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The role of emotional intelligence in counseling bilingual Latinos who avoid expressing or experiencing emotions

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Abstract

A review of literature on the role of emotional intelligence in counseling bilingual Latinos who avoid expressing or experiencing emotions reveals that language, gender, ethnicity, religion, and family structure influence emotion usage. The two constructs, emotional intelligence and multiculturalism, offered a framework for understanding cultural and contextual factors in cross-cultural client-counselor relationships, redefining resistance from a multicultural standpoint, and possible therapeutic interventions that take into account the cultural influences and beliefs of Latinos on the mental health system.

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN COUNSELING

BILINGUAL LATINOS WHO AVOID EXPRESSING OR EXPERIENCING

EMOTIONS

A Research Paper

Presented to

The Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling,

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Master of Arts

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by

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A review of literature on the role of emotional intelligence in counseling bilingual Latinos who avoid expressing or experiencing emotions reveals that language, gender, ethnicity, religion, and family structure influence emotion usage. The two constructs, emotional intelligence and multiculturalism, offered a framework for understanding cultural and contextual factors in cross-cultural client-counselor relationships, redefining resistance from a multicultural standpoint, and possible therapeutic interventions that take into account the cultural influences and beliefs of Latinos on the mental health system.

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Counseling Bilingual Latinos Who Avoid

Expressing or Experiencing Emotions

Over the past decades, the construct of emotional intelligence has gained

an increasing interest from researchers in various fields such as in psychology

(Salovey & Mayer, 1989-1990). The concept of emotional intelligence (EI)

encompasses an assortment of social and cognitive functions which are linked to

the expression of emotion (Goleman, 1995). One particular concept in EI that can

play an influential role in the experience and expression of emotions is culture

(Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000).

For that reason, there are two broad areas of research, emotional

intelligence and multiculturalism, which will be used to examine the role of

emotional intelligence in counseling Latinos who avoid expressing or

experiencing emotions. Areas that will be explored to better understand its

relevance to multicultural counseling and mental health counseling include the

role language, gender, ethnicity, religion, and family have within the individual.

In the second part, the reviews of literature include implications that these roles

have on the counseling process. For that reason, areas of focus include examining

the effect of cross-cultural client-counselor relationships, redefining resistance

from a multicultural standpoint, and possible therapeutic interventions that take

into account the cultural influences and beliefs of Latinos on the mental health

system.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is defined as "a type of social intelligence that

involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate

among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions"

(Salovey & Mayer, 1989-1990, p. 189). Researchers have found that emotional

intelligence is positively correlated with other constructs such as empathy, verbal

intelligence, extraversion, self-esteem, and life satisfaction (Ciarrochi, Chan, &

Caputi, 2000) as well as cognitive ability and social intelligence (Salovey &

Mayer, 1990). Between researchers there is a debate concerning whether the EI

construct should be exclusively presented in terms of ability or if it should be

explained in terms of ability and personality characteristics (Goleman, 1995).

Domains of emotional intelligence

Salovey and Mayer introduced the ability model of EI in the early 1990s

which was later followed by Bar-On (1997) and Goleman's (1995) mixed models

combining ability and personality characteristics. The ability model contains four

domains which are perception and expression of emotion, assimilation of emotion

in thought, understanding and analyzing emotion, and reflective regulation of

emotion (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Goleman (1995) proposed five key areas in

the construct of emotional intelligence which consist of knowing one's emotions,

managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. There is significant overlap between these definitions and the basic principles of Goleman's five domains in emotional intelligence which will be presented in further detail as the theoretical construct.

Knowing one's own emotions. The self-awareness stage is defined by Goleman (1995) as the phase where the individual is able to recognize a feeling as it happens. Goleman further describes this level as the ability to identify and monitor one's true feelings while increasing the level of self-awareness and the ability to monitor and control one's life. This notion allows the individual to make conscious choices regarding key and trivial life decisions. According to Shapiro (1998), an individual's ability to identify and convey emotions into words is a vital part of meeting basic needs, gaining emotional control, and developing fulfilling and nurturing relationships.

Managing emotions. Goleman (1995) stated that in this stage an individual is one step closer to emotional intelligence once he or she can identify the emotions the individual is experiencing and control them in an appropriate manner. He added that the ability to handle these feelings is significant as the individual begins to gain a sense of balance as it relates to the positive and negative experiences that may predict and influence the individual's emotional well-being and stability. The cause and effect of emotions has a direct relationship to the signals transmitted to the brain. Howard (2000) describes a rapid stimulus

and response activity that occurs in the brain that explains how the brain controls them, how and when the emotions are stimulated. Therefore, the effect of the stimulus into a transmitted given emotion indicates that the individual has the potential ability to decide the level and time-span of the emotion, indicating that Goleman's second domain in emotional intelligence is supported in theory.

Motivating oneself. As theorists attempt to comprehend motivation and the purpose of this concept within the individual, attention tends to be placed on the outcomes that behavior is intended for achieving rather than placing the attention on behavior itself (Zirkel, 2000). Therefore, motivation is used in this domain as the degree to which an individual acts upon a given idea, thought, or goal (Richburg, & Fletcher, 2002). Hence, self-motivation manages one's ability to process outcome. Lane (2000) describes motivation as reflecting the ability to create positive affect to enhance motivation and achieve one's personal goals. Goleman (1995) associates motivation with flow which is viewed as a state of self-forgetfulness. Flow can also be observed as a representation of where the connection of emotions creates the most favorable experience in outcome (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Therefore, during a state of flow, emotions are positive and there are feelings of harmony, happiness and enthusiasm. As a result, this level of emotion leads to success because the individual is not preoccupied by the action, but rather the gratification of the act (Richburg, & Fletcher, 2002).

Recognizing emotions in others. As the individual continues to gain a higher level of self-awareness, the next step is to take into consideration the emotions and needs of other individuals. This compassion helps shape the individuals social skills by developing one's insight and increasing one's social competence (Goleman, 1995). Gardner (1983) hypothesizes that the foundation of capability of personal intelligence as it relates to others involves "the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals as it relates to mood, temperaments, and motivations" (p. 239). Gardner additionally addressed that interpersonal intelligence in its primary form relates to the ability of a young child to discriminate and detect moods of other individuals. As a result, the key to recognizing emotion in others is genuinely incorporating empathy.

Handling relationships. During this stage in the emotional intelligence domains this level is where an individual attempts to form a relationship and maintains the relationship. The preservation and continuous building of this relationship process reflects the individual's level of self-awareness and social competence (Goleman, 1995). As one forms a relationship, one begins to identify certain intrinsic needs that are necessary in order to maintain connected at different levels of intimacy (Richburg, & Fletcher, 2002). This process can get complicated due to the complexity of emotions and how they effect interactions with others. However, exposure to social situations can increase the likelihood of having successful relationships (Lane, 2000). By engaging in social activities that

expand one's worldview and increase one's socialization skills, a sense of balance is gained in mutual and respectful give and take exchanges of emotional expressions and social competence (Richburg, & Fletcher, 2002). Hendrick and Hendrick (1992) suggest that one may experience many emotions toward other people that can be summarized by the degree to which an individual likes or dislikes other people through the concept of interpersonal attraction or just simply attraction.

Consequently, these five domains play a large function in the conceptualization of the individual since counselors must have a clear assessment of the types of thoughts, feelings, and emotions that contribute to aversive or undesirable behavior in order to create effective intervention strategies (Lane, 2000). Conceptualization can be achieved by understanding the individual educationally, psychologically, and emotionally that contribute to the individual's behavior (Richburg, & Fletcher, 2002). Furthermore, Goleman (1995) claimed that emotional intelligence could be learned. As a result, emotions and emotional literacy are briefly examined in efforts to further develop the concept of emotional intelligence.

Emotions and emotional literacy

From a sociological perspective, emotions have a cultural, ethical, and political dimension that are linked creating and deepening meaning to life (Freshwater & Robertson, 2002). Emotions are adaptive processes that involve

evaluation of situations in terms of one's well-being and readiness to act to preserve well-being (Cole, Bruschi, & Tamang, 2002). Emotions may perhaps be difficult to express at times however there is a small set of universally recognized nonverbal expressions (anger, fear, happiness, disgust, pride, sadness, and surprise) that facilitate some communication when obstacles are encountered (Tracy, Robins, & Lagattuta, 2005).

So in efforts to further explore emotions, Freshwater & Robertson (2002) define emotional literacy as "the capacity to register our emotional responses to the situations we are in and to acknowledge those responses to ourselves so that we recognize the ways in which they influence our thoughts and our actions" (p. 12). One of the first steps on the road to emotional literacy is being able to name one's emotions. Naming an emotion in itself can bring the individual closer to the affective element of it, as if by naming the emotion we give the brain permission to access it (Freshwater & Robertson, 2002) linking this concept to Goleman's and Howard's proposal in the second domain of EI. For that reason, a better understanding of the individual through an appropriate multicultural lens may enable the facilitation of working with a multiethnic client.

<center>Multiculturalism</center>

According to Taylor (2001), a conception of multiculturalism is a rather negative one, having to do with what multiculturalism is not or what it stands in opposition to. Multiculturalism is based on the acknowledgment and acceptance

of difference rather than its denial (Vaillant, 2000). The distinction is usually expressed in terms of acceptance while assimilations do not accept difference (Tiago De Melo, 1998). Taylor (2001) suggests that the conceptions of multiculturalism are distinguished not so much by the degree of difference they allow but rather by the ways in which they believe difference can be incorporated.

Role of language

For many bilingual Latinos, the Spanish language expresses their heritage, a source of identity and pride, and is the means through which emotions are expressed (Heredia & Altarriba, 2001). However, within some individuals the values may have changed, since many bilingual Latinos have internalized the racial perception that speaking the language or with a Spanish accent, is not acceptable with the mainstream majority (Thompson & Neville, 1999). Another concept to keep in mind is the great deal of variation in the language, sometimes even among people from the same Spanish speaking country. Such differences include regional variations, accents, slang, and "Spanglish" (a mixture of Spanish and English) (Lijtmaer, 1999). Moreover, the Spanish language is the vehicle for maintaining cultural traditions (Reid, 2002). A strong argument supporting the maintenance of the Spanish language is that the majority of Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and individuals from other Spanish-speaking countries continue to migrate and live in predominantly Latino communities and maintain the culture and traditions (Schrauf, 1999).

Therefore, the Latino population is clearly diverse and such acknowledgement impacts the counseling process (Hartmann, & Gerteis, 2005). As a result, Mesquita and Frijda (1992) introduced the idea that there are distinctions and connections across cultures such as the emotional meaning given to certain situations, the approach in how emotions are communicated, and the individual's behavior in coping with certain situations that bring forth emotion. Researchers have identified pattern discrepancies in the usage of the individual's dominant language that have direct implications for the counseling process. Gonzalez- Reigosa (1976) found that taboo and neutral words expressed in one's dominant language draw out more anxiety within the clients than words in their second language.

With that noted, researchers Bond and Lai (1986) proposed that it is easier to discuss more embarrassing topics in one's second language than in one's first language. In their study, female Chinese undergraduates at the University of Hong Kong interviewed each other on four topics in there dominant and second language, Cantonese and English. There were two embarrassing topics which were the sexual attitudes of Chinese and Westerners and a description of a personally embarrassing event recently experienced. The results indicated that when speaking in their second language, the participants spoke longer about the embarrassing topics than in their dominant language Cantonese.

For that reason, Bond and Lai's example suggests that code switching to one's second language can serve as a distancing function which allows the individual to share topics that would be upsetting when discussed in their dominant language (1986). Theoretically, it has been suggested that when individuals learn emotion words in their dominant language, those words are stored in a deeper level of interpretation than their second language (Altarriba, 2001). This is due to the fact that such emotion words like anger, sadness, happiness, pride, etc. have been experienced in many more situations and have been applied in different manners in their dominant language. On the other hand, emotion words learned in a second language are often not as deeply coded since they are applied and experienced much less (Santiago-Rivera & Altarriba, 2002). Also, coming across an emotion word in the second language is not likely to trigger as many different associations as the same word in the dominant language (Altarriba, 2001). However, words that are concrete (table, chair, foot, hand, etc.) despite the language variance are likely experienced in similar ways each time encountered. This suggests that emotion words represent a higher intensity level of feeling when activated than words that label concrete objects (Altarriba, 2001).

Therefore, it appears that individuals tend to represent emotion words differently in their two languages and typically associate such words with a broader range of emotion in their dominant language (Altarriba & Santiago-Rivera, 1994). Hence, code switching is typically not an accidental process, nor

does it suggest that the individual has a language deficit (Heredia & Altarriba, 2001). Researchers have shown that code switching is conscious, expected, and influenced by the subject matter and circumstances in which it occurs (Perez-Foster, 1998). Code switching can also represent an individual's means of maintaining their two languages (Heredia & Altarriba, 2001). The importance of the ability to select the language in which one can express ideas most accurately cannot be overlooked due to the perception of resistance in the counseling process which will be addressed later.

Family influences

During early childhood, an individual begins to develop the ability to interpret emotion expressions, learn to associate them, and learn strategies in managing the display and experience of their emotions (Denham, 1998). This developmental progression undergoes a shift from observable behaviors and events to more complex and time-extended factors (Carpenter & Halberstadt, 1996) , involving beliefs, appraisals, the expression of emotions in unclear situations (Denham, 1998), and the ability to hide emotions in order to act in accordance with society (Saarni, 1999). These social cognitive abilities as stated in Goleman's domains are part of this shift when the individual begins to manage interpersonal interactions along with regulating their emotional arousal (Denham, 1998).

Although the family is not the only socialization means present, it may be one of the most prominent, with respect to the Latino culture, influencing the individual's understanding of emotions (Eisenberg, Cumberland, & Spinrad, 1998). Latinos traditionally place a great deal of emphasis on family and can be centrally tied to self-identity and self-definition upon an individual (Altarriba, 2001). Family experiences are noted as an important framework for the individual as one learns about social interactions (Saarni, 1990). Such family experiences could lead to enhanced social cognitive skills when the individual is given more learning opportunities on emotions and experiences (Nixon & Watson, 2001) which result in the ability to recognize facial expressions of emotion or not. For example, children in families that report discouraging emotion expression in the home are worse at correctly recognizing anger expressions from others (Camras, 1980). Children that are from more negative emotion expression homes are less skilled in perceiving others' emotions while individuals from homes where emotion expression is punished are better at interpreting the emotion expressions of others (Halberstadt, 1998).

Family display rules. This leads us to examining display rules with respect to how families express their emotions (Saarni, 1999). Appropriate use of display rules involves "integrating an understanding of facial expressions, situations, and emotional perspective taking" (Camras, 1980, p.880). The display rule knowledge can be observed with children as young as 3 and 4 years of age as

they begin to learn how to hide their emotions with facial expressions when acting

in accordance with social standards (Camras, 1980). The early age onset of

understanding this concept may due to the socialization pressures. For example,

in one study, a sample of young South Asians understood that one can feel angry

but should not communicate it on one's face (Cole & Tamang, 1998).

Family values. Cultural priorities also appear to affect values with regard

to specific emotions. For example, Latino values are similar to Asian values--

which are often described as "collectivistic and interdependent" (Rothbaum, Pott,

Azuma, Miyake, & Weisz, 2000, p. 1122) and "place high priority on relationship

harmony and respect for authority--discourage anger expression and value shame"

(Kitayama & Markus, 1995, p. 370). Anger and shame serve different social

functions: anger facilitates individual domination whereas shame facilitates self-

submission (Barrett & Campos, 1987). However, in the United States a greater

emphasis is placed on the development of individuality, autonomy, and self-

expression (Harkness, Super, & Van Tijen, 2000). Mainstream majority tends to

tolerate anger in the interest of self-assertion, protection of individual rights and

freedoms as long as it is expressed in a socially acceptable manner (Stearns &

Stearns, 1986). Shame, on the other hand, is often seen by the mainstream as

harmful to self-esteem (Ferguson, Stegge, Miller, & Olsen, 1999). In addition,

subgroups within a culture such as U.S. born Latinos versus immigrant Latinos

hold different values due to the varying experiences encountered (Ferguson,

Stegge, Miller, & Olsen, 1999).

Role of gender

Gender is as indispensable as ethnicity, religion, and family since none

can function without the other (Reid, 2002). Males in the Latino community are

given more independence at an earlier age than females since there are greater

expectations for achievement outside the home for males (Porter, 2000). Females

on the other hand, are expected to retain traditional gender roles in which they are

unassertive, submissive, passive, dependent, nurturers, and domestic versus the

role of authority, power, status, and authority men have within their family and

communities (Porter, 2000). Struggles for both genders are when they do not

engage in the traditional gender roles. When this occurs, men are at risk for not

being perceived as a "real man" whereas the woman is perceived as a traitor

(Niemann, 2001) and engaging in risky behaviors since U.S. women are regarded

as more promiscuous than Latinas (Porter, 2000).

It is also important to understand that behaviors that are generally

acceptable for women in the mainstream are more than likely inconsistent with

the traditional gender roles expected from Latinas. For example, pursuit of a

higher education results in alienation from the ethnic community (Niemann,

Romero, & Arbona, 2000). Whereas, for men, education is valued as a

mechanism for improving themselves so they can have a better job, make more

money, and support the family financially (Niemann, Romero, & Arbona, 2000).

Therefore, Latinos face tremendous pressures to balance the often conflicting

demands of acculturation and maintaining ties to their culture which may lead to a

sense of disconnection with the family and Latino community.

Ethnic identity

Ethnic identity perceptions vary among Latinos based on whether the

individual is U.S. born versus Mexican born (Neimann, 2001). Mexican born

residents of the United States have not been exposed to the many decades of

consistent oppression and stigmatized status in the U.S. as have U.S. born

Latinos, and Mexican born individuals experience almost complete lack of

acceptance (Thompson and Neville, 1999).

Two of the main components of ethnic identity development are ethnic

role behaviors and ethnic feelings and preferences. Thompson and Neville (1999)

refer to auto-colonization which places Latinos in a predicament involving who

they are and what their relative value is in the racial-social order which can also

generate a psychological conflict. This is revealed when an individual begins to

internalize the idea that light or white skin tone is better than more olive skin tone

(Hurtado, 1999). Further conflict and guilt may be created for such individuals

who may not have to acknowledge their ethnicity or experience the

oppressiveness of being Latino in the United States if they can "pass" as

European American which is associated with societal advantages and privileges

(Hurtado, 1999). There are also those internal feelings that Latinos often encounter when they feel as if they live in the margins between cultures of Mexican descent and mainstream society (Thompson & Neville, 1999). Such feelings contribute to the devaluing of cultural patterns such as speaking Spanish.

In 1990, Ruiz proposed a specific Latino model of ethnic identity to address the limitations of other general models. This model describes the development, transformation, and resolution of ethnic identity conflicts. Ruiz's (1990) five stages include: Causal, Cognitive, Consequence, Working-Through, and Successful Resolution. The causal stage is the phase in which a person may experience humiliating and traumatic experiences of being Latino and fail to identify with the Latino culture. The results leading to the cognitive stage in which the individual incorporates three invalid belief systems. First, that being a member of the Latino community is associated with poverty and prejudice, and in order to escape poverty and prejudice is to assimilate into the dominant society since assimilation is the only way to succeed. The third stage Ruiz proposed was the consequence stage in which the individual may reject their Latino heritage due to the crumbling of the individual's ethnic identity. The working-through stage begins with the integration of a healthier Latino identity in which the individual is no longer able to cope with ethnic conflict and becomes conscious that an alien ethnic identity is not acceptable. This stage is distinguished by the increase in ethnic consciousness and reclaiming, reintegrating, and reconnecting with an

ethnic identity and community. The last stage is successful resolution which is differentiated by the individual's greater acceptance of self, culture, and ethnicity while incorporating an improved self-esteem and a belief that ethnic identity is positive and promotes success.

It is evident that increasing an individual's awareness of origin may facilitate their movement toward a healthier stage of ethnic identity development (Neimann, 2001). Individuals go through distinct stages of reaction to this awareness and these reactions depend on the individual's level of inexperience. The eventual realization that they have internalized racism may lead to stages of emotions ranging from rage to sadness to confusion to relief (Thompson & Neville, 1999).

Role of religion

Latinos also differ from mainstream majority with regard to religious preference. The vast majority of Latinos profess Roman Catholicism with a small percentage professing Protestant faiths (Neimann, 2001). Religious practices go beyond spiritual matters for Latinos. Latinos frequently relate to religious leaders and spiritual advisors for support and guidance. Belief systems such as Santeria, Espiritismo, and Curanderismo are actively practiced by Latinos and have mixed in with Catholicism resulting in a strong supernatural belief system (Thompson & Neville, 1999). For example, psychological anguish may be linked to spiritual flaws among Latinos.

The concepts of multiculturalism and the Latino culture are extensive. The key points mentioned along with the construct of emotional intelligence will now be tied together in the next section through the reviews of literature. The second part will assess the implications that these two constructs have on the counseling process of Latinos who avoid expressing and experiencing emotions. For that reason, areas of focus include examining the effect of cross-cultural client-counselor relationships, redefining resistance from a multicultural standpoint, and possible therapeutic interventions that take into account the cultural influences and beliefs of Latinos on the mental health system.

Implications in Multicultural Counseling

Defenses can alter or camouflage self-awareness of emotions when left unattended (Vaillant, 2000). When this occurs, reaction formation takes in an aggressive feeling and transforms the feeling into a more acceptable opposite such as affection or projection where the focus of attention is relocated and hostility is perceived to be in the other person (Nystul, 2001). Another type of defense is intellectualization in which attention is directed to less disturbing aspects in efforts to only experience the non-emotional, intellectual parts (Vaillant, 2000). For that reason, defenses influence perception and suggest that there is a direct connection to the perception and regulation components of emotional intelligence (Nystul, 2001). Thus, the skills of emotional intelligence are perceived to be conscious efforts comparable to coping mechanisms (Haan, 1977).

Emotional intelligence has been related to ego defenses and psychological adaptation. This is evident when an individual uses predominantly adaptive defenses; his or her emotional intelligence is higher due to the individual using their emotional resources whereas the maladaptive defenses like projection, limit and alter one's experience of emotions (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000). If the development of emotional knowledge is built on one's experience of emotions, an individual who mainly uses adaptive defenses will develop the concept about emotions with minimal distortions (Vaillant, G., 2000). On the other hand, an individual who uses predominantly maladaptive defenses may process contradictory or irrational ways of thinking about emotions (Fraley, Garner, & Shaver, 2000). Therefore, based on the adaptive and maladaptive defenses of the individual the effect on the counseling relationship may perhaps be affected.

Ethnic counselor vs. non-ethnic counselor – client dyad

For that reason, in cross-cultural counseling relationships, the counselor's key objective is to attempt to understand the culturally based experiences of the individual, collectively and individually (Constantine, 2000). Consequently, research has demonstrated that emotionally intelligent counselors appear to possess interpersonal strengths that enable them to better grasp to the experiences and issues of culturally diverse individuals (Delgado-Romero, 2001). Although emotional intelligence is generally viewed as a desirable characteristic, it is important to note that there are cultural differences in how some clients express,

regulate, and utilize emotion (Taylor, Parker, & Bagby, 1999). For example, Asian and Latino individuals have been found to have higher levels of difficulties in identifying and describing emotions than Anglos (Tiago De Melo, 1998). As previously mentioned some cultures do not share the same values in the expression of emotion. Hence, it is crucial that counselors are aware of possible culturally based differences lack of knowing may perhaps be incorrectly interpreted or diagnosed inaccurately (Delgado-Romero, 2001). As a result, these individuals may feel that their issues are not being understood or addressed in culturally sensitive ways.

Research indicates that there is a higher commitment in counseling from the Latino client who expresses a strong preference for same-ethnicity counselor, who may perhaps be more sensitive to their needs (Cauce, et al., 2002). If no preferences are made by the Latino client, there are many helpful ways in which the counselor (member of the majority) can processes the cross-cultural counseling relationship with their client. Some suggestions found in literature (Cardemil & Battle, 2003) are to suspend preconceptions about the client's ethnicity and of their family members, to recognize that their client may be different from other members in the Latino ethnic group, to engage the client in processing how the ethnic differences as well as racism, power, and privilege may affect the therapeutic process, and to continue learning about ethnicity issues. As a result, self-disclosing is a tool used that has enhanced the cross cultural

counseling relationship with their clients by sharing their reactions to their client's

experiences of racism and oppression (Burkard, et al., 2006). With that said,

ethnic counselors are also recommended to take in such suggestions based on the

differences within subcultures (Mexican-American, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans,

Cubans, etc.) (Delgado-Romero, 2001).

   Transference and counter-transference. In recent years, attempts have

been made to further understand the role language can influence transference and

counter-transference. Lijtmaer (1999) pointed out the potential for transference to

occur is when the Latino client consciously chooses to work with a therapist who

represents the majority culture and speaks his or her non-dominant language. The

individual may only want to speak English because it embodies the new identity

that the individual may be motivated in obtaining which can eventually lead to the

client idealizing the counselor (Altman, 2000). An example of counter

transference offered by Lijtmaer (1999) is when the counselor has feelings of guilt

and irritation toward their client due to the counselor's lack of ability to

communicate effectively which may lead to the counselor perceiving a lack of

control in the therapeutic process. Therefore, in order to normalize the intense

and personal nature of multicultural counseling, consulting with colleagues for

supervision and support is beneficial when the counselor begins over-identify

with the client's feelings (Delgado-Romero, 2001). Such perceptions may

perhaps get even more complicated when a sense of resistance is felt in the

counseling process.

Resistance

One of the primary barriers to positive outcomes in counseling is the

resistance to change since it can hamper with the effectiveness of counseling

techniques, procedures, obstruct client motivation, and challenge the change

process (Nystul, 2001). According to Freud (1933), resistance is an "unconscious

process associated with avoidance in counseling, and it could manifest in

numerous ways, such as a client showing up late" and Adler (1914/1927), viewed

resistance as a "self-protective act used to preserve the self, others, and life"

(Nystul, 2001, p.271). However, from a multicultural standpoint, resistance needs

to be reexamined since resistance from a member of the majority maybe viewed

as a natural mechanism of defense by a multiethnic counselor and vice versa

(Nystul, 2001).

Therefore, what may appear to be a defense mechanism from a Latino

client may or may not be a defense mechanism. With this suggested, looking at

the role language plays in therapy, counselors may interpret resistance from the

Latino client during the session. However, from a clinically researched

standpoint, clients who are speaking in their 2nd language may not be able to

retrieve certain memories, not because they are repressed memories but rather

because they are inaccessible, having originally been encoded and stored in their

native language (Perez-Foster, 1998). This is due to each language having its own cognitive and emotional component where the individual's memories of an experience are stored in the language that has the most meaning at the time of their occurrence as previously mentioned (Altarriba, 2001). Consequently, when the individual describes the experience in English then in Spanish, an aware counselor may notice a sense of detachment within the client (Marcos, 1994). He further states that this notion of detachment is common among bilinguals. This new understanding of the representation of languages has also led researchers to explore the notion that early experiences and associated emotions are not only tied to the language in which they were lived but also associated with the influences of the individual's environment during early childhood (Nixon & Watson, 2001).

With that said, Marcos (1994) and Javier (1996), both agreed that when the individuals use their dominant language, the individual is capable of bringing forth repressed emotional experiences into the consciousness with a reduction in defensiveness and resistance. Likewise, a bilingual counselor can tap into the individual's early developmental issues and therapeutically use language switching as part of treatment (Rozensky & Gomez, 1983). This may perhaps decreased the individual's deliberate Spanish to English shifts and begin the process of challenging the client to express and experiences the emotion instead of continuing to use language switches as a defense mechanism (Heredia, & Altarriba, 2001).

For that reason, there are arrays of factors that can direct to misdiagnosis and considered before diagnosing resistance (Reid, 2002). Specifically, Constantine (2000, p. 863) described some behaviors that Latinos may perform such as "demonstrating more body movements because of the difficulty in expressing themselves in English; experiencing long pauses, stuttering, mispronounced words, and repetitions; using English words that have less meaning and emotion associated with them; and experiencing a different 'sense of self' in Spanish compared to in English". Understanding and helping with the individual's barriers such as family structure, lack of transportation, inflexible hours, the distance of the counselor's office to their home, and coping mechanisms may facilitate the process for the individual (Cauce, et al., 2002).

According to Marcos (1994), counselors who take on multiethnic clients are challenged to carefully make a distinction between the actual symptoms and examining their own biases by treating the presenting issues based on how the individual defines him or herself collectively and individually. For example, arriving late to counseling may be perceived as resistance from the client when compared to the mainstream majority value of being on time. However, the traditional Latino point of view on time is quite different since the general value is the quality of the interaction (Delgado-Romero, 2001). Nevertheless, the typical duration of a counseling session is 50 minutes to one hour, thus processing the value of quality counseling time may perhaps facilitate this insight for the client.

Based on the information previously mentioned in the first part, resistance perceptions from the counselor may be reduced by processing with the individual their non-verbals, whether language switching is deliberate or not, their language preference, familiarity with diverse emotion words, the ability to use emotion words on a continuum level from the basic feeling to the intensity of the feeling, and the individual's private logic (Cauce & et al., 2002). In contrast, a multiethnic counselor working with a member of the majority may view resistance from their client as a natural mechanism of defense and not address it. The multiethnic counselor is responsibility for his or her level of multicultural awareness as is a non-ethnic counselor.

Cultural influences and beliefs on mental health disorders

For many Latinos, a shameful stigma is attached to mental illness and others knowing about the illness because the symptoms are seen as character flaws that may reflect on the individual and the family (Neimann, 2001). The culture may influence on whether or not an issue is defined as a mental health problem since non-mainstream cultures have alternative supernatural, spiritual, religious, and/or moral explanations for undesirable behaviors exhibited (Cauce, Paradise, Domenech-Rodriguez, & et al., 2002). The belief in some cultures is that the best way to deal with such anguish is to avoid thinking about it and not dwell on the upsetting experience by using willpower to overcome the difficult situation (Neiman, 2001). It is also important to note that individuals may not see

a problem in their behavior due to the typical or within the norm behaviors of their environment (Cauce, Paradise, Domenech-Rodriguez, & et al., 2002). For example, in a neighborhood where aggression is common, an individual may not define a physical fight as outside of the norm. A fear is present that in seeking psychotherapeutic intervention may perhaps result in institutionalization.

Mental health services are the last resort and individuals make every attempt to deal with the issues within the family before getting any outside help. For economical reasons, mental health services are also put off. Studies show that individuals from very low and very high SES backgrounds are more likely to utilize mental health service due to the increased chance of social service agency referrals or referrals from family and friends for those with greater financial means (Cauce, Paradise, Domenech-Rodriguez, & et al., 2002). For that reason, it is usual for Latinos to first consult the family members then move on to consulting closely connected individuals and using such connections as gatekeepers (Cauce, Paradise, Domenech-Rodriguez, & et al., 2002). These gatekeepers serve mostly as an important supportive function in a less threatening connection to mental health services. Therefore, when a mental health counselor is consulted (usually in a crisis situation) the Latino client is expecting a brief, direct, problem-focused, problem-solving type of approach where the counselor is active, involved, offers clear explanations, and manners by which to alleviate symptoms (Kagitcibasi, & Poortinga, 2000).

Intervention

There are various manners in which a counselor may intervene when working with a bilingual Latino who avoids expressing or experiencing emotions. Some major considerations are to focus on the present more than on the past or the future (Delgado-Romero, 2001), when it is clear that the client is experiencing an emotion such as anger, guilt, shame, or frustration, encourage the client to identify the feeling or emotion as a good indication of EI being present in self-awareness (Cole, Bruschi, & Tamang, 2002), provide challenging options for unmotivated clients (Shoda, Mischel, & Peake, 1990), and incorporate professional personal contact and individualized attention to assist empathy (Cole, Bruschi, & Tamang, 2002). Thus, counseling interventions that aim merely at increasing emotional perception and regulation skills may be ineffective if the problem is at an unconscious level requiring a more in-depth, dynamic behavioral therapeutic intervention (Goleman, 1995).

Intervention Resources

As mentioned, there are numerous manners in which counselors may facilitate the counseling process. Some intervention resources include attachment and developmental theory, problem-solving method, and bibliotherapy.

Attachment and developmental theories. Therefore, as previously mentioned, a bilingual Latino client who detaches from the emotional experience by switching languages deliberately is inhibiting the process of receiving

emotional messages and blocking that level of emotion awareness, and
jeopardizes the ability to be emotionally intelligent (Kafetsios, 2002). The
individual may perhaps be better understood by using the attachment theory.
This theory highlights the interpersonal core of emotions by challenging an
individual's defense mechanism that lead to insecure attachment (Bowlby, 1988).
In such cases, RET might be a suitable approach.

Further, a central aspect of EI abilities concerns the management of
emotion personally and interpersonally. Likewise, attachment orientations are
related to differences in emotion regulation at different life-stages (Mikulincer &
Florian, 2001). Developmental theory also perceives avoidance of emotions as a
result of the individual's environments where expression of emotions and
experiences are undervalue and consciously denied (Kafetsios, K., 2002). For
that reason, by incorporating aspects of the developmental theory emotional
intelligence can be used to conceptualize the client and all aspects of how
emotions affect the individual's behavior and overall success (Mikulincer &
Florian, 2001).

Problem-solving method. If resistance is occurring, consistent strategies
and concepts are beneficial. One manner in which this may be achieved is by
using the problem-solving method (Nystul, 2001). This four step model
incorporates both Adler's and Glasser's constructs and is ideal to use with Latinos
since it is suited for short-term therapy, minimizes resistance, and maximizes

client motivation (Nystul, 2001). The four steps as described by Nystul (2001) include problem identification, understanding the problem, enhancing the client's motivation, and developing a new approach. In the first step, with the help of the counselor the client identifies one emotion word that symbolizes their problem. Once this emotion word is identified, -ing, is added to facilitate the insight that the client is in control of their problem. The insight gained, allows the individual to choose whether he or she wants to engage in this type of behavior. Nystul (2001) continues by explaining that the second step is to explore early recollections of how the emotion word, identified in step one, met his or her needs at one point however it is no longer working. The third step may be achieved when the individual's private logic completes a cost-analysis regarding the emotion word. Once the client gains more insight, the individual's motivation level increases as he or she realizes that there might be a more efficient approach. In step four, the new approach could be using a counterpart emotion word to the one used in step one that is consistent with the individual's self-concept that includes his or her thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Nystul, 2001).

Bibliotherapy. The use of literary sources may perhaps bridge the gap between the counselor and client in helping the individual resolve emotional difficulties. Sullivan & Strang (2002) describe bibliotherapy as a technique that is practiced in various settings in efforts to involve the individual in reading about a character in a story who successfully resolves his or her problem which is similar

to the individual's. The use of this technique may promote emotional intelligence

among multicultural clients because this technique strengthens insight and

understanding in a non-invasive manner (Sullivan & Strang, 2002). Discussions

can be stimulated by asking questions so that the client may gain insight,

increased their problem solving skills, and foster their interpersonal skills

(Morowski, 1997). Empathy may also be developed through the use of children's

literature by bringing meaning to the individual's life, making sense of their

world, and learning social skills (Cress & Holm, 2000). Some books suggested

by Delgado- Romero (2001) include Latinos by Shorris (1992), Growing up

Latino by Augenbraum & Stavans (1993), and A Darker Shade of Crimson:

Odyssey of a Harvard Chicano by Navarrette (1993).

Discussion

The purpose of this review of literature was to examine the role emotional

intelligence has in counseling bilingual Latinos who avoid expressing or

experiencing emotions. The linking of two constructs, emotional intelligence and

multiculturalism, were enmeshed in efforts to facilitate the counseling process.

The author attempted to make these connections based on the basic principles of

both constructs with limited literature since this connection has not yet been

published in literature. However, a pattern of significant findings in the available

literature, suggested that the collective and individual differences among the

Latino culture influences the role of expressing and experiencing emotions. This

finding lead the author to further explore how and why emotions are suppressed

and how these suppressed emotions can be facilitated through emotional

intelligence. The facilitation of a bilingual Latino gaining insight to the

expression and experience of emotions promotes an increase in emotional

intelligence which can alleviate the anguish experienced by the individual.

Nevertheless, this is achieved by exploring the role of multiculturalism and its

direct impact on a therapeutic counseling process.

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