

USING THE INTERACTION FOR LEARNING FRAMEWORK TO FOSTER MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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Abstract: This in-depth analysis of the literature examines the most recent findings on diversity in counselor education. More approaches to teaching counselors are shown by discussing ethnocentrism in practice, research, and the assessment of intercultural skills. The study advises adopting the interaction for learning framework (ILF) as a tool to examine bias and, in the end, make counselor education programs more multiculturally competent as a logical, pedagogical strategy to introduce intercultural contact into courses. The report covers the course's content, teaching strategies, student learning outcomes when the ILF is used to counseling. Faculty, aspiring counselors, and community-based practitioners are all urged to consider how self-awareness, knowledge, and skills might be used to provide counseling services that are sensitive to cultural differences.

Keywords: intercultural skills, student learning, Counselor Education Programs, Foster Multicultural Competence.

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

More training programs are implementing rules and processes to recruit and retain students from diverse backgrounds (Dickson, Argus-Calvo, & Tafoya, 2010). More students of diverse races and ethnicities are enrolling in counselor education programs, according to U.S. Department of Education statistics (Kena et al., 2015). In addition to recruitment, counseling programs use diverse techniques. Traditional techniques include standalone multicultural classes, incorporating ethnic content into other courses, and combining the two (Donnell, Robertson, & Shannon, 2009). Multimethod approaches provide students with more opportunity to study and examine issues, as well as learn about themselves and other cultures, than single-method courses (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001; Donnell et al., 2009). Interacting with students and teachers from other cultures is one way to learn about other cultures (Stadler et al., 2006). This study aims to outline studies on intercultural contact and emphasize its advantages and limitations in counseling. In clinical assessment, students must incorporate cultural facts to construct accurate and thorough case conceptualization (Whiston, 2009).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research recommends using the interaction for learning framework (ILF; Arkoudis et al., 2013) as a technique to assess prejudice and, ultimately, make counselor education programs more multiculturally competent. Arkoudis et al. (2013) created the ILF to guide systematic planning and deployment of multicultural interaction (MI) in instructional environments. Each of the ILF's six aspects indicates a strategy for fostering MI's growth. Aspect 1, planning interaction, creating involves defining learning objectives and activities that encourage interaction. Dimension 2, creating environments for interaction, helps students go outside of their regular social groupings and improves their confidence in connecting with others. Dimension 3, supportive interactions, establishes norms and standards for how individuals should engage with one another and shows how students' relationships with their peers may aid in their learning. Dimension 4, engaging with subject

knowledge, focuses on peer learning activities, mutual respect, and shared purpose and teamwork. Dimension 5, developing reflexive processes, aims to increase interaction, cognitive engagement, and critical, reflective behaviors. Finally, Dimension 6, fostering communities of learners, enables students to work together, support one another, and build a shared practice by creating a closeness that encourages communication. The ILF helps researchers comprehend the intricacies of peer interaction across cultural groupings (Arkoudis et al., 2013).

3. METHODS

The researcher conducted a comprehensive literature analysis to locate papers that examined how counselor education programs teach intercultural competency and how diversity is employed. There was also consideration of the impact of these concepts on cultural competence and therapeutic partnership.

4. DATA SOURCES

The author searched the ERIC and ProQuest databases for scholarly papers that included counseling, diversity, or student learning outcomes, multicultural competence, and counselor education programs in the title, abstract, or keywords. The nature of the methodologies used in the papers was classified and examined.

5. RESULTS

Diversity includes color, ethnicity, culture, religion, spirituality, age, gender, sexual orientation, handicap, socioeconomic position, language, and citizenship (Higbee, Siaka, & Bruch, 2007). Dialogue, discussion, and writing are great methods to learn about different cultures and languages. Interactions with individuals from different backgrounds may increase self-confidence, leadership, critical thinking, and cross-cultural communication abilities (Barron et al., 2007). Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002) studied college students' social relationships and academic achievement. Their findings imply that teaching students about diversity problems and giving them opportunity to connect with classmates from other cultural backgrounds fosters active thinking, intellectual engagement, and personal development. Arkoudis et al. (2013) observed that meeting with peers from other cultural and linguistic groups improved comprehension of other perspectives and how to cooperate with diverse individuals.

Studies demonstrate intercultural interaction (MI) treatments boost students' understanding of culture's significance in evaluation and knowledge of culturally sensitive techniques. Students must have listened, contemplative, open-minded, and nonjudgmental qualities to learn in groups. MI in the classroom challenges the learner, gives a new viewpoint, dispels preconceptions about particular groups, and helps one interact well with people from other backgrounds. Peer interaction and cultural diversity dialogues boost cross-cultural learning, allowing students to challenge one other, learn about various cultures, and evaluate new perspectives (Boud et al., 2001). MI promotes cross-cultural interaction and learning, but few classrooms employ it. Educators should be conscious of their own intercultural biases and develop their own knowledge to include multiculturalism in classes and explain how to learn and grow beyond one's own cultural cocoon (Lewis, Bethea, & Hurley, 2009). Teachers should collaborate with diverse communities to improve self-awareness and culture. Tomlinson-Clarke and Clarke (2010) discovered that cross-cultural contacts aid cultural knowledge acquisition. Developing cultural competency in educators increases self-awareness of intercultural biases (Lewis et al., 2009). Educators should seek university and community engagement if classroom settings are sub-optimal. Educators, institutions, and programs must create multicultural learning environments. When administrators grasp diversity's benefits to the institution, program, teachers, and students, they are more inclined to embrace it. A multicultural viewpoint helps institutions and programs create rich, diverse student learning. Glass and Westmont (2014) argued that universities with growing numbers of diverse students need long-term curricular and organizational planning adding that institutions must value diversity. Studies indicate that exploiting diversity requires cross-cultural interaction. Administrators, educators, and student affairs professionals are advised to undertake campus-wide multicultural talks. Arkoudis et al. (2013) and Dunne (2009) noted that administration has the power and obligation to foster involvement.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The ILF is an important tool for providing knowledge and expertise to counseling students and practitioners on the use of psychological, educational, and vocational assessment approaches to evaluate the personal qualities of clients from various backgrounds. This study may help to improve knowledge of evaluative criteria associated with multicultural backgrounds, such as gender, socioeconomic status, and racial and ethnic background. The research also demonstrates why it is critical

to locate and employ culturally and linguistically sensitive tools and/or techniques for obtaining information, as well as how to use assessment findings to plan with the client.

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