
Respondent 2	130.19	128.80	115.46	107.63	14.73	21.17	3.67	3.89
Respondent 3	123.53	130.62	98.62	122.34	24.91	8.28	3.44	2.20
Respondent 4	114.75	130.19	72.00	118.32	42.75	11.87	0	3.0
Respondent 5	127.75	130.65	108.63	112.30	19.12	18.35	0	3.44
Respondent 6	120.76	123.92	92.48	102.71	28.28	21.21	3.78	3.78

Discussion of respondent results

As indicated above, the results from individual respondents followed the same trends as the group results in the intercultural inventory. Although in the

table shown above, some of the incremental changes numerically may look small, the movement along the intercultural development continuum is very significant.

The most significant areas of growth were for Respondent 4. This Respondent moved from defense or polarization (ethnocentric stage) to acceptance (ethnorelative stage) in the developmental orientation, which means the movement moved from a more polarized or defensive way of thinking to a place of accepting and appreciating other cultures. This Respondent's score, or orientation gap was the largest jump in terms of scores.

The next significant areas of growth were for Respondent 3. This Respondent moved from minimization to acceptance in the developmental orientation, which means a similar movement as for Respondent 4. However, the significance for this Respondent is that the first developmental orientation score didn't even reach a score of 100, which means developmentally this person was focused on their own cultural lens and didn't show signs of being ethnorelative. These two Respondents also showed a more accurate perception and knowledge of self, which is indicated by the decreasing of their orientation gap.

Respondent 5 moved from minimization to acceptance in the developmental orientation as similar to the others but the jump wasn't as significant based on the point value of the scores. Despite the point value, the meaning is still significant in that Respondent 5 moved from ethnocentric stage to ethnorelative stage of thinking which still demonstrates change.

Respondent 6 also made movement on the continuum. This movement may have not been as large but there was still change. Respondent 6 moved but it

was within the minimization stage on the developmental orientation score staying within the ethnocentric stage.

The outliers are Respondents 1 and 2. Respondents 1 and 2's developmental scores decreased within their developmental orientation, meaning they didn't demonstrate positive change. Respondent 1 score decreased but was still scoring within the acceptance stage. Respondent 2 score decreased but was still scoring within the acceptance stage as well. The scores may have regressed due to some personal experiences they may have been going through that were unrelated to the professional development experience or something negative within the professional development experience may have also influenced these scores. It is unclear as to why the scores went down.

5 out of the 6 Respondents were scored as resolved within their cultural disengagement score, whereas 3 out of the 6 were scored as resolved during the pre-assessment. As a reminder, cultural disengagement is a sense of disconnection or detachment from one's cultural group. Scores less than 4.00 indicated the person is not resolved and is experiencing detachment or to some degree a lack of involvement in core aspects of being a member of a cultural community. This would suggest that 5 of the 6 are not experiencing any type of disconnection from their cultural group.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

The conclusion from this research study is that on-going customized professional development does influence individual and group scores on the IDI. For this population, the group's perceived orientation score moved to the right along with the developmental orientation score demonstrating movement in a positive manner towards intercultural competency. Additionally, the orientation gap decreased demonstrating the narrowing of perception in the actual approach of the group towards adapting to cultural differences and similarities. The range of developmental orientations narrowed as well for the group, which is another demonstration that individuals narrowed their range of orientation as shown in the post-assessment, which gives the group a more consistent perspective when experiencing cultural differences and similarities. The group also moved from a trailing orientation in reversal which is on the lead side of the continuum to a trailing orientation in minimization which is significant as they moved from a dualistic thinking and approaches to a more universal thinking and approach. Finally, in terms of cultural disengagement, half the group moved from being disconnected or unresolved to a position of resolved. These conclusions highlight the numeric changes each of the participants made, however, there were additional changes that happened as well.

The six participants from the Student Affairs department in this research study demonstrated courage, vulnerability, and a willingness to share their personal perceptions, values, and behaviors during the research process. An

essential observation to note for this group of professionals was that customized professional development that was interculturally responsive to their assessment scores was a positive approach to professional learning for them.

After the first professional development session ended, one conclusion immediately stood out. This conclusion was the positive reaction from the group towards the interculturally customized professional development. Respondents verbally commented that they felt this feedback was very helpful to them and that they were learning much more than they had in other workshops. I found this to be very significant as I observed the group continually engaged with each other during the first session. As I was leading the group through definitions associated with intercultural competency, and brief descriptions of cultural or racially based professional development, the group began describing the “last time” they had participated in a diversity training together and how different that training was from this training. They appeared to be more engaged with this training and seemed to feel this training was more helpful to them.

The group described in detail the previous diversity training focused on institutional and individual racism. Some of the group participants noted that there was a feeling of conflict and hostility generated during the session that left participants polarized as the result. They detailed how work relationships were negatively affected and the lasting result was that no other workshop that involved professional learning on culture or race had been pursued since. This was a powerful validation to approaching professional training with a more strategic, developmental, intercultural assessment driven approach. Let me restate, the

department had not participated in any type of professional development that involved culture or race for ten years while their student population located in their urban college community has grown exponentially.

Another conclusion that emerged from the data collected from the IDI assessment scores was that the group as a whole assessed in the developmental orientation of minimization with a 101.04 score during the pre-assessment. Minimization is a recognition and acceptance of superficial cultural differences such as eating customs, etc., while holding that all human beings are essentially the same (Bennett, 1993). How a group or individual moves through minimization to the next development orientation is to build cultural self-awareness. This group was able to make this move.

Additionally, this study demonstrated movement for individuals as well. All but Respondent 1 and 2 moved on their IDI scores. This movement in all scored areas again demonstrates that consistent, customized professional development can influence scores positively, not only of a group as a whole, but also of many individuals. This movement individually for most of the group was to the right of the continuum demonstrating a more intercultural competence. Along with the movement, the orientation gap was reduced which is also reflective of the group. This movement on the numeric scale will hopefully now show up in the work place. Whereas before this group may have reacted negatively to a student of color by assuming he/she was an athlete, now the staff may ask more questions and get to know the student, demonstrating their acceptance of difference.

As I facilitated the professional training for the group it became very apparent that trust and self-disclosure would be critical to our learning together as a group. The activities the group participated in were framed around identifying each participant's own culture and the organizational culture they worked within. I challenged the group to identify individual and organizational values, and asked them to identify and reflect on the similarities and differences shared from their own personal story and their work experiences in the college community. When I challenged the group in this way, the group response was to challenge me as facilitator to share my own experiences and identify some of my own personal history, values and beliefs or said in other way, they asked me to do what I was asking them to do.

It is my recommendation that as a facilitator of interculturally based professional development, the facilitator is able to model what competent behavior looks like for participants. I noticed that during one of the activities, that I made a stereotypical comment about gender, and immediately I identified what I did to the group, apologized, and communicated to participants the significance of making mistakes and learning lessons from them. I noticed that the participants increased their self and group disclosure during the professional development sessions after I modeled this type of intercultural ethic. Trust seemed to begin to be developed within the room.

In addition, facilitators should spend more time explaining and modeling in "an assets" or strength- based way instead of a using a deficit model. As a person who facilitates professional development, it is assumed in most situations,

that the person leading the group is an “expert” in the topic that is being communicated. I was intentional during each professional development session to inform participants that I would be leaning on their individual and group talents and I was simply sharing my own individual talents with them. When I was requested by the participants to meet them where they were, I was able to solidify credibility and build trust with the group, which is developmentally appropriate for the orientation of minimization. This group was assessed at minimization stage and meeting them where they were at was necessary to contribute to the movement of the group to the orientation of acceptance during post assessment. This seemed to help the participants accept their placement and not strive to move but learn what it meant to be assessed in minimization.

Another conclusion that emerged from the group participation sessions was the importance of time. Based on personal observations each time I arrived for a professional development session, I noticed how busy each participant was with their work duties. Each time I arrived, it seemed to be a high traffic time for the department. I observed lines starting from the courtesy desk extending through the main office door. When our sessions began, I was able to witness the participants “take-a-break” from the fast paced, highly charged work environment they were in. It seemed that the participants were able to “exhale” during our sessions together. It was at this time that each of them was able to pause and be able to critically examine themselves and each other. It was in these moments of structured and unstructured time that participants were able to laugh, catch up

about what was happening in their lives, and experience each other in different ways.

The time to pause proved to be beneficial to the training sessions. The time spent together proved to be a natural icebreaker, which was needed and developmentally appropriate to the orientation of the group. I was able to build this type of unstructured time into the professional development plan for the group and would recommend that this become a standard practice within intercultural-based professional development when a group assesses at the developmental orientation of Minimization.

The last conclusion that was identified and proved to be most critical from my perspective was identifying the “positive intent” of the group through examining beliefs, values, and sensitivity of the individual/organization culture. What is meant by “positive intent” is the group as a whole seemed to assume each participant was coming with positive intent that is purposeful or is their experience and not from a place of intentionally being hurtful, mean or judgmental. Throughout the activities and discussions, when participants reacted or responded in a vulnerable manner, others gave them the space to respond. Individuals didn’t react to what was said, or try and interpret what the others might be saying but allowed each other to be free of judgments. When the group participated in this process, it was the structured support that helped to move the participants through critical dialogue about emotion, ambiguity, stereotypes and cultural projections individuals were withholding. The sharing of their own personal life and organizational experiences proved to be an important stabilizing

factor that worked to build and secure the groups' team identity and allowed them to work together to overcome the fear of participating in this research study. In addition, based on my observations during the professional development sessions, it is critical to reinforce the positive intent of building intercultural competency early and often. When absent from interculturally based professional development, not having positive intent for one another could undermine potentially positive outcomes for the complete professional training.

In summary, each of the conclusions drawn from the findings of this research process was positive about the developmentally appropriate professional development based on Intercultural assessment scores. The participants really gravitated towards this approach and seemed to thrive with each exposure to professional training. This approach enabled participants to learn important concepts related to intercultural competence and how culture impacts them individually and within their work environment.

Limitations

Limitations in this study included the sample size, facilitator experience, training, and the type of study, time constraints, cost, and the amount of data readily available to the researcher. The study could have demonstrated stronger findings if the sample size was larger. The challenges of having one facilitator were also a possible limitation. Having only one facilitator who was challenged with physical and mental fatigue may have negatively influenced how well the professional development times went. The type of study could have been stronger by using a mixed method approach – meaning the study could have used a more

balanced approach by including observational data, interviews, journaling and other qualitative data. The challenges of distance and time constraints were also a challenge in regard to timing and delivery of the professional development. The cost to travel for the facilitator as well as the cost of each of the assessments, which were \$10.00, may have also been an element. The other limitation is that there is not a lot of published research on the use of the IDI with teachers and the effects of professional development.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends that further research be completed in the area of use of the IDI. At this time most of the research is done with teachers or in other countries but there is not a lot of research on the impact of professional development and potential growth of teachers or staff working in schools whether that is public schools K-12 or higher education. The IDI could be a useful tool to assist in both of these arenas.

The researcher also recommends that higher education institutions begin to use a tool such as the IDI on a regular basis with their entire team of staff. The IDI has been proven to be effective in helping staff develop in the areas of intercultural competency. As our society continues to become more diverse, the need is going to increase for becoming a more competent staff. The IDI can be a helpful tool in assisting staff and/or teachers to be more effective interpersonally and as they work with a more diverse population.

Chapter 6

Self-Reflection

Completing this research project has been one of the most difficult and challenging experiences that I have accomplished in my life. The entire process necessary for the action research project took over two years to complete. I was very motivated to start the action research process; however enduring through it all to the end was a challenge. I was happy that I had gained support from the college for my thesis topic and that people were excited to have the opportunity to participate. Over the next series of pages, I will share an authentic account of my thinking related to the research process and the sequence that I followed to complete my action research project.

The first unanticipated consequence was the toil that I had to endure because of the travel needed to conduct the research. This travel time and time away from my home proved to be more of a challenge physically and mentally than I had anticipated. For each of the sessions, I had to travel at minimum 8 hours round trip to the college to provide the 6 hours of professional development. The travel was often done after many hours of work and data gathering, which led to exhaustion from the long days of travel.

Additionally, there were unexpected consequences related to the long-distance location of the research participants. If a participant couldn't attend a professional development session, knowing that there were some mutual dependencies, I had to learn new ways to increase my data collection effectiveness. In order to ensure that the participant got their feedback and that I

could learn from their experiences, I used various forms of communication including email and videoconferencing for regular follow-up.

Another major external factor that I hadn't anticipated impacting me during this project were the pressures of a full time job (during a period where my role was under review as a part of a budget cut) as well as other personal life challenges took away some of my natural energy and personality. There were so many days where I threw my hands in the air and wondered what else in my life can happen to distract me from completing this project. As I was going through personal and professional changes, I felt like my spirit was being blown out and I lived in a constant state of situational depression. It was this time that I was thankful that I was able to lean on friends and my project advisor who helped me work towards rebalancing my life as well as keeping my research on track.

Despite these challenges, I knew the work was important to the college and to myself. I wanted to ensure that while I was interacting with the workshop participants I remained energized, motivating and passionate. This required that I had to dig deep within myself to get a hold of myself despite the challenges around me so I could effectively present the workshop, manage the people in the room and ensure I was getting the information needed for this project.

That being said, as I look back over the last two years, I now have the perspective to see incredible personal development during this time. I am proud of how I have grown in skill areas such as finding balance, in-depth analysis, leadership and even progressing in my own cultural journey.

As I review the process of writing this paper, the most difficult chapter for me was Chapter 4: The Findings. In this chapter, interpreting the individual and group assessment profiles in combination with what I observed while facilitating the customized professional development was challenging. Part of this challenge is that the scores show a quantitative small growth, but subjectively, I observed the group grow interpersonally as they interacted with each other, and to me, this was more powerful. It was a challenge to try and put into words the subjective observations I made because that data couldn't be quantified, it was just my personal opinion. Because this project was focused on quantitative research, I was supposed to be objective and focus solely on the assessment scores, but what I experienced during the professional development training as I observed the participants was amazing. The quantitative scores as shown on the IDI did not fully represent what I observed in terms of human change of the participants as they participated in the sessions. What I learned from this was the importance of the subjective experience – as facilitator I had to constantly self-assess to ensure that I remained impartial and that my bias and beliefs would not impact the experience of the participants. This led me to conclude that professional development is not only the experience of the participants; it is also about the preparation of the facilitator. The facilitator has to be aware and developmentally advanced to be able to successfully facilitate a session that has participants that are on different places of the intercultural continuum.

The chapter that I enjoyed the most was Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations. Although the sample size was small, the assessment results

showed the need for professional development and team building. From analyzing the data and seeing the growth of the participants, I derived great satisfaction knowing that my interactions during the professional development had helped contribute to narrowing the orientation gap between the group's actual and perceived development.

For me, the process reinforced that human beings aren't flawed and incapable of change, but that they can't do it on their own and they may need developmental experiences to help them be better than what they do. When given appropriate support, they have more opportunity to thrive in a multicultural environment.

When this chapter was completed, I was excited and proud of what the research showed – it validated my effectiveness as a facilitator. As mentioned earlier, the unexpected consequences and the external factors that were impacting me during the research process were extremely difficult. This experience of conducting a research project and writing a thesis has built within me a stronger foundation and respect for the research process. Having a conclusive research project validates my beliefs and passion for the need for intercultural professional development.

During the sessions, the people who showed the courage and vulnerability to make personal evaluations and changes inspired me; and I believe that I also further developed the skills to adapt to and encourage session participants through these changes. While I am proud that I can say that I have a Masters degree, the most valuable takeaways from the last six years were the processing of learning

higher level thinking and analyzing skills, as well as opportunity to hone the skills of dedication, determination and discipline - all of which will set me up for a lifetime of success.

References

- Abe, H. and Wiseman, R. (1983). A cross-cultural confirmation of the dimensions of intercultural effectiveness, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 7, 53-67.
- Babbie, E. (2001) *The practice of social research*; 9th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Bennett, M. J. (1986). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In Paige, R. M. (Ed.), *Cross-Cultural Orientation: New conceptualizations and applications*. (pp. 27-69). New York, NY: University Press of America.
- Bennett, M. J. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, in: R. M. Paige (Ed.) *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 21-72). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.
- Bennett, M. J. (2004). Becoming interculturally competent. *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education*. Wurzel, J. (Ed). (pp. 62-77) Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation.
- Bennett, M. J. & Hammer, M. R. (2001). The Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) manual. Portland, OR: The Intercultural Communication Institute.
- Bennett, J. M. & Bennett, M. J. (2004). Developing intercultural sensitivity: An integrative approach to global and domestic diversity. In D. Landis, J. M. Bennett, & M. J. Bennett (Eds.) *Handbook of intercultural training* (3rd ed., pp. 147-165) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Cui, G. M. & Awa, N. E. (1992). Measuring intercultural effectiveness: an integrative approach, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 16, 311-328.
- DeJaeghere, J., Cao, Y. (2009). Developing U.S. teachers' intercultural competence: does professional development matter? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33, 437-447.
- Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., & Guido-DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hammer, M. R. (2007). *The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) manual*. Portland, OR: The Intercultural Communication Institute.
- Hammer, M. R. (2008). The intercultural development inventory (IDI): An approach for assessing and building intercultural competence. In M. A. Moodian (Ed.) *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Understanding and utilizing cultural diversity to build successful organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hammer, M. R. & Bennett, M. J. (2001). *The intercultural development inventory manual. Version 2*. Portland, OR: Intercultural Communication Institute.
- Hammer, M. R. & Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27, 421-443.

- I.D.I. vs. 3 group profile report, 2010.
- Kealey, D. J. & Protheroe, D. R. (1996). The effectiveness of cross-cultural training for expatriates: an assessment of the literature on the issue. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 20 (2), 141-165.
- Kelly, G. (1963). A theory of personality. New York: Norton.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Landis, D., Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J. (2004). *Handbook of Intercultural Training, 3rd Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Mahon, J. (2006). Under the invisibility cloak? Teacher understanding of cultural difference. *Intercultural Education*, 17 (4) 391-405.
- Mills, G. (2011). *Action Research; a guide for the teacher researcher*; 4th edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Neal, L.I., McCray, A. D., Webb-Johnson, G., & Bridgest, S. T. (2003). The effects of African American movement styles on teachers' perceptions and reactions. *The Journal of Special Education*. 37 (1), 49-57.
- Paige, R. M. Jacobs-Cassuto, M., Yershova. Y. A., & DeJaeghere, J. (2003). Assessing intercultural sensitivity: An empirical analysis of the Hammer and Bennett intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27, 467-486.
- Pope, R.L., Reynolds, A.L., & Mueller, J. A. (2004). *Multicultural competence in student affairs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Roat, B. (2010). *Cultural adjustment of white teachers to a diverse urban school district*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ. Retrieved June, 2011, from ERIC database.

Upcraft, M. L. (1993). Translating theory into practice. In M. J. Barr (Ed.), *The Handbook of student affairs administration*. (pp. 260-273). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Westrick, J., & Yuen, C. (2007). The intercultural sensitivity of secondary teachers in Hong Kong: A comparative study with implications for teacher development. *Intercultural Education*, 18 (2), 129-145.

Wiseman, R. L. & Shuter, R. (1994). *International and Intercultural communication annual*, 18, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Augsburg College
Lindell Library
Minneapolis, MN 55454