

Effective Approach in Building up Rapport and Counselling Ethnic Minority Clients

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Outline of Presentation

- ▶ Needs of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong
- ▶ Related research and literature
- ▶ Cultural appropriateness of Carl Rogers for ethnic minorities
- ▶ Cultural Values: Self-Disclosure and Insight
- ▶ Cultural Competence Model
- ▶ Multicultural Counseling/Therapy (MCT)
- ▶ References

Betty C. Eng

- ▶ Live Criss-Cross Cultural Identities
- ▶ Born in China, raised and educated in USA
- ▶ Home in Hong Kong for about 18 years
- ▶ A Chinese American who is an Ethnic Minority in USA but a member of dominant society in HK

Betty C. Eng

- ▶ B.S. in Psychology & M.S. in Counseling, California State University
- ▶ Ed.D. University of Toronto
- ▶ Counseling for over 12 years, universities, H.K. international school, Community Centers. Emphasis in schools, women, Asian Americans.
- ▶ Teaching for over 20 years University of California, HK Institute of Education, City University of H.K.

Henry Chun Yip Ho

- ▶ Born in Hong Kong
- ▶ Immigrated to Canada at the age of 10
- ▶ Received primary, secondary, and higher education in Canada
- ▶ BA in Psychology, Simon Fraser University
- ▶ Received postgraduate education in UK
- ▶ MSc in Social and Organizational Psychology, University of Exeter

Henry Chun Yip Ho

- ▶ Working in City University of Hong Kong as a researcher for more than 1.5 years
- ▶ Previously conducted research for the Correctional Services Department
- ▶ Currently conducting research with Dr. Eng on the development of Student-Centered Counseling in Hong Kong

Eye Contact as a Cultural Experience

I once had a very angry Korean-American mother complain to me that her son was showing her disrespect and challenging her authority. Her son was giving her direct eye contact when speaking to her about his homework assignment. The mother asked her son how he had learned such direct eye contact when speaking to her. The son replied that the Western teachers in his school had instructed students to look directly at them when communicating. For this traditional Asian mother, casting eyes downward when speaking to elders was a sign of humility and reverence. The anger expressed by the mother taught me that there are different cultural meanings for the acts we present. (Eng, 1980)

Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong

Ethnicity	%
Asians (other than Chinese)	
Filipino	32.9%
Indonesian	25.7%
Indian	6.0%
Nepalese	4.7%
Japanese	3.9%
Thai	3.5%
Pakistani	3.2%
Korean	1.4%
Other Asian	2.3%
White	10.6%
Mixed	5.3%
Others	0.6%

Census, 2006

Degree of Discrimination towards Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong

- ▶ 85.8% of interviewees believed discrimination towards ethnic minorities exists in Hong Kong
- ▶ Only 12.8% of interviewees believed discrimination towards ethnic minorities does not exist
- ▶ More than 50% of interviewees believed the seriousness of discrimination towards ethnic minorities in Hong Kong is middle to high

Unison Hong Kong, 2005

Education of Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong

- ▶ 56.5% of ethnic minority students do not believe they receive the same educational opportunities as local Chinese students
 - Limited school choices and places
 - Lack of financial support tuition fees
 - Language barriers
- ▶ 13% reported being disliked by teachers and 27% reported being punished more severely than local Chinese students

Ku, Chan, & Sandhu, 2005; Loper, 2004

Employment Situation of Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong

- ▶ 30% of those who work were unsatisfied with their jobs
- ▶ 46.6% of those who work wanted to change jobs
- ▶ 58.7% were rejected by employers due to their inability to speak Cantonese/Chinese
- ▶ 29.9% were rejected by employers due to their ethnicity

City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Unison, 2003

Problems Faced by Ethnic Minorities in the Workplace

- ▶ 53% had difficulty communicating with Chinese supervisor
- ▶ 43.8% did not receive their salary on time
- ▶ 42.3% reported being bullied by supervisor/colleagues
- ▶ 32.3% were fired because of their ethnicity

City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Unison, 2003

What Research & Literature Tells Us

- ▶ Relatively few literature on the significance of race and ethnicity on counseling ethnic minorities in Hong Kong
- ▶ Overseas literatures provide an alternative to understanding the importance of race and ethnicity in counseling as the discussion of counseling for ethnic minority groups has been well established in the Western context
- ▶ Multicultural competence has been considered as requirement for counselors of cultural diverse clients (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992; Sue & Torino, 2005; Liu and Clay, 2002; Sue & Sue, 2008)

What Research & Literature Tells Us

- ▶ Fraga, Atkinson, & Wampold, 2004: Ethnic group preferences for multicultural counseling competencies
 - Multicultural attitudes/beliefs: European Americans have a stronger preference for counselors that uses local helping practices
 - Multicultural knowledges: Hispanics have a stronger preference for counselors who understands sociopolitical factors that may affect ethnic minorities
 - Multicultural skills: Asian American have a stronger preference for counselors who seeks to achieve a nonracist identity

What Research & Literature Tells Us

- ▶ Zhang & Dixon, 2001: Effects of multiculturally responsive counseling on Asian's ratings of counselors
 - Sample were from mainland China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Nepal, and Singapore
 - Interviewed by either a culturally responsive or culturally neutral counselor and then asked to complete a counselor rating form
 - Multiculturally responsive counselors were preferred over multiculturally neutral counselors based on several dimensions, including expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness

What Research & Literature Tells Us

- ▶ Li, Kim, & O'Brien, 2007: Effects of Asian cultural values and counselor multicultural competence on counseling process
 - Sample mostly from Korea, China, India, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam, Pakistan, and Malaysia
 - Consistency between the counselor and the client's cultural values is positively related to perceived counselor credibility and multicultural counseling competence
 - Acknowledgement on the client's racial differences can enhance the perception of multicultural counseling competence

Cultural Appropriateness of Person Centered Approach of Carl Rogers

Authority and control lies with the person and *not* the counselor

- Person has power to identify, define, resolve the counseling problem or issues.
- Role of counselor is to facilitate counseling

Rapport

- ▶ Positive feeling, trusting, understanding exist with two-way communication of thoughts and feelings
- ▶ Culture Bound Values: Self-Disclosure
- ▶ Culture Bound Values: Insight

Reflective Activity: Self-Disclosure

- ▶ Turn to the person in *front* of you and tell something about yourself that you are comfortable sharing that is personal, meaningful, or special (1 min.)
- ▶ Then, be prepared to share with class and tell how it felt to disclose this information.

Importance of Self-Disclosure

- ▶ Inexperienced therapists often fail to appreciate the values inherent in simply **being themselves**.
- ▶ Counselors who lose themselves in their fixed roles and **hide behind a professional facade** will strive too hard to prove themselves.

Self-Disclosure in Counseling

- ▶ Self-disclosure refers to the client's willingness to tell the therapist what he or she feels, believes, or thinks. Jourard (1964) suggests that mental health is related to one's openness in disclosing.

Functions of Self-Disclosure

- ▶ The counsellor's self-disclosure not only helps to demystify the therapy process, it helps to equalize the relationship by showing client that the therapist is a real person with his or her own problem.

Importance of Self-Disclosure

- ▶ People who do not self-disclose readily in counselling are readily seen as **being guarded, mistrustful, or paranoid**.
- ▶ There are two difficulties in this orientation toward self-disclosure. One of these is **cultural**, and the other is **socio-political**.

Difficulty of Self-Disclosure

- ▶ Clients talk about the most intimate aspects of their lives with a stranger for 50-minutes. To many culturally different groups who stress **friendship as a precondition to self-disclosure**, the counselling process may seem very inappropriate and absurd. After all, how is it possible to develop a friendship with brief contacts only once a week?

Cultural Appropriateness: Insight (1)

- Assumes it is mentally beneficial to obtain insight or understanding into underlying dynamics and causes;
- Psychoanalytic theory, behavioral theories and others hold such assumption;
- Belief that insight leads to behavior change;
- This has been challenged and while insight *may* lead to behavior changes, it does not in all cases;

Cultural Appropriateness: Insight (2)

- In fact, changing behavior first may lead to insight (cognitive restructuring and understanding) instead of vice versa;
- Insight or self-exploration may not be valued in some Asian cultures;
- Chinese have a saying to “not think or talk about it so much” on negative or painful topics such as, Lehman Brothers investment loss, anger with partner, death, etc.;

Cultural Appropriateness: Insight (3)

- ▶ In fact, it may be that thinking and talking about a negative topic so much may lead to feelings of anger and depression;
- ▶ “Think of the family and not yourself” for some Asian cultures, the priority.
- ▶ Different from notion that it best to get things out in the open in order to address emotional distress.

Cultural Appropriateness: Insight (4)

- People from lower socioeconomic class may not value insight;
- More concern with basic survival questions: “Where do I find a job?” “How do I feed my family?” “How can I get affordable medical care for my children?”
- Insight assumes one has time or desire to sit back, reflect and contemplate about the meaning of life.

Cultural Appropriateness: Insight (5)

- ▶ For these people, insight may be counterproductive.
- ▶ But people from this class background are *capable* of insight though they may not value it.
- ▶ As a practitioner who values insight, how best to respond to needs of client who hold a different point of view?

Conventional Counseling Theories and Practices

- Based on an orientation of white cultural values and norms.
- Identification of specific white cultural values and their influence on counseling will help to counter the effects of this framework.

Katz, J. (1985). The sociopolitical nature of counseling. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 13, 615-624.

Essential Values of Counseling (Rogerian Approach)

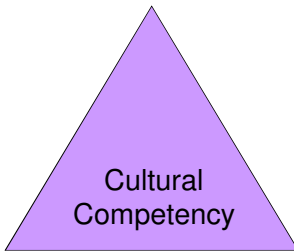
- Non-directive
- Non-judgmental
- Non-active
- Non-advice giving
- Non-closeness
-

Essential Pressures of Counseling (Asian Cultures)

- To give direct advice
- To take turns to speak
- To respect the elderly
- To respect the powerful
- To be subtle and delicate
-

Cultural Competency

Awareness



Skill

Knowledge

Cultural Competency: Awareness

- ▶ “Counselor, know thyself”
- ▶ Often understood intellectually but *not* emotionally
- ▶ Deeply explore your own bias and values and
- ▶ Not allow own biases or values to interfere with ability to work with clients.

Cultural Competency: Understanding Worldview of Culturally Diverse Clients

- Understand worldview of client
 - To see and accept other worldviews in a nonjudgmental manner
 - But does not mean counselor must hold these worldviews as their own
 - Acquiring knowledge about their background, daily living experience, hopes, fears and aspirations.
- Example: acknowledge you have not lived a lifetime of being visually impaired but empathy towards them is still possible.

Cultural Competency: Developing appropriate Intervention Strategies and Techniques

- Strategies and Techniques consistent with life experiences and cultural values of client;
- Examples: 1) economically and educationally marginalized may not be oriented towards “talk therapy”; 2) self-disclosure may be incompatible with cultural values; 3) Sociopolitical may dictate against self-disclosure such as those in gay community; 4) ambiguous nature of counseling may conflict with values; 5) preference for active/directive vs. inactive/nondirective approach.

Cultural Competency

- ▶ **Cultural competence is the ability to engage in actions or create conditions that maximize the optimal development of client and client systems.**
- ▶ **Multicultural counseling competence is defined as the counselor's acquisition of awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to function effectively....(D.W. Sue & Torino, 2005)**

Multicultural Counseling/Therapy

- Effective MCT means using modalities and defining goals for culturally diverse clients that are consistent with their racial, cultural, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation backgrounds. **Advice and suggestions, for example, may be effectively used for some client populations.**

Cultural Competence: Awareness

- ▶ The culturally competent mental health professional is **aware of his or her own values and biases and of how they may affect clients of diverse cultures.** The counselor actively and constantly attempts to avoid prejudices, unwarranted labeling, and stereo-typing. Beliefs that Asian women make good mothers and helpers but poor leaders are no longer useful in society and are examples of widespread stereotyping that may hinder equal access and opportunity.

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Thank You