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Cultural Literacy in Audiology: Audiologists' Perspectives and Attitudes

Traci Brinkley, AuD



Traci Brinkley, AuD

Traci Brinkley, AuD, is a clinical audiologist in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Dr. Brinkley received her Doctorate of Audiology at the University of Texas at Dallas and completed her clinical externship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Her clinical interests include diagnostics, amplification, vestibular assessment, and tinnitus. Dr. Brinkley has participated in the American Academy of Audiology conference presenting her research in ethics focused topics. She is passionate about improving hearing health outcomes for historically underserved populations as well as improving access to the field of audiology for minority students.

Disclosures

- **Presenter Disclosure:** Financial: Traci Brinkley is employed by Kaiser Permanente. She received an honorarium for this presentation. Non-financial: Traci Brinkley has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.
- **Content Disclosure:** This course presentation does not focus exclusively on any specific product or service.
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Learning Outcomes

After this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe the constructs of cultural literacy and identify relevant theories and considerations of culturally-competent care.
- Describe the extent to which audiologists incorporate cultural considerations into their practices.
- Explain the methods, results, and limitations of the research studies discussed.

Course Outline

- Cultural literacy
- Culturally sensitive health care
- Counseling
- Cultural Literacy in Audiology: Audiologists' Perspectives and Attitudes
- Discussion
- Resources

Culture

- “Integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, social, or other group.”

What is Cultural Literacy?

“...the ability to understand the traditions, norms, activities, and critical background of a given culture... [and] to participate fluently in formal and informal traditions, norms, and activities.”

– *National Counsel for Mental Health and Wellbeing*

Culturally Sensitive Care

- Patient-centered
- Emphasizes the relationship between patient and practitioner
- Includes the following constructs:



Cultural Awareness

- Involves self-examination
- Recognizing bias
- Takes one's own cultural into account

Cultural Knowledge

- Health-related beliefs and cultural values
- Disease incidence and prevalence
- Treatment efficacy

Cultural Skill

- Gathering relevant cultural information
- Cultural assessment
 - Systematic examination of the patient's culture
- Accounting for physical differences

Cultural Encounters

- Direct engagement with patients from culturally diverse backgrounds
- Interaction with cultural groups
- Determine communication needs

Cultural Desire

- Intrinsic motivation
- Authenticity
- Openness
- Lifelong learning
- Caring

Building a Therapeutic Alliance

- Improves patient adherence to clinical recommendations
- Promotes motivation
- Involves effective communication
- Barriers exist

Counseling

- Two broad aspects of audiologic counseling
 - Informational
 - Adjustment
- Recent studies have determined there is a lack of foundational structure in counseling literature and counseling education

Cultural Literacy in Audiology Study

- Purpose
 - Investigate the degree to which audiologists are prepared and confident in delivering culturally sensitive care necessary for patient-centered care

Research Questions

1. What are the general perspectives of audiologists on culturally competent care and their self-perceived cultural literacy?
2. What is the extent to which audiologists believe their respective organizations address cross-cultural challenges in the workplace?
3. What were the general experiences of audiologists in their graduate program related to cultural diversity education?

Participants

Demographics

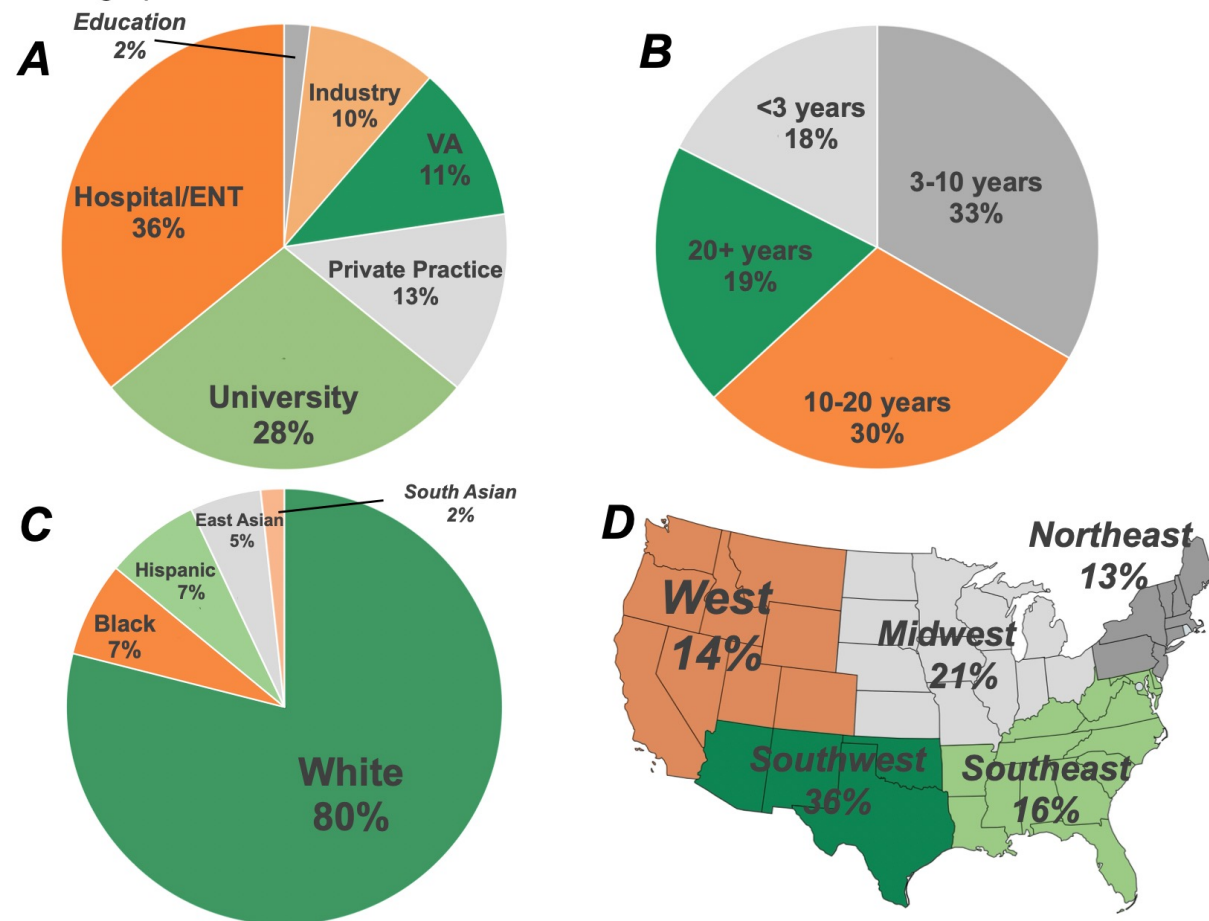


Figure 1: Distribution of demographic factors. (N=57). (A) Respondent workplace, (B) Number of years in practice, (C) Race, and (D) Geographic region of residence. The sample reflects years of practice, race, and region consistent with data for U.S. audiologists⁵. The current sample underrepresents audiologist with 10-20 and 20+ years of practice.

Image: Research Poster, Brinkley & Cokely (2022)

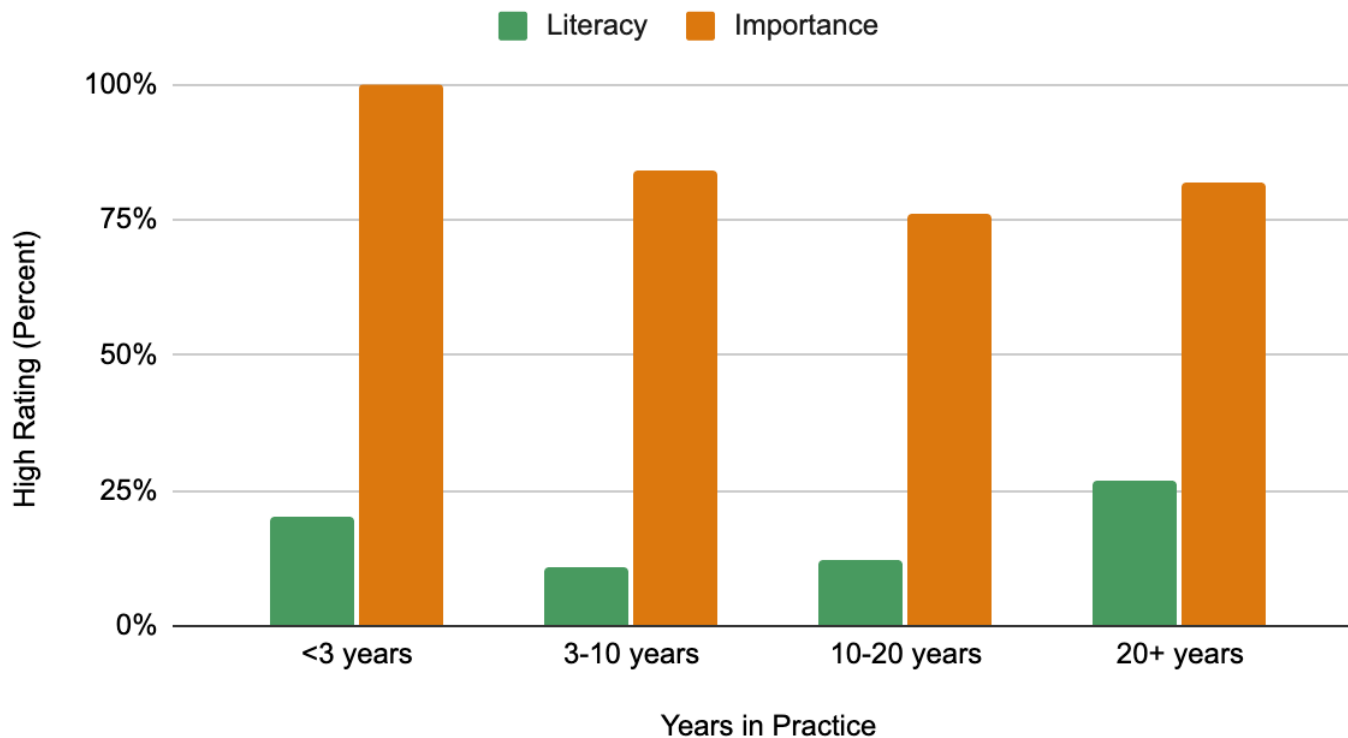
Procedures

- Online ad hoc survey, Online ad hoc survey, Cultural Literacy Survey
- 40 survey items
 - Demographic information
 - Self-perceived cultural literacy
 - Self-perceived importance for culturally sensitive care
 - Workplace accommodations
 - Graduate school experiences specific to cultural learning
- Developed after reviewing the Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Questionnaire, a cross-cultural healthcare provider assessment



Results: Cultural Literacy

Percent of High Literacy Rating vs. Percent of High Importance Rating

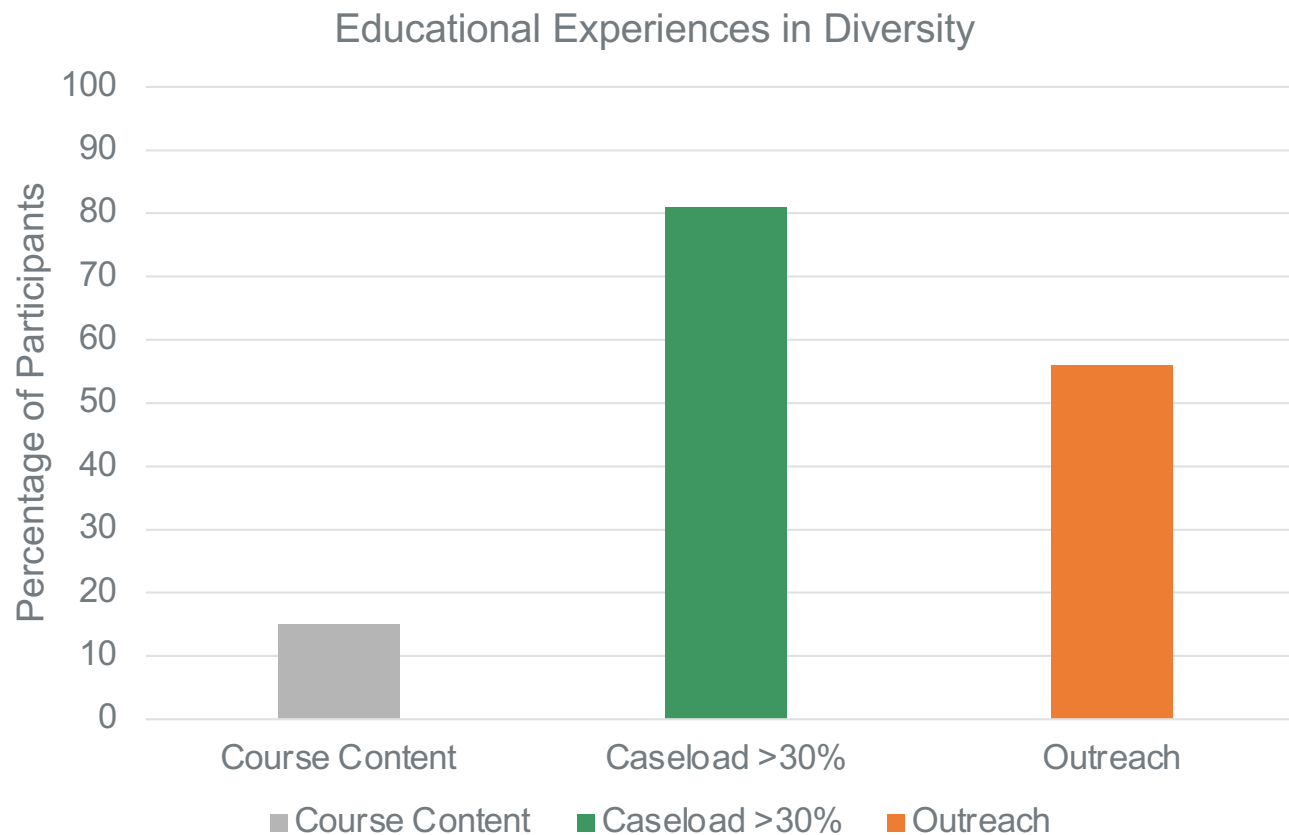


Results: Workplace Considerations

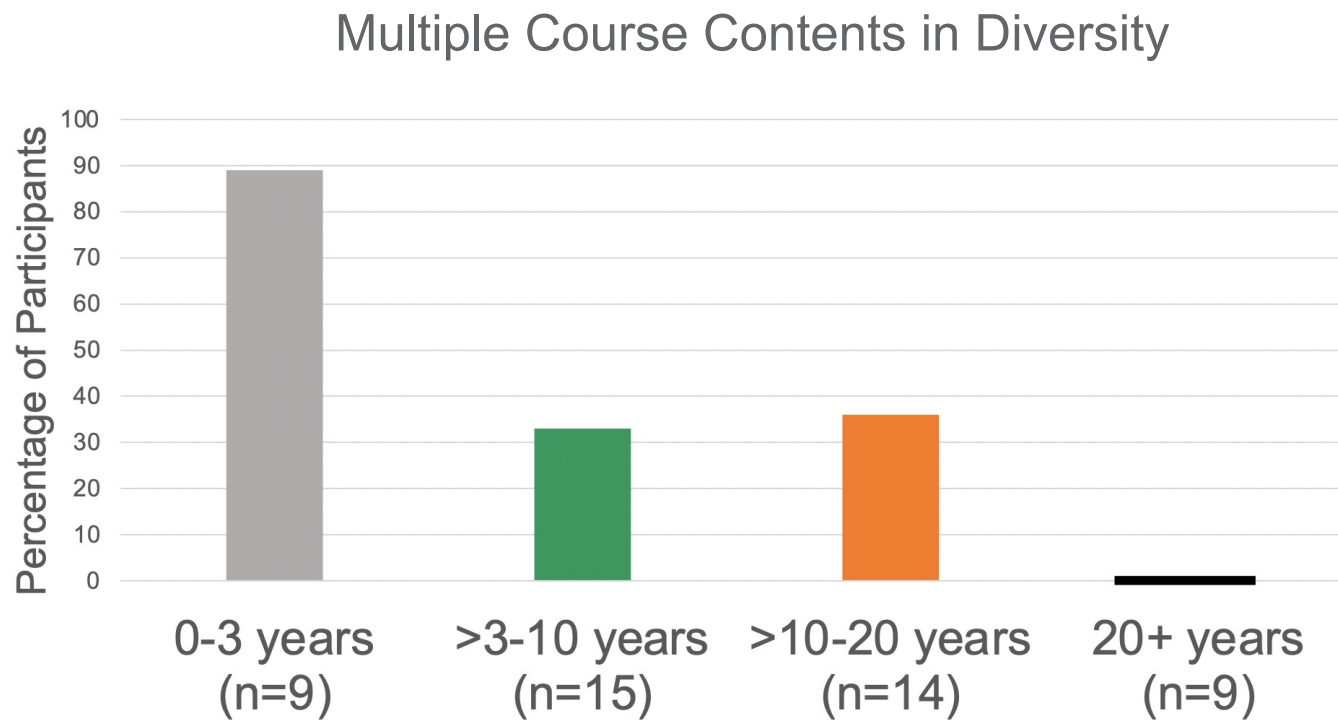


Image: Research Poster, Brinkley & Cokely (2022)

Results: Education



Results: Education (continued)



Limitations

- Self-report data
- Small sample size
- Lack of representation from various cultural groups

Discussion

- Gaps exist between self-reported importance vs. self-reported skill level
- Counseling theories may help explain these discrepancies
- Most workplaces reportedly offer accommodations for culturally diverse patients
- Changing audiology course curriculum

What Next?

Cross Cultural Education

- Implementation of a concrete foundation of both classroom and clinical education
- Utilization of healthcare models

LEARN model (Berlin & Fowkes, 1984)	Four Habits Model of Highly Effective Clinicians (Frankel & Stein, 1999)
L – Listen with sympathy and understanding to the patient’s perception of the problem	1. Invest in the beginning
E – Explain your perception of the problem	2. Elicit the patient’s perspective
A – Acknowledge and discuss the differences and similarities	2. Demonstrate empathy
R – Recommend treatment	4. Invest in the end
N – Negotiate Agreement	

Effective Counseling Guidelines

- Clear practice guidelines from professional organizations
 - American Academy of Audiology (AAA)
 - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- Structured learning
- Shift in perspective
- Consistency and clarity of terminology and expectations

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<https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/resources/integrated-health-coe-toolkit-purpose-of-this-toolkit/module-5-cultural-and-linguistic-literacy/>

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