A new study looks at the experiences of African American Christian counseling students from the Black church as they seek to balance their faith and ethical responsibilities in working with lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) clients.

Findings from the study, which included 7 participants from 3 counselor education programs, suggest that attitudes toward LGB clients are intertwined with faith, race, and community allegiance. The results provide counselor educators and supervisors with important considerations as they train African American students from the Black church to be ethical, culturally competent counselors.

"Counselors are expected to provide culturally competent services to clients from diverse backgrounds. As counselor educators, we were curious as to how students' own personal values and life experiences may impact their development as a counselor," said Dr. Janeé R. Avent Harris, lead author of the Counselor Education & Supervision study. "The results from this study provide important implications for counselor educators. We will continue researching the ways spirituality and counseling intersect for counselors-in-training and clients."


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