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Incorporating a Multicultural Perspective in School Counseling

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Objectives

1. Learn the importance of considering cultural factors when working with students.
2. Become aware of resources to help aid cultural awareness
3. Learn tips to incorporate cultural diversity within the comprehensive school counseling program



Activity

- Read the case study you have been given.
- Discuss the following prompts in your group:
 1. What are your initial impressions of the case?
 2. What types of interventions would you recommend?
 3. If a referral was made, what type of data, assessments and/or techniques would you use or recommend?
 4. Judging from the description given, how would you diagnose the person?
- Report Out

Self-Reflection: Joe V. José

- Consider the responses to the questions for both Joe and José:
- How were your recommendations different for both boys? The same?
- Did you consider any multicultural influences that might have contributed to the situation for José?
- What biases or challenges would you have working with either client?

▶ Lopez, Salas, Arroyos-Jurado & Chinn (2004)

- Gave scenarios to practicing school psychologists on the US- Mexico border.
- Education level ranged from MS to Ph.D.
- Mean age= 53

3 Patterns Emerged...

1. Jose's presenting concerns were more frequently attributed to neurological dysfunction.
2. Minimal attention was paid to cultural or linguistic issues.
3. Participants immediately referred to the Western clinical models for assessing and counseling without consideration to anything that might differ from the paradigm.

Western Approach

- Uniform patterns of thought about assessment and treatment of mental health issues across diverse cultural, natural and linguistic boundaries.
- Psychological illnesses conform to a disease process that is panhuman.
- Medicalization of social problems (ex. aging, birth, obesity, alcoholism).
- Direct style (open ended questions, eye contact, body language).
- Counseling geared toward white, middle-upper class individuals

Higgenbotham & Connor (1989).

Why Is This Important?

- 5 million individuals are misdiagnosed per year due to cultural and linguistic factors that are ignored (Padilla, 2001).
- African Americans comprise 17% of school enrollment yet 20% of all identified students (Rebora, 2011).
- Hispanics comprise 20% of school enrollment yet 24% of all identified students (Rebora, 2011).
- Participants in this study are actively evaluating students for possible learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, speech and language impairments and are likely supervising practicum and internship students.

U.S. Demographics 2010

Race	2010 Census % of Population	% Increase from 2000
U.S. Population = approximately 309 million		
White	72.4	1.2
Non- Hispanic	63.7	4.9
Black/African American	12.6	12
Asian American	4.8	43
Other races (e.g., Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian)	5.2	18
Hispanic/Latino	16.9	43
Foreign Born (majority from Latin America)	11.0	N/A

What is Multicultural Counseling?

The integration of cultural identities within the counseling process.

- *Cultural Identity*
 - Subgroups (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, SES, disability, spirituality, age, etc.)
- *Role of “American” culture*
 - Notion of Salad Bowl vs. Melting Pot
 - Acknowledgement of cultural identity in counseling impacts one’s counseling experience.

Hayes & Erford (2013)

Key Terms

Culture – the set of beliefs, values, customs, and other variables that drive cognition, behavior and perception.

Race – often tied to outward appearance, race is often used to physically identify one group of individuals as being different from another.

Ethnicity – a cultural group that shares common identity and heritage.

Etic Vs. Emic Approach

Etic

- Universal qualities across cultures.
- Considering cultural influences more broadly through the universalistic view.
 - Outsider looking in
 - Comparison and universal generalization
 - Ex. Universal Theory
 - i.e., disaggregating SAT scores by gender

Emic

- Culturally specific qualities.
- Considering specific cultural dimensions represented through a group specific view of cultural diversity
 - Insider perspective
 - Understand the inner workings of a specific culture and how participants view the cultural rites
 - Ex. Functional (significant or distinctive) for the user
 - i.e., offering ACT on Sunday for Jewish students who observe the Sabbath

The influence of culture resides both within the individual and between the individual and the broader contextual systems.

Arthur & McMahon (2005), Pike (1971)

Students with Diverse Backgrounds

- School counselors have a responsibility to acknowledge students' ethnic identity and its association with well-being
- Historic societal shift in the racial and ethnic populations
- School counselors have an obligation to self-reflect on personal belief system including cultural values and biases
- *ACA Multicultural Counseling Competencies* are helpful for self-reflection and to ascertain world views

Studer (2015)

Developmental Issues and Multiculturalism

- Lack of research to determine most effective counseling strategies with diverse individuals
- Most counselors come from a Eurocentric background with little understanding of other world views or systemic oppression

Studer (2015)

Qualities of a Multicultural Counselor

- Credibility
 - Degree to which counselor appears worthy, reliable, entitled to confidence. Made up of many characteristics
- Expertness
 - Perception of how well informed and capable the counselor is
- Trustworthiness
 - Degree to which counselor is perceived as making valid statements

Ahmed et al. (2011)

5 Skills for Cultural Competencies for Effective Educators

1. **Valuing Diversity.** Accepting and respecting differences—different cultural backgrounds and customs, different ways of communicating, and different traditions and values.
2. **Being Culturally Self-Aware.** Culture—the sum total of an individual's experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and interests—shapes educators' sense of who they are and where they fit in their family, school, community, and society.
3. **Knowledge of Students' Culture.** Educators must have some base knowledge of their students' culture so that student behaviors can be understood in their proper cultural context.
4. **Dynamics of Difference.** Knowing what can go wrong in cross-cultural communication and how to respond to these situations.
5. **Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge and Adapting to Diversity.** Culturally competent educators, and the institutions they work in, can take a step further by institutionalizing cultural knowledge so they can adapt to diversity and better serve diverse populations.

NEA (n.d.)

Respectful Cube Model

- Religion/Spirituality
 - Economic Class Background
 - Sexual Identity
 - Psychological Maturity
 - Ethnic and Racial Identity
 - Chronological Stage
 - Trauma
 - Family Background
 - Unique Physical Characteristic
 - Location of Residence and Language Differences
 - 10 dimensions that act as cultural lenses to experience clients
- **Primary assumption** : each client's unique psychological needs, attitudes, values, world views and personal identity are all significantly impacted by the manner in which these and other factors interface with one another.
 - Underscores the importance of recognizing how the client's multidimensional nature impacts the counseling process

D'Andrea & Daniels (2001)

RESPECTFUL EXAMPLE

- *Angelique is a student who is African-American and lesbian. She has recently acquired a physical disability and her family's financial situation is directly related to the care she needs. Her mother is concerned she may be depressed and asked the school counselor to meet with her. Angelique's counselor is a white male. In the interview, Angelique indicates family and religion are all she has left. She feels friends and sports that she enjoyed prior to her disability are no longer an option and indicates she hates being "Black, poor and disabled."*
- Where does the counselor start?
- How does his status impact the alliance?
- How can he use religion and family to impact counseling outcomes?

- Highlights some of the challenges the mental health practitioner faces in providing help to this client.
- Encourages mental health and school counseling practitioners to consider how their own multidimensional characteristics may impact the counseling process.

Being RESPECTFUL of José

DIMENSIONS	What do we KNOW & NEED TO FIND OUT?
Religion/Spirituality	Not Mentioned
Economic Class Background	Not Mentioned
Sexual Identity	Not Mentioned
Psychological Maturity	Behavioral issues in class & with peers
Ethnic and Racial Identity	Hispanic we don't know his ethnic origin how he views his identity
Chronological Stage	Pre-Adolescent
Trauma	Grandma died, moved, suicidal ideation, dev. & academic delays
Family Background	Mention of Mother & Grandmother (dec.)
Unique Physical Characteristic	Not Mentioned
Location of Residence and Language Differences	U.S. State bordering Mexico, struggles with oral expression, visual cues and verbal instruction

▶ Culturally Responsive Teaching

What is it?

- Culturally responsive teaching as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them
- It teaches to and through students' strengths.

Strategies

- Communicating high expectations
- Learning within the context of culture
- Culturally-responsive curriculum
- Culturally-responsive assessment batteries
- Teachers as facilitators
- Student-centered instruction
- Positive perspectives on parents and families

NEA (n.d.); Leibtag (2013)

Academic Outcomes

- Increased level of engagement, motivation and resiliency
 - African American Students 58% more likely to pass Language Arts & 72% more likely to pass Math (CA Standards)
 - Students below grade level passed HS requirement within 1 year (Chicago)
 - Hispanic Students from lower SES out scored White peers in reading, writing & math AND had higher graduation rates than White peers- Grad rate was previously 40%. (New Zealand)
 - Higher GPAs at college level compared to students at same university

Leibtag (2013)

Resources

- Culture Crossing Guide
 - http://guide.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=9&CID=1
- World Religions Basics
 - <http://www.world-religions-professor.com/>
- ELL
 - <http://edition.tefl.net/ideas/business/job-application-tasks/>
- Struggling Readers
 - <http://www.readingrockets.org/audience/professionals/counselors>
- GLSEN
 - <http://www.glsen.org/>
- APA Help Center-Parallel site in Spanish
 - <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/index.aspx>
- ASCA Cultural Competence Certificate
 - <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors/professional-development/asca-u-specialist-trainings/cultural-competency-specialist>

Group Discussion

- What do you do to create a multicultural environment?
- Do you have resources to share ?

Questions?

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