"This intense desire to know the world":
Cultural Competency as a Personal and Professional Disposition in Collection Development Practices

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Abstract:

In a mixed methods dissertation study investigating the factors that influence the selection and collection development of multicultural children's literature (Garrison, 2012), qualitative findings revealed the challenges public librarians face in their efforts to create culturally relevant collections for their increasingly diverse communities, often not representative of their own personal background, knowledge or experiences. Using a conceptual framework for cultural competence for library and information science professionals (Montiel Overall, 2009), this research highlights cultural competence and responsiveness in this sample of U.S. public librarians according to cognitive, interpersonal, and environmental domains. The experiences and reflections of these librarians support cultural competency as both a personal disposition and a professional disposition in collection development practices. The sociological nature of these findings holds implications and significance for library education in developing and promoting strong cultural competency in library students and practitioners.

Keywords: collection development, selection, cultural competence, dispositions, multicultural children's literature

Introduction

The 2010 United States Census revealed that as projected, the U.S. population continued to grow more racially and ethnically diverse in the first decade of the 21st Century (U.S. Census, 2011). The figures in Table 1 show the breakdown by race and Hispanic/Latino origin from the 2010 Census as well as the percent increases since 2000, using designations and languages used by the U.S. Census Bureau. Whites had the smallest increase at 5.7 percent while Asians measured the highest increase at 43.3 percent. The Census recognizes Hispanic/Latino origin as a non-racial question. This group rose 43 percent since the 2000 Census, surpassing African Americans as the largest minority group in the

U.S. (U.S. Census, 2011). Over half of the increase in the total U.S. population resulted from the growth of the Hispanic/Latino population (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, & Albert, 2011).

Table 1.

2010 U.S. Census Data by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin [a]

Race/ Origin	Percent of U.S. Population in 2010	Percent Increase since 2000
White	72.4%	5.7%
Black or African American	12.6%	12.3%
American Indian and Alaskan Native	0.9%	18.4%
Asian	4.8%	43.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	.02%	35.4%
Some Other Race	6.2%	24.4%
Two or More Races	2.9%	32.0%
Hispanic or Latino	16.3%	43%
Not Hispanic or Latino	83.7%	4.9%

[a] This language and data is from U.S. Census Bureau Website (2011).

States in the southeastern part of the U.S. saw dramatic increases in racial and ethnic populations from the 2000 to 2010 Census, specifically with peoples of Hispanic/Latino origin. Figures in Table 2 show the total state populations and increases for four major ethnic groups in southeastern states since the 2000 Census (U.S. Census, 2011). The growth in the number of Latino residents in this area is quite notable with many of these increases exceeding 100 percent.

Table 2.

Percent Increases of Ethnic Populations in Southeastern states in the U.S. from 2000 to 2010 Census [a]

States	2000 Total Population	2010 Total Population	White, non-Hispanics	Hispanic/Latinos	Asians	African Americans
Delaware	783,600	897,934	5.8%	96.4%	27.3%	75.6%
Mississippi	2,844,658	2,967,297	0.5%	105.9%	38.2%	6.2%
South Carolina	4,012,012	4,625,364	13.5%	147.9%	64.0%	8.9%
Kentucky	4,041,769	4,339,367	4.6%	121.6%	64.5%	14.0%
Alabama	4,447,100	4,779,736	3.6%	144.8%	71.0%	8.3%
Maryland	5,296,486	5,773,552	-0.9%	106.5%	51.2%	15.1%
Tennessee	5,689,283	6,346,105	7.9%	134.2%	61.0%	13.3%
Virginia	7,078,515	8,001,024	7.2%	91.7%	68.5%	11.6%
North Carolina	8,049,313	9,535,483	12.5%	111.1%	17.9%	83.8%
Georgia	8,186,453	9,687,653	8.6%	96.1%	81.6%	25.6%

[a] This data is from U.S. Census Bureau Website (2011).

The findings presented in this paper stemmed from a mixed methods dissertation study analyzing factors influencing selection decisions and the inclusion of multicultural children's literature titles in public library collections in geographically and demographically diverse communities across one of these southeastern states (Garrison, 2012). The broad research question for this study asked:

- What are the factors that influence selection and collection development of multicultural children's literature?

In that study, the researcher did a collection analysis of ten public library systems (70 branches) for five children's book awards, both ethnic specific and non-ethnic specific. These awards included: the John Newbery Award for prestigious literature; the Randolph Caldecott Award for outstanding illustrations in a picture book; the Pura Belpré Award given to Latino/a authors and illustrators; the Coretta Scott King Award for African American authors and illustrators; and the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature given to a work honoring the Asian/Pacific American experience. The researcher used hierarchical regression analyses with the presence of the ethnic-specific award-winning books and the ethnic demographics of each library branch community to determine if the latter were significant predictors of the former. The Newbery and Caldecott Awards were used as controls because they are the most popular children's book awards in the United States and are non-ethnic specific.

Statistical significance was found between the presence of the three ethnic groups and the related ethnic specific award. Further, a statistically significant relationship was found between each ethnic award. In other words, librarians may be using the ethnic demographics of their communities to guide their selection decisions and also using the ethnic specific award lists for collection development. In

order to gain a truer perspective of this finding, the researcher interviewed the selecting librarians in each of the ten public library systems to better determine what factors influence their selection of multicultural children's literature. Along with the identification of such factors like review journals, professional organizations (specifically the American Library Association), and circulation statistics, an interesting theme emerged in these interviews related to the personal beliefs and cultural background of the participants. The mostly White, European American librarians shared challenges they face in their efforts to create culturally relevant collections for their increasingly diverse communities, often not representative of their own personal background, knowledge or experiences. Their reflections support cultural competency as both a personal disposition involving their own backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences as well as a professional disposition enlisting resources, networking, and training from the library field.

Review of the Literature

Professional library organizations recognize the increasing importance for cultures to be represented in library collections in order to support literacy and promote cultural understandings. Policies for some professional organizations influencing collection development, specifically with multicultural considerations and youth populations in mind, are included in Table 3. In response to growing diversity, the American Library Association (ALA, 2008) updated their position, "Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation on the *Library Bill of Rights*," to encourage librarians to include materials in library collections that reflect the wide variety of diverse perspectives mirrored in our global community. This understanding of the *Library Bill of Rights* (ALA, 1996) supports the need for librarians to ensure their collections reflect differences. The document notes that this inclusion of cultural pluralism does not mean "an equality of numbers," but a "balanced collection" reflecting diverse perspectives.

Table 3.

Collection Development Policies of Professional Library Organizations

Library Organization	Professional Policies related to Multicultural Materials
American Library Association (ALA)	*Library Bill of Rights* (1996) "I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves." "Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights*" (2008) "Library collections must represent the diversity of people and ideas in our society… Librarians have an obligation to select and support access to materials and resources on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs, interests, and abilities of all persons in the community…This includes materials and resources that reflect a diversity of political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues. A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials and resources, not an equality of numbers."
American Association of School Librarians (AASL)	*Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* (2009) "The school library media specialist: collaborates with the teaching staff to develop an up-to-date collection of print and digital resources in multiple genres that appeals to differences in age, gender, ethnicity, reading abilities, and information needs." (p. 38)
International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)	The *IFLA/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto* (2012) "Core Actions… The multicultural library should: Develop culturally diverse and multilingual collections and services" (p. 3)

Further review of the policies listed in Table 3 identifies assessing the needs of the community as an essential task guiding collection development. AASL includes such considerations in *Empowering Learners: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* (2009), relating it to the appeal of a collection to its patrons. This position suggests the recognition of patron characteristics including cultural demographics and developmental needs as being integral considerations in developing a quality, relevant collection. Moreover, IFLA's *Multicultural Library Manifesto* (2012) serves to outline the core actions of a multicultural library, which should describe most libraries in today's world. That document's focus on diversity and language implies a needs assessment of the user community in regards to collection development.

Assessing User Needs

Considering user needs has been a fundamental component of collection development since the early 1900s (Schmidt, 2004). Scholars and researchers in the professional literature support the value of community needs assessment for collection development (Barreau, 2001; Mestre, 2010; Van Orden & Bishop, 2001). Boulé (2005) suggests using community focus groups to better define user needs for collection development, specifically for multilingual materials. Despite identifying the significance of assessing user needs for library services and collection development, the collection development

studies reviewed in this literature search did not give evidence of librarians engaged in formal needs assessment (Allen, 1993; Dilevko & Dali, 2002; Tjoumas, 1993). No librarians in a study of South African public libraries had ever done a needs assessment of their user community (Rodrigues, 2006).

While this data was not readily available for the other collection development studies analysed in this literature review, there was generally an imbalance between certain multicultural populations and their literary representation in the library collections. For example, findings from an examination of a Spanish nonfiction collection in a public library revealed that only 2.8 percent of the collection was in Spanish, compared to 31.2 percent of the user community being Spanish-speaking (Boulé, 2005). Similar results were echoed throughout this literature review across public and school libraries as well as the international library community (Allen, 1993; Dilevko & Dali, 2002; Rodrigues, 2006; Tjoumas, 1993). While researchers did not give figures for the expected proportion of multicultural literature and patron populations, they did call for a closer balance between the two. In addition to community analysis, studies in this literature review identified other specific sources informing collection development and selection decisions.

Library Staff

Credentialed librarians working in academic, school, public, and special libraries in the United States are still overwhelmingly White (ALA, 2012). To be exact, the Diversity Counts report compiled by ALA (2012) indicated that approximately 88 percent of librarians in 2009-2010 were White. In addition to this shortage of culturally diverse librarians, research on collection development indicates that librarians credit their own personal lack of cultural knowledge and awareness for the low percentages of multicultural literature in their collections (Tjoumas, 1993). School librarians who worked in urban areas with large numbers of Latino students were surveyed by Allen (1993). Results indicated that they had little knowledge of Latino subgroups and that their overall lack of knowledge and awareness of the Latino culture hindered their selection of related literature. Research at the Johannesburg public library in South Africa showed similar findings with the librarians identifying their lack of cultural knowledge and inability to communicate in indigenous languages as obstacles to building collections and stronger cultural understandings with their indigenous patrons (Rodrigues, 2006). Language barriers are especially problematic in developing multilingual collections for libraries (Dilevko & Dali, 2002). Italiano (1993) encourages non-Latinos to seek quality adult Latino and Chicano literature to become more fluent and knowledgeable with these cultures, and thus, make better selection decisions for Latino children. This issue goes back to the discussion of the importance in knowing the community when making selection decisions (Van Orden & Bishop, 2001).

Research from Quinn (2007) connecting psychological market research to collection development decisions suggests that feelings and affect surface when librarians are evaluating materials outside of their own experiences or familiarity. Thus, if a librarian does not have knowledge about a culture featured in a book, he or she may be less apt to select the book for their collection simply because of their inexperience and unfamiliarity with the contents. When librarians do have such cultural knowledge and awareness, they are better prepared to select quality multicultural children's literature and advocate for such titles. Willet (2001) details a situation where an African American librarian wrote the publisher of the Newbery Award-winning book, *Rifles for Watie* (Keith, 1957), calling for changes to some racial references within the story. This occurrence offers support for librarians' role as "cultural gatekeepers for young people" (Willet, 2001, p. 487).

An interesting finding in the professional literature on collection development was that some surveyed librarians indicated a lack of demand for multicultural materials as driving their decision to not acquire such titles even though demographic statistics indicate a diverse patron community (Dilevko & Dali, 2002; Rodrigues, 2006). Survey research regarding multilingual collections in Canadian public libraries by Dilevko and Dali (2002) suggested this as one of the impeding factors to developing the collection. Rodrigues (2006) found similar results in a South African public library system in addition to more disturbing attitudes about who traditionally uses the library (i.e., Whites, English-speaking citizens, and the economically privileged). While the issue of demand affecting purchase decisions is certainly understandable, and specifically during times of budget shortfalls, if an assessment of the community reveals a need, it is the librarian's professional obligation to make the

necessary collection decisions (ALA, 2008). These decisions should be followed by campaigns advocating for usage by the intended patrons in an effort to support the new collections (Dilevko & Dali, 2002). Using a traditional lack of demand as reasoning for continuing to underserve a specific group perpetuates a cycle of library apathy and could be seen as a social injustice. This issue is particularly critical, as library patron communities grow increasingly diverse in the U.S.

At the turn of the twenty-first Century, Robbin (2000) examined the growing trends of ethnic and racial diversity in the U.S. population and the potential implications for libraries. Her analysis of this pending growth supported the importance of cultural considerations and planning in libraries. In the same copy of *Library Quarterly*, Ríos-Balderrama (2000) called this issue a "juggle and struggle" for librarians navigating the complex definitions and implications of cultural privilege, power, and (in)equity in their communities (p. 197). Both scholars cited the need for librarians to examine their own cultural background, beliefs, and position in society to build and develop cultural competence to work with their increasingly diverse patrons.

Montiel Overall (2009) gave a broad definition of cultural competence that will be helpful in framing this study. She described cultural competence as:

> ...the ability to recognize the significance of culture in one's own life and in the lives of others; and to come to know and respect diverse cultural backgrounds and characteristics through interaction with individuals from diverse linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic groups; and to fully integrate the culture of diverse groups into services, work, and institutions in order to enhance the lives of both those being served by the library profession and those engaged in service. (Montiel Overall, 2009, p.189-190)

The resulting framework Montiel Overall (2009) created placed cultural competence in three domains: cognitive, interpersonal, and environmental.

In the *cognitive* domain, librarians are engaged in personal discovery and awareness of their own culture in addition to building knowledge of and responsiveness to other cultures. This "self-examination" process described by Montiel Overall (2009) is critical to understanding how one's cultural background places them in positions of power and (in)equity in society as noted by Ríos-Balderrama (2000). From a more informed stance of their personal culture, librarians are in a strategic position to develop an understanding and knowledge base about the cultures in their patron community through personal interactions and more formal instructional settings.

The *interpersonal* domain relates to the relationships librarians build with their patrons, highlighting emotions of appreciation and caring. Librarians working towards cultural appreciation offer their diverse patrons opportunities to share needs and expectations they have for their library. Gaining trust and building a relationship is an important piece of promoting engagement. Montiel Overall (2009) discusses a second part of the interpersonal domain as developing an "ethic of caring" between librarian and patron (p. 195). This subdomain stresses an intrinsic motivation for the librarian to know and serve the patron and includes aspects of Noddings (2007) theory of caring developed in part for K-12 teacher education. Personal and cultural interactions further develop the cultural competence of librarians in the interpersonal domain and are critical in building an understanding of social protocols and norms among cultures. Montiel Overall (2009) also incorporates value assessment into this domain, specifically focusing on how the values of the institution (i.e. the library) work with or against the values of the patrons.

The final domain includes *environmental* factors related at a basic level to where one lives. The neighbourhood and surroundings of the library itself are key to this factor as they hold implications with issues like transportation, housing conditions, and even the security and safety of the surrounding area. Further components of the environmental domain relate to access issues including the methods and resources patrons employ in seeking, finding, and using information. Language is important here as well as it holds strong access implications. When a language barrier exists between patrons and librarians, librarians must be prepared to break through it in ways like inviting interpreters to programs, using more visual forms of signage, and having translations available in the library collection. Finally, the physical space of the library itself is a critical piece of the environment

domain. Such considerations include the attitudes of staff as well as the layout and appearance of the space (Montiel Overall, 2009).

The framework for cultural competence developed by Montiel Overall (2009) offers a strong base for understanding how librarians offer and can improve such efforts in their services, including collection development. The conceptual framework for the initial dissertation study revealing the findings presented here was based on Edgar's (2003) theory of collection development and cultural responsive pedagogy from the field of multicultural education (Gay, 2002). The unexpected (and unsolicited) findings from that study identified an emerging theme of personal and professional dispositions as a critical piece of cultural competence. Thus, the conceptual framework for cultural competence developed by Montiel Overall (2009) and previously described is the lens of analysis used to frame the findings presented here. This framework gives a foundation for understanding how librarians make cultural considerations for libraries in terms of collection development, the focus of the present study.

Methods

Using phenomenology as the study's theoretical orientation, the researcher interviewed the librarians who make selection decisions for the system or branches using an interview guide approach, probing for potential factors influencing their decisions. Within this research design, the selection process was viewed as a social phenomenon, influenced from within a person as well as through outside sources. Using a phenomenological lens to design this study served to capture the essence of the librarians' experience selecting books (Patton, 2002). More specifically, this approach enlisted the participants to "make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness" during the interview process (Patton, 2002, p. 104). The librarian participants reflected on the selection process, what factors they take into account, and what tools they use as resources.

Data Sources

The ten librarian participants in this study hail from ten geographically and demographically diverse communities across one southeastern state in the United States. Demographic information for these communities is included in Table 4 using language and designations from the U.S. Census Bureau (2011). The three ethnic groups featured in the table were selected based on the ethnicities represented by the three ethnic specific children's book awards used in this study. They are also the largest ethnic minority groups in the United States. Although the U.S. Census Bureau includes two separate categories for Asians and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, figures for these groups were combined in Table 4 to mirror the representation of the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature.

Table 4.

Community Demographics Information for Various Groups per Total Population [a]

Communities	Total Population	White, Non-Hispanic	African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Asian & Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
Riverburg	2,321	98.6%	0.3%	0.8%	0.2%
Brookfield	72,711	95.5%	2.3%	1.3%	0.5%
Grasston	35,604	38.5%	59.0%	2.1%	0.4%
Treetown	97,032	64.2%	28.5%	5.5%	1.8%
Creekton	118,542	86.2%	5.7%	8.2%	1.5%
Lakeland	149,270	88.8%	3.2%	8.1%	1.6%
Streamland	204,214	40.8%	50.6%	6.3%	2.4%
Forest City	209,021	78.7%	12.9%	4.6%	3.8%
Watervale	437,994	67.7%	19.6%	6.6%	6.3%
Hillville	1,104,291	62.8%	9.1%	15.6%	17.6%
State Totals	8,001,024	68.6%	19.4%	7.9%	5.6%

Note. These are pseudonyms; the names of the communities have been changed to protect their confidentiality.
[a] This data is from U.S. Census Bureau (2011).

As shown in Table 4, the ten communities vary in size and ethnic demographics, but most are White, non-Hispanic. This study further analysed the diversity within these communities by identifying the public library and library branches, when present, within each library system and the ethnic demographics of the immediate community surrounding that library or branch, as determined by the building's zip codes. Information on the library systems, including collection size and number of branches, is shown in Table 5. The bigger communities tend to have the bigger collections and most branches. Also in this table is the number of municipalities included within the library system. Some counties and cities work together to offer citizens library services. For example, the Forest City library system comprises one city and four nearby counties. Some of these communities are small in population so combining the municipalities enhances their service to patrons and expands their collections.

Table 5.

Library System Information

Library System	Collection Size in Volumes[a]	Number of Libraries and Branches in System	Number of Municipalities Served by Library System
Riverburg	16,469	1	1
Brookfield	149,818	2	2
Grasston	93,990	2	3
Treetown	265,639	6	1
Creekton	246,770	3	3
Lakeland	274,946	7	3
Forest City	467,627	8	5
Streamland	691,807	9	1
Watervale	754,796	10	1
Hillville	2,302,357	22	2

[a] This data is from Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) website (2009).

The main criterion used to identify interviewees for this study was that the participants had some responsibility in selecting materials for the children's collection in one of the ten library systems. Eight selecting librarians agreed to be interviewed for the study. Librarians from the other two systems declined formal interviews, instead participating by including typed answers to the interview guide questions. Demographic information provided by the ten participating librarians is included in Table 6 along with a description of their participation. All of the librarians were women, but had different cultural and educational backgrounds as well as various job titles.

Table 6.

Characteristics of Interview Participants

Library System	Pseudonym	Job Title	Highest Degree Attained	Cultural Background	Study Participation
Riverburg	Renee	Library Director	Bachelor of Arts	Not given	Questions only
Brookfield	Dixie	Children's Librarian	Bachelor of Arts in K-6 Education	Caucasian	Interviewed by phone
Grasston	Virginia	Library Director	Masters & 36 post graduate credits in non-profit leadership	Not given	Interviewed by phone
Treetown	Dana	Youth Services Librarian	Masters of Library and Information Science	Caucasian	Interviewed by phone
Creekton	Carolina	Youth Services Librarian	Not given	Not given	Interviewed by phone
Lakeland	Kari	Coordinator of Youth Services	Double Bachelors	Irish	Questions only
Forest City	Frog	Children's Services Manager	Masters	Caucasian	Interviewed by phone
Streamland	Leann	Collection Development Manager	Masters	White/ European descent	Interviewed by Skype
Watervale	Mary	Youth Librarian	Masters in English, Masters in Library Science	Not given	Interviewed in person
Hillville	Libby	Children's and Young Adult Selector	Masters of Library and Information Science	German, English, Irish	Interviewed by phone

The interview instrument combined standardized open-ended interview and interview guide techniques. The interviews began with a fixed structure using the standardized open-ended method of previously developed questions asked from the interview guide. Then it evolved into a less structured format exploring the participants' answers. Patton (2002) reports that combining these approaches is commonly used in qualitative research because it gives the interviewee and interviewer time to develop rapport and become more comfortable with the interview setting and topics. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed for formal analysis.

In order to analyse the interview data, the researcher used an inductive content analysis approach, letting themes emerge from the data rather than predetermining them. This analysis approach demanded the researcher read and reread through the data multiple times in order to get a true picture of the surfacing themes and patterns (Patton, 2002). During these readings, the researcher noted

recurring concepts emerging throughout the different interview transcripts. The researcher also discussed these emerging themes and ideas with a second coder who read the same 25 percent of the interviews. Through these discussions and more rereading, the themes became formal codes and sub-codes within those. After establishing these, the researcher and second coder coded two more interviews and measured agreement levels until they were over 80 percent. After this process was completed, the remaining interviews were coded using the refined coding framework by the researcher.

An interesting theme that emerged from these interviews related to the librarians' personal beliefs and experiences as affecting their professional collection development practice. This code was defined as the influence and impact of the librarians' personal interests and beliefs, background and experiences, subjective in nature. Through this code, personal and professional dispositions surfaced as being important impacts on the librarians' selection decisions and collection development activities. The findings reported in this paper deal primarily with the implications and interpretations of this code.

Findings

The theme of personal and professional dispositions emerged in the interviews with the librarian participants as an important factor influencing their selection decisions and collection development practices of multicultural materials. Through this discussion, the librarians shared challenges and triumphs in their efforts to serve their patron communities through collections and also programming. The findings will be discussed and presented using the cultural competence framework for library and information science professionals created by Montiel Overall (2009) and organized by the three domains: cognitive, interpersonal, and environmental.

Cognitive Domain

In the cognitive domain, Montiel Overall (2009) stresses the importance of knowing one's own culture and the issues of power and equity associated with culture in order to fully understand and interact with others. The librarian participants in this study often identified a recognition of their own culture as influencing their selection decisions and their drive to serve their patron community, albeit addressing their diverse needs or introducing and maintaining a diverse collection to patrons from the mainstream U.S. culture (i.e. White, European American). As previously noted, the librarian participants in this study most often represented the dominant, mainstream culture themselves in their corresponding communities and in the U.S. in general. Many of these librarians talked about growing up in small, ethnically homogenous communities without a lot of experiences with ethnic or cultural differences until they got to college. For some of them, this limited experience adds to the challenge of selecting multicultural children's literature when it represents cultures outside of their own experiences. Dixie reflected on this issue in terms of race/ethnicity:

> I am Caucasian, I think my biggest challenge is wanting to have great things, but making sure that I don't, I am not offensive and don't mean to. I wouldn't want to pick something that I thought was nice but has something that maybe, you know, I wouldn't recognize as offensive, but another culture or race would say, "Oh, well that is not that great."

Leann, who was from one of the larger library systems in this study, brought up this issue with regards to the ethnically diverse patrons she is selecting for in her system. Leann is the only selector for her nine branch library system. She said:

> Because of the background that I have, sometimes I feel like I am not, that I am making assumptions about what people of a different culture are going to want that may not be true. You know, so I think that is an issue again of having one person doing the selection, you have one cultural background, one brain, one psychological background, doing the selection. But I am sure it is a part of because of the characters or types of situations that I identify with, but I try to be as objective as I can.

In addition to these references to the mainstream, dominant culture, two librarian participants identified less mainstream cultural experiences that help guide their selection. Dixie, who was

previously quoted as worrying about her lack of cultural experiences being Caucasian and from a predominantly Caucasian community, related the cultural issue to class as she shared her background growing up in a rural area with a working class family. She suggested that such experiences may not be often depicted in U.S. children's literature and how that affects her selection practice and keeping an open mind. She shared:

> I don't want to have collection that is just all White characters, you know living, well I grew up in a poor background so I don't want everyone living in middle class, mom and dad going to work and everything like that.

Dana revealed a background more representative of cultural diversity. She grew up in Hawaii and was the only White child in many of her classes. In her interview, she recognized how being a minority made her more aware of cultural differences and how fantastic those differences and learning about them can be. She related that back to her collection development goals and selection of multicultural children's literature, saying that "growing up the way I did has a very strong impact on it, and I get a little offended when it's a bunch of you know everything's beautiful with beautiful looking children, because that's not the world." Dana and the other librarian participants revealed the cognitive process they engage themselves in and grapple with when considering items for their collection.

Another component of the cognitive domain is building cultural knowledge and awareness. The librarians' discussion of the challenges involved in collection development connect to this idea. Despite their ambitions, these librarians worry about not being able to find the books through traditional selection sources, like review journals, their vendors, or the award lists. Dixie admitted, "my biggest problem would be the fear of not knowing of things, even though I feel like I pretty much, I try really hard." Frog echoed this sentiment stating that, "I feel like there must be good things out there that I am missing, I mean, you know, that sort of haunts you." Leann thinks maybe "they are just not crossing my radar screen, for whatever reason I can't find them." Carolina related this issue to the cultural groups missing in the literature itself. She commented that, "Most of them are invisible to us. Some of the language groups are not so vocal so we are not going to see it." Mary discussed the importance of pursuing this information:

> You research. You go online and find out. You do the research and find out if there are awards that exist. Then you start paying attention if you are on a list serv, you send out questions…And you have to, you really have to, because it is not mainstream material, I think it is your responsibility to become educated and find out what is out there.

These findings connect personal and professional dispositions of these librarians to serve their communities and create high-quality, diverse library collections. Outside of this inner, cognitive perspective of personal/professional reflection and exploration of others comes the interpersonal domain where they take these lessons learned and put efforts into more active engagement and connection with their communities.

Interpersonal Domain

The interpersonal domain was evident in the stories of engagement and interactions the librarians shared in the interviews. They described their own efforts in building cultural appreciation for the diversity represented by their patron community. Carolina's motivations for learning about other cultures and that of her patrons gave the title for this paper as she talked about "this intense desire to know the world" and experience it through traveling. She shared an intimate example after returning from a trip to Panama:

> And I came back from that first trip to the U.S. and walked into a convenience store and saw the clerk helping everybody else, but ignoring the two Hispanic men that were in front of her and I said I can't let this happen, I have to be an advocate in my own city. So those kind of things happen, you know we go through our lives, we see that things that are not always there and we need to be part of that, and that will help us be better global citizens. And my few little travels have taught me that people are kind and they care, and a smile goes a long way to making people feel welcome and having materials and understanding their culture really is helping our library.

Carolina's story shows a deep reflection of the values of her community as noted in this domain by Montiel Overall (2009). Through her traveling, she experienced personal and cultural interactions with Panamanians and Russians, but upon her return, she was forced to examine intolerance of diversity within her community. Her reflection relates to the ethic of caring that Montiel Overall (2009) described in the interpersonal domain as does another theme revealed by the librarians.

While noted in the cognitive domain that many of the librarians represent a more mainstream cultural background in their communities and the U.S. in general, this recognition was noted as increasing their awareness for the need to diversify their collections and offer their young patrons more diverse reading choices. Frog stated:

> Frog: You know, I am a WASP [White Anglo-Saxon Protestant], I sort of reflect the dominant culture.

> Interviewer: So do you think that makes you more aware or cognizant of your decisions?

> Frog: Yea, I think knowing that I am of the dominant culture and most of our books are, it makes me want to hopefully find other things.

Mary confirmed this as well when she was discussing the selection of titles outside of her own experiences and knowledge, stating that "this might seem insignificant to me as a Caucasian White lady, but for a Philippine grandmother, this is crucial." Mary's comment relates to the issues of empathy and appreciation associated with the interpersonal domain of cultural competence. This sentiment was also echoed by Libby, who does all of the children's and young adult selection for her urban community of Hillville, a 22 branch library system. Libby said:

> It's an awareness thing for me, becoming aware of other cultures, becoming aware of sensitivity, whether that's religious sensitivity, or you know other cultural things, so it's sort of an awareness process and I have to be constantly aware of that.

Montiel Overall (2009) also discussed the importance of librarian outreach and the pursuit of interactions to promote an ethic of caring. Carolina went into detail about her experiences in reaching out to the local Latino community by attending their coalition meetings and gaining their trust. She shared:

> So we had the programs for the children and it was written up in the local Hispanic newspapers and people were coming and, feeling very good about it. So much so that we had the Mexican and El Salvadoran consulates say that they would like to come and talk with people so that they could become legalized. And of course, that kind of activity is exciting for people that have come from other countries and may need to update their visa or they may not be here legally. And we have accepted them in the library, we have provided services for them and are not asking those questions. Although everyone around, they are still squirreling about illegals in our country. So they trusted the library, they trust churches, and as a group, they trust the public library, and it took awhile to gain that trust. Well, we had folks that were lining up inside the library to meet with their consulates…So we were trusted, a trusted source.

Carolina also gave an example of another group, the LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, and Questioning) community and her experience in getting them to be comfortable in the library in their own time. She said:

> Let's talk about Gays and Lesbians; they don't often come into the library, demanding resources. However, I know that we have a community and they, for whatever reason, for the most part have stayed invisible to us as a public library. We are just working with a couple that has some beautiful children and they have brought them to the library. I've been working with this couple bringing their children to the library for about ten years. And they are just now saying, "We would like to recommend some books."

These two stories shared by Carolina show her true disposition towards an ethic of caring in the interpersonal domain described by Montiel Overall (2009). However, it is also notable that the

environmental domain of the library and its surroundings hold strong influence on the process of developing cultural competence and a relationship with the patron community.

Environmental Domain

While the environmental domain was less of a focus in the librarian participants' discussions, it surfaced in examinations of patron usage of the library. As noted by Montiel Overall (2009), numerous issues go into the question of what groups are using the library including transportation and security in physically getting there. Circulation statistics were a common theme described by the librarians as influence selection. By focusing on circulation, the librarians are supporting the demand of the patrons who already use their library, but could potentially be missing other groups. Some of the librarians noted the challenge in encouraging diverse groups in their community to use the library and check out books, which would in turn, justify more diverse book purchases. Dana reinforced that with her statement, "I wish I could expand into more Asian cultures because we do have, the Hmong community is important but they are not coming into this library." Although Dana knows that this certain ethnic group is represented in the Treetown community, she does not feel she can purchase books for them because they are not using her library. The needs assessment of her community is not extending past the library doors. This finding is reflected in other collection analysis studies of public libraries (Dilevko & Dali, 2002). In a study of South African public libraries, Rodrigues (2006) found that librarians were not purchasing multilingual resources for indigenous patrons because they were not coming into the library. This could potentially create a cycle of not using the library for this group, who may not find relevant resources in the collection.

Carolina reflected on the challenge of outreach in acknowledging that "these groups are determined to remain invisible, it is hard to find them." The following quote relays the disappointing end to Carolina's experience described previously in getting the Latino community into her library to discuss citizenship issues with their consulates.

> It took one police car driving through the parking lot and everybody disappeared… We have not been able to get the consulates back. They did their work. The people who stayed in because they probably didn't need to update their visa. I wanted to not be the one asking questions, therefore, I am seen as someone who is on their side and just kept smiling and loving them. You know and showing them that they were a person. But we were determined by the coalition, I was sitting in on this meeting and we decided as a group that it was not a good idea to come back to the library. There was too much fear there.

Carolina's story shows the challenge of environmental factors like the security patrons feel at the library. Her personal experiences indicate that the issue of who uses the library is much more than simply who is walking in the door and checking out books. It is about gaining the trust of diverse groups through outreach efforts giving them reason to come to the library and finding out why they are not coming if that is the case. Creating library collections that represent their cultures could be a way of showing them that they are welcome and valued in that public space.

Implications and Significance

The findings from this study support the cultural competence framework for library and information science (LIS) professionals described by Montiel Overall (2009). They also reveal interesting implications for the role of pre-service education and how that affects their selection practices. Willet (2001) talked about "the ways in which youth librarians attempt to be cultural gatekeepers for young people" (p. 487). This idea is reflected in the librarian participants' discussions of their personal beliefs and views from the interviews. Some of the librarian participants remarked that the importance of multicultural considerations in collection development was a part of their library practitioner education. Mary, Libby, and Leann specifically noted that their educators taught them to be cognizant of the perspective they bring to selection and to maintain objectivity. This recognition is an important piece of cultural competence as described by Montiel Overall (2009). Mary discussed the idea of mirrors and windows presented by one of her instructors in library school. She recalled:

> one of the things she said that I really liked and really took to heart was a book is either a window or it's a mirror and it either shows you yourself and … They have to be able to see

themselves. It has to be a mirror so they can see themselves and build their self-esteem …and at the same time, it has to be a window so that I may not have a clue about life in a certain place, but yet I am able through this book, whether it is a picture book, a novel, whatever it is, I am able to look into another world and see what it was like. And I think I probably always try to be conscious you know after she said that…

Findings from collection analysis studies in the professional literature also support the role of LIS education in including multicultural issues in the curriculum and creating a foundation for the open perspective echoed by Mary (Dilevko & Dali, 2002; Rodrigues, 2006). Gollop (1999) suggested that library students with a predisposition towards diversity will inherently be drawn to enrol in such classes if their programs have self-select components. Carolina "intense desire to know the world" supports Gollop's claim. Elements of diversity and multiculturalism should be sprinkled throughout university programs so that students who do not self-select such courses will still be exposed to important concepts (Gollop, 1999). Rodrigues (2006) also called for cultural responsiveness training in LIS programs so librarians will be better prepared to work with the diverse populations they will undoubtedly encounter in their libraries. Further, this training should carry on through continuing education programs focusing on multicultural themes and issues as communities and patrons evolve and become more diverse.

In AASL's *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* (2007), each of the four standards includes a strand describing dispositions in action, defined as "the learning behaviours, attitudes, and habits of mind that transform a learner from one who is able to learn to one who actually does learn" (AASL, 2009, p. 15). While these standards are targeting K-12 students, they hold implications for the way librarians are trained and educated at the university level. Focusing on the multicultural aspects of the user community and their resulting needs helps cultivate the development of professional dispositions directed towards serving diverse populations. The findings from this study support the role that LIS education can have in promoting such dispositions in future and practicing librarians through their initial programs to continuing education opportunities.

In 2000, Ríos-Balderrama noted that, "While we honour the traditions of our cultures, it is incumbent that we be responsible for creating a new future that accommodates all cultures" (p. 212). Though a confronting process, the cultural competence of the librarian participants in this study detailed in their shared stories of successes and challenges shows their strong promise in this evolving goal.

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