Cultural Competencies for Psychologists

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Outline

➲ Challenges of cultural competence

➲ The EXCELL Sociocultural Competence Training Approach

➲ EXCELL Cultural Mapping Activity

Diverse Population

➲ Over 40% of the Australian population were either born overseas or have one or more parents born overseas

➲ Immigrants to Australia have come from over 200 nations

Challenges

1. Challenges facing culturally and linguistically different (CALD) clients

2. "Culture shock" experienced by <u>new</u> arrivals – difficulties in intercultural interactions compounding psychological adjustment issues

3. Challenges in delivering psychological services to CALD clients

Culturally Competent Psychologists

➲ *Cultural competence* refers to a person's effectiveness in communication and behaving appropriately with people from another culture

Involves understanding AND the practical application of this knowledge

   ▪ Is an ethical responsibility of psychologists

Sociocultural Competence for Intercultural Relations (Mak, 2011)

➲ *The EXCELL (Excellence in Experiential Cultural Learning & Leadership) Program* by 4 applied psychologists

   ▪ Marv Westwood, UBC, Canada
   ▪ Anita Mak, UC, Australia
   ▪ Ishu Ishiyama, UBC, Canada
   ▪ Michelle Barker, GU, Australia

The EXCELL Intercultural Social Skills Training (Mak & Barker, 2004)

- ➲ An experiential group program for developing key sociocultural competencies for accessing and negotiating in a new culture (e.g., how to participate in a group)

- ➲ Built on learning paradigms (especially Bandura's social cognitive theory) and group facilitation skills (Mak et al., 1999)

KEY EXCELL SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCIES

ACCESS:
- ➲ Seeking information or help
- ➲ Making social contact or conversation
- ➲ Participation in a group

NEGOTIATION:
- ➲ Refusing a request
- ➲ Expressing disagreement
- ➲ Giving feedback

The EXCELL Process (Westwood et al., 2000)

- ➲ Alliance building & cultural validation
- ➲ Cultural mapping (cognitive schema of social interaction)
- ➲ Coaching, practice & feedback
- ➲ Goal-setting & contracting
- ➲ Transfer to real life & report back

Cultural Mapping (Mak & Barker, 2006)

- ➲ Scenario (requiring one or more key social competencies)
- ➲ Behavioural goal
- ➲ Preparation
- ➲ A: Approach
- ➲ B: Bridging/Breaking in
- ➲ C: Commenting
- ➲ D: Developing/Departure

EXCELL Applications & Research

- ➲ Incorporated in uni educational curriculum – OLT "Internationalisation at Home" Project in 5 disciplines

- ➲ Psychologists' perceptions of intercultural social challenges (Shaw & Mak)

Cultural Mapping

- ➲ Generate a 'map' with specific micro steps for how to perform a specific task in another culture
  - e.g., making social contact, initiating a conversation, participating in a group, asking for help, refusing a request

- ➲ Identify cultural values underlying specific behaviours.

Cultural Mapping

➲ ABCD Model

- **A: Approach** – making initial contact
- **B: Bridging** – building a relationship
- **C: Commenting/Communicating** – communicating the key message
- **D: Developing/Departure** – closing and setting up next contact

Example

➲ Initiating a conversation at a social gathering

- **A: Approach – making initial contact**
  - Make eye contact
  - Smile, friendly facial expression
- **B: Bridging – building a relationship**
  - Say hello
  - Introduce self/perhaps shake hands

Example

- **C: Commenting/Communicating – communicating the key message**
  - Identify common point of interest to open conversation e.g., the occasion, weather etc,
- **D: Developing/Departure** - closing and setting up next contact
  - Keep conversation going by establishing more common interests
  - Take turns at speaking & listening
  - End conversation – say goodbye, arrange further contact.

Stage	Verbal Behaviour	Non-Verbal Behaviour	Cultural Values
A. Approach (making initial contact)		Make eye contact Smile, friendly facial expression	??
B. Bridging (building relationship)	Say hello Introduce self	Perhaps shake hands	
C. Communicating / Commenting (communicating key message)	Identify common point of interest to open conversation e.g., the occasion, the weather etc.	Maintain eye contact Friendly, open posture	
D. Departure/ Developing (closing/setting up next contact if appropriate)	Keep conversation going by establishing more common interests Take turns speaking and listening End conversation – say goodbye, nice to meet you, arrange further contact	Perhaps shake hands again	

Cultural Mapping Exercises

➲ Form small groups (4 people) and work through the 2 cultural mapping exercises.

➲ These examples are a guide only – please adapt them to reflect a situation you have encountered in your own practice if you wish.

➲ Consider the cultural values that underlie these common interactions/scenarios.

Research from Social Psychology

➲ Research from social psychology indicates that perspective taking leads to increased empathy and decreased anxiety around cross-cultural interactions.

➲ Imagining successful interactions with people from culturally different groups can increase feelings of self-efficacy regarding future encounters.

Conclusions

➲Development of cultural competence involves:

1. Awareness of intercultural social challenges in psychological practice.

2. Development of key intercultural communication competencies for psychologists & clients.

➲Any Questions ???

Further Information

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➲ https://sites.google.com/site/internationalisationathome

➲ www.excellinterculturalskillsprogram.com

Key Readings

➲ Mak, A. S., & Buckingham, K. (2007). Beyond communication courses: Are there benefits in adding skills-based EXCELL sociocultural training? *International J of Intercultural Relations, 31*, 277-291.

➲ Westwood, M. J., Mak, A., Barker, M., & Ishiyama, F. I. (2000). Group procedures and applications for developing sociocultural competencies among immigrants. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling, 22*, 317-330.