Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Relational spirituality, differentiation of self, and virtue as predictors of intercultural development

Steven J. Sandage[*a] and Mark G. Harden[b]

[a]*Department of Marriage and Family Studies, Bethel Seminary, Marriage and Family Therapy, Bethel University, St Paul, 55112, MN, USA;* [b]*Dean of Intercultural Relations, Bethel Seminary, Bethel University, St Paul, 55112, MN, USA*

The present study tested the relationships between spirituality, differentiation of self (DoS), virtue (gratitude and forgiveness), and intercultural development among graduate trainees in the helping professions. A relational model of spiritual dwelling and seeking and the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity were used to conceptualise the study. Data were collected in a sample ($N = 174$) of graduate students in counselling psychology, marriage and family therapy, ministry professions, and theology at a Protestant-affiliated university. Results supported the hypotheses that quest religiosity, DoS, and gratitude would be positively associated with intercultural development and spiritual grandiosity would be negatively associated with intercultural development. Intrinsic religiosity was not related to intercultural development. DoS mediated the relationship between gratitude and intercultural development. Contrary to hypotheses, forgiveness was largely uncorrelated with intercultural development. Implications are considered for training in intercultural competence, particularly with highly religious trainees.

Keywords: intercultural development; spirituality; differentiation of self; gratitude; training

Over the past 20 years, the field of psychology has generated rapidly growing literatures in the previously under-studied areas of (a) multiculturalism and (b) the positive psychology of spirituality, religion, and virtue. However, it is curious that these two emerging streams of empirical research have rarely been integrated, particularly since the dynamics of culture and spirituality or religion are interactive for many clients (Worthington & Sandage, 2002) and can influence ideals of human functioning (Sandage, Hill, & Vang, 2003). Numerous authors in the area of psychotherapy have recognised the logical connections between multicultural or intercultural competence and awareness of religious and spiritual dynamics (e.g., Fukuyama & Sevig, 1999; Richards & Bergin, 2000; Schlosser, 2003). *Intercultural competence* has been defined as "the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways" and with sensitivity to "relevant cultural differences" (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p. 422), and in this study we explore the relationships between intercultural competence and relational spirituality, differentiation of self (DoS), and virtue. Some have called for further attention to spiritual and religious

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*Corresponding author. Email: s-sandage@bethel.edu

issues as part of cultural diversity training in clinical and counselling programmes (Hage, Hopson, Siegel, Payton, & DeFanti, 2006). Yet no research attention appears to have been given to studying the relationships between spirituality and religious factors and multicultural or intercultural competence among helping professionals (e.g., psychology, counselling, marriage and family therapy, pastoral or spiritual counselling). The training contexts in North America include at least 28 religiously affiliated schools with APA-accredited psychology training programmes, 20 religiously affiliated schools with Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education training programmes, and 32 faith-based programmes accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counselling and Related Educational Programmes, not to mention the many other training programmes for counsellors and clergy around the world. Yet we could find no studies investigating the intercultural competence of trainees in highly religious contexts.

Attention to religious and spiritual traditions from both a historical and global perspective suggests that most traditions have included adherents characterised by compassion and peace-building across differences, on the one hand, and other followers marked by prejudice and violence towards outsiders. The sacred is a referent used to validate both xenophobia and intercultural understanding depending on the psychological dynamics of the individual or relational system considered. This raises questions about the particular forms of religiosity or spirituality within various religious traditions that promote intercultural competence and those that impede the same. The long history of social psychological research on religion and prejudice offers empirical evidence that some religious orientations predict prejudicial attitudes towards certain forms of difference. Allport and Ross (1967) contrasted *intrinsic religiosity*, which refers to an internalised faith orientation or viewing religion as an end in itself, with the *extrinsic religiosity* of using religion for social conformity or as a means to other ends. Allport and Ross suggested intrinsic religiosity was not correlated with prejudice but also identified a group of ''indiscriminately pro-religious'' individuals who reported high levels of both intrinsic and extrinsic and tended to score high in racial prejudice. Batson's (Batson, Floyd, Meyer, & Winner, 1999; Batson, Schoenrade, & Ventis, 1993) programme of research challenged the notion that intrinsic religiosity was not correlated with prejudice by suggesting religious communities often facilitate "right" or religiously validated forms of prejudice. Batson contrasted prior measures of intrinsic religiosity with a measure he developed of *quest religiosity*, with the latter representing religiosity as an authentic, open-ended process of seeking meaning and tolerating ambiguity. The Quest Scale has correlated positively with religious cognitive complexity and negatively with overt and covert measures of prejudice (Batson et al., 1993).

More recently, Tsang and Rowatt (2007) re-activated research on religion and prejudice by finding that intrinsic religiosity was associated with an implicit attitudes measure of sexual prejudice towards homosexual individuals in a sample of undergraduate students. The use of an implicit attitudes measure was a methodological advance over previous studies that have relied on self-report measures of prejudice. In a random probability sample of 1500 mostly white, Protestant American adults, Rowatt, LaBouff, Johnson, Froese, and Tsang (2009) also found a measure of general religiousness was associated with less accepting attitudes towards homosexuals and showed a modest negative relationship with general racial prejudice. These findings are suggestive but of limited application to the questions about intercultural competence and spirituality for two reasons. First, prejudice is a negative index of alterity and does not directly translate into the positive achievement of the intercultural competence necessary for effective clinical and counselling practice. There is also a need to move beyond global measures like

general religiousness, and even intrinsic religiosity, to tease apart specific dimensions of religion or spirituality that are positively and those that are negatively associated with intercultural competence within various religious traditions. It may actually be indicative of ethnocentrism to assume that the same spiritual or religious factors will correlate with intercultural competence across various traditions without empirical testing.

In one of the only studies directly investigating religiosity and multicultural competence, Balkin, Schlosser, and Levitt (2009) found counsellors with a rigid and conforming religious identity tended to be intolerant of gay men and lesbians while counsellors who questioned their own beliefs tended to be more aware of multicultural issues. However, this exploratory study relied on an unpublished measure of religious identity and lacked hypotheses based on a theoretical framework to connect religiosity and cultural diversity.

Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) is a theoretical model that describes how people develop intercultural competence and can be useful for conceptualising links between intercultural development and individual differences in spirituality and religiosity (Bennett, 1993). Bennett describes the process as six distinct kinds of experience among individuals who encounter differences in cultural orientation. These kinds of experience are divided into two categories that constitute a continuum from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. This model posits that ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism are opposites on the awareness and sensitivity continuum of intercultural differentiation. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI; Hammer et al., 2003) is the assessment tool that is based on the DMIS and used to measure intercultural development.

In Bennett's understanding of ethnocentrism, individuals experience differences primarily based on three distinct worldviews: Denial, Defence, and Minimisation. Denial is when cultural differences are not experienced but rather one's own orientation is considered a single-reality of what is normal and true. Accordingly, Bennett (2004) states that "...cultural difference is either not experienced at all, or it is experienced as associated with a kind of undifferentiated *other* such as a "foreigner" or "immigrant" (p. 63). It is the "inability to make the perceptual distinctions that do not allow for cultural facts to be recognized" (p. 64). Defence differs from Denial in that one experiences cultural difference but perceives their culture as "the only viable one." "Other" is experienced as inferior and as a stereotypic representation. This means that Defence indicates that a person is threatened by cultural differences and reacts accordingly. As a consequence, individuals who have a Defence orientation will interpret difference "as an attack" on their values" (p. 65). A variation of Defence is Reversal. Reversal is similar to Defence in that differences are polarised, but in the reverse. In the case of Reversal, a different culture is experienced in a positive light but also in a stereotypic manner and one's own culture is viewed in a negative stereotypic manner (p. 66). Minimisation is when a person's experience of difference "is the state in which elements of one's own cultural worldview are experienced as universal" (p. 66). Bennett states that the threats that difference pose are no longer viewed in polarizing terms, but are "neutralized by subsuming the differences into familiar categories" (p. 66).

Ethnorelativism is defined as orientations in which one experiences his or her "own culture" in the context of cultural differences. According to the DMIS model, these

orientations include Acceptance, Adaptation, and Integration. With respect to Acceptance, one's cognitive abilities have increased in complexity to a point to which one is able to recognise differences and accept that one's worldview is one of many possible worldview orientations. However, Bennett (1993) points out that they possess minimal ability to contrast cultural differences and be skilled in a different worldview orientation. When the cognitive level of Adaptation is reached, one is able to perceive and produce behaviour that is "appropriate" to a different cultural orientation. Bennett argues that Adaptation is a status in which one is able to organise their experience, engage in empathy, and "express" feelings from an alternative cultural experience. Integration is being able to experience several cultural worldview orientations as representation of "self" (p. 72). Hence, one has an expanded sense of self and is able to move in and out of different cultural worldviews.

Bennett argues that the DMIS is not a model about attitudes, knowledge, and skills but underlying developmental capacities (p. 69). However, the DMIS model provides a framework for understanding how the lack of awareness about differences may preclude a necessary understanding of self and other. The DMIS model was therefore appropriate for investigation of differentiation and helpful in determining what level of awareness positively correlates with spirituality, religiosity, and virtue constructs in relationship to intercultural competence. The DMIS model served as a strong theoretical basis in this study for several reasons. First, the DMIS assumes that cultural orientations can relate to a wide range of individual difference factors, including spirituality and religion, due to underlying developmental capacities like differentiation (Klak & Martin, 2003). Second, the IDI has been used to show that the ability to differentiate cultural orientations is positively correlated with post-conventional moral reasoning and with depth of multicultural experience (Endicott, Bock, & Narvaez, 2003). If intercultural development and moral development are empirically related, it is plausible to examine associations between intercultural development and spirituality, religion, and virtue. This fits with Wainryb's (2006) theory that cultures and ethics comprised multidimensional cognitive frameworks related to beliefs and values. Third, the DMIS has some internal support from Christian scholars who have used the model in applied work with spiritual leaders (e.g., Sheffield, 2007).

Relational spirituality and intercultural development

Spirituality and religion can be challenging to define. Shults and Sandage (2006, p. 161) defined spirituality as "ways of relating to the sacred." This relational definition of spirituality builds upon the psychological work of Hill and Pargament (2003, p. 65) who defined both spirituality and religion as arising from the "search for the sacred," with "sacred" referring to persons and objects of ultimate truth and devotion. Hill and Pargament argued that the "polarization of religion and spirituality into institutional and individual domains ignores the fact that all forms of spiritual expression unfold in a social context" (p. 64), and we agree with their view that spirituality is the broader construct that can be expressed through religious or other social contexts.

Shults and Sandage (2006) also utilised Wuthnow's (1998) model of spiritual dwelling and seeking to highlight two primary and dialectical themes within their developmental model of relational spirituality. Wuthnow has described the changing spiritual landscape in North America since the 1950s as shifting primarily from spiritualities of *dwelling* towards spiritualities of *seeking*. Spiritual dwelling involves relating to the sacred through

a particular community and tradition, and historically this was typically provided by a religious group. Spiritual seeking involves a process of open questing and journeying towards new spiritual experiences and understandings within or beyond the formal boundaries of religious institutions. Spiritual dwelling and seeking are sometimes contrasted in sociological studies based upon whether or not a person is affiliated with a religious institution (e.g., Wink & Dillon, 2003), but a developmental psychology framework also suggests that dwelling and seeking, commitment and questing, can be embedded within a dialectical process of spiritual or faith development for individuals (Hay, Reich, & Utsch, 2006; Sorenson, Derflinger, Bufford, & McMinn, 2004). In fact, one longitudinal study using the relational spirituality framework above found graduate students in a Christian context increased in measures of both spiritual dwelling and seeking during a two-year period (Williamson & Sandage, 2009). The dialectical relationship between spiritual dwelling and seeking reveals the challenge of alterity or how a person holds their connection to the sacred (dwelling) while also being open to understanding others who relate to the sacred differently (seeking) (Sandage, Jensen, & Jass, 2008).

In this study of graduate student trainees in the context of an Evangelical Protestant-affiliated university, we operationalised relational spirituality using the constructs of spiritual grandiosity, intrinsic religiosity, and quest religiosity. Spiritual grandiosity involves a narcissistic style of relating to the sacred which validates the self as more spiritual than other people (Hall & Edwards, 2002) while maintaining forms of self-other differentiation with limited complexity (Jones, 2008). Spiritual grandiosity could hinder intercultural development by limiting interest in and respect for others and making alterity threatening due to an underlying insecurity over self-identity (Shults & Sandage, 2006). Intrinsic and quest forms of religiosity map onto the categories of spiritual dwelling and seeking (Williamson & Sandage, 2009). Measures of intrinsic and quest religiosity have been traditionally used as measures of religious orientation rather than measures of "spirituality" per se. However, within a religious context our definition of relational spirituality as "ways of relating to the sacred" fits with measuring differing stances towards understanding the sacred within a religious tradition. A qualitative study with high religious questers (using the Quest Scale) revealed a strong interest in spiritual experience and ambivalent or complex ways of relating to religious traditions (Graham, McDonald, & Klaassen, 2008). Intrinsic religiosity, like other psychological measures of intrinsic motivation, appears to be positively correlated with well-being but not necessarily with relational complexity or appreciation of diversity (Batson et al., 1993; Shults & Sandage, 2006). Quest religiosity involves an openness to questioning one's tradition, tolerating the ambiguity of meaning-making, and the cognitive flexibility to revise one's worldview based on new experience. Therefore, spiritual seeking or questing can be expected to correlate positively with intercultural development which requires the ability to cognitively frame-shift to other cultural perspectives.

Differentiation and intercultural development

As mentioned above, Bennett (1993) suggested intercultural competence involves high levels of differentiation. DoS is a developmental construct with intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions (Skowron, 2004). The intrapersonal dimension involves the ability to lessen one's emotional reactivity, and therefore relate prosocially and intentionally to others. The interpersonal dimension consists of the ability to maintain a distinct sense of self while connecting with others across differences, initiate and receive

intimacy voluntarily, and establish clear boundaries for oneself within relationships. DoS has correlated positively with a variety of different measures of physical, psychological, and relational well-being (Skowron, 2004; Skowron, Holmes, & Sabatelli, 2003; Skowron, Stanley, & Shapiro, 2009).

There is a growing empirical literature on the relationship between DoS and spirituality (Jankowski & Vaughn, 2009). Spirituality can involve developmental transitions and changes throughout the lifespan. One of the more recent conceptualisations of spiritual maturity is that of differentiation-based spirituality (Jankowski & Vaughn, 2009; Majerus & Sandage, 2010; Schnarch, 1997; Shults & Sandage, 2006) which involves the notion that spiritual development involves growth in differentiated capacities for (a) self-regulation (Jankowski & Vaughn, 2009), and (b) balancing mature intimacy and alterity in relationships (Sandage et al., 2008). Schnarch (1997) suggested those high in DoS may be less prone to spiritual polarisation (i.e., ''us versus them'') and more capable of spiritual complexity that facilitates positive relationships across differences. DoS is particularly relevant to intercultural development since it involves the ability to tolerate the anxiety of difference while maintaining awareness and concern for both self and for others. This could include differentiating one's own cultural framework from that of another person while keeping both frameworks in mind (Bennett, 1993). DoS was found to be positively associated with both personal adjustment and ethnic group belonging among sample of ethnic minority adults (Skowron, 2004). Several empirical studies (for a review, see Hung, 2006) have shown cross-cultural validity for DoS as a construct with ethnic minority adults and urban, low-income families in the United States and Israeli adolescents, as well as with Filipino adults, Asian American women, and African American women.

Gratitude, forgiveness, and intercultural development

Researchers in the positive psychology of virtue are increasingly recognising that understandings of virtue or the ''good life'' are influenced by cultural and religious traditions (Sandage, Cook, Hill, Strawn, & Reimer, 2008). Gratitude and forgiveness have been considered virtues across many religious and spiritual traditions (Emmons, 2007). Both have been described as ''warmth-based'' virtues (Worthington, Berry, & Parrott, 2001) that have been widely studied in positive psychology in recent years. Psychologically, gratitude and forgiveness both build upon a capacity for empathy or social perspective-taking which makes them more similar to other virtues emphasising warm emotions (e.g., compassion, love) than the conscientiousness-based virtues (e.g., temperance, prudence). Gratitude and forgiveness have been found to be positively correlated in prior studies (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002; Witvliet et al., 2008), although we could not find previous studies relating these particular virtues to intercultural development.

The trait or disposition of gratitude has been defined as ''a generalized tendency to recognise and respond with grateful emotion to the roles of other people's benevolence in the positive experiences and outcomes that one obtains'' (McCullough et al., 2002, p. 112). While not studying gratitude per se, Jarrett's (2003) qualitative study linked appreciation of cultural differences with intercultural competence based on the IDI. Bennett's (1993) DMIS posits that appreciation, a construct closely related to gratitude, is the key emotional dynamic of intercultural competence. McCullough, Kimeldorf, and Cohen (2008) have reviewed studies suggesting gratitude may have evolved to facilitate reciprocal altruism and ''upstream reciprocity'' or passing on benefits to third parties outside of one's kin group. Based on evolutionary psychology, gratitude is less relevant as a motivation for

kin altruism (which benefits one's genetic self-interest) than it is for motivating prosocial behaviour towards out-group members. Theoretically, high levels of gratitude may be consistent with high intercultural development as both involve an ability to appreciate the contributions of others and to recognise the benefits of prosocial relations (Bennett, 1993). Gratitude is also negatively correlated with envy, and emotional envy has been identified as a stronger predictor of inter-group defensiveness and prejudice (Smith & Kim, 2007).

McCullough, Bono, and Root (2007, p. 491) defined forgiveness as "a suite of prosocial changes in one's motivations toward an interpersonal transgressor such that one becomes less avoidant of and less vengeful toward the transgressor (and, perhaps, more benevolent as well; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997)." This definition emphasises the emotional dynamics and prosocial nature of forgiveness motivations. Forgiveness and intercultural development both involve capacities for empathy and social perspective-taking towards others (Bennett, 1993). In the field of peace psychology, there is emerging evidence that positive attitudes towards relating with out-group members and perspective-taking are associated with higher levels of inter-group forgiveness (Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006). Capacities for forgiveness and intercultural development may be related through empathy that is extended towards those who might otherwise be considered a threat.

Present study

In the present study, we investigated relational spirituality, differentiation of self, and virtue (gratitude and forgiveness) as predictors of intercultural development in a sample of graduate students in the helping professions (i.e., counselling, therapy, and ministry) at an Evangelical Protestant-affiliated university. The particular university in this study had graduate students representing over 50 denominations. Graduate trainees in the helping professions represent the potential future leaders in spiritual and mental health communities whose intercultural competence (or lack thereof) will potentially impact many people. In this study, we hypothesised that quest religiosity, differentiation of self, gratitude, and forgiveness would all be positively associated with intercultural development. We also hypothesised that spiritual grandiosity would be negatively associated and intrinsic religiosity uncorrelated with intercultural development. Finally, we hypothesised the differentiation of self would mediate the relationship between gratitude and intercultural development. Sorenson's (2004) psychoanalytic model of relational spirituality drew a parallel between relating to one's family of origin and relating to one's cultural and religious traditions. Sorenson further suggested that gratitude towards one's tradition is not idealisation or fusion with one's tradition but a relational stance of differentiation that facilitates both (a) self-awareness of countertransference and (b) a willingness to engage in open alterity or being transformed by dialogue with others. In combination with Jarrett's (2003) findings and Bennett's (1993) theory mentioned above, this suggests the connection between gratitude and intercultural development could be accounted for by an underlying capacity for differentiation of self.

Method

Participants

Participants were 174 masters-level students from a Protestant-affiliated university in the Midwest who were recruited from both classes and orientation sessions and offered a $10

gift certificate to a bookstore for participating by completing a packet of questionnaires. They ranged in age from 21 to 59, and the mean age was 30.79 ($SD = 10.12$). The sample was 55.7% female and 44.3% male. Participants identified as 86.8% European-American, 3.4% Asian or Asian-American, 2.9% African-American, 1.1% Native-American, and 6% did not report their ethnicity. Most of the participants had one of six defined majors, including master's programmes in counselling psychology (18.4%), divinity (36.2%), theological studies (10.3%), children and family ministries (9.8%), marriage and family therapy (7.4%), global and contextual studies (4%), Christian thought (3.4%), Christian education (3.4%), or leadership (3.4%).

Measures

Intercultural Development Inventory

Intercultural development was measured using the 50-item version two of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI; Hammer et al., 2003), which is based on the DMIS as an assessment of intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence. Participants respond to items based on a 5-point scale (1 = disagree, 5 = agree). The IDI provides an overall score for intercultural development, and confirmatory factor analyses have supported the identification of subscales that measure the ethnocentric orientations of Defence, Reversal, and Minimisation and the ethnorelative orientation of Acceptance/Adaptation (Hammer et al., 2003; Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, & DeJaeghere, 2003). Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for the scales ranged from 0.80 to 0.85 in the psychometric studies. The IDI scales also showed no differences in correlations with the Marlowe-Crown social desirability scale, suggesting the IDI is not "transparent" to participants. These 50 items had an internal consistency in this study of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$. Content validity was established by a panel of intercultural experts, and construct validity included predicted relationships between IDI scales and measures of worldmindedness and intercultural anxiety (Hammer et al., 2003).

Disposition to forgive

Participants were asked to complete the 11-item Disposition to Forgive Scale (DFS; McCullough et al., 2002). Items were based on McCullough et al.'s (1997) theorising regarding forgiveness (i.e., that forgiveness involves prosocial changes in avoidance, revenge, and conciliatory motivations). Participants indicated the extent to which they engaged in 11 different responses when people anger or hurt them, including positively worded items (e.g., "I don't hold it against him/her for long") and negatively worded items (e.g., "I will find a way to even the score"), the latter of which we reverse scored. These 11 items had an internal consistency in this study of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$.

Gratitude questionnaire

In order to measure dispositional gratitude, the 6-item Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ; McCullough et al., 2002) was used. Participants use a likert scale to rate the statements 1 to 7 (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Item statements included "I have so much in life to be thankful for" and "I am grateful to a wide variety of people." McCullough et al. (2002) reported an internal consistency reliability of 0.87 for the GQ. The GQ had an internal consistency in this study of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.75$.

Spiritual Grandiosity

Spiritual Grandiosity (SG) was measured through a 7-item subscale of the Spiritual Assessment Inventory (SAI; Hall & Edwards, 2002; Hall, Reise, & Haviland, 2007). The SAI is a 54-item self-report based on object relations and attachment theories and contemplative spirituality. Measuring the dynamics of one's perceived relationship to God rather than focusing on one's representation of God, the SAI comprised two dimensions: awareness and developmental quality. The awareness dimension is designed to measure an individual's awareness of God in everyday life. The developmental quality dimension, which includes SG, is designed to measure the relational qualities of one's relationship to God. The Spiritual Grandiosity subscale is intended to measure qualities consistent with narcissistic personality traits. Examples of SG items include "I find my prayers to God are more effective than other people's" and "God recognizes I am more spiritual than most people." Participants are asked to respond using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all true*) to 5 (*very true*). Hall and Edwards (2002) demonstrated construct, convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity of the measure. Cronbach's alpha reliability of the SG scale in this study was 0.66.

Intrinsic religiosity

Intrinsic religiosity was measured using the 8-item intrinsic subscale of the Religious Orientation Scale-Revised (ROS-R). Gorsuch and McPherson (1989) reported a reliability of 0.83 for the Intrinsic subscale, which has also correlated positively with other measures of internalised religiosity and with better mental health (Hill & Pargament, 2003). Factor analyses confirmed intrinsic religiosity as a factor distinct from extrinsic religiosity as found in prior research. The intrinsic religiosity scale had an internal consistency in this study of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.72$.

Quest scale

The *Quest Scale* (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991a, 1991b) was used to measure spiritual and religious questing and characterised quest as a complex religious orientation that involves valuing the role of doubt and maintaining a tentative, changeable stance towards religious conviction. The 12 items were rated on a scale of 1 to 9 (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 9 = *Strongly Agree*) and included statements such as: "I am constantly questioning my religious beliefs" and reversed scored statement, "I find religious doubts upsetting." In contrast to the internalised commitment orientation of the intrinsic religiosity scale, the quest scale measures a style of relational spirituality that involves questioning one's religious tradition and being open to exploring change. Batson and Schoenrade (1991b) found the revised 12-statement quest scale to have a Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.75 to 0.81. The quest scale has been found to be positively correlated with cognitive complexity and other measures of religious openness and existential motivation. Quest scores have also been found to increase following confrontation with an existential dilemma (for a review, see Beck & Jessup, 2004). These Quest Scale had an internal consistency in this study of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$.

Differentiation of self

The Differentiation of Self Inventory-Revised (DSI-R; Skowron & Schmitt, 2003) is a 46-item self-report measure used to assess Bowen's concept of differentiation. The DSI-R has generated an internal consistency score of 0.92 on the full scale (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003), which was also obtained in this study. The various subscales have obtained internal consistencies ranging from 0.81 to 0.89 and have also demonstrated convergent and divergent validity (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003). Two of the subscales assess the intrapersonal aspects of differentiation ("I" position, emotional reactivity) (Skowron et al., 2003). The other two subscales assess the interpersonal dimension (fusion with others, emotional cutoff). Higher scores on the subscales reflect greater differentiation. Participants were asked to rate how generally true the items were about them on a scale from 1 (*not at all true of me*) to 6 (*very true of me*). Sample items on the "I" position (I-P) subscale include "There's no point in getting upset about things I cannot change." The emotional reactivity (ER) subscale includes items such as "If someone is upset with me, I can't seem to let it go easily." Sample items on the fusion with other subscale (FO) include "I try to live up to my parents' expectations and "Sometimes I feel sick after fighting with my spouse/partner." The emotional cutoff (EC) subscale consists of items such as "When one of my relationships becomes very intense, I feel the urge to run away from it." These DSI-R had an internal consistency in this study of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.91$.

Analysis strategy

The statistical analyses in this study will include simultaneous regression analysis to test whether measures of relational spirituality, virtue, and differentiation of self predict intercultural development. Regression analyses will also be used to test for mediator effects (Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004) for differentiation of self-mediating gratitude and intercultural development. Statistical significance will be accepted at $p < 0.05$.

Results

Bivariate correlations

Means and standard deviations of constructs are reported in Table 1. Bivariate correlations of all measures are reported in Table 2. Intercultural development was positively correlated with gratitude and differentiation of self and negatively correlated with spiritual grandiosity with all significant correlations being small. Quest religiosity showed a small positive correlation with the Acceptance/Adaptation scale of intercultural competence. Forgiveness was not significantly correlated with intercultural development, although there was a small positive correlation with resolution of defensiveness. As hypothesised, intrinsic religiosity was not significantly correlated with any of the intercultural development scales. Interestingly, spiritual grandiosity showed a small correlation with both defensiveness and reversal, measures of two differing forms of intercultural polarisation.

Regression model

A simultaneous regression analysis was used to test whether measures of relational spirituality, virtue, and differentiation of self would predict intercultural development

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of constructs.

Variable	Mean	*SD*
Defence	25.32	3.66
Reversal	31.41	6.39
Minimisation	30.60	6.39
Accept/adaptation	47.60	8.96
Overall IDI*	92.33	14.68
Intrinsic religiosity	64.45	5.43
Spiritual grandiosity	11.22	3.35
Quest	64.20	15.73
Total DoS	193.16	27.31
Gratitude	38.81	3.79
Forgiveness	58.28	10.38

Note: IDI = Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer et al., 2003). Higher scores on the IDI subscales of Defence, Reversal, and Minimisation indicate *greater* resolution of those ethnocentric indicators and higher Overall Intercultural Development. DSI-R = Differentiation of Self Inventory – Revised (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003). Total DoS = Total score on DSI-R. *Overall IDI scores are based on an algorithm using theoretically weighted means of subscales (Paige et al., 2003).

(see Table 3). Spiritual grandiosity, quest, differentiation of self, gratitude, and forgiveness were entered as independent variables with intercultural development as the dependent variable. The overall regression model was significant ($R^2 = 0.16$, $p < 0.0001$). As hypothesised, spiritual grandiosity ($B = -1.11$, $p = 0.002$), quest ($B = 0.19$, $p = 0.015$), and differentiation of self ($B = 0.11$, $p = 0.015$) were significantly related to intercultural development, while gratitude ($B = 0.37$, $p = 0.272$) and forgiveness ($B = 0.00$, $p = 0.999$) were not.

Mediation analysis

To investigate whether a recent differentiation of self mediated the linear relationship between gratitude and intercultural development, we followed procedures outlined by Frazier et al. (2004) for testing mediator effects. To test condition 1 for mediation, differentiation of self (proposed mediator) was regressed on gratitude. Results indicated that gratitude was significantly associated with higher levels of differentiation of self ($B = 2.96$, $p < 0.0001$). To test condition 2 for mediation, intercultural development was regressed on gratitude. Results indicated that gratitude was significantly associated with higher levels of intercultural development ($B = 0.71$, $p = 0.03$). To test condition 3 for mediation, a regression analysis was performed in which intercultural development was regressed on the proposed mediators of differentiation of self. Results showed that intercultural development was positively associated with differentiation of self ($B = 0.11$, $p = 0.004$). A final hierarchical regression multiple regression analysis was performed to test whether differentiation of self significantly reduced the relationship between gratitude and intercultural development (see Table 4). Intercultural development was regressed on gratitude (step 1) and differentiation of self (step 2). As shown in Table 3, the *B* representing the relationship between gratitude and intercultural development was reduced (from $B = 0.71$ to 0.40 or $\beta = 0.18$ to 0.10) when differentiation of self ($B = 0.11$, $\beta = 0.20$,

Table 2. Bivariate correlations between constructs.

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
IDI											
1. Defence	—										
2. Reversal	0.26***	—									
3. Minimisation	0.18*	−0.01	—								
4. Accept/adapt	0.10	−0.06	0.01	—							
5. Overall ID	0.62***	0.73***	0.48***	0.23**	—						
Relational spirituality											
6. Intrinsic	−0.02	−0.02	−0.03	0.04	0.01	—					
7. SG	−0.21**	−0.17*	−0.05	0.13	−0.20**	0.15	—				
8. Quest	0.12	−0.01	0.05	0.16*	0.10	−0.10	0.02	—			
DSI-R											
9. Total DoS	0.20*	0.16*	0.00	0.09	0.22**	0.34***	0.03	0.04	—		
Virtues											
10. Gratitude	0.25**	0.16	−0.01	−0.05	0.19*	0.22**	−0.01	0.02	0.40***	—	
11. Forgiveness	0.18*	0.07	0.04	−0.02	0.14	0.28***	0.11	0.05	0.56***	0.36***	—

Note: IDI = Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer et al., 2003). Higher scores on the IDI subscales of Defence, Reversal, and Minimisation indicate *greater* resolution of those ethnocentric indicators and higher Overall Intercultural Development (ID). SG = Spiritual Grandiosity. DSI-R = Differentiation of Self Inventory – Revised (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003). Total DoS = Total score on DSI-R.
***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

Table 3. Regression model of intercultural development on relational spirituality, virtue, and DoS measures.

Variables	R^2	B	95% CI^{a}	$SE\ B$	β	t	Sign
Model	0.16***						
DoS		0.11*	0.01/0.21	0.05	0.21	2.13	0.035
Spiritual grandiosity		−1.12**	−1.83/−0.4	0.36	−0.25	−3.08	0.003
Quest		0.19*	0.04/0.35	0.08	0.20	2.45	0.016
Gratitude		0.37	−0.31/1.06	0.34	0.10	1.09	0.279
Forgiveness		0.00	−0.28/0.28	0.14	0.00	0.001	0.999

Note: $N = 174$.
[a]95% CI = 95% confidence interval for B.
***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

Table 4. Hierarchical regression model of intercultural development on gratitude and differentiation of self.

Step and variables	R^2	ΔR^2	B	95% CI^{a}	$SE\ B$	β	Sign
Step 1	0.03*						
Gratitude			0.71*	0.07/1.38	0.33	0.18	0.031
Step 2	0.07**	0.04*	0.40	−0.31/1.10	0.35	0.10	0.007
Gratitude			0.11*		0.05	0.20	0.268
DoS				0.02/0.20			0.020

Note: $N = 174$.
[a]95% CI = 95% confidence interval for B.
***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

$p = 0.02$) was entered into the regression equation ($R^2 = 0.07$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.04$). The Sobel test revealed a significant indirect effect ($ab = 0.59$, $z = 3.54$, $p < 0.0001$).

Discussion

The results supported the hypotheses that (a) quest religiosity, differentiation of self, and gratitude would be positively associated with intercultural development, (b) spiritual grandiosity would be negatively associated with intercultural development, and (c) intrinsic religiosity would be uncorrelated with intercultural development. Also as hypothesised, differentiation of self mediated the relationship between gratitude and intercultural development. Contrary to our hypothesis, forgiveness was not correlated with overall intercultural development and showed only a modest relation to the defensiveness subscale.

This study contributes to the small literature on spirituality, religion, and intercultural (or multicultural) competence. Balkin et al. (2009) found counsellors whose religious identity involved a curious blend of relational conformity and confusion about their beliefs reported higher levels of multicultural knowledge but also increased tendencies towards sexism. Our results within a highly religious context (i.e., high mean score on intrinsic religiosity) found quest religiosity was positively related to intercultural development in a regression model while controlling for differentiation of self, spiritual grandiosity,

gratitude, and forgiveness. Quest does not show a significant bivariate correlation with intercultural development, and we believe the reason for this suppressor effect can be seen in the relationships of quest to the subscales of intercultural development. Specifically, although spiritual grandiosity and differentiation of self are associated with defence and reversal, quest is the only scale that is significantly associated with acceptance and adaptation. Our quest measure may have some similarity to the Balkin et al. confusion measure in terms of acknowledging religious ambiguity but appears to include more emphasis on valuing (a) religious doubt and (b) the open-ended process of exploring existential meaning. A willingness to question one's religious tradition and explore new meanings may be an important aspect of spiritual or religious development in order for relational spirituality to contribute to intercultural development and mature alterity. It is possible this is particularly true for highly religious persons since religious communities sometimes emphasise social homogeneity and the conservation of traditional meaning (Pargament, 2007). Prior studies have found mixed effects for intrinsic religiosity and prejudice (Rowatt et al., 2009), and intrinsic religiosity did not correlate with the broader measure of intercultural development in this study. Put differently, strong religious commitments might reinforce homogeneity and potentially hinder openness to diversity unless those commitments are integrated with a capacity for questioning one's sacred tradition. Interculturalists call this cognitive frame-shifting (Bennett, 1993).

Spiritual grandiosity was negatively associated with intercultural development. Prior research has found spirituality grandiosity to be positively correlated with egocentricity, extrinsic religiosity (i.e., using one's faith as a means to other ends), and narcissistic exploitiveness (Hall & Edwards, 2002). Spiritual grandiosity appears to reflect a style of relational spirituality oriented towards using the sacred to support one's own perspective and to secure one's own desires. Based on the items of this scale and associated research on narcissism, those high in spirituality grandiosity likely feel an internal pressure for "specialness" or spiritually privileged status which inhibits their capacity to value the perspectives of others or relate as equals (Shults & Sandage, 2006). In the US context, Christians might be at a higher risk for spiritual grandiosity due to religious privilege which might reinforce the dynamics of ethnocentrism (Schlosser, 2003). One of the challenges for training programmes in religious contexts is that there may be a disproportionate numbers of trainees high in spiritual grandiosity who are drawn to a religious programme (as opposed to a secular one) which they expect to preserve their idealised style of relational spirituality. Such trainees might experience significant dissonance or narcissistic disequilibrium when diversity training leads to the simultaneous deconstruction of their spiritual and cultural frameworks.

Differentiation of self (DoS) was positively associated with intercultural development in what appears to be the first empirical test of this theoretical dimension of the DMIS (Bennett, 1993). While not a focus of this study, DoS was also positively correlated with intrinsic religiosity, gratitude, and forgiveness. These findings add to emerging literature suggesting differentiation of self can be consistent with (a) healthy cultural identity in a diverse array of non-dominant groups (Hung, 2006; Skowron, 2004) and (b) healthy forms of spirituality (Majerus & Sandage, 2010; Sandage & Jankowski, 2010). Those higher in differentiation of self seem to have a greater capacity to differentiate their own cultural framework from that of others without reducing the value of either. Differentiation of self has been positively related to the self-regulation of anxiety and other negative emotions in numerous studies (e.g., Skowron et al., 2003), and this mature capacity for self-regulation may facilitate intercultural development by helping regulate intercultural anxiety (Hammer et al., 2003). Differentiation of self also mediated the positive association

between dispositional gratitude and intercultural development, supporting the implicit theoretical assertions of Sorenson (2004). Gratitude is a virtue that appears to be consistent with appreciating different cultural traditions (Jarrett, 2003) and differentiation of self accounts for this relationship, as suggested by the DMIS (Bennett, 1993). Those high in differentiation of self likely have the capacity for positive, but non-idealising, ways of viewing their own cultural and religious traditions and those of others with appreciation.

Contrary to our hypotheses, dispositional forgiveness was mostly unrelated to intercultural development other than a small positive correlation with the resolution of intercultural defensiveness. Intercultural defensiveness involves an attitude of cultural superiority and an ''us versus them'' cognitive framework, which appears to be modestly and negatively related to forgiveness. The fact that dispositional gratitude showed a somewhat stronger correlation with intercultural development than did dispositional forgiveness is noteworthy since gratitude, forgiveness, and empathy have been positively associated in previous studies (McCullough et al., 2002; Witvliet et al., 2008). The stronger effect for gratitude over forgiveness in this study suggests there is something unique about gratitude in relation to intercultural development over and above positive or prosocial emotion. Perhaps those who are high in intercultural competence tend to not be readily offended by others, and this may limit their need to forgive. Again, the mediation effect for differentiation of self needs replication but provides a tentative explanation for the connection between gratitude and intercultural development.

Limitations and future research

Several limitations of the current study are worth noting. The sample comprised mostly European-American graduate students in a Christian training context and research within other religious traditions and with more ethnically diverse samples is needed. It would also be useful to investigate spirituality and intercultural development among those who identify as spiritual but not religious. Much of the variance in intercultural development remained unexplained, and other measures of relational spirituality (e.g., spiritual commitment to social justice) and virtue (e.g., humility, compassion) might be used in future research. Multi-dimensional measures of quest have recently been developed which might be useful in identifying sub-dimensions of spiritual seeking or questing that are particularly conducive to intercultural competence (Beck & Jessup, 2004). The mediator role of DoS in this cross-sectional study could lead to designing longitudinal and intervention studies on intercultural development to test the role of DoS and related processes of change (e.g., relational factors) over time. The Balkin et al. study cited above also suggests multicultural competence is not synonymous with low sexism, so future studies on intercultural development and spirituality could benefit from inclusion of measures of sexism and homophobia. Future research might also explore the roles of bicultural identity and differing social contexts in relation to spiritual and religious variables.

Practical implications

Training programmes might target spiritual grandiosity, quest, and differentiation of self as areas that are related to intercultural development. Spiritual grandiosity involves high levels of idealisation about self in relation to God and the sacred, and this might serve to

maintain ethnocentrism for some trainees. Training programmes in religious contexts might help trainees engage in a constructive developmental process of de-idealisation (Jones, 2008) and differentiation through case examples of religious communities that perpetuate ethnocentrism and others that are more culturally sensitive. Attention to exemplars of intercultural competence within various spiritual traditions might serve to buffer the loss of prior ideals. For example, the Biblical tradition in Christianity can be read as valuing intercultural competence as part of spiritual maturity (Sandage, Jensen, & Jass, 2008). Spiritual grandiosity is also maintained by limited attachment with others, so experiential and relational factors in training are important sources of gain but might also be challenging for those high in spiritual grandiosity.

Facilitating spiritual questing involves helping trainees learn to value questions and tolerate ambiguity. For religious trainees, this can involve critical thinking capacities for questioning one's religious tradition and cultural factors that have shaped that tradition. The results of this study suggest there is a positive association between spiritual questing and the cultural frame-shifting of intercultural competence, so these skills might be mutually reinforcing if practiced together. In many religious traditions, including evangelical Christianity, the interpretive discipline of hermeneutics involves awareness of the cultural context of ancient sacred texts and differences from the contemporary context to prevent uncritical projection. In fact, many religiously affiliated training programmes have students do coursework in hermeneutics, and the integration of hermeneutics and intercultural development represents a promising area for spiritually integrative training related to clinical practice.

We are hesitant to generalise our findings in considering implications for secular training programmes. However, it is worth noting the findings in what might be the only study comparing evangelical Christian psychologists trained in secular versus religiously affiliated training programmes. Sorenson and Hales (2002) found the evangelical psychologists trained in secular programmes were (a) more conservative in their views of several social and ethical issues (e.g., abortion, divorce, homosexuality, and sexuality) and (b) more likely to use religious techniques in therapy regardless of their clients' religious orientation than were evangelical psychologists trained in the religiously affiliated programmes. While it is hard to interpret the reasons for this in a single study, the authors suggested that evangelical trainees in a religious training environment might experience greater freedom to critically examine their own culturally shaped faith traditions than evangelical trainees in secular programmes who could feel pressure to keep their religious values more private. A confounding, but noteworthy, variable is the training difference mentioned above, namely that evangelical trainees in religiously affiliated programmes are often required to do graduate coursework in theological disciplines which could result in critical thinking capacities related to understanding contextual influences on religious traditions. Those working in secular training programmes cannot mandate such coursework but could invite trainees to reflection and dialogue about how their spiritual, religious, and moral frameworks (whatever those may be) have been shaped by cultural factors, as well as the influence of those frameworks on their approach to diversity.

Finally, differentiation of self is a prominent construct in the fields of marriage and family therapy, counselling psychology, and pastoral care. The process of successfully differentiating within one's family-of-origin carries many parallels to differentiating within one's cultural traditions. Trainees in the helping professions need self-awareness about how they have been shaped by influences from both family and cultural sources, as well as sensitivity to those of differing backgrounds. Differentiation of self-literature also suggests

anxiety can be useful for developmental growth if (a) there is adequate relational support, and (b) capacities for self-regulation are also developing. The same is true for intercultural development in that experiences of diversity that stimulate anxiety can be useful if there is relational support and growth in self-regulation. Relational spirituality can be more or less differentiated, and intercultural development will likely be hindered by forms of spirituality that emphasise conformity more than self-awareness or social perspective-taking (Balkin et al., 2009).

Acknowledgement

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