

Implementing a Model for Culturally Competent Evaluation

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Objectives

- Discuss current research and guidelines on psychological screening of applicants for religious life and diocesan priesthood
- Identify components of a culturally competent model
 - Elements of a culture-specific interview
 - Psychological testing measures of greatest clinical benefit to seminaries and formators
 - Working with evaluating psychologists
 - Formulating helpful and relevant recommendations
- Identify contraindications



USCCB Guidelines

St. John Paul II observed: "Cultural context permeates the living of Christian faith, which contributes in turn little by little to shaping that context. To every culture Christians bring the unchanging truth of God which he reveals in the history and culture of a people."

Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the U.S., Third Edition



USCCB Guidelines

When pastoral ministers cross over cultures to serve in a new context, as they do when they come to the United States, their arrival signals many blessings. Their arrival also means a set of challenges for them and the communities that receive them. Both graces and challenges need to be named. In this process, the particular Churches and the ministers themselves must resist identifying challenges as problems. A problem is something negative that needs to be solved or, at least, contained. A challenge, on the other hand, represents an invitation to change and an opportunity for growth, which through grace may lead to a positive outcome.

Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the U.S., Third Edition



Current Research

What are the psychological constructs necessary for intercultural adaptation and adjustment?

- Adaptation: process of altering one's behavior in response to environment, circumstance, social pressure
- Adjustment: subjective experiences associated with adaption, may be assessed by mood states, self-esteem, self-awareness, physical health, self confidence, stress, psychological and psychosomatic concerns, early return to one's home country, dysfunctional communication, culture shock, depression, anxiety, diminished school/work performance, interpersonal difficulties.

Matsumoto and Hwang, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 2013.



Successful adaptation and adjustment...

Adoption of behaviors that:

- Accomplish goals
- Achieve tasks
- While at the same time, minimizing negative adjustment outcomes and maximizing positive ones.
 - Ex) Successful relationships with people from other cultures, feeling that interactions are warm, cordial, respectful, cooperative.
 - Accomplishing tasks in an effective and efficient manner
 - Managing psychological stress effectively in one's daily activities, interpersonal relations and work environment

Matsumoto and Hwang, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 2013.



Successful adaptation and adjustment...

Adoption of behaviors that:

- Accomplish goals - What are the cultural components?
 - Nature of the priestly/religious vocation
 - Stability to be in a particular order or diocese
 - Completion of an educational program
 - What is their understanding of vocation to mission?
- Achieve tasks
 - Intellectual
 - Human
 - Pastoral
 - Spiritual
- What are the measures that help to answer these questions?



Key Candidate Capacities for Human Formation

- Intimacy and affective maturity by self-awareness
- Internal locus of control
- Self-acceptance
- Growing self-esteem
- Establishing healthy identity
- Dealing with change
- Relational flexibility
- Healthy solitude

McGlone, Ortiz, Viglione. "Cause for Hope and Concern, A Commentary on the Vatican Statements" 2009 Human Development



Culturally Competent Model



Culturally Competent Model

1. Interview with culture specific questions
2. Standard objective and projective professional psychology instruments
3. Intelligence measure
4. Cultural intelligence and adaptability



Challenges for International Pastoral Ministers

- Style of exercising pastoral authority
- Social/interpersonal boundaries
- Style of communication
- Role and place of women culturally and in the Catholic Church in the United States
- Use of and approach to time
- Acquisition and use of money - communal/independent understanding
- Litigious nature of American society
- Ecumenism and interfaith relationships in a pluralistic society
- Place of devotions in the life of the Church
- Patterns of collaboration in ministry between clergy and laity
- Relationships with women/females in the church
- Taking pastoral initiative

Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the United States, USCCB, 2014.



Culture-Specific Interview

- Church in country of origin
- Image of priest in country of origin
- Image of priest in United States
- Description of Church in America
- Important aspects of culture want to hold onto
- Aspects of American Catholicism agree with? Disagree with?
- Prediction of difficulties (self-awareness)
- Cultural identity
- Experience of family and relationships



Culture-Specific Interview

- Role of women
- Understanding of authority
- Understanding of boundaries
- Relationship to lay ministers
- Understanding of poverty, chastity, obedience
- Sense of mission
- Long term plans for US residency
- *Some summary of the culture-specific information needs to be in the psychological report - informs formation, ministry placements, and supports that are put into place*



Standard Professional Psychology Instruments

- Rorschach Performance Assessment System (R-PAS)
- MMPI-II RF
- TAT (select cards)
- House-Tree-Person Drawings
- Intelligence measure: will likely be an underestimate of candidate's cognitive abilities



Instruments Developed in Cross-Cultural Psychology (or Organizational Psychology)

- Measuring Cultural Intelligence: measurements for judgment and adaptability across diverse cultural settings
 - Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (ICAPS)
 - Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)



Relevant Constructs

ICAPS

- Emotional regulation
- Flexibility
- Critical thinking
- Openness.

MPQ

- Cultural empathy
- Open-mindedness
- Social initiatives
- Emotional stability
- Flexibility



Clinician Competence



Cultural Considerations – USCCB

“The professional must be able to interpret correctly the results of psychological testing in light of the cultural background of the applicant. In addition, most of the psychological measures currently available to the professional were developed and originally scaled based on the responses of Caucasian United States citizens as the control group for the development of interpretive norms. Using the same tests on applicants from other cultures or countries can sometimes distort the results.”

Guidelines for the Use of Psychology in Seminary Admissions, 2015 USCCB



Working with Clinicians

- 40% of participants in survey on use of MCA report using no MCA theory or framework
- 25% reported never having taken a course in MCA related content
- Informing clinicians about expectations, content needing to be covered and context are of particular importance

Edwards, et al. November 2, 2017
Professional Psychology: Research and Practice



Working with Clinicians

Assessing competency

- Experience of multicultural assessments; reflected in clinical experience and flexible approach to evaluation
- Knowledge of Catholic culture
- Comfort in addressing issues unique to priestly life: seminary and formation culture, celibacy, ministerial demands, role of authority, diocesan/religious life
- Clear understanding of confidentiality, releases of information and multiple clients; *must have this discussion early*



Working with Clinicians

Assessing competency

- Culturally appropriate interviewing
- Acculturation status assessment
- Culturally grounded test interpretation
- Local norms and tests
- Multicultural report writing

Allen, 2007, p. 250



Formulating Recommendations

- Guidance around areas of difficulty likely to surface in seminary/formation experiences
- Assessment of ability to identify challenges, predict obstacles and ask for help
- Based on individual's self-report, begin to identify strategies for helping individual integrate into the diocese or community....responsibility of both individual *and* diocesan or community leadership
- Predict and provide guidance around academic supports
 - Development of language skills (written and verbal expression)
 - Implications for cognitive findings



Formulating Recommendations

Common Topics of Recommendation:

- Adjustment and Adaptation Issues
- Greater consideration of integration of a pastoral year
 - When the person is ready, establishment of clear goals/expectations
 - Planning around location of pastoral year assignment (parish assisted acculturation)
- Intentional conversations around evolution of cultural identity
- Supported communication and travel back to country of origin, maintenance of family/peer relationships
- Evolution of identity as foreign priest/religious living and serving in United States



Contraindications



Contraindications

1. Inability to be formed
2. Psychopathology
3. Areas of serious emotional vulnerability
4. Personality traits and disorders
5. Pervasive developmental disorders
6. Relations with self or others that are so damaged or shame-based
7. Significant troubles with addictive disorders
8. Activity or inclination toward sexual activity with a minor
9. Psycho-sexual disorders
10. History of psychopathic deviance

Guidelines for the Use of Psychology in Seminary Admissions, USCCB, 2015



Contraindications

“It may be discerned that an applicant is in need of some therapeutic services to address matters which are not entirely disqualifying for admission to the seminary. The timely discernment of and attention to such problems that would hinder the vocational journey can only be of great benefit to the applicant as well as to the Church.”

Guidelines for the Use of Psychology in Seminary Admissions, USCCB, 2015



Clear Signs of Concern

- Entitlement
- Evidence of intellectual limitations
- Intercultural “incompetence” on the part of the candidate (McGlone, Ortiz 2016)
 - Deeply entrenched cultural beliefs accompanied by a lack of adaptability and/or flexibility



Additional Guidelines to Consider

- Invalid assessment
 - Cross cultural shock
 - Limited English language abilities
 - *May not be the right time for an evaluation*
- The benefit of re-assessment
 - Evidence of growth or healthy acculturation
 - Evidence of flexibility and integration of feedback



Culturally Competent Model of Assessment

- Psychologist with whom there is a professional, working relationship....sense of trust in experience and opinion of clinician
- In-depth clinical interview that engages cultural component (country of origin and Catholic culture)
- Team approach
- Appropriate psychological testing measures
 - Projective and objective
 - Measure of Cultural Adaptability
 - Measure of intelligence
 - Helpful and relevant recommendations



QUESTIONS



Resources

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