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**CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Chapter 4 detailed the analysis of the study with the data related to the research question and hypothesis. The researcher conducted the statistical analysis utilizing Microsoft Excel and WINKS SDA analysis software to determine Spearman’s Correlational coefficient and it’s significance. This chapter provides a summary of this study’s research findings, interpretation, implications, recommendations for practitioners, and suggestions for future research. This study intended to examine the social problem of race and the potential multiethnic congregations have to address cultural divides and respond to racism in the US. The specific focus was to explore the potential of a relationship between multicultural church attendees’ CQ and their response to racism. A thorough literature review shaped the study and thesis. Quantitative research provides data that lays an empirical foundation for the findings.

**Findings, Interpretations, and Implications**

The findings of this study were determined through the data provided by 429 Multiethnic church attendees’ responses to the questions from the SF-CQS and ARBI. The Spearman’s Correlational Coefficient of 0.375 indicates a positive monotonic relationship between the attendees’ responses on the SF-CQS and ARBI. A significance of less than 0.001 requires a rejection of the null hypothesis: There is no statistically significant relationship between multicultural church attendees’ Cultural Intelligence and response to racism. Therefore, the alternate hypothesis: A statistically significant relationship exists between multicultural church attendees’ Cultural Intelligence and response to racism, is accepted. There is a statistically significant relationship between participants’ SF-CQS and ARBI scores among multicultural church attendees in the mid-Atlantic. These findings are consistent with other studies that assessed connections between one’s understanding of culture, cultural intelligence, metacognition, cultural empathy, ethnocentrism, nationalism, color blindness, discrimination, and responses to racism (Abrams et al., 2021; Apgar, 2021; Brock-Petroshius et al., 2022; Davis et al., 2021; Pieterse et al. 2016; Tapia, 2019; Thomas et al., 2015).

A statistically significant relationship was found between each of the domains measured by the SF-CQS (knowledge, skill, metacognition) and the ARBI (awareness of racism, individual racism, and institutional racism), with one exception. The exception is that no statistically significant relationship existed between the SF-CQS domain of cultural knowledge and the ARBI domain of institutional racism (see Table 5).

These findings fill a gap in research, as no previous study has determined if there is a relationship between antiracism behaviors and CQ in multicultural churches. While research on other organizations has sought to determine the relationship between CQ and things like cultural orientation, ethnocentrism, color blindness, and nationalism, no study has sought to identify a possible association between antiracism behaviors and cultural intelligence (Abrams et al., 2021, Badru, 2022, Matthews et al., 2018, Young et al., 2017).

This study found a positive monotonic relationship between CQ and antiracism behaviors. This finding means as one variable increased, the other variable also increased. This study also found an association between CQ and antiracism behaviors among multicultural church attendees. While these findings are consistent with similar variables, this study sets a foundation by establishing an association that researchers can build upon. An association does not determine causation, meaning the study cannot conclude that growing in CQ causes people to grow in antiracism behavior or vice versa. However, establishing an association and a positive monotonic relationship provides the required evidence for a study that can analyze if a cause-and-effect relationship exists to build upon.

An association was also found between every domain of CQ (knowledge, skill, metacognition) and ARBI (awareness of racism, individual advocacy, institutional advocacy), except for the CQ domain of knowledge and the ARBI domain of Institutional Advocacy (see Table 7). For the correlated domains, this is consistent with the primary conclusion of this study. The finding of an association between a combination of the eight subdomains establishes a relationship like that of the primary finding and is research that can be built upon. The finding that stands out is that a relationship between the CQ knowledge domain and the ARBI response to the institutional racism domain could not be confirmed. This finding could point to knowledge of culture not being enough to result in a person acknowledging and opposing institutional racism. CQ skill and metacognition, the ability to assess and adjust one’s cultural thinking and response, may then allow one to recognize and respond to institutional racism, as there is an association between these variables. This result may also mean that for some, not responding to institutional racism has nothing to do with their cultural knowledge.

**Table 7**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Correlations Between Three Domains of SF-CQS and ARBI Scores* | | | | |
| Domain | ARBI | Awareness of Racism | Individual Advocacy | Institutional Advocacy |
| SF-CQS | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Knowledge | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Skill | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Metacognition | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

The findings of this study should reaffirm the calling of multicultural churches and their leaders. The multicultural church is an environment where CQ and people responding to racism are related. This research should be an encouragement to those who choose this difficult work. This study indicates the potential of the church to respond effectively to racism. Other works have indicated that CQ is what keeps multicultural churches from being diverse uni-cultural churches (Rah, 2010). Since there is a relationship between CQ and responding to racism, the multicultural church has something that seems to have promise in addressing racism. The multicultural church should continue to seek to grow its people in unity and justice to be an example that other sectors of society can learn from. This study should not only encourage multicultural churches but encourage the development of new leaders to carry on the vision of starting more multicultural churches, leading existing churches, and transitioning churches that are currently homogenous.

An implication of this study is that there is room for multicultural churches to grow in their response to racism. There is also room for increased diversity not only in the American church at large but also in multicultural congregations. While this study demonstrated diversity in multicultural churches with various racial and ethnic groups participating and no single group making up the majority (see Figure 1), there was a lack of Pacific Islander and Native American participants and a relatively low number of Asian and Hispanic participants. Perhaps this is due in part to the location, with all the churches being in the mid-Atlantic, Pacific Islanders being more likely to live on the west coast, and the Native American population being greater in the Southwest (US Census Bureau, n.d.). With proximity to diverse urban areas such as Baltimore, Washington, Charlotte, Hampton Roads, and Richmond, there is significant diversity of people not reflected in this study.

**Figure 1**

***Cultural Intelligence***

The mean SF-CQS score for multicultural church attendees in this study was 38.93, translating to an average score of 3.89 out of 5. The domains of knowledge, skill, and metacognition returned average scores of 3.89, 3.96, and 3.77, respectively. The multiethnic churches in this study scored higher on the overall SFCQS score and the three subdomain scores than other SF-CQS scores found in academic research (Schenk et al., 2022, Thomas et al., 2015). Multicultural church attendees scored highest in the CQ skill domain, 3.96, and lowest in metacognition, at 3.77. All scores were at least 0.41 higher than scores found in other studies (Schenk et al., 2022, Thomas et al., 2015).

CQ scores from this study were notably higher than those found in other studies that used the SF-CQs instrument as their measurement tool (see Figure 2). The scores also exceeded what Thomas et al. (2015) identified as average among Americans and internationals.

**Figure 2**

While this study notes the higher score, it cannot be conclusive in comparing two variables as that is not the study’s design. There are different factors involved in each study. However, the similarity among scores of other studies and a higher score in this study could indicate that multiethnic churches produce and attract people with high CQ. This increase could be for several reasons. First, attendance at any church in the US is optional. Multicultural churches are volunteer organizations where people choose whether they want to participate. This environment of choice may be a significant contributing factor. The volunteer organization factor is consistent with the literate expressing volunteer organizations’ challenges in attracting and keeping diverse participants (Martinez, 2018). When people have a choice to attend, they attend where they are more comfortable. People with higher CQ are more likely to desire a diverse church. The environment of diversity and the opportunity to continually learn about other cultures is also likely to increase CQ. While researchers found that contact alone does not grow one’s CQ, significant relationships, intentional conversation, and Biblical convictions aid in CQ growth (Craig et al., 2018; Engle & Crowne, 2014; Hayward et al., 2017). There may be a spiritual aspect at play as well. Christian values that see all people created in the image of God with great value, and seek to live as examples of Christ who showed great value to all, may contribute to the church attendees’ high score. Perhaps something can be identified from multicultural churches that can be applied to the broader church and culture, leading to greater cultural intelligence. It is also of note that with a mean score of 3.89, there is still room for CQ growth among multicultural church attendees.

Higher CQ scores among multicultural church attendees have important implications. Some lessons can be learned from a place people choose to be a part of that consists of people that are not culturally like them. There was no racial majority among participants in this study. Implications of this could include that more multicultural churches are needed. Multicultural church attendees have higher CQ, this stands to benefit the broader culture in many ways, such as being empathetic toward other cultures and less ethnocentric, nationalistic, colorblind, and discriminatory (Abrams et al., 2021; Apgar, 2021; Brock-Petroshius et al., 2022; Davis et al., 2021; Pieterse et al. 2016; Tapia, 2019). This growth in CQ also benefits churches seeking to evangelize across cultures and “make disciples of all nations” (NIV, 2011). Increasing multicultural congregations would require the training of church planters to plant new multicultural churches and the transitioning of existing homogenous churches to reflect the diversity of their community and the kingdom of God. With much division in our world and among followers of Jesus, multicultural churches show there is hope for people to be unified while being different.

***Response to Racism***

The mean ARBI score for multicultural church attendees in this study was 71.16, translating to an average score of 3.38 out of 5. The domains of awareness of racism, individual racism, and institutional racism returned average scores of 3.81, 3.58, and 2.44, respectively. The multiethnic churches in this study scored higher on the overall ARBI score than all but one study reviewed in the literature (Abrams, 2021; Apgar, 2021; Brock-Petroshius, 2022; Cook, 2016; Winslow, 2021). Compared to those same five studies’ three subdomain scores, this study’s participants had the second highest awareness of racism score, tied for third highest individual racism response score, and third highest institutional response to racism score (Abrams, 2021; Apgar, 2021; Brock-Petroshius, 2022; Cook, 2016; Winslow, 2021). Multicultural church attendees’ ARBI scores, including each individual domain score, are higher than most scores found in other studies.

ARBI scores from this study were higher than most ARBI individual mean scores found in other studies (see Figure 3; Abrams, 2021; Apgar, 2021; Cook, 2016; Winslow, 2021). The scores from this study significantly exceeded the average individual mean scores of the other studies. Consistent with the overall mean comparison, the individual domain means for this study were higher than a majority, but not all scores.

**Figure 3**

While this study notes the higher ARBI score, it cannot be conclusive in comparison as that is not the study’s design. There are different factors involved in each study. However, a higher-than-average score could indicate that multiethnic churches produce and attract people who are more likely to respond to racism. This finding is significant for several reasons. As racism continues to be a challenge, multicultural churches may have learnings they share to help the broader society.

Much like with CQ, it is likely that multicultural churches attract people that oppose racism. If one did not oppose racism or were uncomfortable with people of other races, one would choose to attend a homogenous church. People with higher ARBI results likely want to grow in antiracism and choose a place where they can work with people different from themselves to oppose racism. Some equipping likely occurs within multicultural churches that help their attendees work together to oppose racism and stand with one another when one group is discriminated against.

The spiritual community that multicultural churches are, may be a contributing factor. Does the work of God in a congregation create unity among people who are racially different? Paul encourages the church in Ephesus to “keep the unity of the Spirit,” implying that the unity has been formed by spiritual means (NIV, 2011). The work of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) is to produce the fruit of the Spirit, which all apply to opposing racism, particularly love, kindness, and self-control (NIV, 2011). Apart from the mystical work of the Spirit, the Christian belief system also calls for believers to have unity in diversity. Churches seeking to follow the Biblical model of loving one’s neighbor and making disciples of all nations should oppose racism.

The ARBI domain score that reflects the greatest need for growth is people’s response to institutional racism. The finding of a low response to institutional racism score is consistent with other studies (Abrams, 2021; Apgar, 2021; Cook, 2016; Winslow, 2021). Institutional racism is the hardest to identify and address, yet it significantly affects American society. There is an opportunity for multicultural churches to equip their people to address institutional racism. The implication for churches is to focus more on being an institution for all and help their people learn to identify symptoms of institutional racism and how to address it.

***Other Findings***

**Online and In-person Comparison.**

Several unexpected findings emerged in analyzing participants’ CQ and antiracism behaviors. First, those who attended church online had higher scores in CQ and antiracism behavior (see Figure 4). The scores of those who attend only online have the highest CQ, while those who attend both online and in-person have the highest antiracism behavior score. Both the online score and those who attend online and in-person outscore those who attend in person in both CQ and antiracism.

**Figure 4**

Implications of those who participate online having both an ARBI score and a CQ score higher than those who attend only in person are twofold. First, this calls for more research on the engagement and growth of people who participate in church online. This study was not intended to assess the engagement of online attendees, yet the data point has demonstrated online church engagement is worth researching. Questions like: are people who worship online more engaged in spiritual growth and discipleship than those who attend in person? What is the connection between CQ and worshiping online? What is the connection between responding to racism and online worship? The second implication is for churches not to minimize or diminish their online ministry or those who participate in ministry online. Instead, an intentional investment and paying attention to the unique needs of online churchgoers seems wise.

**Response by Race.**

Another interesting data point emerged in looking at the instrument scores considering the demographics of how participants responded based on their race. The racial categories captured in the demographic section of the survey were American Indian or Alaska Native (non-Hispanic), Asian or Asian American (non-Hispanic), Black or African American (non-Hispanic), Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic), White or Caucasian (Non-Hispanic), Biracial or Multi-Racial or Other (please specify). Only African American, Hispanic, and White participants returned enough results to be significant, so all others were combined and now identified as multi-racial and other, which make up 7.5% of the responses. Regarding CQ scores, multi-race, and others scored the highest, with a score of 4.11, with Hispanic participants scoring slightly lower at 4.04 (see Figure 5). White participants returned the lowest CQ scores, with a 3.84. African American participants scored marginally higher at 3.89.

**Figure 5**

The reasons CQ scores are highest among multi-racial, and others (non-Hispanic, black, or white) and lowest among White people is complex. This continuum from the lowest scores of white people to the highest scores of multi-racial and others may reflect the extent to which races have to engage other cultures to function in this country. White people in many areas can relate and function within their culture if they choose to. This may be true to some extent and in some regions for African American people as well. Moving along the continuum, people of Hispanic descent likely have to engage with other cultures, even if they are from different cultures within the Hispanic community. Those in the multi-racial and other categories choose to, and perhaps must, engage across cultures to function in American society. The choice to engage is consistent with motivational studies of CQ and may be why the multi-racial and other categories scored the highest. One implication is that the need for those in the majority to understand the experience of minorities in this country is foundational. To build on that, humbly seeking to understand the perspective of minorities in this country will lead to empathy and response to racism (Agner, 2020; Brock-Petroshius et al., 2022; Davis et al., 2021; Keum, 2021). This learning acknowledges that being a majority means that most societal encounters will be culturally normal. In a multicultural church, individuals choosing to interact with other cultures even though they could choose to socialize only with their own culture would be a good application of this finding.

Another unexpected finding was the similarity in ARBI scores among the different racial Groups (see Figure 5). Responses to the ARBI based on race did not demonstrate a wide range of scores. African American participants scored the highest with a 3.4, while multi-racial and other participants scored the lowest at 3.31. White participants’ scores ranked second at 3.39, and Hispanic participants’ responses ranked third at 3.36. The similarity in scores among African American, Whites, Hispanics, multi-racials, and others is likely due to a combination of reasons. First, it is possible that African Americans did not score noticeably higher on variables because they are tired of responding to racism in some form in their daily life, having what Boyce (2022) calls racial fatigue. Secondly, people in multiethnic congregations may respond to racism on a similar level. Non-Black people at multiethnic churches are more likely to be allies, opposing racism they see. Finally, although effective and validated, this instrument was not designed for African American participants. So, African American participant scores may not be as accurate. This possible inaccuracy is because American racism in general, and institutional racism specifically, cannot be experienced by those who established the institution. So, the questions about addressing racism may not register as high for African Americans because it is everyday life for many. More use of this instrument in diverse populations that include African Americans could reveal more insights or, even better, the development of a tool that measures African American’ response to racism.

**Future Research**

This study’s findings have helped identify several areas that require further research. With the finding that CQ and antiracism are associated in multicultural churches, further studies to determine why would build on this correlational study to determine causation. A study to assess if multicultural churches attract people with high CQ and respond to racism or equip people is needed. Other studies could also determine factors in multicultural churches that lead to better development of CQ and response to racism among attendees. A comparative study can focus on solutions and unity by identifying if multicultural churches develop people’s CQ and response to racism more than homogenous churches and why. A study to also compare churches to other volunteer organizations is essential. Many companies and governments pay for diversity, hiring people to meet HR quotas. Volunteer organizations like churches are very different as people choose to worship together without an incentive such as pay. A study seeking to determine the role that beliefs, spiritual conviction, and discipleship play in people’s CQ and antiracism growth would be incredibly beneficial to the church being an example of unity in a divided world.

The development of several validated instruments would help advance this area of research on how people respond to racism and treat those of other cultures. An assessment of how African Americans respond when they are the majority and when they see other groups being marginalized would provide a broader perspective. An instrument designed to measure how African Americans respond to racism against themselves and other African Americans would help round out research in a study like this.

With more and more people attending church online, it is crucial for researchers to study these phenomena to evaluate engagement, discipleship, and as this study pointed to the ability to function cross-culturally and respond to racism. While there is a danger of isolation for people worshiping online, it seems in this study that people online are better at functioning across cultures and responding to racism. There could be various reasons for this, and it would take more research to learn the best ways for churches to engage their congregation online.

**Conclusion**

This chapter summarized this study’s purpose, findings, interpretations, implications, and recommendations for future research. Multiethnic church attendees provided data by participating in a study that informed the researcher about the relationship between CQ and attendees’ responses to racism. The two variables of CQ and response to racism were used to identify if multicultural churches address racism. In finding a statistically significant relationship between multicultural church attendees’ Cultural Intelligence and response to racism, this study provides a foundation that can be built upon in seeking to identify if the multicultural church addresses racism.