

Multiculturalism in the Field of School Psychology:

A Literature Review and Critical Analysis

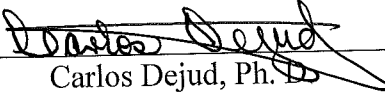
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ABSTRACT

Every year, colleges and institutions of higher education (IHE) award degrees to students in fields dedicated to helping individuals with educational needs, specifically in the field of school psychology. Of the required courses needed to earn the degree and practice the profession, there are virtually none dealing with multiculturalism. Given the steady change in the demographics of the public educational system, and the influx of culturally/linguistically diverse students, the idea of multiculturalism needs to be engrained in every class required for future school psychologists to provided cross-culturally competent service providers in the profession. Until this happens, the field of school psychology will not be giving ethical services to the entire public school system resulting in those of the non Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture to seek alternatives to serve their educational needs. The purpose of this literature review is to give the reader a background on school psychology, why the discipline is culturally biased, and why there is a strong need for cross-culturally competent service providers.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
.....	
ABSTRACT.....	ii
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
<i>Statement of the Problem</i>	6
<i>Purpose of the Study</i>	6
<i>Assumptions of the Study</i>	6
<i>Definition of Terms</i>	7
<i>Limitations of the Study</i>	9
Chapter II: Literature Review	11
<i>The Roots of Modern Psychology</i>	11
<i>The History of School Psychology</i>	14
<i>Code of Ethics and Standards for Training</i>	17
<i>The Product of a Culturally Biased Social Science</i>	18
<i>The Role of Academia and Cross-Cultural Competency</i>	20
<i>The Need for Cross-Cultural School Psychology</i>	24
Chapter III: Summary, Critical Analysis, and Recommendations.....	26
<i>Summary</i>	26
<i>Critical Analysis</i>	27
<i>Recommendations</i>	28
References.....	30

Chapter I: Introduction

Modern psychology as we know it dates back thousands of years to early philosophers in Greece, and has been practiced in some form, from then until present day (Griffin, 2002). It is based on the concept that a trained professional is able to meet with a client who may be experiencing an emotional, behavioral, and/or mental problems, and through some form of psychological service, help him/her solve the problem he/she may be experiencing. This practice is currently accepted in the United States, as well as in many other western countries.

Psychology has many sub-disciplines, in particular, school psychology, which has been implemented in the public and private educational system (Merrell, Ervin, & Gimpel, 2006). The primary discipline of psychology was developed by a small portion of society, Euro-American Judeo-Christian males, and is currently being questioned (Arnett, 2008). The specific subsystem of psychology, school psychology, is one that is currently seen as a “mono-cultural” model, being shaped and modified by the dominant culture in the United States, the Euro-American Judeo-Christian cultures ideals, values, morals, and life initiatives (Frisby & Reynolds, 2005).

As our society rapidly becomes more culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD), it is important for any future school psychologist to be aware of the roots of modern psychology and how these roots may or may not relate to meeting the needs of the United States population. In a recent article entitled, *The Neglected 95%*, author Jeffery J. Arnett writes that the world population is 6.5 billion while the United States has reached 300 million people. If one looks at these numbers, and the trends of American psychological research, he or she will notice that researchers are focusing on 5% of the world population (Arnett, 2008). In terms of ethnicity and culture, the demographics of the world are having an impact on the United States as the influx of

immigrants continues to rise every year (Arnett, 2008). It is projected that by the year 2050, racial and ethnic minorities will account for 47% of the of the nation's population. Furthermore, based on this projection the distribution of the population will be 50.1% Euro-Americans, 24.4% Hispanic/Latino-American, 14.6% African American, 8% Asian-American, and all others 5.3% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). In addition to the changing demographics, the student population of the public education system is made up of multiple ethnicities and cultures. Recent studies such as those conducted by the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES) suggest that almost half of the population in the public education system in 2007, 44.1%, is of a different ethnicity or culture than Euro-American (NCES, 2007a).

As the minority population continues to grow, in particular, in our nations' educational system, those providing pupil services will need to adjust to this system change to provide culturally appropriate support. This change may look different depending on what area of the country one is focusing on as well. For example, if we look at specific regions of the country we will see that the Northeastern has a minority population of 34%, the Midwest, a population of 28%, the South, a population of 48.9%, and the West, a population of 56.6% (NCES, 2007b). These numbers suggest that in some parts of the country, not only are minorities significantly present, but are almost equal if not above the Euro-American population in percentage. If we consider these numbers and compare them to the statistics of people in the field of school psychology, we will see a very large disproportion of CLD service providers.

Despite a need for adequate preparation of school psychologists there is an immense shortage of CLD school psychologists to meet the schools psychological needs of English Language Learner (ELL) children. The need for increasing the number of CLD school psychologists has also been demonstrated by the findings of a recent survey of practicing school

psychologists. In the book, *School Psychology for the 21st Century: Foundations and Practices* (Merrell et al., 2006), the authors outlined the ethnic representation in the field of school psychology. The representation of practicing school psychologists in terms of ethnicity and culture was only 5.5%, and one in ten of them were fluent in a second language (Merrell et al., 2006).

The underrepresentation of CLD school psychologists is further evident by the findings of another survey of members of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) indicating that the ethnic breakdown of NASP members was 91% white/ Euro-American, 1.7% Hispanic, 2.4% African American, 1.1% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.6% American Indian/Alaskan Native (NASP, 2003). These statistics suggest that minorities are significantly under-represented in the field of school psychology. While it would be ideal to have the ethnic and cultural percentage of professionals in the field match that of the population, it cannot be imposed. Therefore it is important to educate the Euro-American majority, who are aspiring to be school psychologists, in different ethnicities and cultures so they are better prepared to help all students, regardless of ethnicity and culture. This need is not only recommended, but mandates by organizations such as NASP and the American Psychological Association (APA).

Although the need for the development of multicultural competencies has been well documented (Fowers & Davidov, 2006; NASP, 2000a; NASP, 2000b; APA, 2002), the training curricula and programs have still not emphasized enough the importance of the experiences and training particularly for students in professional programs. This is further exacerbated by the fact, despite more than two decades of pupil service providers advocating for multicultural training at the university level, only one or two courses are offered in most institutions of higher education (IHE), let alone in a school psychology curriculum (Banks & McGee-Banks; 1995;

Rosenfield & Gravois; 1998). Prominent IHE offer courses that teach multiculturalism, however with such a large and vast minority population, it would be highly unlikely that these classes could provide the knowledge needed to serve the entire educational system. As an example, Roger, Hoffman, and Wade (1998) in their survey of certain APA-accredited counseling and school psychology programs found most of the programs only offering one multicultural course. While the school psychologists of tomorrow are being indoctrinated with Euro-American Judeo-Christian based psychological theory and practice, and required, in some cases given the option, to take a course to address issues of multiculturalism, it is unquestionable that these future professionals will be unprepared to accommodate to the CLD population.

Aside from the demographic change in our Nation's public school system, and the lack of cross-cultural competency training in academia, a school psychologist is ethically bound to understand how to best give services to a diverse population. In recent years professional organizations such as NASP and APA have developed guidelines and ethical standards to incorporate multicultural content into training curricula (NASP, 2000a; APA, 2002; APA, 2000). These guidelines articulate a strong commitment to diversity by establishing certain priorities; however, there are no specific recommendations for transforming traditional training curricula into multicultural curriculum to enhance cultural competence and to provide a supportive training environment.

Similarly, the need for developing cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills through professional programs has not been given ample attention. Sue and Sue (2003) described cultural competence as a kind of personal awareness in "a culturally competent professional who is active in the process or aware of his own assumptions, human behavior, perceived notions, personal limitations, and so forth" (p. 178). It is not only in the best interest of the school psychologist to

have a good understanding of multiculturalism, it would be unethical to not have this knowledge when delivering services to those of a different ethnicity and culture.

When considering the information before this paragraph there are two main ideas to consider. First, if we compare the data, we see that almost half of the population of the public school system is of non Euro-American/ethnicity, yet 94.5% of people going into the field of school psychology are Euro-American (Merrell et al., 2006). It should also be noted that the ethical standards of both the NASP and APA require a firm understanding of different ethnicities and cultures to deliver services to all clients in need, however, the education future school psychologists are receiving in this area is marginal. An astute student of school psychology, on being exposed to cultural differences, will acknowledge that some of the concepts and techniques of modern psychology, which is based on Euro-American Judeo-Christian beliefs and values, may not be effective for minority students and their families.

Furthermore, by limiting our knowledge of those we are helping, we are limiting the help that we can deliver. While the majority of the population in the United States is of Euro-American Judeo-Christian background, there is a large segment that is not. It is this segment that may not be well served with the current principles of modern psychology taught in colleges and universities. The literature and theories studied by school psychologists is based on the ideas of Euro-American Judeo-Christians suggesting that it is unlikely they will be able to deliver effective services to students of different cultures and ethnicities (Behring & Ingraham, 1998). Until the curriculum includes a variety of classes to broaden the multicultural knowledge of the students, academia will simply be producing school psychologists, not multicultural school psychologists, or, those that have a balance of skills including a knowledge of scientific objectivity, a passion for advocacy, a firm understanding of historical politics and social policy,

as well as an awareness of the expanding research on multicultural issues of psychological theory and practice (Frisby & Reynolds, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

School psychologists are not fully able to effectively provide counseling to the current student population of the United States public school system because the theories and techniques they are taught, pertaining to psychological help are rooted in the values and beliefs of Euro-American Judeo Christians and do not include alternative options or cultural views.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand and analyze the current literature pertaining to the lack of cross-cultural knowledge, self-awareness, skills, and competencies for future pupil service providers entering the field of school psychology. Through this literature review, the following objectives will guide the researcher: (1) establish the history of modern school psychology; (2) identify inadequacies in research, theories and practices in terms of cross-cultural competencies of school psychology; and (3) to propose short and long term solutions to improve the impact of school psychology on the entire population.

Assumptions of the Study

In this literature review it is assumed that the current methods of modern school psychology are effective exclusively for the Euro-American Judeo-Christian majority. The population of the United States public education system, in terms of ethnic and cultural demographics, is nearly half non-white/Euro-American. Also, the education of future school psychologist today has, at most, a marginal amount of multicultural education to make these individuals cross culturally competent in the field. As a result of this, those entering the field of

school psychology are ill-equipped to successfully aid all those that are not of, or practice the culture of, Euro-American Judeo-Christianity.

Definition of Terms

To understand the content area of this study, certain terms may need clarification. The terms are as follows:

Anglo-American: “Americans whose biological and cultural heritage originated in England, or Americans with other biological and cultural heritages who have assimilated into the dominant or mainstream culture in the United States” (Banks & Banks, 1997, p. 433). For the purpose of this paper, Euro-Americans will be in place of the more common term, Anglo-American.

Cultural Competence: A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2004).

Culture: “A pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 1992, p. 17).

English Language Learners (ELL): Students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English (Department of Education: Office of English Language Acquisition, 2006).

Ethnic Group: “A micro cultural group or collectivity that shares a common history and culture, common values, behaviors, and other characteristics that cause members of the group to have a shared identity” (Banks & Banks, 1997, p. 434).

Ethnic Majority: “a dominant ethnic group that collectivity within a society has preeminent authority or comprises the majority of a population, to function both as guardians and sustainers of the controlling value system and as prime allocators of rewards in the society” (Kaufmann, 2004, p. 86).

Ethnic Minority Group: “An ethnic minority group has distinguishing cultural characteristics, racial characteristics, or both, which enable members of other groups to identify its members easily” (Banks & Banks, 1997, p. 434).

Judeo-Christian: “...is meant to encompass the perspectives of both Judaism and Christianity, as historic and living world religions. It recognizes the origins and continuity of Christianity with Judaism, but the term is not meant to subsume either faith with the other...” (Miller & Delaney, 2005, p. 5).

Multicultural Competence: “Possessing the necessary skills to successfully interact with individuals of diverse cultural/ethnic backgrounds (Holcomb-McCoy & Myers, 1999).

Multiculturalism: “A philosophical position and movement that assumes that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of a pluralistic society should be reflected in all of the institutionalized structures of educational institutions, including the staff, the norms and values, the curriculum, and the student body” (Banks & Banks, 1997, p. 435).

Multicultural School Psychologist: "... a service provider who respects and honors the dignity of human variation...and subsumes the intention of the careful consideration of the individual as a psychological system interacting with one or more cultural systems. An individual who is aware of the distinct and expanding literature on multicultural issues in psychological theory and practice..." (Frisby & Reynolds, 2005, p. 14-28).

Natural Science: "Any of the sciences (as physics, chemistry, or biology) that deal with matter, energy, and their interrelations and transformations or with objectively measurable phenomena" (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, 2009).

Self-Efficacy: "Degree to which an individual feels confident that he or she can perform a task successfully" (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004, p. 368).

Social Science: "A branch of science that deals with the institutions and functioning of human society and with the interpersonal relationships of individuals as members of society" (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, 2009).

Racial Micro-aggression: "...brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color" (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, et al., 2007, p. 271).

Religion: "A set of beliefs and values to which an individual or group has a strong loyalty and attachment. A religion usually has moral codes, rituals, and institutions (society) that reinforce and propagate its' beliefs" (Banks & Banks, 1997, p. 436).

Limitations of the Study

The United States is made up of multiple ethnicities and cultures. Within these ethnicities and cultures, there may be subcultures and ethnicities as well. With so many different

cultures and sub-cultures, it is unrealistic to expect that expanding the multicultural scope of the fields of school psychology will result in acceptance of the services by all members of the population. Also, the sample of academic institutions taken when collecting data about multicultural courses offered in academia was very small. Much more information would be needed to draw a solid conclusion about the trends in academia and also, if current non Euro-American Judeo-Christians find current school psychology training and practice to be useful or of significant help to other CLD populations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will include a discussion of the literature review pertaining to the roots of modern school psychology and how it has shaped the cultural bias of the discipline today. The topics to be discussed are the roots of modern psychology, the history of school psychology, the code of ethics and guidelines for standards, the product of a culturally biased social science, the role of academia and cross-cultural competency, cross-cultural curricula, and the need for cross-cultural school psychology.

The Roots of Modern Psychology

The methods and techniques of modern school psychology are based exclusively on Euro-American Judeo-Christian theorists and psychologists. It can be said with confidence that modern school psychology is in fact a Euro-American Judeo-Christian concept that has been legitimized in the western culture of Europe and the United States. In the article titled *The Roots and Branches of Psychology: Historical and Contemporary Views on Human Nature and Psychology*, the psychology that is studied today in the United States and Europe sprang from the two areas of the world ultimately coming from the ancient Greek culture. Early poems such as the Illiad and the Odyssey have multiple references to the author's philosophy of human nature (Griffin, 2005).

In addition to Griffin, other authors such as Arnett, make a very similar claim. Brennan wrote that if one truly has a respect for the discipline of psychology, he or she must then understand its roots. He adds that philosophers of the West, specifically in Europe gained large amounts of knowledge and philosophical perspectives from the Greek culture and eventually adapted it as their own. After years of refinement during the Renaissance, Christian philosophers

added their own ideas to these philosophies. Eventually, these philosophies became teachings in Europe and evolved to what we know as psychology in the nineteenth century (Brennan, 1982).

More specifically, the theories of modern psychology are not only of Greek and European roots, but are also rooted in the practice of Judeo-Christianity. One prominent figure for whom the practice of psychology as it is known today is Sigmund Freud, a European male of Judeo-Christian faith. In the late 1800s, Freud developed multiple theories and methods of psychotherapy, in particular, psychoanalysis. Given the significant nature of psychoanalysis in the mid 20th century, virtually every theorist at the time was directly or indirectly impacted by Sigmund Freud's theories (Sharf, 2004).

Many well known people in this field were impacted by Freud, including his daughter Anna Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Aldler, and Erik Erikson. Other sub-disciplines in psychology like Behaviorism, Humanism/Existentialism, and Cognitivism, although not directly related to the work of Freud, were influenced by his theories. Some prominent theorists such as Adler and Jung, questioned Freud considering his methods to be sloppy and his conclusions to be questionable. Regardless of the level of Freudian influence, or how legitimate his contemporaries and future students of psychology believed his findings were, one fact about these individuals remains the same, and that is all of them have roots in the Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture.

In the book, *School Psychology for the 21st Century*, Merrell and colleagues (2006) wrote:

Freud's deterministic view of human behavior and the unconscious was truly revolutionary. Although many of his theories have now been rejected even by proponents of the psychodynamic approach he pioneered, one must not overlook the

enormity of his contributions and influence. Even today, his metaphor of the conscious being the 'tip of the iceberg' of human experience is widely used, and the influence of his work in Western cultures cannot be minimized (p. 25).

It is clear that Freud's contributions to the discipline of psychology and counseling are prominent. Religion played a significant role in Freud's life, adding to the development of his theories. Although it is questioned as to how closely Freud followed his faith, the book, *Freud and Moses: The Long Journey Home*, suggested that he was in fact very much influenced by the Judeo-Christian religion. Biblical stories seem to have been a significant part of Freud's thought process as he would more often than not, reference biblical themes and figures. One specific example from the bible would be Joseph, the man who interpreted dreams (Rice, 1990). The Euro-American Judeo-Christian roots of psychology in the western world have shaped the contemporary practices of the discipline.

Current professionals in the field have commented on the current practice of psychology and the cultural bias it entails. Upon reviewing literature pertaining to psychology in the recent decade, most studies were done by Euro-Americans on clients of the same culture. This suggests that the likelihood of Euro-American values engrained in the field of psychology is highly likely (Behring & Ingraham, 1998). As a result of this, providing mental assistance to individuals who do not practice the culture of Euro-American Judeo-Christianity may be much more difficult. It is crucial that both practices be re-evaluated in a multicultural sense to better suit the needs of the diverse population of the United States.

The History of School Psychology

The Early Years (1890-1969)

Given the historical nature of modern psychology, we know the discipline may not be culturally versatile, and in terms of services, may work better on those of the western Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture. As society has progressed there have been multiple sub-disciplines branching off from this larger discipline, one in specific, school psychology. The history of school psychology dates back to the late 1800's and early 1900's. Prior to the Civil War, the country's public educational system consisted of "common schools". During the reconstruction period of the United States after the Civil War, the more powerful centralized government added the building of schools to its agenda, and also devised a plan to finance these schools creating what could be considered the blueprint for the public educational system (Merrell et al., 2006). The development of the public educational system combined with the social conditions during and after the reconstruction period, and the new ideas and resources in the field of education presented new challenges to those involved in the field of education. It was during this time that the concept of psychology was being introduced to the United States as well. This set the stage for the advent of school psychology (Merrell et al., 2006).

In 1896, Lightner Witmer of the University of Pennsylvania created a psychological clinic designed to teach psychologists to help educators identify and solve learning problems in children. As a result of this, he has been labeled as the founder of school psychology (Bardon & Bennett, 1974). Francis Galton was involved in similar work in London. Twelve years earlier in 1884 he developed programs to help schools in his area academically identify and classify students (Merrell et al., 2006). It was in these two cases that professionals in the discipline of psychology applied their knowledge to the public educational system creating school

psychology, and as the country moved into the 20th century the discipline progressed and was distilled and modified further.

In 1905, in Paris France, psychologists Alfred Binet and Theophile Simon were ordered by the Minister of Public Education to develop a way to identify children in schools that were having a difficult time adapting to the curriculum and to develop a alternative way for them to learn. As a result of this the Binet-Simons scales were created, the first test to measure modern intelligence. These tests proved so useful they were used in the United States, adopted by Lewis Terman of Stanford University. They were translated into English and school psychology became synonymous with testing and assessment in the public educational system (Merrell et al., 2006).

The title of school psychologist would later be officially given to Arnold Gesell when, from 1915 to 1919, he was appointed this title. As time progressed, the term was used more and more in the educational system being linked to delivering psychological services to youths considered at risk. The sub discipline of school psychology, although highly unregulated and unofficial, had been created (Merrell et al., 2006).

The Modern Years (1970-2000)

As time progressed the face of school psychology had undergone constant reconstruction. One individual, Thomas Fagan, summarized the history of school psychology into two time periods. The first was called the hybrid years, or those between the time periods of 1890 to 1969 characterized by the emergence and intense evolution of the discipline. The second time period is known as the thoroughbred years, or, the time period of 1970 to 2000 characterized by stability in the profession, and official recognition of school psychology (Merrell et al., 2006).

As the public educational system developed and became more aware of students needs, so did the discipline of school psychology. The founding of NASP in 1969 was of enormous significance to the field as it gave the discipline official nationwide credibility (Merrell et al., 2006). Government intervention in the public school system, and continuous legislation for students with special needs changed the field even further. The passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975, Education for All Handicapped Children Act, was the first law created by the federal government aimed at children with special needs. This had an enormous impact on the field of school psychology for three reasons. The first reason was because there were specified federal laws pertaining to the needs of students eligible for special education, more school psychologists were needed. Second, more specific and greater expectations were placed on school psychologists in training and in the field. Third, the multiple amendments to Public Law 94-142 made the face of school psychology different every time. As more demands were placed on school psychologists, the greater the education was needed to meet the demands of the public school system (Merrell et al., 2006).

From its very beginning to present day the face of school psychology has changed dramatically. The discipline is one that, as young as it is, has integrated roots in both the fields of psychology and the United States education system (Merrell et al., 2006). The field has move forward from the late 19th to early 20th century to modern day, early 21st century in terms of the role of the school psychologist, who the school psychologist will serve, and to what extent those services will be. As society advances and becomes more and more ethnically and culturally diverse, the discipline of school psychology must not only become more diverse, but must be cross-culturally competent and be able to serve all of those in need in the public educational system regardless of ethnicity or culture (Merrell et al., 2006).

Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Standards

National Association for School Psychologist (NASP)

A number of national organizations have developed school psychologists' Code of Ethics and Standards for Training (NASP, 2000b; APA, 2002) that outline what professionals should know and be able to do when working with CLD children, youth, and their families. For example in the ethical standards for both NASP and APA, there is a specific guideline for best ethical practices in delivering services to a diverse population. The NASP professional conduct manual outlines the expectations of the school psychologist in terms of service delivery to a diverse population. NASP states that:

“School psychologists respect differences in age, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds...” (NASP, 2000b, p. 27).

American Psychological Association (APA)

The American Psychological Association (APA) has demonstrated a similar interest in minority clients by requiring multicultural competencies of all service providers. In its ethical standards, states that service providers should adhere to boundaries of competence

“...establishes that an understanding of factors associated with age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, or socioeconomic status is essential for psychologists to ensure the competence of their services, or they make appropriate referrals...” (APA, 2002, p. 5).

The addition of these ethical standards was another point in the history of school psychology that added another variable to the duties of the professional, the need to be a multicultural school psychologist.

In terms of the ethical standards of both organizations, many of these professional organizations have openly expressed concern about working with and giving effective services to individuals in a cross-cultural context. This concern is not limited to the borders of the United States, but is also shared in other countries as they believe that school psychology will be limited in terms of diversity training and issues (Sandoval, 2007). NASP and APA both have ethical standards outlining the duties of the school psychologist and the ability to be cross-culturally competent; however, the concern of lack of diversity training still exists even with these ethical codes.

The Product of a Culturally Biased Social Science

Understanding the history of school psychology, and the empirical research supporting the practice, is paramount when one is considering the shortcomings of the discipline in terms of cross cultural application. The United States and Europe are two societies that are largely impacted by the values of religion, specifically Judeo-Christianity. Psychology is considered a social science as opposed to the natural sciences. The social systems of Europe and the United States have values and morals founded in the Judeo-Christian religions. Any social science developed in a society influenced by a set of religious values and beliefs will then be influenced by those very same values. It can be said with confidence if one is not a Euro-American that practices Judeo-Christianity, this social science may be of less help to him or her.

If the basis of a social science is merely a segment of a society's population, or only of a specific society, it would then not be applicable to those not included. Professionals in the discipline of school psychology are currently seeking additional empirical research from non Euro-American Judeo-Christian cultures. Due to the small amount of knowledge in the field of school psychology in terms of multiculturalism and cross-cultural competence it is assumed that

those with a marginal knowledge of this will not only be less able to aid those of any other culture than the Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture, but may also impose the values of this culture on the clients he or she is helping (Behring & Ingraham, 1998).

Understanding different cultures is acknowledging different individual identities, beliefs, values, methods of communication, morals, and behaviors, and respecting them. Some professionals are recognizing that psychological research is currently being conducted outside of the United States and Western Europe, however, the psychology practiced in the United States has been aloof to mostly all contributions from the international community. This has had a strong impact on American psychology (Arnett, 2008). These contributions are not being considered and as a result, psychology is cross-culturally deficient.

Arnett (2008) conducted a study of a series of journal articles pertaining to psychology. The journals he investigated were: *Developmental Psychology*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (JPSP), *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* (JAP), *Journal of Family Psychology* (JFP), *Health Psychology*, and *Journal of Educational Psychology* (JEP). The number of articles reviewed from these professional journals amounted to 4,037. Among first authors, overall, 73% were based at American universities; the percentage of first authors who were affiliated with American universities ranged across journals from 65% (JPSP) to 85% (JFP). An additional 14% of first authors were from English-speaking countries (not including the United States), and 11% were from Europe. The world outside of the United States, the English-speaking countries, and Europe was represented by only 2% of first authors. Only 1% of first authors were either from Asia or Israel, and there were virtually none from Latin America, Africa, or the Middle East (Arnett, 2008).

Arnett's study clearly showed that regardless of psychological research abroad, six professional psychological journals readily available for psychologists to utilize contain virtually no information on treatment and therapy techniques other than those of Euro- American Judeo-Christian studies. Arnett (2008) further outlined the reason for considering research from other countries when he wrote about the differences in Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture and cultures of other regions of the world. In the field of school psychology, cross-cultural education is very important.

Arnett (2008) also looked at multiple aspects of culture in terms of developmental psychology, gender roles, marriage, and educational psychology. These four topics in school psychology are important when giving aid to youth in American schools because different cultures and ethnicities may look at one of the four topics in a much different way than Euro-American Judeo-Christians do. Each student may face a challenge in terms of development, gender, marriage and family, and education, and it is the responsibility of school psychology professionals to seek a better understanding of the many different cultural values regarding these topics (Arnett, 2008). In academia, if professionals are to give the best services to their clients and to meet the ethical standards of certain organizations, they must have a better concept of multiculturalism and cross-cultural competency (Behring & Ingraham, 1998).

The Role of Academia and Cross-Cultural Competency

As the demographics of the United States change in terms of race/ethnicity and culture, it is absolutely vital that more cross-cultural education is required of school psychologists. Without such education and its impact on the practices of school psychology, the discipline could be ineffective and at worst scorned by those of non Euro-American Judeo-Christian cultures because of their insensitivities. One particular study done in regards to multicultural training for

school psychologists was done on a national sample taken pertaining to doctoral and non-doctoral programs. The findings were that 40% of the programs involved in the survey had no classes pertaining to minorities or cultural issues. 45% had only 15% of time devoted to discussing and studying minority issues, and 30% of the programs involved had students with little to no experience dealing with issues of multiculturalism (Frisby & Reynolds, 2005).

Institutions of Higher Education: Course Requirements

The University of Arizona, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Delaware each have advanced degree programs for the field of school psychology. To gain a Ph. D. in school psychology at the University of Arizona, a student must complete 32 courses, two of which pertain to multiculturalism. The courses are *Cultural Diversity and School Psychology*, and *Contemporary Issues in Bilingual School Psychology* (University of Arizona, 2007). The University of Minnesota has different requirements for students completing Ph. D. and master's programs. According to the University of Minnesota, the program handbook lists classes that must be completed in order to obtain a Ph. D. in School Psychology, however, not one course specific to multicultural education is mandatory for graduation (University of Minnesota, 2008).

The University of Delaware has a master's program in school psychology which requires the completion of 19 courses, all related to the field of school psychology, none specifically pertaining to multicultural education (University of Delaware, 2008). Although the sample of universities is minor, the fact of the matter is, one third of the sample mandates a student to have one course of multicultural education. After researching the different institutions of higher education catalogs, it is clear that current classes that teach multicultural competence in order to become a school psychologist, is of marginal interest.

In a study conducted by Rogers, Close-Coloney, Ponterotto, & Wiese (1992), it was found that 60% of the doctoral and non-doctoral programs they surveyed offered merely one course specific devoted to multicultural issues and 63% of those programs surveyed offered two to five courses. Seventy five percent made at least one multicultural course a requirement. Rogers et al. (1992) also found that 25% of the programs they surveyed spent less than 5% of their time on courses related to minority issues. Forty percent did not spend any time at all on courses addressing a multicultural content and most of the programs (94%) did not require exposure to a second-language course.

It would seem to make sense that the programs in academia that are preparing future school psychologists would incorporate multicultural education as part of the curriculum. The goal of providing effective multicultural school psychologist is a continuous process including multiple components such as minority recruitment for the field, promoting courses designed to shape a student's cross cultural competencies, and as a whole, engraining a culturally broad approach to the field (Esquivel, Lopez, & Nahari, 2007). While the students in training to be school psychologists are currently being indoctrinated with the theories and practices of Euro-American Judeo Christian researchers, they are, at most, being required to take a small handful of multicultural classes, and in some cases, being given the option to expand their cross-cultural competencies.

Cross-cultural Curricula

In addition to varying theoretical foundations, the delivery of school psychology curricula is also non-uniform. While some school psychology programs infuse multicultural concepts into all coursework, the majority of programs teach the multicultural school psychology curricula through a single semester-long course (Carey & Reinat, 1990; Das, 1995; Tomlison-Clarke,

2000). Current literature in the field of school psychology suggests that if the discipline is to keep current and be practical to all individuals in the public educational system, the curriculum must change for school psychologists in training. The assessment methods, counseling techniques, consultation skills, and strategies in intervention cater primarily to those of Euro-American descent (Zhou, Bray, Kehle, Theodore, Clark, & Jenson, 2004).

One specific reason why cross-cultural curricula would help in delivering services to students of the non Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture is the idea of individual's improved self efficacy when working with multi-cultural school psychologists. Rogers et al. (1992) found that 69% of program directors estimated that students were exposed to minority clients less than a quarter percent of their time during practicum and internship experiences. Even more concerning Rogers and colleagues (1992) found that almost one-third of the programs surveyed reported that students spend 0-5% of their experiential training time with minority students. A multi-cultural school psychologist will be able to give much better services to individuals from diverse backgrounds. As a result of this, the individuals self efficacy will be more positive or higher in terms of the domain he or she needs help in. The idea that professionals with experiences, knowledge, and cross-cultural experiences are able to give better services to clients from different cultures is what is called an efficacy claim (Frisby & Reynolds, 2005). This is one example of the need for cross cultural curricula for aspiring and current school psychologists due to the fact that a large percentage of school psychology students have limited or no direct exposure to CLD clients during field training (Rogers & Conoley, 1992).

The need for cross-cultural curricula for aspiring and current school psychologists is extreme if the professionals in the field are going to give effective services to the entire population. Professionals in the field that have noticed these deficiencies have voiced concern in

the past are finally just now being heard. With the changing demographics occurring in the United States, psychology must make substantive revisions in its curriculum, training, and practice. Without these revisions, psychology will risk professional, ethical, and economic problems because psychology will no longer be a viable professional resource to the majority of the U.S. population (Hall, 1997).

The Need for Cross Cultural School Psychology

The foundations and empirical research of modern school psychology are primarily based on Euro-American culture, and more specifically, on the values of the Judeo-Christian faith. As a result, school psychology is a culturally and ethnically biased social science. This bias is outlined by Sue and colleagues (2007) who made a connection between mental health providers and their tendencies to display racial micro-aggressions toward clients of diverse backgrounds. The nature of a micro-aggression is often not intentional and unconscious leading to two significant dilemmas. One is that the majority of White mental health professionals believe they are completely free of any biased or unjust ideas pertaining to ethnicity and culture. This brings us to the second dilemma, or, that because of the idea of being free of any of these ideals, the professional will be less able to identify any acts of ethnic or cultural insensitivity have taken place in sessions. This can result in the mental help specialist having marginal knowledge, if any, that they have insulted the client of color (Sue et al., 2007).

Sue et al. (2007) proposed that in order for school psychologist to be effective service providers, they must first understand that they may be displaying these micro-aggressions. School psychologists must recognize that their training and the historical fundamentals of the methods and techniques learned in their training have impacted their approaches to the degree that it is likely they are unintentionally displaying some form of micro-aggression. This can be

detrimental to the effectiveness of attempted service and even negate all positive outcome of a session with a client. As a result of this, these clients may feel misunderstood, or may feel that a school psychologist is a bogus form of help if you are not of the dominant culture. For example, certain cultures such as Latino and Asian Americans who may be stressed with inner family issues may be told to openly express the concern they are having and in some cases be defiant to family members. The school psychologist helping them may not understand that in these cultures lies a respect for family and authority usually prohibiting such behavior (Sue et al., 2007).

Much work is needed to expand the services of school psychology to make them effective across cultures and ethnicities. Knox et al. (cited in Sue et al., 2003) stated that in order to be truly effective in his or her position, the mental health provider must be comfortable discussing race, ethnicity, culture, and the concept of racism. As it is his or her job to openly engage in dialogue, it would seem this would be expected, however, data shows that White mental health professionals receive little to no training on how to address these topics with clients. In order for school psychologists in training to learn practices that will be effective to those of cultures other than Euro-American Judeo-Christian, they must gain more knowledge of these cultures.

Chapter III: Summary, Critical Analysis, and Recommendations

The purpose of the literature review was to document the roots of modern school psychology and more specifically, the field of school psychology. This chapter will discuss the findings of the previous literature review in regards to the need for cross-cultural curricula as well as experiential practicum and internship fieldwork with culturally/linguistically diverse students in the training of future school psychologists. Finally, a critical analysis of the literature and recommendations will be presented for areas of future research.

Summary

Aspiring professionals in the field of school psychology usually have the primary focus of helping individuals in need of help, both mentally and physically, specifically in the public educational system that are not able to learn material like those around them. To understand the need for cross-cultural competence in school psychology one must understand multiple variables.

The basic roots of psychology, which impact school psychology, can be found in the ancient Greek society leading all the way up to present day (Griffin, 2005). If one looks at current literature to this point, he/she will see the heavy influence of Euro-American Judeo-Christian morals and values on the discipline (Behring & Ingraham, 1998). If we look at the demographics of the United States, the representation of minorities, some of whom that may not practice the dominant culture, is almost half of the current population (NCES, 2007a).

These facts tell us that those training, and in the field of school psychology will need to be cross culturally competent to aid the whole population, however, as illustrated by Roger, Hoffman and Wade (1998), the amount of multicultural training is marginal. Although NASP and APA require that professionals are able to deliver services to the entire population (NASP, 2000a; APA, 2000), as a whole, academia at the most, requires one class to fulfill a multicultural

requirement. School psychologists have to become educated in their fields, however, the education these professionals are getting is culturally biased, and therefore, is not practical for the entire population they may be giving services to.

Critical Analysis

We now know the roots of psychology, and how these roots influenced the discipline to become a European social science (Griffin, 2005). This social science influenced the newer sub-discipline, school psychology, beginning in Europe and eventually being adopted in American society by prominent figures in the psychological and educational systems (Merrell et al., 2006). School psychology, being a social science, can also be said with confidence to be culturally biased as it is manipulated by society's morals and values. These morals and values are influenced by the society's dominant spirituality. These facts tell us that the modern discipline of school psychology was designed to accommodate those of the Euro-American Judeo-Christian culture.

Considering all of these facts, it is important to pay special attention to the demographics of the American public educational system which was almost half, 44.1%, minority population and is growing exponentially (NCES, 2007a). In addition, the demographics in the profession of school psychology is a stark contrast to this as the representation of school psychologists of different cultures and ethnicities is only 5.5% (Merrell et al., 2006). With this in mind, it would make sense to see an influx of multicultural classes in academia, yet this is still not the case.

In regards to the training programs for school psychologists in training, cognitive assessment is considered the most important class offered, yet a multicultural assessment is rarely seen in the curricula as even an elective option (Martines, 2008). Changes in the field that would increase the number of ethnically diverse CLD school psychologists have been strongly

recommended by some professionals directly, and by organizations such as APA indirectly (Martines, 2008). School psychologists in training are learning skills that help them to work with other professionals, conduct interventions, and communicate effectively with others such as parents, professionals, and clients. The one area these programs fail to address is cross-cultural competencies in the profession. This is further illustrated by the fact that regardless of the advocacy for multicultural curricula for school psychology, only one or two courses are offered to aspiring professionals in the field (Martines, 2008).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The importance of cross-cultural school psychology has just started to gain attention and change will be needed in two areas; increased cross cultural experiences for students of the two disciplines, and changing theories, practices and techniques taught in the schools of the two disciplines. Keen (2001) wrote,

It is perhaps possible now, with the coming of postmodern thought that the cleansing science of values, insisted on by those who see science as beyond the influence of historical rhetoric, can be over. To see the rhetorical nature of psychology is to put psychology into a different historical narrative than the modern one of self-correcting, universal, and objective science. It is time to revise our theory. I wonder if good clinicians have not always known this (p. 239).

The path to multicultural school psychology will ultimately lie in the hands of academia. Reevaluation of current theories and practices in school psychology is important for the discipline's future serving America's student population. Until then it cannot be considered a science that can be effectively be applied to all members of the human race, without regard to the

uniqueness of the individual's ethnicity and culture. There is a dire need to make serious changes to address the growing change in the population demographics in the United States.

Thus, the following recommendations are offered for areas of further research regarding school psychologist in-training as well as practicing school psychologists of provide services to CLD children, youth, and their families:

1. Students need to be introduced to multiculturalism at a much earlier age and at the latest, the undergrad level of college. Multicultural training should also focus on the influence of racial identity development.
2. Inclusion of cultural and ethnic content should be infused in each course, not taught as a single course only. The idea of multiculturalism needs to be ingrained in every course offered to aspiring school psychologists.
3. Professionals in academia that are of culturally diverse backgrounds need to be recruited to educate those entering the profession.
4. Academia must provide more opportunity for students to study in non-western continents such as Africa, Asia, and South America to gain a better knowledge of different cultures and ethnicities.
5. More cross-culturally competent individuals are needed to mentor those students of the majority group and share knowledge of multiculturalism.

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