

COUNSELING GRADUATE STUDENTS' PREFERENCE FOR QUALITIES PERTAINING  
TO TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS (232 pp.)

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The purpose of this Q methodological study was to investigate if counseling graduate students enrolled in CACREP accredited counseling programs aggregated around preferences for teacher behaviors, qualities, and techniques in conceptual courses, and if those aggregated preferences were influenced by student generation membership. Student ratings of teachers have been researched and discussed extensively in recent and historical literature. Very few of these studies were conducted on graduate students, and until December of 2008, no studies were done on graduate students in counseling programs.

The participants in this study were 48 graduate counseling students who were in the practicum or internship portion of their program. All participants completed a Q sort of 40 statements structured according to generational preferences of teaching styles. The three generations under investigation were the Baby Boomers (born 1946 to 1964), Generation X (born 1965 to 1982), and the Net Generation (born 1983 to 1991). All respondents also participated in a post sort interview in order to aid in interpreting their Q sort.

Q factor analysis showed that all respondents significantly loaded on one consensus factor (Environment for Professional and Personal Growth). Two other factors (Working Style and Motivation Orientation) emerged as specificities of Factor 1. These three factors accounted for 54% of the total variance. The general consensus factor and the two underlying factors that emerged indicated that although all respondents held the same general perception of preferred instructor behaviors, qualities, and techniques, some respondents also aggregated around unique

perceptions or understandings supplemental to their agreement with Factor 1. An ANOVA of the factor loadings (based on Fisher's  $Z$ -transformation) indicated a generational difference for Factor 2 only,  $F(2, 45) = 5.624, p = .007$ , with a significant quadratic trend,  $F(1, 45) = 10.505, p = .002$  between Generation X and the Net Generation students.