



Creating a Culturally Responsive Assessment Framework



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Creating a Culturally Responsive Assessment Framework: The Purpose

- This capstone project aims to address the disparities in assessment practices faced by school psychologists when working with families of color.
- A questionnaire will be designed to encompass a comprehensive range of factors, including family dynamics, cultural values, and socio-economic considerations.
- The implementation of this culturally responsive assessment framework is anticipated to empower school psychologists to better engage with and support families of color during the special education process.

An Apology

“Since its origins as a scientific discipline in the mid -19th century, psychology has, through acts of commission and omission, contributed to the dispossession, displacement, and exploitation of communities of color. The early history of psychology, rooted in oppressive psychological science to protect Whiteness, White people, and White epistemologies, reflected the social and political landscape of the U.S. at the time.”

(APA, 2021, para. 8)

Diversity in the schools

The majority of students in schools come from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds:

- Multilingual students
- Various racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Economically vulnerable students
- Immigrants/Refugees

Common Issues: Implicit Bias

Implicit bias is defined as feelings and attitudes that an individual has developed over time throughout life's experiences.

- Biases are unconscious and automatic
- Biases are pervasive; everyone has them
- Biases are formed through interactions with the environment and other individuals
- Biases are formed through patterns, beliefs, and habitual thoughts

Common Issues: Implicit Bias in Special Education

Implicit bias is defined as feelings and attitudes that an individual has developed over time throughout life's experiences.

- Practitioner perspective: Social power, privilege
- Cultural hegemony: Ruling class beliefs become the norm
- White middle class: Academic & behavior expectations
- Deficit thinking: Race = Deficit = Disability
- Referrals to special education: Overidentification
- Special education: Eligibilities

Common Issues: Implicit Bias in Special Education

Implicit bias is defined as feelings and attitudes that an individual has developed over time throughout life's experiences.

- Pre-referral: School District/ Policy Procedures
- Referral to special education: Teacher/Administration perceptions, discipline referrals
- Data collection: Interviews, assessment protocol or lack thereof, rating scales
- Data Analysis: Informants' and school psychologists' perception
- Eligibility: Eligibility criteria

Cultural Competency & Advocacy: School Psychologists Responsibility

“School psychologists work to ensure the protection of the educational rights, opportunities, and well-being of all children, especially those whose voices have been muted, identities obscured, or needs ignored. Social justice requires promoting non-discriminatory practices and the empowerment of families and communities. School psychologists enact social justice through culturally responsive professional practice and advocacy to create schools, communities, and systems that ensure equity and fairness for all children.”

(NASP, 2017, p. 1)

Setting the stage: Interviewing with cultural intention

- Develop a questionnaire using the “ADDRESSING” framework to obtain important information related to student’s culture and related to student’s developmental history
- Questionnaire will be founded in Relational Interviewing: Families’ voices and perspectives will be centered throughout the special education assessment process
- The questionnaire will also acknowledge sociocultural history of education and psychology
- The families’ narrative will be embedded in the psychoeducational report

The Framework: Jones Intentional Multicultural Interview Schedule (JIMIS)

ADDRESSING Framework:

Age

Developmental Disabilities

Disabilities Acquired

Religion & Spirituality

Ethnic & Racial Identity

Sexual Orientation

Socioeconomic Status

Indigenous Heritage

National Origin

Gender

Sample Questions

- How do you define family?
- What are some challenges you and your family have to deal with on a day-to-day basis?
- How does your race affect your relationship with other individuals?
- Have you, your child, or your family experienced racism? In what setting?
- For you what are the most important aspects of your background, culture, religion etc?
- How do others in your family/your household describe your child?
- How is education viewed in your family and in your culture?
- What is your understanding of special education?

Culturally Responsive Questionnaire: The Benefits

Culturally responsive interviews with students and families are an important and useful component of a culturally responsive assessment.

- Increase the involvement of parent in the special education process
- Allows parents and families voices to be heard
- Fosters trust and builds rapport with families
- Reframe deficit approaches to strengths-based approaches
- Collaboration with students and their families regarding interventions, supports, and recommendations
- Identifies factors in the student's ecology that promotes resilience & healing
- Assesses the students' village, their network
- Assesses the students' sociocultural and ecological variables

Summary: Culturally Responsive Practices

1. **Enhanced Communication and Understanding:** Culturally responsive questionnaires acknowledge the unique cultural backgrounds of families of color, fostering more effective communication and understanding between school psychologists and these families.
2. **Reduced Bias and Misinterpretation:** By aligning questions with the cultural context of families of color, psychologists can gather more accurate information, ensuring that assessments and interventions are tailored appropriately and free from cultural bias.
3. **Empowerment and Engagement:** Culturally responsive questionnaires empower families of color by recognizing and valuing their unique perspectives and experiences.
4. **Improved Outcomes and Equity:** By incorporating culturally responsive practices into the assessment process, school psychologists can contribute to improved educational outcomes and greater equity for students of color.

References

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