Pedagogy in Counselor Education: A 10-Year Content Analysis of Journals

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Abstract:

This content analysis includes 230 peer-reviewed articles regarding teaching and learning published in journals of the American Counseling Association and its divisions between January 2001 and December 2010. Results include examination of focus, pedagogical foundations, and the methodologies used. Implications for the scholarship of teaching and learning in counselor education are discussed.

Keywords: counselor education | pedagogy | content analysis

Article:

Professional counselors are ethically responsible for using evidence-based practice (e.g., American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 2009), and counselor educators are responsible for ensuring that students learn guidelines and procedures for evidence-based practice. This focus on evidence-based counseling practice parallels national dialogue regarding accountability and demonstration of effectiveness in higher education (e.g., Association of American Colleges and Universities. 2008; Ewell, 2009; Kuh & Ikenberry, 2009). It was within this context that the CACREP *2009 Standards* ushered a profound shift in the ways counselor education programs are evaluated, from input-focused relevance of the curriculum to a focus on demonstrated facilitation and assessment of student learning (Barrio Minton & Gibson, 2012; Urofsky & Bobby, 2012). In accordance with this shift, the *2009 Standards* included enhanced attention to how aspiring counselor educators prepare for teaching (see Standards I.W.3, II.C.3, II.C.4, and Doctoral Student Learning Outcomes C-D; CACREP, 2009). In this shift from covering specific content to documenting student learning and ensuring that doctoral students have training in pedagogy, there is a need for rigor in teaching about teaching.

Content analysis provides one method of illuminating major trends and developments within a discipline. For example, Helwig and Schmidt (2011) analyzed 32 years of programs at the ACA national conference and highlighted shifts in topics over the decades. Blancher, Buboltz Jr., and Soper (2010) conducted a 10-year content analysis of the *Journal of Counseling & Development* and compared the results to two previous content analyses. A number of researchers have also conducted content analyses regarding areas of concern within counselor education, including problematic behavior (Brown, 2013), clinical preparation of school counselors (Akos & Scarborough, 2004), and crisis preparation (Barrio Minton & Pease-Carter, 2010). A review of the literature shows that this method can be particularly useful for illuminating trends in related professions, such as teaching of psychology (Griggs & Collisson, 2013), school psychology (Little, Akin-Little, & Lloyd, 2011), marriage and family therapy (Winston & Piercy, 2010), and social work (Wike, Bledsoe, Bellamy, & Grady, 2013). Without a systematic evaluation of literature regarding learning in counselor education, it remains difficult to assess the degree to which the practice of counselor education is consistent with accreditation standards and grounded in evidence-based pedagogy. In short, a content analysis of the scholarship of teaching and learning within counselor education may illuminate current trends and future directions for consideration.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to illuminate trends within counselor education via a content analysis of all peer-reviewed articles regarding the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) published by ACA and its divisions from January 2001 through December 2010. Although accountability expectations in the *2009 Standards* (CACREP, 2009) are new, line-by-line analysis of the *2001 Standards* (CACREP, 2001), *2009 Standards*, and Draft 2 of the *2016 Standards* (CACREP, 2013) demonstrated eight stable core areas, no substantive deletions to operationalized requirements within core areas, and very minor additions to required content within some areas from 2001 to 2009 and again from 2009 to 2016. From 2001 to 2009, core curricular requirements remained nearly identical for social and cultural identity, career development, group work, assessment, and research and program evaluation areas. Professional identity and ethical practice removed explicit attention to technology and added attention to emergency response, self-care, and supervision models. Helping relationships deleted explicit mention to technology and added a notation regarding wellness and prevention orientation along with crisis intervention. Human growth and development had no deletions but included new mentions of neurobiological behavior, crisis, resilience, differentiated interventions, and addictions. Similarly, although specialty area names and definitions have shifted somewhat over the years (Bobby, 2013), recent shifts have focused on unifying areas for attention. The *2009 Standards* included a new addiction counseling program area, and they combined community and mental health counseling into one program area and student affairs and college counseling into another program area. Although most or all articles were written prior to the rolling implementation of the *2009 Standards* between 2009 and 2016, the current standards provide a

remarkably stable reference point for how well the counselor education literature reflects past, present, and future accreditation foci. We investigated the following research questions:

1. To what degree does the literature focus on teaching and learning in general, teaching content, teaching techniques, and overall pedagogical practices?

2. To what degree does the literature focus on master's and doctoral-level students?

3. To what degree does the literature correspond with CACREP (2009) core curricular areas, CACREP (2009) program areas, and elective topics? Specifically, which CACREP core curricular and program areas are represented in the literature?

4. To what degree does the literature include foundations in learning theories and instructional research? Specifically, which learning theories and instructional research are represented in the literature?

5. To what degree does the literature represent empirical research? Specifically, what research approaches and foci are represented in the literature?

Method

Quantitative, descriptive content analysis was used to address the identified research questions. An article was eligible for inclusion in the study if its main focus was on how people learn knowledge or skills, teaching for acquisition of knowledge or skills, or challenges related to teaching and learning in counselor education. Because there is a considerable body of literature regarding the practice of supervision with developing counselors, we excluded articles focused solely on supervising counselors and articles in which authors simply described competencies, mentioned counselor training as one of many variables, or paid only brief attention to teaching implications. Only full-length articles were included; we excluded book reviews, interviews, and editorial statements or announcements. Comparison of initial keyword searches and tables of contents indicated that restricting to keywords was likely to result in an incomplete data set. Thus, we tasked a graduate research assistant with culling through all titles and abstracts and flagging all articles that appeared to be focused on teaching and learning. This review yielded 289 articles for potential inclusion; 230 articles met all inclusion criteria.

In accordance with Neuendorf's (2002) recommendations, the first author used research questions to create and operationalize definitions within an a priori codebook. The research team of two associate professors and a 1st-year doctoral research assistant in a CACREP-accredited program suggested changes to the codebook prior to a first round of coding. In particular, they focused on ensuring that rating categories were exhaustive and mutually exclusive.

We engaged in four iterative pilot coding exercises using random samples of 5% of the articles until we reached comprehensive, mutually exclusive categories with interrater agreement no less than 80% for any item. In efforts to enhance the rigor and stability of findings, we elected to

have two team members code each article independently and enter results into an electronic data collection tool. We reached 92.63% agreement for article inclusion and 90.48% agreement across all items. To determine final ratings, each of the two team members examined discrepant ratings and discussed until consensus was reached, consulting the third team member as necessary. In two instances, we added a coding category and reviewed all previously coded articles to ensure consistency. For ease of reading, categories and their definitions are provided throughout the Results section.

Results

In total, 230 articles published between January 2001 and December 2010 met the criteria for inclusion in the study. Articles were from the following journals: *Counselor Education and Supervision* ($n = 62$, 26.96%), *Journal for Specialists in Group Work* ($n = 34$, 14.78%), *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* ($n = 30$, 13.04%), *Journal of Humanistic Counseling* ($n = 28$, 12.17%), *The Family Journal* ($n= 17$, 7.39%), *Counseling and Values* ($n = 15$, 6.52%), *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health* ($n = 11$, 4.78%), *Journal of Counseling & Development* ($n = 8$, 3.48%), *Professional School Counseling* ($n = 7$, 3.04%), *The Career Development Quarterly* ($n = 5$, 2.17%), *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* ($n = 3$, 1.30%), *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology* ($n = 3$, 1.30%), *Adultspan Journal* ($n = 2$, 0.87%), *Journal of Addictions and Offender Counseling* ($n = 2$, 0.87%), *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling* ($n = 2$, 0.87%), and *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin* ($n = 1$, 0.43%). Four journals, *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, Journal of College Counseling, Journal of Employment Counseling*, and *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*, did not publish any eligible articles during the period of interest.

Research Question 1: General Focus of Articles

We categorized each article as being focused on teaching and learning in general (i.e., how people learn or teach, characteristics of instructors or students as they relate to teaching and learning, broad-based issues in counselor education), content (i.e., considerations related to teaching a specific course or concept), technique (i.e., specific techniques for use with a course, issue, or population), or pedagogical practices (i.e., examination of teaching and learning practices across programs or studies). Operational definitions called for differentiation between primarily content-focused articles and primarily technique-focused articles. Content articles were focused on teaching specific courses or concepts; if authors mentioned teaching techniques, they did so in the context of illustrating content considerations. Technique articles were focused on describing or evaluating specific teaching techniques; if authors mentioned curricular content, they did so as a way of providing context for the technique.

Articles were most likely to focus on techniques ($n = 99$, 43.04%). Although techniques varied, trends included a focus on service learning projects implemented prior to practicum ($n = 12$), experiential group encounters ($n = 12$), use of popular media ($n = 9$), curricula for structured

training programs ($n = 9$), interdisciplinary collaborations or simulations ($n = 6$), skills training models ($n = 5$), genograms and self-reflective activities ($n = 5$), journaling or letter writing ($n = 5$), and cultural immersion ($n = 4$). Remaining technique articles included the presentation of specific experiential exercises for the classroom.

Content articles made up another 41.30% ($n = 95$) of the sample. Specific trends in content-focused articles will be discussed in response to Research Question 3.

Articles regarding pedagogical practices made up 9.13% ($n = 21$) of the sample. These articles were most often focused on clinical or non-core-curricular practices ($n = 8$) regarding topics such as spiritualty, substance abuse, crisis preparation, and alternative methods of healing. A substantial portion of these articles was focused on school counseling preparation practices ($n = 6$); other pieces involved the study of preparation in core areas (e.g., ethics preparation practices, multicultural syllabi, group training experiences; $n = 4$). Three articles were reviews of research regarding skills models, family training, and multicultural course outcomes.

Finally, articles regarding teaching and learning in general were relatively rare, appearing just 6.52% ($n = 15$) of the time. Examples of general articles included those focused on humanistic values in distance education, frameworks for adult learning and development, applications of Bloom's taxonomy in counselor education, and ethical considerations in teaching.

Research Question 2: Student Level

We explored whether articles were focused on master's- or doctoral-level pedagogy. Most articles ($n = 126$, 54.78%) were written in ways that applied across student levels, and 95 (41.30%) were focused on master's-level curricula. Only five (2.17%) articles focused exclusively on doctoral-level curricula. Although counselor education tends to be limited to graduate-level preparation, our search process included four articles (1.74%) focused on undergraduate-level teaching by counselor educators or counselor-educators-in-training.

Research Question 3: Correspondence With *CACREP 2009 Standards*

For articles that were not focused on teaching and learning in general, we examined whether the main focus of the article was on CACREP (2009) core curricular requirements, CACREP (2009) program areas, or elective topics. Because operationalization of the CACREP core remained consistent with only minor additions to key areas, transition from the *2001 Standards* (CACREP, 2001) to the *2009 Standards* (CACREP, 2009) had a negligible effect on the classification of articles. Examination of Draft 2 of the *2016 Standards* (CACREP, 2013) indicated that the core remains operationalized in ways that include and go slightly beyond the 2001 and 2009 requirements. Core articles were clearly linked to CACREP core curricular experiences and may have been designed to meet either all areas or just some specific standards. Program area articles were linked to required content for accredited program areas (e.g., clinical mental health counseling, school counseling) under the *2009 Standards*; again, articles could be

designed to meet all areas or just some specific standards. Elective articles were those in which the focus of the article went well beyond the *2009 Standards*. For example, we coded articles regarding infusing spirituality into the curriculum as core; however, we coded articles regarding stand-alone coursework in spiritualty as elective. Because articles often cut across areas (e.g., teaching group work to school counselors), raters selected all applicable focus areas. As displayed in Table 1, the majority of articles corresponded to CACREP core areas ($n = 147$, 63.91%). Nearly one quarter were focused on program areas ($n = 55$, 23.91%) and elective issues ($n = 57$, 24.78%).

Table 1. Correspondence With Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs 2009 Standards

Focus Area	Standard	*n*	%
Master's core curricular areas			
No master's core curricular area		84	36.52
Professional orientation and ethical practice	II.G.1	11	4.78
Social and cultural diversity	II.G.2	73	31.74
Human growth and development	II.G.3	1	0.43
Career development	II.G.4	4	1.74
Helping relationships	II.G.5	28	12.17
Group work	II.G.6	32	13.91
Assessment	II.G.7	2	0.87
Research and program evaluation	II.G.8	4	1.74
Program areas			
No program area		172	74.78
Addiction counseling		2	0.87
Career counseling		0	0.00
Clinical mental health counseling		9	3.91
Marriage, couple, and family counseling		16	6.96

School counseling		29	12.61
Student affairs and college counseling		2	0.87
Counselor education and supervision		5	2.17
Elective issues		57	24.78

Next, we used the *CACREP 2009 Standards* for operational definitions regarding the degree to which articles were focused on each of the eight master's core curricular areas, each of the seven master's program areas, and doctoral-level counselor education and supervision programs. For example, we coded an article focused on developing general multicultural competencies as master's core area social and cultural diversity and no program area focus. On the other hand, we coded an article regarding teaching program evaluation to school counselors as master's core area research and program evaluation and specialty program area school counseling. For this reason, totals in this section equal more than 100%.

Master's core areas. Social and cultural diversity accounted for nearly one third (31.74%, $n = 73$) of all articles and received more than double the attention of any other master's-level core curricular area. These articles were primarily focused on teaching specific content ($n = 42$), although a substantial portion focused on training techniques for facilitating multicultural counseling and advocacy competencies ($n = 26$). Three articles focused on teaching and learning in general (e.g., infusing diversity competencies and values across the curriculum), and two articles included attention to broader pedagogical practices. Most articles applied across program areas, although several ($n = 5$) were specific to school counseling.

The next most common core area, group work, accounted for 13.91% ($n = 32$) of articles. Group work articles tended to focus mostly on techniques ($n = 17$), with considerable focus on methods for conducting experiential and reflective components of dedicated group courses. Thirteen additional articles included attention to group work content considerations, including specific group training foundations, ethical considerations, and multicultural considerations.

Helping relationship articles (12.17%, $n = 28$) were more likely to be focused on teaching techniques ($n = 20$) than on content ($n = 5$), pedagogical practices ($n = 2$), or general considerations ($n = 1$). Eleven articles described and evaluated specific training methods for learning essential counseling skills, and five additional articles examined considerations for developing counselor characteristics (e.g., appropriate self-confidence, empathy, tolerance of ambiguity). Four articles focused on developing an understanding of counseling theories. Other topics included case conceptualization, consultation, crisis/suicide, and family systems.

The remaining five master's-level core curricular areas appeared rarely and accounted for a combined total of 9.56% ($n = 22$) of the articles. Half of these articles were accounted for by

professional orientation and ethical practice pieces ($n = 11$). Trends in articles were fairly evenly divided in their attention to ethics education ($n = 5$) and interdisciplinary collaboration ($n = 4$). Perhaps most notably, only four articles each focused on career development and research and program evaluation, just two articles included attention to assessment, and only one article included attention to human growth and development.

Master's program areas. One quarter (25.22%) of articles focused on CACREP-accredited program areas, with the greatest attention paid to school (12.61%) and marriage, couple, and family (6.96%) counseling areas. Remaining areas received little to no attention in the literature.

Articles focused on school counseling were mostly technique articles ($n = 12$) and included service-learning initiatives ($n = 5$) designed to develop leadership, presentation, or essential skills. Technique articles also included attention to modules or curricula for a wide variety of core and specialty topics (e.g., group counseling, family systems, suicide prevention, program evaluation). Eight articles were focused on school counseling content, such as advocacy ($n = 3$), collaboration, consultation, professional identity, group work, and family systems. Eight articles were classified as pedagogical practice and included the ways in which programs met training standards ($n = 2$), prepared candidates to work with exceptional students ($n = 2$), or provided overall curricula, field experience, group, and crisis training. Finally, one general article included attention to a social justice cohort model for preparation.

Marriage, couple, and family counseling articles ($n = 16$) were mostly technique articles ($n = 9$) and included attention to use of film ($n = 4$), experiential techniques ($n = 3$), interprofessional collaboration, and service learning. Six content articles focused on general family counseling ($n = 2$), couple counseling ($n = 2$), ethical considerations, and in-home training. One article included a review of training research regarding couple and family training.

Finally, nine articles focused specifically on clinical mental health counseling. Included in the pedagogical literature were four articles regarding content (collaboration, advocacy, psychiatric taxonomy, and prevention), and four articles regarding techniques (interdisciplinary staffing, sexual minority clients, using film to teach diagnosis, and medication compliance exercises). Just two articles focused on the new addiction counseling area, and two articles attended to student affairs and college counseling. We did not identify any articles regarding training career specialists.

Counselor education and supervision. The five articles focused on the preparation of doctoral-level counselor educators and supervisors included one article each on portfolios, teaching teams, research training environments, advanced group work, and suicide intervention. Although the *2009 Standards* (CACREP, 2009) include learning outcomes focused on supervision as well as leadership and advocacy, we were unable to locate any articles regarding teaching in these areas.

Electives. Nearly one quarter (*n* = 57, 24.78%) of articles were focused on topics that reached beyond the typical coverage of CACREP core and program areas. These included 29 content, 21 technique, six pedagogical practices, and one general article. Across areas, themes emerged related to elements of social and cultural diversity. For example, content articles included those focused on spirituality (*n* = 11), advocacy, gender issues, Native American healing, antiracism curricula, multicultural relationship enhancement, and cultural immersion. A second major theme was coursework related to creative and expressive counseling approaches, including arts, ecotherapy, dreamwork, and complementary and alternative medicine. Other articles focused on topics that may have been addressed in the program areas above (e.g., family systems preparation) yet served as electives for those not specializing in the area.

Research Question 4: Pedagogical Foundations

We examined each article to determine the degree to which it was grounded in learning theory or instructional research. An article was rated as clearly grounded if the content reflected consistent integration of pedagogical theory or instructional research, minimally grounded if it included mention of literature but lacked full explication or link to pedagogical theory or instructional research, other foundation if the article was grounded in a foundation not clearly related to learning theory or instructional research (e.g., supervision theory, counseling literature), or not identified if the article was not grounded in a specific learning theory or instructional research. When the nature of articles did not warrant foundation in learning theory or instructional research (e.g., research regarding program curricula), articles were marked as not applicable.

Clearly or minimally grounded. Only 14.78% (*n* = 34) of articles were clearly grounded in learning theory or instructional research; 12.17% (*n* = 28) were minimally grounded. Although categorizing responses was difficult given the overlap in learning theories and because those who grounded their work often pulled from multiple areas, several clear themes emerged. Of those that included some degree of theoretical grounding, articles were balanced in their attention to four areas: (a) constructivist, social, and situational learning theories (e.g., Bandura & Walters, 1963; Halpern & Associates, 1994); (b) critical pedagogical theories, including transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), liberation pedagogy (Freire, 1993), feminist pedagogy (Ropers-Huilman, 1998), and multicultural education (Banks, 1988); (c) motivational and humanistic learning theories, especially experiential education (Kolb, 1984); and (d) use of instructional research without theoretical grounding, especially service-learning effectiveness, active learning, multimedia, or multicultural education. Notably, only two articles included focused attention to instructional, design-based theories, and only one article included attention to a more traditional cognitivist learning theory.

Although cell sizes do not allow more formal analysis regarding trends in pedagogical foundations, several trends emerged in the analysis. For example, 41.18% (14 of 34) of clearly grounded articles utilized critical pedagogical theories, whereas only 10.71% (3 of 28) of minimally grounded articles used the same set of theories. Conversely, authors of minimally

grounded articles (13 of 28, 46.43%) were more likely to cite experiential education (Kolb, 1984) compared with their clearly grounded peers (8 of 34, 23.53%).

Other foundations. A large portion of articles (44.78%, $n = 103$) were grounded in counseling literature, theories, or research rather than learning theories or instructional research. Most often, authors drew from the topic-based clinical literature to show how the topic or concept was relevant to clients and, therefore, important to address with student populations. Authors often justified their work using landmark competency documents. This included the CACREP Standards (2001, 2009); Multicultural Counseling Competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992); Association for Specialists in Group Work's (2000) Professional Standards for the Training of Group Workers; Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (2009) Competencies; and ACA Advocacy Competencies (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002). Finally, authors supported assertions regarding the appropriateness of teaching approaches through counseling theories and supervision training literature.

No foundation or not applicable. Only 14.78% of articles ($n = 34$) had no identifiable foundation. Often these articles simply included the presentation and evaluation of a teaching technique without discussing why the authors believed it to be an effective counselor training tool. Foundation was not applicable for 13.48% ($n = 31$) of articles; these most often included reviews of training literature or studies regarding pedagogical practices.

Research Question 5: Research Status

A number of articles included integration of experiences that did not represent formal inquiry and yet included attention to instructor evaluations, student feedback, and instructor reflections, sometimes containing Method, Results, and Discussion sections. We defined an article as empirical when it represented a systematic inquiry that included formulation of research questions, clear methodology, explicated data analysis, and presentation of results. Empirical articles were subclassified as focused on learning outcomes (i.e., direct measures of student knowledge, skills, or dispositions), satisfaction/experiences (i.e., satisfaction or experiences with teaching and learning, including self-perceived increases in knowledge or skill), or pedagogical practices (i.e., research regarding program-level curricular practices). Articles that were not empirical were subclassified as with or without integration of experiences. For example, an article in which the authors reflected on the effectiveness of an approach was classified as not empirical with integration of experiences; an article in which the authors obtained institutional review board approval, collected student journals, and called on a research team to code journal entries via an established method would be classified as empirical with a focus on satisfaction/experiences.

Over two thirds (67.83%) of articles were not empirical; less than one third (32.17%) represented empirical investigations. Authors were more likely to integrate experiences (37.39%) than to write nonempirical articles without integration of instructor or student experiences (30.43%).

Empirical articles were fairly equally distributed between studies of satisfaction/experiences (13.04%), student learning outcomes (10.43%), and pedagogical practices across programs (8.70%). Of the 74 empirical articles, 68.92% used quantitative methods, 25.68% used qualitative methods, and 5.40% used mixed methods. (Some percentages in the Results section do not total 100 because of rounding.)

Discussion

Results indicated a clear trend toward publishing regarding specific content or techniques rather than examining teaching and learning in general or larger pedagogical practices within the profession. Authors tended to focus on graduate students in general or master's students specifically rather than on doctoral students. Throughout the study, we found a clear preference for reporting on teaching regarding social and cultural diversity. Although we identified a number of articles regarding teaching within the more clinically oriented core areas, such as helping relationships and group work, foundational core areas, such as human growth and development, career development, and research and program evaluation were all but excluded from the literature. Similarly, the literature included attention to school counseling as a specialty area; however, most program areas appeared rarely in the literature. Articles regarding elective or clinical topics were more common than articles regarding the preparation of counselors for work in various settings. Authors often grounded counselor education SoTL by using clinical resources and competency documents rather than traditional learning theories or instructional research. Finally, only one third of the articles represented empirical research; the remaining two thirds were conceptual, often including anecdotal reflections regarding experiences.

There was a clear preference for reporting on teaching and learning regarding social and cultural diversity, often to the exclusion of other core areas. The finding that nearly one third of articles were focused on diversity issues is consistent with that of other researchers who reported an increasing focus regarding issues of social and cultural diversity within professional counseling (e.g., Blancher et al., 2010; Helwig & Schmidt, 2011). Yet, this area had well over double the attention of any other content area. Previous content analyses noted social and cultural diversity as a growing trend, but there were other areas (e.g., individual, group, and consultation; research studies, reviews, and methods [Blancher et al., 2010]; creative arts, counseling skills, and career [Helwig & Schmidt, 2011]) that had more or comparable attention dedicated to them.

Although we do not want to undermine the importance of multicultural and advocacy competencies, other areas such as professional orientation and ethical practice, career development, research and program evaluation, assessment, and human growth and development also serve as key foundations of the counseling profession, as demonstrated by their long-standing inclusion in the CACREP core. Similarly, we are concerned about a considerable lack of literature regarding critical areas of doctoral-level preparation, such as instructional theory and methods, preparation for supervision, and attention to research competency. It is curious that we are not examining these areas from a pedagogical standpoint. Are we confident that our

instructional processes are strong and well-established in these areas? If so, why are we not seeing a translation of our teaching in these areas to client-outcome research (see Wester, Borders, Boul, & Horton, 2013)? Do those conducting instructional research or our editorial review boards place less importance on these areas of teaching, compared with social and cultural diversity? If so, do we need to broaden our horizons? Regardless of the reason for exclusion, there is a noticeable dearth of SoTL for a considerable portion of curricula at both the master's and doctoral levels. This gap begs for scholarly exploration and renewed efforts at SoTL in neglected areas.

Regarding theoretical grounding, nearly half of the articles were grounded in counseling literature, often to the exclusion of instructional research or literature regarding pedagogical methods. Slightly less than 15% of the articles had a clear grounding in pedagogical research or learning theory; 12% made cursory mention of related learning theory or instructional research. Although research on counselor education practices benefits from a grounding in counseling-based literature, we may need to expand our base to instructional literature when we research pedagogical practices—particularly when we want to discuss why counselor educators should use a specific method or present content in a specific way. Otherwise, we fail to build a case for the very teaching practices we are examining. Just as a deeper understanding of counseling theory might help clinicians understand why specific techniques are appropriate, the integration of broader pedagogical concepts might help counselor educators build intentional foundations rather than rely on "bags-of-tricks" articles to design instructional activities and assignments.

Of the learning and instructional theories that served as a grounding for these articles, there was limited incorporation of traditional learning and instructional theories in favor of a heavier focus on theories more closely connected to social and cultural diversity (e.g., transformative learning [Mezirow, 1991], liberation pedagogy [Freire, 1993], feminist pedagogy [Ropers-Huilman, 1998], and multicultural education [Banks, 1988]). These theories have merit; however, some may lack the degree of research that underscores traditional learning theories (e.g., constructivist, social, and situational learning theories [Bandura & Walters, 1963; Halpern & Associates, 1994]; motivational and humanistic learning theories [Kolb, 1984]). In addition, it was often unclear whether authors selected learning theories because they best fit the topic or because they were those with which the authors and reviewers were most familiar. For example, a brief paragraph and cursory citation of "experiential education" (Kolb, 1984) commonly appeared in articles that were minimally grounded. It was unclear whether the content or technique was designed with a working knowledge of experiential learning theory or whether authors made an assumption of what experiential meant and wrote from that perspective when asked to ground their work. Renewed focus on a broad range of learning and instructional theories may pave the way for a new generation of SoTL in counselor education.

There was strong reliance on satisfaction and indirect measures of student learning as opposed to direct measures of student learning when designing empirical articles. For example, only two articles included analysis of student artifacts. Despite evidence that direct and indirect learning in

helping professions are different (Calderon, 2013), far more authors relied on self-report of learning or satisfaction with a technique without examining whether learning took place, was maintained, or influenced practice. With notable exceptions, designs and analyses were relatively weak, reflecting a troubling trend in professional counseling research (see Wester et al., 2013), perhaps because studies were designed and implemented as an afterthought, rather than as part of a scholarly agenda or comprehensive research plan. We are hopeful that the transition to a student learning outcome focus within the CACREP *2009 Standards* will facilitate a surge of SoTL that involves direct and rigorous evaluation of student gains in knowledge and skills.

Limitations

Although we took care to minimize threats to validity, this study has several limitations. First, the sample is exhaustive of ACA and division journals but does not include interdisciplinary journals in which counselor educators might publish, textbooks, or book chapters. Thus, it does not represent an exhaustive sampling of SoTL within our profession. It is possible that counselor educators who ground their work in instructional theory chose to publish that work in venues outside of the profession. Also, although interrater agreement was acceptable and we coded to consensus, we noted trends in lower initial interrater agreement on pedagogical foundations, student level, and research status of the articles. Lags in publication times and the reality that the *2009 Standards* (CACREP, 2009) will not be fully implemented until just months before the *2016 Standards* take effect means that few, if any, articles would have been written after full implementation of the*2009 Standards*. Thus, the literature reviewed cannot be fully reflective of research in counselor education following adoption of the *2009 Standards*. Rather, they reflect a decade of trends in the context of a remarkably stable core curriculum. Finally, the ratings do not evaluate the quality of integration, foundation, or research method used. Rather, they focus on the presence or absence of research. Despite limitations, we hope that researchers may use these findings to consider areas of strength and implications for growth within counselor education.

Implications

One of the most substantial implications for counselor educators is the need to determine the extent to which counselor educators have foundations in teaching and learning theories. If, as suggested by the results of this content analysis, this foundation is weaker than we might like, how can we educate the next generation of counselor educators to help them develop into teacher-scholars? Furthermore, if our teaching practices are left minimally examined (at the master's level) or unexamined (at the doctoral level), how do we know that our students are as well prepared as we believe they are? Our profession has been vocal about the need to generate client-outcome research. Investigation into these critical questions and focused efforts to tie pedagogy to student and client outcomes are essential to our profession.

As others have discussed (e.g., Sink & Mvududu, 2010; Thompson & Snyder, 1998; Vacha-Haase & Thompson, 2011; Wester et al., 2013), designing and implementing quality research is

imperative to the strength of the counseling profession. This preparation begins in the classroom. When counselor educators bring students into conversations regarding effectiveness, we model how to integrate evaluative practices into practice seamlessly. As we move toward more rigorous evaluation of pedagogical work, it will be important to identify opportunities for enhancing the professional development of counselor educators and counselor educators-in-training and supporting SoTL in counselor education. This may occur in a myriad of ways, ranging from funding rigorous instructional research to ensuring that instructional research counts toward tenure and promotion.

SoTL in counselor education, much like client-outcome research, needs to include more methodological rigor and diversity in application. By designing research with care, directly measuring student-learning outcomes, and tying classroom experiences to clinical effectiveness, we can enhance the counseling profession, establish evidence-based practices for teaching, and tie learning outcomes to work with clients. After all, how can we promote the use of evidence-based practices for clinical work when there is little attention to evidence-based practices in counselor education and even less discussion of their connection to client outcomes?

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