Tracey Nigro and Max Uhlemann

their interests or to evaluate the professional's advice" (Kitchener & Harding, 1990, p. 148).

There have been several studies addressing both sexualized and non-sexualized dual relationships. Historically, the professional focus has been upon sexualized dual relationships (Borys, 1988; Borys & Pope, 1989). More recently, non-sexualized dual relationships have been given increasing consideration (Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 1998; Sheppard, 1994), and some research has been conducted regarding various types of counsellors' attitudes toward non-sexualized dual relationships (Anderson & Kitchener, 1996; Borys; Gibson & Pope, 1993; Pope, Tabachnick & Keith-Spiegel, 1987). The studies most relevant to the current research will now be examined.

~Pope et al. (1987) surveyed 1,000 members of Division 29 (psychotherapy) of the American Psychological Association (APA) with a 46% response rate. The survey comprised three main sections. First, respondents were asked to rate 83 [l]behaviours (30 of which related to a • bound. or dual relatio , ` , * ues) according ~t TWVa textent t ey: (a) engage in the behaviours, (b) consider each behaviour as ethical, and (c) consider the behaviours to constitute good practice. Second- respondents were presented with 14 resources for guiding practice (e.g., colleagues, graduate training, ethics committees, etc.), and were asked to rate them in terms of effectiveness in guiding ethical practice. Thc. thin d-section inquired about participants' characteristics such as age, theoretical orientation, and gender. A few of the surveyed dual relationship behaviours were significantly (p < 0.001) related to gender. Females were more likely to hug a client and have the clients call them by their first name. Males were more likely to tell a client they were sexually attracted to them and to engage in sexual fantasy about a client. Borys and Pope (1989) noted that a primary limitation of this study was asking respondents about their beliefs and behaviours that created the possibility that responses regarding beliefs influenced responses regarding behaviour or vice versa. Borys (1988) surveyed 4,800 professionals-1,600 psychologists, 1,600 psychiatrists, and 1,600 social workers—from three national groups. In this study, participants were surveyed regarding 10 personal characteristics and 20 dual relationship behaviours with a return rate of 49%, Half of each group were asked about beliefs regarding the ethics of behaviours and h e Fre quenc of their own practices ortlMV771 ours. thusavoid*n he previously

identified limitation of the stud by Pope et a r. 9 Based upon actor analysis, (1 87). Based upon the 2 0 dua i rfelationship behaviours were reduced to three factors. The first factor included incidental involvements (e.g., accepting a gift) that were seen as less - thical by social workers and psychiatrists compared to psychologists, and less ,thical by females compared to males. Second, social/financial involvements were - ated as less ethical by psychiatrists compared to the other two professions, females - ompared to males, and urban practitioners compared to rural practitioners. Fhird, dual professional roles (e.g., providing therapy to a student) were seen as ess ethical by females compared to males, and urban practitioners compared to ural. Several behaviours were viewed as never ethical by a majority of the

respondents: (a) selling a product to a client, (b) providing therapy to an employee, (c) engaging in sexual activity with a client after termination, (d) engaging in sexual activity with a current client, and (e) inviting clients to a personal party or social event. Analyses of the practice of behaviours also revealed that incidental involvements were more common for women than men, and private practitioners as compared to other practice settings. Financial relationships were more common for rural than urban practitioners and less common for psychodynamic as compared to humanistic and cognitive orientated practitioners. Social relationships were less common for women than men, and psychodynamic therapists compared to other practice orientations. Finally, professional overlaps were more common for males than females. The most frequently reported behaviours overall were accepting a gift of less than $ 10, and providing simultaneous therapy with a client's friend, lover, or relative.

The research by Borys (1988) and Pope et al. (1987) also identified some counsellor characteristics that are related to different attitudes toward dual relationship activities. These characteristics include gender, practice locale (rural versus urban), academic degree, and counselling experience. Pope and Vasquez (1998) suggest that while such studies of non-sexualized dual relationships provide some information about this topic, there is a striking scarcity of such research.

P * • research has also been limited a s- - -. saram- - of the dual relationship behaviours queried. The items have not examined dual relationship behaviours along various dimensions of erceived   rity. For example, they have --only looked at being friends with a client during or after therapy, without considering the temporal element of post-termination duration as a factor in ethical decision-making. It is by investigation of these elements of dual relationships that the current research builds upon previous investigations and makes a unique contribution to the body of knowledge in this area of professional practice.

PURPOSE OF CURRENT RESEARCH

The purpose of the current study was to build upon aspects of previous research and to explore new areas of dual relationships. Replication provided information from .a new geographical population and enabled consideration of how attitudes might change over time. Exploration of new areas of dual relationships included delineating the elements of dual relationships, such as temporal and monetary amounts, through the use of matched pair items. To this end, several new items were generated for the survey instrument. A review of the professional literature guided development of these items to address these elements of dual relationships. For example, attitudes regarding post-termination sexual relationships were explored by Pope et al. (1987, p. 996), and Gibson and Pope (1993, p. 332) who asked about "Becoming sexually involved with a former client." Borys (1988) used the phrase "Engaging in sexual activity with a client after termination" (p. 196). This researcher decided to delineate the post-termination temporal

element to explore if counsellors did believe that a longer time interval was important. Hence, two items were used: "Having a sexual relationship with a previous client six months after termination" and "Having a sexual relationship with a previous client two years after termination." Two years was selected as the time frame as it is a relatively lengthy period of time which the author hoped would encourage a range of responses. This time frame is also consistent with formal time delimiters in ethical codes regarding sexualized relationships with previous clients, that of the American Psychological Association's (APA) prohibition of sexual intimacies within two years of termination (APA, 1992). The current survey was developed prior to the availability of CCXs Code of Ethics (1999) which identified a temporal delimiter of three years for post--termination sexual relationships. Another set of matched items explored the monetary element of accepting gifts from clients. In previous research Borys (1988) asked about "Accepting a gift worth under $10 from a client" and "Accepting a gift worth over $50 from a client" (p. 196). Gibson and Pope (1993, pp. 332, 333), and Pope et al. (1987, pp. 995, 997) asked about "Accepting a gift worth less than $5 from a client" and "Accepting a client's gift worth at least $50." In order to compare counsellors' beliefs about accepting gifts of differing values, it seemed advantageous to eliminate the gaps between the lower end of $ 5 to $10 and the higher end of $50. To do so, the items "Accepting a gift from a client under $20" and "Accepting a gift from a client worth over $20" were developed.

The research questions of the current study were the following:
1. What are the attitudes of British Columbian counsellors regarding the ethics of dual relationship activities?
2. How do these counsellors' attitudes compare to those found in similar research?
3. Are counsellors' attitudes consistent with the professional literature regarding theoretical considerations of dual relationships (e.g., social role theory), elements of dual relationships (temporal, monetary, etc.), and professional guidelines for clinical practice?
4. Are there relationships between counsellors' characteristics and their attitudes toward dual relationships?

METHOD

Sample

The participants were drawn from British Columbian members of the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA). Out of 529 deliverable surveys, 214 were returned, 8 of which were unusable. Thus, 206 surveys were considered analyzable for a response rate of 39%. Since the CCA does not collect demographic information from members it was not possible to compare personal characteristics of the survey sample to the broader membership.

Procedure

Each survey package included the survey instrument and a pre-paid return envelope. A cover letter outlined the background of the study, issues of consent and confidentiality, and methods for contacting the researcher with any questions or concerns. An additional cover letter from the President Elect of the CCA, stating support for the study, was enclosed. Two weeks after survey dispersal, a reminder postcard was mailed to all British Columbian members of CCA.

Instrument

The first section of the survey included 15 questions regarding respondent characteristics such as age, marital status, education, gender, and practice locale. The second section consisted of 39 dual relationship activities (see Table 1) to be rated on a five-point likert scale of. (a) Never Ethical, (b) Ethical Under Rare Conditions, (c) Ethical Under Some Conditions, (d) Ethical Under Most Conditions, and (e) Always Ethical. Never Ethical was rated one and Always Ethical was rated five. A sixth option of Not Sure was also provided. Eight types of dual relationship activities were included in the survey based upon the professional literature (Anderson & Kitchener, 1996; Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 1998; Pearson & Piazza, 1997): (a) sexual, (b) social, (c) familial, (d) professional, (e) incidental boundary crossing (e.g., "Accepting an invitation to a client's special occasion"), (f) circumstantial encounters (e.g., "Dining at a restaurant where a client is a server"), (g) financial (including bartering), and (h) response set minimizers. To minimize the influence of response set, three items were included to encourage a range of responses as similar questionnaires have had responses skewed toward the "Never Ethical" anchor of the scale (Borys, 1988; Pope et al., 1987). The response set minimizing items were "Accepting a 'thank-you' card from a client at the termination of counselling," "Calling a client by their first name," and "Shaking hands with a client."

Twenty of the 39 dual relationship activity items were adapted with permission from the 20-item survey of Borys (1988). The 19 new items were developed by the -researchers based on the professional literature regarding elements of dual relationships, such as temporal considerations and concurrent versus post-termination relationships. There were nine pairs of items designed to explore whether counsellors' attitudes were consistent with suggestions made in the professional literature regarding these elements of dual relationships. Respondents were given the following guidelines for terminology: "For the purpose of this

Item	Type	Never Ethical 1	2	3	4	Always Ethical 5	0	NR	M	SD
Having a sexual relationship with a client	Sex	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.00	0
Going into business with a client	Fin	94.7	5.3	0	0	0	0	0	1.05	0.23
Having a sexual relationship with a previous client six months after termination	Sex	89.8	7.3	1.5	0	0	1.5	0	1.10	0.35
Inviting a client to a personal party or social event	Soc	77.2	18.0	2.4	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	1.27	0.58
Hiring a client	Prof	76.7	17.5	4.9	0	0	1	0	1.27	0.55
Lending a client over $10	Fin	72.8	19.9	5.8	0	0.5	1.0	0	1.33	0.63
Becoming friends with a client	Soc	70.4	21.4	5.3	0.5	0	0.5	1.9	1.34	0.61
Selling an item to a client which is unrelated to counselling	Fin	74.3	17.5	4.4	1.9	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.36	0.75
Starting counselling for an employee Going out to eat	Prof	68.0	15.0	8.3	1.5	0	3.9	3.4	1.39	0.72
with a client after a counselling session Providing	Soc	66.5	21.8	8.7	0.5	0	1.0	1.5	1.42	0.67
counselling to relatives Providing counselling to a current supervises	Fam	64.1	22.8	11.2	0	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.48	0.73
Starting counselling for a coworker	Prof	63.6	20.4	9.7	1.9	1.5	1.9	1.0	1.53	0.87
Lending a client up to $10	Prof	52.9	26.2	8.7	2.4	0.5	5.3	3.9	1.58	0.81
Purchasing goods from a client,	Fin	56.3	29.6	10.2	1.9	0.5	1.5	0	1.59	0.79
Providing counselling for an unequal time amount (e.g., 1:4) of "manual" services	Fin	53.4	29.1	13.1	1.0	0	0.5	0.5	1.60	0.76
Having a sexual relationship with a previous client two years after termination	Fin	55.8	17.5	9.7	3.9	1.5	9.7	1.9	1.62	0.96
	Sex	53.9	27.7	10.7	3.9	0.5	2.9	0.5	1.65	0.87
Allowing a client to enroll in one's class for a grade	Prof	52.9	23.8.	11.7	2.4	1.5	6.8	1.0	1.65	0.91
Accepting a gift from a client worth over $20	IBC	47.6	30.6	11.7	4.4	0.5	4.4	1.0	1.73	0.89
Starting to provide counselling for a friend	Soc	46.1	35.4	13.1	2.4	0.5	1.9	0.5	1.73	0.83
Going into business with a previous client	Fin	43.2	36.4	13.1	2.4	0	3.4	1.5	1.73	0.79
Hiring a previous client six months after termination of counselling	Prof	45.1	32.5	14.6	3.4	0.5	3.9	0	1.76	0.87
Providing counselling to a co-worker(s) of that counsellor's partner/spouse	Fam	40.8	25.7	15.0	5.8	1.0	4.9	6.8	1.87	0.99
Starting counselling with goods and/or services being received for counselling	Fin	38.8	22.3	16	6.3	1.9	10.2	4.4	1.94	1.07
Providing counselling for an equal time amount (e.g., 1:1) of "professional" services	Fin	42.7	22.3	16.0	5.8	4.4	8.3	0.5	1.98	1.16
Giving a client a ride home after a session	IBC	18.4	47.1	24.3	8.3	1.0	1.0	0	2.25	0.89
Receiving goods and/or services in exchange for counselling if a client becomes unable to pay	Fin	27.7	24.3	30.1	8.3	2.9	6.3	0.5	2.30	1.08
Accepting a gift from a client worth up to $20	IBC	21.8	27.7	27.2	18.4	2.0	2.4	0.5	2.50	1.09
Accepting an invitation to a client's special occasion	IBC	12.1	32.5	40.3	11.2	1.0	2.9	0	2.55	0.89
Becoming friends with a previous client two years after termination	Soc	17.0	31.1	29.1	16.0	4.4	1.5	1.0	2.58	1.06
Providing counselling to a relative, friend or lover of a client	Prof	14.6	16.5	40.8	19.4	4.4	3.4	1.0	2.82	1.07
Hugging a client	IBC	1.9	23.3	51.5	20.4	2.4	0	0	2.98	0.79
Selling a client an item under $10 which could be considered a counselling aid	Fin	12.1	16.5	19.9	34.5	12.1	4.4	0.5	3.19	1.24
Coincidentally attending an ongoing community class with a client	Circ	10.7	16.0	21.8	32.5	12.6	3.9	2.4	3.22	1.21
Dining at a restaurant where a client is a server	Circ	6.8	14.6	27.7	37.9	12.1	0.5	0.5	3.34	1.09
Attending a fitness facility where the counsellor occasionally runs into client(s)	Circ	1.9	10.7	22.3	41.7	19.9	2.4	1.0	3.69	0.98
Accepting a "Ttank-Yyu" card from a client at the termination of counselling	RSM	1.0	1.0	6.8	46.1	43.7	0.5	1.0	4.33	0.73
Shaking hands with a client	RSM	0	1.0	3.9	47.1	48.1	0	0	4.42	0.62
Calling a client by their first/given name	RSM	0	0.5	1.9	51.5	45.6	0.5	0	4.43	0.56

Note. Sex = Sexual; Fin = Financial; Soc = social; Prof = Professional; Fam = Familial; IBC = Incidental Boundary Crossing; Circ = Circumstantial; RSM = Response Set Minimizers. Rating code: 1=Never Ethical, 2=Ethical Under Rare Conditions, 3=Ethical Under Some Conditions, 4=Ethical Under Most Conditions, 5=Always Ethical, O=Not Sure, NR=No response.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the Participants

Of the 206 surveys analyzed, 199 respondents indicated their ages, which ranged from 27 to 75 with a mean of 46.16 years *(SD* = 9.3 years). A total of 80.1 % of respondents Indic. red they were female, 19.9% were male, and one person did not indicate . -ender Most (62.6%) of the respondents were married (including common-law', . % were single; 13.2% were separated/divorced; 3.4% were widowed; and 1.96% indicated "other." Respondents reported counselling experience ranging from less than 1 year to 37-years with a mean of 10.34 years (SD = 7.47). The average number of weekly client contact hours was 16.85 *(SD* = 10.59) with a range from 1 to 51 hours. Counsellors gave percentages of their clientele population in terms of adult women, adult men, -aRT`chiTcFren (under 19). Forty-three percent of counsellors _ reported -tᵍe—ywor-ked with a majority of women (60% or over), 17% with children, 11% with men, 14%, with mixed adult (each between 40 to 59%), and 12% with a mixed population of men, women, and children (each between 20 and 59%). Reported type of primary employment in descending order of frequency was private practice (33%), educational settings (18%), community agencies (17%), government (7%), and other settings (5%). Twenty percent of respondents did not rank their multiple ein Tto-yment setting and so were not categorized. The majority of respondents had Master's (73%) degrees, 9% had less than a Bachelor's, 12% had a Bachelor's, 5% had a Doctorate, and 1 % did not indicate their education. Types of reported degrees were counselling psychology, (45 %), psych ~Io (16%), and education (650), and 34% reported "other" or did not respond. When asked aG-6u-rfbTmal education in ethics, 40% indicated completing a full course, 38% indicated that education in ethics was part of their training or part of a course, 6% indicated completing a workshop, 14% indicated they had no formal ethics education, and 2% did not describe their formal ethics education. Urban counsellors comprised 80% of respondents, 19% were rural, and 1% did not indicate their locale.

Counsellors were asked to numerically indicate a frequency of circumstantial encounters with clients (e.g., an unplanned meeting at a gym, restaurant, or class), and these responses were standardized and categorized. For example, a response of "once per month" was standardized to 12 times per year. Asa result, 35% reported 2 or less encounters per year, 10% reported 3-6 per year, 16% reported 7-20 per year, and 32% reported over 20 encounters per year. Some responses (7%), such as "frequently," could not be categorized. Cross-tabulations between practice locale and circumstantial encounters revealed a significant relationship indicating that counsellors in rural practices are more likely than their urban colleagues to experience circumstantial encounters with clients, X' (3, *n* = 191) 32.33, p < 0.001.

Counsellors' Attitudes Regarding Dual Relationship Activities

the Never Ethical category. Frequency in , Not Sure and No Response are excluded from calculations of mean and standard deviation. Where means are equal, ranking is based upon higher these phone kancroslongacentarvwaprovadzon chroxporbous seen in Table 1.

category.

Paired Items

Within the 39 dual relationship act ties, there were nine sets of paired items. Participants' ratings of these paired - Zems were analyzed for statistical differences with Wilcoxon's signed rank procedure, with all nine pairs demonstrating significant differences (p < 0.001) as follows. First, "Having a sexual relationship with a previous client two years after termination" was rated as more ethical than "Having a sexual relationship with a previous client six months after termination." Second, "Becoming friends with a previous client two years after termination" was rated as more ethical than "Becoming friends with a client." Third, "Starting counselling for a coworker" was rated as more ethical than "Starting counselling for an employee." Fourth, "Hiring a previous client six months after termination of counselling" was rated as more ethical than "Hiring a client." Fifth, "Accepting a gift from a client worth up to $20" was rated as more ethical than "Accepting a gift from a client worth over $20." Sixth, "Lending a client up to $ 10" was rated as more ethical than "Lending a client over $ 10." Seventh, "Selling an item under $10 which could be considered a counselling aid" was rated as more ethical than "Selling an item which is unrelated to counselling." Eighth, "Receiving goods and/ or services in exchange for counselling if a client becomes unable to pay" was rated as more ethical than "Starting counselling with goods and/or services being received for counselling." Finally, "Providing counselling for an equal time amount (e.g., 1:1) of 'professional' services" was rated as more ethical than "Providing counselling for an unequal time amount (e.g., 1:4) of 'manual' services."

Analysis of the Independent Variables

Cross-tabulations were used to identify significant relationships between in e epen 4 ent an, • epen , en , - is a es. o as. ress insu * icient cell sizes, t e five response-categories were collapsed into three categories. The responses of Always Ethical and Ethical Under Most Conditions were combined into an Always/Most category, and the responses for Never Ethical anTEUt - c erre= icOins were combined into a Never/Rarely Ethical category. The responses were then cross-tabulated and Spearman's correlation was utilized for the ordinal independent variables. For the nominal independent variables, a non-directional Chi-square was utilized to assess significant relationships. For items where cell sizes

yielding two categories. The degrees of freedom indicate when this additional collapsing of categories was necessary. Determination of statistical significance was based upon an alpha of 0.0 1, leading to a total of 15 significant relationships.

The respondents' gender was the independent variable most frequently associated with significant relationships as seen in Table 2. All of these relationships were based upon males rating items as more likely to be ethical than females.

TABLE 2
Items with Significant Relationships Between Counsellors' Gender and Ratings of Ethicality

Item	n	df	$X2$	P
Starting to provide counselling for a friend	201	1	13.380	< 0.001
Becoming friends with a client	201	1	11.826	0.001
Starting counselling for a coworker	187	1	11.068	0.001
Hiring a previous client six months after termination of counselling	198	2	11.53	0.003
Hiring a client	204	2	10.884	0.001
Providing counselling for an unequal time amount (e.g., 1:4) of "manual" services	182	1	9.333	0.002

The participants' ages were associated with significant relationships for the following two items: "Giving a client a ride home after a session," r (197) = .244, p = 0.001, and "Providing counselling for an unequal time amount (e.g., 1:4) of `manual' services," r (179) = .202, p = 0.007. These figures indicate that increasing age is correlated with perceiving these dual relationship activities as more ethical.

The participants' primary form of employment was associated with two significant relationships. Primary employment at an educational institution was associated with rating the following items as more likely to be ethical: "Becoming friends with a client," $X2$ (3, n = 149) = 12.658, p = 0.005, and "Providing counselling for an unequal time amount (e.g., 1:4) of 'manual' services," $X2$ (6, n = 136) = 17.812, p = 0.007.

The participants' primary type of clientele was associated with two significant relationships. First, respondents who worked primarily with children were more accepting than those working with adult females for the item "Becoming friends with a client," $X2$ (4, n = 182) = 20.336, p < 0.001. Second, respondents who worked primarily with children were more accepting than those working with a mixed adult population for the item "Receiving goods and/or services in exchange for counselling if a client becomes unable to pay," $X2$ (8, n = 184) = 21.853, 0.005.

The participants' locale, frequency of circumstantial encounters, and level of education were each associated with one significant relationship. For locale, rural

counsellors rated "Attending a fitness facility where the counsellor occasionally runs into a client(s)" as more likely to be ethical than their urban counterparts, A' (1, n = 197) = 7.394, p = 0.007. Participants' reported increasing frequency of circumstantial encounters was related to higher ethics ratings for "Providing counselling to a relative, friend or lover of a client," r (183) = .196, p = 0.008. A higher reported level of education was related to lower ethics ratings for "Starting counselling for a coworker," r (185) = -0.258, p < 0.001.

To analyze for relationships between formal ethics education and counsellors' rating of dual relationship activity items, Spearman's correlation was performed on four ordinal rankings of formal ethics education (None, Workshop, Part of Training, and Full Course). An increasing reported level of ethics education was associated with rating "Providing counselling for relatives" as less ethical, r (198) =-0.187, p=0.008.

There were no significant relationships for reported years of counselling experience, number of weekly client contact hours, marital status, educational major, and primary theoretical orientation.

DISCUSSION

Discussion of the results will be guided by the original research questions.

What are the attitudes of British Columbian counsellors regarding the ethicality of certain types of dual relationship activities?

Respondents rated 27 of the 39 dual relationship activity items as Never Ethical or Ethical Under Rare Conditions. As seen in Table 1, concurrent Sexual and Financial dual relationships were seen as the least ethical, and Circumstantial Encounters and Response Set Minimizing items were rated as the most ethical. The response set minimizing items were "Accepting a 'Thank-you' card from a client at the termination of counselling," "Calling a client by their first name," and "Shaking hands with a client." Respondents' rankings of the three Response Set Minimizing items as the three most ethical items suggests that respondents did carefully consider their responses to each item rather than responding in a set pattern toward the Never Ethical anchor. Those items with a higher mean response, indicating that they were rated as more ethical, also tended to have higher standard deviations indicating a wider variability in responses. Bartering issues were particularly difficult for respondents to rate. This was reflected by the fact that the four Bartering items were within the top five for items most frequently rated with a Not Sure response.

Although the focus of this research was not on sexualized dual relationships, several items were used for comparison to previous research. It was notable that only about half of the respondents rated "Having a sexual relationship with a previous client two years after termination" as being "Never Ethical." This is in contrast with the Code of Ethics of the CCA which was published at about the same time as the survey was dispersed (published under the organization's former

title, The Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association, CGCA, 1999). The previous code of ethics, published in 1989, had only addressed concurrent sexual dual relationships. The new Code of Ethics (1999) states

> Counsellors do not engage in sexual intimacies with former clients within a minimum of three years after terminating the counselling relationship. This prohibition is not limited to the three year period but extends indefinitely if the client is clearly vulnerable, by reason of emotional or cognitive disorder to exploitative influence by the counsellor. (Article B11)

The disparity between counsellors' responses and the CCKs Code of Ethics may reflect a need for increased education of the membership regarding the new code as they may have been operating based upon the previous Code of Ethics. Alternatively, respondents may have more accepting attitudes toward these relationships than is recommended by the CCA.

How do counsellors' attitudes in the current study compare to those found in similar research?

The most similar previous research to compare with the current findings was conducted by Pope et al. (1987) and Borys (1988). There was a general tendency for respondents of the current study to rate dual relationship activities for comparable items as less ethical than respondents in previous research. Thirteen items from the current research were considered similar enough to items from one or both of the previous studies to allow for direct comparison. That is, the identical item was used, or the difference was considered to be a minor semantic one. Respondents in the current research rated the following nine items as less ethical than those in previous studies: (a) Having a sexual relationship with a client, (b) Going out to eat with a client after a counselling session, (c) Inviting clients to a personal party or social event, (d) Providing therapy to an employee, (e) Hiring a client, (f) Allowing a client to enroll in one's class for a grade, (g) Providing counselling to a current supervises, (h) Accepting an invitation to a client's special occasion, and (i) Going into business with a client.

Respondents in the current research rated the following two items as more ethical than those in previous studies: (a) Providing counselling to a friend, and (b) Hugging a client. Respondents in the current research provided similar ratings to those in previous studies for the item "Providing counselling to a relative, friend or lover of a client."

There are several possible explanations, other than sampling, for respondents from the current research generally rating items as less ethical. First, the ethical practice of professional helpers has received widespread media attention over the past decade since the previous research. Thus these respondents may have been more sensitized to dual relationship issues compared to those participating in previous research. Second, changing professional values about ethical practice may have led to a less tolerant collegial environment for transgressions, thus encouraging more conservative attitudes. Third, recent ethical guidelines and casebooks have proscribed more explicitly dual relationships, thereby setting new

standards for professional practice. Fourth, as suggested by some (Hermansson, 1997; Lazarus, 1994), increasingly conservative views on dual relationships may reflect counsellors' concerns regarding complaints to professional associations or civil litigation for malpractice. Finally, it is possible that consumer groups have become organized voices against exploitation that have affected societal expectations of professional helpers.

Are counsellors' attitudes consistent with the professional literature?

Respondents' ratings for the nine paired items were generally consistent with the suggestions made in the literature regarding theoretical considerations (e.g., social role theory), elements of dual relationships (monetary, temporal, etc.), and professional ethical guidelines (Anderson & Kitchener, 1996; Coleman & Schaefer, 1986; Herlihy & Corey, 1997; Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 1998; Sell et al., 1986). For example, items were rated as significantly more likely to be ethical with non-concurrent relationships, increasing post-termination time, decreased monetary value, decreased power differential, and decreased role disparity. The significant differences between the nine paired items underscore the importance counsellors place upon circumstances and contextual factors of ethical challenges.

Are there relationships between counsellors' characteristics and their attitudes toward dual relationships?

Various counsellor characteristics were related to differing attitudes toward the dual relationship activities. These differing attitudes are understandable when set in the context of a self-driven model of ethical decision-making (Garfat & Ricks, 1995). That is, one's gender, age, education, and circumstantial client contact contribute to the nature of the counsellor's self and ethical decision-making processes. This is in contrast to counsellors primarily acting on an externally driven ethical decision-making process, based upon universal rules, that is more likely to lead to homogeneous attitudes. In fact, the results of this research provide insight as to how some specific attributes contribute to the self-driven ethical decision-making processes (Garfat & Ricks) of the participants. In the current study, the characteristic most frequently associated with significant relationships was gender with a total of 6 of 15 items. Without exception, these relationships were based upon males rating items as more ethical than did females. These results are generally consistent with previous research, although some data have shown that female therapists may see incidental involvements, such as accepting a card, as more ethical than do males (Borys, 1988; Pope et al., 1987).

One explanation for the gender differences in the current research may be related to the justice perspective of moral decision-making that evolved out of Kohlberg's research, which focused on males (Santrock, 1986). From the justice perspective of moral development, people are differentiated and generally seen as standing alone and independent from others. If this perspective is more prevalent for males, then their interconnectedness with their clients may not weigh as strongly in their decisions regarding dual relationships. As well, Gilligan's

(1982) exploration of women's moral development may explain aspects of these gender differences. In her research, she noted that "when women begin to make direct moral statements, the issues they address repeatedly are those of exploitation and hurt" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 103). Gilligan suggested that women's morality is constructed around responsibility for relationships, which in turn is equated with not hurting others. This focus for ethical decision-making for women may lead to decisions that err more cautiously on the principle of nonmaleficence. Further, Gottlieb (1993) recommends that in ethical decision-making, the power dimension of relationships should be considered from the client's more vulnerable point of view. Perhaps women are more able, or more likely, to consider the relationship from this more vulnerable point of view and hence make different decisions.

The influence of formal education in ethics was unclear in the survey; this could be a fruitful area of research with implications for counsellor training programs. There was only one significant relationship associated with ethics education. An increasing reported level of ethics education was associated with rating "Providing counselling for relatives" as less ethical. The paucity of significant relationships may be reflective of the limitations of analysis. The survey responses were sufficiently diverse in nature to make categorization of the responses challenging, and this may have resulted in Type II error. Another possibility is that counsellor experience may mitigate the effects of formal education. Or the paucity of significant relationships may indicate that formal ethics education is not significantly associated with different attitudes about ethical issues.

The low number of significant relationships for the Rural/Urban variable was surprising. Only one significant relationship was identified for locale, with rural counsellors rating "Attending a fitness facility where the counsellor occasionally runs into a client(s)" as more ethical than their urban counterparts. Given limited alternatives, rural counsellors may be more likely than urban colleagues to engage in many of the dual relationship activities such as purchasing goods from clients, going into business with a previous client, or counselling coworkers of the counsellors' spouse/partner. Alternatively, counsellors in rural areas may have more knowledge about their clients' activities than their urban counterparts and so are able to avoid dual relationships. While the current data indicate that rural counsellors experience circumstantial activities significantly more frequently than those in urban areas, the relative frequencies of other types of dual relationships were not investigated and may be an area for future research.

The issues of rural practice may be particularly germane for Canadian counsellors due to the broad geographic dispersion of the population across the zountry. The results of this research support the common belief that rural practitioners are more vulnerable to dual relationship overlaps, specifically the :ircumstantial types, and so warrant particular attention. Particular rural practice Issues would include coping strategies for such dual relationships and development 3f support networks, both personal and professional. However, the logistics of addressing these rural practice issues may limit implementation. For example,

professional support networks are difficult to develop when the nearest colleague is a two-hour drive away. The electronic resources available to counsellors today may be options for fostering professional networks. On-line newsgroups, e-mail, and the recent "unlimited long distance" telephone plans could serve to enhance collegial exchange of information and support. Opportunities for social involvement for some rural counsellors may be limited by direct relational overlaps and/or by increased likelihood of circumstantial encounters in the community. Given that 20% of respondents described themselves as having rural practices, a substantial number of Canadian counsellors may experience significant deficits in meeting their social needs.

LIMITATIONS AND CAUTIONS

Several limitations and cautions were identified for the current study. First, although the percentage of returns (39%) is considered reasonable for survey research, at less than 50% the generalization of results must be a cautious endeavour. It has been suggested by those associated with CCA that there was a relatively high number of responses for Master's level counsellors and a relatively low number of responses for CCA members with educational training of less than a Master's level. One explanation for this is that empathy for the researcher as a graduate student would be more likely for Master's level respondents, which could increase their response rate. Another factor that may differentiate respondents from non-respondents is the possibility that counsellors who are more accepting of, or had engaged in, more controversial dual relationship activities would not respond as frequently to this type of inquiry. Should this be the case, the results of this survey would represent artificially conservative attitudes toward dual relationships. Several of the survey items related to counsellor characteristics and dual relationship activities could be improved for clarity and format. In particular, phrasing of the item Providing Counselling to a Coworker(s) of That Counsellor's Partner/Spouse was less than ideal, and the relatively high percentage on No Response (6.8%) was likely reflective of this. Further, a 0.01 alpha in light of the number of analyses performed may have lead to some Type I errors. For Chi-square cross tabulations, the five-point scale was compressed to reach adequate cell sizes which may have lead to some Type 11 errors. For the correlational analyses, it is important to note that the significant results generally had modest correlation coefficients.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Several avenues for future research in this area of professional practice are available for exploration. Accessing the non-responding population through a different research design with more possibilities for follow-up may yield new information and patterns for these counsellors. Further exploration along

of how counsellors weigh context into their decision-making processes. For example, different types of counselling have been discussed in the literature as germane to decision-making for dual relationship issues. That is, two sessions of cognitive-behavioural self-management for smoking cessation have different relational dynamics than a year of weekly counselling sessions for family-of-origin issues. Further, additional delineation of temporal considerations, monetary values, and clarity of counselling termination could increase our understanding of these contextual issues of dual relationships.

The influence of formal education in ethics was not clearly delineated, and this could be a fruitful area of research. A different research design, such as a cross-sectional sample of counsellors exiting specific training programs, could provide information regarding the influence (if any) of formal ethics education on counsellor attitudes. Also, longitudinal studies of these counsellors could support or refute the suggestion that counselling experience mitigates any initial differences between groups.

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