4-2024

# From Doctoral Student to Professor: The Professional Socialization and Career Development of International Counselor Educators

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# FROM DOCTORAL STUDENT TO PROFESSOR: THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COUNSELOR EDUCATORS

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Western Michigan University, 2024

Becoming a counselor educator is a complex and rigorous process wherein students grow both personally and professionally (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Throughout this process, students develop in accordance with doctoral competency standards (CACREP, 2021) which help socialize them into the role of professor. For international learners, their education has historically included unique challenges such as language barriers (Behl et al., 2017; Hegarty, 2014; Jang et al., 2014; McDowell et al., 2012; Ng, 2012; Pollock et al., 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Sherry et al., 2010), cultural adjustment (Jang et al., 2014; Kuo et al., 2018; Woo et al., 2015), and lack of support (Berry et al., 1987; Wu et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2022) that can challenge their professional growth. In an effort to provide a more holistic view of international scholars and their experience, this study sought to understand how the process of professional socialization impacted the career development of this student group within the Counselor Education field. Using a qualitative phenomenological research design, results revealed three themes describing participants' experiences with professional socialization and the connection this and other elements had with their career development. The three themes include: (1) Institutional Impact, (2) International Realities, and (3) International Lens. Implications for Counselor Education programs and institutions are given and suggestions for future research are provided.

# FROM DOCTORAL STUDENT TO PROFESSOR: THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COUNSELOR EDUCATORS

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate College
is partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
April 2024

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ACHNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not be possible without the incredible support of my family, friends, colleagues, and mentors. The culmination of your influence has conjured in me the perseverance, confidence, and passion that enables me to be the person I am today. For your support, I thank each and every one of you deeply and dearly. I would like to begin by acknowledging my husband, Jungsoo Lee, whose support throughout both my masters and doctoral journey has been incredible and unwavering. You have consistently been there to celebrate, console, cheer, and encourage me throughout this graduate adventure, even when it meant doing schoolwork many late nights and weekends. Thank you for always being exactly who I needed to support me through this process. Next, I would like to acknowledge my father and mother, Tom and Deva Ludwig. From the beginning, you have always encouraged me to follow my passions and do the difficult work that leads to bettering myself. You both are inspiring, creative, and honest people whom I love and without which I would not be where I am today. Thank you for all the love and encouragement you bring to my life.

I would additionally like to acknowledge my dear friends, Leah Kulikowski, Kristina Scott, and Sarah Spilling. The community, comradery, and support you have provided me throughout this process has been invaluable, and I am truly so lucky to have a friendship like ours. Kristina, although we are on different doctoral journeys, the encouragement we have been able to give each other throughout our studies has been so refreshing. You are going to be an outstanding veterinarian, and I look forward to greeting one another as doctors as we often promised, using this as lighthearted encouragement to keep going.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues and mentors who impacted my journey. To my doctoral cohort, you all are rockstars whom I was privileged to go through this process with. I have no doubt your unique and passionate voices will be powerful in the Counselor Education field, and I applaud all you have accomplished over the years as up and coming professionals. Dr. Rawls, you have been a positive and encouraging chair who has given steadfast and growth-promoting feedback. This has been instrumental in building me into who I am as a Counselor Educator. I am truly blessed to be championed by someone who believes in me and my work. Dr. Craig, you are the epitome of a caring, compassionate person who leads with wisdom and unwavering professionalism. I look up to you as an example of an exemplary Counselor Educator, and it has been a pleasure to work with you throughout my doctoral journey. Dr. Metro-Roland, your passion for the international student population has aided this project immensely, and your insight and excitement around these students has spark deep reflection on how to further my research around this population. Finally, Dr. St. Martin, you have been my mentor for many years and I owe much of my professional development to you. Thank you for always being a patient and available guide, and thank you for helping me discover my love for vocational psychology and career counseling. You have always supported my professional growth and invested in me as a person, and for that, I am truly grateful. Thank you, and everyone, for your truly awesome support.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Within Counselor Education, international students make up just 1.29% of the study body, approximately 815 learners out of the 63,167 Counselor Education graduate student population (CACREP, 2023). Despite their small numbers, the contribution of international students' unique perspectives is profound in academic spaces, bringing diverse viewpoints that surpass those of domestic students and faculty (Hegarty, 2014; McDowell et al., 2012). A portion of these students continue on to earn their doctoral degree in Counselor Education (CACREP, 2023) and in turn some transition into American academia to teach the next generation of counseling professionals.

At the doctoral level, international students make up around 155 out of the approximately 2,764 students enrolled in CACREP-accredited programs (CACREP, 2023). Much of their experience as doctoral students revolves around accounts of hardship, being unheard, underappreciated, and isolated. This comes in spite of the desire to share their unique perspectives as global learners (Jang et al., 2014; Kuo et al., 2018; Woo et al., 2015). While navigating the Euro-American culture imbedded within Counselor Education studies (Interiano & Lim, 2018; Singh et al., 2020), some students have reported developing a chameleon-like professional identity as a result of experiencing loss, conflict, and grief. This manifests in students through shifting between two identities; one of authentic cultural identity and one of European American values and customs (Interiano & Lim, 2018). In addition, international students commonly experience a lack of support while going through the hardships of their program (Berry & Kim, 1987; Wu et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2022), with some resorting to support from mentors in their home country (Woo et al., 2015).

Across all disciplines, accounts of hardship and strife are common for the international population. Due to the uniqueness of their student status, they are considered a vulnerable student population (Sherry et al., 2010). This is due to the distinct challenges and barriers faced when studying in a host environment, such as language barriers, culture shock, lack of social support, feeling unsafe, and experiences of racial and ethnic discrimination (Behl et al., 2017; Hegarty, 2014; Jang et al., 2014; McDowell et al., 2012; Ng, 2012; Pollock et al., 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Sherry et al., 2010). In addition, international students traditionally face the challenge of acculturation during their studies, which is defined as the process of cultural and psychological change that takes place due to prolonged contact with a host environment (Berry, 2005). Going through the acculturation process can result in a shift in values, behaviors, speech, and political views (Berry & Sam, 2016).

Despite this hardship, international students in Counselor Education doctoral programming have demonstrated profound resiliency, reaping many benefits from United States (U.S.) education. For example, international Counselor Education students have reported a strengthening of their professional identity through clear understanding of the counseling profession, experience with professional engagement, advocacy on behalf of clients, and opportunities for personal and professional development (Kuo et al., 2018). They have additionally been able to gain a deep multicultural perspective and identity as a result of studying in the U.S. (Kuo et al., 2021). Although the professional gains are significant, international counseling graduates experience difficultly translating Western concepts into their native classrooms as well as implementing Western teaching philosophies to coworkers. This in turn leads to hardship finding a professional fit abroad (Duenyas et al., 2019).

Those who choose to stay in the U.S. join the American system of academia within the Counselor Education field. Approximately 22% of post-secondary educators in the U.S. are foreign-born (Institute for Immigrant Research, 2022) and with numbers on the rise, international faculty are predicted to grow by 17% by the year 2060 (U.S. Census Bureau [Decennial Census], 2020). Within Counselor Education, foreign-born scholars make up roughly .83% of the approximately 2,770 faculty within the field (CACREP, 2022a). It is necessary to note that within past statistical reports of Counselor Education programs, international individuals are only recognized as "non-resident aliens," and various circumstances such as naturalization are not accounted for. This makes it difficult to ascertain a true account of foreign-born faculty.

For international faculty at American institutions, experiences of tokenism, microaggressions, lack of support, and linguistic difficulties are widely reported (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Mamiseishvili & Lee, 2018; Omiteru et al., 2018; Joshi et al., 2022; Rita & Karides, 2022). These occurrences are also experienced by international Counselor Education faculty (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Joshi et al., 2022). Such treatment has been shown to negatively impact the professional identity of these scholars which in turn transfers ill effects onto students within the field, effecting students' development as future counseling professionals (Calley & Hawley, 2008; Kaplan & Gladding, 2011; Woo et al., 2014). Additionally, visa issues (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Joshi et al., 2022; Omiteru et al., 2018) and foreign accent discrimination (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Omiteru et al., 2018) have been reported as pervasive, stifling professional issues unique to this population.

International faculty within Counselor Education view their unique, multicultural backgrounds and perspectives as strengths that benefit their work (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al.,

2021). Environments that support and nurture this perspective are reported to be the most beneficial for international scholars and aid in their successful transition to American academia (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Joshi et al., 2022). In particular, colleagues who are sympathetic to international faculty needs and department chairs who are knowledgeable and supportive throughout transition and visa processes are highly desired. Mentorship for junior international faculty is another area of desire, as the adaptation process to American academia can be confusing and complex for scholars within Counselor Education (Joshi et al., 2022).

## Statement of the Problem

Current Counselor Education literature on international populations focuses almost exclusively on the experience of international students (e.g. Jang et al., 2014; Kim & Nam, 2019; Woo et al., 2015), and this is easily eclipsed by inquiry into the native student population. As international individuals add valuable perspectives within higher education through their cultures and language (Hegarty, 2014; McDowell et al., 2012), they are an asset to fields such as Counselor Education that stand to promote multicultural perspectives (American Counseling Association, 2014). While there is limited research on the experience of international Counselor Education faculty and their socialization into the professorate, understanding their experiences can illuminate conditions and issues specific to this diverse group. Such knowledge can prompt discussion around needed support during their preparation and transition period.

It is additionally unclear how career development is impacted by the professional socialization experience had by the international Counselor Education doctoral population. There is a call within U.S. Counselor Education to move toward a decolonized, multicultural view of mental health and its education (Singh et al., 2020) and this can be championed through the promotion of international faculty and their unique perspectives as globalized citizens. At

present, low numbers of both international students and faculty are estimated within U.S. Counselor Education programming (CACREP, 2022a), and limited information is available going beyond accounts of hardship and strife. Understanding how doctoral Counselor Education programming affects the career development of international faculty can help evaluate the state of globalized education within the field and reveal suggestions for better implementing and championing multicultural perspectives.

## Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine international counselor educator's perception of the professional socialization they received during their doctoral studies. An a posteriori application of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT; Lent et al., 1994) is applied as a conceptual lens through which the findings are understood. Given this focus, the questions guiding this research inquiry were as follows:

1. How do international faculty feel their Counselor Education doctoral experience socialized them for the professorate?
2. What factors contributed to or detracted from their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals within their professional life?

## Theoretical Framework

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT; Lent et al., 1994) is used as the framework for understanding the career development and socialization experiences of international Counselor Education faculty during their doctoral studies. Bringing together common elements of early career theorists, SCCT is a framework for understanding how vocational interests develop, how career choices are made, how career stability and success is achieved, and how satisfaction and well-being is experienced in a work environment (Brown & Lent, 2013). Given this, SCCT

focuses on three social cognitive processes which include, 1) self-efficacy, 2) expected outcomes, and 3) personal goals. SCCT theorizes that self-efficacy beliefs, garnered from life experience, inform what a person believes they are capable of which then determines personal goals (Brown & Lent, 2013). The influences of race, gender, social supports, and systemic and perceived career barriers are additional factors in determining self-efficacy (Lent et al., 1994). Within the international student population, SCCT has been used to understand how factors such as acculturative stress and host country social support affect the career expectations of those studying in the U.S. (Franco et al., 2019). Give the focus of this study, SCCT was deemed an appropriate means through which findings could be understood.

## Significance of the Study

The international faculty experience within Counselor Education and at large is fraught with accounts of discrimination and hardship. These accounts have included instances of microaggression, tokenism, isolation, and lack of mentorship (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022; Mamiseishvili & Lee, 2018; Omiteru et al., 2018; Joshi et al., 2022; Rita & Karides, 2022). These issues have been largely discussed within the context of international faculty as a whole, though literature into the experience of international faculty within Counselor Education is extremely limited. This study will allow the perspectives of international counselor educators to be understood and will provide insight into their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals garnered from doctoral level Counselor Education. This will also help add a holistic understanding of their experiences abroad to a literature base that is largely monolithic in its accounts of hardship for this diverse group in the U.S.

As Counselor Education is a field centered on multicultural competence and adhering to the needs of a pluralistic society (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2022b), the experiences and training of

diverse faculty can help promote this mission. The international presence on college campuses greatly enhances global perspectives (Hegarty, 2014; McDowell et al., 2012), and learning more about the experiences of international faculty within Counselor Education will uncover to what degree their global perspective has been promoted throughout their training and professional life. The study will also enable discussion of actionable change that can be employed to support international individuals during doctoral studies in the U.S. which then translates into academic Counselor Education careers.

## Definition of Terms

*International faculty* — Teaching professionals at the university level who are born and attended K-12 schooling outside of the U.S. and are employed at American higher education institutions (Altbach & Yudkevich, 2017).

*International student* — An individual who was born and grew up outside the U.S., leaves their country of origin, and is enrolled in a higher education institution in the U.S. (OECD, 2016; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2014).

*Career Development* — The complex and contextual process of shaping one's career path psychologically and behaviorally across the lifespan (Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

*Self-efficacy* – The ability one perceives within themselves to achieve a desired outcome (Bandura, 1986).

*Outcome Expectations* – The result that is anticipated based on engaging in or performing certain actions and behaviors (Bandura, 1986).

*Personal Goals* – An individual's intention that aids in the planning and regulation of specific behaviors to achieve a desired outcome (Bandura, 1986).

## Chapter I Summary

This chapter introduced the lived experiences of international students and faculty within the U.S., both in Counselor Education and at large. The issue of limited research was highlighted within this population and the lack of holistic international academic experiences was discussed. In particular, the need to understand the career development and socialization experiences of international Counselor Education students turned faculty was noted in an effort to further the multicultural mission of the counseling field. Through discussing the above, this chapter introduced the purpose, significance, and theoretical framework for this study. The next chapter consists of a literature review of professional identity development within the American counseling field, the foundational standards of doctoral Counselor Education, international students, international students in Counselor Education, and international faculty in the U.S.

# CHAPTER II

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## The Professional Development of Counselor Educators in the United States

### Professional Identity Developmental Theory

As CACREP accredited programs currently prepare the next generation of counseling professionals, it is important to understand these students' development in the U.S. context. This educational process constitutes the professional socialization of counseling students. Beginning with the master's degree, students grow into professional counselors (Gibson et al., 2010) and further grow into counselor educators with the pursuit of a doctorate (Dollarhide et al., 2013). To more closely examine the process of this identity development, two developmental models are explored in the following sections for both masters (Gibson et a., 2010) and doctoral (Dollarhide et al., 2013) Counselor Education students. This foundational understanding is necessary for a holistic view into a student's development and education throughout their graduate studies.

#### *Professional Development of Masters & Doctoral Students in the Counseling Field*

**New Masters Students.** Gibson et al. (2010) demonstrated the professional growth of new counselors through a model entitled *transformational tasks: a process view of professional counselor identity development*. This developmental model consists of three transformational tasks that are addressed as students move from the beginning of their educational training towards graduation. The three transformational tasks are defined as 1) defining the practice of counseling, 2) identifying responsibility for professional growth, and 3) transforming to systemic identity (Gibson et al., 2010). Gibson and colleagues found that new counselors-in-training addressed these three tasks in specific ways. First, definitions of counseling were derived from experts and texts, and many students were shown to parrot opinions, views, and information

from professors. They also relied on external sources for expertise on counseling. Second, Gibson et al. (2010) showed that new students place the responsibility for professional growth on authority and educational figures, tending to rely heavily on them for professional advancement opportunities. Finally, new counselors-in-training identified systemic identity as holding licensure, certification, and professional titles (Gibson et al., 2010).

**New Counselors.** As students progressed through their master's program, Gibson and colleagues (2010) observed a shift in professional development which centered around an intrinsic sense of counselor identity. This shift was recognized in students who had completed much of their coursework, were pre-internship, and/or pre-graduation. In this stage, the three transformational tasks of counselor professional development were addressed in more unique and personal ways (Gibson et al., 2010). To begin, students at this level gave definitions of counseling that were informed by personal experiences and values. Definitions at this stage largely varied depending on the counselor and their personal view of professional identity. Next, the responsibility for professional growth was largely seated in a personal desire to find external sources of improvement (Gibson et al., 2010). Counselors at this stage sought out additional education, such as supervisory training, to help themselves grow as professionals. Finally, views of systemic identity changed from official titles and licensures to an integration of personal and professional values. Counselors began to articulate the importance of aligning what one has learned with who one is as a person in order to be a competent professional (Gibson et al., 2010).

**New Doctoral Students.** In examining the professional development of doctoral Counselor Education students, Dollarhide and colleagues (2013) developed a three stage model, entitled *transformational tasks for counselor education (CE) doctoral students' professional identity*. This model resembles the aforementioned professional development model for master's

students and is comprised of three transformational tasks. The three transformational tasks are defined as 1) acceptance of responsibility, 2) evolving legitimacy, and 3) integration of multiple identities. In Dollarhide and colleagues' (2013) research, new Counselor Education doctoral students reported experiencing considerable adjustment to their new academic role. To begin, students early in their program gave standardized definitions of what it meant to be a counselor educator and relied on their professors for the dissemination of knowledge and responsibility. To continue, new doctoral Counselor Education students also struggled with finding confidence and legitimacy. Many reported having confidence in their ability as a clinician, but did not yet have confidence in their ability as a doctoral student or educator (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Finally, the integration of multiple identities seemed to cause distress in new Counselor Education doctoral students. Dollarhide and colleagues (2013) reported that although students self-identified as being in a doctoral program, they still felt a strong alliance with their counselor identity. Additionally, study participants reported identifying more strongly with the role of "doc student" than the role of counselor educator in the early stages of their academic experience.

**New Counselor Educators.** As Counselor Education doctoral students continued their education, Dollarhide et al. (2013) found that students reported growth in all three areas of the transformational task model. Beginning with sense of responsibility, students began to define their field in more personal terms based on their own experiences in leading and educating others. This became more apparent as students progressed in their studies. Counselor Education doctoral students also began to report feeling more comfortable as the creators and disseminators of knowledge as appose to students who simply memorized texts and information from experts (Dollarhide et al., 2013). In building a sense of legitimacy, students who were in year two of their studies recognized their ability to succeed as counselor educators, but viewed their

dissertation as the final measure of their worth in the field. Students at this stage also expressed that both peers and professors were influential in how they viewed their work (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Counselor Education students who were solely focused on dissertation were able to expand their sense of legitimacy through feeling comfortable with conducting research. Finally, Counselor Education doctoral students experienced an identity integration of doctoral student, counselor, and counselor educator in the final years of their program (Dollarhide et al., 2013).

## Core Counselor Education Doctoral Standards

Counselor Education professional development is currently understood through proficiency in five core areas (CACREP, 2021a). These areas are integrated and assessed throughout a Counselor Education doctoral student's programming and are necessary pillars against which sound development is determined. The five core Counselor Education competencies include counseling, supervision, teaching, research/scholarship, and leadership/advocacy (CACREP, 2021a). Developing in these five areas is meant to prepare an individual for a career as a counselor educator.

### Counseling

The literature pertaining to doctoral Counselor Education students and counseling is currently lacking in topic diversity and number of studies. At present, study topics include lesbian, gay, and bisexual issues and training (Graham et al., 2012), mindfulness in clinical practice (Greason & Cashwell, 2009) and multicultural competencies (Campbell et al., 2018), spirituality, faith, and religion (Scott et al., 2016), vicarious trauma experiences (Lu et al., 2017), clinical skills and client evaluation (Martin et al., 2012), and readings in rehabilitation counseling (Bishop et al., 2017). It is worthy to note that although these studies add to the literature on counseling practice, they do not focus specifically on the doctoral student experience or how

one's counseling identity becomes strengthened as a result of doctoral training. Many of the above mentioned studies contain a sample of both masters and doctoral level students (e.g., Campbell et al., 2018; Graham et al., 2012; Greason & Cashwell, 2009) or do not include a doctoral student sample at all (e.g., Bishop et al., 2017). Further, the literature is extremely limited regarding how doctoral student counselor identity is shaped by their program and evaluated as a core competency by faculty.

As noted in previous studies, counseling identity is first shaped by experiences in master's level training (Gibson et al., 2010) and is found as a salient identity for new doctoral students entering Counselor Education programs (Dollarhide et al., 2013). During the course of study, doctoral students are expected to demonstrate understanding and integration of theory, client conceptualization, knowledge of evidence-based practices, counseling skill evaluation, and ethical counseling skills (CACREP, 2021a). Choate and colleagues (2005) assert that professional identity at the doctoral level is determined at large through the successful completion of core courses, comprehensive exams, and practicum/internship experiences. This assumes that doctoral students largely have a comprehensive counselor identity prior to acceptance into their program which is further confirmed by satisfactory completion of program curricula.

Considering this, there remains a substantial gap in the literature in regard to how counselor identity is affected, changed, and experienced by doctoral students in Counselor Education. Additionally, it is not currently known how strong Counselor Education students perceive their clinical identity to be upon entry to a doctoral program. It would also be of interest to understand how growth as a counselor affects one's sense of leadership in the Counselor Education field. Understanding these phenomena can provide insight into how being a counselor

and identifying with a counseling specialty influences professional growth and informs one's professional identity.

**Supervision**

The literature pertaining to doctoral students and supervision provides a wider range of research involving professional (Neuer Colburn et al., 2016) and supervisory identity (Baker et al., 2002; Borders et al., 2017; Frick & Glosoff, 2014; Hein et al., 2011; Nelson et al., 2016; Rapisarda et al., 2011). CACREP (2021a) currently mandates doctoral students show proficiency in 11 key supervision areas, including understanding of supervision theory, effective supervision skills, and evaluation, remediation, and gate keeping. Studies on doctoral student professional development show that during year two, supervision experiences play an important role in fostering leadership and professional growth in students (Limberg et al., 2013; Murdock et al., 2013).

The hands-on experience of being a supervisor was cited as one of the most growth-promoting aspect of doctoral training, with many students commenting on how being a supervisor, teacher, and/or mentor put them squarely in the position to lead and foster growth in others (Limberg et al., 2013; Murdock et al., 2013). Additionally, it was found that being in an evaluator role made doctoral students perceive themselves as educators as appose to students (Limberg et al., 2013; Nelson et al., 2006). Learning by observing others, either in taped or live supervision, was also shown to be beneficial to development as a supervisor (Nelson et al., 2006). This data highlights the importance of hands-on experiences in counselor educator professional identity and supervision. It additionally implies that it is beneficial for doctoral Counselor Education programming to place considerable focus on experiences that expand outside of traditional classroom activities.

Further building on these findings, supervision self-efficacy (Frick & Glosoff, 2014) and various supervisory experiences of Counselor Education doctoral students (Borders et al., 2017; Hein et al., 2011; Minor et al., 2013; Rapisarda et al., 2011) were commonly explored themes in the literature. Supervision self-efficacy was largely shown to be facilitated by influential people, receiving feedback, feelings of ambivalence, and conducting evaluations (Frick & Glosoff, 2014). Influential people are particularly important in doctoral student development, as mentoring has been correlated with improved motivation and performance during Counselor Education doctoral study (Limberg et al., 2013; Murdock et al., 2013; Okech et al., 2006; Welfare & Sackett, 2011). Additionally, receiving faculty feedback in areas such as research has been shown to be an invaluable piece of the professional identity development process (Nelson et al., 2006; Protivnak & Foss, 2009).

Frick and Glosoff (2014) held focus groups with 16 Counselor Education doctoral students on their supervision self-efficacy beliefs and found that much of their growth was facilitated by interactions with their supervision peers and instructors as well as through interactions with their supervisees. Study participants commented on how impactful and positive instructors were on their own development by way of being accessible and available to answer questions. Peer input during group supervision was additionally cited as a helpful way to gain multiple perspectives on a supervision issue. This finding is further supported in the literature, as relationships with supervisors, supervisees, and peers have been shown to positively drive growth as a supervisor (Nelson et al., 2006; Rapisarda et al., 2011). Interestingly, when it came to remediation and gatekeeping, students have reported a lack of collaboration and involvement in these processes (Frick & Glosoff, 2014). This is a noteworthy finding, as CACREP (2021a) requires students gain experience and familiarity with these gatekeeping measures.

Other themes were shown to influence supervisor identity and self-efficacy in a number of ways. To begin, issues surrounding supervisees, such as supervisee incompatibility (Hein et al., 2011), multiple relationships (Minor et al., 2013), and giving and receiving feedback (Borders et al., 2017) were all shown to have positive and negative influences. A largely negative contributor to the supervision space was supervisee incompatibility (Hein et al., 2011). Hein and colleagues (2011) found that this dynamic, defined as a supervisee having poor counseling, professional, and interpersonal skills, resulted in poor communication, low levels of learning, a lack of openness, and difficulty with feedback in triadic supervision. As giving feedback has been shown to improve over time in a didactic setting (Borders et al., 2017), it is curious to consider how group supervision experiences are being prepared for in doctoral coursework. Considering Frick and Glosoff's (2014) findings, it can be hypothesized that doctoral supervisors who experience supervisee incompatibility can better manage this issue with the assistance of a supportive instructor and peers. Studies in this area are largely missing and would add to the literature regarding doctoral supervisory development and preparation.

Cross-cultural supervision was noted briefly in the literature, with only two articles addressing this topic at the doctoral level. Cross-cultural supervision was only mentioned with regard to the international student experience and included many accounts of difficulties throughout the supervision process (Jang et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2015). To start, a study by Jang and colleagues (2014) reported that international students largely found their supervision courses to be challenging and unsupportive. Specifically, these students described experiencing a lack of multicultural discussion and supervision models as well as instructor and peer support. Students in the study stated that their instructors were dismissive of their unique needs as international students and ignored the issues they brought to supervision. Examples of this were noted as

navigating cultural differences, understanding language nuance, and needing to learn about counseling specialty areas of supervisees (Jang et al., 2014).

Woo and colleagues (2015) complimented the work of Jang and their research team (2014) by examining the coping strategies international students employed while taking supervision courses. Similar to Jang and colleagues (2015), study participants reported experiencing difficulties related to assimilating to American culture, staying up to date with supervision literature, and finding culturally sensitive supervision models (Woo et al., 2015). Study participants additionally found cultural sensitivity to be missing from their supervision experience, and students coped by personally seeking assistance outside of the course. This included auditing classes to improve knowledge, volunteering in different counseling settings (i.e. schools), networking with international peers, and contacting mentors from their home country (Woo et al., 2015). All students reported feeling isolated due to their unique, international status and felt othered by their struggles (Jang et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2015).

**Teaching**

Teaching has been cited as a critically important aspect of Counselor Education training (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Elliot et al., 2019; 2016; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011; Waalkes et al., 2018), as the main role of future professionals will be as instructors. CACREP (2021a) currently mandates Counselor Education doctoral students receive training in nine areas, including pedagogy, adult development and learning, online instruction, learning assessment, and mentoring. Teaching has been shown to take a more salient role during students' third year of study (Limberg et al., 2013; Murdock et al., 2013) and has helped students see themselves as educators as appose to simply doctoral students (Limberg et al., 2013). The literature on teaching in doctoral Counselor Education programs currently sheds light on developmental themes such as growth (Baltrinic et

al., 2016; Elliot et al., 2019; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011, Waalkes et al., 2018), motivation (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Elliot et al., 2019; Waalkes et al., 2018), struggles (Elliot et al., 2019, Hunt & Gilmore, 2011), and program design that helps and hinders student professional development as educators (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011; Swank & Houseknecht, 2019; Waalkes et al., 2018).

Beginning with growth, several elements repeatedly appeared as students described their teaching preparation experience. Participants in a study by Elliot and colleagues (2019) reported a crucial element in increasing self-efficacy was being open and receptive to struggles and discomfort. This openness was reported to be a gateway to growth, leading to future oriented hope, and a willingness to remain engaged in learning pedagogy (Elliot et al., 2019). Further, mentorship, described as working with an instructor whose teaching style was admired by the student, was also reported as another key element in growing as an educator (Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). As students worked with co-instructors and under teaching supervision, open communication was valued as growth-promoting (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011; Waalkes et al., 2018). This open communication prompted students to more comfortably approach faculty with questions and concerns (Baltrinic et al., 2016), successfully resolve problems, and build classroom confidence (Hunt & Gilmore, 2011; Waalkes et al., 2018). Feedback from peers was also cited as helpful, as these types of discussions aided in the development of new ideas as well as teaching skills and philosophies (Hunt & Gilmore, 2011).

Growth was also observed in areas of technical teaching skill (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). Baltrinic and colleagues (2016) found that students undergoing a coteaching training experience attributed this type of preparation to increased skill development, ability to face challenges, and improved confidence. Students in Baltrinic and colleagues' (2016) study

promoted the coteaching experience as preferred to a "sink-or-swim" approach, wherein students would have little support and scaffolding in teaching graduate coursework. The gradual unfolding of responsibilities while having access to guidance and support was a pronounced positive aspect of coteaching training (Baltrinic et al., 2016). Hunt and Gilmore (2011) found that co-instruction also allowed Counselor Education doctoral students to gain experience in the creation of assignments, syllabi, exams, and grading rubrics, as well as be a part of lectures and demonstrations. Students in this research stated that hands-on training provided by a coteaching experience helped them to recognize themselves as future professors. This finding is consistent with results from Limberg and colleagues' (2013) research on Counselor Education doctoral student development.

Although coteaching, communication, and supervision feedback were noted as largely positive (Baltrinic et al., 2016; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011), difficulties in the teaching preparation process were reported by some students (Elliot et al., 2019; Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). To start, many student characterized the beginning of their teacher training as being riddled with self-doubt and second guessing (Elliot et al., 2019). This fragile state made being open to feedback and critique a difficult process, but one that students found necessary to foster continued growth. Students also reported having difficulty applying theoretical teaching knowledge, attending to various student learning styles, and applying knowledge in the classroom (Elliot et al., 2019).

Additionally, some students described their coteaching experiences as unhelpful. This was characterized by faculty modeling poor teaching styles and supervising student co-teachers too closely (Hunt & Gilmore, 2011). Students in Hunt and Gilmore's 2011 study also critiqued the inclusion of lesson planning in their training, stating that they did not get the chance to lesson plan with their co-instructor and instead had to plan independently. They then later had to

combine their plan with their co-instructor, which was seen as unhelpful. Further critiques of Counselor Education training curricula largely center around program design. Waalkes and colleagues (2018) sought to understand the teaching preparation experience of nine beginning counselor educators, and found that many professionals reported dissatisfaction with their training experiences. Participant responses revealed program foci on research as opposed to teaching, poor preparation in the areas of pedagogy and teaching strategies, preparation as a lecturer as appose to a teacher, and an overall lack of emphasis on teaching in their program (Waalkes et al., 2018).

**Research and Scholarship**

Training as a researcher is considered an important feature to many in doctoral Counselor Education programs (Borders et al., 2014; Kuo et al., 2018). It is argued that the production of good researchers will help the field stay legitimate and in line with other helping professions (Lambie et al., 2008). CACREP (2021a) currently requires Counselor Education doctoral students receive training in 12 areas pertaining to research and scholarship. This requirement includes focus on topics such as research design, instrument design, formulation of appropriate research questions, writing for publication, and research ethics. As students typically enter their doctoral programs with a strong clinical identity (Dollarhide et al., 2013), it is important to foster the development of their research self-efficacy to prepare them for their role as counselor educator (Kuo et al., 2018). Research efficacy has been shown to improve during students' second year of doctoral study (Limberg et al., 2012) and further improve during students' third year when they are more involved in projects and dissertation research (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Limberg et al., 2013). The research base in this

area gives rise to a number of influences that affect students in their research self-efficacy as future counselor educators.

The literature on research and doctoral students acknowledges the emphasis on quantitative research methods in Counselor Education programming (Borders et al., 2014) and student aversion to statistics (Lenz et al., 2013). Students who have low levels of research motivation, self-efficacy, and external support have been shown to have fewer publications and an avoidance of research involvement (Kuo et al., 2018; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). The opposite has also been demonstrated, with higher levels of research self-efficacy and support being correlated with more publications within the field (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). Intrinsic motivation has been suggested as an important factor in fostering genuine interest in conducting research which can be garnered through mentorship and advisory relationships (Kuo et al., 2018). Research mentorship has been highlighted as a necessary element in Counselor Education doctoral training (Kuo et al., 2018; Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Okech et al., 2006; Welfare & Sachett, 2011). Mentorship has been shown to improve student confidence and competence (Welfare & Sackett, 2011), foster a positive research environment, provide research role modeling (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011), and improve research productivity (Kuo et al., 2018).

Although research mentorship has been shown to be beneficial, seeking out a mentor or establishing a working alliance with faculty can be difficult for students (Kuo et al., 2018). It has been suggested that Counselor Education faculty make a concerted effort to connect with students and aid in their development as a researcher (Kuo et al., 2018; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). In order to promote a stronger identity in this area, programming modifications have been suggested so that students have an avenue to seek out mentorship more easily (Kuo et al., 2018).

Additionally, students reported organically growing a research identity as they progressed through their program, which was strengthened by hands-on experiences and support from external sources (Lamar & Helm, 2017). In handling difficulty in this area, peer support has been suggested as a way to help students handle anxiety associated with statistics and may promote positive attitudes towards research (Lenz et al., 2013). It can be inferred through these findings that research mentorship, strong advisory relationships, and other forms of external support greatly aid doctoral students in the development of their research self-efficacy.

**Leadership and Advocacy**

Leadership and advocacy is largely written about in the context of the Counselor Education field as appose to how it is experienced by doctoral students. Much of the research includes samples of counselor educators (e.g., Magnuson et al., 2003) or conceptual articles regarding leadership in Counselor Education (e.g., Gibson et al., 2018; Kress & Barrio Minton, 2015; Luke & Goodrich, 2010). In doctoral training, CACREP (2021a) currently requires students to receive leadership training in 12 areas. These areas include theories and skills of leadership, leadership in Counselor Education programming, leadership in consultation, and leadership on multicultural and social justice issues. Leadership in Counselor Education has been cited as an importance piece in bringing unity to the field and advancing a sense of professional identity (McLaughlin & Boettcher, 2009). A main component of leadership development have been cited as membership in professional organizations, such as Chi Sigma Iota (CSI; Kress & Barrio Minton, 2015; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Myers et al., 2002). CSI chapter leaders cite their experience as a bridge between learning about and applying leadership skills while also prompting the development of professional relationships as well as leadership qualities (Luke & Goodrich, 2010).

The literature on leadership and advocacy within the Counselor Education field lays a clear roadmap for how to grow and embody leadership qualities within the field. The importance of professional organization membership is understood by students as early as the master's degree (Gibson et al., 2010) and is further promoted through mentor relationships and passion for the field (Magnuson et al., 2003; Woo et al., 2015). In a survey of 228 Counselor Education doctoral students, Lockard and colleagues (2014) found that the majority of the sample (186, 81.6%) believed they were receiving adequate leadership training. Adequate leadership training was endorsed by the majority in areas such as clinical counseling (81.6%), research (86.8%), teaching (90.8%), and supervision (93.8%). Training in professional organization leadership was found to be the least endorsed item, with only 49.1% of students feeling prepared.

In a study by Woo and colleagues (2015), the professional identity of 10 counselor educators in leadership positions were examined. Results indicated that mentorship, good professional fit, professional engagement, and the integration of multiple roles (i.e. supervisor, educator, research, service, etc.) were the most influential pieces in their development as leaders. As observed in other competency areas, mentorship appears to be a foundation element of professional development in Counselor Education doctoral students. It can thus be concluded that an emphasis on exemplary role modeling and sound mentorship is the keystone of Counselor Education doctoral programs. In doing so, the embodiment of a counselor educator can be demonstrated to students, which in turn will inspire the next generation of leaders and educators (Woo et al., 2015).

## International Students in Higher Education

During the 2020-2021 academic year, over 900,000 international students were studying within the U.S. higher education system. This accounted for approximately 4.7% of the total U.S.

college population (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2022). An international student is defined as any person who leaves a native country to enroll in an educational program in a second, non-native country (OECD, 2016; Farrugia & Bhandari, 2014). The study abroad experience elicits the unique process of acculturation, wherein the student sojourner experiences difficulty in adjustment, mental health, language, support, and discrimination to varying degrees (Berry, 2005; Berry et al., 1987; Berry & Sam, 2016). Acculturation occurs in both undergraduate and graduate students (Ugwu & Adamuti-Trache, 2017) and is mitigated by personal factors and unique experiences in the host culture (Berry, 1997). Understanding this process presents a multifaceted view into international students' lived experience and perception of everyday life abroad.

**Acculturation**

Common to the study abroad experience is the process of acculturation. Seminally defined, acculturation is the process of maintaining balance between a host and heritage culture (Berry, 1997; Berry, 2005) wherein changes occur in both the acculturating individual and host environment (Berry, 2005). Further defined, acculturation is understood as the complex process of cultural and psychological changes that occur due to contact with people, groups, or social influences of a different culture (Berry, 2005). Within this process, five acculturating groups are recognized and include immigrants, refugees, native peoples, ethnic groups, and sojourners (Berry et al., 1987). According to Selvarajah (2000), acculturation takes place across a four stage cycle that includes 1) pre-departure preparation involving a sojourner's motivation, expectation, excitement, adventure, and uncertainties, 2) initial experiences of the host culture formed by first interactions with the host country, 3) culture shock due to intense experiences in the host environment, and 4) adjustments made due to the degree of distress and/or comfort one

experienced in the first three stages while in the host culture. It has also been asserted that acculturation can occur within individuals in new environments, such as an educational setting (Ward & Geeraert, 2016).

Student sojourners have been reported to experience higher levels of stress caused by the acculturation process when compared to other groups (Berry et al., 1987; Kuo & Roysircar, 2004). This is largely due to the substantial differences between themselves and the host environment, such as culture, language and values, physical location, political ideologies, social experiences, ethnic discrimination, and behavior such as way of speaking, dressing, and/or eating (Berry & Sam, 2016). Isolation from familiar support systems such as friends and family also play into acculturation difficulties (Sherry et al., 2010). In addition, international student acculturation experiences depend heavily on the quality of interaction within their host environment, as positive interactions with instructors and social supports are correlated with positive attitudes toward the host country and one's overall integration (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Psychological adjustment within this process is also variable and depends on the degree of stress experienced within the host environment and the degree to which one utilizes successful coping in response to this stress (Berry, 1997; Bui et al., 2021b; Szabo et al., 2015).

Acculturated stress in international students is greater for those whose culture of origin differs significantly from Western life (Sherry et al., 2010). Students from Asia are specifically noted in the literature as experiencing higher levels of acculturated stress when compared to their international peers (Tian et al., 2019). The initial culture shock students encounter during their study abroad experience has been characterized as struggling with new behavioral norms, values systems (i.e. collectivist vs. individualist), signs and symbols of social contact, and the dynamic of interpersonal relationships (Wu et al., 2015). Additionally, developing English ability,

academic burden and system differences, and lack of social support define the difficulties faced by international students in the U.S. (Bai, 2016). Despite the significant toll of acculturated stress, many students do not seek assistance as they prefer to keep their struggles with cross-cultural adjustment to themselves (Bui et al., 2021a). Acculturation difficulties are experienced by both undergraduate and graduate students alike, with many struggling to adapt to a new culture, the English language, and cultural, social, and adjustment barriers even after graduation from a doctoral program (Ugwu & Adamuti-Trache, 2017). In the following sections, acculturative elements and stressors will be reviewed in greater detail.

**Mental Health**

During the study abroad experience, it is common for individuals to experience issues with mental health. In the international population, mental health problems are generally defined as emotional and stress-related issues that are exacerbated by the reality of living in a foreign environment away from home (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016). Most commonly, adjusting to a new environment and undergoing significant changes to daily life has been shown to cause anxiety, loneliness, and depression (Choi, 1997; Lin & Yi, 1997; Pollock et al., 2017; Ward & Kennedy, 1993).

Adjustment difficulties can also be somatically expressed, occurring typically in students from Asia and manifesting as respiratory disorders (Allen & Cole, 1987), headaches, low energy, gastrointestinal problems (Thomas & Althen, 1989), loss of appetite, sleep difficulties, and fatigue (Lin & Yi, 1997). Academic stressors additionally compound poor mental health realities and include struggles with assignments, competition, perfectionism, and workload (Bui et al., 2021b). Culture shock and poor acculturation to the host environment can also influence the degree to which a student struggles (Bui et al., 2021b). Additionally, due to the immense

financial investment of study abroad, pressure to succeed from family can lead to significant strain. Some students under this pressure have been reported to experience suicidality if they fail their classes (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016).

Despite the mental health concerns faced by international students, mental health services are significantly underutilized. Forbes-Mewett and Sawyer (2016) found that students often seek out services only when issues have reached "disastrous" levels. This was largely due to the stigma and taboo of being labeled with a psychological issue and other negative cultural beliefs about mental illness. Although counseling centers are typically avoided by this population, goal alignment between student and school is mitigating factor to mental health concerns. In particular, students who view their study abroad goals as significantly important and perceive university support in goal achievement experience reduced stress and better psychological adjustment (Bui et al., 2021b). Further, students who experience supportive experiences in relation to broader life goals such as personal growth, career, social approval, and education report a more positive study abroad experience (Zimmermann et al., 2016). This in turn encourages students to become more open-minded and social, enabling friendships with native students to occur (Heng, 2018).

**English as a Second Language**

English language proficiency is considered to be the most significant struggle for student sojourners (Sato & Hodge, 2009; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Reid & Dixon, 2012). It has been touted that difficulty with English can negatively affect all other aspects of life, most notably classroom learning and participating, medical visits, and the capacity to establish social relationships (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016). In particular, as learning in the U.S. depends heavily on information transmission through text and speech (Mclean & Ransom, 2005), a significant

portion of a sojourner's student life can be based in stress and confusion if English proficiency is low (Bai, 2016; Ra & Trusty, 2016).

Despite spending a number of years studying English in one's home country, international students commonly report experiences of social isolation and struggles due to self-described language deficiencies (Sherry et al., 2010; Wu et al., 2015). Cultural disparities and language barriers also hinder connection within the host environment and result in greater levels of acculturated stress, particularly among Asian students (Bai, 2016; Ra & Trusty, 2016). Some individuals try to mitigate this by participating in culture-oriented activities on campus to improve their English (Zhang et al., 2022).

It has been purported that English-speaking countries have an English proficiency minimum standard that is too low, allowing for linguistically underprepared students to study abroad (Bai, 2016). In a study by Sato and Hodge (2015), students described feeling that a passing score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) qualified them to take classes alongside native students, though once in the classroom many encountered difficulties in theoretical and lecture comprehension. American English spoken by natives presents unique difficulties such as differing accents, rates of speech, and pronunciation. These unique difficulties require a student to spend extra time acclimating to and deciphering what someone is saying (Wu et al., 2015).

International students also have been found to spend extra time on readings and homework due to difficulties with English comprehension and unfamiliarity with the conventions of academic writing in the United States. In writing, international students report struggling to find the right words and authentic styles of expressing their ideas in English (Cennetkusu, 2017). This difficulty with language has been positively correlated with

acculturative stress (Kuo & Roysircar, 2004), feeling lost in the classroom (Jang et al., 2014), and needing extra time to complete course assignments (Moon et al., 2020).

Language ability has also been found to impact a student's capacity to establish social connection. In particular, language barrier issues inhibits a student's ability to connect with peers, faculty, and the local community (Kuo & Roysircar, 2004). Limited English proficiency can impede a student from communicating deeply and authentically with peers (Zhou & Zhang, 2014) and being unfamiliar with common conventions like slang, idioms, and conversation etiquette can create barriers to connection (Sherry et al., 2010). Communication difficulties can also result in native students perceiving their international peers as less intelligent and less educated due to their non-native accent (Behl et al., 2017). As a result, student sojourners have reported feeling uneasy about speaking with native students and subordinate when interacting with those from the host culture (Sato & Hodge, 2015). Those who graduate from English language high schools typically make friends with more ease due to their improved English ability (Zhou & Zhang, 2014).

**Social Connection**

Social connect is an important factor in decreasing acculturative stress and improving adjustment to the host culture (Bai, 2016). Connection to the host culture aids international students in successful adjustment, improves cultural appreciation and intercultural competency, and provides exposure to sociocultural nuance (Tran & Pham, 2016). Tran and Pham (2016) found that international students view interaction with native peers as a valuable, transformative experience that can improve their knowledge, skills, and professional capacities in unique and authentic ways. Interaction with native peers has also been shown to break stereotypical perceptions of Americans held by student sojourners and improve culture-specific knowledge.

International students also benefit from being able to mimic native peers in everyday habits such as leisure activities, study, and work (Zhang et al., 2022).

Despite the benefits of social connection, student sojourners have historically lacked valuable social networks in their host culture, particularly in times of need (Berry et al., 1987). This is due to the difficulty of establishing deep connection with native students (Wu et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2022). Cultural differences can significantly amplify communication hardship (Yan & Berliner, 2013), as individuals typically grow up with culturally constructed perceptions of humor, daily routine, friendships, sexual relationships, and privacy that can be disrupted during time abroad (Zhou & Zhang, 2014).

Limited English ability also contributes to inhibited social contact with native students (Zhang et al., 2022), similar to previously mentioned issues. For example, students can find themselves restricted to academically-based topics with natives because of limited vocabulary and being unfamiliar with American pop culture (Sato & Hodge, 2015; Zhang et al., 2022). As a result, international students often feel that native peer interaction is superficial, and many retreated to their own cultural group for social support (Sato & Hodge, 2015; Zhang et al., 2022). This lack of connection to the host culture can lead to a shallow understanding of American culture and the reinforcement of American stereotypes (Zhang et al., 2022).

Limited social interaction often leads to isolation and loneliness in international students (Sherry et al., 2010; Wu et al., 2015). In a study by Sherry and colleagues (2010) on the vulnerabilities of international students, 50% of participants indicated that their main social circle consisted mainly of other international students and 38% of students indicated having no social support during their time abroad. This lack of contact can lead to feelings of being unwelcome, marginalized, and alone both in personal life and academic courses (Sato & Hodge,

2015). Some students have even reported being avoided by their American classmates (Sato & Hodge, 2015) and feeling as if American students do not care about international students due to exclusionary behavior (Zhang et al., 2022). It has been reported that native students often reject working with international students on academic tasks due to a fear of earning a lower grade (De Vita, 2002). As this stressor is unique to the international student community, it can often be difficult for students to feel a sense of belonging in a foreign land and find trusted others who can understand their struggle (Sherry et al., 2020).

To stimulate social interaction, many students turn to church activities (Yu & Moskal, 2019; Zhang et al., 2022) despite not being Christian or having any plans to convert to Christianity (Zhang et al., 2022). International students additionally utilize various other social outlets when able, such as sports clubs and inviting American families, which can lead to significant positive social connections within the host culture (Sherry et al., 2010). Cohort models of study can also prove beneficial, enabling close intercultural contact and a dynamic learning environment for both native and international students (Kimmel & Volet, 2012). Campus events highlighting cultural hallmarks such as football games, Thanksgiving, and Christmas have also been shown to bring a more meaningful interaction with American culture to student sojourners (Zhang et al., 2022).

**Academic Struggles**

Differences in educational culture also present unique challenges for international students (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016; Sherry et al., 2010; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). In particular, students from collectivist cultures encounter a kind of culture shock in the Western classroom when they are expected to comment, voice their own opinions and arguments, and synthesize information. In such cultures where students are socialized to be passive learners and

classes are teacher-centered, this new-found expectation of active participation can cause study-related stress (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). In Sato and Hodge's 2015 study, a participant recounted their shock at a native student who openly disagreed with the professor during class. The participant explained that in their culture a student is not allowed to disagree with an instructor, and thus the participant felt they were evaluated poorly because of their reluctance to participate in class discussion.

Language barriers also play a role in classroom communication. According to Wu and colleagues (2015), professors were reported to be kind and welcoming toward international students, though international students found communicating their needs to be difficult due to limited English. Some students choose to visit professors during offices hours for assistance, but reported receiving negative feedback about their academic performance such as not having good enough English skills to pass the class. Students have even reported encouragement from instructors to drop their class a few weeks into the semester due to low English ability (Sato & Hodge, 2015). Isolation can further occur as a result of these experiences (Sherry et al., 2010) causing students to take a more passive student role until strategies are created to engage more actively (Wu et al., 2015).

**Cultural Values**

Those with significant cultural differences from the host culture typically experience greater acculturative stressors (Sherry et al., 2010; Tian et al., 2019), while those from similar cultures experience greater life satisfaction and less mental health issues (Tauˆsová et al., 2019). In particular, Asian students from collectivist cultures typically adhere to behavior that puts the needs of others ahead of their own. In an American context, this can result in not getting personal needs met and being construed as a people pleaser (Tian et al., 2019). The relearning of cultural

norms has been shown to result in loneliness, as individuals have reported difficulties with making friends, understanding the basic operations inherent in everyday life, and being alienated due to one's accent (Sherry et al., 2010; Wu et al., 2015).

The cultural traditions of international students has also been poorly considered in the U.S. For example, religious considerations for Muslim are rarely addressed on campus and the variety of ethnic food at college cafeterias does not accommodate the diets of some students, such as those whose diet includes Halal food (Sherry et al., 2010). Additionally, space for religious practices and holidays have historically been poorly addressed, with some students reporting that practices such as fasting in the Muslim community go unnoticed at the university level (Sherry et al., 2010). Cultural mismatches can also occur, such as differing gift-giving traditions between Asian and European cultural practices. This can result in awkward situations and further "other" international individuals (Wu et al., 2015). International students have expressed the desire to be briefed on American culture before beginning their study abroad experience and wish that others understood more about their own culture (Sherry et al., 2010).

**Racism and Discrimination**

Racial and ethnic discrimination exacerbates issues of language barrier, culture shock, establishing support systems, and feeling unsafe for international students (Behl et al., 2017; Hegarty, 2014; Jang et al., 2014; McDowell et al., 2012; Ng, 2012; Pollock et al., 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Sherry et al., 2010). The nature of abuse, as reported by Brown and Jones (2013), has been described as being sworn at, being told to go back to their country, objects being thrown at them, physical assault, derogatory comments about their home country, and aggressive laughter. Historically, these issues have seldom been reported to police or university authorities for fear of not being believed and nothing being done (Brown 2009; Koo et al., 2021a). In

addition to these experiences, many international students are in the unique position of becoming an ethnic minority for the first time upon arriving in the U.S. (Mitchell Jr. et al., 2017) and experiencing first-hand, race-based discrimination due to U.S. politics (Koo et al., 2021a; Lee & Rice, 2007; Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2017).

A particularly unique phenomenon for international students is the sudden awareness of their racial and ethnic backgrounds in a U.S. context (Kim et al., 2015; Park et al., 2017). For many, being considered a racial/ethnic minority in society is a new experience which is colored by their time within American higher education (Loo, 2019). This creates new barriers and adjustments for this student population and in particular students of color (George Mwangi et al., 2019). Racial awareness among international students has been described as being on a spectrum, with students of color being more racially aware due to their lived experience while abroad (Mitchell Jr. et al., 2017). It has been documented that international students from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East in particular experience more discrimination than White international students (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Lee & Rice, 2007). This has been found to be more pronounced at predominantly White institutions (Koo et al., 2021a; Halpern & Aydin, 2020; Talley-Matthews et al., 2020). These experiences are used to shape how students view the world around them in areas such as employment, equity, student interactions, and their own environment (Mitchell Jr. et al., 2017).

Discrimination experienced by international students has been reported to spike due to political policies and historic events. A prime example can be noted after the terrorist attack on September 11$^{th}$, 2001. In a study by Lee and Rice (2007), international students reported feelings of being unwelcome after this event, and consequently the U.S. saw a dramatic drop in the number of international students choosing to study in America. Among the students who still

chose to study abroad, many reported feeling overwhelming discomfort brought on by the host culture, resulting in the early termination of their study abroad experience (Lee & Rice, 2007). The travel ban instated by past U.S. president, Donald J. Trump, in 2017 is another example of an event spurring upset. A consequence of this travel ban included individuals originating from Muslim countries being blocked from entering the U.S., and Muslims with U.S. citizenship were routinely detained at airports and questioned about their religious beliefs (Graham-Harrison, 2017). In the academic community, those from Muslim countries feared returning home to visit family due to the uncertainty of being able to reenter the U.S. International scholars were forced to cancel trips abroad as a result and have been described as essentially stranded within their host culture (Blumenstyk et al., 2017).

Most recently, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic brought about an increase in discrimination and racism towards Asians living in America. A study by Koo and colleagues (2021b) focused on uncovering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on international students and found that Asian international students in particular felt unsafe and fearful of experiencing racism and discrimination. Students in Koo and colleagues' (2021b) study reported enduring physical attacks, racial comments, and online bullying in emails, Zoom calls, and text messages throughout the pandemic. This caused many individuals to want to return home and discontinue their U.S. studies. Students who chose to stay at their institution were subject to quarantine and shared that although being mandated to stay away from others limited their exposure to discrimination, they felt incredibly lonely and isolated. Students also reported feeling helpless against the harsh acts of others, as reporting incidents to campus police or authorities never resulted in protective action (Koo et al., 2021b).

## International Students in Counselor Education

International students within American Counselor Education programs have experiences that are both typical and unique for this student population. In addition to the tenets of acculturation and other barriers, being engaged in a graduate counseling program promotes personal and professional growth that informs how one sees themselves within the field. In particular, international students have reported an enhanced multicultural identity (Kuo et al., 2018; Woo et al., 2022), greater sensitivity to multicultural and mental health issues (Li & Liu, 2020; Woo et al., 2022), and a keen interest in advocacy work (Woo et al., 2022). Challenges reported by this student group mirror issues previously discussed, including acculturation (Haktanir et al., 2022; Interiano & Lim, 2018; Kuo et al., 2020), cross-cultural disconnect (Interiano & Lim, 2018; Li & Liu, 2020), and cultural discrimination (Interiano & Lim, 2018; Jang et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2015).

In Counselor Education doctoral programming, professional identity has been shown to improve for international scholars. Similar to development models for native students (i.e., Dollarhide et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2010), international students recognize that professional counselor identity is a complex and continuous process that is positively impacted by their studies in the U.S. (Kuo et al., 2018; Woo et al., 2022). Completing coursework and clinical experiences have also been shown to significantly improve counseling self-efficacy (Haktanir et al., 2022). International students have reported that their personal values align with that of the counseling profession promoted in America (Kuo et al., 2018) and that advocacy for minority populations is a significant interest for them professionally (Kuo et al., 2018; Woo et al., 2022). Further, international students have grown the ability to critique their home country's mental

health culture through reinventing how they view mental illness and growing sensitivity for injustice and discrimination because of their doctoral studies (Woo et al., 2022).

The experience of being within the U.S. education system has also helped promote positive growth in international students. In a study by Woo and colleagues (2022), international students expressed that they felt their Counselor Education program was open to and respectful of diversity which enhanced their learning and freedom to express themselves in the classroom. They noted a "liberal and democratic atmosphere" (Woo et al., 2022, p. 190) that enabled flexibility and the development of awareness and sensitivity. This freedom of expression and openness has also been translated into other areas of professionalism, such as teaching. Li and Liu (2020) reported on the teaching preparation experience of international doctoral students in Counselor Education programs, and participants noted how embracing their multicultural identity and using their unique background has helped build their teaching self-efficacy. Using their lived experience, participants reported being able to authentically illustrate multicultural and cross-cultural topics such as collectivism, discrimination, privilege, and oppression.

Support has also been shown to aid in the professional development of counseling graduate students (Interiano & Lim, 2018; Kuo et al., 2018; Li & Liu, 2020). In particular, faculty have been cited as critically important as professional role models, guides, and mentors providing crucial feedback needed for growth (Interiano & Lim, 2018; Kuo et al., 2018; Li & Liu, 2020). Counseling faculty giving personal support for the unique needs, identities, and experiences of international students has also been shown to lessen the psychological stress associated with acculturation (Interiano & Lim, 2018). Peer support is another important factor in promoting sound adjustment. Peers have been instrumental in passing down information, encouragement, resources, and general support during the rigors of academic study (Kuo et al.,

2018; Li & Liu, 2020). External supports, such as family and on-campus international organizations, have also been shown to help international students succeed within Counselor Education programming. Family in particular has been shown to bolster perseverance throughout the study abroad experience (Kuo et al., 2018).

Despite the many growth-promoting factors reported for international students in Counselor Education, negative aspects also exist. As previously discussed, the level of acculturation one experiences significantly affects the study abroad process (e.g. Berry, 1997; Bui et al., 2021b; Szabo et al., 2015) and the field of Counselor Education is no different. Within this field, one's level of acculturation is significantly predictive of counseling self-efficacy and mental health issues such as anxiety (Haktanir et al., 2022). Additionally, international Counselor Education students report struggles with issues pervasive in their population such as language barriers, visa restrictions, problems with paperwork, educational culture, and limited social support (Haktanir et al., 2022; Interiano & Lim, 2018; Kuo et al., 2020).

Counselor Education programming has also been critiqued by the international student population as being intolerant of diverse points of view (Jang et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2015) and imbued with Euro-American values (Interiano & Lim, 2018). A study by Interiano and Lim (2018) found that international students feel obligated to adopt Euro-American values, culture, and viewpoints at the expense of their of their own unique identity. Participants in this study shared feeling conflict, loss, and grief as they shifted into a new, "chameleonic" identity, wherein they felt forced to act like Americans while having to hide their authentic selves. This shift was noted as a "non-negotiable prerequisite to their professional survival and success" (Interiano & Lim, 2018, p. 318). This cultural oppression was echoed in other works previously discussed (e.g., Jang et al., 2014; Woo et al., 2015) wherein students felt shutdown, disrespected, and

unable to share their authentic, multicultural viewpoints in the Counselor Education classroom. These adverse experiences have driven international counseling students to make advocacy for minority populations a cornerstone of their professional identity, as they had experienced discrimination first hand and have a strong desire to stand up for themselves and others (Kuo et al., 2021; Woo et al., 2022).

## International Faculty in Higher Education

International faculty are an integral part of global academia and the internationalization of higher education institutions (Altbach & Yudkevich, 2017). They contribute to higher global rankings for colleges and universities, facilitate English language orientation on non-English speaking campuses, and bring scholarly innovation in research and teaching. As a result, they are a highly valued academic group because of the diverse qualities they bring (Altbach & Yudkevich, 2017), and are considered overrepresented in postsecondary positions making up 22% of faculty nation-wide (Institute of Immigrant Research, 2022). Despite the positive qualities they bring to the higher education space, a significant issue faced by these professionals is their integration into the American culture of academia (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Krsmanovic, 2022; Omiteru et al., 2018; Rita & Karides, 2022). Integration issues include visa complications (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Chen & Lawless, 2018), lack of institutional support (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Joshi et al., 2022; Omiteru et al., 2018), cultural adjustments (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Krsmanovic, 2022; Omiteru et al., 2018; Rita & Karides, 2022), discrimination, and hostility (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Omiteru et al., 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021).

Visa issues are a unique yet significant aspect of international faculty life. Socio-cultural and political perspectives both inside and outside an institution affect the ease of obtaining U.S. work permission and can also affect support for family and spousal immigration (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021). Differing visa types can also affect how long an individual can work in the U.S. and the type of work they can undertake. Certain visas can additionally add stipulations requiring the return to an individual's country of origin (Chen & Lawless, 2018). Department chairs are typically involved in the filing of H1-B visas on behalf of new international hires (Weaver et al., 2019), though a lack of guidance and support has been reported. This has resulted in improper filing of documents by the department (Joshi et al., 2022), refusals to assist in the H1-B visa filing process, and putting the financial burden of visa filing on new international faculty (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Omiteru et al., 2018). Hostility from administrators has been reported by international faculty (Omiteru et al., 2018), and the COVID-19 pandemic has additionally added to visa complications and stress. Due to budget cuts during the pandemic, international faculty expressed fear regarding job security, visa status, and visa processing delays (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021).

Within the field of Counselor Education, visa issues add additional setbacks in professional life. In a study by Interiano-Shiverdecker and colleagues (2021) on the strengths, challenges, and areas of support for international counselor educators, participants spoke to the limitations visas have on their work. To begin, participants on H1-B visas noted that they were limited in their work experience and could not become licensed counselors in the U.S. This obstructed professional growth and income opportunities. Additionally, their ability to teach about counseling from their life experience was impacted by this limitation (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021). Academically, participants spoke to limitations on their professional

work due to their immigrant status. In particular, a portion of study participants indicated that they were unable to apply for research grant funding due to being a non-citizen (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021).

Similar to the language-related issues of international students, international faculty experience language discrimination and difficulties during their professional life in the U.S (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Omiteru et al., 2018; Rita & Karides, 2022). Accent discrimination in particular is a common phenomenon. International faculty have reported being harassed by students due to being a person of color with an accent (Rita & Karides, 2022), experiencing microaggressions in their workplace due to foreign accent (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Rita & Karides, 2022), and being treated differently than other faculty because of their speech pattern (Omiteru et al., 2018). A study by Chen and Lawless (2018) uncovered the presence of an accent hierarchy, wherein White, European women faculty were complimented on their accent, having it be considered "nonthreatening, pleasant, or lovely" whereas individuals of color, particularly Black women, experienced their accents being deemed "threatening, unintelligent, or alien" (Chen & Lawless, 2018, p. 14). This created an intersectional identity of otherness for study participants.

Racial discrimination is an additional challenge faced by international faculty (Chen & Lawless, 2022; Omiteru et al., 2018; Rita & Karides, 2022). It is posited that lack of exposure to diversity promotes hostility toward foreign-born peoples in the U.S. (Omiteru et al., 2018), and this can affect one's ability to be taken seriously and find appropriate work (Rita & Karides, 2022). Chen and Lawless (2018) again capitalized this in their study findings, noting that stereotyping, tokenism, differential ranking, and discrimination based on racialization and gender were experienced by the majority of study participants, noting that the lack of a White, male

body was a setback within their profession. While satisfying, collegial relationships with native colleagues have been reported, racial and cultural prejudice, lack of partnership, and differences in job performance expectations have been expressed. In particular, international faculty have reported feeling pressure to work harder than their native peers in order to be successful at their U.S. institution (Omiteru et al., 2018).

Positive work environments for international faculty are necessary during the transition to U.S. institutions (Joshi et al., 2022). The value of faculty mentorship and comradery have been cited as critically important factors for positive and successful transition into new academic roles, particularly within Counselor Education (Attia, 2021; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Joshi et al., 2022) as well as having the support and understanding of department chairs and colleagues (Joshi et al., 2022). International faculty within Counselor Education view their multicultural perspectives and backgrounds as an inherent strength in their professional work as well as their capacity to adapt and be resilient in a new culture. When international faculty encountered a work culture that was open and accepting to their unique perspectives and contributions, their work thrived (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021). A study by Joshi and colleagues (2022) regarding the transition experiences of international faculty in Counselor Education found that having a supportive department was key in successful transition as well as having a knowledgeable and proactive international office that was there to advocate for and support foreign-born faculty. Thus it can be concluded that a well-organized system for supporting new international hires is paramount for successful integration into American academia.

## Chapter II Summary

This chapter detailed several areas of literature germane to the study topic including the professional development of counselors and counselor educators in the U.S., the doctoral Counselor Education competency standards, and the international student and faculty experience both in the Counselor Education field and at large. This foundation is necessary to understand the Counselor Education expectations in the United States, the typically observed development of students in the field, and the standards against which students are measured. With the introduction of literature regarding international students and faculty, their unique status, situations, and challenges can be appreciated within an American academic context. The next chapter details the methodology used to carry out this study.

# CHAPTER III

# METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the professional socialization experienced by international students who went on to be counselor educators in the U.S. This was done through the lens of SCCT, taking into account participants self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and resulting personal goals prompted by their socialization experiences. This chapter will present a description of the approach to qualitative research and the phenomenological design for this study. It will also discuss the participants involved, sampling methodology, data collection methods including recruitment and procedures, and interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). Trustworthiness strategies will also be described in addition to ethical considerations and the positionality of the researcher.

## Research Approach

Socialization is defined as a process wherein an individual's behavioral potential is narrowed into an acceptable range based on group standards (Child, 1954). Socialization occurs in a number of situations, such as on a grand societal level, and in lesser instances, such as in social circles or places of work. International students experience significant socialization to their host culture during their study abroad experience, with examples including socialization to American academic life, the conventions of social interaction, and the expectations surrounding the pursuit of specific career paths in the U.S. In light of the issues inherent in the study abroad experience and life within a host culture, the socialization of the international population throughout various life phases (i.e. in student and professional life) can be purported as complex. As such, this researcher has chosen to conduct a qualitative research study to best understand the unique and intricate experience of this academic population and professional socialization.

Qualitative approaches to research assert that individuals are continuously constructing meaning from activities, experiences, and phenomenon while quantitative approaches view knowledge as preexisting and discoverable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Further, qualitative research typically uses words as the data to be analyzed while quantitative research relies on numbers (Braun & Clarke, 2013). To gain rich, thick description and understanding of an activity, experience, or phenomenon, qualitative research is considered the ideal approach as it allows for open-ended responses, probing, and follow-up inquiry. Within the qualitative process, vital characteristics include a focus on meaning and understanding, the researcher as the data synthesis instrument, inductive processes, and an outcome that is richly descriptive (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

During a qualitative investigation, the researcher focuses on how people interpret their experiences, construct their worlds, and make meaning that is ascribed to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This type of research thus lends itself well to questions that seek to understand lived experiences. Data collection can occur through conducting interviews, observations, and site visits. This data is then prepared for analysis which is carried out by the researcher. Examples of data include interviews, transcripts, observational notes, written accounts, electronic communication, or any combination of these sources. Using inductive processes, the researcher then works to categorize data into themes that are used to inform concepts and theories. The resulting work is a rich, thick, descriptive account of an individual's lived experience that adds to the understanding of a phenomenon. As this study seeks to understand the lived professional socialization experience of international students, the qualitative research methodology was determined to be the most appropriate for such an inquiry.

The qualitative approach allows for a rich account of the professional socialization phenomenon as well as the meaning it has in relation to career development.

**Phenomenology**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Edmund Husserl created what is known as phenomenological research (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). The initiation of this new research methodology was largely spurred by the need to ground foundational knowledge of reality into an accepted research style. Husserl created phenomenology by first examining the problem of how objects and events appear to consciousness. This was grounded in the notion that nothing in our reality could ever be illuminated if it did not come through an individual's consciousness (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). Currently, phenomenology has come to be defined as "... the study of human experience and of the ways things present themselves to us in and through such experience" (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 2) and the study of how consciousness structures experiences from the first-person point of view (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

Phenomenology has additionally been described as a way of seeing (Gallagher, 2012). Instead of relying on doctrines or theories to guide interpretation, phenomenology encourages the researcher to instead consider the way an individual sees the world around them. In doing so, phenomenology has been described as a method of seeing as opposed to a philosophical theory (Gallagher, 2012). Husserl himself deemed phenomenology 'the science of appearance' and noted this approach as one that gives a description of the way things appear in our conscious experience. Thus, a phenomenological researcher is not concerned with how things actually are, but rather how an individual experiences an object or event (Gallagher, 2012).

From its philosophical roots, phenomenology has moved into the notion of "lived experience," (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 26) as in an examination of individuals' everyday

lives. This follows the assumption that these lived experiences can be boiled down to an essence, or shared experience. The goal of phenomenology, then, is to make sense of these lived experiences as they are understood by the individual, generally achieved through data collection methods such as observation or interview. For analysis of this data, phenomenology maintains some unique methods of its own such as epoche and bracketing, phenomenological reduction, heuristic inquiry, horizontalization, and imaginative variation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 27).

Within the phenomenological approach there are three subcategories of design; transcendental phenomenology (Husserl, 1970), existential phenomenology (Husserl, 1964, 1983), and hermeneutical phenomenology (Van Manen, 1990, 2014). Transcendental phenomenology is concerned with the understanding of participants' lived experiences divorced from the interpretation of the researcher. As such, techniques are used by the researcher to separate themselves from preconceptions and biases and include strategies such as epoche and bracketing (Moustakas, 1994). Existential phenomenology concerns itself with understanding human existence in an embodied, in-depth way and looks at the meaning individuals make out of life as a person (Husserl, 1964, 1983).

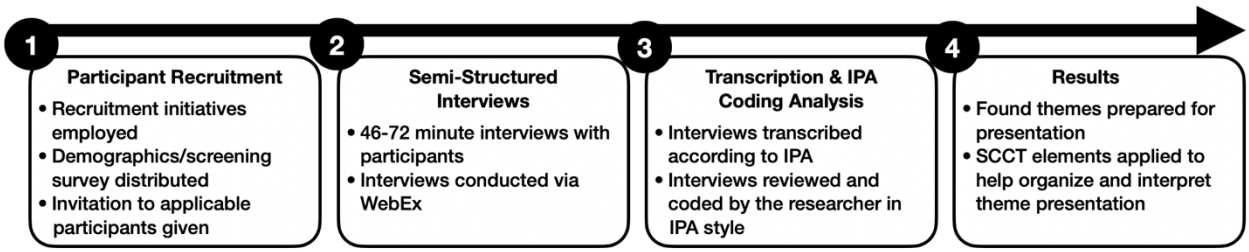
The current study employs a hermeneutical, phenomenological approach. This approach centers on the interpretations of the researcher as they synthesize collected data (Patton, 2002). Data collection in this instance was done through semi-structured interviews which explored participants' experience with professional socialization as international doctoral students. It also asked participants to infer meaning generated by the professional socialization on their career development. As both participants and researcher derived meaning from the experiences shared, this study is considered a double hermeneutic approach (Smith et al., 2009).

## Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study involved four stages, which are illustrated in Figure 1. In beginning this project, a recruitment email and demographics/screening survey were sent to two listservs within the Counselor Education field. Applicable participants known to the researcher were separately contacted and invited to participate. These individuals were also asked to pass along the invitation to others who may meet criteria. The chairs, liaisons, and unit directors of CACREP accredited counseling programs in the U.S. were additionally emailed and asked to pass along the recruitment email to faculty meeting study criteria. Eight applicable individuals were selected for participation based on the results of their demographics survey. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted and lasted between 46 and 72 minutes. The interviews were then transcribed and coded using IPA. Findings were prepared and compared to the themes present in SCCT (Lent et al., 1994).

**Figure 1.**

*Research Design*




## Participants and Sampling

Participants for this study were foreign-born Counselor Education faculty members within the first three years of their employment within CACREP-accredited, U.S. programs. These individuals had to have been international students at the doctoral level studying in the U.S. on an F-1 or J-1 visa. They also must have earned a doctoral degree from a U.S., CACREP-

accredited counseling program prior to their current employment. A minimum of eight and a maximum of 10 were expected for participation. Sampling was conducted through purposeful (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and snowball sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Purposeful sampling involves identifying individuals meeting study criteria and inviting them to partake in the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). There are several types of purposeful sampling including typical, unique, and convenience. This study employed a typical purposeful sampling procedure which includes identifying individuals for participation because they represent the average person experiencing the phenomenon under review. Participant recruitment thus commenced through a listerv specific for the academic counseling profession and a listserv specific to international faculty and students in the counseling field. The researcher also reached out to individuals who were specifically known to meet study criteria. The chairs, liaisons, and unit directors of CACREP-accredited counseling programs in the U.S. were also sent the recruitment email and asked to pass the email along to eligible faculty at their institution. Snowball sampling is an approach wherein participants are asked to invite others they know meeting study criteria to participate in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher asked participants in the recruitment email and at the conclusion of their interviews to refer others known to them to join the study.

## Data Collection

### Recruitment

Kent State University's listerv for international counseling students, ISFIN, and CESNET, a popular listserv for the counseling profession, was used for recruitment. ISFIN consists of international counseling faculty, allies of international counseling students, and international counseling students at the masters and doctoral level. CESNET is a listserv for the

Counselor Education academic community. CESNET allows for three posts to the listserv calling for research participants for any one study. An email was sent through these listservs inviting faculty, allies, and doctoral students to pass on information to applicable individuals. It also invited applicable listserv subscribers to participate in the study. The email detailed the general nature of the study and a link to a brief demographics/screening survey. The demographics/screening survey began with a description of the potential risks and benefits of the study and an informed consent statement. Participants were required to read these statements and confirm their willingness to participate before seeing survey questions. Participants known to the researcher who met study criteria were also directly invited to participate via email. They were additionally asked to invite others they know who qualify to participate. The chairs, liaisons, and unit directors of CACREP-accredited counseling programs in the U.S. were additionally sent the recruitment email and asked to share it with eligible faculty within their program.

**Procedures**

Participants began their contribution to this project by completing a brief demographics survey linked within the recruitment email. Time for a virtual, semi-structured WebEx interview was then established with applicable participants via email. This was set for a date and time that was convenient for both the participant and the researcher. Interviews lasted from 46 to 72 minutes and inquired about the participant's professional socialization experience throughout their doctoral studies. The interviews were audio and video recorded using the WebEx recording feature. At the conclusion of the interviews, a pseudonym was established and used to replace the real names of participants, creating anonymity. Data analysis was then conducted using IPA, and results were prepared for presentation using this method.

### Trustworthiness

In an effort to portray an accurate reflection of interview themes, the researcher utilized triangulation (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to enhance trustworthiness. To begin, the data went through several rounds of coding that established and refined themes which addressed the research questions. Next, member checking was conducted. The researcher sent theme titles and brief descriptions of each theme to participants for their feedback and an endorsement of accuracy. Adjustments were then made to the themes based on this feedback. Finally, the themes were compared to the elements of SCCT (Lent et al., 1994).

### Positionality

Although international students and by extension, faculty, are considered a unique educational population, the researcher shares familiarity with their experiences and with the phenomenon under study. During her undergraduate years, the researcher participated in a one year study abroad program where she lived in Kyoto, Japan. During this time, she completed an intensive Japanese language program and was a student at a large, private Japanese University. This experience granted the researcher a firsthand account of acculturation, language barrier issues, academic life as an international student, and other issues common to the study abroad experience. After graduation with her bachelor's degree, the researcher moved to Seoul, South Korea to work as an educator. She stayed in this role for five years and became intimately familiar with the professional socialization and acculturation process inherent in international life.

## Data Analysis

Through semi-structured interviews and IPA, the overall purpose of this inquiry was to explore the professional socialization of international Counselor Education doctoral students into

the U.S. professorate. In doing so, a transcript was created of interviews conducted. The researcher then uploaded the transcript into the qualitative analytics software, MaxQDA, and performed several rounds of analysis according to the IPA coding methodology. These findings were then used to inform the results of this inquiry.

**Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

Analysis of interview data was done using IPA. IPA is one of the best known methods of qualitative analysis within the field of psychology. It is concerned with uncovering in detail one's lived experience, the meaning of that experience, and how one makes sense of the experience. The IPA method of data analysis is theoretically rooted within phenomenology specifically in addition to hermeneutics and idiography (Camic, 2021; Smith, 2011). As IPA requires both the researcher and participants to engage in meaning making, this approach is considered double hermeneutic (Smith et al., 2009). Within IPA, detailed personal accounts from participants are required for analysis, and most commonly this is done through semi-structured interviews (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008) that are audio and video recorded (Smith, 2011). The recommended sample size for doctoral dissertations utilizing IPA is eight to 10 participants. This number has been deemed large enough to provide a rich and patterned analysis while also allowing for manageability within the dissertation period (Camic, 2021).

Data collection within this method begins with semi structured interviews. In IPA, interview protocol typically involves an interview schedule, wherein major areas of discussion are noted, and a few questions to stimulate discussion are prepared. This guide is then used to initiate targeted conversation while also allowing for natural, organic discourse. This approach allows for inquiry around a phenomenon that is not strictly tethered to a protocol, producing the rich, thick description of the participant's lived experience that is desired within phenomenology.

Transcripts are then created of completed interviews and include notations of pauses, laughter, and participant expression (Camic, 2021).

Analysis of these transcripts undergo a multi-phase process. To begin, transcripts are read a number of times so that the researcher can familiarize and immerse themself in the world of the participant. Next, the research takes notes on the transcripts commenting on the concepts, ideas, and impressions conveyed by the participant. Notes are then synthesized into concise statements that express the essence and importance of what was conveyed by the participant. From these concise statements, the researcher then clusters similar statements together, creating universal themes that speak to a common phenomenon across interviews. These themes are then recorded in a table, noting subthemes when appropriate, and feature direct quotes from participates that illustrate these themes. The conclusion of this analysis is a full account of results generated from the data analysis process (Camic, 2021).

## Chapter III Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology used to conduct this study. In this discussion, the rationale for implementing a phenomenological qualitative research approach was introduced to explore how international faculty experienced their professional socialization for the U.S. professorate through their Counselor Education doctoral program. The data analysis strategy, interpretative phenomenological analysis, was detailed, and procedures for data collection, establishing trustworthiness, participant recruitment, and other core tenets were described. The next chapter presents the results of the study, answering the research questions of 1) how do international faculty feel their Counselor Education doctoral experience socialized them for the professorate?, and 2) what factors contributed to or detracted from their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals within their professional life?

# CHAPTER IV

# FINDINGS

Chapter four centers on the findings of the present research study. It begins by providing an overview of the study and describes the methods used to carry out the protocol. A description of the eight participants is included as well as updated procedures for participant recruitment. Study findings are then detailed along with how the findings answer the research questions.

## Overview of Study

This study explored the phenomenon of professional socialization and the impact this has on the career development of international doctoral students-turned-professor within Counselor Education. The findings of this study add to the international student literature and increase the holistic understanding of the international student experience. It also adds to the multicultural literature within the Counselor Education field and has implications for improving work with international students. The research questions guided the analysis and interpretation of the data, speaking to: 1) how international faculty feel their Counselor Education doctoral experience socialized them for the professorate and 2) the factors that contributed to or detracted from their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals within their professional life.

A qualitative approach was used in this study because of the ability to fluidly explore processes, reasonings, and content that relates directly to the phenomenon under investigation. Additionally, this approach allowed space for participants to provide a thorough, holistic account of their socialization experience and the elements that impacted their career development as international scholars (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This study employed a phenomenological hermeneutic design, as interpretation of meaning was used to determine findings (Camic, 2021).

As both the researcher and participants engaged in a meaning-making process, this study is considered double hermeneutic (Smith et al., 2009).

Following the protocol for IPA, semi-structured interviews were used as the method for data collection (Camic, 2021). These interviews were then transcribed and analyzed for thematic data. The resulting themes were used to answer the two research questions, and additional findings were also noted. These additional findings are included for discussion within this chapter.

## Description of Participants

Eight individuals participated in this study. The demographic information for these participants was gathered through an online survey that followed a digital informed consent form. Demographic data gathered included participants' name, gender identity, country of origin outside of the U.S., and age. This information for each participant is displayed in table 1. Pseudonyms are used in place of participant names to maintain anonymity. Additionally, as the population for this study is estimated to be small, the ages of participants have been averaged instead of reported per participant to further promote anonymity. The average age of participants was 34, with a minimum age of 29 and a maximum age of 52. The length of interviews ranged from 46 to 72 minutes with an average length of 57 minutes. All interviews were conducted via WebEx video call.

All participants identified as international scholars within their first three years as Counselor Education professors. Participants were employed at American institutions and prior to this had completed a doctorate in Counselor Education within the U.S. During their doctoral studies, all participants were studying in the U.S. on an F-1 student visa. Participants resided in a variety of states cross the U.S. and were employed at an R1, R2, or teaching institution.

**Table 1**

*Demographic Information*

| Pseudonym | Gender | Country of Origin Outside the U.S. |
|---|---|---|
| Ian | Male | South Korea |
| Claudio | Male | South Korea |
| Tiramisu | Female | South Korea |
| Younghee | Female | South Korea |
| Patrick | Male | China |
| Lilly | Female | China |
| Lydia | Female | Uganda |
| Sophia | Female | Brazil |

## Data Analysis

This study employed the protocols of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) when analyzing interview data. This process began with the recording of semi-structured interviews with participants which were then transcribed (Camic, 2021). The researcher sought to capture the authentic expression on the participant during the interview, noting pauses, facial expressions, laughter, and other expressive behavior in the transcript. After transcription was complete, the researcher aimed to immerse themself in and familiarize themself with the world of the participant. In doing so, the researcher watched the interviews back two times and read through the transcripts three times before beginning thematic analysis (Camic, 2021).

Next, the researcher read through the transcripts and noted concepts, ideas, and impressions portrayed by the participant (Camic, 2021). These observations were then simplified into concise statements that expressed, based on the researcher's inference, the core of what the participant meant to convey. As common themes began to emerge within and across transcripts, statements exemplifying these themes were grouped together and stored in aptly named folders in the qualitative analysis software, MaxQDA. As new interviews were conducted, this process was repeated and universal themes and subthemes began to emerge. Once all interviews were

complete, the universal themes and subthemes were further refined to create the concluding themes for this project.

Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher wrote memos to document their thoughts throughout the project and to help bracket any personal views and bias. Using the log book feature within MaxQDA, the researcher recorded their thoughts, feelings, insights, and decision-making processes at the conclusion of each coding session. The researcher referred to this log before beginning a new coding session, reviewing past thinking and checking for bias. The researcher also created memos attached to interview transcripts describing their impressions of each participant and interview. The researcher further created memos attached to theme folders within MaxQDA, describing their thought process in creating the theme, descriptions of the theme, and questions to consider when refining the theme.

During the process of participant recruitment, the researcher modified their recruitment strategy in an effort to reach more individuals meeting study criteria. The researcher submitted a revision for this purpose to the HSIRB office and was granted permission to implement the update. As a result, the researcher gathered the email addresses of all Counselor Education department chairs, liaisons, and unit directors at CACREP-accredited programs via the CACREP website database. The researcher then sent an email to these individuals asking if they would share the invitation to this study with any international faculty in their department. This effort resulted in successfully recruiting the final participants needed for this project.

The final stage of data analysis involved member-checking with study participants. The researcher created summaries of themes and subthemes and emailed them to participants for their feedback and endorsement of accuracy. The researcher invited participants to share their feedback in whatever way felt comfortable, including email, comments on the summary

document, voice memos, or a call with the researcher. Five out of eight participants responded via email and affirmed that the themes and subthemes accurately reflected their experiences.

## Findings

Three major themes emerged from the interviews and included: *Institutional Impact*, *International Realities*, and *International Lens*. These major themes describe the professional socialization experienced throughout participants' doctoral studies as well as related experiences that impacted career development. Several subthemes also help break down and further contextualize major findings.

### Institutional Impact

This theme describes the impact participants' institution had on their professional socialization and career development within Counselor Education. Four subthemes further define this impact and include *professional goals and inspiration*, *support*, *core competencies*, and *professional deficits*. Seven participants spoke to this theme, describing the outcome of their institutional impact.

#### *Professional Goals and Inspirations*

This subtheme speaks to the goals and aspirations that developed in participants during their Counselor Education doctoral program. Because of their doctoral experience, participants were able to define what kind of professionals they wanted to be, how they wanted to contribute to the profession, and what types of institutions best matched their professional needs. Seven participants spoke to this subtheme, and this ability to goal set and map out their professional future helped participants shape what they aspired toward based on their experience in the doctoral program.

Participants commented on their strong desire to give back to the profession in the form of role modeling because of their doctoral studies. This desire was prompted by both positive and negative experiences during their time as students, and becoming someone their students look up to was described as a way to empower, inspire, and hone the next generation of counseling professionals. Lydia described having an overwhelmingly positive doctoral experience wherein she felt motivated and inspired. As a professor, she now wants to give this motivation back to her students, commenting, "I really want to be able to impact their lives and help them when they go out there, and they are in their world, their day-to-day world, and to be able to use what they picked from me." Patrick described encountering growth-promoting challenge during his doctoral life which resulted in a desire to be a quality professor, "I want student to, when they take my class, we know that this is going to be an interesting, engaged class, right? I want to be able to deliver quality, thoughtful things." Claudio further illustrated this desire and spoke to how poor multicultural awareness within his doctoral studies prompted him to value multicultural education and be a professor who challenges his students.

> Because of my doctoral program… there are still a lot of people out there who are not self-aware about their biases, assumptions, or stereotypes, or specific population, although they want to be a helping professional and they want to help others and have good intentions. So I wanted to become a counselor educator who really focus on teaching students on developing their awareness on those biases and assumptions.

These doctoral experiences prompted critical thought into what participants valued as teachers and what kind of professional they wanted to be.

Participants also spoke to ways they wanted to contribute to the Counselor Education field at large because of their doctoral education. Participants described developing particular

interest in key areas which filtered in to who they are now as professionals. Lydia described developing a deep passion for social justice because of her doctoral studies and how this is playing out when preparing for classes she now teaches.

> I'm doing a lot of reading around [social justice]. Seeing how do I teach, how do I blend social justice advocacy in the theories, how I blend social justice into the supervision piece, how do I create that alertness of social justice advocacy and skills? That is my niche.

Patrick discussed the value of expanding the horizons of Counselor Education as a field, as it is a young profession. He described how attending interdisciplinary conferences as a doctoral student inspired him to produce unique contributions for the Counselor Education field, "Going into interdisciplinary conferences and seeing what other people are doing. I'm doing a lot of stuff on [research agenda], none of these originated in the counseling field, right? This has been a huge catalyst for my growth." These experiences helped participants clarify professional goals that they are now living out as counselor educators.

Experiencing the responsibilities of counselor educators throughout their studies, participants were able to clearly define the type of environment they wanted to work in for their professional futures. Participants were able to describe the roles they enjoyed, the atmospheres they thrived in, and the kinds of professional circumstances that were not preferred. Lilly exemplified this, stating that she developed a passion for research but shied away from the realities of a research intensive position, "I really think what I really want. I still want to do research, because that's also a way to explain myself, but do I really want the pressure?" Sophia honed in on her desire to teach, sharing, "… I intentionally did not want an R1 institution. I wanted teaching, clinical-oriented, clinical program because I like to talk and be around

people… I did not want [the] publish or perish type mentality." For Younghee, she discovered a fondness for research and mentorship, leading to a professional goal, "… that's when I know I wanted to be a professor in a research school. I think that helped me thinking about what environments that I will want to work with." These experiences aided participants in setting professional goals and outcoming expectations upon their transition into the professorate.

***Support***

This subtheme provides commentary on the powerful effect of holistic support systems throughout the doctoral journey. Seven participants spoke to this, and these supports were described as aiding in the professional socialization and development of participants as it assisted them in understanding the roles, expectations, and realities of being a counselor educator. Prevalent elements of the support subtheme include mentorship and role modeling, institutional support, and peer support.

Role models and mentors within Counselor Education were described as transformative figures in the lives of participants. Participants shared having a good advisor, supportive faculty, and other professional figures that spurred growth and development. These individuals helped participants have confidence in their skills and abilities and inspired participants to be successful. Role models and mentors also greatly helped prepare participants for the job market, improving their self-efficacy during this crucial, post-doctoral period.

Participants specifically mentioned how working with someone who had international experience aided in their development. Ian commented, "I had good advisors. They had pretty enough experience of dealing with international students… They were kind of familiar to those issues and certain unique challenges that international students face." Tiramisu also had support from those familiar with international student issues.

> I reached out to those faculty members who were once international students in Counselor Education… Those kind of mentorship relationship, advice, I think those were the most practical help for me because they went through the same process that I been through.

Lilly talked about how her advisor was able to help beyond graduation, sharing, "I had a mentor who was international faculty. She even help me as working for all the green card or she let me know [about negotiation]."

Having mentors and role models further aided participants in understanding the roles they would fill when becoming counselor educators, what they wanted to be like as professionals, and enhancing the belief that they could succeed. Tiramisu shared that her faculty helped her understand how to transition from student to professor, commenting, "I think I learned better about the goal and the position of faculty versus a student… That kind of cleared the responsibilities of faculty member as well. And that has been pretty helpful for me to work." Ian noted that he benefitted from watching exemplary faculty, and this helped him shape what he hoped to become.

> My advisor was really excellent role model to me in terms of student responsive attitude and approaches. I truly believe that I was benefitting and privileged to work with her as a co-teacher in the same class environment a couple of times, and I learned so much from her.

Lilly again commented on the help she received from domestic faculty when it comes to applying for positions within academia and how this enhanced her self-efficacy, "That's really the role model… I do have faculty help me in doing all the mock interview, like a question by question. So I think that's all the beliefs that I can do, I can believe in myself."

Participants additionally spoke to the impact that holistic institutional support had on their development. In particular, institutions that had a culture supportive and understanding of international students and their issues resulted in greater resiliencies and brighter outcome expectations for participants. Sophia mentioned being the only international student in her program, but because of her institution's sensitivity to her circumstances, she received needed accommodation, "I started my cohort a semester prior because of that international need. Because they usually would only accept students in the summer, but I needed to start in the spring for immigration purposes." Tiramisu also had a positive, supportive culture at her institution, stating "I thought faculty and students were much more supportive and have a better understanding of international students in general… My faculty have a lot of experience working with or admitting, advising international student and that was really helpful." While discussing his cumulative doctoral experience, Patrick described it as "empowering" because of all the support and he received studying abroad.

Peer support was described by participants as the supportive power of peers, cohort members, and colleagues within the Counselor Education space. Participants emphasized how other students, international and domestic, came together to form a supportive, inspirational community that allowed them to feel comfortable and competent during their doctoral studies. The cohort model and programming with other international students specifically was instrumental in finding community and informal mentorship during their studies.

Several participants spoke to the value of international peers in their program. These peers added a sense of familiarity and home to a foreign and demanding environment and helped participants feel comfortable. Lilly described having several Chinese peers in her program and shared, "We are all from the same country, we totally understand each other. And it's just

magic." Ian also mentioned having international cohort members and discussed how they would often gather for social events and special meetings such as "friendsgiving" and birthday parties, which boosted moral and comradery. Tiramisu noted a similar experience and explained how having a number of international students within her cohort helped her find community, "There were more international students. So, I think just being an international student in my program was pretty positive experience."

Domestic peer support additionally benefitted international scholars during their studies, helping them to feel accepted and safe. Sophia described a senior colleague whom she connected with right away. This colleague helped her see her potential as a scholar and encouraged her to attended conferences throughout her doctoral program because she did not believe she could do it. Lydia described a supportive, intentional cohort experience where she went from feeling out of place to feeling like there was always someone ready to help her, "They were always available, they were open and would be like, if you need anything, let us know and we shall help." She went on to describe that her cohort helped her with everything from how to get textbooks to how to navigate her university's computer system. They even bonded outside of their school setting, "Sometimes we go out of town and just hang out and have a meal together and laugh at each other, the silly things we were doing. And that kept us going." Ian experienced professional support through his peers, commenting, "[My] cohort group, they were also pretty supportive and they were kind of telling me, I have no doubt you're going to be a great researcher and counselor educator. Those encouragements really means a lot to us, to me." These connections greatly enhanced the personal and professional efficacy of participants and created a sense of morale, perseverance, and legitimacy.

### *Core Competencies*

This sub-theme demonstrates how core Counselor Education competencies were strengthened throughout the doctoral program. All eight participants spoke to this phenomenon, and this strengthening then impacted participants' outcome expectations and confidence within their career futures. Participants described feeling more competent in specific areas such as teaching and research, which allowed them to realize that they could be successful counselor educators moving forward.

Participants spoke most frequently about how teaching was the most improved skill as the result of their doctoral studies. Younghee spoke to the cultural learning that took place, sharing, "I think teaching experiences really helped me to prepare myself as a professor, especially in the U.S. higher education settings, because it really has a different perspective and different values compared to Korea." Other participants discussed the benefit of coteaching, which for Sophia helped build a resumé that resulted in her current role as a professor at a teaching institution. For Ian, teaching allowed him to understand his professional role beyond being a student. Lydia spoke about how she now looks back at her doctoral teaching experiences and uses them to improve her classes as a professor.

> [I'm using] the evaluation feedback I got from the students… The students say that was good here, so I'm going to use this and even reinforce this demo and integrate it here in my teaching process and what I'm doing to prepare my lessons and my classes.

The hands-on experience of teaching helped participants become more socialized to the role of professor, build professional self-efficacy, and set expectations for their professional life.

Research experience was additionally discussed and was described as another hands-on experience that boosted professional self-efficacy. Sophia described uncovering parts of herself

as a result of her exposure to research during her program, and this prompted the development of who she wanted to be as a professional, “There was a researcher in me, there was teaching in me that were very much important to my thought process of who I would want to become as a counselor educator.” Ian commented on the impact of his R1 institution on his identity as a researcher, saying, “I also identify a big portion of my identity as a counselor educator as a researcher. I think that really poured my ambition or expectation from myself to be a good researcher and do a lot of research.” Others, like Claudio and Lydia, learned that through research, they could champion topics they cared about, such as multiculturalism, social justice, and advocacy, and this provided inspiration for a research agenda post-graduation.

Less robustly discussed were the core competency areas of supervision, leadership, and social justice and advocacy. These core competency areas were also described as socializing participants to the roles of counselor educators and building upon their professional competency. Younghee described how learning about multiculturalism and social justice in the U.S. transformed her thinking about these topics and helped her grow as a professional, “I learned those concepts in the U.S. as a doc student, and that was groundbreaking, and it really changed my whole perspective in understanding the roles of counselor.” Lilly brought up experiencing poor clinical supervision prior to her doctoral program. As a doctoral student, she described learning that multicultural supervision is a necessity as a professional.

> I really hope something, supervisor need to know more about the challenges of minority counselor. So that’s also a big passion. So I just think my doctoral program helped me have more clear picture about each part of our profession.

Patrick shared that his program “talk[ed] about leadership so much” and inspired him to think about how he wants to lead within the field, “When I think about leadership in our field, I don’t

need to be president of ACES… I am expanding the things that I feel comfortable with and the scholarship leadership is the way I want to take."

***Program Deficits***

Seven participants described encountering program deficits during their time as a student. Namely, participants spoke to general as well as core competency development lacking throughout their programs, such as teaching, research, counseling, and social justice/multiculturalism. Although paradoxical considering previous themes, participants in some cases shared going outside of their departments to get the necessary education and/or mentorship in these areas. Other participants mentioned needing to seek out opportunities in Counselor Education to teach or do research because it was not immediately accessible in their program. In some cases, these deficits resulted in participants lacking confidence in their skills and abilities when participating in job searching.

A number of participants spoke to general elements that could have been strengthened within their doctoral education. Sophia commented on the impact of unsupportive figures within her doctoral experience. She described how some faculty lacked passion for their subject and this affected her development, "I had professors that didn't care. And those experiences really hindered my learning because they were tired." Lilly echoed the effects of unsupportive figures, sharing her experience with those lacking multicultural appreciation for her circumstances, "We also have some White faculty, they're great but they just don't know what that looks like. They try to support you but they're not exactly understanding your situation." Patrick found that the Counselor Education field at large, being a young profession, can be lacking in mission and direction which made understanding the field unclear for him at times. He described, "There's numerous people do numerous different things, right? Sometimes it becomes overwhelming to

know what exactly are we doing? Sometimes we are lacking in our discipline and profession to really stay grounded…" He went on to describe the desire for greater guidance when it came to finding his place within the profession, saying, "There's a lot of freedom… I wouldn't say that there was a lot of guidance in terms of—and again, I'm not looking for hand holding, but I'm looking for someone who has a historical perspective."

Participants also commented on the deficits in core competencies encountered in their program. Tiramisu mentioned a lack of support for research which affected her development in this area, "I don't think I had a lot of support in terms of research… my advisor was really in the later phase of his profession, his career, and he didn't care about the research." Patrick shared that although he saw professional improvements in many areas, some things were still missing, "I felt much more prepared, much more confident as a counselor educator, as a researcher, and also as a teacher and supervisor… I noticed that I didn't mention counseling… I wouldn't say that I've become a much better counselor." Other participants, like Claudio, mentioned a missed opportunity for multicultural growth. Claudio described his institution's multicultural focus as not enough.

> It could be more helpful if there has been more challenges… the place where I study, many of the students and all the community members are White people. So, although I learn a lot about the multiculturalism and diversity, however, there was a lack of challenging towards it, so lack of challenging toward White students, or even, rather, ethnic minority students.

Younghee also experienced a lack of multicultural awareness, in particular when it came to international and refugee experiences. She commented, "I don't think there was any discussion

about this. International status, immigrant status, nationality was almost never discussed in multicultural counseling courses that I took."

## International Realities

This theme demonstrates the general circumstances that disrupted the professional lives of participants. All participants described these experiences, and disruptions included acculturation factors, personal stressors, the COVID-19 pandemic, issues with visa sponsorship, and feeling the need to prove their value. These circumstances were portrayed as standard realities for participants, as their international status appeared to facilitate these experiences.

### *Acculturation*

This sub-theme speaks to the effects of acculturation on participants and their experience abroad. All participants spoke to this, and language barrier in particular was mentioned as the most significant issue. This affected how participants learned, interacted with peers and faculty, and maintained their self-efficacy. Growing accustomed to life in another country also influenced their self-concept, causing some participants to feel behind, slow, out of place, and alien.

Language barrier hindered participants' professional development by causing feelings of inadequacy, alienness, and isolation. Ian mentioned language sometimes getting in the way of smooth communication between himself and others in his program, saying, "Sometimes I found some people's reactions awkward and could be because of those cultural differences or language barrier. I wanted to express this but regardless of my intention, sometimes those were delivered in another way." Due to the communication rift caused by this barrier, Ian sometimes felt isolated. Tiramisu commented on how her coursework was affected due to language difficulties, resulting in greater stress during her program. She noted, "Having to spend maybe some more

time on coursework compared to the domestic students just because English, just because of the linguistic difference." Claudio mentioned how language has constantly been a struggle, inhibiting his confidence and professional capacity.

> If I do this in my language, then I feel like I could be more confident, and I'm gonna do a much better job in terms of writing or practice or teaching, any of that stuff… I want to do this in my own language, but that's not possible. I just admit that I'm not going to be perfect in my English forever.

Language was shown to be a significant factor in how participants rate themselves as professionals, resulting in extra effort being put forth to feel worthy of their academic status.

Other forms of acculturation, such as cultural adjustments, hindered participants' development and made them feel like outsiders. Lydia described significant acculturative challenges when she first arrived in the U.S. which made focusing on her studies difficult, "Everything was new, like, almost shifting from the left to the right… So just that whole piece of in my mind getting to settle that before I can even concentrate on the school work." She further shared differences between Uganda and the U.S., describing how driving, light switches, elevators, and sink handles were different, "So all that whole mental orientation of orienting myself to the environment kind of distracted me a bit, put me a little bit off balance." Similar struggles were voiced by Ian, Lilly, and Sophia who all described how the foreignness of their environment resulted in an adjustment period that made them feel out of place. Patrick described his focus on not standing out because of his international status, stating, "I was trying to make sure that the cultural barrier didn't get in the way… I was much more wanting to conform, I wanted to make sure that I am not different than my peers." This acculturative factor was

described as an additional layer of difficulty participants experienced while completing their doctoral program.

***Personal Stressors***

This sub-theme illuminates the various stressors encountered by participants as they navigated their Counselor Education program and academic job search. All participants described this experience, and stressors largely included anxiety and stress about securing a professor position and feeling disconnected and alien from issues in the U.S. due to their international status.

Participants discussed the pressure and uncertainty around securing a professor position within the U.S. As they were international and in need of a visa, the ability to land a job was crucial as without employment, participants would need to return to their home country and rethink their career trajectory. Patrick exemplified the pressure and extreme sacrifice that comes with being an international scholar in the job market.

> As an international students, I have a lot of challenges my peers don't have. [My peers say] I'm probably only applying to three, five places. I don't want to go out of [state name], and, you know, if I don't get a full time position, I'm just going to do part time or even a gap year. I'll do something else and then I'll go back to it. That's not an option for us, right?... I didn't have the luxury of, oh, I'm just gonna do big cities and I'm just gonna do these states. I applied everywhere, you know?

In addition to the pressure to apply for any and all jobs, Patrick described the constant restarting that international scholars must do not only within their school life, but also within the employment process, "… you are going to a place where you know nothing and nobody potentially in a place, right?... It's a very salient feeling of, you're just by yourself." Claudio also

spoke to the disconnection that comes with being dependent on a visa, saying, "… the sad part, you know, we just moving around based on job, based on our admissions to programs." This made putting down roots and maintaining supportive connections difficult, as he continued, "I spent there for about four years living in [city name], so I met really great people in community, not the school… it's kind of really sad to say goodbye to people who have spent about four years like family." Those who had family experienced additional stress when faced with the realities of moving for work, as Ian described, "I brought my wife and kid, and I got another kid in the meantime… So there was a lot going on… so that was continuously affecting the transition into the role of counselor educator."

Participants additionally commented on feeling like an outsider in the U.S. because of their international status. Younghee described this phenomenon as salient within her experience in America.

> … it's more than just I have to wait longer line in the airport… It's very psychological in terms of the pressure that I give to myself. The fact that I'm not a part of the society, I felt very disconnected when I talk about those efficacy issues and societal issues in the U.S. as an international doc student to masters students or to clients.

Younghee went on to describe feeling like she was "pretending" while educating her students, saying, "… as a counselor, we need to do things to change the society when I can't vote… I am pretending I have power in society, but in fact, I do not until I get citizenship… I think it creates helplessness." Tiramisu additionally spoke to disconnection due to being international. She described how language played a part in her socialization, adding an additional layer of difficulty.

> Sometimes international students have two different personalities, as it's a person who speaks when they speak their native language, but then another person that speaks English, right? And then sometimes those two different personalities are really different… And then it was kind of hard for me to be socialized being in an environment where I have to deal with that interaction… so it was all mixed.

Claudio similarly spoke to differences that he had to adjust to, causing him stress during the study abroad experience, sharing, "The cultures are so different… I just feel more comfortable just being with people from my country who speaks also the same language… There's some of the gap."

***COVID-19***

This sub-theme describes the hardship faced by participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants shared being disconnected from their families back home for years at a time and re-recognizing the fragility of their international status. This was due to many schools cutting graduate assistantship funding and creating mandates to send international students home if they did not meet an in-person class quota during the pandemic. Other participants mentioned the strain COVID had on the job market, noting fewer jobs being posted due to budget cuts which caused increased stress and anxiety. These realities greatly impacted participants, as their professional goals within the U.S. were thrown into question and the possibility of staying state-side was uncertain.

The COVID-19 pandemic additionally disrupted the socialization of participants as traditional educational methods were suddenly supplemented by virtual contact. In general, Patrick commented on how many counseling conferences were cancelled, making many professional pursuits "twice as hard." Sophia explained the impact COVID had on her

development, describing how something was lost being in the virtual higher education environment, “Eventually though, my socialization aspects became a little bit more blurred because I did about a year of my program over COVID. So my classes were online…” Tiramisu also commented on the hindering effects of COVID during her studies and how this affected her personally and professionally.

> … after my second year there was pandemic coming in, and then I didn’t have the full experience in four full years of experience as a doc student, which is pretty sad. But then prior to that outbreak, I was pretty confident.

Lilly also described hardship due to COVID and shared how her profession endeavors were impacted as well as her personal state of being, “… you are still very anxious in second year. When you starting some projects, COVID happens, [and I would do anything to get] back my mental health in 2020.”

For Sophia, COVID-19 had a profound impact on how she viewed her professional future in the U.S. For her, COVID halted her professional development as her international status was threatened by the pandemic.

> I didn't think I could have goals… when I was in the middle of my doctoral degree, COVID came, and within four weeks of COVID, when we’re still deciding on what you do for fall classes or not, the presidential administration at that time requested for all international students that were taking online classes to leave the country. That really reminded me that I didn’t belong to the United States.

The effect of COVID threw more things into question for Sophia, and her singular goal was to finish her doctoral program because everything else was uncertain. She further commented, “I had a lot of short term goals, but I didn’t think I could have large goals.” Lilly encountered

similar challenges within her program, explaining how funding for graduate assistantships were suddenly cut, "So during the COVID, whole cohort are guaranteed a three-year graduate assistantship. At the end of one year they said, 'Your program has too many assistantships and there is a hiring freeze.'" This created uncertainty for Lilly where she questioned how she could continue in her program.

The COVID-19 pandemic also had a profoundly personal impact on participants as they were landlocked in the U.S. while the world and their families were struggling. Lydia spoke to the traumatic impact COVID had on her life while abroad, describing how personal loss in Uganda distracted her from her U.S. studies, "… within a period of two weeks, around 20 people who I personally knew died when I was [in the U.S.]… My anxiety went through the roof." Ian experienced familial hardship being alone in the U.S. with his spouse and children.

> It was really hard for multiple aspects… because of COVID-19, for eight or nine months we were all together. And we're counseling graduate couple… And during the time we're serving our clients… my kid was watching TV for multiple hours, and [I felt guilty] as a parent.

Ian also described how he became hyper aware of his appearance, being of Asian descent. He described stopping himself from speaking Korean in public for fear of discrimination during COVID-19, asking himself, "is it safe?"

In addition to the stress created by COVID, participants were prohibited from traveling home to be with friends and family during this stressful period. This enhanced feelings of loneliness and isolation. Lydia said, "I came in 2019 and I had planned to go home in 2020… I never went back until December of '21 because of COVID." During this time, she endured the loss of many friends and family from afar, growing afraid of checking her phone for fear of more

tragic news. Patrick also spoke to the loneliness he experienced, saying, “I can’t really go home… my parents came last month, but before that, I hadn’t seen them for four years.” Ian added, “During the COVID-19, we were not able to go to Korea to see my family… So, it kind of added to the kind of struggle and challenge a little bit more.” Lilly also missed visiting her family, stating, “The loneliness is the part that we always to deal with, especially during the COVID. I haven’t been able to come back home. Almost three and a half years, and I haven’t seen any of my family member.”

### *Visa Issues and Sponsorship*

This sub-theme demonstrates the difficulties and stress created by international scholars needing a visa. All participants described maintaining their visa status as paramount, as this allowed them to continue their journey abroad and conceive of future professional goals within the U.S. Participants also described the effect needing visa sponsorship had on their job search, as this limited where they could apply and made landing a job much more competitive. Alternatively, without a job that provided visa sponsorship, participants faced returning to their home country.

Visa status was reported to affect participants in their doctoral experience as well as during their job search. Sophia encountered work issues when trying to gather hours to apply for full counseling licensure, sharing, “There was a lot of immigration barriers. When it comes to research, I was able to do research assistantship. I had barriers within finding clinical placement because of the reality that I couldn’t work outside of the school.” This resulted in Sophia doing the majority of her counseling hours pro bono, which lead her to question her professional capabilities, “It was a barrier in that sense of would I even get a job with only a [limited counseling license]? And I’m still working on that licensure.”

Other barriers were encountered during the job search phase of participants' professional journey. Participants were restricted to institutions that were willing to sponsor the H1-B work visa, though many participants found that schools were either not knowledgeable of this visa process or were unwilling to providing funding. Claudio illustrated the critical nature of visa sponsorship while interviewing for positions, commenting, "… domestic students, it is okay for them to apply jobs here and there… if we don't get a job after graduation then we cannot stay in the United States." Younghee spoke to the absolutely necessity of visa sponsorship as well as the weight that reality has on her as an international scholar.

> It's definitely one of our barriers is the fact that I need visa sponsorship to have a job. That is a real issue, and that is something that I will always think about, and I will always prioritize. And it's not just a clerical barrier, it's more of a psychological barrier as well and the fact that I have to be twice better so that I can feel valuable enough to ask for that sponsorship.

Patrick also spoke to the realities of needing visa sponsorship and the skepticism his institution had toward him because of it, "Our university wasn't willing to sponsor right away… it is something that I feel disappointed at, just there are lack of awareness of how important this is for international faculty." He went on to describe his institution holding out sponsorship until two or three years into his professorate, to which he openly questioned, "… do you do that to other faculty?... you're on probation until your third year until they're really serious about you."

***Proving my Value***

This sub-theme illustrates the pressure felt by participants to prove their worth as international individuals. Most notably, participants felt that because of their unique struggles and identities, they needed to try harder to be seen as proficient within their professional spaces.

Six participants spoke to this, noting feelings of being an imposter, being ignored, and needing to exert extra effort to stand out and show their professional worth.

Feeling deserving of their scholarly status as international individuals proved challenging for participants. Lydia described her imposter syndrome beginning in her doctoral program and continuing on into her role as professor.

> I was the first person from my country at [university name]… then I come to class and everything is new, and everybody seems like they just got it… I kind of felt like, am I in the right group? A part of me felt like I was an imposter. So, that was affecting my self-confidence and in a number of times I would hold back and be a bit like, I don't think I belong in this league.

Now as a professor, she affirms that she has more confidence in herself, but still questions her abilities and feels the need to work hard to prove her worth. While interviewing for jobs, Younghee commented on the hardship that came with negotiating her value with interviewers, sharing, "I understanding the concept of me having to sell myself, but can I negotiate my value was another level for me…" She went on to connect this with the pressure that comes with asking for visa sponsorship, as she believes she needs to work much harder to earn that support, "… that perspective has stayed for a while… I'm less than, like after I get H1-B, and know that my university will sponsor me for my green card. That's when I stopped thinking about, I need to prove myself." Sophia described being denied visa sponsorship from every job she applied for, and so she decided to apply for a visa where she could sponsor herself.

> You know what's funny about this visa is that you need to provide immigration with your resumé. And they read your resumé and they then deem you if you are a national interest or not. And I would look at my resumé and feel like I didn't do enough. I should have

done in that more. I should have been to more conferences, published more and everything.

Patrick, Claudio, and Ian also commented on how acculturative issues such as language and cultural barriers prompted the need to prove their value within the academic space. As a result of these and other barriers, participants commented on the tenacity and flexibility required of international scholars to be successful. Sophia exemplified this, commenting, "We do tend to be way more adaptable and flexible in how we portray ourselves," Patrick agreed, sharing, "I think there are so much the international students and faculty can offer that are currently underutilized or even ignored."

**International Lens**

This theme shows the meaning making process and self-discovered value of participants as international scholars in the U.S. All participants spoke to this theme and described their unique contribution as international scholars. Within this theme are two sub-themes, *meaning and purpose* and *outside the American lens*, which speak to the personal journey of finding an authentic place within the profession and the explicit value international scholars bring to the multicultural Counselor Education landscape.

***Meaning and Purpose***

This sub-theme illustrates the deep meaning participants were able to make in their professional lives because of their experience as international Counselor Education doctoral students. Seven participants spoke to this, and this meaning-making process resulted in recognizing the valuable perspective they bring as an international scholar, how being a minority enriches the educational space, and how cultures are blended to create new topics and understanding.

Participants described the personal meaning that resulted from their doctoral studies and the connection with had with their professional selves. Patrick was able to look back and frame his international student experience in a new way, recognizing how he pushed down his international identity to fit in better with his peers. He described wishing someone could have helped him see the value he brought with him as an international student during his studies, commenting, "… there's a reframe of, gosh, you don't know how much stuff that you already have. Stop looking for other things… you'd be able to focus on what you have and grow them instead because they are part of you." For Younghee, she was able to find value in her international status upon her transition to the professorate, which she had previously struggled to do as a student.

> … you have me as a colleague and as a professor, you probably wouldn't have a chance to understand what an immigrants might feel. So what I'm sharing is not to nag my struggles. It's also help you understand another marginalized status that you probably haven't thought of.

Tiramisu described noticing a greater appreciation for international topics within the Counselor Education field which has improved her sense of legitimacy as an international scholar, "… our work is being valued and also the influence of our work, especially in the current society, is well recognized… that kind of gave me kind of confidence being in this field for different reason." Sophia also realized how her presence as a faculty changed the student application pool to include more international students. This made her realize that her representation in the Counselor Education space mattered and helped diversify her program. Claudio further described how straddling two cultures expanded his view of privilege and oppression, "… I really got a lot of privileges in my country… I'm also a minority in the United States. So, I was able to think in

their shoes more… which I might not able to do in my country." Because of their U.S. studies, participants were able to discover newfound meaning and purpose in their life experience, academic pursuits, inner value.

***Outside the American Lens***

This sub-theme speaks to the unique and broadened perspective participants were able to realize as a result of studying in the U.S. Most notably, participants described recognizing the value of their unique contributions to the multicultural landscape within the Counselor Education field and how they have the unique ability to see and critique things from outside an Americanized lens. Six participants spoke to this, and this was described as a strength and something that added to their value within the profession. Additionally, participants were able to grow their view of what Counselor Education is from what they had experienced in their home country.

The unique perspective of international scholars was noted as a strength that brings a new view into the Counselor Education space. Sophia noted this in her experiences, saying that her flexibility in understanding diverse perspectives grew because it was a necessity in her everyday life as an international student. She then used this flexibility to critique the American point of view of multicultural issues.

> We're not talking much about other factors of diversity as sometimes we're just sitting down and, like, okay so this week we're going to review Latinx perspectives. This week we're going to review African Americans. So it's all so much compartmentalize, but that's the American thought process… other cultures, they don't necessarily have things so black and white.

Patrick echoed this critique, commenting on how his international experience has allowed him greater flexibility within multicultural spaces and the ability to critique the American multicultural perspective, "I think being exposed to a very different culture gives me a window to how complex human beings and human societies can be, but these lens are not necessarily going to be available for folks who grew up here." Ian described how his international experience extends beyond his native and host culture.

> I have more international experience doing my internship in Singapore, and I've traveled to Africa a few times for mental health services project. I can do and give kind of consultation to people, folks in Korea as a counselor educator in the U.S. and vice versa, right? I can also bring some different perspective to the department meeting when making a decision.

These unique multicultural perspectives were described as ways to grow understanding of people and their identities, aiding the Counselor Education field in expanding its view of this topic.

## Answering the Research Questions

The first research question examines how international faculty feel their Counselor Education doctoral experience socialized them for the professorate. Socialization refers to the process of narrowing behavioral potential into an acceptable range based on group standards (Child, 1954). In this instance, understanding how the doctoral experience impacted the narrowing of behavioral potential into an acceptable range so that one can become a counselor educator is the objective of this inquiry. Using question one as a foundational base, question two then explores how one's professional socialization as a counselor educator impacted their career development. Career development is defined in this instance using the tenants of social cognitive career theory (SCCT; Lent et al., 1994). These tenants include self-efficacy, outcome

expectations, and personal goals. Question two seeks to explore what factors contributed to or detracted from these three tenants within participants' professional life. The overview of themes as they respond to the research questions can be seen in table 2.

**Table 2**

*Research Questions and Corresponding Themes*

| Research Question | Themes | Subthemes |
|---|---|---|
| RQ1: How do international faculty feel their Counselor Education doctoral experience socialized them for the professorate? | 1. Institutional impact | a. Professional goals and inspiration<br>b. Support<br>c. Core competencies<br>d. Professional deficits |
| | 2. International realities | a. Acculturation<br>b. Personal stressors<br>c. COVID-19<br>d. Visa issues and sponsorship |
| RQ2: What factors contributed to or detracted from their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals within their professional life? | 1. Institutional impact | a. Professional goals and inspiration<br>b. Support<br>c. Core competencies<br>d. Professional deficits |
| | 2. International realities | a. Acculturation<br>b. Personal stressors<br>c. COVID-19<br>d. Visa issues and sponsorship<br>e. Proving my value |
| | 3. International lens | a. Meaning and purpose<br>b. Outside the American lens |

## Answering Research Question One

### *Institutional Impact Theme*

The first theme, *institutional impact*, and subsequent subthemes, *professional goals and inspiration*, *support*, *core competencies*, and *professional deficits*, provide insight into how the participants are socialized into their role as counselor educators. The *institutional impact* theme as a whole speaks to how participants' place of study socialized them for their professional lives, helping define what kind of professionals they wanted to be, how they wanted to contribute to the profession, and what types of institutions best matched their professional needs. The subsequent subthemes further detail participants' socialization.

Because of the impact of participants' institution, these scholars were able to define their academic persona and what they wanted to achieve professionally. This spoke to the socialization process undergone by participants, as the knowledge they gained around Counselor Education culminated in an overall understanding of what it means to be a professor. For example, participants demonstrated a holistic understanding of the Counselor Education field by describing the duties and necessary skills required to lead in that space. This includes things such as being a multiculturally competent instructor, using student-centered strategies, and building relevant curriculum for classes. They additionally shared innovative thought and inspiration around how to contribute to and grow the profession of counseling as an academic.

Support played a significant role for participants as they progressed in their doctoral journey. In regard to professional socialization, mentorship and role modeling had the most influential impact. Participants described how working with mentors greatly helped refine their idea of what a good counselor educator was, which often differed from the persona of professors in their home country. Participants were then able to model themselves after those they admired

while also working to find their authentic expression as international academics. In particular, participants noted the pronounced student-centered attitude of mentors and role models, citing this as a major catalyst for their growth and learning in their socialization. The positive impact of role models and mentors was especially apparent in areas such as research and teaching. Co-teaching and being part of a research team lead by a mentor helped participants understand standards and expectations for these duties, socializing them to these responsibilities and growing their professional competencies.

Gaining experience with Counselor Education core competencies was a positive factor in the lives of participants. This subtheme described how participants grew in their socialization as the result of being exposed to core competencies within the Counselor Education field, most notably the core competencies of research and teaching. The hands-on experience of professional responsibilities, such as leadership, supervision, research, and teaching, enhanced participants' understanding of what they would be doing as counselor educators. This in turn provided rich socialization into the profession, as participants gained mastery in these subject areas and understood first-hand what went into being a competent, student-centered professional. They additionally learned what it took to perform the responsibilities of their future roles.

Despite the growth-promoting experiences described by participants, program deficits were also discussed. These deficits were described as the lack of development in core competency areas, namely the areas of teaching, research, social justice, and counseling. Deficits additionally included a lack of support and understanding for international students, unsupportive figures within their program, and an unclear definition of the Counselor Education field at large. These deficits were described as negatively affecting professional socialization, as participants were left confused and unclear regarding key areas of development. As a result, some

participants described going outside of their program to gain needed experiences, such as seeking research mentorship from external faculty. Others were left uncertain regarding specific subjects, such as how being a good counselor relates to Counselor Education.

### *International Realities Theme*

The second theme, *international realities*, and subthemes four of the five subthemes, *acculturation*, *personal stressors*, *COVID-19*, and *visa issues and sponsorship*, described general circumstances and experiences that disrupted the lives of participants. These factors were unique to the international student experience and negatively impacted participants' socialization during their doctoral journey.

Acculturation, and in particular, language barrier, was described as a hindering force throughout the doctoral process. Acculturative factors prevented participants from communicating clearly, forming connections with professors and peers, and seeing themselves as competent within the Counselor Education space. In relation to the socialization process, acculturation appeared to create a barrier between participants and their learning environment, adding extra layers of difficulty. In particular, participants noted trying to manage a cultural adjustment period that distracted them from their academic pursuits. They additionally sought to hide their cultural adjustment process in order to fit in with their academic environment and spent extra time on assignments because of language difficulties. This made the professional socialization process more complex as participants had to navigate how to be themselves in a new culture and how to be a professional in their field simultaneously.

Personal stressors endured by participants appeared to mildly affect professional socialization. Personal stressors were described as hinderances that occurred in the lives of participants inside and outside of their academic life that had an effect on their studies and career

pursuits. These stressors included anxiety around securing employment as a professor and feeling disconnected and alien from issues in the U.S. Regarding professional socialization, participants voiced the stress that came with finding themselves within the context of a foreign environment. This was described as disorienting and distracting, which took away from the socialization process during their doctoral education. Participants were not only focused on becoming counselor educators, but also becoming accustom to life in a host culture, often focusing on hiding the impact of their adjustment. These findings are similar to those in the *acculturation* subtheme, though speak to the stress involved in masking their discomfort to fit into their surroundings.

COVID-19 had a profound impact on the professional socialization of study participants. The COVID-19 pandemic was described as a hardship that isolated participants from their immediate surroundings as well as their family in their home country. As the worldwide quarantine that accompanied COVID-19 prevented in-person contact, something was reportedly lost during the professional socialization process. Courses went online, professional conferences were suspended, and the hands-on, in-person experiences typically found in a Counselor Education program were drastically altered. This resulted in separation from the campus communities and mentors that had provided rich professional socialization experiences. The mental health of participants was also reportedly worsened, causing distractions from coursework. It was more difficult for participants to socialize to their professional roles considering these factors, and the isolation caused by quarantine added a layer of difficulty to the professional socialization process.

Visa issues and sponsorship was a unique part of participants' professional socialization process. Participants who had worked with mentors experienced in international student issues

learned early about negotiation and asking for visa sponsorship. Participants were then prepared to implement this during their job search, as it was paramount for their professional future in the U.S. They were mentored in the interview process and prepped on negotiation tactics to help them land employment considering their international status. This professional socialization element is unique to international students and requires advisors and mentors to know how to prepare these unique students for success beyond their doctoral degree.

## Answering Research Question Two

### *Institutional Impact Theme*

The first theme, *institutional impact*, and subsequent subthemes, *professional goals and inspiration*, *support*, *core competencies*, and *professional deficits*, additionally provide insight into how the second research question can be answered. The socialization experience participants received from their institution directly impacted and informed elements of career development as counselor educators. The subsequent subthemes help to illustrate participants' career development experience.

Because of the impact of participants' institution, these scholars were able to define personal goals and find inspiration for what they wanted to achieve professionally, which had implications for their career development. To begin, participants expressed a general enhancement of their self-efficacy, describing how their doctoral program engendered a well-rounded sense of professionalism and capability. This was achieved through the various curricular experiences in areas such as research, teaching, and multicultural exposure which allowed them to grow their skills and recognize self-improvement. Even deficits in this area resulted in inspiration to make up for lacking subjects in their future role as a counselor educator. This then lead to the creation of outcome expectations, wherein participants expressed their plans

to become educators focused on key areas such as multicultural competence, research, and pedagogy. This informed personal goals, as participants spoke to the desire to work at R1, R2, or teaching-focused institutions that would best enhance their professional aspirations.

Support from mentorship and role models additionally contributed to the career development of participants. To begin, self-efficacy was improved as the result of engaging in activities with mentors, such as being part of their research team or participating with them in co-teaching experiences. These opportunities gave participants hands-on experiences, feedback, and chances to improve in real time. This allowed them to grow their self-efficacy and see themselves as future counselor educators. This then helped participants conceive of outcome expectations based on their doctoral research and teaching experiences, such as the expectation that they will be effective researchers and educators. Personal goals could then be set, such as goals involving how they wished to give back to the profession, for instance by leading through scholarship, being a student-centered educator, and pursue a particular research agenda.

Institutional support and peer support were elements that contributed to the professional development of participants. Institutional support was characterized as the holistic support of an institution for international students while peer support was described as the positive influence of peers and cohort members during the doctoral journey. Institutions that demonstrated understanding for international accommodations and needs provided participants with an improved sense of self-efficacy. Without such support, participants would face extra challenges that could throw the ability to finish their program into question. This support also helped sustain outcome expectations held by participants, as they were able to see a path forward toward graduation. Personal goals for their professional futures were then created based on this trajectory. Peer support additionally improved the self-efficacy of study participants, as cohort

members and peers were routinely encouraging, supportive, and positive about participants' development and ability to become a counselor educator. Similar to institutional support, this also enabled participants to sustain positive outcome expectations, such as proficiency in teaching and research as a professor, and set personal goals, such as working at certain institutions, because of the support for their skills and abilities.

The career development of participants was also richly enhanced through exposure to the core competencies of Counselor Education. To begin, self-efficacy was improved in most core competency areas because of the hands-on experiences they received. Feedback from these experiences additionally enhanced self-efficacy, as they were able to receive critiques on their performance and implement changes to better their abilities. Depending on what participants gravitated toward while gaining experience in core competency areas, they created outcome expectations and personal goals for their professional life. For example, some participants discovered a passion for research and set an outcome expectation that they would pursue a specific research agenda after graduation. They then set personal goals to gain employment at an R1 university so that they could fulfill this expectation, similar to findings in the *professional goals and inspiration* subtheme.

Program deficits additionally impacted the career development of participants, namely the aspect of self-efficacy. In their career development journey as doctoral students, participants spoke to feeling regret that they had not been prepared better as counselors, had not been given more support as international students, and had encountered figures who hindered their growth. This affected self-efficacy by lessening their confidence in skills and abilities when participating in the academic job search. Outcome expectations and personal goals were described as

remaining intact, though the perception of their ability to achieve these goals and expectations was negatively impacted.

### *International Realities Theme*

The second theme, *international realities*, and subthemes, *acculturation*, *personal stressors*, *COVID-19*, *visa issues and sponsorship*, and *proving my value*, describe how the disruptive factors that accompany life for international scholars affect career development during participants' doctoral journey.

Acculturation was shown to detract from participants' career development as counselor educators. In regard to self-efficacy, lack of language ability caused participants to question whether or not they could be equal to American scholars in the field. They worried that their non-native English ability would result in being less competitive in the job market, hinder their ability to publish research, and make them less valuable to an employer. Outcome expectations were affected less so, as all participants described having clear ideas of what they expected professionally, though they acknowledged their international identity may color how others perceive their capabilities in a professorial role. Personal goals also appeared to be minimally impacted by acculturation. Although various challenges resulted from the acculturative process, participants voiced a solid commitment to their studies. They additionally described the creation of personal goals they all strived for throughout their doctoral journey despite acculturative challenges.

Personal stressors had a more pronounced impact on career development, specifically self-efficacy. In particular, participants shared that they felt the need to outperform competition in the job market to an exceedingly high degree during the job search. Some participants stated that their ability to do this waivered due to English language deficiencies and feeling less worthy

of the professorate than native competition. This also affected self-efficacy as a professor, as participants voiced feeling less qualified to speak to multicultural and social justice issues within the U.S. due to their foreign status. Although personal stressors did impact ease of the professional development process, participants remained resolute in their outcome expectations and personal goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic also had a significant impact on participants' career development. On a student level, the stress created by COVID-19 made some participants question their self-efficacy and wonder whether or not they could continue with their studies. Personal goals and outcome expectations were similarly affected, as the pandemic caused university budget cuts that threatened the funding of international students. This was coupled with the threat of being returned to their home country if they did not take a mandatory minimum of in-person courses. This resulted in participants questioning if they could have goals and expectations for their professional life in the U.S. as their ability to complete their degree was thrown into uncertainty.

Visa issues and sponsorship seriously impacted the career development of international scholars. Without visa sponsorship from their employer, participants faced returning to their country of origin, effectively ending their ability to be counselor educators within America. The pressure created by this reality made participants question their self-efficacy and wonder if they were a competitive enough candidate to gain employment and the additional visa sponsorship. This also threw their outcome expectations and personal goals into question, as uncertainty around their ability to achieve weakened their belief that they could have outcome expectations and personal goals within their professional life. Visa sponsorship thus proved to be a final

determining factor regarding whether or not everything participants had worked for could become a reality.

Connected to the *visa issues and sponsorship* subtheme, participants reported feeling the need to prove their value as international scholars. Proving their value was described as the desire to be seen as proficient within their professional spaces despite their unique circumstances and struggles. Within this process, participants reported feeling like an imposter, being ignored, and needing to put forth extra effort to demonstrate professional worth. Similar to previous findings, this negatively affected the professional self-efficacy of participants by adding a layer of difficulty for international scholars. As a student, participants reported labeling themselves as less capable in the classroom and other learning environments because of their initial struggles with acculturation and language. This then prompted the desire to prove their value and be recognized as someone who can succeed and successfully fit in to their professional space. This carried over to the academic job search and participants' roles as professor, as they reported feeling the need to prove their value above and beyond that of domestic competition. This need was again prominent within their hiring institution because of the acculturative and linguistic struggles they face as international scholars.

### *International Lens Theme*

The third theme, *international lens*, and subthemes, *meaning and purpose* and *outside the American lens*, showed how the unique international perspectives held by international scholars connected to meaning and purpose within their professional life. This had direct implications for the career development of study participants.

As the result of their doctoral studies, participants were able to make meaning in their professional lives. This meaning making process resulted in recognizing the valuable perspective

they bring as international scholars, appreciating how being a minority enhances the educational space, and realizing how blending cultures creates new topics and understandings within multicultural scholarship. For example, participants spoke to how they learned about privilege, oppression, and discrimination from an American perspective which built upon what they had learned and experienced in their home country. Participants were also able to realize a unique perspective around these issues as international scholars.

Finally, participants voiced that their international identity enhanced the educational space because they can represent international learners and teach others from an underrepresented perspective within Counselor Education. Although this meaning making occurred post-doctorate, participants were able to appreciate in retrospect how their doctoral experiences was the catalyst for these realizations. In some ways, this aided in the development of personal goals for participants as multiculturalism was very important to their professional identity. They felt that their voices could be appreciated within university culture and Counselor Education scholarship. This thus encouraged them to set goals around pursuing research agendas and teaching topics that expand the multicultural conversation in the field.

In addition to meaning and purpose, participants discussed their ability to view topics from outside an American lens. This ability enabled participants to describe the value of their unique contributions to the multicultural landscape within Counselor Education and critique things from an internationalized perspective. Although also a post-doctoral realization, participants described seeing this as a strength that added to their value as counselor educators. They described being able to bring new viewpoints and challenges into multicultural classroom discussion, widen perspectives within departmental meetings, and critique American scholarship

in the multicultural space through their unique viewpoint. This culminated in the enhancement of self-efficacy as a counselor educator.

## Chapter IV Summary

This chapter provided an account of the procedures and findings for this research inquiry. This included a review of methods followed according to the phenomenological hermeneutic approach and updates to procedures made by the researcher. The eight participants interviewed for this research were also described. This study resulted in a total of three main themes being gleaned from participant interviews with four subthemes in theme one, five subthemes in theme two, and two subthemes in theme three. These themes and subthemes were demonstrated using quotes form participant interviews, and the chapter concluded with showing how the themes answered the research questions for this inquiry. Chapter five explains the relevance of study findings in relation to the current literature and the Counselor Education field at large.

# CHAPTER V

# DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the overarching conclusions gained from the results of this qualitative inquiry. As such, this chapter summarizes the study, presents how study findings are supported by related literature, and provides implications for how study findings impact counselor educators and the Counselor Education field. Challenges, limitations, and overall conclusions are also include. This chapter finishes by providing recommendations for future research.

## Summary of the Study

Becoming a counselor educator is a complex and rigorous process wherein students grow both personally and professionally (Dollarhide et al., 2013). Throughout this process, students develop in accordance with doctoral competency standards (CACREP, 2021) which help socialize them into the role of professor. For international learners, this process includes unique challenges (Behl et al., 2017; Hegarty, 2014; Jang et al., 2014; McDowell et al., 2012; Ng, 2012; Pollock et al., 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Sherry et al., 2010; Jang et al., 2014; Kuo et al., 2018; Woo et al., 2015), and at present, it is unclear how the process of professional socialization impacts the career development of this student group. As such, this study sought to examine the professional socialization experiences of international Counselor Education students and its impact on their career development process.

### Overview of the Problem

Within Counselor Education, there are few studies that focus on the experience of international students and even fewer studies focusing on international faculty. The literature that is currently available largely speaks to the international experience through a deficit lens,

limiting a more holistic view of these scholars. Within the higher education space, international scholars have been promoted as a great asset, as they broaden multicultural perspectives and diversify the educational space (Hegarty, 2014; McDowell et al., 2012; Fang et al., 2012), yet exploration into their experience beyond a deficit-driven perspective is considerably lacking. This has resulted in an underappreciation of how these individuals contribute to their fields in an American context.

The Counselor Education field stands to promote the inclusion and celebration of multicultural perspectives (American Counseling Association, 2014). In recent years, there has been a call to move toward a decolonized appreciation of mental health and mental health education within the U.S. (Singh et al., 2020), which can be interpreted to include the promotion of international voices within the field. As the research into and numbers of international scholars are low within Counselor Education (CACREP, 2022b), it is unclear how international students and faculty contribute to the multicultural mission considering their unique status and diverse, non-native multicultural perspectives. Inquiring more into their experiences within American higher education can help to uncover their multicultural perspective as globalized citizens and how this enhances the field of U.S. Counselor Education.

**Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

Given the limited inquiry into the experiences of international scholars within Counselor Education, the purpose of this study was to explore the professional socialization of international students and how this connected to their career development. Given this focus, the research questions guiding this inquiry were as follows:

1. How do international faculty feel their Counselor Education doctoral experience socialized them for the professorate?

2. What factors contributed to or detracted from their self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals within their professional life?

## Findings Related to the Literature

### The Benefit of Experiential Learning

A theme apparent throughout the literature on Counselor Education core competencies is the immense benefit of experiential learning. In particular, the experience of supervising, teaching, (Limberg et al., 2013; Murdock et al., 2013), and conducting research (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Limberg et al., 2013) has been shown to improve self-efficacy and confidence in a student's skills and abilities. Within the international student population specifically, clinical experiences as well as completing coursework have been show to improve self-efficacy (Haktanir et al., 2022), and professional development has been reported to improve as the result of teaching experiences within their program (Li & Liu, 2020).

The findings of this study support the benefit of hands-on learning for Counselor Education students. Although no studies have examined this phenomenon within international students specifically, this study presents strong evidence that this population also greatly benefits from experiential education. This is exemplified within the *institutional impact* sub-theme, *core competencies*. In this sub-theme, participants spoke at length about the benefit of co-teaching, conducting research, and supervising others. In fact, participants spoke exclusively about the benefit of these experiences as a means of positive socialization while neglecting to mention other forms of learning. The notion of experiential, hands-on learning as a positive form of professional development and socialization within Counselor Education is thus further supported, particularly among the international population.

**Acculturation**

A well-documented phenomenon within the international student literature is the phenomenon of acculturation. Acculturation is defined as the complex process of cultural and psychological changes that occur due to experiences in a new host environment (Berry, 2005). These changes perpetuate shifts within the individual having the acculturative experience (Berry, 2005) as they try to maintain a balance between their host and heritage culture (Berry, 1997; Berry, 2005). The acculturative experience commonly results in difficulties such as stress (Berry et al., 1987; Kuo & Roysircar, 2004), diminished mental health (Choi, 1997; Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016; Lin & Yi, 1997; Pollock et al., 2017; Ward & Kennedy, 1994), difficulty with communication (Forbes-Mewett & Sawyer, 2016; Sato & Hodge, 2009; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Reid & Dixon, 2012), and experiences of discrimination (Behl et al., 2017; Hegarty, 2014; Jang et al., 2014; McDowell et al., 2012; Ng, 2012; Pollock et al., 2017; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Sherry et al., 2010). The most pronounced acculturative issue for international students specifically is English as a second language proficiency (Sato & Hodge, 2009; Sato & Hodge, 2015; Reid & Dixon, 2012).

Participants in this study described their experience with acculturation as negatively impacting their doctoral studies. This impact was described within the *international realities* sub-theme, *acculturation*. The majority of participants commented on the hardships caused by their acculturative experience, such as being in a new culture and academic environment, the deficits they perceived from having English as a second language, and the stress of being an international student. This acculturative experience was described as decreasing their self-efficacy and increasing feelings of isolation and alienness. As a result, participants shared that they exerted themselves to hide their struggles and appear well-adjusted. This notion of hiding

their true selves parallels the “legacy of silence” wherein ethnic minorities often experience the realities and salience of race, culture, and ethnicity going unrecognized (Day-Vines et al., 2007, pg. 402). Some participants described at first questioning if they belonged in their new environment due to the significant differences between their host and home environment and education system. These findings further add to the accounts of acculturation within the international student population.

**COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has been shown to insight instances of racism and discrimination toward international scholars in the U.S (Koo et al., 2021b). International students from Asia have been particularly affected, enduring feelings of insecurity and fear due to the reality of physical attacks, racial comments, and online bullying. As an international scholar studying in a host environment, these events paired with the quarantine experience were shown to promote feelings of isolation and loneliness (Koo et al., 2021b). Similarly, participants in this study commented on the detrimental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their mental health, stress levels, and educational attainment. This was demonstrated in the *international realities* sub-theme, *COVID-19*. Participants noted that COVID-19 increased their stress due to isolation and disconnection and instilled fear because of the discrimination and violence against Asians living in America. These findings concur with the current literature and additionally provide a look into how COVID-19 impacted the school experience of international students, particularly those in Counselor Education programs.

It is additionally important to note the uniqueness of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic was a world-wide event that resulted in the sudden and strict quarantine of individuals to prevent the spread of disease. This non-normative and historic occurrence

produced experiences that are extremely uncommon and likely not reproducible in the near or distant future. Thus, the findings around COVID-19 should be considered within the context of this unlikely global phenomenon, though connections to the general stressors experiences by participants were present. The stress associated with living through the COVID-19 pandemic seemed to join with the stressors typically experienced by participants, such as visa sponsorship issues, acculturation, and proving their value.

### Visa Sponsorship

A number of studies highlight the difficulties around work visas for international scholars. These issues include uncooperative institutions, lack of knowledge from an institution around the visa sponsorship process, and institutional resistance around sponsoring international faculty (e.g. Chen & Lawless, 2018; Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2021; Joshi et al., 2022). The results of this study spoke to this phenomenon, as participants described encountering institutions that were unaware of participants' visa sponsorship need and a reluctance to provide sponsorship. The findings of this study support the notion that a substantial and career-altering element to working in the U.S. is the ability to find visa sponsorship for international scholars.

## Conclusions

This study examined the phenomenon of professional socialization and the connection this had with the career development of doctoral international Counselor Education students. The findings of this study support themes prominent in the literature pertaining to experiences such as acculturation, communication difficulties, and visa issues and provide new insight into the benefits of support, job search preparation, and mentorship. Most notably, participants in this study noted the immense benefit of support and mentorship, sharing that this experience enabled valuable socialization for the professorate and enhanced career development.

## Challenges

A challenge within this study was encountered during the participant recruitment phase. At first, participants were recruited via posts on well-known listservs for those in the Counselor Education field, CESNET and ISFIN, in addition to snowball sampling methods. This resulted in the recruitment of six participants, which was not enough to satisfy the sampling criteria for qualitative phenomenological dissertation research (Camic, 2021). Because of this, a modification was made to the recruitment protocol. This modification resulted in recruitment of two additional participants, making eight participants in total. This number of participants met the minimum sampling criteria for this study.

## Limitations

This study explored the professional socialization of international Counselor Education students and the connection this had on their career development as counselor educators. As such, this study came with limiting factors such as a small overall population, which is not well defined within CACREP statistical reports, and lack of diversity in the sample. To begin, CACREP reports that approximately 155 out of its 2,764 doctoral students are international. For international faculty, CACREP's most recent statistical reports no longer denote a "nonresident alien" category for this group and instead report on the population of counselor educators by ethnicity (CACREP, 2023). Due to this reclassification, there is no reliable estimate of the total number of international counselor educators in the U.S. This limits the generalizability of findings of this and other studies because it is not clear how many international counselor educators are employed in the U.S. at present. Knowing an accurate estimate would allow researchers to infer how representative their sample is of the overall population.

An additional limitation of this study is the overrepresentation of participants from Asian countries. Although CACREP's statistical reports do not share what country international scholars originate from, again weakening generalizability, a more diverse sample of participants would have provided a balanced account of international scholar experiences in general. As this study consists of an Asian majority, these findings can be most closely attributed to this demographic's experience. Future studies would benefit from obtaining a more diverse sample to improve generalizability of findings.

## Implications for Counselor Educators and Counselor Education Programs

The results of this study present several implications for the field of Counselor Education. These implications include mentorship for international Counselor Education doctoral students, training and accommodation for international students circumstance and needs, and job search preparation.

### Mentorship for International Doctoral Students

Participants in this study spoke to the powerful impact professional mentors had on their development as counselor educators. This mentorship was described as helping participants to learn about the profession and become socialized to their roles as future faculty. Throughout the Counselor Education literature, mentorship is noted repeatedly as a factor that improves self-efficacy and motivation for doctoral students (e.g. Frick & Glosoff, 2014; Limberg et al., 2013; Murdock et al., 2013; Okech et al., 2006; Welfare & Sackett, 2011), and this study supports the positive impact of this experience within the international student population.

Participants in this study shared that they wish someone had helped empower their unique perspectives as international scholars during their doctoral programming. Empowerment as an international scholar appeared to have developed once participants became professors, and

upon retrospect, participants recognized how impactful culturally supportive mentorship would have been as a student. It can thus be inferred that mentoring relationships with international students would be greatly beneficial considering their unique needs, circumstances, and multicultural perspectives. Counselor educators should be encouraged to seek out mentoring opportunities with international students in the core competencies areas of teaching, supervision, research, counseling, and leadership/advocacy to help empower these students and further their socialization into the professorate. To promote accessibility to mentoring opportunities, students can be invited to apply for research assistantships, co-teaching experiences, leadership positions, and supervisory duties. Faculty mentors should also provide space for international mentees to process the cultural reckoning they experience as they navigate life in their American host culture and Westernized education system.

Peer mentorship and support was also noted as an impactful factor in participants' professional development and socialization. To promote connection with peers, cohort models for doctoral programs with international students can be beneficial. By having a cohort model, international students can rely on their cohort for support and encouragement and seek guidance from more advanced cohort groups. Additionally, it can be helpful to have several international students within a doctoral program to promote community and mentorship across and among cohorts. Further, comradery and support can be bolstered by department sponsored events that are geared toward international students, globalized multicultural competency, and community building within a program.

**Training on and Accommodation for International Student Circumstance and Needs**

Participants in this study commented on how the understanding and accommodation of their needs as international scholars greatly enhanced their study abroad experience. Participants

also mentioned how a lack of understanding for their needs hindered their career development and professional socialization. To help ensure positive growth for this student population, counselor educators should receive training on the needs of this student group, including the effects of acculturation, communication difficulties, cultural differences, and mental health concerns. From this, faculty members can be better equipped to identify and address the needs of these students through enhancing classroom experiences, providing culturally sensitive mentorship, and knowing how to identify struggles and other issues.

Counselor Education programs can also benefit their international students through being sensitive to this group's unique needs. Participants in this study shared that programs who made accommodations for their circumstances helped enable their success and foster feelings of support. Accommodations for international students can include allowing for alternate program start dates, aiding students who struggle to meet the requirements for their student visa, having understanding grading policies in place in the event of written and verbal communication difficulties, and providing outlets and options for students experiencing psychological distress during their time abroad.

**Job Search Preparation**

Study participants spoke to the benefits they received when faculty helped them prepare for the academic job search. This aid was described as helping them build confidence around interviewing and presentation skills when applying for academic positions. Considering this, Counselor Education programs should be intentional about providing job search mentorship through coaching, workshops, and interview practice for international scholars. Such interventions can aid these students in understanding expectations, building confidence, and

honing key skills when applying to academic positions, which is essential for students unfamiliar with the American vocational landscape.

Providing coaching on negotiating visa sponsorship is an additional key element for international scholars participating in the academic job search. In this study, participants noted the value that came from advisors preparing them to look for and negotiate grounds for work visa sponsorship. In many instances, participants needed to educate those they interviewed with about their sponsorship needs and advocate for their worth as international scholars in the American Counselor Education space. Advisors should thus be knowledgeable about the visa sponsorship process to help prepare international advisees for their professional transition and coach them on selling themselves as outstanding Counselor Education professionals.

## Recommendations for Future Research

As the results of this study spoke to the value of mentorship and support for the international scholar population, future research should further explore these phenomenon. At present, few studies examine the mentorship experiences of international students, and virtually no research exists as to the experience of mentorship for international Counselor Education students. Participants in this study spoke to how mentorship improved their socialization experience and career development process, and it would be beneficial to establish best practice, culturally sensitive standards for international student mentorship within Counselor Education. Qualitative inquiries into the lived experience of mentorship for international scholars could help establish best practices and culturally sensitive necessities.

Future research that focuses on building support for international students would also be beneficial for this student group. As support was the most endorsed and widely discussed benefit in this study, future studies could expand the understanding what good support means and looks

like for international scholars. This can be achieved through both qualitative and quantitative measures, as individuals' lived experience can be documented along with quantitative measures on elements such as sense of belonging. Building on this, pilot support programs could then be run and evaluated in an effort to establish standards of practice for supporting international Counselor Education students.

## Summary

This study utilized a phenomenological, hermeneutic design to investigate the professional socialization of international Counselor Education doctoral students and the connection this had with their career development. The results of this study provide insight into the elements that enhance and detract from the professional socialization process for this population and understanding of how the socialization process influences their career development as counselor educators. This information is directly applicable to the Counselor Education field, providing evidence for experiences and practices that aid the professional development of these scholars. Future research should continue to focus on elements that enhance international student professional development during their study and professional lives in the U.S.

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## Appendix A

Recruitment Listserv Post Script

Greetings,

My name is Ayla Ludwig, and I am a doctoral student in the Counselor Education program at Western Michigan University. Under the supervision of Dr. Glinda Rawls, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, SCL, ACS (glinda.rawls@wmich.edu), I am conducting a phenomenological study to fulfill the degree requirements of dissertation research, which explores international counseling students' professional socialization experience during their doctoral program. This research has been approved by the Western Michigan University Institutional Review Board.

Criteria for study eligibility includes:

- Being a faculty member in a U.S., CACREP-accredited Counselor Education program
- Being within the first three years of your professorate experience
- Completing your doctoral studies while on an F-1 visa
- Having graduated as an international student from a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in America

If you meet the above criteria, I would like to invite you to participate. If you know someone who meets the above criteria, please share this invitation with them. **Participants will receive a $50 Amazon gift card as compensation for your time after you complete an interview**.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw from this study at any time. If interested, please fill out a screening survey through the link below. The results of this research will be used in the dissertation of Ayla Ludwig and may be published in counseling journals. Please be sure to read the informed consent statement in the first section of the survey. Your participation in this study will involve a one-hour virtual interview.

- Screening Survey Link:
    - https://wmich.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e3AaWvX37IaQGQS

If you have any questions, please contact Ayla Ludwig (ayla.m.ludwig@wmich.edu; (269) 365-2920) or Dr. Glinda Rawls (glinda.rawls@wmich.edu; (269) 387-5108). Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Ayla Ludwig, MA, LPC, NCC, CCC

## Appendix B

Recruitment Email Script

Greetings,

My name is Ayla Ludwig, and I am a doctoral student in the Counselor Education program at Western Michigan University. Under the supervision of Dr. Glinda Rawls, Ph.D., LPC, NCC, SCL, ACS (glinda.rawls@wmich.edu), I am conducting a phenomenological study to fulfill the degree requirements of dissertation research, which explores international counseling students' professional socialization experience during their doctoral program. This research has been approved by the Western Michigan University Institutional Review Board.

I am sending this email to ask that if you have international faculty within your Counselor Education program, you pass along this invitation to participate in my dissertation research. Complete study details are as follows:

Criteria for study eligibility includes:

- Being a faculty member in a U.S., CACREP-accredited Counselor Education program
- Being within the first three years of your professorate experience
- Completing your doctoral studies while on an F-1 visa
- Having graduated as an international student from a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in America

If you meet the above criteria, I would like to invite you to participate. If you know someone who meets the above criteria, please share this invitation with them. **Participants will receive a $50 Amazon gift card as compensation for your time after you complete an interview**.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw from this study at any time. If interested, please fill out a screening survey through the link below. The results of this research will be used in the dissertation of Ayla Ludwig and may be published in counseling journals. Please be sure to read the informed consent statement in the first section of the survey. Your participation in this study will involve a one-hour virtual interview.

- Screening Survey Link:
    - https://wmich.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e3AaWvX37IaQGQS

If you have any questions, please contact Ayla Ludwig (ayla.m.ludwig@wmich.edu; (269) 365-2920) or Dr. Glinda Rawls (glinda.rawls@wmich.edu; (269) 387-5108). Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Ayla Ludwig, MA, LPC, NCC, CCC

## Appendix C

Informed Consent

**Western Michigan University**
**Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Principal Investigator:** | Glinda Rawls, Ph.D., LPC (MI), NCC, SCL (MI), ACS |
| **Student Investigator:** | Ayla Martine Ludwig, MA, LPC, NCC, CCC |
| **Title of Study:** | From Doctoral Student to Professor: The Professional Socialization of International Counselor Educators |

You are invited to participate in this research project titled "*From Doctoral Student to Professor: The Professional Socialization of International Counselor Educators*."

**STUDY SUMMARY:** This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study, and it will provide information that will help you decide whether you want to take part in this study. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. The purpose of the research is to explore the socialization experiences that occur within doctoral Counselor Education programs from the perspective of international Counselor Education faculty. If you take part in the research, you will be asked to participate in a virtual interview where you will be sharing your own socialization experiences as an international student in an American Counselor Education doctoral program. Your time in the study will take approximately one hour. Possible risk and costs to you for taking part in the study may be emotional/psychological distress that may be caused by recalling negative or aversive experiences (if there are any), and potential benefits of taking part may be having an opportunity to better understand meanings attached to your own experiences by illuminating them. Your alternative to taking part in the research study is not to take part in it.

The following information in this consent form will provide more detail about the research study. Please ask any questions if you need more clarification and to assist you in deciding if you wish to participate in the research study. You are not giving up any of your legal rights by agreeing to take part in this research or by agreeing to this consent form. After all of your questions have been answered and the consent document reviewed, if you decide to participate in this study, you can indicate so below this form. By clicking "yes" in response to the questions below, you are indicating that you have read this consent document in its entirety and agree to participate in this study.

**What are we trying to find out in this study?**

We would like to advance our understanding of international students' socialization experiences in Counselor Education and the effects this has on career development. In this case, socialization is defined as the molding of one's behavior into that of a counselor educator due to their U.S. doctoral Counselor Education program.

**Who can participate in this study?**

Participants for this study will be foreign-born Counselor Education faculty members within the first three years of their employment at CACREP-accredited, United States (U.S.) schools. These individuals have to have been international students at the doctoral level studying in the U.S. on an F-1 visa. They also must have earned a doctoral degree from a U.S., CACREP-accredited counseling program prior to their current employment.

**Where will this study take place?**

This study will be conducted virtually containing email communications and a virtual interview.

**What is the time commitment for participating in this study?**

The virtual interview will take up to one hour.

**What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?**

During the virtual interview, you will be asked to share your professional socialization experiences within your Counselor Education doctoral program. The entire interview will be audio-recorded for further analyses. After the analyses, the recordings will be permanently deleted.

**What information is being measured during the study?**

As a result of your and others' participation in this study, we will be collecting information on international faculties' doctoral experience with a phenomenon, professional socialization, from multiple perspectives and may draw common and meaningful themes or patterns from interview data.

**What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?**

As mentioned above, if you have negative or aversive experiences while completing your doctoral studies and are willing to share such experiences during the virtual interview, it may cause emotional or psychological distress. To minimize this risk, the investigators will make sure you are comfortable enough to share such experiences and will attempt to provide resources where the participants can seek additional support (e.g., support groups, counseling services). Also, as this study involves human subjects, it may carry risks to confidentiality and privacy. To minimize these risks, the investigators will only use your preferred pseudonym during data collection (interview), analysis, and dissemination. All the data including the screening surveys and audio recordings will be stored in a locked folder that is only shared among the investigators. Also, only the approved investigators will have access to the data, not allowing unqualified personnel to be able to read or use the data.

**What are the benefits of participating in this study?**

You may benefit from participating in this study as you have an opportunity to better understand meanings attached to your own experiences by illuminating them. In addition, the findings may contribute to enriching and diversifying the counseling literature, which may also inform counselor educators and counseling students of their further practices to serve international counseling students better.

**Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?**

There are no costs associated with participating in this study; however, as an incentive to take part in the study, participants who complete all study requirements will receive a $50 Amazon gift card after their interview.

**Is there any compensation for participating in this study?**

Participants will receive a $50 Amazon gift card as compensation for fully participating in and completing this study.

**Who will have access to the information collected during this study?**

In addition to the investigators who are given access to the data collected, the information may be disseminated to other researchers, counselor educators, and counseling students through future publication or professional presentations. However, any forms of the dissemination will not involve identifiable personal information.

Data collected for this study will be kept on a password protected computer only accessible to the student researcher. The data will be permanently deleted after a mandatory three year holding period.

**What will happen to my information or biospecimens collected for this research project after the study is over?**

The information collected about your experiences for this research will not be used by or distributed to investigators for other research.

**What if you want to stop participating in this study?**

You can choose to stop participating in the study at anytime for any reason. You will not suffer any prejudice or penalty by your decision to stop your participation. You will experience NO consequences either academically or personally if you choose to withdraw from this study.

Should you have any questions prior to or during the study, you can contact Dr. Glinda Rawls at glinda.rawls@wmich.edu or Ayla Ludwig at ayla.m.ludwig@wmich.edu. You may also contact the Chair, Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293 or the Vice President for Research and Innovation at 269-387-8298 if questions arise during the course of the study. This study was approved by the Western Michigan University Institutional Review Board (WMU IRB) on April 19th, 2023.

## Appendix D

Screening and Demographics Questionnaire

### Demographics/Screening Survey

Thank you for your interest in this study about the professional socialization experiences of international Counselor Education students in doctoral programs. Before completing this screening and demographics survey, please read the informed consent information below in its entirety and provide your consent.

This survey consists of two sections and a total of 11 questions. It should take between 5 to 10 minutes to complete. If at any time you do not wish to continue with the survey for any reason, you can exit this web page without penalty. After completing the 11 questions and submitting your responses, the researcher for this study will contact you regarding your eligibility. Thank you again for your time and your interest in this research.

---

This section of the survey will inquire about study eligibility criteria. Please respond to the questions with the most accurate information as it pertains to you.

Were you an international Counselor Education doctoral student in the United States (U.S.)?

- Yes
- No
- I am currently an international Counselor Education doctoral student

Was your U.S. doctoral program CACREP-accredited?

- Yes
- No

Did you graduate, earning your doctorate in Counselor Education?

- Yes
- No
- I am still a student in a doctoral Counselor Education program

What type of visa were you on while completing your doctorate in Counselor Education?

- F-1
- H-1
- J-1
- Other

Are you currently employed as faculty in a CACREP-accredited Counselor Education program?

- Yes
- No
- I am employed as Counselor Education faculty, but my program is not CACREP-accredited

Are you within your first three years of employment as a Counselor Education faculty member?

- Yes, I have been employed as a counselor educator for less than three years
- No, I have been employed as a counselor educator for more than three years

---

This final section of the survey will inquire about your demographic information. Please respond to the questions with the most accurate information as it pertains to you.

What is your first and last name?

How would you define your gender identity currently?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender male
- Transgender female
- Nonbinary
- Other

What is your country of origin outside the United States?

How old were you on your last birthday?

What is your university email address? If your university email is inaccessible because you have graduated, what is the best email address to contact you?

If you are selected for participation in this study, an email will be sent to this address to set up an interview time with the researcher.

---

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

## Appendix E

Interview Protocol

### From Doctoral Student to Professor: The Professional Socialization of International Counselor Educators

**Introduction**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about your professional socialization experience within Counselor Education. I am a doctoral candidate at Western Michigan University, and this interview is part of my dissertation research. As a student researcher, I am interviewing you and other international Counselor Education faculty to better understand the professional socialization you experienced as a part of your Counselor Education doctoral studies in the United States. Please know that during this interview:

- I will be taking notes, but also recording the interview so I do not miss anything
- All information gathered will be transcribed and de-identified prior to analyzing
- After interview data is de-identified, the recording will be destroyed
- I will be asking you 10 main questions
- I expect the interview to take approximately 60 minutes
- I am really interested in your experiences, so please answer with what you think, not what you think I want to hear
- If at any time you feel uncomfortable, you may skip a question or ask to stop the interview completely without penalty

In this interview, I will be asking about your professional socialization experience within your doctoral Counselor Education program. Socialization is defined as a process wherein an individual's behavioral potential is narrowed into an acceptable range based on group standards. I am interested in your retrospective look at your experiences here now that you are a professor in the Counselor Education field.

Additionally, I want to ensure that everything in the informed consent document for this study was clear. Do you have any questions or concerns regarding the informed consent or participation in this study? Do I have your consent to participate in this research and record our interview?

Do you have any questions before we begin? I will begin the recording now.

**Interview Questions**

1. Describe your experience as a Counselor Education doctoral student in the U.S.
2. Describe your experience going from doctoral student to counselor educator.

3. What experiences in your doctoral program, if any, helped prepare you for your role as a professor?
4. What experiences in your doctoral program, if any, hindered your professional preparation as a professor?
5. What challenges or barriers, if any, have you encountered in becoming a counselor educator?
6. What impact, if any, did your doctoral program have on your belief that you could be a counselor educator/professor?
    a. What helped or hurt this belief throughout your program?
7. What expectations, if any, did you have about yourself in your career as a counselor educator because of your doctoral program?
    a. What helped or hurt these expectations throughout your program?
8. What professional goals, if any, were you able to set as a result of your doctoral program?
    a. What helped or hurt these goals throughout your program?
9. How did your doctoral studies in the U.S. shape what it means for you to be a counselor educator?
10. What contributed the most to who you are as a professor in your professional training?
11. Is there anything else about your Counselor Education doctoral experiences that you would like to share that I did not ask?
12. What pseudonym would you like to use to protect your privacy?

## Appendix F

Theme Summary for Member Checking

# FROM DOCTORAL STUDENT TO PROFESSOR: THE PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL COUNSELOR EDUCATORS

SUMMARY OF STUDY THEMES & SUB THEMES | AYLA M. LUDWIG, MA, LPC, NCC, CCC

### THEMES & SUB-THEMES

**Institutional Impact**

- Professional Goals & Inspirations
- Support
- Core Competencies
- Program Deficits

**International Realities**

- Acculturation
- Personal Stressors
- COVID-19
- Visa Issues & Sponsorship
- Proving my Value

**International Lens**

- Meaning & Purpose
- Outside the American Lens

### CONTACT


**Dissertation Chair:**

Glinda Rawls, Ph.D., LPC (MI), NCC, SCL (MI), ACS

glinda.rawls@wmich.edu

**Doctoral Candidate:**

Ayla Ludwig, MA, LPC, NCC, CCC

ayla.m.ludwig@wmich.edu


### THEME & SUB-THEME SUMMARIES

**Institutional Impact**

This theme described the impact participants' institution had on their professional socialization and career development within Counselor Education. Four sub-themes further define this institutional impact and include professional goals and inspiration, support, core competencies, and professional deficits.

**Professional Goals & Inspirations.** This sub-theme speaks to the goals and aspirations that were able to develop in participants during their Counselor Education doctoral programs. Because of their doctoral experience, participants were able to define what kind of professionals they wanted to be, how they wanted to contribute to the profession, and what types of institutions best matched their professional needs. This ability to goal set helped participants shape the professional future they aspired toward based on their experience in their doctoral program.

**Support.** This sub-theme provides commentary on the powerful effect of holistic supports that aided in the professional socialization and development of participants during their doctoral studies. The elements of the support include mentorship and role modeling by Counselor Education faculty, institutional support, and peer support. These various support systems encountered during the doctoral program helped participants discover who they wanted to be as professors and how they wanted to make their mark on the next generation of counselor educators. Peer support in particular helped participants feel a sense of belonging and comradely throughout their studies.

**Core Competencies.** This sub-theme demonstrates how core Counselor Education competencies were strengthened throughout the doctoral program. This strengthening then impacted participants' outcome expectations and confidence within the career futures. Participants described feeling more competent in specific areas such as teaching and research, which allowed them to realize that they could be successful counselor educators moving forward.

**Program Deficits.** This sub-theme reveals deficits encountered by participants during Counselor Education doctoral study. Namely, participants spoke to core competency development lacking throughout their programs, such as teaching, research, and social justice/multiculturalism. Participants in some cases shared going outside of their departments to get the necessary education and/or mentorship in these areas. Other participants mentioned needing to seek out opportunities in Counselor Education to teach or do research because it was not immediately accessible in their program. In some cases, these deficits resulted in participants lacking confidence in their skills and abilities when participating the academic job search.

**International Realities**

This theme demonstrates the prominent circumstances that disrupted the professional lives of participants. These disruptions included acculturation, personal stressors, the COVID-19 pandemic, issues with visa sponsorship, and feeling the need to prove their value. These circumstances were portrayed as standard realities for participants, as their international status appeared to facilitate these experiences.

**Acculturation.** This sub-theme speaks to the affects of acculturation on participants and their experience abroad. Language barrier in particular was mentioned as the most significant issue, with this affecting how participants learned, interacted with peers and faculty, and maintained their self-efficacy. Growing accustom to life in another country also influenced their self concept, causing some participants to feel behind, slow, out of place, and alien.

**Personal Stressors.** This sub-theme illuminates the various stressors encountered by participants as they navigated their Counselor Education program and academic job search. Stressors for participants largely included anxiety and stress about securing a professor position, feeling disconnected and alien from issues in the U.S. due to their international status, and making sound decisions to support their family.

**COVID-19.** This sub-theme describes the hardship faced by participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants shared being disconnected from their families back home for years at a time and re-recognizing the fragility of their international status. This was due to many schools cutting graduation assistantship funding and creating mandates to send international students home if they did not meet an in-person class quota during the pandemic. Other participants mentioned the strain COVID-19 had on the job market, noting fewer jobs being posted due to budget cuts, which caused increased stress and anxiety. These realities greatly impacted participants, as their professional goals within the U.S. were thrown into question and the possibility of staying state-side was uncertain.

**Visa Issues & Sponsorship.** This sub-theme demonstrates the difficulties and stress created by international scholars needing a visa. Participants described maintaining their visa status as paramount, as this allowed them to continue their journey abroad and conceive of future professional goals within the U.S. Participants also described the effect needing visa sponsorship had on their job search, as this limited where they could apply and made landing a job much more competitive. Alternatively, without a job that provided visa sponsorship, participants faced returning to their home country.

**Proving my Value.** This sub-theme illustrates the pressure felt by participants to prove their worth as international scholars. Most notably, participants felt that because of their unique struggles, identities, and appearances, they needed to try harder to be seen as proficient within their professional spaces, resulting in extra effort being put in to teach, research, and lead within the Counselor Education space. Professional value was also mediated by whether or not an institution was willing to sponsor a participant's H1-B visa.

**International Lens**

This theme shows the meaning making process and self-discovered value of participants as international scholars in the U.S. Within this theme are two sub-themes, meaning and purpose and outside the American lens. These sub-themes speak to the personal journey of finding an authentic place within the profession and the explicit value international scholars bring to the multicultural Counselor Education landscape.

**Meaning & Purpose.** This sub-theme illustrates the deep meaning participants made in their professional lives due to their experience as international Counselor Education doctoral students. This meaning-making process resulted in recognizing the valuable perspective they bring as international scholars, which differed from that of native students and faculty. This perspective was viewed as something that could help grow the multicultural conversation beyond where it currently stands within the Counselor Education field. Additionally, participants spoke to how being a minority enriches the educational space because of their international perspective, and how the cultural blending they must do creates new topics and understanding of content within Counselor Education.

**Outside the American Lens.** This sub-theme speaks to the unique and broadened perspective participants were able to realize as a result of studying in the U.S. Most notably, participants described recognizing the value of their unique contributions to the multicultural landscape within the Counselor Education field and how they have the unique ability to see and critique things from outside an Americanized lens. This was described as a strength and something that added to their value within the profession. Additionally, participants could perceive of how Counselor Education could grow and change in their home country because of their U.S.-based education.

# Appendix G

HSIRB Approval Letter

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Human Subjects Institutional Review B

Date: April 19, 2023

To: Glinda Rawls, Principal Investigator
[Co-PI], Co-Principal Investigator

Re: Initial - IRB-2023-60
From Doctoral Student to Professor: The Professional Socialization of International Counselor Educators

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled "From Doctoral Student to Professor: The Professional Socialization of International Counselor Educators" has been reviewed by the Western Michigan University Institutional Review Board (WMU IRB) and **approved** under the **Expedited** 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application. **Please note:** This research may **only** be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes to this project (e.g., ***add an investigator, increase number of subjects beyond the number stated in your application, etc.***). Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation.

In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the IRB or the Associate Director Research Compliance for consultation.

**Stamped Consent Document(s) location - Study Details/Submissions/Initial/Attachments**

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Sincerely,

Amy Naugle

Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair
WMU IRB

For a study to remain open after one year, a Post Approval Monitoring report (please use the continuing review submission form) is required on or prior to (no more than 30 days**) April 17, 2024** and each year thereafter until closing of the study. When this study closes, complete a Closure Submission.
**Note: All research data must be kept in a secure location on the WMU campus for at least three (3) years after the study closes.**