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## Barriers of cross-cultural counseling

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## Barriers of cross-cultural counseling

### Abstract

In the past two decades, attention has been focused on the topic of cross-cultural counseling. Cross-cultural counseling is defined by Sue (1981), as a counseling relationship in which the participants are different in terms of values, norms, roles, lifestyles, verbal, and nonverbal methods of communicating. Literature in the area of cross-cultural counseling has been a recent occurrence in the counseling profession, with professional articles beginning to appear in the journals around the mid 1960s. Before the mid 1960s the counseling profession showed little interest or concern toward the racial, ethnic or minority groups. However, as the journals point out there has been a number of societal changes which have taken place and affected the counseling profession. The current concern for counseling the culturally different came as result of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. This movement of the 1960s caused America to take notice of minority groups. The preamble of the constitution was being challenged by all minority groups. Minorities were striving for their equal rights. There were movements to promote cultural pride in minority groups and minority individuals. Minority groups were realizing that for the most part they were all being oppressed by the white anglo saxon protestant majority in America. The United States government has also been affected by the minority movements in the last decades. Because, of this impact there has been legislation such as the civil rights amendments passed in order to insure equal rights for all individuals regardless of race, sex or nationality. Cross-cultural counseling has emerged because of the daily impact that minorities are bearing on the American society. Majority and minority individuals were coming in contact with each other on the job, at school, church, sporting events, cultural events and daily interactions. The counseling profession has been placed in the position of needing to observe the issues of cross-cultural counseling.

BARRIERS OF  
CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELING

A Research Paper  
Presented to  
the Department of Educational Administration  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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CHAPTER ONE  
CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELING

Introduction

In the past two decades, attention has been focused on the topic of cross-cultural counseling. Cross-cultural counseling is defined by Sue (1981), as a counseling relationship in which the participants are different in terms of values, norms, roles, lifestyles, verbal, and nonverbal methods of communicating. Literature in the area of cross-cultural counseling has been a recent occurrence in the counseling profession, with professional articles beginning to appear in the journals around the mid 1960's. Before the mid 1960's the counseling profession showed little interest or concern toward the racial, ethnic or minority groups. However, as the journals point out there has been a number of societal changes which have taken place and affected the counseling profession. The current concern for counseling the culturally different came as result of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's. This movement of the 1960's caused America to take notice of minority groups. The preamble of the constitution was being challenged by all minority groups. Minorities were striving for their equal rights. There were movements to promote cultural pride in minority groups and minority individuals. Minority groups were realizing that for the most part they were all being

oppressed by the white anglo saxon protestant majority in America. The United States government has also been affected by the minority movements in the last decades. Because, of this impact there has been legislation such as the civil rights amendments passed in order to insure equal rights for all individuals regardless of race, sex or nationality. Cross-cultural counseling has emerged because of the daily impact that minorities are bearing on the American society. Majority and minority individuals were coming in contact with each other on the job, at school, church, sporting events, cultural events and daily interactions. The counseling profession has been placed in the position of needing to observe the issues of cross-cultural counseling.

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Issues

The counseling profession must face several issues when dealing with the topic cross-cultural counseling. Gary Belkin (1980), pointed out that the counseling profession has not yet fulfilled the promise of counseling and guidance for minority individuals, nor has counseling today been able to bring much clarity to issues raised in the minority group literature. Central to all other considerations is the role of the profession itself vis a vis minorities. Should counselors work in the domain of special minority needs and experiences or should they continue to aim at serving the middle American population? While to some

extent the question appeared moot, one needed only to examine the curricula of major counselor training programs to determine that the profession continued to train counselors for working with white, middle-class, straight, mainstream clientele. Indeed, this has been a serious bone of contention for many minority professionals.

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Application

Understanding cross-cultural counseling has been enhanced by examining it's application. Cross-cultural counseling has included situations in which both the counselor and client are minority and they review the present racial\ethnic groups (Black-Chicano, Asian American, Native American, and Puerto-Rican-Black). It also included counseling situations in which the counselor was a racial/ethnic/minority person and the client was white (Black counselor-white client, Chicano counselor-white client, etc...). Cross-cultural counseling can include the circumstance in which the counselor and client are racially and ethnically similar but belong to different cultural groups because of other variables such as sex, sex orientation, social economic factors, and age. Wohl (1981), presented a number of situations in which cross-cultural counseling and therapy may occur. These included situations where: (a) the counselor was a member of a dominant American population and the client was a member of a racial or ethnic minority, (b) an individual from a western-oriented

country transports the therapy to a foreign non-western country, (c) counseling services were offered to foreign students in the United States, and (d) ethnic racial minority professionals counsel members of the dominant culture or members of another subculture. He further illustrated how differences in cultural variables, such as religious belief between client and counselor, may justifiably be referred to as cross-cultural counseling.

Cross-cultural counseling was made up of components such as race, ethnicity and culture which was used interchangeably and causes the definition of the three to become confusing. Definitions were necessary in order to clearly understand the components of cross-cultural counseling. The counselor should be able to effectively define for him/herself the difference between race, ethnicity and culture. This enabled the counselor to understand the client's background and hopefully to communicate accurately and appropriately when working with a culturally different client. Frist, Krogman (1945), defined race as: "... a subgroup of people possessing a definite combination of physical characters, from genetic origin, the combination of which to vary degrees distinguishes the subgroup from other subgroups of mankind"(p. 49). Physical differences such as skin pigmentation, head form, facial features, structure and color distribution and texture of body hair were the factors most commonly used to distinguish race. Ethnicity, on the other hand referred to a group

classification in which the members shared unique social and cultural heritage passed on from one generation to the next (Rose, 1964). Culture was sometimes confused with race or ethnicity. Moore (1974), helped resolve the confusion about culture, he stated: "Great races do have different cultures, ethnic groups within races differ in cultural content but, people of the same racial origin and of the same ethnic groups differ in their cultural matrices. All browns, blacks, or whites, or yellows, or reds are not alike in the culture in which they live. The understanding of the culture of another, or of groups other than our own, demands a knowledge of varying elements within the culture for the variety of culture component within a large cultural matrix" (p. 41).

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Historical Overview

The concept of cross-cultural counseling has been explored further by examining the history of cross-cultural counseling. Minorities in the 1960's and 1970's were calling upon all organizations to live up to their promises of supplying services to all individual regardless of race, sex or nationality. The counseling profession was one of the groups which had to answer for their traditional counseling roles. The counseling profession saw counseling primarily as a western creation. According to Sue (1981), the definition of counseling encompasses western oriented philosophical assumptions such as: (a) concern and respect for

the uniqueness of the clients, (b) the worth of the individual, (c) the highly priority traced on helping others to obtain their own self determined goals, (d) the freedom and opportunity to explore one's characteristics and to develop one's potential, and (e) a future oriented promise of a better life.

The minority client did not find the endorsement made by Sue(1981), to be true in their situation. The counseling profession needs to be aware that if they are to continue to claim the factors listed by Sue(1981), in defining counseling, there has to be some changes made to reach out to the minority. Also, the counseling profession needs to take into consideration minority concerns within the counseling relationship. The literature which has investigated cross-cultural counseling had a narrow focus. The data reported in practice oriented cross-cultural counseling research focused on white, middle-class English speaking counselors, working with black and Hispanic clients in the United States (Sundberg, 1981). There is a need to do research with all minority groups in order to understand their specific needs. By only researching black minorities, counseling literature was making assumptions that the information gained from the research done on blacks applied to all minorities. Counseling literature should examine all cultures in order to gain the information needed to understand the client, through his/her language, culture and class. This information should not be used

to stereotype a client but, instead it should be used to assist the counselor in becoming culturally skilled and to assist the client more effectively within the counseling relationship.

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Keys to Effective Counseling

Cross-cultural counseling did present a complex set of variables to the culturally skilled counselor and the counseling relationship. Sue discussed two major propositions which were keys to effective cross-cultural counseling. Proposition I: Cross-cultural counseling effectiveness was most likely to be enhanced when the counselor and client share the same world view. World views were frequently correlated with the persons cultural/ racial heritage, ethnic identification, and experiences in society. As a result, credibility and attractiveness of the counselor was likely to be high. Proposition II: Cross-cultural counseling effectiveness was most likely to be enhanced when the counselor uses counseling modalities and defined goals consistent with the life experiences\cultural values of the client (Sue, 1981).

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Characteristics of Culturally Skilled Counselor

Counseling effectiveness factors are essential and are critical to effective cross-cultural counseling, and are critical to the counselor becoming culturally skilled. Various characteristics of a culturally skilled counselor relationship

were: (a) awareness of sociopolitical forces that have impact on the minority client; (b) understanding that the culture, class, and language can act as barriers to effective cross-cultural counseling; (c) knowledge of how expertness, trustworthiness, and lack of similarity influence minority clients respectively to hinder influence and (d) understanding the importance of world views\cultural identity in the counseling process.

Acknowledgement of the variety of factors present in a cross-cultural counseling interaction become apparent that the culturally skilled counselor may be required to use a different combination of skills, process and goal, then employed in a typical counseling relationship.

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Training

One way of gaining a different combination of counseling skills is to introduce new curriculum into university training programs. Counselor education programs must take the major responsibility to examine and evaluate the relevance of their particular theoretical framework regarding the needs and values of culturally different clients. First, the counseling student must acquire a knowledge of minority group cultures and experiences. Second, the characteristics of counseling and the particular values assumptions inherent to the traditional counseling roles must be made clearly and explicitly. Third, when these two

conditions are met we can modify traditional counseling concepts in order to develop a more flexible counseling approach. This change is necessary in order to accommodate all the individuals who seek counseling services. Counselor education programs have the responsibility to explore the history and background of cross-cultural counseling in order to effectively train students in the development of a counseling relationship.

#### Cross-Cultural Counseling: Summary

In summary, there are problems with the cross-cultural counseling process, these problems are centered around counselor education and training programs, counseling in literature, and counseling process and practice. There is a need for the counseling profession to deal with these areas of failure and to try to overcome the barriers that hinder the counselor from being effective in a cross-cultural counseling situation. The problems facing counselors are the barriers that hinder them from being skilled cultural counselors. The previous discussion has given an overview of how cross-cultural counseling needs to be explored in order for the counseling profession to give effective counseling service to minority clients. Cross-cultural counseling effects every counseling relationship. Anytime a counselor and client enters a counseling relationship there will be different values, norms, roles, life styles, cultural background, and methods of communicating; then this can be considered a cross-cultural

counseling relationship. It is the counselors responsibility to help the client feel comfortable, relaxed, in order to understand the clients situation.

Statement of Problem:

Literature contended that cross-cultural counseling relationships tend not to be as effective as possible. Counselors in cross-cultural counseling relationships are faced with barriers that hinder them from being effective, these barriers are factors which adversely affect the development of the counseling relationship. The three factors that hinder the formation of a good counseling relationship are discussed by Sue(1981): (a) a language barrier often exists between the counselor and the client, (b) a class-bound value barrier which indicates that the counselor is allowing his/her middle class values to enter the counseling relationship, and (c) culture-bound value barrier which are used to judge normality and abnormality in clients. These variables seem to interact in such a way as to seriously hinder and distort communication within the cross-cultural counseling relationship.

Within the counseling relationship minority individuals have expressed the need for counselors to break away from the traditional counseling relationship and to explore the barriers that block effective communication. Minority individuals claimed that the counseling relationship was too time-bound, space-bound

and irrelevant to the realities of the life experiences and needs of minority individuals. Minorities argued, the need for more counselors, to meet the client on the client's ground. Rather than demanding the client adapt to the counselors culture, the counselor should adjust to the client's culture.

When the counselor takes the time to observe the minority client's background he/she will become aware of the oppression that the client experiences. Minority individuals are by definition oppressed and it is highly unlikely that any minority problem is ever totally free of this oppression. Providing an empathic ear so that the client can reassess past experiences, or even changing the client's behavior so that he or she can cope better within the environment, does not eliminate the oppression.

Pine (1972), found viewpoints that expressed that the counselor may even be involved in promoting the oppression felt by the minority client within the counseling relationship: "...that is a waste of time; that counselors are deliberately shunting minority students into dead end nonacademic programs regardless of students potential, preferences, or ambition; that counselor discourage students from applying to colleges; that counselors are insensitive to the needs of students and the community; that counselors do not give the same energy and time in working with minority as they do with white-middle-class students; that counselors do not expect, respect, and understand cultural

differences; that counselors are arrogant and contemptuous; and that counselors do not know how to deal with their own hang-ups." (p. 35).

#### Method and Plan of Study

The method and plan of study used in this research paper investigated the above mentioned three barriers of the cross-cultural counselor: language values, class-bound values, and culture-bound values. The investigation of these barriers focused on what they are and how they can be overcome. The literature reviewed look at a variety of viewpoints presented by authors in the area of cross-counseling counseling.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Review of Related Literature

Cross cultural counseling was defined by Sue(1981) as a counseling relationship in which the participants are different in terms of values, norms, roles, lifestyles and verbal and nonverbal methods of communicating. To be effective with the counseling relationship, the counselor must be able to relate to the client in the above mentioned areas. Padilla, Ruiz, and Alvarez (1975), have identified three major impediments of counseling that a non-Latino counselor may encounter when working with a Latino client. Sue and Sue(1977), have generalized these barriers as relevant to all minorities. They expanded the concept further in an attempt to relate the three barriers to all minority group/cross-cultural counseling situations. The barriers the counselor may face are language values, class-bond values, and culture-bond values in trying to relate to the client. The literature reviewed on cross-cultural barriers will help explore the issues in further detail in order to reveal the effects that the barriers have on the counseling relationship.

#### Language Values

Verbal communications is a major factor in building rapport in a counseling relationship. Vontress(1973), focused on the

importance of having the counselor check to make sure that there is effective communication between the client and him/herself. The counselor often times presupposes that the client is on the same communication level. Calia(1966), and Tyler(1964), commented that counselors often times used talk therapy to build a relationship with clients. Unfortunately, clients may be at a disadvantage because of educational or economically disadvantages they have experienced. The counselor when using the talk therapy relies on complex cognitive and conative concepts to help generate the clients' insight; however, this process is not always effective. Minority groups and other cultures will have problems communicating and being understood if they do not use standard English. Sue and Sue(1977), agreed that the use of standard English with a lower-class or bilingual client may result in misperceptions of the clients strengths and weakness. The use of the standard English seemed as unfairly discriminating against those from a bilingual or lower-class background. Research has been done on the bilingual background of the Asian-American by D.W. Sue and Kirk(1972,1973) and also D.W Sue and Frank(1973). For the Chicano group, research was done by Padilla, Ruiz and Avarey(1975). Attneave(1972), explored the bilingual background concerning the American Indians. The above mention researchers agreed that a limited understanding of standard English produced misunderstandings within the counseling relationship. Wilson and

Calhoun(1974) expressed their opinion that if the counselor was unfamiliar with a clients' dialect or language system, that rapport was not likely to be successfully established. Sue (1981), commented that rapport is the comfortable and unconstrained mutual bond between two or more persons, in the counseling dyad, it implies positive feelings combined with a spirit of cooperativeness.

In dept studies have been done on language differences with the black clients concerning language difference. Smith(1973), pointed out that many Black Americans used various phrases and words which are not standard English. Smith found that black clients were expected to communicate their feelings and thoughts to the counselor in standarized English. The black culture has a language of its own which is called Black Language. Sue(1981) explored how Black Language and other language codes associated with the lower socioeconomic classes, involve shorter sentences and less grammatical elaboration, there becomes a greater reliance on nonverbal cues. The language code of the middle and upper classes seemed to be more elaborate with less reliance on nonverbal cues and greater reliance on knowledge of grammer and syntax.

It was a difficult task for the minority who uses nonstandard English as a norm , to adopt to using standard English within the counseling relationship. When the counselor was unaware of the

language code of the culturally different client the counselor often times stereotyped the client. Vontress(1971 and 1973) found that counselors do misinterpret the client and pointed out that the counselor needed to become familiar with the client's body language and language code. Counselors who were not familiar with the culturally different client may misinterpret the clients positive, gesture and inflection. Vontress(1973) gave an example of differences in nonverbal behavior between blacks and whites. When speaking to another person, Anglos tend to look away from the person(avoid eye contact) more often than do black individuals. When listening to another person speaking; however, blacks tend to avoid eye contact while Anglos make eye contact. This may account for the statements from teachers who feel that black pupils are inattentive (they make less eye contact when spoken to) or feel that blacks are more angry (intense stare) when speaking. Wesson(1975) stated that poor verbal responses may also lead counselors to label the client in an inappropriate way. The counselor characterized the client as uncooperative, sullen, negative, nonverbal or repressed on the basis of language expressions alone. Belkin(1980) commented concerning how the client may be labeled inappropriately, were consistent with those of Wesson. Belkin(1980) introduced information concerning language systems with other non-racially identified minority groups. Examples of different groups that felt that the

counselor stresses standard English as a way of communicating are prison inmates, gays, appalachian whites, drug users, the handicapped and any other category which qualifies as a minority group. The counselor's inability to communicate effectively in the client's language may have contributed to the poor acceptance which counselors have received from minorities. Culturally different clients wanted to be able to communicate their feelings and emotions to counselors who were able to understand and relate to them without having further translation into standard English. Sue(1981) pointed out that because western society places importance on the use of English, minorities were seen as inferior and lacked awareness or conceptual thinking power. These misinterpretations were not only experienced in the counseling relationship but also in psychological and achievement tests. The counseling profession should maintain awareness of language misinterpretations and not let them enter the cross-cultural counseling relationship.

#### CLASS-BOUND VALUES

Counselors and clients will face differences in values, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs, within the counseling relationship, because of the socioeconomic class differences. Minority group members are disproportionately represented in the lower classes. Havinghurst and Neugarten(1963) concluded that at

least 50% of the American population fell into either the upper lower or lower lower socioeconomic classes, suggesting that a large portion of potential clients may come from these socioeconomic classes. Sue(1981) pointed out that traditionally counseling has tried to assist the client in self-direction through the presentation of the results of assessment instruments and self-exploration via verbal interaction. However, the values underlying these activities were primarily by middle-class and were not valued for those living in poverty. Belkin(1980) agreed that the traditional counseling role was compromised by social class difference. The traditional counseling approaches, based on middle and upper-class values, were not appropriate for lower middle and lower-lower class clientele. Lewis(1966) commented that because of the socioeconomic differences the counselor who generally came from a middle to upper-class background found it difficult to related to the circumstances and hardships affecting the client who lived in poverty. Lewis describes the phenomenon of poverty and its effects on the individual as factors that characterizes the clients life. The poverty client faced issues of low wages; unemployment, underemployment, minimal property ownership, depleted savings, and limited food supply. Meeting even the basic needs of hunger and shelter were in constant day to day jeopardy. The individual often times had to pawn personal possessions and borrow money from loan sharks who

charged unaffordable interest rates which lead to even greater debt. The individual was made to feel helpless, dependent and inferior, because of the situation he/she was in due to lack of money. Pollack and Menacker(1972) pointed out that when the counselor has a client whose major concern is day to day survival, there have may been semminly inappropriate action. These actions occurred because of the financial problems which cannot be generalized as a cultural trait, instead as a environmental trait. Likewise, Menacker(1971) pointed out how children from low income families may be encouraged to work at a early age. The child, while helping contribute to the family income, was directing energy away from his/her school work which may lead to truancy and poor performance. The teacher and counselor may view the student as unmotivated and as a potential juvenile delinquent. The teacher and counselor may also transfer the characteristics of the child mentioned above to another child from the low socioeconomic class. Garfield, Weiss and Pallock(1973), supported the data presented by Menacker that the counselor may have veiwed the client wrong because of inappropriate perceptions. In their study counselors were given identical descriptions of a nine year old boy, except for his social class, who engaged in maladaptive classroom behavior. The majority of the counselors were more apt to working with the boy after labeled upper-class versus lower-class. Likewise, Habemann and Thiry(1970), found that candidates

in the doctoral program for counseling and guidance, programmed students from low socioeconomic backgrounds more frequently into noncollege-bound tracks than a college-preparation ones.

Lorion(1973), was involved in an extensive review of services delivered to minorities and low socioeconomic which revealed that psychiatrists and counselor types related to therapy persons who are most like themselves: white rather than non-white and those from upper socioeconomic status. Lorion(1974), likewise, pointed out that expectations of the lower socioeconomic class clients were often different from those of psychotherapist. Sue(1977), pointed out that the client concerned with the survival or making it through on a day to day basis and expected advice and suggestions from the counselor. The client does not feel that the weekly 50 minute appointment addresses the culturally different clients immediate concerns and needs toward a solution to their problem. Vontress(1973) specifically referred to the Appalachian whites who refused to be enslaved by the clock, they looked down on promptness, planning, and protocol and suspected people who adhere to these values. Lower socioeconomic class people and minority groups cannot be blamed totally for their lack of promptness, planning and protocol. Schindler-Rainman(1967) explained that many lower-class people through multiple experiences with public agencies operate under what is called Minority Standard Time(MST). Sue(1981) pointed out the reason

lower socioeconomic class people tend to operate under MST is because when arriving at an appointment with institutions such as medical clinics, police stations, and agencies of the U.S Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The individual usually waits one hour for a ten to fifteen minute appointment; therefore, the lower socioeconomic class individual does not see the importance of being on time when the result is a waste of precious/valuable time. If the counselor however, is not familiar with the above mention cultural value concerning MST, he/she will view the client as indifferent and hostile.

Belkin(1980) believed that another area where socioeconomic values was affected was in the different perception of sexual behavior between cultures. The open acceptance of sexual promiscuity differs from one socioeconomic level to another. There may be other factors that enter in for example, religious beliefs may play a major role. The point is that middle-class counselors often attempt to impose their middle-class sexual mores on low and upper-class clients whether it is consciously or unconsciously.

The major reoccurring issue that occurred was that the lower-class clients expected to receive advice or some form of concrete treatment. The client often times became confused and frustrated when the counselor tries to use theoretical approaches to problems. Abad, Ramos and Boyce (1974), gave an example of how

the counselor expected the Puerto Rican client to talk about the problem and to take initiative and responsibility for decision making; however, this is not what the Puerto Rican client expected. Along the same line several writers (Bloom, Davis Hess (1965); Amos and Grambs, 1968; Schindler-Rainman, (1967); Menacker, (1971) have taken the position that lower socioeconomic class individuals were best motivated by rewards which were both immediate and concrete. The lower socioeconomic class individual did not focus on several counseling sessions which will help in planning long range goals. The ability to sit and talk about things was perceived by the lower class to be a luxury of the middle and upper classes. Because of the low-class clients environment and past experiences with counseling this may have hinder the clients outlook on counseling. If the client is not familiar with the counseling process he/she will not be apt to continue and maybe seen by the counselor as hostile and resistant; therefore, termination of the relationship occurs. Ryan and Gaier(1968) for instance, found that students from upper socioeconomic background had more exploratory interviews with counselors than do students representing other social classes. Winder and Hersko(1962) pointed out that middle class patients tend to remain in treatment longer than lower-class patients. Hollingshead and Redlick(1968) found that the level of therapeutic intensiveness varies directly with socioeconomic background.

Hollingshead and Redlick(1968) also found that lower socioeconomic class patients tend to have fewer in dept sharing relationships and less intensive therapeutic relationships than members of higher socioeconomic classes.

#### CULTURE-BOUND VALUES

Culture as defined by Belkin(1980), consisted of behavior patterns which are shared and transmitted by a group of individuals. Sue(1981) expanded on Belkin's definition of culture and included additional components such as those things that people have learned to do, believe, value and enjoy in their history. Culturally different clients may be forced to communicate in a culture that they are unfamiliar with. D.W. Sue and Sue(1972) understood the culturally different clients need for the counselor to focus on the positive aspects of being bicultural within the counseling relationship. According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, bicultural is the existence of two distinct cultures in one nation. Stonequist(1937) however, noticed how dual membership in society may have presented a problem for many minorities. Minorities are placed under pressure to adapt to the ways of the dominant culture. Stonequist used the term marginal person as the miniorties inability to form dual ethnic identifications. The dominant society tried to make the minority group feel that their cultural heritiage and enthnicity are

something which are inferior and degrading. The minority group also was made to feel that they should be ashamed of their heritage, they were taught that if they do not conform to the dominant way they were sick, pathological or deviant.

Belkin(1980) made reference to counselors imposing their own cultural values upon the minority client in ignorance. The counselor was not taking into consideration the clients values but instead, referred to clients from racial/ethnic view point labeled culturally deprived. The counselor was assuming that the client was cultural deprived because of his/her own cultural values.

This assumption has often wrong and causes a lot of misinterpretation of the client on the counselors part.

Granberg(1967) verified the above mentioned point in which he found himself incorrectly assuming his homosexual client wanted to become straight, an unusual example of the counselors cultural values interfering with the counseling relationship.

The counselor may be seen as an agent of society transmitting under western values. Szasz(1970) has the view point that psychiatrists and counselors are like slave masters using therapy as a powerful ploy against people whose ideas, beliefs, and behavior differ from the dominant society. Wilson and Calhoun(1974) would agree with Szasz on the point that the counselor and culturally different client have values that stem from two different subcultures which may be as diversified as two

people from different countries. The counselor in the cross-cultural counseling relationship values verbal, emotional and behavioral expressiveness as goals to be transmitted with in the counseling interaction. Sue(1981) presented how the above mentioned value was not consistent with the culturally different client. Asian Americans for example have been labeled by many mental health professional as the most repressed clients because, they did not exhibit the counselors values. The counselor should explore the clients' background and cultural upbringing before negatively classifying the Asian American client. Sue(1981) also, decribed how the traditional Chinese and Japanese culture value restraint of strong feelings and subtleness in approaching problems. The family may stress the importance of not sharing information with a counselor because the problems are seen as a reflection of the family. Cross and Malonado(1971), reported similar finding concerning Chicano. Timble(1976), also found similar values conflicts for the Native American when dealing with the counselor. The counselor when describing the cultural different client often uses negative terms like repressed, inhibited, shy or passive, which are undesirable western standards.

Sue(1977), pointed out that there was a cultural belief by counselors who value verbal, emotional and behavioral expressiveness as goals in counseling , that self disclosure is

desirable. Self disclosure refers to the clients willingness to tell the counselor what he/she feel, believes, or thinks. Many professionals argue that self disclosure was a necessary condition for effective counseling. Jourad(1964), suggested that mental health was related to ones openness in disclosing. Jourad also, felt that clients will disclose to another who will react in the same way they do. Self disclosure was seen as an essential factor to the counseling process but, it may go against cultural values for some minorities. Belkin(1980),pointed out that in addition many racial minorities have learn to distrust whites in general because, of past experience. Vontress(1976), felt that Black Americans are especially reluctant to disclose to the white majority counselor because, of past experience which stems from racism. Few blacks perceived the white counselor as someone to assist them with their needs and concerns. Instead the white counselor was seen as a agent in society which is working against their whole being. From the black perspective, uncritical self disclosure to others was not healthy. On the same line Sue and Sue(1972), explained how the minority client views the counseling relationship as a waste of time. If the culturally different client does not want to self disclose because, of cultural values, the counseling relationship forces the client to self disclose. The counselors using skills such as listening empathically and responding in a way to encourage the client to continue talking.

Haettenschwiler(1971), pointed out that minorities found the lack of structure in the counseling relationship to be frustrating, confusing and threatening. Sue(1981) commented that one of the American Indian and Chicano strong cultural values is the concept of friendships. Within these friendships the American Indians and Chicano shared intimate aspects of life. Friendships take time to form and once they are formed they last for a life time. In contrast, the white counselor was asked the American Indian and Chicano to place their trust in them and share their most inner-thoughts with the counselor 50 minutes once a week. To the Native American and Chicano this was viewed as absurd and inappropriate. The Native American and Chicano had a difficult time imagining how they are expected to share with a individual who have only develop a brief friendship (Sue 1981). The structure of the counseling session Atkinson, Maruyama, and Matsui(1978), found was not directive enough for the Asian American. Peoples and Dell(1975), also concluded that black students prefer a more active counseling role over a passive one. The counselor should not interpret short phrases or statement from the culturally different client as negatively, it could be in actuality a sign of respect. Sue(1981) discussed how the cultural upbringing of the individual may have dictated different patterns of communications which may place the individual in a disadvantage in the counseling relationship. The Asian American, Chicano and

Native American were taught not to speak until they were spoken to. The cultural value just mentioned places the client in a confusing and frustrating situation when the counselor is expecting the client to initiate the counseling relationship. Arkoff, Thaver, and Elkind(1966), found evidence to support that the Asian American associate mental health with exercising will power, avoiding unpleasant thought, and occupying ones' mind with positive thought. The counseling process is seen more in a authoritative format where the counselor is more active and directive, the father type. Many minority groups viewed counselors in the same way as doctor, priest or ministers. These professionals deal in immediate solutions and concrete tangible forms of treatment such as advice, confession, consolation and medication. In counseling however, the treatment in most cases are not immediate. Counseling theories according to Sue(1981) tended to emphasize analytical, rational, verbal and strongly stress discovering cause effect relationship which is in conflict with many cultures philosophies.

#### Comparison of the Cross-Culutral Counseling Barriers: Middle Class Variables Versus Minority-Group Variables

It is helpful to be able to observe the three cross-cultural barriers in order to see how the middle class (generic characteristics of counseling) values and the miniortiy-group

(Asian-American, blacks, Chicanos and Native Americans) values differ from one another. The three barriers observed are language value, class-bound values and culture-bound values. The comparison of the cross-cultural barriers which Sue(1981) has provided summarizes which values conflict with one another and which values do not.

The middle-class language valued standard English and verbal communication as characteristics used within the counseling relationship. The minority-group would prefer to use bilingual background within the counseling relationship, while blacks would prefer the use of Black language.

The middle-class class-bound values are the following: standard English, verbal communication, adherence to time schedules(50-minute session), long-range goals and ambiguity. The minority-group class-bound values differ from the middle-class values, when observing the variables of the two groups. Minority groups middle-class values are as follows: nonstandard English, action oriented, different time perspective, immediate, short-range goals, concrete, tangible, structured approach.

The culture-bound values does influence both the language and class values which were mentioned above. The middle-class culture-bound values consist of the following variables: standard English, verbal communication individual centered, verbal/emotional/behavioral expressiveness, client-counselor

communication and openness and intimacy, cause-effect orientation, and clear distinction between "physical" and "mental" well-being

The minority groups cannot be classified into one general group when listing culture class values. Culture is what makes each minority group distinctive from one another the culture-bound values will be listed in the alphabetical order (Asian-Americans, blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans). The list of the different minority groups will help give an overview of each culture. The minority group variables are as follows:

Asian Americans culture values consist of the following: Asian language, family centered, restraint of feelings, one-way communication from authority figure to person, silence is respect advice seeking, and well-defined patterns of interaction (concrete structured), private vs. public display (shame/disgrace/pride) and "physical" and "mental" well-being defined differently.

The black cultures cultural values consisted of the following: sense of peoplehood, and action oriented paranoia due to oppression and importance placed on nonverbal behavior.

The Chicanco individual valued the following characteristics within their culture: Spanish speaking, group-centered cooperation, temporal difference, family operation, different pattern of communication, and a religious distinction between mind/body.

In the Native American culture the following have become cultural characteristics: tribal dialects, cooperative not competitive individualism present time orientation, creative/experiential/intuitive/nonverbal, satisfy present needs and use of folk or supernatural explanations.

This concludes the summarization and comparison of the different cross-cultural values. Having been able to observe the cross-cultural barriers, the middle-class versus the minority group was helpful in determining where the conflicts were with the traditional counseling program also, the observation revealed the needs of the cultural different client within the counseling relationship. Hopefully, the counseling profession has take notice of the needs of the culturally different and effectively address the issue.

### Summary

The literature research available concerning cross-cultural counseling was fairly recent. The literature that was available on cross-cultural counseling seemed to point out how the counseling profession had failed to contribute to the betterment of minority groups in America. The scientific literature found in the professional journals and taught in the counseling training programs center around the traditional counseling role. There has been a small amount of literature that dealt with the concern of

cross-cultural counseling. The research which has been done was centered around the black client and white counselor. There needs to be more studies done on the different cultures instead, of generalizing the needs of all minorities. The counseling profession has an obligation to serve the needs of the minority population of American, regardless of language, class or culture values. If the counselor fails to overcome the barriers that face him/her within the counseling relationship, Yamaoto, Jamer, and Palley(1968) suggested that misunderstandings will arise from cultural variations in communication which can lead to alienation and/or an inability to develop trust and rapport. The counselor must take more of an active concern in the situation of cross-cultural counseling since most of their clientele will have some type of cultural value difference that conflict with their own.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CONCLUSION

The counselor will come into contact with a variety of individuals within the counseling relationship, who have different culture philosophies, beliefs and values. The literature reviewed supports that there are three cross-cultural barriers which cause the counselor not to be effective. Pedersen(1981), agreed that if the counselor does not address these three cross-counseling barriers: language, class, and culture values, numerous problems will occur for the counselor when dealing with the culturally different client. The literature reviewed also pointed out that a lack of verbal communication within the counseling interaction causes conflict. If the counselor is not aware of the clients' communication system he/she will find it difficult to relate to the clients' problems.

Chapter three discussed the problems revealed about the three cross-cultural barriers. Implications concerning the barriers were also introduced revealing how the counselor can become culturally skilled. The culturally skilled counselor will have to depend on counseling training programs and develop further research in order for the counseling profession to advance in the area of cross-cultural counseling. Also, chapter three will bring together the information presented in chapters one and two,

concerning cross-cultural counseling and also examine implications for the counseling profession.

The goal of the counselor in the cross-cultural relationship was to be aware of the clients' language, class and cultural values and how they effect his/her own values. The self awareness gained by the counselor is referred to as being culturally skilled. In order to help examine how counselors can become better educated about cross-cultural counseling the counselor training program and research on the topic of cross-cultural counseling will be explored.

#### Recommendations for Language Barriers

The literature reviewed reveals the counselor needs to effectively communicate with the client in order to start the helping process. Communicating with a wide variety of verbal and nonverbal responses allows the counselor to help the minority client feel comfortable about the relationship. It is because the counselor communicates in an understandable manner. Ivey and Authier(1978) agreed that the larger the repertoire of responses the counselor is able to have the better helper he/she will become. The key words according to Sue(1981) in communicating to the client are: send, receive, verbal, nonverbal, accurately and appropriately. The counselor must be able to send and receive both verbal and nonverbal messages accurately and appropriately.

In the counseling relationship communication is a two way process. That is to say, the counselor not only has to send his/her thoughts and feelings to the client but, must also be able to receive the accurate thoughts and feelings from the client. Verbal communication is not the only form of communication that the counselor should be aware of, there is also nonverbal communication. Additionally, the counselor needs to be aware of the nonverbals in order to help interpret the verbal messages sent by the client. As mentioned above, it is important for the counselor to appropriately communicate to the minority client according to the clients' cultural background. Since there is not one method which can be generalized to all minority groups, the counselor needs to be aware of the culturally different client and use the skills necessary to communicate accurately. Sue(1981), pointed out that the counselor should use the appropriate basic skills: eye contact, body language, tone of voice, rate of speech and loudness. Receiving what the client is sending is very important to the counselor. It becomes even more important when there are cultural differences. The counselor should appropriately use the following skills: attending skills of open and closed questions, minimal encouragements, paraphrases, reflections of feelings, summarizations and influencing skills of directive expression of content, expressions of feeling(self-disclosure), and interpretations. Concreteness, respect, warmth, immediacy,

confrontation, and genuineness are the qualitative skills that must be used within the counseling relationship. The counselor must be aware that the usage of the aboved mentioned skills must take the different cultures into consideration when determining the style to be used. When the counselor is sending and receiving messages from the client he/she needs to be aware of how the culture may influence the way the client responds to the question. Therefore, it is not appropriate to assume that a client is hostile or being repressive because, the client does not respond to the question in the way of the dominant culture. The counselor is aware that communication is the key to the counseling relationship. When the counselor is able to gain accurate and appropriate communication within the cross-cultural counseling relationship the rapport and trustworthiness gained from the minority client will follow.

#### Recommendations for Class-Bound Values

The literature reviewed revealed how values, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs stem from the different socioeconomic classes. The counselor must take into consideration the socioeconomic class that the client is associated with when applying certain styles of counseling. Most likely the counselor is from a middle-class background and tends to impose his/her middle-class counseling method. The traditional counseling method based on the middle-class values include a self-direction and

self-exploration approach. In looking for the appropriate process and goals for the culturally different client the counseling must be consistent with the clients values and life experiences.

Calia(1968) pointed out that when a counselor is working with the cultural different client he/she may have to break away from his/her narrow definition and expectation of the counseling process. As pointed out in the literature reviewed Lorion(1974), stated that lower socioeconomic individuals are concerned with survival and living one day at a time. The lower socioeconomic client expected immediate, concrete advice. Therefore, if the counselor used counseling strategies that make sense to the client and are consistent with his/her values as well as define a suitable goal, the client is more apt to feel that the counseling relationship is worthwhile. Berman(1979), agreed that the counselor needed to be aware of the different socioeconomic characteristics and background of the client before deciding to use one method of counseling versus another. Atkinson, Maruyama and Matsui(1978), also found supporting evidence which discussed how minority individuals from different socioeconomic classes and culture respond differently to the use of counseling skills. Not everyone is familiar with the counseling relationship and its purpose.

If the counselor is not able to adjust the traditional counseling role to meet the clients' needs then he/she may lose

the client through termination on the clients part because, he/she did not feel that the counselor could relate to the situation he/she was facing. Lorion(1973), stated that counselors preferred to work with clients who were more like themselves rather than those from different classes and cultures. The reason for the counselors' preference to counseling his/her own kind was because a minority person may pose a threat by challenging the counselors' class values. The counselors' main goal as in language values was to realize that there are different language, class, and culture values that need to be identified in order to work with the minority client more effectively.

#### Recommendations for Culture-Bound Values

Culture is everything that a person has learned to do: believe, value, and enjoy in their history according to Sue(1981). The individuals' culture represents who they are and how they view themselves in relation to the rest of the world. In most cases the counselor is from a culture that is different from the minority. Language and socioeconomic class are components of culture. The counselor needed to be aware of the cultural differences in order to respond accurately. The counselor needed to be sensitive and concerned about the minority individual needs. Thus he will not allow his/her own cultural values to hinder the counseling process. The counselor needed to value other cultures

as much as he/she values his/her own culture. When a counselor became culturally aware he/she was less apt to impose his/her own values on the minority client. The counselor therefore, avoided the use of unwarranted labeling, stereotyping and prejudice. Likewise, the counselor had become comfortable with the cultural differences that existed between the counselor and client. The minority clients' race and cultural beliefs did not become a barrier for the counselor who was cultural aware. Being cultural aware, the counselor will view each individual as equally human, regardless of race or other physical differences. Actually, the counseling profession should not try to make everyone equal by the middle class standard instead, it should view the difference of the minority individual as a positive factor for our society. The counseling relationship with the culturally different client may bring up sensitive areas that cause personal biases. The counselor needs to be aware of when sensitive circumstance arise and feel comfortable enough to refer to some other counselor who can effectively communicate with the client. Referral of a cross-cultural client should not be seen as a negative factor for the counselor, but as a counselor concerned enough about the minority client to see that he/she receives the proper care. There has been a need for the counselor to continually be aware of the clients' culture and background. The more knowledge the counselor has the

better prepared the counselor was in communicating effectively with the client.

#### Summary of the Culturally Skilled Counselor

The culturally skilled counselor was one who adhered to the skills presented in the above paragraphs which center around the counselor first being aware of his/her own cultural values. Also, he/she should be aware of how they relate to the minority clients' cultural values without being judgmental. Instead the counselor should view both culture as being equally important. The counselors' goal to become culturally skilled should occur within the cross-cultural counseling relationship.

In order for the counselor to be culturally skilled he/she must have a clear understanding and accurate knowledge of the traditional counseling method. The method encompasses language values, class-bound values and culture-bound values. By understanding the culturally different client's values versus the traditional counseling, which is usually middle class, the counselor becomes aware of his/her value assumptions. The counselor will constantly be tested in a cross-cultural counseling relationship by the client to see how competent the counselor really is. Through this test, issue of expertness, trust worthiness, and similarity are areas that the client observed.

The counselor who is culturally skilled has been able to meet the challenges of the cross-culturally counseling relationship.

### Conclusion

The cross-cultural counseling relationship should not be seen negatively as something to difficult to accomplish (that it would be better for the client to find someone from his/her own culture to counsel him/her). What has been presented is this: that when a cross-cultural counseling session occurs, the counselor needs to be sensitive to the needs of the culturally different client. The cross-cultural counseling relationship can be exceedingly rewarding to the counselor and client because of the potential for considerable cultural learning. Atkinson, Morten and Sue(1979), pointed out that it was difficult to pin point exactly which barrier was the cause. They pointed out that it was not the fact that one person in a counseling dyad was black and another white, which assumes that there will be difficulty with one another. The factor that determined how the counselor and client work together was how they perceive their blackness and whiteness, which can cause barriers to constructive communication. Another issue that counselors present as a reason for not working with culturally different clients was that the counselor would not be able to relate to the culturally different client's experiences because, of a different background. De Vore(1977), who is a sociobiologist

however commented that as human beings we are more alike than we are different. "Anthropologists always talk about cross-cultural diversity, but that's icing on the cake. The cake itself is remarkably pan human. Different cultures turned out only minor variations on the theme of the species--human courtship, our mating systems, child care, fatherhood, the treatment of the sexes, love, jealousy, sharing. Almost everything that is importantly human--including behavior flexibility--is universal and developed in the context of our shared genetic background. (p. 88).

The counseling profession was at the stage where counselors could not declare they are not aware of the counseling needs of minority individuals. The counseling profession realized that the traditional standard English, white, middle class counseling method was not going to suffice for the minority client. What are the counselors going to do? Concerned counselors request that there be further research and training provided in the area of cross-cultural counseling; however, most try to put off the responsibility of counseling minorities. It is because they feel threatened when dealing with the racial and ethnic barriers. The questions which counselors fail to ask themselves is what can I do to change? instead of, How the minority client can fit into the traditional counseling role? The failure of the counseling profession to concentrate on the above mentioned questions were

major reasons why there were a problems dealing with minorities. Most counselors are no different then any other persons, they are products of their society, which has been often characterized as racist. Even though the counselor has gone through basic training which has enlighten his/her perspective toward minority needs, his/her counseling techniques are still basically shaped by his/her culture.

There is a need for counselors and the counselors in training to be given the opportunity to experience counseling relationships with minorities. Courses on the topic of counseling racial and ethnic minorities are helpful in exposing the counselor and the counselor in training to the needs of the minority. There needs to be a continual effort made to develop and design activities which will humanize the counselor. Other suggestions are practicums and internships with agencies that deal with minorities. The key is to help the counselor grow as a human being eventually leading him/her to becoming a culturually skilled counselor. Counselors and counselors in training programs have an need the opportunity to gain at least the minimal skills needed to work with the minority client. This however, is on the assumption that the counselor educators and supervisors who will provide the training has achieved enough personal insight and knowledge of minorities to help others develop the needed skills to work with culturally different clients.

Not only the counselor in training but, the whole counseling profession needs to become involved in further research on the topic of cross-cultural counseling. Sattler(1970), reviewed the research done concerning the effects of experimenter race on experimentation, testing, interviewing, and psychology, and found only three studies related to counselor-client interaction. There has been a few studies conducted since Sattler's report; however, the research in the area is limited. Why is the research done on cross-cultural counseling so limited? First, the majority of the researchers felt that the topic was too controversial of an issue and preferred to conduct surveys on less controversial topics. Gardner(1971), pointed out that minority professionals have requested that white investigators stop conducting studies on minorities because, they tend to reinforce stereotypes rather than enlighten understanding. Secondly ,individual members from various minority groups have become resistant to research and refuse to serve as subjects. Thirdly, and probably the main reason research has not been conducted was because majority-controlled counseling research establishment has simply not viewed minority status as an important factor in counseling. The information that was used to write this research paper was made possible because, of the concerned men and women in the counseling area who felt the need to develop the topic of cross-cultural counseling. Further research is needed to expand the information

available about cross-cultural counseling. The researchers need to maximize the benefits of cross-cultural counseling, at the same time minimize the obstacles. Researchers also, need to conduct studies on all cultures, instead of generalizing findings on black culture and applying to other cultures.

In this research paper a challenge is being made to the counseling profession, to become more aware of the cultural barriers that are present within the counseling relationship. Awareness however, is not enough, once the counselor is aware then he/she needs to gain the knowledge necessary to communicate effectively with the minority client.

Minorities within the profession should not be the only people concerned enough to do research on cross-cultural counseling. It is a topic that effects all counselors and the future of the counseling profession. The diversity of the American society suggests that the 1980 counselor in training will most likely come into contact with culturally different clients. This paper hopefully has served a vital impact on the counseling profession. Hopefully the impact motivates counselors to take interest in the needs of the minority client.

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