

Socially Just and Culturally Responsive Leadership Within Counseling and Counseling Psychology: A Grounded Theory Investigation

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to develop an abstracted theory concerning how counseling and counseling psychology leaders and educators engage in and enact socially just and culturally responsive leadership in professional association and higher education contexts. This grounded theory study included 18 participants with a range of social locations and professional leadership experiences in counseling and counseling psychology associations and higher education. Findings from this study were analyzed and are presented using the Straussian tradition of grounded theory. We discuss implications for counseling leadership, training, and development; social justice, cultural responsiveness, and advocacy; and future research.

Keywords

counseling leadership, culturally responsive leadership, educational leadership, organizational leadership, qualitative research

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Significance of the Scholarship to the Public

The results of this study provide a model explaining how 18 counseling and counseling psychologists engaged in socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership within associations and higher education contexts. The results are of value to the public, given they provide public stakeholders with an understanding of how counseling leaders promote, advocate, and work towards social justice and cultural responsiveness within their professional contexts. As a result, access to this information can foster increased awareness, transparency, dialogue, and accountability between leaders and the public stakeholders they seek to serve.

Scholars have argued that cultural responsiveness first emerged in the education and health fields, centered on recognizing and utilizing another's social-cultural worldviews and needs to inform professional practice with diverse persons (Giovanangeli & Oguro, 2016; Roberts et al., 2011). Cultural responsiveness has since been conceptualized and discussed within counseling and counseling psychology, particularly connected to the fourth force (i.e., multicultural) of counseling (Lee et al., 2013; Pieterse et al., 2009). As a result, cultural responsiveness has assisted counseling professionals in both their cultural development and competence (American Psychological Association [APA], 2017; Ratts et al., 2016). Within the extant literature, cultural responsiveness is argued to involve cultural sensitivity, cultural knowledge, cultural empathy, and cultural guidance (Tseng & Streltzer, 2004), and most recently, cultural humility (Hook et al., 2013). Accordingly, cultural responsiveness is an important concept for counseling professionals, informing and connecting to social justice as the fifth force of counseling (Lee et al., 2013; Ratts et al., 2016).

Similar to cultural responsiveness, social justice has been integrated into the counseling and counseling psychology literature (APA, 2017; Pieterse et al., 2009; Ratts et al., 2016; Shin et al., 2017). Despite this infusion, there remains limited understanding, research, and enactment of social justice (Goodman et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2009). To date, the counseling professions continue to describe social justice as a singular, complex, and nonstatic phenomenon (Shin et al., 2017). Further, authors suggest that social justice involves actions that address multiple fluid systems of privilege and marginalization, disadvantages and advantages, and practices and systems of inequity (Dollarhide et al., 2016; Dollarhide et al. 2018; Goodman et al., 2004; Ratts et al., 2016). These foci parallel the definitions provided by various scholars (c.f. Dollarhide et al., 2016; Goodman et al., 2004; Ratts et al., 2016; Shin et al., 2017). Scholars have endorsed social justice as a construct

because it includes various subconstructs, such as diversity, change, equity, inequality, oppression, marginalization, disruption, decolonization, and affirmative action, within the operational meaning and practice of social justice (Furman, 2012; Goodman et al., 2018; Pieterse et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2009). Nonetheless, further research is needed to address the current strengths and limitations associated with the definitions and practices of social justice (Shin et al., 2017). One such area involves the current scholarship on counseling leadership.

Socially Just and Culturally Responsive Leadership

Socially just and culturally responsive leadership mirrors the scholarship on cultural responsiveness and social justice. For example, culturally responsive leadership is purported to involve theorizing leadership using a culturally responsive framework, interpreting one's leadership through a culturally responsive lens, and enacting leadership that is culturally responsive (Lopez, 2015, 2016; Santamaría, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2015). Lopez (2016) built upon such assertions in the development of her culturally responsive leadership model, which consisted of four components: critical self-reflection, construction and deconstruction, agency and action, and support and sustenance. Each of these four elements centered around learning and unlearning all forms of discrimination, inequity, and oppression. Similarly, social justice leadership is argued to involve developing a culture that promotes and engages in social justice advocacy and change to ensure that social, cultural, political, historical, and economic systems account for equity and are held accountable (Hargons et al., 2017; Theoharis, 2007; Wang, 2018). Moreover, it is argued that critical culturally responsive and socially just leadership must seek and demand social change by disrupting and challenging the majoritarian and subjugating systemic powers that negatively influence all communities, but disproportionately affect marginalized communities (Hargons et al., 2017; Lopez, 2015, 2016; Theoharis, 2007; Wang, 2018). To date, much of the socially just and culturally responsive leadership scholarship is conceptual, within the realm of education, or focused on the experiences and practices of a particular identity and community (Furman, 2012; Hargons et al., 2017; Lopez, 2015, Theoharis, 2007; Wang, 2018). Thus, this study adds empirical attention to these important constructs.

Counseling Leadership

Focusing on the unique aspects and practices of counseling and counseling psychology leadership is important, as leadership is argued to be understood

and enacted differently based on a leader's professional specialty, identities, culture, discipline, system, or contextual factors (Fassinger & Shullman, 2017; Harrison, 2017; Luke & Peters, in press; McKibben et al., 2017; Peters & Vereen, 2020). Of the existing research on counseling leadership, few studies have incorporated multiculturalism, cultural responsiveness, or social justice (Hargons et al., 2017; Roysircar et al., 2017; Storlie & Wood, 2014). The majority of the scholarship has focused on a general understanding of counseling leadership (Fassinger & Shullman, 2017; McKibben et al., 2017), leader profiles (Borders & Cashwell, 2014), leadership development (Gibson et al., 2018; Luke & Goodrich, 2010), and school counseling specific leadership (Peters et al., 2018). Similar to the overall status of counseling leadership, the current theories and principles used to conceptualize and enact counseling leadership (e.g., servant leadership, transformative leadership; Chang et al., 2012; McKibben et al., 2017; Peters et al., 2018), have yet to adequately integrate or center multiculturalism, cultural responsiveness, or social justice (Eagly & Chin, 2010; Fassinger & Shullman, 2017; McKibben et al., 2017; Peters et al., 2018) within counseling psychology. As a result, there is not yet an empirically developed socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership model. Given the dearth of scholarship exploring the intersections of counseling leadership, social justice, and cultural responsiveness, the authors of this article sought to address this important gap. The two primary research questions that guided this study were, R1: What processes influence counseling leaders and educators to engage in and enact socially just and culturally responsive leadership in the context of counseling associations and higher education? R2: How does socially just and culturally responsive leadership occur in the contexts of counseling associations and higher education?

Method

Given the paucity of scholarship on socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership (SJCRL; Hargons et al., 2017; McKibben et al., 2017; Storlie et al., 2015), qualitative research was ideal, as it supports exploratory, inductive, and recursive approaches to understanding and analyzing social phenomena (Hays & Singh, 2012). Additionally, strengths of qualitative inquiry include development of rich and robust understandings of a particular phenomenon from a small sample of participants, as well as centering multiculturalism and social justice (Hays & Singh, 2012; Lyons et al., 2013). Because of the research questions in this study, a grounded theory approach was selected over other qualitative methods because it provided a methodological framework to examine the what's, why's, and how's

of participants' action–interaction with SJCRCL, ultimately resulting in the development of an abstracted theoretical model (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; Hays & Singh, 2012).

Researcher Reflexivity

The first author, Harvey Charles Peters, identifies as a gay, non-Latino White, able-bodied, and cisgender male. The second, third, and fourth authors (Melissa Luke, Janine Bernard, and Heather Trepal, respectively) identify as heterosexual, non-Latino White, able-bodied, and cisgender females. As researchers, the authors have varied experiences with counseling leadership and qualitative research, as well as differing epistemological and ontological positions around social justice and cultural responsiveness. These stances ranged from postpositivism, modernism, and postmodernism. Because of our similar and dissimilar identities, positions, and experiences, we discussed the following issues during this study: (a) our identities and beliefs around social justice and cultural responsiveness; (b) our largely privileged identities as researchers; (c) what tradition of grounded theory was congruent to the research questions and aims of this study, social justice and cultural responsiveness, and us as researchers; and (d) how to work towards centering the participants' experiences, epistemology, and ontology.

As a result, the authors utilized multiple measures of trustworthiness to account for our range of personal and methodological positions and experiences. These methodological practices supported our ability as researchers to account for our positionality and influence on the data and abstracted theoretical model of SJCRCL. An essential trustworthiness practice included the inclusion of a peer debriefer and external auditor. In an attempt to account for and balance our research team's Whiteness, we sought a peer debriefer and external auditor with differing racial identities and a commitment to social justice and cultural responsiveness. The peer debriefer identifies as heterosexual, able-bodied, and cisgender female, who was born and raised in South America. The external auditor identifies as a heterosexual, Black, able-bodied, and cisgender male, who was born and raised in the United States. The peer debriefer and external auditor completed a reflexivity statement that was used to facilitate transparency, reflexivity, and discussion amongst the researchers.

Procedures and Participants

Because we sought to understand counseling and counseling psychology leaders' SJCRCL experiences and processes in the context of counseling associations and higher education, we sampled associate and full professors

employed in higher education settings, who were a homogeneous population in terms of the identified research participation criteria, with moderately diverse social locations (Gibson et al., 2018; Hargons et al., 2017). Following institutional review board approval, purposive and snowball sampling was used to intentionally identify individuals who met the criteria for the study: (a) 18 years of age or older; (b) awarded a PhD or EdD; (c) served as an associate or full professor within the last five years; and (d) served in counseling association leadership within the past five years. The inclusion criteria of PhD and EdD was used to create parity between counseling and counseling psychology's foci on training, teaching, and research. Thus, we decided that the practice foci of other doctoral degrees, such as PsyD, may be too disparate for a homogeneous population. We also believed the educational and professional experiences of doctoral students and assistant and adjunct professors were too different to include in an initial exploratory study. Therefore, these populations merit further inquiry as a next step.

Participants were identified through online and public platforms including but not limited to leadership rosters of the American Counseling Association and Division 17: Society of Counseling Psychology, as well as their affiliate divisions, such as the (a) Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, (b) Counselors for Social Justice, (c) Ethnic and Racial Diversity, and (d) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues. University faculty rosters and articles pertaining to multiculturalism, social justice, and advocacy also guided participant identification. After we developed an extensive list of potential participants, a recruitment email was sent out to a heterogeneous sample of individuals who met the criteria for the study. The recruitment of potential participants lasted several months. Of the 60 individuals invited to participate, 19 individuals agreed and 18 completed two rounds of semi-structured interviews and member checks. No *a priori* sample size was set; instead, we used Corbin and Strauss' (2015) definition and guidelines of saturation and theoretical sampling to facilitate the concurrent process of collecting and analyzing data. Thus, we reached saturation once there were no new emerging concepts, categories, themes, or gaps present, as well as when concepts were fully developed, dimensionalized, and further confirmed by the external auditor and participants. Saturation and theoretical sampling occurred over two rounds of semi-structured interview and member checks. Given the nature of qualitative grounded theory research, and the definition and guidelines set forth by Corbin and Strauss, 18 participants was a sufficient sample for this study (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012).

The participants reported multiple intersectional social locations; however, they will be reported in the aggregate to further ensure each participant's anonymity. When asked about their racial and/or ethnic identity,

participants identified their race and ethnicity as Black/African American ($n = 5$); Latinx, Hispanic, or Mexican American ($n = 3$); Native/Indigenous ($n = 1$); biracial/multiple heritage ($n = 1$); Asian/Asian American ($n = 1$); and non-Latino White ($n = 7$). All participants identified themselves as cisgender, and female ($n = 10$) or male ($n = 8$). Participants labeled their affectional identity as lesbian ($n = 2$), gay ($n = 2$), queer ($n = 1$), and heterosexual/straight ($n = 13$). Participants reported their dis/ability status as disabled ($n = 1$) and abled ($n = 17$). All participants reported being a United States citizen and their ages ranged between 36–56 years old. In addition, participants reported multiple spiritual or religious identities, specifically agnostic, atheist, Buddhist, Catholic, Christian, Jewish, nonreligious, religious, and spiritual. Last, participants reported master's specialties including career counseling, clinical mental health/community counseling, counseling psychology, marriage and family counseling, multicultural counseling, rehabilitation counseling, school counseling, and student affairs/college counseling.

Participants reported a range of leadership and education experiences. Participant experience in professional association leadership ranged from 4–24 years. Participants reported holding leadership positions within professional associations or divisions, such as chair (e.g., committee, ethics, foundation, interest network, task force); founding editor; editor; associate editor; editorial board member; president (e.g., elect, current, past); treasurer; trustee; secretary; site team chair/member; and vice president. Participants also indicated serving in a range of leadership associations, at the regional ($n = 6$), national ($n = 16$), and international ($n = 5$) levels.

The last demographic area focused on participants' higher education leadership experience. Participants reported having served as a tenure-track/tenured faculty member and higher education leader for a range of 6–19 years. Participants reported their faculty rank as an associate professor ($n = 12$) and professor ($n = 6$). Participants reported holding a variety of higher education leadership positions, such as associate dean, liaison to accrediting bodies, chapter faculty advisor, director/co-director (e.g., clinic, grant, research), faculty senate, program/department chair/coordinator, specialty coordinator, and committee chair/lead (e.g., diversity, ethics, curriculum, promotion and tenure, recruitment and retention, research).

Data Collection

Participant data were collected via two rounds of semistructured interviews that occurred over the phone, Skype, or Zoom, and member checks that transpired through phone or email. The first round of semi-structured interviews

lasted an average of 80-min. The second round of semi-structured interviews lasted an average of 60-min. All demographic information was collected during the initial semi-structured interview. All interviews were audio recorded, and once an interview or member check was completed, it was transcribed verbatim within 48–72 hr. The first author of this study conducted all of the interviews and member checks.

The interviews and member checks were aimed at exploring leaders' SJCRCL processes and practices. Thus, a range of broad to specific open-ended questions were utilized to answer the two overarching research questions. The first round of questions was derived from the extant leadership, social justice, culturally responsive, and grounded theory literatures (see Appendix). Between round one and two, the first author conducted member checks, which allowed us to collect additional data on how participants' understood the emergent findings and their level of agreement, as well as to develop other questions for the second round of interviews and member checks. The second round of interviews were based on the first round of interviews and subsequent emergent theory, concurrent and recursive data collection and analysis procedures, and gaps in the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Additionally, we collected researcher-based data, as evidenced in our positionality statements, journals, and memos, given the need to attend to our influence and bracket our positionality throughout the concurrent process of collecting and analyzing data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012; Saldaña, 2016).

Data Analysis

Within grounded theory, the process of collecting and analyzing data is concurrent and recursive, as each process continuously informs the other, which ultimately leads to the development of an emerging grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012). The purpose of data analysis is to identify and organize concepts for the purpose of abstracting lower-level concepts, followed by categories and a core category. Therefore, we utilized concurrent analytic techniques of induction, deduction, and verification to assist in the process of analyzing data and developing an emergent theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012).

Analysis began by immersing ourselves in the raw data by reading and listening to the transcripts. Grounding ourselves in the raw data was essential, given each participant's experiences, processes, and narratives were used to develop and create codes and categories. We then engaged in open coding by reading and analyzing each line and paragraph for lower-level concepts (e.g., codes, themes). Open coding provides a broad review of lower-level concepts, which was used to understand the large emergent themes or domains present

within the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). We separated line(s) and paragraph(s), given that sentences can occur in more than a line, and ideas, experiences, and events can occur in multiple sentences or paragraphs. The interviews were separated into smaller units of meaning and coded using participant language, thereby allowing us to break down the data using more specific labels and terms to represent the meaning of the data. Each transcript and source of raw data was initially analyzed using open coding, which supported creating a consistent structure throughout the process of data analysis.

Next, as suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2015), we developed a codebook using the first three semi-structured interviews. The codebook contained a list of codes, subcodes, and patterns, as well as operationalized meaning, examples, and deidentified quotes related to the ongoing data collection and analysis. Our codebook was based on participant-described processes and experiences, rather than prioritizing the current scholarship, although the extant literature was used to analyze the data further. For example, when we examined each participant's SJCRCL actions, the existing literature was used to inform our understanding of the data further. We then engaged in axial coding in order to identify and better understand the relationships between and amongst codes. Axial coding is identified as a second-tier coding process by which lower-level concepts are organized, divided, and collapsed into broader categories (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012). Accordingly, we used our identified open codes, codebook, and data to identify the causal conditions, phenomenon, intervening conditions, strategies/actions, and consequences. The axial coding supported our examination and understanding of actions–interaction, nuances and complexities, and similar and dissimilar situations among participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Each of these components was understood within the context of counseling leaders engaging and enacting socially just and culturally responsive leadership within professional association and higher education contexts. This was accomplished using Corbin and Strauss's (2015) analytic practices and/or tools (i.e., context, paradigm, conditional and consequential matrix, process).

We based our analytic practices and tools on Corbin and Strauss's (2015) definitions. Context encompassed developing an explanation and rationale for what an individual says, thinks, feels, or does (action–interaction) in response to a specific event, circumstance, or condition. The paradigm provided a mechanism for us to investigate and organize concepts by potential linkages or relationships (i.e., conditions, actions–interactions, consequences). The matrix, as an analytic tool, was used to explore and deconstruct the following: (a) the range of conditions and outcomes; (b) the complexity of the relationship between conditions, actions–interactions, and consequences; (c) different actors and perspectives; (d) micro and macro conditions; and (e) it brings all the

data together. Process was incorporated as an analytical practice used in conjunction with each analytic tool. Given that actions–interactions are not static, but rather are fluid and often repetitive, varied, interrupted, paused, or changed, it is essential that our data analysis accounted for this dynamic and responsive process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Next, we employed the use of selective coding, which allowed us to further refine our axial codes and place them in relation to one another, which resulted in an emergent abstracted theory explaining how counseling leaders engage and enact the process of socially just and culturally responsive leadership within professional association and higher education contexts (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012). The use of selective coding required us to identify the patterns, processes, and sequences amongst our axial codes. This in turn allowed us to establish an integrated, sequential pattern and process to explain the phenomenon being studied and the larger identified processes of SJCRCCL. The final analytic step included the development of an abstracted visual representation of the theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Trustworthiness

We engaged in multiple practices to increase the trustworthiness of our study (Hays et al., 2016; Morse, 2015; Tracy, 2010). First, we used constant comparison, by using open codes, a codebook, and data to inform, analyze, and complicate future data sources (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2012). Therefore, we constantly checked and compared our conclusions about the data. We also utilized prolonged engagement through multiple rounds of interviews and member checking, generating an audit trail. Member checking played a vital role in ensuring our participants' had an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss how the findings related to their SJCRCCL processes, practices, and experiences. During the first and second rounds of member checking, each participant was provided with, or asked the following questions: (a) "Does the transcript accurately represent what transpired during our individual semi-structured interview?" (b) "Is the analysis and emergent findings representative of your experiences, processes, and narratives?" (c) "Would your interpretation of the phenomenon change if these themes were not included or changed?" (d) "Is there anything in the analysis that resonates with you more than anything else?" (e) "Is there anything missing from the analysis from your perspective?" (f) "Do you have any thoughts, feelings, or reactions to share about the emergent analysis and findings?"

We utilized a peer debriefer and external auditor to ensure a data-driven theory, rather than using our own beliefs, values, and assumptions (Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays et al., 2016). The peer debriefer and first author met at several different points throughout the study to discuss personal beliefs,

positions, biases, and assumptions associated with the data collection and analysis process. Similar to the peer debriefer, the external auditor was used to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. At the end of each round of interviews, the external auditor was given every fifth deidentified transcript (e.g., fifth, tenth, fifteenth), as well as the emergent findings and emerging theoretical model. The external auditor was asked to code the interviews and compare their findings to ours. After, the external auditor emailed their work, which outlined the similarities, differences, and questions related to their understanding of the data, codes, and findings. The researcher used this data to further analyze and refine the abstracted theory.

Additionally, we used a positionality statement, journaling, memoing, and member checking in order to document our roles as research instruments and our researcher-participant relationship (Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays et al., 2016; Morse, 2015; Tracy, 2010). These practices provided us with a mechanism to situate ourselves as researchers, account for our influence, and bracket our personal positions, identities, beliefs, and experiences regarding the data (Hays & Singh, 2012). The last measures of trustworthiness included use of thick descriptions using participant quotes and negative case analysis where we accounted for data that differed and added complexity to the abstracted grounded theory (Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays et al., 2016; Morse, 2015; Tracy, 2010). For example, negative case analysis supported us in looking at data and explanations that went against our emergent theory, conceptualizations, and findings. Hence, we used negative case examples to reexamine the data and address important limitations of the study (Hays & Singh, 2012). This allowed us to further examine the data, account for our position, and establish increased measures of trustworthiness.

Results

The analysis from this study resulted in an abstracted theory that described the causal conditions, contextual factors, intervening conditions, actions, consequences, and a core-category pertaining to the phenomena of interest. In particular, causal conditions included personal experience and/or exposure, awareness and knowledge, affective experience, sense of calling and/or duty, and environmental stimuli. The phenomena involved socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership. Contextual factors consisted of bidirectional points of entry and influence, counseling leadership pillars, and dimensions for consideration. The intervening conditions were obstacles, group-system dynamics, conflicts, dis/agreements, and change. Actions included personal actions, skill-oriented actions, relational oriented actions, community cultural actions, and group-system actions. Lastly, consequences included pathways that foster, hinder, or stagnate, and a core category of connectivity (see Figure 1).

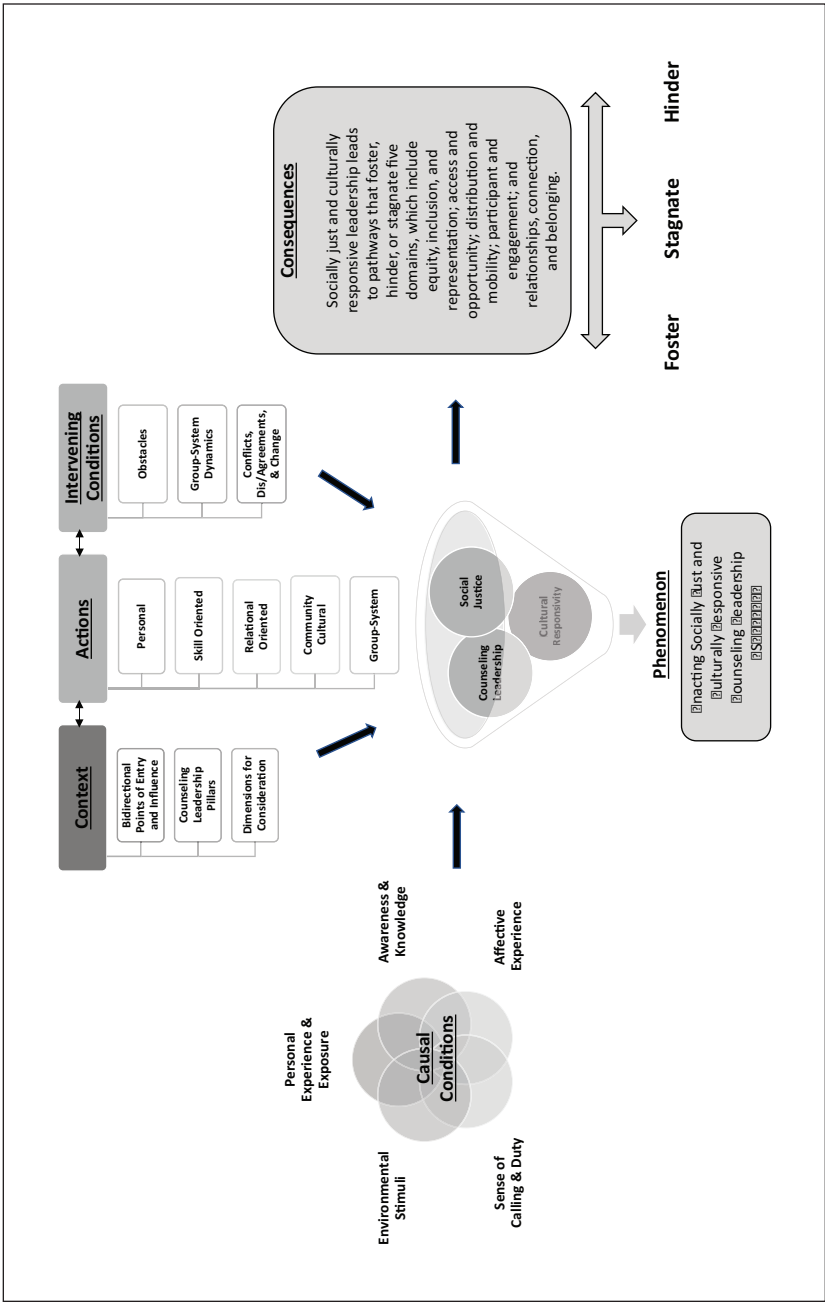


Figure 1. Socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership model.

Causal Conditions

Causal conditions are defined as the events or conditions that led participants to engage in SJCRCL. Each participant discussed five such conditions in a singular and intersectional form.

Personal Experience and/or Exposure. The first causal condition was defined as the personal or observed experiences that acted as a catalyst for each leader's desire and ability to engage in SJCRCL. Every participant spoke about how their "personal," "witnessed," or "secondhand" experiences informed their desire to become involved in leadership. Participants consistently discussed areas such as their "identities," "upbringing," and "lived experiences" prior to counseling, as well as "educational," "professional experiences," and "happenstance." For example, participants shared how their experiences were related to their own identities or how exposure to others' singular and intersecting identities, such as "race," "ethnicity," "ability," "affectional orientation," "gender," "nationality," "language," "spirituality," and "socioeconomic status," acted as one of the catalysts for their leadership. One participant reported,

I think about some of my other identities and how I've experienced marginalization and isolation from those things, [and they] absolutely inform how I think about my leadership and ways [in] which I can really serve as a conduit to try to address some of the concerns that I've personally experienced and then also professionally either experienced or seen.

Awareness and Knowledge. The second causal condition was defined as the awareness and knowledge that was internalized by counseling leaders and that ultimately guided and supported them toward engaging in SJCRCL. Every participant shared how "awareness" and "knowledge" of different areas, such as "injustices," "privilege," and "oppression;" "social-cultural;" the "counseling profession," "service," and "leadership;" and an "organization" or "institution" further led them to engage in socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership. Most participants discussed that they were "trained" or "socialized" to believe that social justice and cultural responsiveness should be at the "core" or "central" to the work of all counseling clinicians, educators, and leaders. One participant reported how their training and socialization in counseling was central to their current leadership practices,

A large part of our overall philosophy is really just inclusivity. Making sure all voices are heard. Part of leadership is ensuring that the people that you're leading, the people that you're working with, feel like their voices are heard, feel like their opinions matter, and that they're a valued part of the group. Keeping that overall philosophy in mind, but then also working as best as possible to practice it, I think is really a fundamental part of ensuring that that happens.

Affective Experience. The third causal condition was defined as the emotions that influenced and/or motivated counseling leaders toward enacting SJCRCL. Each participant verbally shared or displayed emotions, including “empathy,” “compassion,” and “care;” “enthusiasm” and “passion;” “enragement,” “frustration,” “disappointment,” and “violated;” “hurt” and “fear;” or “guilt” and “shame,” when describing what led them to engage in SJCRCL. Participants’ emotions were positioned as a motivating force, such as when one participant stated, “You know, what fundamentally makes us angry, motivates us.” Another participant shared,

Seeing somebody who has, I think, that inner core of strength that keeps them moving on. Not just when you’re exhausted from all the work we do, but even exhausted from defeat, and frustration, and seeing an issue continue to become an issue. People who can be just tired of fighting, and yet still approach the world, still approach people with energy, with compassion, with understanding, with passion. Because for me, that’s kind of, a rubber hits the road moment. That really inspires and motivates me.

Sense of Calling and/or Duty. The fourth causal condition was defined as a personal and professional compass that guides counseling leaders toward SJCRCL. The majority of participants directly spoke about how their own internal and external sense of calling or duty led them to enact counseling leadership that was both socially just and culturally responsive. Participants explained their calling or duty as “moral;” “responsible,” “integrity,” and “ethical;” “instinctual;” and “spiritual” and “religious.” Although multiple participants differentiated a sense of calling and sense of duty, the majority of participants described one or more forms of a sense of calling and/or duty.

As a group, participants had a deeply integrated sense of personal and professional responsibility, instinct, or spirituality/religiosity guiding them toward socially just and culturally responsive leadership practices. Whether or not a participant described themselves as “a reluctant leader,” there was a shared narrative around “doing good” or “doing what’s right,” and “being part of the solution” because “inaction is not a suitable option.” This connected with a felt sense of calling and/or duty. In illuminating the core of this causal condition, one participated stated:

I happen to live in a community that is really, really feeling the discrimination. I live on the border. I cannot turn a blind eye. I am in the thick of human rights violations [and] civil violations. Just legal violations and I cannot not see that. I cannot sit still and pretend that it’s not happening. I think just being in the thick of human rights violations keeps me really, really engaged in social justice work.

Environmental Stimuli. The fifth causal condition was defined as the landscape or climate within which counseling leaders interact, which informs their desire

and ability to engage in SJCRCL. When verbalizing what led them toward SJCRCL, the majority of participants directly or indirectly shared how their environments and climates influenced their involvement. Participants described different “environmental landscapes” or “atmospheres,” such as “social,” “cultural,” “political,” and “physical.” Although participants spoke about a range of environmental stimuli, they consistently discussed the connection between their environment and current leadership. For example, multiple participants spoke about being in an environment where there were, and were not, people “thinking,” “looking out,” or “advocating” for “marginalized,” “oppressed,” “powerless,” “disenfranchised” or “overlooked” people. They further asserted that environmental stimuli, such as “policy, politics, discourse, national discourse, global discourse” were constantly “impacting our landscape.” One such example included a participant who shared that they “had grown up in an environment with White people,” and as a result, they would have a different focus and approach as a leader, “empathizing” about “why it’s so difficult for [White people]” to see their “privilege” and “Whiteness.”

Contextual Factors

The contextual factors are conditions, patterns, and properties within which the action strategies were taken by participants to manage and undertake SJCRCL. Each of the three factors are multifaceted and intersect to influence contextual and intervening conditions and actions participants used.

Bidirectional Points of Entry and Influence. The first contextual factor was defined as including the various ecological systems that the counseling leaders interacted with and were influenced by when engaging in SJCRCL. The bidirectional component represents the reciprocal and cyclical relationship between how the leaders’ points of entry and actions influenced and were influenced by the various points of entry. The bidirectional points of entry and influence were representative of “privileged” and “marginalized” ecological systems that occur at the (a) “individual,” (b) “group,” (c) “community,” (d) “organizational” and “institutional,” (e) “professional,” (f) “societal,” and (g) “global” level. The privileged to marginalized nature was represented by participants communicating how factors such as “identity,” “history,” “culture,” “privilege,” “representation,” “colonization,” and “power” influenced different ecological norms, values, and practices within each point of entry, as well as the reciprocal influence. Most participants shared the importance of conceptualizing and intervening at each of the points of entry, due to the “complex,” “diverse,” “interconnected,” and “evolving” world. One participant articulated, “I’m thinking of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system. This idea that things change over time and

context, but we're also affected by our times and context. That's been reinforced in my readings and work as a social justice leader."

Counseling Leadership Pillars. Participants reported six counseling leadership pillars, which were "community," "counseling," "teaching," "scholarship," "service," and "supervision." Participants defined these as the different professional domains where counseling leaders engage in SJCRCL within professional association and higher education contexts. All participants spoke of their conceptualizations and practices within various counseling leadership realms and consistently reported engaging in "service," primarily through "associational," "organizational," "departmental," or "institutional" contexts. The other pillars frequently named included "teaching," "supervision," "counseling," "research," and "community." The majority of participants spoke of their counseling leadership in multiple concurrent domains. One participant discussed how their social justice work occurred simultaneously in multiple domains stating, "Yeah, some of it would be research-oriented. Some of it is throughout a classroom experience. Some of it will be with colleagues in conversations. And yeah, some of it will just be across different contexts." Likewise, another participant highlighted the multiple different contexts associated with their community-oriented leadership focus,

I get to work directly with adults, adolescents, children. I do pro bono clinical mental health services. I also serve as a child advocate for a guardian at an organization. As a child advocate, I spend time with one child at a time once a week in the detention center system. I work with unaccompanied child migrants in that system. I do that to be engaged and on the ground. As a leader, I encourage other people to do it as well.

Dimensions for Consideration. This factor was defined as the different considerations, conditions, or processes counseling leaders intentionally and proactively contemplated before enacting SJCRCL. These were identified as being important because leadership, social justice, and cultural responsiveness are "contextual" and "complex," especially the "intersections" of each construct. Given the desire of the participants to be intentional and dynamic, they reported contemplating multiple dimensions within their leadership. Such reported factors included but were not limited to "conceptualization," "multiculturalism," "processes," "potential implications," "positionalities," "sustainability," "interplay of development," and "contextual support and barriers." A regularly occurring dimension involved considering the "past," "history," "collective memory," or "institutional memory" of a cause, issue, organization, or institution. Participants also named a variety of dimensions to implications, such as "considering who is and who is not benefiting;"

“weighing the pros and cons;” thinking of potential “benefits,” “impact,” “repercussions,” and/or “consequences;” considering the influence on “policies,” “procedures,” “legislation,” and “economics;” and considering how various “stakeholders,” “members,” or “communities” will be influenced or will perceive future actions. One participant shared,

I ground myself on how others are grounded in this work. So again, that goes to thinking about how do they think about their own positionality? How are they remaining connected to various communities or understandings of those different communities?

Intervening Conditions

Intervening conditions represent the broad structural factors that influenced the SJCRCL action strategies used. Each of the three intervening conditions influenced the other corresponding intervening conditions, as well as the contextual conditions and action strategies used to engage in or enact SJCRCL.

Obstacles. *Obstacles* were defined as the issues and barriers that counseling leaders encountered when attempting to enact or engage in SJCRCL. Although not an exhaustive list, participants described obstacles, such as “exploitive” or “problematic people,” “colonizing social justice” and/or “cultural responsiveness,” “personal barriers,” “social-cultural barriers,” “systemic barriers,” and un/intentional “ignorance.” Obstacles were reported to influence counseling leaders, socially just and culturally responsive leadership, and those who identified as having marginalized identities. For each of the participants, obstacles were heavily prevalent in their narrative, experiences, and practices, and of all areas within the data; this intervening condition had the most data.

Participants identified barriers, such as “lack of support” and “isolation,” “fear” and “imposter syndrome,” “financial costs,” “personal toll,” and “politics.” Another set of related obstacles included issues associated with the inability of various professionals and stakeholders to utilize basic counseling skills, such as “perspective taking,” “both/and thinking [non-dichotomous or divergent thinking],” “seeking to understand,” and “empathy.” Participants suggested this had led to increased issues and practices of “polarization,” “false dichotomies,” “all-or-nothing thinking,” “apathy,” “othering,” “vilifying,” and unwillingness to hear “differing perspectives” or “experiences.” A third focus discussed by many participants included how the counseling profession or related disciplines, explicitly their “scholars,” “advocates,” “educators” and “practitioners” or “associations,” “organizations,” and “institutions” have claimed to engage in social justice and culturally responsive work, and yet it appears to be a “superficial act,” given the “current power” and “culture around” social justice and

cultural responsiveness. One participant suggested that, “[Social justice] is a fad, it gets indoctrinated as part of the dominant discourse, which has really been co-opted or colonized by the privileged and the powerful.”

Group-System Dynamics. *Group-system dynamics* were defined as the visible and invisible, formal and informal, and behaviors and dynamics that occur within and between groups and systems. Participants described these group-system dynamics as inherent to leadership, as well as having “positive” and “negative” effects on SJCRCL. These group-system conditions and properties involve “norms” group-system “processes” around “communication,” “decision-making,” “negotiation,” and “policies” or “rules;” “relationships” and “developments;” “social, cultural, and political power” and “capital;” and group-system “atmosphere.” As well, the importance of developing a group-system atmosphere within which people felt “safe,” “heard,” “visible,” “understood,” “valued,” “seen,” “accepted,” or like they “belong” was articulated. However, multiple participants also cautioned against some of the current rhetoric around safety, as they argued not all spaces and environments can “be safe.” One participant of color disclosed that as a socially just leader, “I’m always walking this tightrope around making White people feel safe in White spaces, but also needing to challenge the norms or status quo around what safety feels like and who gets to feel safe.”

Conflicts, Dis/agreements, and Change. Participants described conflicts, dis/agreements, and change as intervening variables. Although each of these variables can have a positive or negative connotation, participants described them on a “continuum” and as “inherent to human interaction.” One participant shared, “you don’t have to like” conflict, dis/agreement, or change “to know they have purpose.” Multiple participants talked about the initial emergence of conflict, dis/agreement, and change. These participants discussed the importance of the initial emergence, suggesting it was a “critical incident” or “moment,” and “set the stage” for future conflicts, dis/agreements, and change. Other areas discussed by the majority of participants included the importance of “addressing” and “facilitating,” as well as “resolving,” “learning from,” or “utilizing” conflict, dis/agreement, and change. One participant stated as a leader, they “typically wait for the first challenge” because they “can’t build trust until” they had the opportunity to showcase they can “have conflict and resolve it.”

Actions

Actions were defined as all activity that lead to action, including the act of interpreting events, whether visible or invisible and action or nonaction. Every participant described engaging in multiple SJCRCL actions simultane-

ously. This resulted in five categories of SJCRCL actions: personal, skill oriented, relational oriented, community cultural, and group-system.

Personal Actions. *Personal actions* were defined as intrapersonal behaviors or inquiries that counseling leaders use to support their enactment of SJCRCL. Such actions involved practices, such as utilizing one's "personality dispositions" and "characteristics" (e.g., humble, authentic, genuine, outspoken, feisty, vulnerable); fostering one's "personal strengths," "resilience," "self-efficacy," and "agency;" employing a personally-professionally "congruent theoretical lens" or "framework;" engaging in "self-reflection" and "meaning making;" ongoing "personal" and "professional work" and "holding oneself accountable."

As a means of engaging in SJCRCL, participants described the importance of personal work through actions, such as "self-care," "mindfulness," "attending counseling," and "making time" or "making space" for themselves as well as things that are important to them, whether that is "working out," "relationships," "retreats," "eating well," "faith," "humor," "reading," or experiences that provide them with "energy." Many participants also spoke about their ongoing commitment to their own growth and development. The actions associated with professional work included practices, such as "reading," "attending conferences," addressing "blind spots" (an ablest term), "consultation," "getting involved," "asking questions," and "learning from" "students," "colleagues," "clients," "mentors," or "those who came before us." One participant stated, "I think part of being a good leader is acknowledging and finding out ways to challenge those blind spots and gauging and being okay with uncomfortable situations and uncomfortable conversations, sometimes not even knowing what you're setting foot in."

Skill Oriented Actions. Although participants identified many skills, commonly named skills included "counseling skills," "communication skills," "dialectics," "administrative" and "managerial tasks," "use of data" and "assessments," "risk-taking" and "making hard decisions," and being "receptive to" and "dealing with challenges."

Many participants equated foundational "counseling skills" with "leadership skills." For example, participants reported counseling skills that included but were not limited to "microskills," "core conditions," "listening to understand," "humor," "transparency," "intentionality," "conflict mediation," "tracking," "observational skills," "openness," "adaptable," "problem solving," and "communication skills." Another set of actionable skills discussed by participants involved dialectics, which encompassed "perspective taking," "relativism," "openness," "flexibility," and "obtaining" and "hearing" both "consenting" and "dissenting views." The majority of participants also emphasized the value, utility, and richness that can come from utilizing dialectics

within leadership. One participant indicated, "I think it's a fundamental belief that I have to try to the best of my ability to understand the other, whoever that other is," adding that it is "not always easy to try to understand the other."

Relational Oriented Actions

Relational-oriented actions were defined as those that center on relationships, trust, and connectivity. Relational-oriented actions were identified as being critical to the work of socially just and culturally responsive counseling leaders, especially in relation to successful actions and uptake. Such relationship-oriented actions included "building personal and professional relationships" and "networks," "attending to relationships," having "loyal" and "trustworthy relationships" or "allies," and "building" and "maintaining trust" within "marginalized" and "underserved communities," as well as "those they seek to serve."

Participants asserted that relationships were foundational to the work of all counseling professionals and that without such relationships SJCRCL would not exist. Building relationships included but was not limited to "reaching out," "collaborating," "networking," "mentoring," "inviting," "getting to know," and "spending time" with various stakeholders, whether that was in a personal or professional context. Attending to relationships was described as involving "relational tasks" and "maintenance," "repairing ruptures," and "holding others accountable." One such example involved "personally inviting" and "building relationships" with "queer folks, folks of color, and with trans folks of color." This followed a participant reporting, "We have to foster personal relationships with emerging leaders to get them on the ground floor of joining a committee. Being involved in committee leadership and then working their way up."

Community Cultural Actions. *Community cultural actions* were defined as intentional behaviors counseling leaders utilized to promote "diversity," "responsivity," "equity," "critical-consciousness," and "justice" within various privileged to marginalized communities and cultures. These actions targeted specific communities, cultures, and systems owing to their privileged to marginalized status and their ability to alter social justice and cultural responsivity. Such actions involved but were not limited to "naming," "discussing," and "breaking down" or "unpacking" issues of "identity," "power," "privilege," and "marginalization;" "challenging," "confronting," "disrupting," and "fracturing" "problematic," "oppressive," or "majoritarian discourses" and "practices;" cultivating "inter-group perspectives and contact;" "use of space," "voice," "language," and a "critical eye;" "advocacy" and "civil disobedience;" "centering the margins" or "those who are directly affected;" "setting the stage for future access;"

“opportunity,” and “distribution;” “empowerment with or on behalf of;” and “attending to insider/outside status.”

For example, participants who discussed having or using a critical eye depicted this practice through such words as “critically,” “proactively,” and/or “carefully” looking at various aspects of leadership to ensure that they are multiculturally and socially just. A participant described this as “diving more deeply into critical analysis of different identities and oppressed groups.” Another participant declared that when dealing with areas, such as recruitment, representation, or retention, “I want to have a critical eye, and if it takes two, three, four, or five times, I’m willing to do that to make sure there’s more access and opportunity for various individuals from different backgrounds and communities.”

Group-System Actions. *Group-system actions* were defined as purposeful behaviors that counseling leaders utilized to attend to within- and between-group system norms, processes, and interactions. Actions included “joining,” “bridging,” and “cultivating” group-system “interactions” and “relationships;” group-system “facilitation;” “group counseling skills;” intervening at “multiple [group-system] levels;” “centering group-systems;” attending to group-system “homeostasis;” and “intervening during critical moments.”

Generally, participants spoke about the importance of and complexity associated with group-system actions. For example, one participant discussed the complexities associated with group-system leadership. In doing so, they shared, “I think if you take a linear approach, you run into more roadblocks and you have a greater chance of misunderstanding what’s going on within groups and systems.” This was paralleled by most participants, who used words such as “messy,” “complicated,” “situational,” “contextual,” “changing,” “dependent on,” and “fluid” or “not static” when discussing how they attend to group-system actions and interactions within SJCRCL. Participants also named “joining,” “bridging,” and “cultivating” group-system interactions and relationships. In discussing this, participants discussed actions, such as “setting the stage,” be[ing] able to speak multiple languages,” “inviting,” “encouraging,” “connecting,” and “reaching out” to all individuals within the group, both “inside” and “outside” of the group, especially for those with marginalized identities and narratives.

Phenomenon, Consequences, and Core Category

Within the Straussian tradition of grounded theory, the phenomenon describes what participants are doing (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). In this study, participants identified the integration of social justice, cultural responsiveness, and counseling leadership. Thus, within SJCRCL, the phenomenon represents the

process of channeling and integrating each of the three constructs as well as the context, intervening conditions, and actions that influence the enactment of SJCRCL.

Consequences represent the implications, outcomes, or results of SJCRCL under the reported sets of conditions. Findings from this study suggest that SJCRCL leads to pathways that foster, hinder, or stagnate in five domains: equity, inclusion, and representation; access and opportunity; distribution and mobility; participation and engagement; and relationships, connection, and belonging. In terms of the model, each of the domains led to an ongoing cyclical process of engaging in SJCRCL. However, when leadership resulted in stagnation, it left each of the five domains static, thus limiting their continued growth and development. Similar to stagnation, the result of hindrance ultimately stifled and discouraged each of the five domains.

The core category encapsulates the main finding and most frequently occurring concept within the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Within this study, the concept of connectivity occurred most frequently within participant narratives, experiences, and practices as well as among all of the findings. Thus, participants reported that connectivity was central to and influenced all aspects of their SJCRCL. Participants discussed how connection to or with others was central to all areas, including “empathy,” “understanding,” “relationships,” “trust,” making a cause or issue “visible,” “navigating systems,” “change,” “belonging,” “collaboration,” and “social justice.” Inversely, when participants spoke about a lack of connection, they talked about issues such as “isolation,” “misunderstanding,” “oppression,” “ivory tower,” “missing the mark,” “othering,” “apathy,” “rejection,” “disinterest,” “missed opportunities,” “discounting people” and “opportunities,” and it was often connected to a negative implication or consequence.

Discussion

The experiences, narratives, and practices of 18 participants provide a grounded theory of how counseling leaders and educators in this study enacted and engaged in SJCRCL within professional association and higher education contexts. Understanding and abstracting a theoretical model of SJCRCL was an essential next step in the counseling leadership research due to the paucity of research focused on multicultural and social justice responsibilities of leaders (Fassinger & Shullman, 2017; Ratts et al., 2016; Storlie & Wood, 2014). The results of this study both complement and extend the SJCRCL and related scholarship.

The results of this study provide further support for the current literature on what influences participants to engage in counseling leadership (Dollarhide et al., 2018; Hargons et al., 2017), the role of ecological systems within

counseling leadership (Singh et al., 2010), the different realms of counseling leadership (Singh et al., 2010; Storlie et al., 2015; Storlie, Baltrinic, et al., 2019), and the importance of and behaviors associated with a leader's intentionality (McKibben et al., 2017). However, the findings also diverge from the current literature (Caldwell & Vera, 2010), in that participants described their motivation for SJCRCL in a more extensive, holistic, and intersectional fashion, as well as a temporal and cyclical process, nonhierarchal, and not based on any singular event. Although findings included supervision and community as counseling leadership pillars, these have minimal empirical support within the extant counseling leadership research (Luke & Peters, in press; Singh et al., 2010; Storlie, Baltrinic, et al., 2019; Storlie, Woo, et al., 2019). This was important and connected to the role of ecology, as participants asserted SJCRCL could not be solely understood within any silo or singular individual, group, profession, or system, as there are multiple simultaneous social-cultural ecologies that influence and are influenced by one another.

This study provides additional support for the developmental nature of counseling leadership (Gibson et al., 2018; Luke & Goodrich, 2010; Storlie & Wood, 2014), as the participants framed their SJCRCL as developmental and cyclical. With that, the participants also indirectly challenged our current understanding of development within leadership, as they considered multiple aspects of development, rather than attributing development to one characteristic or opportunity. Participants' inclusion and attention to the interplay of development was unique to this study and a frequently discussed dimension for consideration that can be used to further the profession's SJCRCL research and practice.

In addition, findings reflect the obstacles and barriers associated with social justice and culturally responsive work (Eagly & Chin, 2010; Hargons et al. 2017; Lopez, 2015, 2016; Phillips et al., 2017; Theoharis, 2007). These issues included, but were not limited to, social-cultural or environmental barriers, experiences of "isms" (e.g. racism, sexism, classism), and lack of support and training. This study's documented obstacles are robust and more comprehensive than most of the current research and include additional barriers. For example, the participants brought light to issues of exploitive or problematic people and the colonization of social justice, which is largely missing within the research on counseling and counseling psychology leadership (Hargons et al., 2017; Storlie et al., 2015). Despite the lack of literature, these two specific obstacles were identified by participants as being extremely important. In particular, they highlight incidents of leaders and organizations exploiting and colonizing issues, topics, and communities for their benefit, as well as engaging in problematic actions. Thus, this specific finding highlights the fact that leaders with a range of privileged to marginalized identities are

engaging in leadership that participants believed served as an obstacle to their SJCRCL. Moreover, this problematic leadership became a barrier to the communities counseling professionals seek to serve. As a result of this finding, leaders can assess for issues of exploitation and colonization of social justice within the context of counseling associations and higher education. Then, these issues can be addressed through professional dialogue and action. However, further research on these areas is warranted.

Connected to the previously mentioned obstacles were the five identified actionable domains. As a whole, the five SJCRCL actions have provided the profession and related disciplines with a range of categorized leadership actions. Whereas contemporary research has identified similar leadership actions (Hargons et al., 2017; Lopez, 2015; McKibben et al., 2017; Theoharis, 2007; Wang, 2018), the current findings offer a broader understanding of those actions. Of all the actions and findings within this socially just and culturally responsive leadership, the inclusion of group-systems was the most distinct contribution to both the counseling-specific and socially just and culturally responsive leadership literature, given the lack of accounting for group-system dynamics in leadership at large, especially socially just and culturally responsive leadership (Lopez, 2016; McKibben et al., 2017).

Limitations

Findings from this study should be understood within the context of the following limitations. First, inherent to the process of qualitative research, we the researchers acknowledge our intentional and unintentional effects on the study (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; Hays & Singh, 2012; Hays et al., 2016). Although we utilized multiple measures of trustworthiness as a means of bracketing and attending to our influence, our personal and methodological decisions affected the outcome of the study. Second, the current research associated with cultural responsiveness (Giovanangeli & Oguro, 2016), social justice (Shin et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2009), and counseling leadership is in a state of development (Fassinger & Shullman, 2017; McKibben et al., 2017). This means counseling and related disciplines have only recently begun to develop a rich, empirical understanding of each of the aforementioned constructs. Thus, our findings are bound by the current rhetoric and discourse around social justice, cultural responsiveness, and counseling leadership. Third, given this study's criteria for participation, we limited the narratives and experiences accounted for within the results, such as the exclusion of current graduate students, nontenured faculty, those who do not train counseling professionals, and those without access to and opportunity in professional associations and higher education leadership. The lack of inclusion may have

omitted additional rich and diverse perspectives of SJCRCL. Fourth, the study only included phone, Skype, Zoom, and email-based interactions wherein nonverbal data may have been missed and inadvertently excluded. Fifth, we navigated through epistemological and ontological tensions in regard to Corbin and Strauss' (2015) tradition of grounded theory, which is often positioned between post-positivism and modernism, and the constructs of social justice and critical theoretical framework (i.e., intersectionality) which are positioned within the realm of postmodernism (Cole, 2009; Collins & Bilge, 2016; Crenshaw, 1989; Peters, 2017).

Implications for Practice, Advocacy, Education, and Training

This study is the first to examine the intersections between counseling leadership, social justice, and cultural responsivity, and to provide counseling and counseling psychology professionals with an abstract, theoretical model of SJCRCL. Our results have implications for the future practice, education, training, advocacy, and research on SJCRCL. Our findings provide counseling leaders and educators with a framework that can be used to tailor and adapt their applications of SJCRCL continuously based on the complex circumstances affecting their leadership style. Given that this is the first study that has sought to develop an empirical model of SJCRCL, the results provide a much needed theoretical structure with which to guide leadership practices. Having a model to understand leadership is important, as SJCRCL can be abstract and difficult to conceptualize and contextualize, even when informed by previous experience and training (Hargons et al., 2017; Roysircar et al., 2017; Singh et al., 2010). In addition, much of the literature on SJCRCL has focused on personal and skill-oriented practices and behaviors (Fassinger & Shullman, 2017; McKibben et al., 2017). In contrast, the emergent model supports additional actions, more specifically, relational-oriented, community cultural, and group-system actions. Therefore, this framework provides counseling professionals with suggestions on how to move beyond insular notions of leadership and cultivate SJCRCL actions and practices.

SJCRCL education training and mentorship programs are clearly vital to improving leadership education, training, and practices (Peters & Vereen, 2020; Theoharis, 2007), but this approach is largely missing from the training opportunities currently available to professionals (Hargons et al., 2017; Singh et al., 2010; Storlie & Wood, 2014). Our findings thus have multiple implications for leadership training and development, whether in education and leadership programs or in education leadership associations or communities. In particular, this model can be used to (a) teach or guide counseling and counseling psychology

professionals toward SJCRCL; (b) critically examine how individuals, groups, or organizations are engaged in SJCRCL; or (c) examine potential barriers to SJCRCL. The proposed framework also can facilitate the continued development of practices, policies, or environments conducive to SJCRCL. This can be accomplished through standalone courses, lectures, or panels on SJCRCL, as well as ongoing discussions, journaling, leader training, and webinars (Singh et al., 2010; Storlie, Baltrinic, et al., 2019; Storlie & Wood, 2014). Alternatively, it could be part of associations' or institutions' strategic planning for or self-evaluation of socially just and culturally responsive leadership practices (Hargons et al., 2017; Singh et al., 2010). By providing various stakeholders with the current findings, time for self-reflection, and evaluations of themselves and/or their groups, associations, or organizations, counseling professionals can further develop and revise ways to advance SJCRCL-based practices (Lopez, 2016; Hargons et al., 2017).

Advocacy is purported to play an important role in counseling (Farrell & Barrio Minton, 2019; Singh et al., 2010); however, outside of graduate student training and practices, beliefs and attitudes, and advocate identity development (Goodman et al., 2018; Storlie, Woo, et al., 2019), much of advocacy remains largely unexplored (Goodman et al., 2018; Farrell & Barrio Minton, 2019; Smith et al., 2009). For that reason, the findings of this study can be used to further understand the SJCRCL actions associated with advocacy, activism, and civil disobedience. One point of enhanced understanding involves participants' assertions that SJCRCL and advocacy actions should be critical, comprehensive, disruptive, and holistic; centralize marginalized identities, communities, and social structures; promote prolonged engagement and reciprocity; and offer a pragmatic, developmental, and dynamic approach to SJCRCL. Another related implication of this study may coincide with SJCRCL and advocacy simultaneously occurring across multiple ecologies (e.g., individual, interpersonal, group-systems), domains (i.e., community, counseling, teaching, scholarship, service, supervision), and stakeholders (e.g., client, student, university, governmental agency). Thus, the socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership model provides counseling and counseling psychology with a theoretical leadership model that is arguably congruent to the competencies and frameworks used to promote multiculturalism, social justice, and advocacy (APA, 2017; Lewis et al., 2002; Ratts et al., 2016). As such, the model can be used to further the practice, training, advocacy, and research efforts of counseling leaders.

Overall, the present results suggest that SJCRCL is a complex, contextual, temporal, developmental, and cyclical process. Therefore, further research on SJCRCL and the proposed model is warranted. Future studies of the emergent theory could examine each component of the model individually, such as the role of group-systems. Furthermore, quantitative or mixed-methods

designs could be used to quantify and empirically test this model. The new findings may provide additional support for the SJCRCL model, as well as identify how it can be extended to meet the needs of various counseling leaders (Singh et al., 2010). Researchers could also investigate this topic using different participation criteria in order to elucidate how different stakeholders understand and engage in SJCRCL. For example, future studies may want to focus on the individuals whom counseling and counseling psychologists seek to serve (Phillips et al., 2017), as well as graduate students, adjunct faculty, assistant professors, and interdisciplinary professionals. This could be essential, as the research on counseling leadership has been dominated by a privileged and insular understanding of this phenomenon, which has excluded the narratives of people whom leaders, educators, and professionals claim to help (Hargons et al., 2017; Phillips et al., 2017). Finally, based on the existing literature, the development of a SJCRCL instrument could be useful as a way to connect all the extant research on the intersections between social justice, cultural responsiveness, and counseling leadership.

Conclusion

Through the narratives, experiences, and practices of 18 counseling leaders, this study underscores the phenomenon SJCRCL as a complex, ever-evolving, and nonperfect practice, where privileged and marginalized individuals, groups, and systems come together with the intent to better the counseling professions and those they seek to serve. Given the professional roles and responsibilities placed upon counseling and counseling psychology leaders and educators in conjunction with the professions' values and missions, this study provides an abstracted model that highlights the processes, actions, and interactions of SJCRCL.

Appendix

Sample Items From Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

1. Why does social justice and cultural responsiveness matter to you as a counseling leader?
2. Can you tell me about a few social justice causes or platforms that are meaningful to you as a counseling leader?
3. How do you differentiate the terms social justice and cultural responsiveness or do you believe these are the same things?
4. Tell me about an experience that showcases the essence of who you are as a counseling leader?

5. If you were writing an autobiography about how you utilize social justice and cultural responsiveness in your leadership, what would you include in your autobiography?
6. At what point in your development as a counseling leader would you describe yourself as a socially just and culturally responsive leader?
 - a. Since that point, how has your leadership changed?
7. Within your associational and educational leadership, what has been particularly effective or resonant for you when serving, teaching, mentoring, or writing about leadership?
8. Do you enact socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership differently in the areas, such as service, teaching, research, or mentorship?
 - a. If so, can you explain and provide some examples?
9. What allows or supports your enactment of socially just and culturally responsive leadership?
10. Are there specific practices or skills that you use when engaging/enacting socially just and culturally responsive leadership?
 - a. Can you provide me with a few examples of how they were utilized?
11. Has there ever been a time where you decided to not use a socially just or culturally responsive leadership approach?
 - a. Can you tell me about that experience/time?
 - b. If so, what informed this?
12. Have there been any obstacles related to your identity as or enactment of socially just and culturally responsive leadership in associational or educational contexts?
 - a. If so, can you share experiences?
 - b. How did you respond to such barriers?
 - c. What might be needed to address or further navigate these issues?
13. How do your identities influence how you understand or enact socially just and culturally responsive leadership?
14. How do systems or cultures influence how you understand or enact socially just and culturally responsive leadership?
15. Do you utilize culturally responsive leadership differently when working with privileged to marginalized populations or communities?
 - a. If so, what does this look like in practice?
16. If you were to give a metaphor or analogy of socially just and culturally responsive counseling leadership, what would it be?
17. If you had to name your super power as a socially just and culturally responsive counseling leader, what might that be and why?

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