

CONDUCTING CULTURALLY COMPETENT RESEARCH IN SERVING LATINO/A POPULATIONS: PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE?

Cultural competence is now considered a standard when working with ethnically diverse populations (Flaskerud, 2007).

Cross et al. (1989) defined cultural competence as a “set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that come together in a system or agency among professionals and enables the system, agency, or professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (as cited by Flaskerud, 2007, p. 121).

WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE?

- ◉ Cultural Knowledge: Actively learning about the community (Flaskerud, 2007).
 - Ethnicities
 - Language
 - Origin
 - Immigration status
 - Acculturation level
 - Economy
 - Sources of income
 - Family and social structures and roles
 - Value systems and beliefs
 - Education levels and literacy
 - Geography
 - Ecologic environment

WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE?

- ◉ Cultural Sensitivity: Ethic that values and respects the beliefs, norms, and practices of the people to be served (Flaskerud, 2007)
 - This may include but is not limited to:
 - Having an awareness of our own cultural beliefs and practices
 - Having the capacity to be warm, empathic, and genuine
 - Flexibility and skillfulness in adapting to differing cultural contexts and situations

WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE?

- Collaboration with the community to be served.

- Collaboration with the community in research indicates that members of the community are **ACTIVELY ENGAGED** in the research **PROCESS**

MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES AND STANDARDS

- According to Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) there are three counselor characteristics:
 - 1) *counselor awareness of his or her own assumptions, values and biases*
 - *Understanding of own personal worldview*
 - 2) *understanding of the worldview of the culturally different client*
 - *Without negative judgment*
 - *Accepting the client's worldview as a viable perspective*
 - 3) *development of appropriate intervention strategies and techniques*

MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE

- ◉ Is an ACTIVE PROCESS
- ◉ Acknowledgment of our own limitations
- ◉ Dimensions of cultural competency
 - Beliefs and attitudes
 - Checking biases and stereotypes
 - Knowledge
 - worldview
 - Skills
 - Intervention strategies that are effective with the target population (e.g. Latinos)

HOW CAN WE BE CULTURALLY SENSITIVE WHEN CONDUCTING RESEARCH?

- ◉ Can use the Multicultural Competencies as a Framework for conducting research with underrepresented or Latino populations
- ◉ Must take it several steps further
- ◉ Collaboration with the local university or research agency might be beneficial in conducting culturally competent research
- ◉ Involving the community members directly in the research process is crucial

RESEARCH DESIGN

- ◉ There are multiple approaches to research that can serve as more culturally appropriate and more rooted in social justice in working with ethnically diverse populations
 - **Participatory Action Research (PAR)**
 - Action Research
 - Participatory Research
 - Community Based Participatory Action Research
- ◉ These approaches may be qualitative, quantitative, or both (e.g. mixed methods)

HISTORY OF PAR

- ◉ Developed in the 1970's as a way to resist mainstream oppressive research via community/participant involvement in the research design and process (Rutman, Hubberstey, Barlow, & Brown, 2005)
- ◉ The relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed (Freire, 1973)
 - The process of *conscientizacion* or critical reflection
 - Engaging the community in solving their problems utilizing critical dialogue

CONDUCTING RESEARCH

- ◉ Engaging in culturally competent research requires a skepticism with regard to the methods and concepts that have been standard in social and behavioral science research (McKean, Chesla, Mycude, & Fisher, 2002).
 - McKean et al. (2002) study examining cultural competence and recruitment methods in a sample of Latinos with diabetes, found that Latinos tended to have a difficult time saying “no” face-to-face and instead expressed unwillingness to participate in more subtle ways (e.g. not answering the door, rescheduling appointments).
 - During a follow-up 1 year later, Latinos seemed to refuse participation in the study due to stressors related to illness or other factors, had experienced major health complications, and other more severe health problems. Other families had returned to Mexico.

CONDUCTING RESEARCH

- ◉ Several assumptions may be made if we do not examine the environmental, social, political and historical context in which people are living.
- ◉ For example, women that do not show up for their counseling appointments at the DV agency may have a variety of valid reasons that may be misinterpreted.
- ◉ It’s important to check ourselves, our biases and perceptions about the people we are working with or the people we would like to “investigate.”

WHAT IS PAR?

- ◉ Participatory: research suggests there is an “emphasis on collaboration and participation in both production and spectatorship. They are anti-hierarchical and value process over product” (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 263).
- ◉ Similar to phenomenological research, PAR suggests that the essence of meaning is understood through subjective experience; and particularly, a community of people reflecting on themselves and their own experiences

WHAT IS PAR?

- ◉ Minkler (2000) defines PAR as “systematic inquiry with the collaboration of those affected by the issue being studied, for the purpose of education or taking action or effecting social change” (p. 192).
- ◉ PAR is rooted in social justice (Potts, 1997)
- ◉ Combination of:
 - INVESTIGATION
 - EDUCATION &
 - COMMUNITY ACTION
 - And the creation of an EMPOWERING atmosphere for personal and social change

WHAT IS PAR?

- ◉ Six tenets of PAR (Israel et al):
 - 1) participatory
 - 2) cooperative, engaging community members and researchers in a joint process in which both contribute equally
 - 3) a co-learning process between researchers and community members
 - 4) a method for systems development and local community building; strengthening and building relationships
 - 5) Empowerment: participants, researchers, and other
 - 6) Balance between abstract process and outcomes and more distal and/or concrete accomplishments; a way to balance research and action

PAR

- ◉ Gonzalez, Lejano, Vidales, Conner, Kidokoro, Fazelli, & Cabrales (2007): a PAR/Freirian study conducted in East Los Angeles to examine the benefits of PAR research and what could be learned about health issues in this community using this multiplex approach.
- ◉ They conceptualized 7 methodologies

PAR

- ◉ 7 methodologies (Gonzalez et al, 2007)
- ◉ 1) Organizing - making phone calls & making personal invitations to community members, adults and youth for participation
- ◉ 2) Workshops - focus groups to learn about the main elements of the study that were important to residents
- ◉ 3) resident interviews - member participants interviewed other residents in their homes about their health concerns
- ◉ 4) Land use mapping - based on residents discussing problematic land uses; team started logging and mapping land use patterns
- ◉ 5) Community Health Survey - included quantitative and qualitative data
- ◉ 6) Photo Voice
- ◉ 7) Reflection Analysis

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