
Counselling Expectations of a Sample of East Asian and Caucasian Canadian Undergraduates in Canada Les attentes face au counseling chez les étudiants de premier cycle au Canada : Comparaison des canadiens caucasiens et originaires de l'Asie de l'Est

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated whether East Asians differ from Caucasian Canadians in their expectations about counselling. Participants in this study included 31 East Asian and 53 Caucasian Canadian university students. The East Asian participants were all first-generation East Asians living in Canada, originally from China, Korea, Japan, or Vietnam. The Caucasian Canadians were all born in Canada. All participants completed the Expectations about Counseling–Brief Form (Tinsley, Workman, & Kass, 1980), amongst other measures. Results indicated that Asians scored lower than Caucasians on client motivation and responsibility, but higher on the counsellor confrontation, directiveness, empathy, self-disclosure, expertise, and tolerance subscales. Clinical implications of these results and directions for future research are discussed.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette recherche vise à déterminer s'il existe des différences dans les attentes face au counseling entre des participants originaires de l'Asie orientale et canadiens caucasiens. L'échantillon comprenait 31 participants originaires de l'Asie de l'Est et 53 participants canadiens caucasiens, tous étudiants universitaires. Les participants originaires de l'Asie orientale étaient tous des immigrants de première génération provenant de la Chine, la Corée, le Japon, ou le Vietnam et habitant au Canada. Les participants caucasiens étaient tous nés au Canada. Les participants complétèrent le Expectations about Counseling–Brief Form (Tinsley, Workman, & Kass, 1980), parmi d'autres mesures. Les résultats indiquent que les participants originaires de l'Asie orientale avaient des scores plus bas au niveau de la motivation et de la responsabilisation, mais plus élevés quant à l'indice de confrontation du conseiller, le contrôle, l'empathie, le dévouement, l'expertise, et la tolérance. Les résultats sont discutés en tenant compte de considérations cliniques et des orientations de recherche à venir.

The purpose of this study is to examine the differences in expectations of counselling between a sample of first-generation East Asians living in Canada and a

sample of Caucasian Canadians living in Canada. The first-generation East Asians in this study were originally from China, Korea, Japan, or Vietnam. The literature review that follows refers to previous studies that used the term "Asians," which generally refers to East Asians from these four countries, but may refer to Asians from regions outside of China, Korea, Japan, or Vietnam.

Despite the growing population of Asians in Canada, there is a lack of research examining this population regarding issues related to counselling. For this reason, most of the research reviewed here pertains to Asian Americans, or Asians residing in the United States.

Ethnic matching and cultural sensitivity have been suggested as an effective way to provide culturally sensitive counselling. However, the results of empirical studies on ethnic matching have showed mixed results (Maramba & Nagayama Hall, 2002; Zane, Nagamaya Hall, Sue, Young, & Nunez, 2004). Furthermore, from a practical point of view, ethnic matching between counsellors and clients may not be feasible in most counselling service agencies. Therefore, it is crucial that all counsellors be aware of the unique needs of Asian clients to provide better service to this clientele.

While the level of effort has increased in the mental health field to provide culturally sensitive practice to culturally diverse populations (e.g., Arthur & Collins, 2005; Hays, 2001; Sue & Sue, 2003), it has been well documented that Asians underutilize mental health services and have higher dropout rates from psychotherapy and counselling than European Americans (see Chen, Sullivan, Lu, & Shibukawa, 2003). Recent research by Li and Brown (2000) suggests that Asian Canadians consistently underutilize mainstream mental health services, such as counselling. This trend is disconcerting, given that research has suggested that Asians report having higher levels of social and emotional distress than the general public (Cheng & Leong, 1993). For most Asians, traditional forms of counselling based on Western values can be viewed as foreign concepts (Hong, Lee, & Lorenzo, 1995). Some of the reasons cited for Asians' underutilization of mental health services include lack of knowledge of available mental health services and lack of trust in counsellors (Kim, 1987, 1996).

Furthermore, cultural norms around family privacy (i.e., keeping personal issues in the family to save the face of the family) may deter Asians from seeking mental health services (Hong & Ham, 2001). Partly due to these norms, Asians are more likely to seek help from family members or respected members of the community rather than from a mental health professional (Hong et al., 1995; Yeh & Inose, 2002) or solve problems on their own (Loo, Tong, & True, 1989). In a similar vein, self-concealment (i.e., the tendency to conceal distressing or negative personal information) has been reported as another factor that affects Asians' help-seeking attitude. Public admission of personal problems is suppressed because it can implicate one's family as the cause of one's problems. Liao, Rounds, and Klein (2005) have shown that for Asian college students, having a high level of self-concealment is the single largest contributing factor to negative attitudes about receiving counselling.

Counselling expectations have been defined as “probability statements regarding the likelihood that an event will occur in counselling (e.g., the counsellor will understand my problem) or a condition will exist (e.g., the counsellor will seem trustworthy)” (Tinsley, Bowman, & Ray, 1988, p. 100). As a function of gender, ethnicity, and culture, expectations many differ between groups (Yuen & Tinsley, 1981). This variance may be seen regarding expectations of client and therapist roles, as well as expectations about the outcomes of counselling (Glass, Arnkoff, & Shapiro, 2001).

There is an abundance of research suggesting that Asians have different expectations pertaining to counselling and that these distinct preferences for certain types of therapy are due to cultural factors. Many Asians show resistance when it comes to openly discussing their problems and feelings due to the notion that depression, regret, guilt, and shame are all considered private matters in Asian cultures. Any discussion of these matters is thought of as indiscreet and showing a lack of character (Kinzie, 1989; Lee, 1988; Owan, 1985; Tung, 1985).

Asian culture in general tends to place a high value on the restraint of emotional expression, and Asians tend to believe that suffering should be done silently (Lee & Lu, 1989). Displaying strong emotions is viewed as a sign of weakness in Asian cultures (Kinzie, 1989; Lee & Lu, 1989). Asians, therefore, tend to conceal their distress (Brower, 1989; Kinzie et al., 1990). Many Asians are raised to believe that talking about themselves and revealing their emotions, especially to a stranger, is dull, dominating, and demonstrating a lack of self-control (Johnson & Johnson, 1975; Kim, 1983; Leong, 1986; Owan, 1985; Tung, 1985).

Research has also examined how cultural factors may relate to what Asians expect or want from counselling or psychotherapy. Asians are generally opposed to revealing a lot of personal information to a complete stranger, such as a therapist (Johnson & Johnson, 1975). Further research mentions a tendency to prefer counsellors who are directive, suggesting that they want a counsellor to tell them what to do and to solve their problems for them (Arkoff, Thaver, & Elkind, 1966). Asian Americans tend to view therapists as authority figures and never expect an egalitarian relationship. American psychotherapists, however, tend to be more democratic and egalitarian with their clients (Lee, 1982; Yamamoto & Acosta, 1982).

From the counsellor's perspective, knowing what a client expects from psychotherapy is beneficial to the therapeutic process. A client is more likely to reap benefits from psychotherapy if the style of counselling fits the client's expectations (Parrot, 2003).

Lack of understanding of these cultural differences may lead a counsellor to make incorrect assumptions about a client's behaviour. For example, a Western counsellor who works in a society that values articulation and emotional expression might view self-concealment exhibited by an Asian client as a sign of lack of interest in counselling or as repression. In light of this, understanding Asians' expectations for counselling seems essential in order for counsellors to explore effective strategies to reach out to this population and engage them in counselling when they do seek services.

Implications for Asian participants' expectations for the counsellor's expertise found in this study can be drawn from what Kuo (2004) termed "the concept of reciprocity" (p. 160) prevalent in collectivistic cultures. In the hierarchical social structure often found in collectivistic cultures, individuals who obtained expertise in a certain area through education and training are regarded with high respect. According to the concept of reciprocity, respect paid to an expert needs to be reciprocated with something in return. Kuo asserts that in the counselling relationship, the expectation for reciprocity can be manifested through the client's expectations for tangible gains from the counsellor. Attainment of tangible gains, in turn, will increase the level of trust and credibility of the counsellor, which has been often cited as an essential component of relationship building with Asian clients (Sue & Zane, 1987; Zhang & Dixon, 2001).

Thus, focusing on symptom relief using concrete tasks early on in counselling may be beneficial when working with Asian clients. Previous research shows that Asian clients whose problems were quickly solved in the early phase of the counselling relationship rated their working alliance with the counsellor more favourably than did those whose problems were not immediately solved (Kim & Atkinson, 2002). Conversely, counselling approaches that emphasize egalitarian relationships between the counsellor and the client (e.g., a feminist approach) may undermine the authority of the counsellor, potentially leaving clients uncertain about how to behave in the situation. Symptom relief or immediate problem-solving may require counsellors to take on non-traditional counselling roles such as teacher, coach, and advisor (Atkinson, Thompson, & Grant, 1993), which may be challenging for counsellors in that it may involve getting out of their comfort zone and diversifying their role as a helper.

Atkinson, Maruyama, and Matsui (1978) randomly assigned 52 Asian American university students to one of four groups. Each group listened to a tape of a contrived counselling session. Participants were told that the counsellor was either Asian or Caucasian. Counsellors were either directive or non-directive. The two counsellor approaches were crossed with the two counsellor ethnicities to generate the four experimental conditions. After hearing one of the four combinations of introduction and counselling style, each participant rated the counsellor on the Counselor Effectiveness Rating Schedule (CERS; Atkinson & Carskaddon, 1975). The CERS allows participants to rate counsellors on the following concepts: knowledge of psychology, ability to help, willingness to help, comprehension of the problem, and whether the participant views the counsellor as someone they would see. The results indicated that Asian American university students perceived directive counsellors to be more credible and approachable. Similarly, they viewed Asian American counsellors as more credible and approachable.

Yuen and Tinsley (1981) administered the Expectations about Counseling Questionnaire (EACQ) to 40 American students, 39 Chinese students, 35 African students, and 36 Iranian students. The Chinese, African, and Iranian students were all international students attending university in the United States. The EACQ was developed by Tinsley, Workman, & Kass, (1980); the

shorter version of the questionnaire, the Expectations about Counseling-Brief Form (EAC-B; Tinsley, 1982), was used in the current study (see Method section below). The EACQ measures expectancies regarding client attitudes and behaviours, counsellor attitudes and behaviours, counsellor characteristics, characteristics of process, and quality of outcome. Results of the study by Yuen and Tinsley (1981) indicated that the Chinese, African, and Iranian students expect a counsellor to be directive and nurturing, and that they as clients would assume a passive role in the therapeutic process. In contrast, the American students expected to play an active role in the therapeutic process, and they expected the counsellor to be less directive. Yuen and Tinsley (1981) found no significant main effects for sex or college year. This suggests that the isolating factor causing these differences is culture.

Despite the importance of understanding clients' expectations for counselling, little attention has been paid to Asians' expectations for counselling in Canada. Although a few studies that examined Asian clients' expectations for counselling were conducted with Asians in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Atkinson et al., 1978; Yuen & Tinsley, 1981), these data are decades old. The present study is important because it examines Asian Canadians as opposed to Asian Americans. This study will serve to demonstrate whether previous findings hold true today, using a sample of participants in Canada. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this study is to examine the differences in counselling expectations of a sample of first-generation East Asians living in Canada with a sample of Caucasians Canadians living in Canada.

METHOD

Participants

First-generation East Asians living in Canada, hereinafter referred to as *East Asians*, and Caucasian Canadians, hereinafter referred to as *Caucasians*, were recruited through the psychology department at a large urban university in eastern Canada.

Instruments

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire asked for information such as student status (full-time or part-time), program of study, employment status, and age. Participants were grouped into one of seven age categories: less than 18, 18, 19, 20–22, 23–24, 25–29, or 30 and older. These specific age categories were taken from the demographics section of the EAC-B, given the small number of participants in the present study. Participants were exclusively undergraduate students who received one bonus credit toward a psychology course, a practice that is common within psychology departments. Further demographic information was asked on the Expectations about Counseling-Brief Form (EAC-B) and on the Suinn-Lew

Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA). See the descriptions of these measures below. To avoid redundancy, the same information was not asked for on the demographic questionnaire.

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT COUNSELING-BRIEF FORM (EAC-B)

The EAC-B (Tinsley, 1982) was administered to all participants to assess their expectations about counselling. Participants identified themselves as Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, or Asian on the EAC-B. Only Caucasians and Asians were invited to further participate in the study. The EAC-B requires respondents to rate their expectations about counselling in a hypothetical help-seeking scenario using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not true*) to 7 (*definitely true*). The EAC-B contains 66 questions that measure 17 dimensions of counselling expectancies (see Table 1).

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations Counselling Expectancy Scores

Counselling expectancies	East Asian		Caucasian		R Squared	F
	**Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Motivation*	4.01	1.26	5.00	1.32	.132	12.44
Openness	5.49	.84	5.67	1.08	.008	
Responsibility*	5.32	.69	6.10	.66	.247	26.91
Acceptance	5.20	1.17	5.10	1.28	.002	
Confrontation*	5.67	.81	5.10	1.21	.064	5.59
Directiveness*	5.30	1.16	3.98	1.16	.237	25.43
Empathy*	5.21	.89	3.26	1.28	.406	56.13
Genuineness	6.28	.81	6.20	.84	.002	
Nurturance	6.02	.81	5.73	1.05	.020	
Self-disclosure*	5.48	1.11	3.05	1.72	.376	49.44
Attractiveness	4.97	.93	4.45	1.35	.043	
Expertise*	6.06	.81	5.28	1.27	.103	9.45
Tolerance*	5.78	.76	4.97	1.38	.101	9.24
Trustworthiness	6.04	.79	6.22	.90	.011	
Concreteness	5.87	.90	5.59	.90	.022	
Immediacy	5.26	.71	5.35	.93	.003	
Outcome	5.63	.93	5.54	.96	.002	

*Significant difference at $p < .05$. **Maximum mean score for each Counselling Expectancy dimension is 7.00.

Descriptions of the 17 dimensions of the EAC-B are provided in the Appendix. Data on each dimension are presented in the Results section. The EAC-B also contains some demographic questions, such as present year in university, sex, and race. Participants were also asked if they had ever been to see a professional counsellor. Test-retest reliabilities of the EAC-B for a 2-month period range from .47 to .87 with a median of .71. The internal consistency of the scales ranges

from .69 to .82 with a median reliability of .76 (Tinsley et al., 1980). A study by Tinsley, Holt, Hinson, and Tinsley (1991) also demonstrated construct validity for the EAC-B.

The rationale for using the EAC-B is that it is psychometrically sound (i.e., reliable and valid). The EAC-B has also been used in a number of studies. Hardin and Yanico (1983) examined counselling expectations as a function of counsellor gender. Hardin and Subich (1985) compared counselling expectations of non-clients, student clients, and non-student clients. Hardin, Subich, and Holvey (1988) compared counselling expectations with premature termination. Another reason for selecting the EAC-B is that this measure was used by Yuen and Tinsley (1981), whose study also aimed to elucidate differences in counselling expectations between Asians and Caucasians. The measure takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

SUINN-LEW ASIAN SELF-IDENTITY ACCULTURATION SCALE (SL-ASIA)

East Asian participants were also asked to complete the SL-ASIA (Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew, & Vigil, 1987) to assess their acculturation level. The psychometric properties of the scale are well documented and deemed excellent (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992; Suinn, Khoo, & Ahuna, 1995; Suinn et al., 1987). The SL-ASIA includes 21 items, and each item has five possible responses. The mean score is used to classify respondents' acculturation level into one of three nominal categories: (a) low acculturation, or Asian-identified; (b) bi-culturation; or (c) high acculturation, or Western-identified. The score range is from 1 (*lowest*) to 5 (*highest*). A mean score from 1 to 2.99 is classified as low acculturation. A score from 3 to 3.99 is classified as bi-culturation. A score from 4 to 5 is classified as high acculturation. Embedded in many of the questions on the SL-ASIA is further demographic information for East Asian participants, such as what generation they are and where they were raised. First-generation Asians were born in Asia, second-generation Asians were born in North America but have at least one parent that was born in Asia, and third-generation Asians were born in North America while both parents were born in Asia. Also embedded in the SL-ASIA questions is demographic information on language proficiency. The SL-ASIA was also used by Yuen and Tinsley (1981).

Procedure

Ads for East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese) and Caucasian participants were posted outside of the psychology labs. Participants provided their names on a form and selected one of the available time slots to participate. The recruitment period lasted for 4 weeks. There were eight time slots available for data collection over the 4-week period. Data were collected by a research assistant in the psychology department, where participants were asked to complete paper-and-pencil questionnaires. In general, inventories were completed within one week from the time the participant volunteered for the study. The demographic questionnaire was administered first, followed by the EAC-B, and lastly

the SL-ASIA. It took approximately 15 minutes for Caucasian participants to complete the inventories and approximately 25 minutes for East Asians, which was expected given the additional questionnaire administered to them. One bonus point toward a psychology course was awarded to each participant. The data were analyzed using SPSS.

RESULTS

Of the 31 East Asian participants, 20 were female and 11 were male, 10% were majoring in psychology, 74% were in the faculty of commerce (various majors included finance, economics, marketing, and accounting), and the remaining 16% were in majoring in various other subjects or were undeclared. Of the 53 Caucasian participants, 43 were female and 10 were male, 47% were majoring in psychology, and the remaining 53% were majoring in various subjects or were undeclared. The median age of participants was in the categorical range of 20 to 22, with a significant difference between the two groups in terms of age $X^2(6, N = 84) = 29.12, p < .001$. There was no significant difference between the two groups in terms of gender, $X^2(1, N=84) = 2.88, n.s.$

SL-ASIA

Results of the SL-ASIA indicated that all 31 East Asian participants in this study were classified as low-aculturated, or strongly Asian-identified (i.e., adhering mostly to Asian values and customs). This result allowed for comparisons between Caucasians and East Asians who were strongly Asian-identified only. With a cut-off score of 3 on the SL-ASIA indicating low acculturation, all East Asians in this sample may be classified as such. The mean score was 2.116 (range = 1.71–2.76, $M = 0.2517$; see Table 2). All East Asian participants identified themselves as “first generation” on the SL-ASIA.

Table 2
SL-ASIA Descriptive Statistics

Case Summaries		SLASIA
Total	<i>N</i>	31
	Mean	2.1158
	Median	2.0400
	Minimum	1.71
	Maximum	2.76
	Range	1.05
	Std. Deviation	.25166

EAC-B

Analysis of variance on the 17 counselling expectation subscales (see Table 1) showed an overall significant difference between the two groups, $F(1, 82) = 2.88$, $p < .001$. Also presented in Table 1 are the significant F values and R Squares for the individual dimensions of the EAC-B.

NON-SIGNIFICANT SCALES

There were no significant differences on the following dimensions: Openness, Acceptance, Genuineness, Nurturance, Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Concreteness, and Outcome.

SIGNIFICANT SCALES

Scales where East Asians scored higher than Caucasians

1. Confrontation: East Asian participants expected the counsellor to challenge discrepancies between what the client wants and how he or she behaves, or discrepancies between what the client is and what he or she wants to be ($M = 5.67$; $SD = .81$) significantly more than did Caucasian participants ($M = 5.10$; $SD = 1.21$).
2. Directiveness. East Asian participants expected the counsellor to offer direct advice ($M = 5.30$; $SD = 1.16$) significantly more than did Caucasian participants ($M = 3.98$; $SD = 1.16$).
3. Empathy. East Asian participants expected the counsellor to understand how the client feels ($M = 5.21$; $SD = .89$) significantly more than did Caucasian participants ($M = 3.26$; $SD = 1.28$).
4. Self-disclosure. East Asian participants expected the counsellor to discuss his or her own problems and attitudes and relate them to the client's problem ($M = 5.48$; $SD = 1.11$) significantly more than did Caucasian participants ($M = 3.05$; $SD = 1.72$).
5. Expertise. East Asian participants expected the counsellor to know how to help the client solve his or her problems, and be able to determine what the problem is ($M = 6.06$; $SD = .81$) significantly more than did Caucasian participants ($M = 5.28$; $SD = 1.27$).
6. Tolerance. East Asian participants expected the counsellor to be calm and easy going ($M = 5.78$; $SD = .76$) significantly more than did Caucasian participants ($M = 4.97$; $SD = 1.38$).

Scales where East Asians scored lower than Caucasians

1. Motivation. East Asian participants expected to remain in counselling even if he or she is uncertain if it will help or if it may be painful or unpleasant at times ($M = 4.01$; $SD = 1.26$) significantly less than did Caucasian participants ($M = 5.00$; $SD = 1.32$).
2. Responsibility. East Asian participants expected to make their own decisions, talk about concerns, work on concerns outside the counselling process, and be responsible for outcomes ($M = 5.32$; $SD = .69$) significantly less than did Caucasian participants ($M = 6.10$; $SD = .66$).

DISCUSSION

Compared to Caucasian participants, East Asian participants tended to expect that the counsellor would be more confrontational, direct, empathic, self-disclosing, tolerant, and to demonstrate more expertise. As for their own role in counselling, East Asian participants in this study had lower levels of motivation and responsibility than their Caucasian counterparts did. East Asian participants, more so than Caucasians, expected counsellors to play more of an authority role, offering solutions to their problems while they themselves assumed a somewhat passive position. Caucasian participants expected that they would play an active role during counselling and did not expect the counsellor to solve their problems. These findings are consistent with previous research (Arkoff et al., 1966; Atkinson et al., 1978; Atkinson & Matsushita, 1991; Kim, Atkinson, & Umemoto, 2001).

East Asian participants in this study expected seemingly conflicting qualities from the counsellor. While they anticipated empathy and tolerance, they also expected the counsellor to be direct and confrontational at the same time. These findings suggest that despite the importance of understanding clients' experiences and treating them with positive regard, empathy and tolerance alone may not lead to a successful outcome when working with Asian clients. These results are in line with the previous research findings that report Asian clients' preferences for a directive approach to counselling in which guidance and suggestions are offered (Atkinson & Matsushita, 1991; Li & Kim, 2004).

In Li and Kim's (2004) study, Asian clients who worked with counsellors with a directive style gave higher ratings to their counsellors on their empathy and cultural competence compared to Asian clients who worked with a therapist with a non-directive style. Combined results of these studies indicate that, when working with Asian clients, the counselling process may benefit from the therapist being active in taking charge of the process while balancing it with emphatic understanding of clients' experiences.

As for their own role in counselling, East Asian participants in this study expected to assume a more passive role, following the counsellor's lead. In the counselling situation, so-called "passivity" exhibited by Asian clients can sometimes be construed as a form of resistance or lack of interest. However, deferring authority to an expert is in line with the cultural norms of Asian culture. Asian culture is marked by collectivism in which a sense of self is determined by one's relationship with others (Triandis, 2001; Yeh & Wang, 2000). In collectivistic cultures, expectations about one's roles in social situations are clearly defined (Kuo, 2004), and violations of such expectations can be costly, sometimes resulting in social isolation. In that sense, individuals from collectivistic cultures may find it more adaptive to sit back and observe to sort out the rules of social interactions rather than starting to actively engage with others, especially when they find themselves in a novel situation.

Results of this study concur with those found by Kuo (2004). Kuo asserted that when working with Asian clients, counsellors would benefit from clearly explain-

ing the respective roles of the counsellor and the client during the early stages of counselling. In a similar vein, it may also be important for counsellors to help their Asian clients define their goals for counselling early on in the counselling relationship (Maki & Kitano, 2002; Sue & Zane, 1987). Furthermore, approaches with clear structure (e.g., cognitive restructuring) in which the roles of clients are explicitly defined may work better with Asian clients than open-ended, insight-oriented approaches, at least in the beginning phase of counselling.

East Asian participants in this study did not expect themselves to be less open or expressive during counselling sessions than in customary situations. This is in contrast to what has been acknowledged of Asian clients' tendency for self-concealment, especially regarding issues that may shame their family (Kinzie, 1989; Liao et al., 2005). This finding is even more surprising given that Asian participants in this study had a low level of acculturation. A close examination of the items that measure openness on the EAC-B provides insight into this unexpected finding. These items specifically address how comfortable clients are in openly expressing their emotions, as opposed to how open they are about discussing specific issues. In other words, the type of openness measured in this study tapped more into the participants' openness about revealing their emotions in general, and not so much into their comfort level about sharing information regarding certain aspects of their lives (e.g., family issues).

This result also raises a question about a need to differentiate between varying definitions of the term "openness" in the counselling relationship. In a recent study by Fitzpatrick, Janzen, Chamodraka, and Park (2006), clients identified their openness as the main contributing factor for the development of a positive counselling relationship. However, clients in that study identified two different types of openness. The first type of openness, *productive openness*, is defined as openness to disclosing oneself. Productive openness—the type of openness measured by the EAC-B—is very similar to the traditional definition of openness that emphasizes self-disclosure on the part of the client. The second type of openness identified was *receptive openness*, defined as openness to receiving input from the counsellor. On the EAC-B, *Directiveness* and *Expertise* appear to be most related to what Fitzpatrick et al. define as receptive openness.

The finding that East Asians scored higher on *Directiveness* and *Expertise* fits with information noted earlier, namely that Asian clients are more likely to view their counsellor as an authority figure. As Kim and colleagues (2001) pointed out, when interacting with an authority figure, it is considered more socially appropriate to listen and reflect on advice given from the authority figure rather than taking charge of the process by revealing too much about oneself. In sum, although "openness" was identified as a main contributing factor for the development of a positive counselling relationship in the study by Fitzpatrick et al. (2006), Asians would likely only identify receptive openness as being important in the counselling relationship.

The results of the present study indicated no differences between East Asians' and Caucasians' expectations about the quality of outcomes from counselling,

as both anticipated positive consequences. Although East Asian and Caucasian participants in this study expected that counselling would result in positive outcomes, the two groups had differing assumptions regarding what needs to happen to achieve such results.

Limitations

A major limitation of this study is the sample size. Although the sample size of this study is small, significant differences were found nonetheless ($p < .001$). While future research with larger sample sizes should be carried out to confirm these findings, this research provides a good starting point.

Another limitation of this study is that respondents were required to answer the EAC-B and thus rate their expectations about counselling in a hypothetical help-seeking scenario. As such, the participants did not necessarily have specific presenting concerns on which they based their judgement. The results may have been different if the participants were scheduled to see and/or were already seeing a therapist because of an identifiable set of presenting concerns. However, this does not necessarily diminish the value of the study, given that research has already demonstrated that Asians underutilize counselling services partly because of their expectations of the process (Chen et al., 2003; Kim, 1996). As such, the value of this study is, in part, that it has investigated the expectations that Asians have about counselling in order to better understand why this population might underutilize counselling services.

Another limitation of the study is related to a problem inherent in a comparative study that examines inter-group differences. Inter-ethnic group comparisons may result in faulty sweeping generalizations of the experiences of a specific ethnic group. While the study provides a glimpse of East Asian Canadians' expectations for counselling as a whole, it fails to examine within-group differences. Considering the wide range of diversity that exists among Asian Canadians, further investigation is needed to examine differences that may exist across different Asian ethnic groups. In addition, future research needs to focus on counselling expectations of a specific Asian ethnic group in order to explore individual differences that may exist among members of that Asian ethnic group.

Two within-group differences between East Asians and Caucasians were age and area of study. Though this study demonstrates significant differences amongst East Asians and Caucasians in their expectations about counselling, it may be the case that these differences have been due in part to differences in their ages. Future studies could benefit from examining differences amongst East Asians and Caucasians when these differences do not exist. Also, both the East Asian sample and the Caucasian sample favoured female representation. Regarding area of study, 74% of the East Asian sample was identified as commerce majors while 50% of the Caucasian sample was psychology majors. It could be argued that differences in counselling expectations could be a product of undergraduate major rather than culture. As psychology majors may have a greater knowledge of what happens in counselling, their expectations may vary concomitantly.

There is a lack of relevant demographic information provided, especially for the East Asian sample. For example, it is not known if they were international students. It is not known how long they have lived in Canada, if they plan on living here permanently, or if they plan on living here temporarily. It is not known if English is their second language or even if their English is proficient enough to fully understand the questions on the measures. However, we assume these students are proficient enough in English to attend an English-speaking university. The wording of the questions on the measures that were used in this study was basic and free from jargon.

Despite these limitations, this study suggests that in comparison to Caucasians, East Asian participants differ on some of their expectations about counselling. Given that there will likely be an increase of the East Asian population in Canada over the next decade, it is crucial that as counsellors we continue to increase our knowledge base about East Asians' cultural values and beliefs as they relate to their expectations about counselling. In a qualitative study that examined clients' perspective on multicultural competence, Pope-Davis et al. (2001) reported that clients identified the counsellor's ability to assess clients' needs as an essential component of multicultural competence. Our findings suggest that an examination of clients' expectations for counselling is a key element of clients' need assessment. As such, counsellors should assess their clients' preconceived notions about the helping relationship and the impact of cultural norms and values on the shaping of such expectations when working with Asian clients. Understanding these factors will help counsellors make informed decisions about culturally sensitive interventions that are appropriate for their clients.

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Appendix

EAC-B Scale Descriptions

EAC-B Scales	Scale Descriptions
Motivation	The extent to which the client expects to remain in counselling even if he or she is uncertain if it will help, or if it is painful or unpleasant at times.
Openness	The extent to which the client expects to express and discuss his or her emotions, and how much he or she feels safe doing so.
Responsibility	The extent to which the client expects to make his or her own decisions, talk about concerns, work on concerns outside the counselling process, and be responsible for outcomes.
Acceptance	The extent to which the counsellor is expected to be warm and friendly.
Confrontation	The extent to which the client expects the counsellor to challenge discrepancies between what the client wants and how he or she behaves.
Directiveness	The extent to which the client expects the counsellor to offer direct advice.
Empathy	The extent to which the client expects the counsellor to understand how he or she feels.
Genuineness	The extent to which the counsellor is expected to be honest, real, and respectful.
Nurturance	The extent to which the counsellor is expected to provide encouragement, reassurance, support, and praise.
Self-disclosure	The extent to which the client expects the counsellor to discuss his or her own problems and attitudes and relate them to the client's problem.
Attractiveness	The extent to which the client expects to like the counsellor.
Expertise	The extent to which the counsellor is expected to know how to help the client solve his or her problems, and be able to determine what the problem is.
Tolerance	The extent to which the client expects the counsellor to be calm and easy going.
Trustworthiness	The extent to which the counsellor is expected to inspire confidence and trust.

Concreteness	The extent to which the counselling process is expected to help the client identify and solve problems, as well as identify and understand his or her feelings, problem situations, and behaviour.
Immediacy	The extent to which the client expects to gain experience in new ways of solving problems, and relate openly and honestly to another person within the counselling relationship.
Outcome	The extent to which the counselling process is expected to help the client gain better self understanding, become better able to help his or herself in the future, and improve relationships with others.

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