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Brief Reports

Understanding Schizophrenia: A Classroom Simulation for Future Human Services Professionals

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Abstract

In order to provide effective services, human services professionals need opportunities to explore issues related to living with schizophrenia. This study examined students' perceptions of a classroom simulation designed to expose them to what it is like to live with schizophrenia. Using content analysis, we analyzed 112 text responses from 56 participants. Five themes emerged that captured their perceptions how the simulation helped them to understand the lived experiences of individuals with schizophrenia. Herein, we offer implications for human services professionals and discuss strategies for human services training programs to integrate classroom simulations into their training practices.

Understanding Schizophrenia: A Classroom Simulation for Future Human Services Professionals

Roughly four in every 1,000 people are diagnosed with schizophrenia (McGrath, Saha, Chant, & Welham, 2008; Saha, Chant, Welham, & McGrath, 2005). Diagnosis usually occurs in late adolescence or early adulthood with emergence of psychotic symptoms, such as hallucinations, delusions, and disorganization of thought (Carpenter & Koenig, 2008). Age of onset, impact on daily life functioning, and stigmatizing symptoms lead to significant life challenges for individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia. Discrimination in securing housing, gaining employment, and accessing healthcare are common barriers to stability for persons with schizophrenia (Carpenter & Koenig, 2008; Link & Phelan, 2001; Thornicroft, Brohan, Rose, Sartorius, & Leese, 2009). Accordingly, these individuals have an increased risk of homelessness, health issues, substance use, educational setbacks, and employment difficulties (Desai, Lawson, Barner, & Rascati, 2013; Olfson, Gerhard, Huang, Crystal, & Stroup, 2015). Unfortunately, in the United States, many people hold stigmatizing views of persons diagnosed with schizophrenia, often perceiving them as lazy, incompetent, untrustworthy, and even dangerous (Fiske, 2012).

Given the prevalence of schizophrenia and the wide range of settings in which human services professionals work, it is inferable that human services professionals will provide services to someone diagnosed with schizophrenia. This could include mental health treatment (e.g., therapists, social workers, case managers), residential services, vocational training, and other types of care. Students enrolled in human services training programs need to be prepared to provide competent and ethically rooted services that demonstrate respect for clients (National Organization of Human Services [NOHS], 2015).

However, current and future human services students have likely been exposed to negative images of persons with schizophrenia, and subsequently, they may hold stigmatizing

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views (Corrigan, 2002; Overton & Medina, 2008). Fiske (2012), found that undergraduate students held negative and stereotypical beliefs of individuals with mental illness; particularly for those with serious mental illness such as schizophrenia. As a result of these findings, she surmised: "For [undergraduates], the most stigmatizing mental disorders, those without redeeming features, include people with schizophrenia or generic psychopathology. These most extreme mental illness images are probably what comes most often to mind when people imagine someone with mental illness as unrelatable" (p.4).

    While the statement by Fiske (2012) powerfully illustrates the negative perceptions held by undergraduate students in general, it is unclear if the participants in the study she referenced were human services students. From other sources, there is empirical evidence that students enrolled in health professions programs hold stigmatizing opinions of persons with schizophrenia. A survey of medical and nursing undergraduate students found that 78% of them perceived patients with schizophrenia as dangerous and 50% felt that those diagnosed with schizophrenia would not recover (Llerena, Cáceres, Peñas-LLedó, 2002). Findings from two additional studies with medical and nursing students found their attitudes towards people with mental illness, including schizophrenia, worsened over the course of their training program (Korszun, Dinos, Ahmed, & Bhui, 2012; Murphy, Jones, Edwards, James, & Mayer, 2009). Finally, undergraduate psychology students also appear to possess stigmatizing views towards persons with schizophrenia that include a lack of empathy, fearfulness, and little desire to connect socially (Brown, Evans, Espenschade, & O'Connor, 2010; Kalyanaraman, Penn, Ivory, & Judge, 2010). In sum, the findings from the studies described above provide evidence that current and future human services students may hold stigmatizing opinions of persons with schizophrenia. Accordingly, further investigation of human services students' perceptions of schizophrenia is needed.

Preparing Future Human Services Professionals to Serve Persons with Schizophrenia
    In order for human services professionals to best serve clients with schizophrenia, it is imperative that they develop an empathic understanding of the lived experiences associated with schizophrenia so they can change any stigmatizing beliefs (Overton & Medina, 2008). Empathy and understanding, perhaps the most universal skills needed in order to build helping relationships, refer to one's ability to feel the cognitive and emotional experiences of someone else as his or her own (Neukrug, Bayne, Dean-Nganga, & Pusateri, 2013; Rogers, 1957). In a review of literature regarding strategies for facilitating empathy for individuals with schizophrenia, Keryebuhl, Nossel, and Dixon (2009) found that empathy and understanding exhibited by the human services professional improves client engagement in long-term treatment. Negative and stigmatizing views held by current and future human services professionals could inhibit their empathy and understanding for persons with schizophrenia (Overton & Medina, 2008). Such negative perceptions create a barrier between human services professionals and persons with schizophrenia. Instructors in human services training programs may not be able to control the negative messages their students receive prior to starting the program about schizophrenia, but thankfully, empathy and understanding are skills that can be developed (Neukrug et al., 2013). It is the instructor's responsibility to explore ways to help students develop a greater sense of understanding of schizophrenia (Overton & Medina, 2008). Experiential learning is one such way.

Experiential learning to facilitate empathy and understanding.

Experiential learning helps students develop insight to the experiences of others (McAuliffe, 2011; Neukrug et al., 2013). Experiential learning embodies sensory, cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes. Characterized as student-centered and integrative, experiential learning allows students to gain direct sensory input to serve as the foundation for synthesizing concepts (Dewey, 1938; McAuliffe, 2011). Learning through ambiguous conditions that reflect the complexities of human experience allows students to actively construct meaning (McAuliffe, 2011). Experiential learning fosters student engagement through deep processing that challenges dichotomous thinking, reduces bias, and supports long-term retention of concepts (Kolb, 1984; McAuliffe, 2011;). Human services instructors can best serve students' developmental processes by providing opportunities to enhance skills related to empathy (McAuliffe, 2011; Neukrug et al., 2013).

Indeed, experiential learning activities have been used with students and human services professionals to help them better understand the lived experience of schizophrenia. Ando, Clement, Barley, and Thornicroft (2011) identified eleven articles, seven qualitative and four quantitative, that investigated participants' understanding of schizophrenia and perceptions of reduced stigma associated with schizophrenia by exposing them to simulated auditory hallucinations. Results of the quantitative studies indicated mixed findings on the effectiveness of the simulation in improving participants' understanding of schizophrenia and reducing stigma associated with schizophrenia. They found evidence that the simulation positively impacted participants' empathy for people with schizophrenia but may also have increased their desire to avoid them socially. Across all the qualitative studies, during the activity, participants reported experiencing (a) cognitive impairment, (b) emotional discomfort, (c) physical discomfort, (d) poor functioning on tasks, (e) hallucinations that seemed real, and (f) compensatory reactions (e.g., desire to isolate and/or quit activity; for more details, see Ando et al., 2011, pp. 13-14). They found that across all qualitative studies, participants reported the simulation experience gave them an increased understanding of the pervasive impact of hallucinations on daily life. Participants in one study reported feelings of hopelessness and in another study, grief. Accordingly, as a result of completing the simulation, participants reported a greater sense of empathy and respect for persons with schizophrenia.

As noted by Ando et al. (2011), only two qualitative articles used the simulation as a learning tool with correction officers (Wise, 1989) and nurses (Wilson et al. 2009), but both studies found evidence that such an intervention could help to improve students' understanding of schizophrenia, subsequently, positively impacting their future careers. While the findings from these studies provide promising evidence of the utility of simulations as a learning tool to improve students' understanding of schizophrenia, additional research is warranted.

The Current Study

This study aimed to assess human services students' perceptions of a classroom simulation where they were asked to complete a series of tasks that would be typical for someone diagnosed with schizophrenia while also experiencing simulated auditory hallucinations. The purpose of the classroom simulation was to provide students with an opportunity to better understand the lived experiences of persons who have schizophrenia. In the current study, we

sought to add to the existing body of literature on how students in human services programs perceive such classroom situations, and the effectiveness of such classroom simulations in terms of improving understanding of schizophrenia. The following research question guided our investigation: What are human services students' perceptions of a classroom simulation as it relates to their understanding the lived experience of individuals with schizophrenia?

Method

Recruitment Procedure

The participants were current and former graduate students of two human services training programs located in the Southeastern United States who had completed the classroom simulation in one of their introductory courses in the past four academic years (2013-2017). After obtaining IRB approval at both institutions, we contacted by email 89 potential participants, and invited them to complete an online survey in Qualtrics. Sixty-eight of the 89 students contacted agreed to participate in the study, yielding a response rate of 76.4%.

Instrumentation and Participants

We designed an instrument to capture the students' perceptions of the classroom simulation as it relates to the students' understanding of the experience of schizophrenia. Two open-ended items were the focus of the study: (a) "What was the most important thing you took away from the class exercise?" (b) "How has the exercise helped you in your work as a counselor?" Twelve of the participants did not complete the two open-ended items, so we removed their responses from the analysis, resulting in a final sample of 56 responses.

The age of participants ranged from 22-47 (M = 27.6, SD = 6.9, *n*= 56). The majority of participants identified as female (82.1%, *n*= 46) while nine identified as male (16.1%) and one participant identified as other (1.8%). Regarding race/ethnicity, 42 participants identified as White (non-Hispanic; 75%), nine participants identified as African American/Black (16.1%), three participants identified as Asian/Pacific Islander (5.4%), one participant identified as Hispanic/Latino/a (1.8%), and one participant responded "none of the above categories" (1.8%). There were 24 (42.9%) participants who completed the simulation in 2017, while 22 (39.3%) completed it in 2016, four (7.5%) completed it in 2015, four (7.5%) completed it in 2014, and two completed it in 2013 (3.6%). Please note that percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

The Classroom Simulation Procedure and Instructions to Students

Students completed a series of tasks that would be typical for someone with schizophrenia while experiencing simulated auditory hallucinations. In the current study, the auditory hallucinations were produced for a training model, "The Hearing Voices Experience" (for more information, see http://www.power2u.org; Deegan, 1996), which has been used in numerous previous studies (e.g. Brown et al., 2010; Bunn & Terpstra, 2009; Wilson et al., 2009). Prior to beginning the classroom simulation, we provided information to the students that included the purpose of the classroom simulation, the guidelines for the classroom simulation, and a brief description and instruction for each task they would be asked to complete. The guidelines for the classroom simulation included to independently work at each station, to seek clarification of instructions from the instructor if necessary, and to personalize the experience

(e.g., raise or lower the volume and/or pause or stop the audio at any time) to minimize their level of distress and to maximize their learning experience. We also discussed the voluntary nature of the classroom simulation and informed students that their decision to participate or not participate in the activity including some or all parts of the simulation, would not impact their grade. Consistent with recommendations from past studies (Ando et al., 2011), students were made aware of potential harm or distress from participating in the activity.

During the classroom simulation, students completed five, 10-minute tasks (see Figure 1). Each task was selected for two purposes. First, these tasks are things that a person with schizophrenia may need to accomplish in real life. Although participants in the current study may have completed these or similar tasks in the past, doing so with the presence of the auditory hallucinations makes this a new and authentic learning experience (Ando et al., 2011: McAuliffe, 2011). The second reason for the selection of the materials is they are publicly available. For example, the job application was downloaded from a national retailer's website and the sample exam questions were found on the local community college study tips website. Following the completion of the stations, students participated in a 30-minute debrief of the activity.

Figure 1
Sample Student Schedule
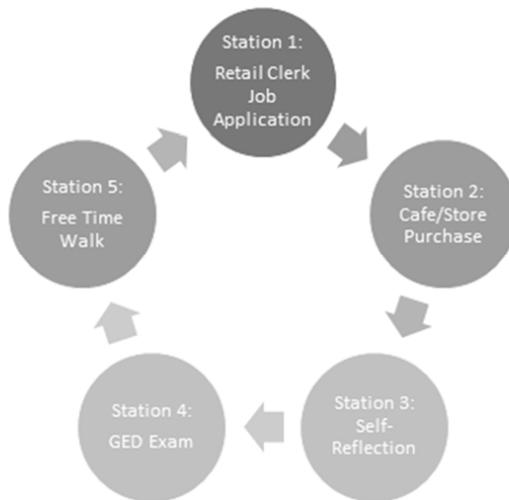
Station 1: Complete the provided job application and place it in the folder for review by the store manager. Be sure to do your best work. You need this job to pay for food, housing, and transportation.

Station 2: Make a small purchase of your choosing at the nearby store/café. If you would prefer not to make a purchase today, simply ask the attendant what the hours of operation are next Saturday.

Station 3: Find a place to sit and write on the back of this paper. Answer the following prompts: (a) As you hear the voices from your headphones, notice your thoughts and feelings and list three adjectives below; (b) Pay attention to how you feel physically in this moment. Do you feel tension in your shoulders? Uneasy in your stomach? A headache? Describe your physical feelings; (c) Close your eyes for a minute or so. Is that more or less comfortable? What was that like?

Station 4: Complete the items on the exam without consulting outside resources. Be sure to do your best. You need to pass this exam to get your high school diploma.

Station 5: Now you have some free time between activities. Take a walk inside the building. What do you notice as you rest or relax during this free time?

Research Team

Our research team was made up of three members. The first and second authors served as coders and the third author served as a peer reviewer. The first and third authors are faculty members in a human services training program at different universities, and the second author is a doctoral student in a human services program. We all are licensed human services professionals with more than fifteen years of collective experience providing direct services to clients. Also, we all have trained and supervised students in a human services graduate program. Since the first and third authors were instructors of record for the students who had taken the course, prior to the analyses process, we discussed how this experience might influence the coding process. In addition to bracketing potential biases, we calibrated our coding process, engaged in frequent peer debriefs, and utilized a peer reviewer as suggested by Creswell (2013).

Study Design and Data Analysis Process

To understand human services students' perceived effectiveness of the classroom simulation, we utilized conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Conventional content analysis allows us to generate themes by subjectively interpreting participants' open-ended text responses without the use of preexisting categories to understand the phenomenon of interest. We analyzed all participants' responses to both questions collectively to best understand the phenomenon of interest, resulting in a dataset of 112 text responses. Following the process described by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the two coders read all participant responses in order to familiarize themselves with the data. Next, the coders met to discuss their initial impressions of the dataset and discussed potential influences of bias. Next, the coders independently identified keywords or phrases from all participants' responses that captured their experiences of the phenomenon. The coders then independently labeled each segment of text to document their reactions and impressions of the data. Next, the coders individually sorted their labels into meaningful clusters. Both coders independently identified eight clusters; however, some of the clusters generated, as well as the categorization of participant responses, differed. The coders met on three occasions to reach consensus on the clusters and to develop overarching categories.

In the final step, the coders created names and definitions for each of the categories. The third author reviewed the entire coding process including the coders' initial labels, the clusters, and finally the categories (Creswell, 2013). The third author did not recommend any changes to the categorization of participants' responses, but did recommend rephrasing the name of one category to improve clarity and better reflect participant responses. Five categories emerged from our analysis.

Results

Our analysis of participants' open-ended responses yielded five categories that reflected their experience of the classroom simulation. Forty (71.4%) participant responses provided evidence of the category "improved empathy towards persons with schizophrenia." Twenty-five (44.6%) participant responses supported the category "awareness of day-to-day life of persons with schizophrenia." The category, "increased recognition of stigma associated with schizophrenia," appeared in 22 (39.3%) participant responses. Twenty-one (37.5%) participant responses included data support for the category "participants' reflections on their own experience during the classroom simulation." The final category, "impact future work as a human services professional," appeared in 17 (30.4%) participant responses.

Improved Empathy towards Persons with Schizophrenia

The vast majority of participants (71.4%) perceived that their empathy towards people with schizophrenia improved after participating in the classroom simulation. One participant wrote, "I can be more empathetic and understanding towards those who experience auditory hallucinations." Another participant responded, "It will improve my empathy and understanding as I aim to relate to the clients and see it from their perspective." One participant identified the hands-on nature of the activity as being helpful to increasing her empathy:

> Prior to completing this exercise, I truly could not understand what it was like to "hear voices"...reading texts or even watching videos did not give me the same experience. By actually having to complete activities while repeatedly having "voices" distract me gave me an entirely different understanding of what a client might be experiencing. It certainly helped me develop empathy toward these clients.

Awareness of Day-to-Day Life of Persons with Schizophrenia

Approximately 45% of participant responses indicated they gained an increased understanding of what a person with schizophrenia may experience on a daily basis. Many of these participants indicated daily activities, which they normally complete effortlessly, became challenging or complicated as a result of also hearing auditory hallucinations. A few participants described the tasks included in the simulation as "simple tasks" that were "complicated" by hearing auditory hallucinations. One participant surmised that daily activity might be "difficult" and "scary." One participant wrote, "You never truly know what someone else may be dealing with and what lengths that person may go through to survive on a daily basis." Another participant responded by writing that she had, "a completely newfound understanding of what a person who is hallucinating experiences in daily life." Finally, one participant wrote that she

gained an "understanding of the lack of control one has over the hallucinations and how invading they can be on everyday experiences."

Increased Recognition of Stigma Associated with Schizophrenia

Another category, found in roughly 40% of participants' responses, was their increased awareness of the stigma associated with schizophrenia. This category reflected the participants' insight that the classroom simulation helped to challenge negative perceptions (i.e., stereotypes) of persons living with schizophrenia. One participant wrote, "I think it also helped me understand the stigma towards these individuals." Another participant wrote that her previously held opinions of mental illness changed, "I hate to admit, but I believed some of those same biases and stereotypes before completing this exercise...[the classroom simulation] has helped me develop a greater understanding of the impact hallucinations have on a person's life." Another participant wrote, "I learned that people that live with auditory hallucinations are not lazy. It can be exhausting trying to complete tasks…I understand why some may use alcohol and drugs to silence the voices and get rest."

Participants' Reflections on Their Own Experience during the Classroom Simulation

The fourth category, supported by 37.5% of participants, encompassed participants' reflections on their own experiences (e.g., thoughts, feelings, observations) that occurred during the classroom simulation. Some participants described feeling "exhausted" during the activity, and one participant wrote, "The [classroom simulation] really opened my eyes to how uncomfortable and exhausting it is to experience auditory hallucinations. I was physically and mentally exhausted…it gave me a whole new understanding and respect for individuals living with hallucinations." Another participant added, "How doing a simple task can feel exhausting because you have to work harder to overcome the voices I was hearing." Other participants expressed they felt "judged" by others who may not have known they were participating in a classroom activity. One participant responded, "While experiencing [the classroom simulation], I encountered people in the hallway (not my classmates) and I wondered what they were thinking about me during that encounter…I felt judged when I would not otherwise think so." Finally, several participants discussed difficulty focusing or concentrating during the activity. One participant described her experience, "There were times during the exercise when the voices on the recording would stop and it was difficult for me to focus on anything else other than when the voices were going to start again." Another participant added that the voices felt "scary" and "weird" and that while doing the activities she "felt the need to always look behind my back just to check if I was by myself."

Impact Future Work as a Human Services Professional

The final category, found in 30.4% of participants' responses, reflected their perceptions that their participation in the classroom simulation would positively impact their future work as a human services professional. One participant wrote, "It has helped me understand schizophrenia better…I feel that…when I do encounter someone with schizophrenia I will be able to connect with them better." Multiple participants wrote that they believed it was important to slow down in a session when someone was experiencing auditory hallucinations. One participant wrote that she would, "give others more time to speak," and another participant responded, "I don't think

I'll be as rushed to get through a session." Another participant wrote about being aware that those experiencing auditory hallucinations might have a delayed response which means she needs to adjust how "I could listen more closely and give others more time to speak." One student, who is already working with clients, noted the positive impact the classroom simulation had on her work in the field:

> This semester I had a client with a previous diagnosis of schizoaffective disorder. The [classroom simulation] helped me know what questions to ask this client and facilitated meeting the client with genuine empathy and congruence as we engaged in conversation about her life. I was grateful for having an opportunity to learn about auditory hallucinations prior to having a client that experienced these events. I was a better counselor because of the [classroom simulation].

Finally, one participant wrote that she felt her experience would help her better serve her clients, "it helps me to become more capable of helping my clients deal with their everyday issues."

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to examine human services students' perceptions of a classroom activity in increasing their understanding of the lived experience of individuals who have schizophrenia. The current study yields evidence that human services students perceive such a classroom activity as improving their empathy towards persons with schizophrenia, increasing their awareness of the day-to-day life experience of persons with schizophrenia, boosting their recognition of stigma associated with schizophrenia, improving their awareness of their own experience during the simulation, and impacting their future work as human services professionals. Given that human services students are called to serve persons with schizophrenia, classroom simulations like the one assessed in the current study, may provide a valuable learning opportunity for students to better understand what it is like to live with schizophrenia.

Consistent with previous studies (Ando et al., 2011), we found evidence that human services students who participated in the classroom simulation perceived an increase in their own empathy towards individuals with schizophrenia. Roughly 71% of the participants in the current study referenced how their empathy towards persons with schizophrenia increased as a result of their participation in the classroom simulation. As noted by Neukrug et al. (2013), demonstrating empathy is perhaps the most foundational skill for developing a helping relationship with others. Human services students have likely been exposed to stigmatizing views of persons with schizophrenia (e.g., dangerous, incompetent, lazy) which may stifle their ability to connect and/or relate to persons with schizophrenia (Fiske, 2012). Relatedly, approximately 44% of the participants in the current study, discussed how the classroom simulation increased their awareness of the day-to-day life of persons with schizophrenia. This finding is consistent with those of previous studies. Using a meta-ethnographic synthesis of qualitative findings, Ando et al. (2011) identified one theme as an "insider's perspective of the difficulties faced by people who experience auditory hallucinations" (p. 13). This theme encompassed participants' awareness of the complexity of daily life for persons with schizophrenia. Accordingly, classroom simulations, such as the one assessed in the current study, may provide students with the opportunity to confront their stigmatizing views by experiencing the tasks typically asked of

persons with schizophrenia which may help to foster a greater sense of empathy and understanding (McAuliffe, 2011).

The third theme, increased recognition of stigma associated with schizophrenia, reflected the participants' improved awareness of the stigma and/or stereotypes held about schizophrenia. Students enrolled in health professions, such as nursing or medical students, may hold negative, stereotypical views of schizophrenia despite having little or no previous contact with someone diagnosed with schizophrenia (Llerena et al., 2002). The classroom activity assessed in the current study was conducted in an introductory course in students' first semester of their graduate training program. It may be possible that, for the participants in the current study, this was one of their first exposures to the lived experience of schizophrenia. Developmentally, an increased awareness of the stigma directed towards persons with schizophrenia may be a critical first step to their development as human services professionals: namely, facilitating their empathy towards persons with schizophrenia (Neukrug et al., 2013).

Approximately one-third of participants discussed their insights into their thoughts, feelings, and emotional experience that occurred during the classroom simulation. Participants described the experience of difficultly focusing and/or concentrating, feeling exhausted by the tasks, preoccupation with worry about being judged by others, and even feeling scared. The experiences described by these participants reflected distress and a negative emotional response that occurred during the activity, which is consistent with previous literature. In a synthesis of eleven studies that employed auditory hallucinations, Ando et al. (2011) found participants reported experiencing cognitive impairment, emotional discomfort, physical discomfort, poor functioning on tasks, and perceiving the auditory hallucinations as being real. Experiential activities, by their nature, are intended to be an immersive experience. Other negative emotional experiences described by participants in previous studies, that were not present in the current study, include feelings of grief and hopelessness (Ando et al., 2011; Dearing & Steadman, 2008). While the participants in the current study described a brief negative experience that occurred during the activity, none of the participants reported they discontinued the classroom simulation nor did they report lingering distress or harm. Like previous studies (Ando et al., 2011), we view the experiences described by participants in the current study as an important learning opportunity generated through an immersive, simulated experience as well as a reminder of the importance of need precautions associated when employing such an activity.

The final theme that emerged reflected the participants' belief that their future work as human services professionals would be positively impacted as a result of their participation in the activity. Ultimately, the purpose of experiential activities is to facilitate participant development (in this case empathy and understanding) through an immersive experience conducted in safe and structured environment (Kolb, 1984; McAuliffe, 2011). Given that the participants in the current study were human services professionals, we, the authors, view the finding that participants connected the activity to their future work as human services professionals to be an important finding. This finding may provide initial evidence that classroom simulations can be a useful learning tool to facilitate human services students' development and, in turn, better prepare them in their future work as human services professionals.

Implications for Instructors in Human Services Training Programs

Health professions instructors are charged with preparing students to serve all types of individuals, including those diagnosed with schizophrenia. Because students may hold stigmatizing views of persons with schizophrenia, instructors in human services training programs are called to help students develop empathy and understanding for persons with schizophrenia. Experiential activities such as this simulation can help students develop an authentic and empathic understanding of what it is like to live with schizophrenia. By actively engaging in this learning activity, then reflecting on the observations and the perspectives of others, students can learn new material and begin to revise stigmatizing misconceptions if needed. Instructors who desire to implement such classroom simulations are encouraged to take several precautions and to make advanced preparation in order to create a safe environment for students to challenge themselves in this simulation. First, as informed by previous research (Ando et al., 2011), instructors should provide full disclosure regarding the negative outcomes of participating in the activity. Signs of experiencing distress should be discussed, as well as the previous research about the potential impact on students with a history of hallucinations, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Students could be given the option of confidentially turning the audio volume down or completely off when completing the activities. Instructors should take care to avoid inadvertently stigmatizing students. Students should be informed of the option to continue to activity (if they chose) without the presence of auditory hallucinations in order to keep their decision to discontinue anonymous from their peers (Ando et al., 2011). In planning the activity, instructors may want to avoid asking students to use stairs or go outside given that auditory hallucinations can be distracting and result in accidental injury.

Implications for Students

Forming an authentic and empathic understanding of others' experiences can be difficult for all people, regardless of employment and education level (Neukrug et al., 2013). Yet, human services professionals have an ethical obligation to treat all clients with "respect, acceptance, and dignity" (NOHS, 2015, p. 82). The classroom simulation assessed in the current study may be an effective tool for cultivating understanding of persons with schizophrenia. This classroom simulation provides temporary exposure to one symptom of schizophrenia. Students who actively engage in the simulation and reflect on their experience afterwards (McAuliffe, 2011) may yield the most benefits. Students should also be aware that simulations can be potentially distressing, and coordinate with instructors to make appropriate accommodations if needed.

Limitations and Future Research

There are limitations of this study to address. First, we collected data via participant self-report. We were encouraged by the robust response rate, but we do not know why some decided to participate and others did not participate. Also, we surveyed students who completed the simulation from 2013 to 2017. The majority of participants (82.1%) completed the activity within two years of being surveyed, but our findings could be influenced by participants' ability to recall details about the simulation. It is also possible that participants may have been less likely to self-report feelings that indicate a continued stereotypical view (Ando et al., 2011). Another limitation is that we focused our investigation on examining human services students' perceptions of the classroom experience as it relates to their understanding of the lived

experience of schizophrenia. It is possible that by employing such a narrow focus, we failed to capture the participants' perceptions of schizophrenia, in general. Future researchers may consider employing a pre-test and post-test design to capture a more holistic picture of students' perceptions of schizophrenia as well as provide additional evidence of the effectiveness of similar classroom simulation. Another limitation is that the participants in the current study were students enrolled in a master's level counseling training program. The findings in the current study may be limited to master's level students and to programs that emphasize training in mental health and mental health awareness. Future research should explore students' perceptions in undergraduate training programs as well as additional human services programs that place less of an importance on training in mental health. Finally, consistent with previous literature, students were exposed to simulated auditory hallucinations to mimic the symptoms of schizophrenia. However, auditory hallucinations are only one aspect of the complex lived experience of schizophrenia. Thus, the findings generated from this study may only reflect students' impressions of this single facet of schizophrenia.

Future Direction and Conclusion

While the current study enriches the understanding of how human services students perceive a classroom simulation designed to improve their understanding of the lived experience of schizophrenia, there are opportunities for future research in this topic area. First, although there is promising evidence that classroom simulations can be used to improve students' understanding of schizophrenia, there is a lack of research on the long-term benefits of such trainings. Per Ando et al. (2011), in only two studies did researchers followed up with participants a week after completing a simulation, and no study has examined the lasting effects of the intervention. As such, investigations into the longitudinal effects of classroom simulations are needed. Another opportunity for future research is that, although schizophrenia is one of the more stigmatized mental health disorders (Fiske, 2012), human services professionals are called to serve persons who are diagnosed with a variety of mental illnesses. Therefore, future research is needed to understand how to better prepare future human services professionals to work with persons diagnosed with a number of mental illnesses (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder). Finally, the majority of prior studies in this topic area, including the current investigation, examined students' perceptions. Human services professionals in the field may also hold stigmatizing views of schizophrenia (Overton & Medina, 2008). Perhaps classroom simulations, such as the one employed in the current study, could be used as a training exercise for current human services professionals to facilitate their understanding of schizophrenia. In sum, human services professionals have a responsibility to provide quality care to individuals with schizophrenia. Cultivating authentic and empathic understanding of the varied lives of others can be challenging, but it is critical to reducing stigma and eliminating barriers to helping services. Experiential learning activities, including simulations such as this one, are key to helping students understand the lived experiences of others. Students who participate in authentic learning are likely to engage in new ways of thinking and open the door for dialogue, which could lead to improved care for persons with schizophrenia.

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Human Services Identity Development: Exploration of Student Perceptions

Narketta Sparkman- Key, Anthony J. Vajda, Ne'Shaun J. Borden

Abstract

Helping students to develop a strong professional identity is an essential function of human services education. The literature on professional identity development shows that new professionals have long term success when they feel connected to the profession and are competent in their ability to perform their assigned roles and duties. Although there is a large body of literature related to professional identity development, there are gaps in the literature related to professional identity development among human services professionals. This qualitative study used an exploratory grounded theory approach to learn about professional identity development of senior human services students from a large Southern university in the United States. Authors used feedback from participants to establish five themes that participants felt were key to their development as human services professionals. Recommendations are provided for human services educators on ways to develop foundational skills in entry level human services professionals.

Human Services Professional Identity Development

Human services professionals are viewed as generalists and often take on a wide variety of roles in diverse settings (Bayne, Pusateri, & Nganga, 2012). In these settings, human services professionals establish helping relationships with individuals and families to support and foster self-sufficiency among client populations. To establish effective helping relationships, human services professionals must possess a breadth of knowledge and skills including empathy and cultural competency while working in administrative, clinical, and advocacy positions (National Organization for Human Services [NOHS], 2016). While the professional and ethical guidelines for human services professionals clearly outline what is expected of professionals in the field, there appears to be a lack of research conducted illuminating the identity development process among both human services students and professionals (Council for Standards in Human services Education [CSHSE], 2013; NOHS, 2015). Seeking input from current undergraduate human services students, the researchers were guided by the question: What are the perceptions of human services undergraduate students regarding essential components of human services professional identity development? The intent of the current study is to contribute to the gap in the literature by exploring the development of professional identity among human services undergraduates, discover trends in professional identity development, uncover perceptions of students, and address possible gaps in curriculum.

Literature Review

Professional identity is a broad concept that seeks to describe how individuals define themselves within a professional context and how this is then proclaimed to others (Neary,

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2014). The general consensus from a review of professional identity development literature asserts that professional identity development is a lifelong process (Borders & Usher, 1992). Professional identity has been referred to in the literature as professional socialization, professional formation, professional education, and professional development (Trede, Macklin, & Bridges, 2012). Identifying what factors contribute to professional identity development has also been a much-debated topic. Over the years, professional identity development has been conceptualized and defined several ways. In 1978, Schien defined professional identity as the "relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role" (as cited by Ibarra, 1999, p. 2). Although the literature on professional identity development has often concluded that new professionals develop their identity on the job, in recent years, theorists who study identity development have challenged this idea. Ibarra (1999), asserted that much of an individual's professional identity development happened when new professionals tried out different professional personas until they had the knowledge and skills they believed they needed in their professional role.

As the professional identity conversation continues to evolve, there has been more focus on the role higher education plays in students' professional identity development. Barbara-i-Molinero, Cascon-Pereira, and Hernández -Lara (2017) believe that students begin to develop their professional identity before they enter the workplace. Guided by these beliefs, the researchers worked to develop a conceptual framework of professional identity development based on the higher education literature. They found that factors influencing professional identity development fall into two groups, professional identity and degree characteristics. Some of the results suggested that students' professional identity and degree choice are influenced by their social experiences, educational experiences, and work experiences.

Developing professional identity includes learning professional roles, learning theories related to one's chosen profession, and understanding the culture of the workplace and professional socialization (Trede et al., 2012). A wide variety of theories have been used in the literature as theoretical frameworks to guide how individuals develop as professionals including learning theories, activity theories, developmental theories, and personal epistemologies. This highlights the lack of available evidenced-based literature for professional identity and the disagreement among identity theorists.

Trede et al. (2012) found in their review of professional identity development literature as it occurs in higher education that an integral aspect of professional identity development is "the role of self" (p. 375). As students developed their personal knowledge of self, their professional identity also grew. In order for this to happen, students had to be challenged and put into situations where they were encouraged to reflect deeply on their professional experiences. Deep reflection is a process that must first be facilitated by the instructor until students are able to do it on their own. The researchers also found that gaining professional experience by being in a professional role was also an integral part of professional identity development.

Of the literature reviewed on professional identity development in higher education, Trede et al. (2012) found that there was not a consistent working definition of professional identity development. The research team found that although "personal, professional and social identity is often discussed, there is not an explicit connection made between them" (p.376). Knowing that the literature on professional identity development in higher education often

focuses solely on the role of the university to teach students theory related to professional identity, there is a gap in the literature related to how personal, professional and social identity intersect. Human services educators know even less about how human services professionals develop professional identity, as this has yet to be explored by the field. However, other helping professions like counseling and social work have begun to work to define professional identity development in their respective fields which lends insight beneficial to human services.

In the field of counseling, extensive research has been conducted to learn more about the professional identity development of professional counseling students and counselor education students. Findings have indicated the importance of both intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions of professional identity including skills, values, problem solving, and integration into the professional culture (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Moss, 2012). Additionally, professional identity development research in counseling emphasizes that it is a process during which students vacillate between dependence and autonomy as they grapple with new ideas, skills, and receive constant feedback. Counselor educators in leadership positions, who were participants in a qualitative study intended to describe perceptions of professional identity development, revealed the importance of mentorship, intrinsic values, professional engagement, and opportunities for leadership and scholarship as important influences to their professional development (Woo, Storlie, & Baltrinic, 2016).

Similar to individuals working in human services, social workers find themselves increasingly in multidisciplinary environments and in diverse settings (Moorhead, Bell, & Bowles, 2016). This increase in the variety of roles has the potential for disrupting the distinct professional identity within a field due to an unclear territory of practice (Beddoe, 2013). However, literature in the field of social work discusses the importance of active leadership, public recognition, and positive practice outcomes which have contributed to the solidarity of the social work profession (Mitchell, Parker, & Giles, 2011). In a study which included participants who were social work students in non-traditional placements, it was found that students identified areas of skill and knowledge, as well as personal qualities, as essential to the social work professional identity. These factors included communication; listening; group work; awareness of services available for clients; social work theory; knowledge of legislation; knowledge of human development; and values such as empathy, patience, non-judgmental attitude, and respect of individuals (Scholar, McLaughlin, McCaughan, & Coleman, 2014).

It is clear that other helping professions have laid a foundation of understanding professional identity development. However, it is still unknown if professional identity development in human services is consistent with findings of other helping professions. The goal of this qualitative study is to address this gap by exploring professional identity development in the field of human services through student perceptions.

Method

Qualitative inquiry is a form of research that aims to understand and explore the subjective experience of individuals. Qualitative research includes inductive analysis which requires constant reflection of both the research process and findings (Patton, 2002). The current qualitative study used an exploratory grounded theory approach to generate an explanation of the views of human services identity of undergraduate human services students with the ultimate goal of identifying the perceptions of undergraduate human services students regarding essential

components of human services professional identity development. This method was chosen for this study because it focuses on providing insight and understanding of professional identity development of human services undergraduate students. Additionally, this exploratory analysis was conducted with the intention to develop a meaningful guide to action for human services educators. All participants in this study were human services undergraduates who had taken several human services courses and could therefore describe their views regarding their perception of professional identity as a human services student. In accordance with guidelines for a grounded theory data collection process and data analysis, researchers began by reviewing and analyzing larger domains of data and continued the analysis by reduction and clustering of the data into thematic labels to represent core themes of experiences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Trustworthiness

Maximizing trustworthiness is a vital consideration in all qualitative designs (Hays & Singh, 2012). In this study, the researchers implemented strategies to maintain the integrity of the data including careful consideration of questions used for the data collection, personal and collaborative reflection of the data collection and analysis process, frequent debriefing sessions, and peer scrutiny of research methods. The researchers put intentional care in deciding what means they used to maximize trustworthiness. During the discussion of trustworthiness, the researchers agreed on the importance of bracketing researcher bias and assumptions about the focus of the study. As an additional measure to maximize trustworthiness, researchers reviewed themes individually and together to ensure that consensus was reached in the coding process.

Due to the nature of qualitative investigations, researcher biases are inherent. All researchers are professionals in human services or related fields, as such, professional identity development is something that is considered to be important by all researchers. In a step to aid in removing this bias when designing the study, researchers constructed questions that were open-ended to facilitate broad and in-depth responses. The researchers acknowledged biases and were all involved in the coding process to enhance reliability of the resulting data. Each researcher examined data individually to determine preliminary codes, after which, those codes would be reviewed by the other researchers. Discrepancies and possible biases were identified, and the process was repeated until consensus was reached.

Participants

Since the purpose of this inquiry was to concentrate on the formative period of professional identity development, undergraduate human services students would be the most suitable to provide rich information central to the importance of the research question. As such, researchers implemented a purposeful sampling method based on specific criteria which allowed researchers to obtain information-rich cases for in-depth analysis. With access to information from this sample, researchers hoped to gain a vital understanding to the phenomenon of identity development in a specific population rather than solely making generalized observations (Patton, 2002).

In total, there were 41 students who were invited to participate in this study. One student declined, resulting in a final total of 40 (N= 40) student participants. Participants included in this study were undergraduate students 18 years of age or older. All participants were upper level human services majors from a large Southern university. To ensure anonymity of students,

demographic information was not obtained from the participants. However, during the time of data collection there were 441 full-time and 93 part-time students with majors in human services studying on campus. Human services majors are predominantly female (89%). The racial makeup of the students consists of the following: less than 1% Native American, 2% Asian, 3% unknown, 9% Hispanic, 7% two races, 27% White, and 51% African American. At the time of participation, students were enrolled in a required writing intensive course, as part of the core requirements towards a Bachelor of Science in Human Services. Any identifying information provided within the context of participant responses was removed. Participants' names were changed to pseudonyms to protect participant confidentiality (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006). Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and were provided with information detailing the confidential nature of the research. Researchers obtained exempt human subjects committee approval from the affiliated institution.

Data Collection
        The questionnaire in this study was designed to elicit students' perspectives and experiences regarding views of themselves in the context of the human services profession. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire titled, "My Human Services Professional Identity," which contained five separate prompts. The questionnaire modeled resources commonly used in "person centered planning" (Wells & Sheehey, 2012). Person centered planning is based on the empowerment of individuals with disabilities by focusing on their individual goals and needs rather than the systems which serve or marginalize them. This approach promotes individual identity development and encourages individuals to define their own goals and the paths to achieve them. Questions targeted domains regarding self-assessment of personal strengths and characteristics of effective human services professionals. The following are the five prompts included on the questionnaire: (a) What do people like and admire about you?; (b) What are the characteristics of a good human services professional?; (c) What are your strengths as a human services professional?; (d) What are the supports I need to grow as a human services professional?; (e) How do I want the clients I serve to experience me?
        The goal of collecting the data in this manner was to allow the participants to feel comfortable with disclosing their thoughts and feelings without the pressure of sharing in a group setting or with time constraints. The researchers believed that this would increase the likelihood of participant involvement and provoke more thoughtful responses. These prompts were chosen because professional identity is a constellation of self-identified traits based on skills, personal values, beliefs, experiences, and how individuals see themselves in relation to the profession in which they are working in (Ibarra, 1999; Schein, 1978). The progression of the prompts was intended to guide students in their consideration of overall personal qualities and how those qualities relate to the human services profession. In addition, the questions were designed to discern what students believed human services professionals should be and how they desired to be viewed once they are in the professional role. Researchers were guided by the assumption that the resulting data might highlight both congruence and discrepancies between the participants' views of the human services professional identity and the competencies necessary for successful human services work (Creswell, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Data Analysis

In preparation for data analysis, questionnaires were collected and reviewed one at a time. As researchers reviewed an individual questionnaire, answers were recorded verbatim in a separate document according to each prompt. This was repeated for each subsequent questionnaire to result in the creation of a master list. Since no identifying information was recorded for use, each questionnaire was assigned a pseudonym to identify the individual participant's response corresponding to each of the five questions.

In analyzing participant responses, the researchers first utilized an open coding method consistent with the initial steps of grounded theory research (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The collected data was divided into segments and then scrutinized for commonalities that could reflect common conceptual themes. These themes were organized into categories and then subcategories to capture the depth of each emerging concept. After categories were generated, researchers engaged in a selective coding process to integrate and refine categories (Hays & Singh, 2012; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Researchers carefully examined category identification and discussed any inconsistencies in coding, as well as how each researcher was managing his or her bracketing of bias. As a result, discussions required further analysis and re-organizing of several thematic codes. Revisions to the coding structure are a natural occurrence in the coding process and add to the authenticity and meaningfulness of the study (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Findings

An open coding analysis of the data led to the identification of the following themes: (a) self-identified personal strengths; (b) characteristics of human services professionals; (c) self-identified professional strengths; (d) identifying supports, and; (e) self-perception of clients' experiences. For each theme, researchers were able to identify commonalities among participant responses. Researchers identified eight commonalities among participant responses for prompt one (*What do people like and admire about you?*). The following were the thematic codes agreed upon by all researchers: helpful, caring, humorous, compassionate, friendly, empathic, honest, and genuine. For prompt two (*What are the characteristics of a good human services professional?*), researchers identified ten thematic patterns which were the following: helpful, caring, honest, empathic, nonjudgmental, genuine, communication skills, open minded, trustworthy, and respectful. Researchers identified five prevalent thematic patterns for prompt three (*What are your strengths as a human services professional?*): caring, openness, listening skills, empathy, and helpful. For prompt four (*What are the supports I need to grow as a human services professional?*), four prominent themes were identified: family, continued education and experience, self-care, and other professionals. For the final prompt (*How do I want the clients I serve to experience me?*), five thematic patterns were identified: dedicated, caring, accepting, supportive, and trustworthy.

Overall, findings show that participants believe that others view them as empathic and able to establish connections, which is one of the most salient characteristics of an effective helper and human services professional (Neukrug, 2017). The remainder of the codes are personality traits or strengths which can contribute to building rapport with others and creating safer interpersonal spaces. In order to provide illustrative examples, direct quotes from participants have been weaved throughout the findings section to represent each of the themes

using participant voices (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006). Pseudonyms are used to protect participant identity.

Self-Identified Personal Strengths. Each student's response highlighted the high value placed on interpersonal skills in human services. Of the traits identified by the participants, there were eight that they all felt contributed to their personal strengths as a human services professional: helpful, caring, humorous, compassionate, friendly, empathic, honest, and genuine. Ashley responded, "I'm honest. I'm helpful. I'm loyal. I'm loving. I'm a good listener," which was a similar response of other participants. Brittany shared, "People like that I am a good listener and that I am empathetic to others' situations.'' Similar strengths were also echoed in other participant responses. Tanner believed his personal strengths were, "My ability to always put others first and how caring and nice I am." As previously mentioned, interpersonal skills were consistently highlighted by participants as their strength. When asked to identify the strengths or characteristics of good human services professionals, the student participants had a similar perspective with a strong focus on interpersonal skills.

Characteristics of Good Human Services Professionals. Students' views of competent human services professionals seemed directly related to interpersonal skills such as the ability to express empathy, build rapport, and actively listen. Payton responded, "Characteristics of a good human services professional are: having the ability to demonstrate empathy and questioning skills, providing feedback, expressing openness, using silence, continuing or further studies and training in human services, and so much more I have yet to learn." This finding was not surprising as human services students' interactions with competent human services professionals are often limited to a short internship while in school if students do not have previous work experience. Another participant, Lisa, responded "I feel that characteristics of a good human services professional is a nonjudgmental attitude and someone that is a good listener," which closely echoed Payton's sentiments. For these pre-internship students, much of the identity of competent human services professionals was placed on interpersonal skills and not foundational skills like writing and time-management. Participants also recognized that human services professionals also must possess intrinsic motivation to work in the human services field which can be challenging. Brian captured this in the following statement, "Trustworthy, empathetic, good listening skills, compassionate, capable, and they want to help people." This focus on interpersonal skills, with a desire to be a helping professional, is also captured in the participants' views of their professional strengths.

Self-Identified Professional Strengths. Professional strengths identified by students followed this theme and highlighted strong interpersonal skills that could be used to develop rapport with clients. Participants wanted their clients to view them as trustworthy, helpful, and confident in their abilities. From the responses, it seemed that students recognized that working from a strength-based perspective was critical in human services work. Michael captured this theme with his response, "I am caring and open minded. I believe that it is a privilege to work with people. I am flexible." Participants also recognized the importance of resourcefulness as a human services professional. Kesha shared, "My strengths as a human services professional are my ability to listen and I am very resourceful when necessary. I am honest but know how to

handle different situations that are presented to me. At least so far." Interpersonal skills, intrinsic motivation and resourcefulness were strengths captured by participants. It also seemed that even in the pre-internship phase, students were beginning to recognize the importance of working objectively with clients and avoiding biased interaction. Lamar believed it was important to, "Be able to put all my personal problems to the side and listen to only my client. Give great advice even when my beliefs are different from my clients. Having the strength to be tough for a client who needed me." Student participants also recognized the need for continued support as they work to develop their professional identity.

Identifying Support. Students recognized the need for family, friends, and other professionals to encourage and guide them as they continue to grow as human services professionals. Participants believed that experience in the field and continuing education would also help to contribute to their identity as human services professionals. Participants expressed that they are looking for mentorship and guidance from faculty members as they work to develop their knowledge about the field and their professional identity. Jackson responded, "Membership in professional organizations. One or more mentors in the field. Access to research and professional literature. Continuing education courses. A structured training program at my first job. Ways to manage compassion fatigue and burnout," were all things he would need to be successful as a new professional. The need for continued training and knowledge as a human services professional was also evident in other participant responses with Derrick sharing, "To continually grow my knowledge in all subjects of the human services field. I feel that the field is constantly changing with the times around us and although school may be close to finishing, I should take the initiative to continue learning for the sake of my clients." There also seemed to be an underlying theme related to the importance of self-care for human services professionals. Michael shared, "It is important to take care of myself emotionally, physically, and mentally. It is also essential to continue learning the new information pertaining to the line of work I choose."

Self-Perception of Client Experiences. Students wanted to be seen as competent, compassionate, and trustworthy by their clients. Taylor responded, "I want my clients to feel comfortable with me so that they will know that I am there for them and they will open up to me so that I will be able to help them. I want to earn and keep their trust." This finding was consistent with previous themes as it was directly related to what students believed to be characteristics of strong human services professionals. As human services professionals are often seen as "helpers," holding jobs like case managers, counselors, and liaisons, it is important to possess helping skills. Ashley shared, "I want my clients to feel that I have empathy for them all and an unconditional positive regard for them. I want them to feel comfortable and open to me and feel safe when they are with me." Ashley captured rapport building skills needed to effectively work with clients. Remaining participants shared similar views of how they would like to be perceived by clients, with Sharice stating that she would like to be seen "as someone who is genuinely interested in their well-being, supportive, unconditionally accepting and willing to match their level of commitment and effort."

Discussion

This study examined the professional identity development process of current human services undergraduate students. The results of this study identified that personal strengths, professional strengths, and internalized beliefs about the role of human services professionals strongly influenced the way the students in the sample viewed their professional identity development. Overwhelmingly, the future human services professionals in this study stated that their interpersonal skills would be most important in their future roles. Students' views of human services professionals seemed in some ways one dimensional, only accounting for interpersonal skills while neglecting other important skills such as the ability to problem solve, multitask, locate community resources, or properly document interactions with clients (Chang et. al, 2018). This one-dimensional view of human services identity is consistent with students' views of human services professionals, which, in the pre-internship phase, is characterized by excitement, idealism, and high motivations to serve clients (Diambra, Cole-Zakrzewski, & Booher, 2004).

A strong focus on interpersonal skill development was anticipated by the researchers as interpersonal skill development is a large focus of human services education. The Council for Standards in Human Services Education (CSHSE) specifically outlines this skill in Standard 17 of the National Standards for a Baccalaureate degree (2013) in human services which reads as follows: "Learning experiences shall be provided for the student to develop his or her interpersonal skills (pg. 8)." Although most programs offer stand-alone interpersonal skills courses, interpersonal skills are also usually highlighted in all courses delivered to students as they are essential to direct services with clients.

Although there is limited literature related to professional identity development in the field of human services, there is an abundance of literature available in related helping professions. In a study of counselor professional identity development, Prosek and Hurt (2004) found a statistically significant difference between the professional identity development of novice counseling professionals and advanced counselor trainees. Prosek and Hurt attributed these differences to real world experience. Like the participants in the aforementioned study, the undergraduate students in our sample have not yet entered practicum or internship. The authors believe lack of exposure to the day-to-day tasks of human services professionals has skewed the views of the skills needed to be a professional helper. Li and Liu (2015) reported similar findings in their study of social work students in China. From their sample of undergraduate students enrolled in social work programs, they found that students' professional identity was most influenced by professional training and practice in the social work field. Knowing that many pre-professional helpers have idealistic views of what is required of professional helpers has implications for the field of human services.

Implications for Human Services

Findings from this study suggest a need for human services education that is focused on developing the professional identity of students during the critical formational period of identity development, which is in the undergraduate education years (Barbara-i-Molinero et al., 2017). Trede et al. (2012) and Barbara-i-Molinero et al. (2017) identified a need for mentorship in professional identity development in higher education settings. Human services educators can help students feel connected to the field by inviting professionals into the classroom, helping

students find internship sites, encouraging students to join professional organizations, and collaborating with students on projects focused on human services.

Findings suggest that undergraduate students are aware of the interpersonal skills needed to be successful in developing and maintaining rapport with clients and they can identify these skills within themselves. However, there seems to be a lack of awareness of the importance of foundational skills that are characteristic of good human services professionals. Foundational skills include the ability to write, analyze, problem solve, and utilize critical thinking to make assessments and solve problems (Chang et. al, 2018.).

Human services education has a focus on developing these foundational skills through course content for baccalaureate education outlined by CSHSE (2013). Standard 11G of the national standards for a baccalaureate degree in human services highlights the importance of students possessing skills needed to analyze and interpret data: "Skills to analyze and interpret historical data for application in advocacy and social change (p.6)." However, there seems to be a gap in students' understanding that these foundational skills are characteristic of competent human services practice and at the core of human services professional identity. Similarly, standard 14D, "Disseminating routine and critical information to clients, colleagues, or other members of the related services system that is: 1. Provided in written or oral form, and 2. Provided in a timely manner (p. 7)," highlights the importance of students knowing how to disseminate information in written form to clients, colleagues, and other related service systems. Standard 14D also emphasizes communication that is timely as prompt communication is often essential in the field of human services.

Human services educators can foster a more accurate image of good human services practice by challenging limited perceptions that focus solely on interpersonal skills and expand the understanding of the importance of foundational skills and competencies required for effective human services practice. Bridging the gap between student perceptions of what it means to be a good human services professional, and actual competencies needed to be effective, is the first step in developing a professional identity that is more accurate to practice in the field.

In addition, participants identified the need for established human services professionals as supports in their development as "good human services professionals." Human services educators can create opportunities for students to be exposed to competent human services professionals by inviting professionals working in the field to speak about their roles in the classroom. Human services educators can also provide students with opportunities to be mentored by seasoned professionals and teach students how to network and seek out mentorship in the field. Exposure to good human services practice could also help to give students an understanding of the importance of foundational skills that are required to be effective professionals.

Human services education that combines theory and practice is essential to human services identity development. Participants in this study focused on the importance of key interpersonal skills, supports, and characteristics that would positively influence how clients experienced them. Human services educators can foster the development of human services identity by making sure students understand that basic foundational skills such as professional writing skills, the ability to read to gather information, working collaboratively, time management, and problem-solving skills are just as important as interpersonal skills. Human services educators can create opportunities for students to gain exposure to competent

professionals and teach students how to seek mentorship and make professional connections (Perrin, 2011). Mastery of these foundational skills would positively influence how students are ultimately experienced by the clients they serve which is an important aspect of identity development.

Limitations

This study adds significant value to human services education, but there are limitations. First, all of the participants included in the study were from the same mid-size Southern university. For future research, it is recommended that participants be purposefully recruited from a variety of human services baccalaureate programs at different institutions in order to gain understanding of student perspectives from various institutions and programs. Another limitation of this study relates to the lack of available literature on human services professional identity development. The majority of the literature on professional identity referenced in this paper is from other helping professions such as counseling, nursing, social work, and higher education (Barbarà-i-Molinero et. al., 2017; Moss, Gibson & Dollarhide, 2014; Neary, 2014; Trede et. al., 2012). As the literature on professional identity for human services professionals continues to evolve, it will be important to revisit this study to compare the findings.

Conclusion

Interpersonal skills are key traits in human services practice. However, in developing human services professional identity, it is important to note foundational traits that extend beyond interpersonal skills. Confidence in service delivery, personal strengths, and having the support of human services practitioners also contributes to the development of a competent human services professional. This study explores students' perceptions and lends insight to how educators can use students' perceptions to improve curriculum and training opportunities in human services education. Being that research is limited in exploring how students develop professional identity in human services, this study begins to establish the research on professional identity development of human services students while also bridging gaps in the human services literature.

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A Phenomenological Study on Meaningful Professional Experiences for Human Services Professionals

Saundra Penn and Hannah Baartmans

Abstract

Human services professionals are a relatively new addition to the realm of professionals in the mental health community. As such, little research has explored how human service professionals make meaning out of their experiences with clients. Thus, this phenomenological study explored the defining professional experiences of human services professionals providing direct care to persons with mental health and/or developmental disabilities. Findings related to the intensive role of the human services professional, intrinsic rewards, client connections, barriers to service provision and professional development, self-care, and ethical issues are discussed.

Literature Review

The human services profession emerged in the 1960s. As communities transitioned from institutional mental health care, the need for associate and bachelor level community-based professionals grew (Neukrug, 2017; Woodside & McClam, 2015). Often, human services professionals are referred to professionally as case managers, generalists, and direct service providers. Many are responsible for coordinating, consulting, counseling, planning, problem solving, and record keeping (Taylor, Bradley, & Warren, 1996; Woodside & McClam, 2013). As generalists, human services professionals are often capable of performing their roles and duties in many settings and expected to support a range of client populations and demographics (Neukrug, 2017; Woodside & McClam, 2015).

Human services professionals are often accountable for client care in two primary ways: direct care of clients and managing and coordinating services for clients within the community (Neukrug, 2017; Woodside & McClam, 2015). In many cases, this creates a "dual role" as human services professionals are both providers of care and brokers of services. At the micro-level, direct service providers are empowering their clients, providing support, and intervening in times of crisis. At the macro level, they are creating a community network of supports for clients as well as managing and facilitating these services (Taylor et al., 1996). Several researchers have explored the challenging nature and complex roles of human services professionals and their workload (Taylor, et al., 1996; Woodside, McClam, Diambra, & Varga, 2012).

Woodside et al. (2012) examined what time meant to 46 human services professionals. After completing thematic analysis, the researchers discovered that these professionals had a "never-ending pace," highlighting the agencies' demands, the intensity of client care, and the lack of time to accomplish it. Moreover, human services professionals admitted that indirect roles such as recordkeeping and documenting offered a greater challenge than other professional tasks. Several research studies show that mental health workers were found to be high risk for burnout resulting in exhaustion, compassion fatigue, and a negative professional outlook (Morse, Salyers, Rollins, Monroe-Devita, & Pfahler, 2012; Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009). Similarly, providing direct care for persons with developmental disabilities places human services workers at risk for burnout, especially if they support clients with challenging behaviors

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and are unable to maintain positivity related to the clients they serve (Kile, 2014; Lunsky, Hastings, Hensel, Arenovich, & Dewa, 2014). Chronic burnout leads to an erosion in professional values and places human services professionals at-risk for behaving unethically (Corey, Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 2015; Neukrug, 2017).

Woven throughout the literature is an acknowledgement that the human services profession is an extremely demanding and time intensive field (Kile, 2014; Lunsky et al., 2014; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Taylor, Bradley, & Warren, 1996; Woodside et al., 2012). However, to date, there is a scarcity of qualitative research that examines how human services professionals draw meaning from their complex professional roles. Human service students and educators could benefit from reading about participants' social, cultural, and historical interactions within the profession. Further, they may learn more about professionals' subjective accounts on navigating and negotiating their human services career. Therefore, the purpose of the current qualitative study explores defining professional experiences of human service practitioners providing direct care to persons with mental health and/or developmental disabilities.

Method

This article is based on a qualitative research design relying on a social constructivist paradigm where the researchers explored the lived experiences of human service practitioners supporting clients with mental health and developmental disabilities. A social constructivist paradigm with phenomenological underpinnings was selected as a means of understanding human service practitioners' subjective views and interactions within the profession (Bevan, 2014; Creswell, 2013). In phenomenology, the number of individual interviewees varies depending on the phenomena being explored. In some cases, the number of individual interviewees ranges from 3 to 10 (Creswell, 2013), while the number of focus group participants averages 6-10 (King & Horrock, 2010). Using individual interviews and a focus group, the researchers delved into the lived experiences of human service workers supporting clients with mental health and developmental disabilities. Thereafter, the interviews were analyzed for latent themes (Creswell, 2013).

Participants

Convenience and purposive sampling strategies were used to recruit participants from a southeastern metropolitan city. To recruit participants, e-mails and flyers were distributed to non-profit and for-profit agencies that specifically served clients with mental health and/or developmental disabilities. To be eligible to participate in the study, the practitioner must have worked in the human services field for at least six months, served clients with mental health and/or developmental disabilities, and have not received an educational degree higher than a bachelor's degree. Focus group participants had the opportunity to win a $40.00 Visa check card and all other participants' names were added to a drawing for a Kindle Fire.

Participants were given the choice to participate in focus groups or an individual interview. The focus group was slated for one and a half hours while each individual interview was scheduled for one hour. A total of 13 participants were recruited. Eight human services professionals participated in a focus group and five completed individual interviews. Of the participants, nine worked for privately-owned for-profit comprehensive agencies serving adults and children with mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse needs. Two

worked at government agencies supporting young children with socio-emotional and development needs, while two of the participants were employed at a non-profit agency for teens and families in crisis. Seven of the participants self-identified as African American males; three identified as African American females. Three of the participants were white females. Of note, participants' ages ranged between twenty-five and forty-five. Participants reported being in the human services profession between two and 12 years with bachelor's degrees in several majors including Biology, Communication, Marketing, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology. One participant had a high school diploma. Participants signed an informed consent document and completed a survey prior to the interview.

Data Collection

Structured questionnaire. Prior to the focus group or individual interview, each participant completed a brief questionnaire and informed consent document. The structured questionnaire solicited information about the human services professional's gender, age, race, population served, job title, years in the human service field, highest degree awarded, hours of supervision received monthly, and hours of supervision provided per month.

Interview. Adhering to phenomenological interview guidelines, two data collection approaches were chosen, individual interviews and a focus group (Creswell, 2013). The focus group lasted one and a half hours with eight of the participants. This timeframe aligned with the suggested length of a focus group (King & Horrock, 2010). The other five human services professionals were interviewed by the first researcher for 35 to 45 minutes in a place of convenience and comfort including their homes or private office settings. The length of the individual interviews contrasted from the typical one-hour length; still, interview protocol was followed regarding rapport building and the development of questions (Creswell, 2013; King & Horrock, 2010).

The interview questions were limited to allow space for participants to freely express themselves (Bevan, 2014; Creswell, 2013). The structured questions were broad, open-ended, descriptive, and imaginative. The questions were: If you had to choose an animal to describe your experiences in the human service field, what animal would you select? Why? Can you describe your job responsibilities? What has been the most meaningful part of your career in mental health and developmental disabilities services? Describe the ways that you have grown in your career in these populations? Describe some of the biggest challenges you and other professionals face in your work with this population? The participants were encouraged to explore beyond the questions presented and introduce salient topics or ideas. The interviewer also used active listening and clarification skills when respondents were vague or unclear. When the interviews ended, each participant was thanked and encouraged to contact the first researcher if they had further questions or additional comments.

Strategies for Trustworthiness

Several techniques were used to validate data sources and data analysis in the study. The decision to use a combination of individual interviews along with a focus group was based on data source triangulation and the desire for a spectrum of participants (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, Neville, 2014; King & Horrock, 2010). Because human services professionals handle sensitive client information and function in diverse organizational structures, the ability to

select their preferred interview method was significant as it tends to relate to the type of information shared (Carter et al., 2014). Also, of significance, the coders for this study were licensed professional counselors with experience in phenomenology utilizing a semi-structured interview. They discussed potential biases and assumptions influencing their interpretation of participants' statements. Because advanced degreed licensed professionals often supervise human services professionals in the respective state, the coders felt it compulsory to converse about their clinical and supervisory experiences (Creswell, 2013). Ultimately, both coders felt that it was impossible to set aside their human services experiences but believed that by bracketing (critical self-reflection), they could remain focused on the participants' phenomenological experience.

Data Analysis

The phenomenological data analysis process adhered to standards described by Creswell (2013). Following the interviews, the data were transcribed verbatim and the first researcher along with an outside coder read through the data several times before meeting. In the first meeting, the coders had already identified preliminary significant verbalizations. They engaged in horizontalization of the data by continuing to explore significant statements that reiterated how human services professionals drew meaning from their professional experiences. Initial coding evolved into latent themes analysis identifying underlying ideas and assumptions which resulted in textual descriptions (Braun & Clark, 2006). Verbatim examples were found that reiterated participants' lived experiences for each theme (Creswell, 2013; Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). A structural description was independently written to reflect on the context in which these human services professionals found themselves.

Findings

The participants described and discussed several professional issues impacting their work with clients with mental health and developmental disabilities. The emergent themes were a) a varied and intensive role, b) an identity shaped by intrinsic rewards, c) professional development through client connections, d) barriers to service provision and professional development, e) self-care plans to balance life roles, and f) encountering ethical issues frequently.

A Varied and Intensive Role

These human services professionals provided an array of services to a wide range of populations highlighting the variation in clients' needs. They worked with elderly, adult, and child consumers coping with a single or a combination of emotional, physical, and developmental issues. Some worked with individual clients alone while others worked in team settings with clients. Other professionals highlighted their work with clients and their entire families. In addition, participants outlined their work schedules where some indicated being on-call 24 hours a day for seven days a week. In addition, some participants found themselves working additional unpaid hours to ensure that they completed all their tasks. They provided in-home services, facility services, and community-based services throughout one or more counties. They had administrative responsibilities in addition to a long list of specific direct services benchmarks they were expected to meet with their clients. As one participant describes*:*

You're constantly on the go. You might spend several hours in court just waiting to get in. You could be in an IEP meeting that took three (3) or four (4) hours long. You could be at the doctors' office with a family helping them explain the recent behaviors that could take several hours. There's a lot of competing priorities that eat up a lot of time.

Another participant reiterated: "I am a jack of all trades."

An Identity Shaped by Intrinsic Rewards

The participants were cognizant that the human services profession demanded a lot of their time and energy and offered low pay. Most of the participants have been in the human services field an average of 10 years and reported fluctuating salaries. Some discussed their experiences losing their jobs when private for-profit companies closed within the state. Despite these challenges, they were unable to imagine working in another field. As one participant said:

For me it's always been a sense of feeling blessed to be able to help others and get paid for it. There are a lot of hurting people out there and anything you can do to help minimize some of that hurt, pain, stress, what have you, I think it's an absolute wonderful thing but to be able to get paid for it, is icing on the cake, that's a sweet deal in my opinion.

And another participant shared:

If I come in and I'm the only positive thing they see, they begin to look at me as a leader. I can't describe the feeling but it's just a good feeling you feel when you have been able to connect with a family in hopes of re-establishing some of those broken relationships.

The participants shared a belief that the strides observed in clients, no matter how small, were an intrinsic reward within their profession which often superseded financial gain.

Professional Development Through Client Connections

Another collective idea among participants was that their professional development was a direct result of the challenges presented by their client populations. As such, they reported that careers within the profession called for constant flexibility and preparedness for almost any scenario. As one participant asserted:

I would say that in this job you learn so much from each case that you're working with because I had no idea about anything with Di George syndrome before I got this child's case. And I said okay, I'd better learn about this because I'm not going to be very helpful to them if I have no idea what the syndrome is or what's going on with it.

Similarly, another professional echoed:

Meeting people that have such a vast wealth of knowledge, being able to observe and learn and process some of the things they say, teach and do has helped me to be

introspective and retrospective of who I am and how I can do what I'm doing better.

Because of the diversity of clients served, participants reported a propensity towards professional growth.

Barriers to Service Provision and Professional Development

The participants have witnessed many changes in the profession. With the privatization of mental health and developmental disabilities services in their state, participants discussed the challenges with uncertainty in human services positions and roles. One participant disclosed:

> I think it's depending on who is, I guess, in the position of power in the state of … and how they view how mental health services should go. Seems like things have come full circle in some respect because years ago, case management was working directly with children and families but then that role was extracted and isolated to primarily coordination of services as opposed to direct provision of services. Now it seems like it's coming full circle again, with intensive in-home and foster care having the case management component built in it.

Another notable barrier was the high volume of administrative tasks expected in their roles. One participant explained:

> So basically, you have a lot of lists. We have a white board at our desk. You have a lot of check marks making sure you meet deadlines, spreadsheets, you know, things like that. You really have to find your way of being organized. You have reminders on your computer. You have reminders on your phone, and you have your calendar. It's constant because sometimes when we are sitting at our desk and were like "I feel like I am caught up" that means something is wrong because you're actually not caught up.

Collectively, participants also reiterated changes related to agency practices where human services professionals clashed with their supervisors. Participants believed that while their supervisors may have the education and credentials to provide clinical oversight, many supervisors were unprepared for the demands of the job. One participant commented:

> Currently our new team lead, I'm not sure what her previous experience was, but I'm pretty much teaching her everything. For instance, she didn't know how to put an authorization, so I have to do all of that. And she delegated that we do the Person Centered Plan and the One Child One Plan forms at the Child and Family Team meetings. I feel like having been in the field for ten (10) years, I should be able to move up, but the fact that I don't have that extra degree stops me. I have a Bachelors in Sociology and have been in the field for ten (10) years and I can train a lead therapist. That should stand for something.

Participants identified many barriers to their professional development but among the more salient were agency changes and organizational demands.

Self-Care Plan to Balance Life Roles
        While participants described their daily routines as full of activities, they collectively reported that having a good self-care plan was essential for optimally working with challenging clients and families. One participant stated:

> You need to sleep well, because every day you have to be mentally prepared for what's going to come and going off of four (4) to five (5) hours of sleep, I've tried it. It's not going to work. You'll have a short fuse that next day. And that's for the younger people coming in, you've really got to get your rest, you have to be prepared for that next day.

Another participant reiterates the same concept stating:

> Particularly, because you impact and shape and mold the thinking of a lot of people, like a teacher, it's a huge responsibility shaping and molding minds, and if you're not in a good place then I think your advocacy when working with children and families will be reflected in that.

It appeared that the volume of work responsibilities did not supersede their commitment to self-care and self-preservation.

Encountering Ethical Issues Frequently
        The participants consistently explored the frequency of ethical quandaries they faced. While all reported they would consult their supervisors when boundary issues emerged, participants shared a belief that agency practices seem to limit the scope. For instance, one participant stated:

> I know at my previous job the level of education was much lower and we were doing the same job that we are doing here, and it didn't seem that they had enough background information on how relationships should be formed with clients before venturing out. We go to people's homes, and there is a real danger of crossing boundaries there.

Other ethical issues related to agency practices included those related to the high rate of turnover in the human services field as well as enduring invisible costs that the job does not cover including mileage and personal car usage. Participants openly shared some of the ethical and professional challenges they faced, and despite such challenges, they remained committed to working within the human services field.

<div align="center">

Discussion
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        The intent of this qualitative study was to explore human services professionals' subjective accounts of their work experiences. Similar to prior research with social work students, these human services professionals had an intrinsic desire to serve others and felt rewarded when clients made progress (Osteen, 2011). Their lived experiences also linked to the professional discourse on characteristics of human services professionals including flexibility

and competence (Woodside & McClam, 2015; Neukrug, 2017) and prior qualitative research on the never-ending work demands and pace (Woodside et al., 2012). The "never ending pace" and intensity experienced by human services professionals appears an accepted professional norm.

The professional acculturation process for many human services professionals begins within the confides of the classroom (Neukrug, 2017; Woodside & McClam, 2015). Yet, the experiences of these professionals were unique because none of the 13 participants self-identified as having either an associate or bachelor degree in human services; yet, thematically their professional experiences eluded to a professional acculturation process where they learned to deal with ethical quandaries, balance work and family responsibility, and engage in self-care (Corey et al., 2015; Moriarty, Manthorpe, Stevens, & Hussein, 2011; Woodside & McClam, 2013).

Implications

The phenomenological experiences of this group of human services professionals reiterate the complexity of professional acculturation. Without formal classroom education in human services, supervisors might benefit from understanding the development of new human services professionals as they gain competence in role acquisition, supporting diverse client populations, identifying available resources, and managing professional and ethical dilemmas (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Another area for consideration relates to interprofessional understanding within human services and other helping professions. Human service educators might reflect on professional orientation related to interprofessionalism, specifically role differentiation and collaboration among helping professionals. The combination of these items tremendously impacts service delivery and ethical client care.

Limitations

The use of a small, convenience sample is not a limitation of this research design. However, similar to other phenomenological studies, there are constraints to the generalizability of this study. For instance, these human services professionals were more seasoned African-American human services professionals solicited from a metropolitan area. Eight human services professionals participated in a focus group while five others were interviewed individually. Thus, individual interviewees may have opened-up and shared more, while participants in the focus group were at risk for not sharing their original ideas. However, the use of two data sources may help with the validation of the data sources (Creswell, 2013). While researcher bias was addressed, member checks were not provided to solicit input from the participant after their interviews. In addition, longer interviews may yield different results. Also, the individuals that chose to participate in the interview process may differ from the common experiences of other human services professionals who opted not to participate.

Future Research

Much discourse has focused on the formal educational trajectory for students and professional legitimacy for human service practitioners (Neukrug, 2017; Sparkman-Key & Neukrug, 2016; Woodside & McClam, 2015). However, the results of the current study reiterate that additional research is needed to understand the professional acculturation process of persons transitioning into human services careers without formal education. Of note, supervisors play a

critical role in successfully integrating human service workers into the profession. Therefore, a follow-up study might include a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach to better understand role acquisition of new professionals transitioning into the human services field without formal human services education. Also, the current study is culturally specific to a metropolitan area; thus, a parallel study with a more racially diverse group or in a rural area might yield different findings.

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Responding to Epidemics and Pandemics: The Role of Human Services Professionals

Tammi F. Dice, Jennifer Simmons, Olivia Wolfenden

Abstract

Inclusion of human services professionals to mitigate the impact of epidemics and pandemics is appropriate; however, very little has been published on their particular roles. Drawing from the existing literature that addresses the roles of related helping fields in addressing epidemics and pandemics, it is possible to establish roles and responsibilities for human services professionals in the event of these catastrophes. The purpose of this article is to define epidemics and pandemics and discuss their impact, review current responses by those in related medical and social service fields, and articulate the abilities and functions specific to the work of human services professionals.

Responding to Epidemics and Pandemics: The Role of Human Services Professionals

Human services professionals aim to improve the quality of life for those served through preventative and remedial interventions and mobilizing efforts to meet individuals' needs (National Organization for Human Services [NOHS], 2018; Neukrug, 2017;). The efforts of human services professionals are well defined with regard to their roles in addressing the socioemotional, educational, career, health, and resource needs of a variety of different populations including children and families, the elderly, those in poverty, veterans, immigrants, and individuals with substance use disorders (Neukrug, 2017; Occupational Outlook Quarterly, 2011). As such, they are uniquely positioned to impact efforts at addressing societal epidemics and global pandemics, yet little has been written about the role of human services professionals pertaining to these crises. The following article defines epidemics and pandemics, examines the impact of such outbreaks, reviews current responses by those in related medical and social service fields, and addresses various roles the human services professional can take in preparation and response at the individual and systemic levels.

Defining Epidemics and Pandemics

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2013), public health issues that are simultaneously experienced by a disproportionately large number of individuals can be defined as an epidemic or a pandemic. They differ by geographical coverage. An epidemic is focused to a particular city, region, or nation, while a pandemic is global (Last, 2001). The World Health Organization (2013) has found that health issues more easily transition from epidemic status to pandemic status due to the increased mobility of individuals today. Efforts to address community needs are very similar for both epidemics and pandemics. However, because they are experienced by such a large number of people, pandemics result in far greater costs to society both economically and socially (Holloway, Rasmussen, Zaza, Cox, & Jernigan, 2014).

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Types of Epidemics and Pandemics

Epidemics and pandemics can be infectious diseases transmitted from human to human or non-infectious conditions that result in health consequences (Saurez, 2011). Some of the largest communicable disease epidemics affecting various countries include Influenza, Typhus, Smallpox, Measles, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis A, Malaria, and Yellow fever (Moyer, 2018; WHO, 2018). Cholera and HIV/AIDS are deemed examples of infectious pandemics (WHO, 2018). Consequences of infectious disease epidemics and pandemics include social phobias, mandatory vaccinations, overtaxed healthcare systems, high rates of mortality, economic strains, and prejudice and discrimination against specific individuals and/or regions affected by the disease (Bloom & Canning, 2006; Hougendobler, 2015; Saurez, 2011, Van Bortel, et al., 2016). These consequences can produce significant hardships for communities and individuals, resulting in the need for deliberate and skilled interventions to mitigate their impact. Similar consequences exist for non-infectious pandemics and epidemics.

Pandemics and epidemics that are non-infectious conditions resulting in health consequences include bio-terrorist attacks, salmonellosis outbreaks, exposure to contaminants, hurricanes, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and non-medical use of opioids (Hodge, Wetter, Chronister, Hess, & Piat, 2017; Moyer, 2018; Saurez, 2011; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2016). As an example, according to the World Health Organization (2017a), obesity has been deemed a non-infectious epidemic globally because it impacts one in three adults and one in six children resulting in approximately 2.8 million deaths each year. It is also highly correlated with other health conditions including diabetes, heart problems, and cancer (Knox-Kazimierczuk & Shockley-Smith, 2017). Moreover, it accounts for 10% of the national medical budget, or $150 billion dollars per year (CDC, 2011). Based on these consequences and its prevalence in society, obesity is at epidemic proportions.

Global estimates indicate that as many as two out of three deaths are now attributed to non-communicable diseases, which is five times more prevalent than the previously discussed infectious diseases (WHO, 2017b). Health consequences of these non-infectious epidemics and pandemics can be both physical and mental. They include, but are not limited to, debilitative levels of stress and anxiety, stress induced diseases, increased prevalence of social phobias, substantial economic loss, malnutrition, displaced populations, fraudulence and criminal behavior, social stigma, and death (Hodge, Wetter, & Noe, 2017; Saurez, 2011). As with infectious epidemics and pandemics, the consequences of those that are non-infectious require trained professionals to assist in addressing the associated hardships (Hodge, Wetter, Chronister, Hess, & Piat, 2017). In order to intervene effectively, it is helpful to identify the stage of the epidemic or pandemic to assist in clarifying a community's needs (WHO, 2013).

Classifying Epidemics and Pandemics

The World Health Organization (2013) developed a continuum for identifying phases of Influenza pandemics that is applicable for assessing virtually any type of epidemic or pandemic. This 4-step classification system falls on a continuum and is grounded in risk-assessment and risk-management. The continuum follows a bell-shaped curve and ranges from no infectious or non-infectious condition to recovering from the effects of a pandemic. Specifically, it begins with the *interpandemic phase* in which animals may be experiencing a particular condition, but no human cases have been reported. Further on the continuum but still in this phase, human cases

are noted and thus an epidemic and/or pandemic threat exists. The *alert phase* is entered when clusters of individuals experience the condition, yet a community outbreak has not yet occurred. Still in the *alert phase*, but further on the continuum, the condition becomes epidemic; entire communities, regions, or a nation are affected. Still further on the continuum within the *alert phase*, the condition exists in two countries and indicates that a pandemic is inevitable. Moving into the *pandemic phase*, the condition exists in multiple countries and is indicative of a global pandemic. Further on the continuum, the *transition phase* is represented by a reduction in the condition below peak levels. At the end of the continuum, a return to the *interpandemic phase* indicates that the condition has returned to typical levels or has ceased in humans entirely (WHO, 2013; see Table 1).

Table 1
Pandemic Phases

Phase	**Condition Status**
Interpandemic	1. Condition developed in animals, no human cases
	2. Human cases noted
Alert	3. Clusters of individuals develop condition, no community outbreak
	4. Epidemic status reached
	5. Condition spans across two countries, pandemic threat rises
Pandemic	6. Condition affects multiple countries
Transition	7. Condition falls below peak levels, prevalence rates decline

Note. Adapted from World Health Organization (WHO) (2013). *Pandemic influenza risk management: WHO interim guidance.*

To guide efforts at addressing epidemics and pandemics, the WHO further classified the phases into broader categories (WHO, 2013). The *interpandemic phase* falls under *preparedness*, the *alert* and *pandemic* phases fall under *response*, and the *transition* phase falls under Recovery. The return to the *interpandemic phase* means a return to *preparedness*. These categories can be used to guide the development of appropriate prevention and response efforts at each phase (see Figure 1).
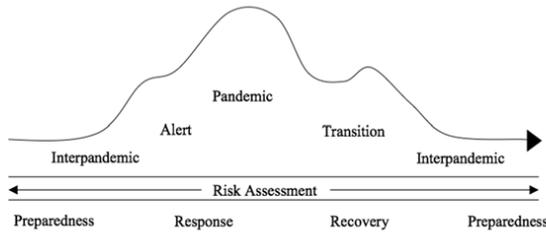
Figure 1.
The continuum of pandemic phases.
Source: World Health Organization. (2013). *Pandemic influenza risk management: WHO interim guidance.* Geneva, Switzerland: Author, p. 6.

Much effort has gone into the development of intervention protocols for epidemics and pandemics by U.S. agencies such as the Center for Disease Control, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and international agencies such as the World Health Organization. Many publications can be found describing efforts to be taken at the Preparedness, Response, and Recovery stages (Holloway, et al., 2014; Homeland Security Council, 2005; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], 2005; WHO, 2013). These efforts address assessments, prevention activities, support services, medical interventions, regulatory mechanisms, needed resources, and harm reduction, to name a few.

Current Gaps in Epidemic and Pandemic Interventions

While many plans exist for addressing epidemics and pandemics, post epidemic and pandemic assessments have revealed significant gaps in the ability to address them effectively. Not surprisingly, financial gaps related to the provision of necessary resources and epidemiological gaps regarding the cessation of disease promulgation (Epseland, Tsai, Larsen, & Gary, 2018; Zakour & Harrell, 2003) have been noted. Additionally, gaps have been found to exist due to understaffing and lack of job specification in relation to the health and social services fields (Upshur, 2006; Zakour & Harrell, 2003). While the CDC (2009) noted that the foundation of an efficient and successful epidemic or pandemic response is the strength of our human resources, currently, underinvestment in our public health services has created a critical shortage in skilled and qualified service providers (Zakour & Harrell, 2003). Public health services are made up of an array of essential workers including healthcare professionals, public health workers, first-responders, and public utility, sanitation and transportation employees (CDC, 2009; Upshur, 2006). Also indispensable are social service employees who may be providing essential supports, such as childcare, eldercare or behavioral and mental health services to those in the community (Kidman & Heymann, 2016; NOHS, 2018). These individuals are also capable of providing necessary psychosocial support services to assist healthcare workers and first-responders in the management of emotions during this high-stress time (Upshur, 2006). Many of these roles are well suited for the human services professional. However, while current literature addresses the roles of emergency responders, hospital staff,

and public health employees (CDC, 2009; Kidman & Heymann, 2016; Upshur, 2006; Zakour & Harrell, 2003), the specific roles of human services professionals in the Preparedness, Response and Recovery stages of epidemics and pandemics have been neglected in the literature. Deliberate inclusion of human services professionals in epidemic and pandemic intervention plans seems appropriate given their related professional capabilities.

Human Services Professionals' Roles

The primary goal of efforts aimed at addressing epidemics and pandemics is to minimize the number of individuals affected by an infectious or non-infectious condition and ultimately, prevent mortality (Baba, Hincal, & Alsaadi, 2018; British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, 2012). Many of these efforts are non-pharmaceutical community mitigation strategies (Upshur, 2006, Van Bortel, et al., 2016). With training in advocacy, prevention programming, collaboration, systems theory, brokering, community change, and cultural competence (Homan, 2016; Kincaid & Andresen, 2016), human services professionals are well equipped to positively address community needs with regard to these societal crises. They may play an important role in providing interventions at the Preparedness, Response, and Recovery stages for the community, individuals within the community, and the medical and professional responders.

Preparedness Stage

Proactive measures are deemed imperative during the Preparedness stage of the *interpandemic phase*. Objectives and strategies for preventing full-blown outbreaks of infectious diseases and non-infectious conditions focus on developing the public health infrastructure (WHO, 2013). Human services professionals are well-positioned to lead organizational and/or community efforts to prepare for a widespread crisis. The formation of an inter-organizational network of social service, medical, educational and governmental resources is recommended in many pre-pandemic action plans (HHS, 2009). This coordination of services improves effectiveness and minimizes redundancy. Linking non-profit organizations with governmental agencies provides an integration of relevant resources better preparing communities for impending disasters (Zakour, 1996). Efficient communication can then allow for shared intervention protocols (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006). Human services is an interdisciplinary profession with an emphasis on improving accessibility, accountability and coordination of service delivery (HHS, 2009; NOHS, 2018). Human services professionals are trained in service management and partnership development and are therefore uniquely qualified to coordinate and facilitate these multifaceted networks (Homan, 2016; NOHS, 2018).

Additionally, evaluations in the Preparedness stage aim to illuminate behavioral and environmental factors that put the population at risk so modifications can be made to current practices with the goal of optimizing public safety (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006). For example, absenteeism in the health care and first-responder fields can be as high as 40% throughout the Alert and Pandemic phases (Barnett, et al., 2009; Upshur, 2006); thus, a plan to prevent absenteeism and address staff shortages should be developed during the Preparedness stage before the Response stage is entered. Trained in program evaluation (CSHSE, 2018), human services professionals have the capacity to conduct agency assessments to determine staffing needs.

Moreover, human services professionals possess skills in advocacy and brokering (Homan, 2016; Kincaid & Andresen, 2016, Neukrug, 2017) which further allow them to assist in readying for potential physical, social, and mental health challenges likely to occur during and after an epidemic or pandemic. As brokers of services for clients, human services professionals may use their connections to community agencies and institutions to allow them to disseminate information to academic settings and various healthcare settings in preparation for an outbreak. General information may address preventing exposure, minimizing the spread of a particular condition, and available community resources (WHO, 2007; WHO, 2005).

Human services professionals may also disseminate information more directly through their skills in conducting psychoeducational groups (CSHSE, 2018). The psychoeducational group format is useful for helping to teach individuals about preventing health conditions from developing and/or spreading, and to address the psychological impact of such conditions. Human services professionals possess the knowledge and skills to facilitate psychoeducational groups on topics stressed by the CDC (Holloway, et al., 2014) and WHO (2013) as essential during the Preparedness stage. These topics include, but are not limited to, warning signs and actions to take, awareness of and access to emergency response and healthcare facilities, contingency plans for service continuity, hygiene, food security, healthy living habits, safe sexual habits, and immunizations (Rocco, Billay & Penner, 2006; WHO, 2013; HHS, 2009). Ultimately, these pre-pandemic psychoeducational groups conducted by human services professionals for high-risk individuals, their families, and their service providers can assist in mitigating possible health, psychosocial, and financial obstacles (Van Bortel, et al., 2016).

In addition to informing the public about issues relevant to an epidemic or pandemic, it is also necessary to establish linkages between vulnerable populations and service systems during the Preparedness stage, allowing for access to available resources when needed (CDC, 2009; Kim & Zakour, 2018; Kim & Zakour, 2017; Vlahov, Coady, Ompad & Galea, 2007). Human services professionals trained in culturally alert interventions and advocacy are capable of identifying and locating specific high-risk individuals as well as vulnerable communities (Neukrug, 2017). As such, they may assist in developing appropriate services as well as removing potential barriers for service delivery so that necessary resources are available for utilization during an epidemic or pandemic (Kim & Zakour, 2018; Kim & Zakour, 2017; Vlahov, Coady, Ompad & Galea, 2007).

Through many jobs that human services professionals hold, there is the opportunity to serve marginalized populations (Neukrug, 2017). As such, they have a unique opportunity to develop relationships with these individuals. Established relationships should allow for enhanced trust between the human services professionals and the clients, thus promoting communication (Neukrug, 2017; Vaughan & Tinker, 2009). This communication can improve the helper's ability to contact the clients in the event of an epidemic or pandemic and promote openness to hearing that action is needed and resources should be utilized (Vaughan & Tinker, 2009). Essentially, culturally alert aid allows human services professionals to develop culturally appropriate interventions and establish relationships with marginalized individuals during the Preparedness stage that can lead to vital linking of clients to services once the Response stage is reached.

Response Stage

When a health condition has reached epidemic proportions, efforts shift to the Response stage (WHO, 2013). Active partnerships with clear communication and a sharing of resources among all governmental levels in both public and private sectors is deemed critical by the WHO (2013) and CDC (Holloway, et al., 2014). Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, strong leadership, competent internal organization and efficient communication is imperative in order to meet the needs of the public during a mass crisis (HHS, 2009). Based on their skill sets, and with many employed within the social service, non-profit and health industries (NOHS, 2018; Occupational Outlook Quarterly, 2011), human services professionals can continue to offer crucial aid throughout the Alert and Pandemic phases.

Within the community, human services professionals may coordinate outreach and communication efforts (Homan, 2016). Comprehensive communication and the dissemination of information to the public is paramount during an epidemic or pandemic (HHS, 2009). With training in cultural variations, a human services professional can assist in modifying messages so that they are able to be received by everyone in a community.

Information dissemination and Psychoeducational efforts during this stage focus on minimizing the spread of the condition, correcting misinformation, and preventing discrimination of those with the condition (CDC, 2009). In general, human services professionals can work collectively with other service providers to ensure individuals throughout the community are updated on the progress of the pandemic, locally, nationally, and internationally (British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, 2012; WHO, 2007). Information may also include risk management and strategies for personal and family preparedness (WHO, 2005; WHO, 2007).

More specifically, within agencies and institutions in which they are employed and throughout the community through linkages with other service agencies, human services professionals may engage in information initiatives that are focused on the particular outbreak (Homan, 2016). This may include posting flyers, making public announcements, sending letters, and posting on various social media outlets about the need to wear facemasks, wash one's hands often, isolate at home upon exposure to the condition, and access healthcare early if specific stated signs of the condition are noted (WHO, 2007; WHO, 2005). Dissemination of information should also include signs and symptoms of cognitive, physiological, behavioral and emotional strain, and mechanisms to address these issues (Hodge, Wetter, & Noe, 2017, Van Bortel, et al., 2016).

In addition, at the systems level of intervention, human services professionals may advocate for company follow-through on behalf of clients and colleagues with policies particularly related to supporting employees when absences resulting from an epidemic or pandemic are necessary (WHO, 2007). As stated before, the rate of absenteeism at places of employment typically soars during an epidemic or pandemic (Upshur, 2006). Employees may need to miss work as a result of either having the condition or supporting family members that have it. The human services professional may have to serve as a spokesperson for clients and colleagues and seek creative mechanisms for assisting companies in addressing the high rates of absenteeism in a manner that allows a company to still operate while also supporting absent employees as opposed to penalizing them. Possible alternative approaches include policies allowing employees to work from home on suitable tasks, increasing staff rotation, moving part time workers to full time status, utilizing volunteers for shift coverage, and hiring additional

temporary staff through temp agencies, all of which may be coordinated by a human services professional for an agency or organization (WHO, 2005; Zakour & Harrell, 2003).

At the client level, human services professionals' skills in advocacy, culturally alert helping, direct service, case management, brokering of services, and collaboration (CSHSE, 2018; Neukrug, 2017) can once again be utilized to promote access to resources and minimize the consequences resulting from an epidemic or pandemic. An essential role for the human services professional is to facilitate access to information and services for at-risk populations (Neukrug, 2017). As stated earlier, this is possible due to their established relationships with many members of at-risk populations inherently established as a part of their typical professional responsibilities (Neukrug, 2017). Those identified as most vulnerable and in need of services may include children, the elderly, and pregnant women, as well as those with physical or mental disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency, individuals with chronic medical conditions, individuals with compromised immune systems, those living in poverty, and those with substance use disorders (Vaughan & Tinker, 2009; Vlahov, Coady, Ompad & Galea, 2007). Information, such as safety directives and service delivery sources, may not reach at-risk individuals if not for the efforts of human services professionals skilled in community engagement (Homan, 2016). Through facilitation of emergency management as well as advocacy efforts, resources can be distributed equitably to vulnerable populations most impacted (Vaughan & Tinker, 2009; Vlahov et al., 2007). Consequently, through outreach, services can be made more socially and geographically accessible.

Given that services are available and accessible, human services professionals are also well suited to assess the specific needs of individuals in the community based on their skills as direct service providers and brokers of services (NOHS, 2018; Neukrug, 2017). Combined with their awareness of organizational and community resources, and their established relationships with those in the community, they can play an integral role in linking individuals to the specific resources they need (Homan, 2016). Furthermore, human services professionals have the capacity to work collaboratively with other health professionals to establish continuum of care plans for those directly impacted by the epidemic or pandemic (NOHS, 2018).

Specific needs may require direct service initiatives, such as individualized support to those affected by the condition, including family members and caregivers (Kidman & Heymann, 2016). For those experiencing the condition directly, human services professionals can assist in accessing and navigating health care systems, addressing employers, and coping with the psychosocial consequences of affliction, including isolation, discrimination, and failing health. Human services professionals may also engage in advocacy efforts to prevent stigmatization of those who become afflicted by a condition (Van Bortel, et al., 2016).

Families and caretakers may also benefit from psychosocial support to assist in coping with fears associated with losing a loved one and/or becoming afflicted with the condition oneself (Kidman & Heymann, 2016; Oduaran, 2017). They may need coping skills to manage the stigma encountered as a result of being associated with an afflicted individual. Human services professionals would be very useful in reducing the stigma by creating clarity through accurate information that can be absent in the event of epidemics and pandemics. Individuals can have extreme perceptions of danger regarding an illness and cause afflicted individuals to become pariahs in society. For example, as HIV and AIDS emerged in humans, beliefs spread that the conditions could be contracted through coughing, sneezing, touching and kissing an

infected individual, and therefore, members of society with HIV or AIDS were often treated as outcasts and were feared (HHS, 2003). With more widespread, adequate information, these clouded understandings have mostly disappeared and have been replaced with more realism. The work of human services professionals can mitigate issues of impartial treatment and unfair stigma by providing unbiased information in educational settings where individuals that may have a condition of concern and otherwise healthy individuals can be taught and advocated for to support the health of both groups (HHS, 2003; NOHS, 2018). Settings that may benefit from these teachings or written materials include hospital waiting rooms, college campuses, homeless shelters, waiting rooms of community services boards, workplaces of first responders, and professional development seminars for health care personnel. Through community outreach, human services professionals have the ability to reach many individuals and systems (Homan, 2016).

When the needs of individuals extend beyond that which a community can provide, the human services professional has the skills to research resources at the state and national level and ultimately advocate to have individual clients' needs met (Neukrug, 2017). Assistance in acquiring necessary services due to possible financial hardship may be necessary (Bloom & Canning, 2006). These circumstances further highlight the importance of the human services professional engaging in proactive planning for the development and gathering of funds and resources during the preparedness stage for access during the response stage.

While the needs of individuals served by health and social service agencies can be facilitated by human services professionals during an epidemic or pandemic, so too can the needs of other service providers. It goes without saying that during an epidemic or pandemic, healthcare workers' services are in high demand, and consequently, the health, safety and performance of essential service workers are at risk (Maunder, et al., 2006). Distress, grief, exhaustion, helplessness, and fear are common reactions they may experience (CDC, 2009; WHO, 2013, WHO, 2007). Initiatives by human services professionals could include the implementation of a workforce resiliency program in support of the front line essential service workers and first-responders (Maunder, et al., 2006). Through a resiliency program, human services professionals can facilitate appropriate support and training to manage these emotional challenges. Dissemination of information in these programs could include cognitive, physiological, behavioral, and emotional signs and symptoms to assess and basic coping strategies to implement. Information could aim to reinforce self-care activities to safeguard workers' emotional and physical health.

More directly, human services professionals may facilitate psychological debriefing among first responders. Utilizing psychoeducation group facilitation skills, human services professionals may expand the debriefing process to serve multiple essential service workers at once. This format would allow those directly affected during an epidemic or pandemic the opportunity for healing through reflection of victim accounts coupled with education on coping skills and available social support (Zakour & Harrell, 2003).

Since human services professionals cannot serve every individual in need during an epidemic or pandemic, they may utilize their training and supervision skills (Neukrug, 2017) to establishing peer support groups for emergency, first responder, and hospital staff. These groups could encourage cohesiveness and lift morale (Maunder, et al., 2006). Additionally, with their brokering skills (Neukrug, 2017), they may increase accessibility to psychosocial support

services and link individuals to mental health counseling, worker crisis counseling, substance abuse prevention programs, and occupational health clinics (Maunder, et al., 2006). Contingency plans for coping with the aforementioned staff shortages may need to be put into place, including the mobilization of volunteers and other community organizations (Barnett et al., 2009; Upshur, 2006). Additionally, workers may need guidance in acquiring supplementary resources or services including childcare or eldercare (CDC, 2009). As such, the human services professional could play an integral role in addressing the needs of all individuals in a community during an epidemic or pandemic, from the most marginalized to the service providers and business owners. Their work can continue to play an important role in addressing the needs of individuals in the Recovery stage.

Recovery Stage
        Efforts at the Response stage should continue until the outbreak begins to subside and it is clear that a return to typical functioning is going to occur. At this point, the Recovery stage and Transition phase are entered and addressing the psychosocial needs of a community becomes paramount (Rocco, Billay & Penner, 2006; WHO, 2013). Reduction of fear and reestablishment of a sense of security, as well as coping strategies for addressing the consequences of the epidemic or pandemic, are priorities in the Recovery stage. Responses are similar to those enacted during disaster relief (WHO, 2013). Geographic barriers, financial deficits, and ongoing medical concerns are common obstacles that make recovery efforts difficult and longstanding (HHS, 2009). A significant overlap in roles and responsibilities exists for human services professionals during the Response and Recovery stages.
        Continuation of service delivery to affected individuals is essential post-epidemic or post-pandemic (WH), 2013). Through both direct service and brokering of services, human services professionals can play an integral role in getting individuals the interventions they need. Mental health services for individuals may be particularly important during the Recovery stage WHO, 2013). Addressing post-traumatic stress symptoms, developed phobias, and persisting anxiety and depression may be necessary (Rocco, Billay & Penner, 2006). During the aftermath of a major epidemic or pandemic, vulnerable populations, such as low-income groups, children, the elderly, and the intellectually challenged and mentally ill, are at a disproportionately high risk for overall loss (Rocco et al., 2006). A need for skilled grief counselors to address individuals struggling with losses associated with the mass crisis is paramount (WHO, 2013). In addition to addressing the obvious grief associated with the loss of a loved one due to death from an epidemic or pandemic condition, individuals may need assistance in coping with factors such as the loss of physical abilities due to exposure to the condition, loss of a sense of safety and security in society, and/or loss of economic stability due to prolonged absenteeism from work (WHO, 2013).
        Economic recovery efforts for individuals in the community are often needed post-epidemic/pandemic. Disruptions to both production and consumption during the epidemic or pandemic impact job security and access to resources during the Recovery stage (WHO, 2013). Human services professionals may assist individuals in recovering financial losses through insurance agencies or seeking coverage of expenses through social service agencies (Bloom &

Canning, 2006). They may also assist communities by conducting resource assessments to guide efforts at distributing assets and securing additional needed funds (Holman, 2015).

Previously cultivated interagency relationships can allow human services professionals to continue collaborations and promote service delivery. However, as a result of the epidemic or pandemic, many of these agencies may be understaffed and poorly resourced (Maunder, et al. 2006). As such, human services professionals may need to use their skills in grant writing and fundraising (Homan, 2016; Neukrug, 2017) to solicit supports for the agencies themselves. While federal and state aid may be available to a community during and immediately following an epidemic or pandemic, these resources are typically short term (Bloom & Canning, 2006). Therefore, long-term support through ongoing efforts at fundraising may be needed.

Long-term efforts following an epidemic or pandemic should also include formative assessments of prevention and intervention strategies and policies (WHO, 2013). As with so many other tasks, human services professionals, trained in program evaluation (CSHSE, 2018; Kincaid & Andresen, 2016), have the skills to assist in this process. Following policies and procedures manuals and preparation efforts should be adapted based on the evaluation results (WHO, 2013). Ultimately, when a community has successfully recovered from one epidemic or pandemic, efforts shift back to the *interpandemic phase* and preparations for the next epidemic or pandemic begin once again. However, it should be noted that these phases are not always strict in adherence, and the shift from recovery back to the *interpandemic phase* is not certain. Many non-infectious pandemics and epidemics, such as diabetes, obesity, cancer, and heart disease, persist with high mortality and morbidity rates. For example, the CDC (2017) reported that heart disease has remained the leading cause of death in the United States since 1921, despite public health efforts. The specialized skills of human services professionals in behavioral and psychological research and counseling could fill the gaps of the current public health initiatives to address roots of preventable pandemics and epidemics and begin unprecedented movement in the Recovery stage.

Limitations

While the current article fills a gap in the literature by describing specific ways in which human services professionals may contribute to addressing epidemics and pandemics within their communities, research is needed to determine if their actual efforts would be deemed effective. Research is also needed to determine if communities currently enlist the efforts of human services professionals in the event of epidemics and pandemics. If it is found that they are in fact involved in efforts in their communities, and that their efforts make a positive impact, the results of these research studies could substantiate the inclusion of their roles in WHO and CDC publications, thus further validating the profession of human services as a vital component of a community's response to epidemics and pandemics.

Conclusion

Epidemics and pandemics occur all around the world (WHO, 2013). In the United States, issues such as obesity and opioid use as well as various strains of influenza have recently been or are currently at the epidemic level (CDC, 2016; WHO, 2018). The WHO and CDC have many publications addressing appropriate community responses to epidemics and pandemics, yet the role of human services professionals is typically left out of these documents. Due to the manner

in which human services professionals are trained and the locations in which they are employed, it stands to reason that they are well prepared to play an integral role in prevention, response, and recovery efforts related to epidemics and pandemics. The present article suggests ways in which human services professionals may serve those in need at the individual, group, and systems levels during epidemics and pandemics, yet research is needed to assess current roles and validate their efficacy.

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Is My Instructor a Robot? Creative Methods for Establishing Social Presence in Online Human Services Education

Kristy L. Carlisle, Robert Carlisle, Shawn Arango Ricks, Robika Mylroie

Abstract

The current paper surveys the literature in online education in human services and offers suggestions for future research. After introducing the community of inquiry (CoI) framework and indicators for establishing social presence in online courses, the paper critically evaluates the current body of literature on social presence in online course delivery. Authors introduce research-based creative strategies for establishing social presence in an online human services educational environment. The paper concludes with practical implications for human services educators.

Creative Methods for Establishing Social Presence in Online Human Services Education
Prevalence of Online Education in Human Services

Online education continues to grow in popularity as a modality of instruction (Demiray & Sever, 2009) and contributes to educational accessibility (Babson Survey Research group, 2011). In the fall of 2015, there were 5,750,417 students enrolled in online coursework in a degree-granting institution of higher education (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Of these students, many were taking advantage of one of the main benefits of online education: accessibility. Online education makes higher education more accessible for students who might otherwise be unable to attend a face-to-face class, including: people with dependents, people living in rural areas, people with disabilities, and people working full or part-time jobs

In human services education, the online modality is prevalent and growing. The Guide to Online Schools (2018) lists 66 regionally accredited institutions of higher education which offer online degrees in human services as of 2018, preparing students for skills-based jobs as case workers, advocates, and aides. The Council for Standards in Human Services Education (CSHSE) has offered national accreditation to 50 schools including community, technical, and four-year colleges (CSHSE, 2018), as well as schools offering an online component (e.g., Old Dominion University). The CSHSE offers guidelines for schools with online accreditation through their Member Handbook: A Self-Study Guide. These policies align with face-to-face standards (CSHSE Member Handbook, 2016; Hill, Pusateri, Braun, & Maweu, 2012).

The purpose of this article is to analyze the benefits and challenges to establishing social presence within an online educational environment in human services, review the community of inquiry (CoI) framework and indicators for establishing social presence in online courses,

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critically evaluate the current body of literature on social presence in online course delivery, introduce research-based creative strategies for establishing social presence in an online human services educational environment and provide practical implications for human services educators. The article is a survey of current literature and provides suggestions for future research in more specific areas of human services online education.

Benefits and Challenges of Online Education in Human Services

The growing prevalence of online education indicates that the benefits of online education appear to outweigh the obstacles, but online instructors are responsible for taking measures to both maximize the benefits to students and mitigate the challenges. Students taking coursework online are benefiting from the accessibility, flexibility, convenience, cost, pace, and access to diverse instructors. They also face challenges including available access to technology, lack of face-to-face interaction, potentially lower quality of education, lack of structure and need for self-discipline, lack of socialization, lack of hands-on learning opportunities, and limited personal interaction (Martin & Martin, 2015). Human services students may be especially affected by the absence of face-to-face interaction, socialization, and hands-on learning, because human services is a skills-based helping field requiring direct work with clients. Thus, human services students can benefit from the social presence, or experience of connection (Akyol & Garrison, 2008), with the online instructor. The establishment of presence in an online environment can improve student learning, student persistence online, and student perception of the online educational experience, as well as increase both student and teacher satisfaction (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Lehman & Conceição, 2014).

Social Presence within the Community of Inquiry (CoI) Framework

In online learning education research, the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework developed by Garrison et al. (2000) is a well-known and well debated model for online classroom interaction. Based on social constructivist theory, CoI purports the facilitation of student reflection, as well as higher level communication among the online instructor and students. The CoI Framework proposes three areas of online presence instructors maximize in order to lead students to higher level thinking: social presence, teaching presence, and cognitive presence. Learning presence was later added to the framework, recognizing the student's role in interacting in an effective online learning environment (Shea & Bidjerano, 2010; 2012).

Social, teaching, cognitive, and learning presence co-exist and interact to produce the overall effect an instructor and the students have on the online environment. Social presence is the sense of connectedness created with students (Garrison et al., 2000) or, what the present authors describe as, proof that the instructor is a human being and not a robot. Teaching presence is the structure the instructor provides to students when designing and delivering instruction (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison, & Archer, 2001). Cognitive presence describes the way an online instructor promotes meaning-making and critical thinking amongst students (Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2001). Finally, learning presence refers to the students' self-direction and self-regulation in the learning process (Pool, Reitsma, & van den Berg, 2017; Shea et al., 2012). While social, teaching, cognitive, and learning presence all contribute to the effectiveness of an online classroom experience, social presence is particularly vital as a mediating variable between teaching and cognitive presence (Garrison et al., 2000; Garrison,

Cleveland-Innes, & Fung, 2010) and as a necessary element for higher level communication (Arbaugh et al., 2008). In human services education, in particular, social presence created by the instructor can be a model for students of the essential skills they are learning in the field, namely empathy, self-disclosure, and effective communication with diverse people.

Indicators of Social Presence

Social presence theory predates the rise of online education and emphasizes how socio-emotional information is conveyed so that others can tell it is real (Short, Williams, & Christie 1976). Social presence in the online educational environment poses particular challenge due to the asynchronous nature of some online classroom communication, e.g., discussion boards, announcements (Kreijns, Van Acker, Vermeulen, & Buuren, 2014). However, recent research (Aragon, 2003; Garrison, 2009; Rourke, Anderson, Garrison, & Archer, 1999, 2001; Sung & Mayer, 2012) has found specific indicators of social presence, or behaviors instructors can exhibit that promote social presence. Indicators found to promote group cohesion, or commitment, are "vocatives" or referring to students by name, using inclusive pronouns like we and us, and purposeful greetings and closures in communication. Indicators that promote open communication and interaction include continuing a thread, quoting from another's post, referring to another's post, asking questions, giving/receiving feedback, giving compliments, showing appreciation, and agreeing with others. Finally, indicators that promote affective expression include expressions of emotion including emoticons, use of humor, and self-disclosure (Rourke et al., 1999, 2001; Garrison, 2009). Similarly, Aragon (2003) found that when instructors contribute to discussion boards, answer email in a timely fashion, provide feedback frequently, start conversations, disclose personal stories and experiences, attempt humor, use emoticons, and address students by name, they can more effectively establish social presence. Instructors who focus on building social presence when instructing humans services students are modeling fundamental human services skills, since being socially present with clients is an essential aspect of the work.

Critical Analysis of Literature on Social Presence

Incorporating the above behaviors (indicators of social presence) into the online course environment may not be enough to achieve results with students related to connection, satisfaction, achievement, and retention. Social presence may develop in stages, as students take time to integrate into the social space of the online learning environment and develop impressions of the other group members and of the environment itself (Kreijns et al., 2014). Further, social presence may be difficult to measure with current instrumentation, especially if it is being viewed as distinct from interactivity and intimacy (Kim, Song, & Luo, 2016). In addition, most studies reporting on social presence are correlational in design, so it is unclear if certain behaviors, or indicators, of social presence are actually causing social presence or vice versa. For example, open communication could be facilitating students' feelings of connectedness just as much as feeling connected could be encouraging open communication. Thus, more controlled studies may be necessary to determine the relationship or link between learning outcomes/achievement and social presence (Annand, 2011). Considering the challenges to establishing social presence online and recognizing its potential importance for human

services students' learning outcomes, human services instructors may need to think outside of the box to develop creative ways of building a connected online classroom community.

Creative Twists on Traditional Methods of Establishing Social Presence

There are countless methods for establishing social presence in an online course environment, and in many ways instructors are only limited by their imaginations. Authors of this paper are online educators and three of the four authors are human services educators using research-based best practices in online human services education. The following sections present our creative ideas, based on the research presented above, to enhance social presence in the online human services classroom.

First, it is important to understand functions of the software/systems used in online course delivery to be able to develop both traditional and creative methods for establishing social presence within the technological boundaries of the learning management system (LMS) being used. An excellent first place to start is with getting to know the ins-and-outs of the LMS being used to deliver the online coursework. For example, an LMS like Blackboard allows instructors access to a multitude of functions that can be used to establish social presence: Blackboard profiles, introduction discussion boards, welcome letters/videos, announcements, interactive discussion board assignments, and webinars. Considering Blackboard is the most popular LMS in use, servicing over 16,000 clients and 100,000,000 users across 90 countries (Blackboard News Room, 2017), many of the below methods for establishing social presence are specific to Blackboard technologies, but still adaptable to other LMSs with similar functions.

Setting up Blackboard and Initial Introductions

Within the Blackboard LMS, instructors have many tools available to establish social presence to help students better get to know the instructor and each other. Instructors have an option to set up a Blackboard profile with professional/personal information. Further, they can create fun introduction discussion board forums and engaging introduction letters or videos.

Blackboard profiles. In many ways, a Blackboard profile can be set up and managed in a way similar to managing a profile on a social media website. A profile can allow users to share personal and professional information about themselves and can be updated on a regular basis. Blackboard user profiles are readily accessible and easily viewed within courses. In fact, when students or faculty post to discussion boards, if a user hovers their pointer over the author's name, a small pop-up emerges with a snapshot of the user's profile in addition to an option to view the full profile. At the second author's institution, we highly encourage both instructors as well as students to set up a Blackboard profile, as it assists in humanizing users. Instructors can also think outside the box and build their profiles in professional yet personalized ways. For example, in a past version of the second author's Blackboard profile, he included a profile picture of him and his son playing Frisbee Golf to help humanize him as a real person with a family and a hobby. He also shared some past work experience details pertaining to a summer job he had for ten years as a professional high diver and included a link to a YouTube video of him climbing an 80-foot ladder and doing flips off of it into an 8-foot deep pool in an amusement park. As one can image, by allowing students to gain additional insight into their instructor's and peers' personalities and lives, users within the course become real people and not just names

written in black font. Creating profiles can also spark student interest in wanting to form social connections over shared and unique experiences. These connections can then initially be made within an introduction discussion board area.

Introduction discussion boards. Many online programs within helping professions have adopted the common practice of creating an introduction discussion board forum in which professors ask students to introduce themselves based on a particular set of prompts (e.g., what would you like to learn, what brought you to this field). When the writing prompts are generic or dry, and when only the professor replies to the student introductions, the value of this discussion board decreases. In developing introduction discussion boards, instructors can include some of the traditional prompts as listed above, but also think outside the box when developing prompts to come up with some fun ways for students to get to know each other better and even build some initial bonds. For example, the second author developed an initial discussion board prompt in which students addressed some traditional items such as those stated above, in addition to sharing their greatest success story and their favorite "good deed" they have done for someone else. Then each student was instructed that they could award up to two accolades to other students while welcoming them to the class. These accolades took a visual form of two pictures created in Photoshop. One contained the words "You Rock!" The other contained the words "Heart of Gold." Students could then reply to their peers' posts (at least two students) to welcome them to the class and embed the accolade picture of their choice in their response post. Based on observations of student participation, the second author was able to easily encourage his online students to view numerous peer posts, without requiring them to do so, as they searched for peers to award accolades. In addition, this helped students make some genuine initial connections with one another.

Alternatively, instructors can go beyond building introduction discussion board areas that rely purely on written responses. For example, a common third-party application that can be integrated into Blackboard is Kaltura Media. Kaltura is a media tool that allows students or instructors the ability to record or upload videos and directly embed them into a discussion board forum. By encouraging students to create introduction videos rather than written responses, instructors can further establish social presence by allowing students to be able to see videos of each other while hearing their classmates' voices. In addition to crafting well thought out and engaging introduction discussion board prompts that provide students with motivation to make student-student connections, instructors can also create their own welcome letters or videos to introduce themselves.

Welcome letters or videos. Posting an instructor welcome letter or video is a common practice in online course delivery as well as a requirement in many online guidelines such as the Quality Matters rubrics (Quality Matters, 2014). However, professors can add a twist to this common practice that is engaging and creative. For example, one of the most creative ideas we have observed is an instructor that created a welcome video for a human development class he was teaching based on key points in his life that lead him to enter into the field of education. The video starts with some old VHS style footage of the instructor catching a game winning touchdown pass in 3rd grade and continues on for another 5-minutes highlighting key events that crafted his life path from adolescence through early adulthood. The video not only held meaning

as it related to the content of the human development course but also provided students with additional insight into the instructor's life as a son, brother, father, husband, and professional. Although this particular video took the instructor months to create in iMovie, with advances in technology, fun, entertaining, and visually appealing introduction videos can be created with online software relatively quickly. For example, online software programs like Animoto, Smilebox, and Moovly all offer various forms of pre-existing templates to create videos, animated videos, or slideshows without needing advanced video editing knowledge.

Announcements

The announcement functions within Blackboard can be one of the most useful ways of establishing social presence on a regular basis throughout the duration of the class. The announcement function allows instructors to post messages to the entire class, and students can be trained to view this announcement area on a regular basis. The announcement function can also be used in such a way that allows instructors to directly send their announcements to students' university e-mail immediately upon posting by clicking on the send a copy of this announcement immediately radio button in the web announcement options area. This announcement area can logically be used to inform students of class updates, send students assignment due date reminders, provide students with supplemental resources, offer assignment tips or clarifications, and address any errors or issues within the course. However, when posting an announcement for any of the above reasons it is also another opportunity to infuse social presence indicators such as humor.

For example, when posting announcements, the second author often utilizes Memes he has created or adapted from the Internet. These Memes are based on pop-culture references and supplement his announcements with the social presence indicator, humor. Instructors can easily create Memes using free online websites such as Imgflip that allow users to select images while adding text at the top and bottom of the image. Essentially, a Meme is a picture with text written at the top and bottom, but the written text adds a unique twist to the original meaning of the selected picture. Here are a couple examples of Memes that the second author has created or adapted to supplement assignment due date reminder announcements. In an announcement sent out to remind students of the due date for their assignment, a Meme was generated by selecting an image of Mike Myers portraying the character Dr. Evil from the movie Austin Powers (Chasin et al., 1999). Dr. Evil was making air quotation marks with his fingers in the image and the text at the top of the image stated "Gentle Reminder" and the text at the bottom stated "To submit your assignment by the end of the day Sunday." Another Meme example included an image of the Muppet character Kermit the Frog looking into a mirror with a dark Sith Lord version of Kermit looking back (parodying the movie Star Wars in the film Muppets Most Wanted; Lieberman, Hobeman, & Bobin, 2014). At the top of the image, overlapping Kermit looking into the mirror the text read, "Maybe I should listen to [author name omitted] advice and work on my initial post early" and on the other side of the image, overlapping the dark Sith Lord version of Kermit, the text read, "Or we can have a race against the clock and see how close to 11:59 pm we can submit our post without being late." As a final example of using Memes, other social presence indicators can also be utilized that do not rely on humor, but instead are developed to encourage students or demonstrate empathy. In a course with a relatively high work

load, author two posted an announcement with the subject "Some encouragement to get you through the week." The body of the announcement read:

> I realize many of you have a large amount of work on your plate this week, not to mention work, and the rest of your life outside of work and school. As I am sure you know, there are times in life when you thrive, and other times when it feels like you just survive… For all of you out there currently in survival mode, remember to put your oxygen mask on first and take care of yourself. No gesture or act of self-kindness is too small. Now, remind yourself that you are amazing, that you are strong, and that you can do this…I'm serious, please say that to yourself right now…I am amazing, I am strong, and I can do this…no, I will do this! I leave you with the closing words of one of the great philosophers of our day…

The announcement ended with a picture of Dory from the movie Finding Nemo (Walters, Stanton, & Unkrich, 2003). At the top of the image it stated, "Just keep swimming," then in smaller font at the bottom it repeated those same words multiple times. As can be gleaned from the above examples, the announcement function in Blackboard can be a powerful tool that allows instructors to stay in regular contact with their students while establishing social presence in such a way that models characteristics and skills associated with being a human services professional, such as being genuine and demonstrating empathy.

Interactive Assignments (Discussion Boards)

Beyond the simple strategy of creating assignments that encourage or require students to collaborate or work in groups, interactive assignments with the use of specific technology tools can be developed in online human services courses to promote social presence, namely assignment discussion boards using technology tools. Rather than requiring students to create a written discussion board post, instructors can require a video post in which the students use a program such as Kaltura to record their discussion board post. Then, students can also reply to peers' posts by creating their own video posts as well. By using videos rather than written words, key social cues can be observed within students' posts such as intonation, facial expressions, and body language to create a more engaging discussion. Furthermore, considering that human services professionals need to learn how to pick up on and recognize non-verbal cues in clients, being able to practice with peers in the classroom setting is a valuable educational tool specific to our field. Instructors can even take this approach to the next level using programs like Voice Thread.

Voice Thread is similar to Kaltura in that the software can be integrated into the Blackboard LMS. Instructors can use software programs such Voice Thread to prerecord a lecture and then in key areas of the lecture identify specific places to ask students questions. Then students have the capability to provide responses to those questions within the program using their audio only or audio and video. Settings can also be managed to allow students to see their peers' responses and respond to peers with audio and video posts. By developing assignments that allow students to interact with one another and observe non-verbal cues, social presence can more easily be established to create a collaborative classroom community.

Webinars

A final method for establishing social presence is by holding live webinars using video web conferencing software. Within a live web conferencing environment, instructors have the opportunity to approximate face-to-face learning by holding discussions and conducting learning activities that would typically require real-time or immediate interactions. When viewing one of the seminal works on social presence, Short, Williams, and Christie (1976) who coined the term social presence, indicated that two factors in particular comprise social presence, intimacy and immediacy. Holding live webinars provides students across disciplines, e.g., nursing (Hart, 2014), counselor education (McBride & Muhlbach, 2008), and computer science (Çakıroğlu, Kokoç, Kol, & Turan, 2016), the opportunity for immediate interaction and to make a connection with instructors in a real-time environment (Pattillo, 2007). Holding live web conferences allows instructors one more tool to build social connections, nurture the development of a classroom community, and establish social presence. There is also no shortage of software programs available to instructors interested in providing live video web conferences within online courses.

In 2017, we conducted a non-experimental correlational design (*N*= 673) that examined the types of technology used in counselor education supervision and reported 28 different types of web conferencing programs used in the field to conduct live video conferences. Some of the most popular software programs reported for use included commonly known software programs such as Adobe Connect, Collaborate, Global Meeting, and GoToMeeting. Some of these software programs such as Adobe Connect are third-party applications while other software programs such as Collaborate are native to most of the newer versions of Blackboard. This means that if you are an online instructor using Blackboard and interested in offering video web conferencing opportunities to your students, you likely already have access to Collaborate in Blackboard without even knowing it. To find out if Collaborate can be used within your institution's Blackboard version, contact your Blackboard help desk or log into any of your Blackboard courses, look under the control panel menu on the left sidebar for course tools, and scan the list of tools for Blackboard Collaborate. While using these web conferencing tools can assist in establishing social presence, it is also important to consider the available software functions that can be used to run webinars.

Based on the our collective experiences using most of the above software programs to deliver web conferences, there are two key functions offered across almost all of the web conferencing software platforms: allowing students' user rights to use a chat box and the options to allow students' mic and camera access. We have conducted live video webinars in which the instructor uses a video and mic feed, but only allows students to participate using the chat function. We have also conducted live web conferences in which both the instructor and students use a mic and video feed. The possibilities for the types of live activities and interactions that can be conducted in the webinar will vary depending on instructor creativity and whether or not students have access to a mic and camera or simply the chat box. For example, when the first and second authors taught a diversity class using mic and camera access for the instructor, but only the chat box for students, they conducted experiential activities such as a digital version of the privilege walk where students used the chat to report their steps forward and backward. One of the greatest challenges we found in running live web conferences was brainstorming methods for adapting face-to-face experiential activities for use within a video web conferencing

environment. When considering any of the above methods to enhance social presence within a course, human services online educators should take into consideration some key implications.

Implications for Human Services Online Educators

Human services online education can be enhanced with live web conferencing, through which essential human services skills can be modeled, including eye contact, non-verbal cues, minimal encouragers, reflections, and empathic responses. In this way, using live web conferencing tools can assist in establishing social presence; however, one of the key benefits of taking online asynchronous coursework for students is flexibility (Allen and Seaman, 2016), and requiring students to attend a live webinar at a specific time can remove some of that flexibility. Additionally, if teaching an online course that is specifically marketed as asynchronous, then instructors certainly should not require students to attend a live web conference at a specific time. Therefore, based on our experiences in navigating the above issues, we recommend offering weekly/periodic voluntary live web conferences that are recorded. By making live participation voluntary, the course remains asynchronous, but with a voluntary synchronous option. For students that cannot attend live, instructors can post the recordings of the live web conference and even require that all students watch the recording if they did not attend live. To further increase accessibility of live webinar attendance, instructors can also rotate the times and days webinars are offered throughout the semester. Instructors should make sure to inform students at the beginning of the class when the live webinars will be offered and to specifically note they are voluntary (if used within an asynchronous course). Another important consideration is what type of mic, camera, or chat access to allow students to use in order to participate in the video web conference. Based on our experiences, when holding video web conferences using software such as Collaborate, Zoom, WebEx, and Adobe Connect, it would be wise to take the size of the class into consideration when deciding whether or not to allow students to have mic and camera access. For example, students need to be trained to use the software and certain software programs have particular weaknesses that make holding a large conference session with 25 students or more difficult. Also, some software is prone to audio feedback issues when more than one individual in the video web conferencing session has their mic active. Separate from technology issues, when holding large sessions, it is not uncommon for a student to unmute their mic to speak and to hear a TV or family members of the student talking in the background. Therefore, training on the norms of attending live video web conferences is an important consideration in addition to training on the technology. Specifically, instructors can train human services students on concepts like protection of privacy and confidentiality, which are key to the profession, requiring special attention when technology is in use.

Anytime technology is introduced into a course, such as web conferencing software, instructors should make sure they have received appropriate training to use the software while also providing students with appropriate training. As online instructors using web conferencing software, we have most frequently provided our students with training on the use of web conferencing software by creating point-and-click instructional guides to the software and software orientation recorded videos. Additionally, we also recommend providing a brief bullet point list of appropriate student behaviors in web conferencing sessions that is based on whether

or not students are participating in the web conference with solely the chat function or using their mic and camera.

When communicating with students via announcements or in the discussion board, another key point to consider is using inclusive language such as "we" and "our" (Rourke et al., 1999, 2001; Garrison, 2009). For example, an instructor could say, "Welcome to our course, I am very excited to get to know you all this term." It is also good practice to be in the habit of using inclusive language in e-mails as well as any live web conferencing sessions. Human services students can also learn to model this type of inclusive language when establishing rapport and relationships with clients in individual and group settings.

Further speaking to communicating with students via announcements, it is essential to keep in mind the student demographic characteristics in the class. For example, if teaching a class in a program with primarily non-traditional students as opposed to students attending college straight after high school, instructors can take into consideration demographic characteristics such as the average student age when developing Memes based on pop culture references. Further speaking to developing creative announcements based on pop culture references, instructors should make sure they fully understand the pop culture references being used in any images they post to avoid unintentionally making an inappropriate reference of which they were not aware. On the same note, instructors can also be mindful of posting multicultural appropriate images when creating memes. For instance, when selecting images for memes, an instructor can consciously seek to diversify gender and ethnicity of individuals used in images to develop memes and avoid any images that could be interpreted as biased or culturally inappropriate. Modeling multi-culturally aware practices is particularly important for the comprehensive instruction of human services students, who are on their own multi-cultural journeys as part of their education.

Last, when developing announcements, we recommend clicking the radio button in Blackboard that allows the announcement to be sent to students' e-mail. In today's world of instant information, our students are accustomed to the information they need being available in the palm of their hands. Although instructors could train students to regularly log into the class to check the announcements, there is an option that can send the instructor's announcements directly to the students' phones, or at least their e-mails. Instructors can also teach their students how to add their university e-mail to their phone so that they can receive course information immediately when it is posted.

Future Research

Social presence as a part of the CoI framework has been thoroughly researched through a wide range of educational settings. However, there were no studies currently available that researched strategies for promoting social presence based on the use of certain software functions in Blackboard. For example, no studies to date have examined relationships between social presence and the use of announcements. An experimental or quasi-experimental design could easily be utilized if the same instructor is teaching two sections of the same course during the span of the school year. There are many possibilities for grouping variables such as using announcements or not using announcements, sending announcements by e-mail or just posting them to Blackboard, and utilizing announcements with social presence indicators (e.g., creative Memes) vs. announcements without creative methods of establishing social presence.

Furthermore, due to the large number of students that online instructors sometimes encounter in online classes, examining how permitting students to use solely the chat function in a web conference vs. using mic and video is related to social presence could also be explored with an experimental design. Although many of the above variables could be examined with qualitative studies or non-experimental designs, experimental research would be the optimal choice to determine if the above interventions are effective.

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Human Services Education and the Millennial Student

Robert "Tony" Dice

Abstract

This article explores the characteristics of the millennial student in higher education and discusses how human services educators may have to shift their approaches to teaching in order to meet students where they are. The shift may involve a change in how educators transmit knowledge via instructional techniques as well as teaching formats. As such, this article explores human services educators' need to accept and excel in the digital age to be able to truly connect with the coming generations.

Human Services Education and the Millennial Student

Human services educators face challenges differentiating their teaching strategies to millennial students. This post-literate, screen-based generation that has been raised entirely in the new digital era is now college-aged and ready to learn (Morreale, & Staley, 2016). However, there is often a disconnect between the teaching strategies of the college professor and millennial students (McAllum, 2016). This paper explores why instructors may be struggling to connect with millennial students and how they can enrich their teaching strategies to continue connecting with future generations of students.

This generation has been "plugged in" since birth and has been processing higher volumes of data at a much more rapid pace than any generation before (Monaco, & Martin, 2009). We are faced with a generation that has shifted from reading books, articles, and other literature to focusing on sound bites, video clips, and memes (Oppawsky, 2016). This paper explores the characteristics of millennial students and discusses how human services educators can adapt their approaches to teaching in order to meet students where they are. Human services students must learn the essential theorems, concepts, and skills for effective practice. Therefore, the shift may involve a change in how we transmit knowledge, not a shift in what knowledge is taught. This article will address human services educators' need to accept and excel in the digital world in order to connect with the coming generations. To this end, the author explores different answers to the question: How do we prepare human services educators to modify teaching approaches to best meet the needs of millennial learners while still adhering to the Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE, 2018) accreditation standards?

Millennial Student Defined

Millennials have been referred to by many different names including Generation Y, Gen Next, Digital Natives, and the Me Generation (Morreale, & Staley, 2016). This group of individuals, born between the years 1982 and 2002, is currently 80 million strong (Pew Research, 2014) and is expected to make up over 75% of the U.S. workforce by the year 2020 (Roberts, Newman, & Schwartzstein, 2012). This generation is the first to be raised in a predominately digital environment and has learned to interface with the world in different ways than previous generations (Pardue, & Morgan, 2008).

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Millennials have been shaped by a technological society where everything is faster and more is happening at one time. This generation has grown up using iPhones, iPads, email, instant messaging, social media, and the Internet daily (Morreale, & Staley, 2016). Their sense of information and how it is acquired is based on the notion that it is all just one click away, and does not require memorization, research, and discovery from print material and/or in-person dialogue. This generation was raised in an era where one could answer questions like, "how far away is the sun from the earth in inches?" by simply asking a phone. In addition to differences in exposure to technology, the millennials' upbringing by the previous generation has also differed.

Millennials are primarily the offspring of Generation X. Gen Xers are often associated with being latchkey kids, in which they were left unattended for long periods of time while both parents worked (Monaco & Martin, 2009) and it appears that they wanted to avoid this phenomenon for their children. Consequently, the millennial generation has been more nurtured by their parents than their predecessors. Many millennials have been showered in praise and given participation trophies that do not distinguish the winners from the losers. Many have not experienced corporal punishment and instead have been given a vocal role in their disciplinary discussions. For many, this has led to a sense of overconfidence and entitlement that may seem unwarranted (McAllum, 2016). This sense of confidence and trust in having their needs met may be further fueled by an almost daily witnessing of technological miracles taking place all around them that ultimately make their lives more comfortable. This can result in a belief that the same sense of being cared for by their parents will continue throughout their lives in the form of technology.

Millennials commonly have a unique sense of social consciousness greatly based in social media that lends itself easily to a collectivist mindset (McGlynn, 2005). This has given many a more liberal view of the world that leans toward the need for more corporate responsibility and social justice. Consequently, many hold a different conceptualization of money. Millennials tend to appreciate money and what it can do, but many are not driven to become millionaires like previous generations. They instead tend to value the life experiences that money affords and appear content earning just enough to do the things that they want to do. Societal shifts have occurred as a means to adapt to the millennials' way of being in the world.

Society's Response

Millennials' impact on the world can be seen in the way they do business, the way they buy products, the way they utilize services, and the way they communicate. Corporations and institutions have adjusted their practices to fit this new generation. Big businesses have adapted by providing more information about their products and allowing for near instant access through the Internet (Roberts, Newman, & Schwartzstein, 2012). Healthcare has made tremendous leaps by digitizing medical records and providing immediate access to medical information through services like WebMD and virtual access to practitioners (Pardue, & Morgan, 2008). Even K-12 schools have transitioned to a more tech-savvy format with media linked classrooms that encourage collaboration, internet-based assignments, real time access to grade books for parents and students, and iPad and Chromebook interfaces for individual student use (McGlynn, 2005). In keeping with the millennial student's propensity towards video gaming, many components of the K-12 education system have adopted the practice of allowing re-takes of failed tests until

success is achieved, thus mimicking the experience of having multiple lives in video games (Perna, 2015). These institutions have found measured success in adapting to the characteristics of this new generation. The question remains, why have many in higher education resisted this shift?

Higher Education and the Millennial Student

In the past decade, higher education has only begun its transition away from the use of traditional teaching modalities (Kurt, 2017). Face-to-face and online teaching continue to rely to a great extent on these traditional practices, including textbook and journal article reading assignments, PowerPoint presentations to supplement lectures, and lengthy written assignments (Perna, 2015). In contrast, due to the infusion of technology throughout the K-12 curriculum for middle and upper socioeconomic statuses, many millennial students have experienced the best that tech-savvy education has to offer in their elementary through high school years (McGlynn, 2005). As such, they commonly assume higher education will provide the same levels of digitally literate pedagogy. Furthermore compounding this expectation is the tendency for millennial students to place less value on someone who is knowledgeable because "everyone knows everything" if one has access to a smartphone (Morreale, & Staley, 2016). The Pew Research Center published a Princeton Data Source phone interview survey of 617 millennials which reported that 60% of Millennials trust the information that they receive digitally more than what they receive in person (2014). This strikes at the core of higher education's time-tested format: instructors bestowing information to their students (Mann & Robinson, 2009). Recent modifications to traditional teaching formats, such as the social constructivist model and project-based teaching (Mann & Robinson, 2009), may be less effective without the infusion of technology. Millennial students may see a disassociation with technology as antiquated, and because of this, may assume that what is being taught lacks relevance to their future. It appears that the millennial student values information and learning differently than the generations before.

Additionally, many Millennials have been afforded the opportunity to miss deadlines and retake tests during their entire academic career (K-12) and now educators are surprised that they insist on being given the same treatment at the collegiate level (Morreale, & Staley, 2016). This appears to speak more to socially constructed change as opposed to right or wrong ways of knowing. Students have become accustomed to mastery learning in which they have the opportunity to build upon knowledge through repeated attempts at assignments (Oppawsky, 2016). However, instructors in higher education may interpret this generation's approach to learning as lacking the motivation displayed by students in previous years. Millennial students may be mistakenly labeled as lazy, when research has shown that they are simply more motivated to develop knowledge through a collaborative feedback process (Monaco, & Martin, 2009; Oppawsky, 2016). In addition to a shift in their approach to learning, there has also been a change in Millennial students' view of higher education (Oppawsky, 2016).

As Millennial students came of age many also witnessed their parents' struggles with student loan debt. This further shifted their perception of education from being a right-of-passage or an investment in their future to a more realistic view of seeing it as a potential expense (Perna, 2015). This perspective views higher education as a premium purchase, and as such, it must meet the same high expectations they have placed on other commodities. In this digital age, if items

that Millennial students wish to purchase do not meet their exact specifications, they continue to shop around until they find exactly what they want. This consumer experience, as well as personal interests, drives Millennials with their education. If these two criteria are not met, then the Millennial student may lose interest and become dissatisfied with the education being provided. Consequently, they may make greater demands for their educational needs to be met, opt to pursue their education at a more dynamic institution, or simply delay their education until a later date. This is a shift from the previous generation that was told to buckle down and get through college because their future depended on it (Monaco, & Martin, 2009).

While Millennials' perceptions of higher education may differ from that of their parents, this has not thwarted their desire to pursue it. According to the PEW Research Center (2016), 63% of Millennials either have obtained or plan to obtain a college degree. This is significant when compared to the Gen Xer's college graduation rate of 25% and the Baby Boomer's rate of 15.5% (Pew Research, 2014). It speaks to the value Millennials place on higher education, despite their very different expectations for it than that of previous generations.

Based on our understanding of the characteristics of Millennial students, modifications to teaching approaches can be made to enhance their investment in the classroom, engagement in the learning process, and knowledge attainment in human services education. Many human services educators have been raised and educated in a system that was developed in the pre-digital era. It is necessary to accept the new reality that Millennial students bring and modify traditional approaches to teaching that have worked in the past.

Human Services Education for Millennial Students

The field of human services is rapidly expanding which correlates to the noted increase in human services majors populated by Millennial students (Braun, 2014). In an attempt to meet Millennial students where they are, it is recommended that today's human services educators take into account the above-mentioned differences and make adjustments to traditional teaching pedagogy. The following learning interventions may be considered to assist in this transition.

Computers and Smartphones Are Not Technology

Computers and smartphones are as common and mundane to today's students as television is to you and me (Oppawsky, 2016). Students are not excited when we place a web link in our PowerPoint presentation. Millennial students may require increased engagement in the presentation itself in order to maintain interest (Monaco & Martin, 2009). Rather than expect students to set aside their phones and only use their computers for notes, we can invite them to incorporate their devices in the learning process. An example of this might be to encourage real-time fact checking with their devices during lectures that would promote open dialog and debate.

Additionally, presentation applications such as Metimeter and Poll Everywhere allow students to use their smartphones to interact with the PowerPoint presentation in real-time. For example, the instructor can ask students to enter into their phone a one or two-word description of the most important characteristics of a human service professional and everyone gets to see the results pop up on the screen in real-time. This gives Millennial students a sense of being connected to the process and allows them to influence the outcome of the information exchange (Monaco & Martin, 2009).

Students may also be encouraged to participate in online video conferencing with professionals in the field. Today's instructors will find that this generation has become extremely fluent in this form of communication through near constant connection with each other in social media applications like Snapchat and Facetime (Villena-Alvarez, 2016). Integration of computers and smartphones into course plans may contribute to student learning and eliminate some of the frustrations when used inappropriately by students during class.

Doing is More Important than Knowing

With today's student having instant access to almost all information, knowledge is no longer the only goal of learning (Oppawsky, 2016). Knowledge is further devalued due to today's accelerated rate of discovery. Why would someone learn a fact that may become obsolete in six months? The Millennial student values the experience of doing much more than the knowledge of how-to-do. To this end, an instructor could maintain the Millennial student's interest with the use of meaningful class projects and activities that result in real change to the world around them, otherwise known as service learning. Research has shown that experiential learning projects such as these have seen successful with this generation (McGlynn, 2005). For example, in addition to learning about advocacy, students may be asked to engage in an advocacy effort on campus. The act of impacting change can contribute to bringing the concepts to life and promote transfer of learning for Millennial students. Another example might be to ask students in a family systems course to use their own family in their written assignments. While promoting the competencies of the topic to be addressed, it also allows Millennial students to maintain their personal interest in the topic. As discussed earlier, Millennial students are not typically lazy, just less interested in subject matter that is deemed irrelevant. However, if we can capture their interest and make it applicable to their future endeavors, they can be extremely motivated and thus able to engage and achieve (Oppawsky, 2016).

Learning More Closely Resembles Gaming than Logic

The Millennial generation is also the age of the video gamer (Roberts, Newman, & Schwartzstein, 2012). Video games are solved using a trial and error approach to learning (Pardue & Morgan, 2008). In the gaming world, losing over and over again represents learning. To this generation, learning how not to do something has as much value as learning how to do something (Pardue & Morgan, 2008). With this in mind, instructors can allow students to use a mastery learning approach, where students are allowed multiple submissions of a paper so that they have more chances to learn from their mistakes. (Roberts, Newman, & Schwartzstein, 2012; Bloom, 1971). Likewise, during students' internships, they could be allowed to submit a greater number of individual session video reviews for ongoing feedback toward mastery. This approach mirrors the gamer's mindset that a level must be completed before moving forward. As stated earlier, many Millennial students have already become accustomed to this format in K-12 education and thus expect to have multiple chances to complete their work and master material and skills (McGlynn, 2005).

Multitasking is a Way of Life

Most of today's students are comfortable doing multiple things at once (Morreale & Staley, 2016). It is not uncommon to have students working on homework with the music on,

while facetiming on the phone and texting someone. In this example, there are four streams of consciousness present (homework, music, talking, and texting). If today's students can effortlessly navigate this, is it any wonder that they lose interest when we restrict their streams of consciousness to just one when we expect undivided attention to our lecture? Conversely, we can feed this bandwidth by admitting to ourselves that just because we are not able to function at this level does not mean that students cannot. What might appear chaotic to our generation can be seen as stimulating to the Millennial. A presentation can have music playing in the background, multiple discussions can be simultaneously taking place in one room, and several small groups can be processing topics collectively. All of this creates a buzz of stimuli in the room and may contribute to keeping the Millennial student engaged.

There is Zero Tolerance for Delays

Millennials were raised in a world that places a great deal of importance on immediacy (Roberts, Newman, & Schwartzstein, 2012). Things can be instantly downloaded, food is ready in minutes, and overnight delivery is an option. The expectation of immediacy does not stop when entering the classroom. This generation will respond more favorably to a quick turn-a-round in grading and rapid replies to email correspondence (Roberts et al., 2012). Not only do Millennial students prefer immediacy, but their academic performance has been found to improve when provided opportunities for immediate feedback (Grossman & Conelius, 2015; Sancho-Vinuesa, Escudero-Viladoms, & Masia, 2013). A study of undergraduate nursing students who were provided immediate feedback on exercises to prepare them for a final exam performed better than those exposed to traditional approaches (Peck, Stehle Werner, & Raleigh, 2013). This expectation for immediacy also applies to emails. While many Millennial students prefer immediate responses, it is recommended that faculty respond to student emails within 24 hours during the workweek and 48 hours over the weekend (Kreuter, 2012).

Consumer and Creator Are Blurring

In this file sharing, music sampling, cut-and-paste digital world, the lines between author, owner, and consumer are becoming less clear (Zyl & Thomas, 2015). There is a general sense among Millennials that all information is free. They can, at any moment and without cost, download music, view images, and watch movies. They can copy stories to their news feed and post quotes from anyone, all without citation. All this information appears to be theirs for the taking, and the idea of intellectual property does not seem to exist in their world. Additionally, the concept of plagiarism is often foreign to them. Time must be taken to provide not only a detailed description of what plagiarism is, but also to delineate between plagiarism, self-plagiarism, paraphrasing, and citing direct quotes. Instructors are encouraged to identify clear examples of plagiarism and to model the progression from research article to in-text citation. In the world of the Millennial, they may have unknowingly plagiarized a dozen times that morning on their Twitter account and it seemed completely normal to them.

Books Are Dead

Despite research that shows that Millennials are reading more than the previous generation, with an average of 50 minutes per day (Roberts et al., 2012), they are reading differently. Millennials are not drawn to books or lengthy articles; instead, they have taken to

intense scanning of multiple forms of media with a heavy emphasis on news (Roberts et al., 2012). The PEW Research Center (2016) reports that 60% of Millennials consume 74 minutes of news media daily. This is more than any previous generation (Pew Research, 2014). While scanning makes up the bulk of the reading Millennials do in a given day, it allows for more focused attention to articles that are of direct interest to them. This skill has tremendous crossover use in academia. Research and literature reviews may come easier to this generation, as they have grown very adept in the use of databases and keyword searches. However, textbook and hard-copy article assignments may not be as effective. Students appear to prefer to receive information in the form of videos, blogs, websites, and news sources (Roberts et al., 2012). They may also be invited to seek information about a topic on their own. A balance must be found between honoring Millennials' inherent draw towards digital media while at the same time emphasizing the need to incorporate peer-reviewed sources.

To further this sense of connection with the material, *Classroom Flipping* has been shown to be successful with Millennial learners (Oppawsky, 2016). Classroom flipping is when a student (or students) is assigned to teach a topic to the rest of the class. For example, the development of a specific helping theory lecture would be assigned as homework to the students and class time would be used for hands-on instruction and group work in which they teach the construct. This appears to satisfy Millennials' desire for enriching experiences while catering to their inherent draw toward collectivist learning (Kurt, 2017). This format also allows the learner to flex his/her digital muscles and bring new and different technologies into the classroom.

The Internet is Taking Over

Everything is on the Internet. Since Millennials prefer interacting with the world digitally, corporations and service providers have had to adapt in order to be successful (Villena-Alvarez, 2016). In 2013, Millennials were reported to have the most spending power of any generation (Pew Research Center, 2014), so it is no surprise that in 2013, for the first time ever, more products were reported to be purchased online than in stores (Pew Research Center, 2014). Higher education is responding by increasing the number of courses offered online. Studies have shown that students prefer online courses to traditional formats (Pew Research, 2010). This is true of human services students as well (Dice & Rehfuss, 2017). In recent years we have seen tremendous growth in online universities that cater exclusively to this format.

The Internet based classroom continues to draw Millennials due to its ability to satisfy their desire for flexibility, instant access, and a digital interface (Morreale & Staley, 2016). As this transition continues, it is important to keep in mind that an online format alone may not be sufficient to truly address this generation's learning style. The format of these online courses often resembles the traditional formats of their brick and mortar counterparts, with an instructor imparting knowledge through the use of assigned readings, voice threads, and videos (Villena-Alvarez, 2016). This may fail to capture and hold the interest of Millennials. The change in instructional delivery method of the program does make these courses more palatable to Millennials, but the structure itself may still fall short.

Online programming, specific to the human services professional, might include the required viewing of actual intake sessions, mock online psycho-social evaluation sessions between students, online group sessions through the use of Adobe Connect or Zoom, and the review and critique of fellow students through discussion board posts. Additionally, the inclusion

of programs such as TeachLive (Andrew, Maslin-Prothero & Ewens, 2015), which provides a virtual reality space for students to practice skills through simulated experiences, can be modified to allow human services students to practice helping skills on an avatar and can be infused in online courses.

Many of these interventions are already being used in human services education. Further enhancing them with the above-mentioned techniques might contribute to this generation responding even more favorably to the online learning format. The learning interventions suggest significant modification to traditional teaching pedagogy. While this may be necessary for engaging the Millennial student, it is also imperative that pedagogical changes still adhere to the competencies needed for effectively preparing human services students for the profession.

CSHSE Adherence

It is necessary to consider CSHSE standards (2018) when making modifications to teaching approaches. Factors related to privacy and access need to be considered. The digital world has risks with regard to personal information and asking students to utilize online learning tools may subject them to risks of exposure. Further, while we can assume most Millennials have ample access to technology, this might not be the case for all. Institutions must be able to address issues of equity to ensure education is accessible to every student.

Many human services programs do not only serve Millennials. Many non-traditional students seek degrees in human services. As such, supports to assist those less familiar with technology-based learning must be available so that all learners are able to meet the learning standards. Further, faculty may need training to ensure they are capable of utilizing the technology effectively.

CSHSE standards require program evaluation. Therefore, changes in teaching modalities must be assessed for quality and effectiveness in meeting the learning goals. With thoughtful and intentional design, it is possible to modify current approaches to teaching that meet the needs of the Millennial student while also meeting the standards set forth by CSHSE.

Limitations

The author offers suggestions for modifying pedagogy to better meet the needs of Millennial human services students while aligning the approaches with CSHSE standards. The focus is on Millennial students in general and does not address additional variables that impact the learning needs of underrepresented students from specific ethnic, racial and cultural groups.

Additionally, it is essential to be aware of classroom demographics and be mindful that all students may not be Millennials. Non-traditional students, including those who are generation X, may struggle to adapt to the technology enhanced learning environment. Educators may need to assess students' varying learning styles and individualize approaches by offering additional support for those less familiar with the required technology and/or by offering multiple alternatives for assignments that allow for more traditional approaches to promote achievement for all.

Future Directions

Information provided in this article is based on a review of existing literature. Research is needed to further assess the efficacy of the strategies suggested as they apply specifically to

Millennial human services students. Both quantitative and qualitative program evaluations are needed to validate technology enhanced teaching for human services students. Further, research is needed to ensure that modified teaching approaches are able to meet human services program standards delineated by CSHSE. Assessment of issues of equity are needed to determine if new tech-savvy requirements are appropriate and attainable by all. The focus of future articles should consider modifications needed to meet the educational needs of culturally diverse human services Millennial students.

Conclusion

This article provides an understanding of how the Millennial generation views the world and made suggestions for ways in which human services educators can harness the many attributes that Millennial students have to offer. It also promotes embracing these new members of our higher education community. A willingness to change requires open-mindedness and acceptance that others' ways of being in the world are just as valid as our own. It has become necessary to make the pedagogical changes to what has worked in the past in order to best meet the needs of our contemporary students. Moving forward, when educators see students staring at their smartphones, rather than getting angry and seeing this as a sign of disrespect, hopefully educators will view this act as an opportunity to reach students and promote their development as human services professionals.

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Bringing Social Justice into the Human Services Classroom:
Broaching the Topic of Current Social Movements

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Abstract

Human services educators are charged with preparing human services professionals who are responsible to clients, the profession, and society. Preparing professionals who feel a sense of responsibility to clients, the profession, and society can be inhibited when educators are reluctant or feel unprepared to bring current social justice issues into the classroom. This manuscript discusses two well-known social movements and one political policy with related social movements, and offers practical suggestions to encourage meaningful discourse in the classroom.

Social Justice Movements and Human Services Education

Many human services educators struggle to integrate current events into the classroom. Attempting to bring current events into the classroom can be problematic due, in part, to a political climate that has seemingly polarized the nation (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2018). Ideally, classrooms are spaces of critical discourse; however, they can become spaces of polite conversation and political correctness when educators are hesitant to discuss certain topics, possibly out of the fear of engendering controversy (hooks, 1994; Dantley, 2017).

As human services educators, addressing issues of social justice and activism are inextricable from the ethical and professional guidelines that govern the field (National Organization of Human Services [NOHS], 2015). Social movements directly impact human services providers and organizations, who are frequently on the front lines as helpers, caregivers, and outreach workers (Thompson, 2002; Ferguson & Smith, 2012; Kabaria-Muriithi, VanLeeuwen, Kathuri-Ogola, & Weeks, 2018; Zald, Morrill, & Rao, 2002). In addition, many human services professionals may experience vicarious trauma related to their work in the field (Wiley, 2017). Considering the NOHS standards, human services educators would be remiss to attempt to glaze over, ignore, or otherwise minimize how life informs the classroom. However, many educators feel ill-equipped to deal with the difficult dialogues that may result from bringing the world into the classroom (Sue et al., 2009). In spite of this, there is no circumventing teaching students about real-life situations (Sue, Lin, Toriono, Capodilupo, & Rivera, 2009). Holistic education is accomplished through the integration of classrooms and the "real world" and utilizes "safe" spaces to challenge and promote change (Dantley, 2017).

The authors provide a brief discussion of the intersection of activism and human services to establish the purpose of this conceptual piece. In order to fully accomplish the goal, an overview of two social movements, Black Lives Matter (BLM) and #MeToo, and a political policy, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) will be provided. These movements and policies have become part of a larger conversation on college campuses related to social justice. Lastly, the authors will suggest strategies for human services educators to bring social movements and activism into the classroom.

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Introduction to Activism

From a global perspective, activism is defined as the process of having an impact on public policy (Fisher, 2018; Milosevic-ĐorCevic & Zezelj, 2017). Activism and addressing social justice concerns are not new issues on college campuses or in academic settings. College campuses in the United States have served as a focal point for activism for decades (Fisher, 2018). The passion for activism that is stimulated from fear, anger, and frustration is specifically linked to the New Social Movement theory, which describes the significance of thought and emotion in activism and is a form of activism currently seen in the United States (Dantley, 2017). Throughout the years, students have banned together to share their thoughts and opinions, work for social change, and resist changes that specifically marginalize minorities (Benski & Langman, 2013; Ciszek, 2016; Fisher, 2018). Fisher (2018) highlights activism during the civil rights movement that utilized students, at universities and colleges, to challenge the status quo.

Smith (2017) indicated that currently we are in the golden age of student activism despite beliefs that millennials are not as engaged as their predecessors. Students are speaking up on BLM, #MeToo, and DACA, even at the risk of having their voices minimized by parents, students, and faculty (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016; Sharp et al. 2017). Sharp et al. (2017) encourages faculty to stand with and for students on campus and participate in activism. The topics that students are currently addressing include racism, immigration policies, sexual assault, and school fund allocation (Quaye, Shaw, & Hill, 2017; Fisher, 2018).

Hoffman and Mitchell (2016) explored how students formed an activist group on a large college campus to create a list of concerns and potential solutions and presented them to their university. The creation of the school activist group highlights the degree to which students at this college felt their opinions and experiences deserved to be heard. Hoffman and Mitchell's (2016) case study is a microcosm of society, as it mirrors society's tendency to blame the victim. They assert that similar events of victim blaming are being mirrored throughout the country. In spite of these challenges, students continue to support activism and are committed to increased social media coverage of incidents that may have fallen by the wayside in previous years.

Activism in Human Services

Fisher (2018) highlighted that activism on college campuses started with the need to address social changes. The human services profession mirrors Fisher's ideas by "appreciat[ing] human beings in all of their diversity" and through "offering assistance to clients within the context of their communities and environments" (NOHS, 2015, para.1). NOHS, the governing body for the profession, clearly states the importance of activism in the profession's preamble. Human services professionals are expected to follow the ethical standards to uplift, support, and advocate for all humans (NOHS, 2015). Specifically, standard 10 of the NOHS guidelines stresses the importance of nondiscrimination and support to all. Johnson (2014) discussed how social movements have become a light of hope for communities that are underrepresented and often in need of support. Johnson's perspective suggests that social movements provide the foundation to empower communities and create change. In the next section, the authors will discuss social movements and public policy (BLM, #MeToo, and DACA) as examples of social justice topics that can be brought into the human services classroom and used as an impetus for activism and critical discourse.

The Movements

Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a grassroots social movement that originally appeared as a hashtag on social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) in response to a series of shootings of unarmed Black men, women, and children by civilians and the police (Dixson, 2018). In February 2012, Florida teenager Trayvon Martin was fatally shot by George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch captain. The shooting of Martin sent shock waves across many parts of the country and became the precursor to the BLM movement. Martin was unarmed when Zimmerman approached and shot him in what he claimed to be self-defense after being previously advised by a 911 operator not to pursue Martin. After Zimmerman was tried and acquitted for the death of Martin in 2013, three Black women, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi took to social media with the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag which quickly gained popularity. Studies of social media usage show high activity from July to August of 2013 of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag which is directly correlated with the acquittal of George Zimmerman (Sawyer & Gampa, 2018).

Martin's was the first of a series of fatal shootings of unarmed Black men, women, and children in the United States, which were attached to the BLM movement. In 2014, 18-year-old Michael Brown was fatally shot by Officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri. Brown was also unarmed when shot by Officer Wilson. On August 9th, 2014, one day after the death of Brown, protesters took to the streets of Ferguson and other cities around the nation, declaring that Black lives matter and calling for justice for Brown (Sawyer & Gampa, 2018). Although only Brown and Martin are discussed in detail in the current article, there were more than 100 unarmed African-Americans killed by the police in 2015, which is twice the rate of White/European Americans (Beer, 2018). The BLM movement has continued to grow with the subsequent shootings of unarmed men, women, and children.

What started as a hashtag on social media is now an organization with over 40 chapters in the United States and abroad focused on organizing communities to "build local power and intervene when violence is inflicted on Black communities by states and vigilantes" (Black Lives Matter, n.d., para.1). Race scholars have linked the BLM movement to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's and the Black Panther Party Movement (Clayton, 2018). The Civil Rights movement, BLM, and the Black Panther party movement have all shared a similar goal: the liberation of Black people in the United States through equality in political, social and physical well-being to their White peers (Nelson, 2016). Outlined on the BLM website are the following goals: restorative justice, globalism, being queer and transgender affirming, valuing and including Black women and Black families, practicing empathy, and being unapologetically Black (Black Lives Matter, n.d.). Although other movements like "All Lives Matter" and "Blue Lives Matter" have attempted to change the narrative of BLM, trends in social media show that the social media reach of such other movements has not been as far and wide (Sawyer & Gampa, 2018).

#MeToo

The #MeToo movement was founded in 2006 by Tanya Burke in hopes to raise awareness and facilitate healing for survivors of sexual assault and violence, particularly women

of color from low-income communities (Burke, n.d.). In October of 2017, the hashtag #MeToo became viral on social media in response to *New York Times* story about Harvey Weinstein's long reputation of sexual assault and harassment in Hollywood (Jaffe, 2018). Because of the viral hashtag, the grassroots work Burke had been doing was thrust into a global platform. The goal of the #MeToo movement is to hold perpetrators accountable as well as implement strategies for long-term and systemic change (Burke, n.d.). The #MeToo movement has grown, as the research on sexual assault and violence against women shows that not only does sexual assault happen in the workplace, but on college campuses as well. On the average college campus, reportedly 1 in 5 women experience some form of sexual assault, regardless of age, race, or ethnic background (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018). One in five women assaulted (approximately 20%) do not report their assault to campus administration. Underreporting leads universities to believe their numbers of sexual assaults to be well lower than the actual number (Spencer, Mallory, Toews, Stith, & Wood, 2017). Awareness of sexual abuse and violence has increased through social and print media, which has assisted the #MeToo movement in garnering national and international attention (Lopes, 2014).

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
        Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was put into place on June 15, 2012, under the Obama administration. DACA allowed immigrants who met specific criteria (age, residency, education, and criminal history) in the United States deferred removal action on their residency status for two years, subject to renewal (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services [USCIS], 2018). Deferred action under DACA allowed individuals to remain in the United States to work and go to school, without having the status of being a legal citizen or resident, and without the threat of being detained and deported. In September of 2017, President Donald Trump called for the end of DACA which impacted over 800,000 Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAMers), who were in active deferment status (Romo, Steward, & Naylor, 2017). In January of 2018, USCIS began allowing requests for renewal, but are not currently accepting requests for individuals who have never been granted deferred action under DACA. DACA has affected an estimated over 2 million individuals in the US, with 77% being from Latin America (USCIS, 2018; Rusin, 2015). Individuals eligible for DACA are not solely from Latin America. Many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are eligible to receive deferred action but apply at far fewer rates than individuals from Latin America (Rusin, 2015).
        The Migration Policy Institute (MPI; 2017) did a demographics study of those who were under DACA and those DACA eligible. The breakdown of those eligible for DACA showed that the majority were students and workers, suggesting that those students needed to work in order to afford their education (Capps, Fix, & Zong, 2017). Of those already under DACA, there is almost an even distribution of enrollment in secondary school, some college, and high school completion, with 5% already holding a bachelor's degree (Capps et al., 2017). The MPI (2017) discerned that DACA not only leads an occupational movement from outdoor labor to formal jobs but also has had a major impact on the number of individuals who participate in secondary education. Due to the end of the DACA public policy, the DREAMers and supporters began larger scale protests and gained more momentum.
        The DREAMers began to form as increased numbers of undocumented students started

sharing their narratives and gained the attention of other undocumented immigrants. DREAMers quickly became prominent spokespeople for immigration reform (Eilbaum, 2015). The development of the DREAMers began back in the early 2000s and stood for three goals: (a) they were all *normal* Americans; (b) they were even better than *normal* Americans, and; (c) that they were innocent as they were brought to the United States by their parents by no fault of their own. The DREAMers derived their name from a previous act standing for "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors" (Eilbaum, 2015). In addition to the DREAMers, many anti-immigration reform groups began to form in the early 2000s.

In March of 2006, a "sea of humanity" came together in Chicago and began to march in protest of the Sensenbrenner Immigration Bill (HR 4437), or Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (Vonderlack-Navarro & Sites, 2015). The Sensenbrenner Immigration Bill (HR 4437) would have criminalized undocumented immigrants as well as the individuals who were aiding them. Another 2006 anti-immigration event occurred in Arizona, which sparked the development of Arizona Dream Act Coalition (ADAC; ADAC, 2014; Tan, 2017). ADAC is a youth-led, pro-immigration movement that was developed in protest of Arizona's passing of Proposition 300, requiring undocumented youth to pay out-of-state tuition, being the first immigrant targeted law in Arizona (Tan, 2017). In 2014, ADAC peacefully protested a recent ban in Arizona that attempted to not allow DACA recipients and other immigrants—who were authorized to live and work in the states—driver's licenses (Tan, 2014). In addition to ADAC, there is the national group UnidosUS, based out of Washington D.C., that is the largest "trusted, nonpartisan voice for Latinos" (n.d., para 1). UnidosUS, formerly National Council of La Raza (NCLR), has been advocating for the Hispanic community on various issues, including immigration, citizenship rights and civil rights since 1968. Through the work that UnidosUS and their 300 plus community-level chapters, the advocacy work has resulted in 1.4 million immigrants obtaining citizenship in the United States (UnidosUS, 2016). With the most recent legislative decision to end DACA (USCIS, 2018), there has been a spur of advocacy and the spread of pro-immigration movements throughout the United States. The increased access and ease of social media has played an impact in the formation and accessibility to the pro-immigration movements (Lopes, 2014).

The Role of Social Media

The impact of social movements has been amplified by the introduction and use of social media as a communication tool. The average college student has spent the majority of his/her life utilizing technology daily (Littlefield, Rubinstein, & Pittman, 2015; Milosevic-ÐorCevic & Zezelj, 2017). Platforms such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram are a few of the most common forms of social media (Eriksson, 2016). Social media provides a rapid way to share news in real time, disseminate information, and build momentum around activism (Kende, van Zomeren, Ujhlyi, & Lantos, 2016). According to Milosevic-ÐorCevic & Zezelj (2017), social media does not negatively impact activism; instead, it provides additional spaces to share information and ignite change. With the rise of social media, activism is no longer solely done through voting and other physical acts (Milosevic-ÐorCevic & Zezelj, 2017). As a result of the high levels of visibility of social movements through media outlets, we can infer that students are exposed to these movements in their daily lives. Knowing that the majority of our students are exposed and possibly impacted by these movements, makes it even more pertinent for

educators to reclaim the classroom and purposefully engage and grow with students (hooks, 1994).

(Re)claiming Classrooms

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin (hooks, 1994, p. 13).

A pivotal moment for human services educators can occur when it becomes clear that in order to be effective instructors, they are going to have to do more than teach content. bell hooks (1994) refers to awareness and growth in her work as recognizing education as a practice of freedom. Awareness and growth pushes educators out of the tendency to subscribe to the paradigm of the mind/body split. The mind/ body split refers to the tendency of educators to only bring their minds into the classroom but not their personal histories which could lead to deeper connection with students. Integrating a mind/body viewpoint into teaching pedagogy recognizes that students, of all ages, bring their whole selves into classrooms and that as educators we should do the same. hooks (1994) reminds us that the environment is as important as the content. For the learning process to fully occur, educators must honor both environment and content. Neglecting the environment creates less engaged teaching.

Fear

According to Sue et al. (2009), educators may be afraid to discuss current events in the classroom. Many educators feel ill-equipped regarding current themes and trends, and/or classroom facilitation, to engage in topics that will take them off topic. Fear can become paralyzing, and potentially debilitating, as instructors find themselves politely dancing around current issues and trends (Ricks, 2011). Specifically, educators may feel uncomfortable and unprepared to address multicultural topics as assumptions of views can create biases for everyone in the classroom (Brown, 2013). Classroom dynamics could be exacerbated when classrooms are diverse. For example, an educator that does not identify as African American/Black, may be hesitant to discuss topics such as BLM out of fear of being perceived as patronizing. Brown (2013) discussed observing educators' silence and discomfort when racial discussions occurred in the classroom. Educators' discomfort often led to these sensitive topics not being addressed in the classroom and "safety" trumping learning.

However, the diversification of classrooms can present an excellent opportunity for meaningful discourse. The majority of studies focused on conversations that may be perceived as difficult point to the impact of these conversations on White students and negate the impact of not having these conversations on marginalized populations (Sue & Constantine, 2007). Additional research shows that some educators from marginalized groups use their situatedness as a tool in the classroom to enrich or challenge students' worldviews (Sue et.al, 2011). There is a dearth of literature examining the various ways educators from marginalized populations

balance their positionality and their mental health when facilitating meaningful discourse in the classroom.

Meaningful Discourse

Although the authors could not locate a collective curriculum developed to address incorporating social justice in the classrooms, there have been attempts to bridge the gap between the classroom and the community. For example, in 2016, schools in the Seattle area brought the BLM movement into their classrooms by participating in the Nationwide BLM Week of Action in Schools organized by Teaching for Change (Black Lives Matters Week Resources, n.d.). Seattle schools started by first training educators in Seattle public schools on how to bring difficult conversations related to race and diversity into the classroom. Next, educators were provided with a guide for learning that could be adapted to the elementary, middle, and high school levels. For one week, lessons were delivered to students that focused on the BLM movement, social justice, and equity. Seattle's school officials felt the lessons were necessary as the students enrolled in their district are diverse and are exposed to and impacted by the events connected to the BLM movement.

It may not be feasible or practical to develop a one size fits all approach to engaging in meaningful discourse in the classroom; however, the authors would like to suggest several options to begin to fully engage your classrooms in discussions around social justice movements and current events. These suggestions are rooted in social constructionism which asserts that knowledge is not bestowed upon others but that knowledge is created through conversation (McAuliffe, 2011). Social constructionism also asserts that knowledge is constantly changing as we create new meaning and that previous knowledge can be deconstructed. These suggestions also come from the authors' experiences as educators, as well as students, from marginalized populations. The suggestions listed below are not an all-inclusive list, but instead the authors hope they will be used as a springboard for educators and students to co-construct meaning.

Can We Talk?

The first step in engaging in meaningful discourse is creating an atmosphere in which those conversations can occur (Nash, Bradley, & Chickering, 2008). One of the hidden questions with which students often enter classrooms is "can I really share what I think?" As educators, our initial reaction is to say "Yes! Of course!" But what is the atmosphere in our classroom saying? Does it support or contradict our intention? Creating a classroom where students can feel free to be themselves will demand that educators listen, really listen, to students, in a way that shows how much they respect and value their opinions (Ricks, 2011). By modeling respect, and enforcing respect between students, the environment in the classroom can shift from a lecture hall to a communal shared space.

Develop a Posture of *Not Knowing*

As educators, it is vital to remember that our experiences, which may be limited, have shaped our worldview, thereby creating the lens through which we view the world (McAuliffe, 2013). Keeping one's awareness in the forefront can be helpful as the educator attempts to engage in meaningful discourse. If educators assume a posture of *not knowing* (de Jong & Kim Berg, 2013), they can fully allow students to have their experiences and interpretations of social

justice movements and other world events. Their interpretations and experiences of events could be very different than ours-- and that is okay. Part of a working community is grounded in the acknowledgment and acceptance of diverging viewpoints. By acknowledging educators are not the experts of others' experiences, students are granted permission to teach educators along with classmates about who they are and what they value.

Instructor Know Thyself

Knowledge is to be shared not distributed. bell hooks (1994) spoke about the shift in her experience of the classroom from being a place of joy and expression, to a sterile cold environment. hooks (1994) speaks to the importance of transitioning from the *banker model* of teaching and into a fluid classroom where information is shared. To transition to the place of awareness to which hooks refers, instructors must accept that they may not be the expert on some topics and they cannot be the expert on another individual's experience. By accepting this fact, instructors can let go of some of their fear with addressing social movements. If an instructor believes that a topic may result in an escalated situation, the instructor can be trained in conflict resolution but also, more importantly, reach out for help. If the instructor can grasp the concept that they are not the expert, then it would be less intimidating to bring in individuals from the communities that also are educators to create spaces for students to express themselves openly and authentically.

The More You Know

Finally, the authors recommend actively seeking out opportunities to learn more about social justice movements, their societal impact, and the way movements may interface with classroom topics and students. Many instructors get caught in a cycle of busyness. The constant whirlwind can make it tempting to ask students to act as *native informants* regarding experiences that instructors may assume students are familiar with or can relate to (hooks, 1994). Not only does this add additional pressure to students, but it can work against the creation of the classroom environment mentioned above.

Prior to asking for students to explain themselves, social justice movements, and how those movements potentially impact them, instructors should do as much as they can to become informed. They could do this by reading, attending community events and lectures, and talking with colleagues. Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) encourages instructors desiring to increase their cultural awareness to be self-reflective and self-aware. Self-reflection could involve examining the course syllabus for representation from non-mainstream voices and perspectives, as well as examining personal assumptions, biases, and perspectives. Self-reflection may demand increased self-awareness. Self-awareness could include such things as acknowledging the limitations of one's personal worldview, family origin, and educational experiences.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Future Research</h2>

Understanding the salience of social movements in America and the responsibility of human services practitioners to act as advocates for clients is only the beginning of our work as human services educators. To continue to add to the body of knowledge related to social justice activism and human services, the authors have three suggestions for future research. First, the authors suggest a study that explores the impact of social media in the human services classroom

(Hickerson & Kothari, 2017). Although there is currently research on the impact of technology in higher education (Jessell, Smith, Jemal, & Windsor, 2016; Chang, Tseng, Liang, & Chen, 2013; Larsen, Visser-Rotgans, & Hole, 2011), it does not focus specifically on human services students. Next, the authors propose a quantitative study which examines the impact of politics on the classroom. Instruments such as The Activism Orientation Scale (AOS), Social Issues Advocacy Scale (SIAS), Social Issues Questionnaire (SIQ), or the Social Justice Scale (SJS) could be used to determine educators' perspectives on engaging in meaningful discourse (Fietzer & Ponterotto, 2015). The authors believe that the movements (#MeToo, BLM, DACA) have impacted a variety of students, and within a helping profession it would be proactive to determine the impact of these movements within the classroom. Lastly, a grounded theory study exploring how fear influences professors' willingness to discuss current social movements in the classroom would be timely for the human services profession (Ricks, 2011).

Conclusion

Human services educators are committed to preparing professionals who are aware of themselves, their communities, and the world, and how all three intersect and overlap with each other. A critical part of preparing human services professionals demands that human services educators increase awareness of their position within social justice movements, so they can actively assist students in examining how they are situated. The authors have highlighted BLM, the #MeToo movement, and DACA as examples of social justice movements and public policy which are impacting students, but these are only a few of the movements that are currently taking place in the United States (Amenta, Caren, Chiarello, & Su, 2010).

Through intentional engagement with students (and themselves) around social justice movements, human services educators can prepare human services professionals who are informed, aware, and culturally competent. Incorporating social movements into human services pedagogy and classroom discourse creates opportunities to use real life events to develop human services professionals who are better prepared to engage in meaningful discourse. The human services profession has always been a leader in tackling tough issues and embracing challenges, and embracing meaningful discourse can be another opportunity to advance the field.

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Review of *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*

Dusten Lyvers and Joseph Campbell

Book Review

In *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do* (2011), author Claude M. Steele poses the idea that stereotypes can negatively impact performance (e.g., academic, social, occupational, relationships, etc.). Steele suggests that *identity contingencies*, or the identities society has labeled one as, perform a key role in successfully obtaining what one wants or needs. Steele uses the example of a Caucasian student in an African American political science class. Because of the student's *Whiteness*, any ignorance shown by the student in the prominently African American classroom could cause the student disapproval by peers (e.g., being seeing as culturally incompetent or disrespectful). This added layer of pressure the White student feels, because of his/her identity contingency, is what Steele coins as *stereotype threat*.

Steele later states that individuals can be primed to experience stereotype threat through the use of *cues* found in day-to-day life. The example Steele shares is how African Americans may count how many other African Americans are present in a given room or social environment. If a certain amount of other African Americans are present, then a *critical mass* is reached, which signals that the environment is *safe*. Steele coins this phenomenon *identity safety*, or the ability to feel safe and secure in one's own identity contingency. Cues do not necessarily have to be people; cues are also artifacts, music, symbols, and more. For example, a human services professional could incorporate art and artifacts from a variety of cultures in the office environment to encourage identity safety and ultimately increase performance towards diverse clients' goals.

While Steele's ideas sound relatable for groups with stereotypes attached to them, it took a long time until Steele was able to demonstrate his ideas through research. Steele's research examined women and math ability with the stereotype being that women are not as good at math as men. Steele assessed for math ability performance before selecting participants, and both the men and women selected for his study showed equal math ability. He presented the women and men with a standard math test, and the women underperformed. Steele then replicated his experiment, but before administering the math test, told the women in the experiment that women always do as well as men on the math test, and with that intervention, found that the women performed just as well as the men.

Steele's findings have huge implications for human services professionals and educators, and it is important that such professions be aware, and understand the phenomenon, of stereotype threat. As human services professionals engage with individuals and groups, it is important to consider and reflect on cues within the environment, helping to provide an opportunity for identity safety. Everything from visible decorations, the style and temperature of a room, clothing and jewelry, administrative paperwork and the admissions process itself, all are sending cues to clients. Human services professionals and educators need to be aware of the cues they

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may unintentionally be sending to students and clients, such as facial expressions, the way materials are presented, and the seating arrangements in a room, since all these examples are sending cues.

Steele offers two practical suggestions to help secure identity safety and alleviate stereotype threat: *self-affirmation* and *talk groups*. Self-affirmation is "a chance to step back, take a breath, and affirm a larger, valued sense of self," (p. 173) which would lessen the impact of a cue that primes a stereotype threat. Talk groups are exactly what they sound like, safe environments where individuals can connect to others through dialogue and learn that others are going through similar experiences. Human services professionals have skills to design talk groups, such as *Friends of Dorothy* meetings for LGBTQ+ individuals or *Friends of Bill W.* for individuals struggling with alcoholism. Educators may want to focus their efforts on having students self-affirm a broader view of self before taking tests, and Steele mentions a quick 15-minute exercise on how to do this on in his book (p. 174).

There are limitations to Steele's idea that need to be addressed. First, not all people experience the same level of stereotype threat. While one woman may be severely affected by the stigma of being labeled bad at math and may have underperformed in Steele's first experiment, another woman may not hold such a belief and may perform just as well as men. Second, stereotypes, stereotype threats, and identity safety levels vary from culture to culture and person to person. The exposure to one's identity contingency also varies. For example, a young gay man consistently labeled as gay by others throughout his life would have a different identity contingency than a young gay man that was not thought of as gay, and both of these scenarios would impact performance differently when cues surrounding being gay present themselves.

This is a great book for professionals entering the human services field or a career in education to help them better understand the role that stereotypes and cues play in identity safety and performance. Steele outlines his ideas practically and clearly, providing a useful resource for educators and human services professionals seeking to understand and apply all or part of his ideas. This book is useful for professionals working in the fields of human services, counseling, psychology, communication, social work, or other helping professions. After the publication of Steel's research, many studies highlighted his original ideas and drew conclusions that stereotype threat may lead to self-fulfilling prophecies. Steele's book holds its weight both in real world applications and inside the classroom.

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Review of *Dictionary of Counseling & Human Services:*
An Essential Resource for Students and Professional Helpers

Deanna Chappell Belcher and Shoshana D. Kerewsky

Neukrug, Kalkbrenner, and Snow (2017) have engaged in an ambitious project in characterizing human services, counseling, and other interventionist professions by ranking, indexing, and defining common professional terminology. They have created a useful resource for students, those seeking certification or licensure, faculty and trainers, and professionals.

The book is organized as a dictionary/glossary including each term's definition, followed by indices listing the terms and their rankings, separated into counseling and human services sections. Appendices provide useful websites and related professional information. Ancillary resources, including a test bank, teaching manual, and slides presenting many of the concepts underlying the terms, are available to instructors online. These resources greatly expand the teaching and training opportunities associated with the text. It will be a valuable addition to human services students' classroom learning, internships and field site placements, and professional positions.

Most professionals remember being overwhelmed by the lingo, technical terminology, and acronyms when they entered the field. Teachers, mentors, and supervisors, though well-intentioned, occasionally slip into this mysterious coded language, circumstances for which the Dictionary provides a helpful solution.

In considering how to use this book to its best effect, a challenge may arise in helping students, especially digital natives, embrace this comprehensive resource. To the student assertion that "I can just Google it," we offer a caveat; the Internet may not provide the most reliable sources and definitions for technical, professional information. For example, a Google search for the term *depression* undertaken for the purpose of this review returns multiple advertisements for pharmaceuticals and several magazine articles about celebrities' mental health, in addition to potentially useful pages from National Institute of Mental Health, Mayo Clinic, and WebMD. This observation may be used as a classroom demonstration of the variability of quality of online resources and the utility of a comprehensive textbook.

Student engagement with the book may be deepened by introducing students to it early in their college careers and providing opportunities to use it immediately, whether in the classroom or when writing papers or developing presentations. Supervisors and instructors may encourage students engaged in service-learning or field study to use the book to identify subsets of terminology that they may frequently encounter at their site. We suggest that instructors encourage students and new practitioners to annotate their copy with examples and questions and highlight terms that they encounter multiple times.

Future editions may benefit from increased focus on systemic and social justice issues inherent in counseling and human services work. If these terms do not appear with high frequency in the field's textbooks and literature, one goal of future editions of this text may be to raise the bar by including them aspirationally. Students coming to these fields wishing to help people and to be the change benefit from reminders that the people they want to help are not context-free but are embedded in systems that may not support optimal human development.

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Including the terminology associated with social justice-oriented theory and practice would serve to legitimize these concerns in a different way. Just as educators embed discussions of race, class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, dis/ability, and other group memberships in our courses, inclusive terminology should be incorporated consistently in this dictionary.

The *Dictionary of Counseling & Human Services* is a useful and comprehensive resource from respected experts in the field. Experienced practitioners, as well as students and those just starting out in the field, will benefit by its addition to their professional libraries.

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Brief Report: A Game-Based Teaching Strategy
Using the *Dictionary of Counseling and Human Services*

Shoshana D. Kerewsky, Deanna Chappell Belcher

Abstract

This report on educational games using the *Dictionary of Counseling & Human Services* (Neukrug, Kalkbrenner, and Snow, 2017) supports the book's utility for teaching, training, and review of human services terminology and concepts. We provide several examples of games promoting active student learning using this dictionary as a source text for game content.

A Game-Based Teaching Strategy Using the *Dictionary of Counseling & Human Services*

In addition to its utility as a reference work for students and professionals, the text may be used for teaching games to facilitate student, trainee, or professional acquisition or consolidation of the terminology and concepts relevant to human services careers. We briefly review the literature on the use of games in teaching, then give examples of game structures we have used in our classrooms and online to use the dictionary as a sourcebook.

Support for Learning Games

Games and game-like elements (*gamification*; Deterding et al., 2011) have been used to support both student and client learning and intellectual or emotional skills acquisition (cf. Pacella, & López-Pérez, 2018). Experiential learning (Kalkbrenner & Horton-Parker, 2016), coupled with reflection (Guthrie & Jones, 2012) and immersion or *flow* (Buil, Catalán, & Martínez, 2018; Davis, Sridharan, Koepke, Singh, & Boiko, 2018), provides a popular alternative to front-of-room instruction and other teacher-centered instructional strategies. One option is to use games with educational content to teach or review course content. Informal and formal research supports the assertion that many students enjoy and learn from educational games (Davis et al., 2018; Kalkbrenner & Horton-Parker, 2016; Kerewsky, 1989; Kerewsky, 2002). Martí-Parreño, Galbis-Córdova, and Miquel-Romero (2018) report positive responses when students perceive the game to be relevant to their learning. Davis et al. (2018) found positive trends in student responses, with no significant gender difference, and Lamb et al. (2018)'s meta-analysis found positive effects for types of learning games that included simulation, *serious* games (training games with realistic examples) and others (see Davis et al., 2018, for a fuller discussion of game subtypes).

Unsurprisingly, much of the research on the use of games in teaching and training comes from computing-related fields or digital delivery (Aldemir, Celik, & Kaplan, 2018; Ritterfeld, Cody, & Vorderer, 2009). However, authors in other fields, including accounting (Malaquias, Malaquias, & Hwang, 2018), business (Buil, Catalán, & Martínez, 2018), psychology (Kerewsky, 2002), and high school English (Kerewsky, 1989), have explored the use of games or gamified teaching.

In addition to students, alumni/ae, professionals studying for licensure and certification, and human services agency trainers often request access to educational games developed by the

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first author and her students in human services courses. Anecdotally, they report decreased stress and increased retention and integration of material learned using a game modality. Thus, both research findings and informal human services user reports support the utility of this teaching strategy.

Example Games

Game 1: Counseling and Human Services Literacy

This activity is modeled on a similar game using Hirsch's (1988) *Cultural Literacy* as its sourcebook (Kerewsky, 1989). Small groups are assigned chapters from their other human services textbooks. For each indexed term they encounter, they create a flashcard with the term on the front and its definition on the back. Similarly, they create a second set of flashcards with each important non-indexed term and its definition, including a citation for their source. These flashcards may be used in memory games or as quiz questions or form the basis for a discussion about the students' textbooks. Instructors may wish to use current professional articles instead. The flashcards can be retained in the program office as a resource for students. Flashcard content may also be added to the course's online platform as a matching game or quiz.

Game 2: Counseling and Human Services Jeopardy

In this activity, the instructor or students determine the categories (e.g., human services interventions, counseling acronyms, commonly abused substances, ethical standards, DSM-5), then develop questions based on the *Dictionary of Counseling's* items. This may be most effective across two classes or sections, which may trade the games they develop. Several free online Jeopardy-style platforms are available (e.g., JeopardyLabs, n.d.) and can be used in classroom and online classes.

Game 3: Counseling and Human Services Scavenger Hunt

In this activity, groups develop and exchange themes that are represented in the Dictionary (e.g., medications, governmental organizations, testing and screening tools). Each group attempts to find 25 entries that fall into their category, define them, and find illustrative examples online. They build and upload a slide presentation with the theme as the title and a slide for each term, including the definition and their examples with citations.

Game 4: Counseling and Human Services Dominos

In this activity, groups identify 10 indexed terms with which their group is not familiar and email the instructor the terms and their definitions. The instructor combines all of the sets and constructs flashcard dominos with a term on one end and the definition of a different term on the other end. These cards may be used to play dominos-style matching games. As a variant, terms not found in the *Dictionary of Counseling* may be added by the students or instructors.

In addition to reinforcing students in learning professional terminology and concepts, these games help students, trainees, and professionals to thoroughly explore the *Dictionary of Counseling & Human Services*, becoming familiar with its structure as well as its content.

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What are you going to do with this Major?
The Role of a Career Exploration Course

Robyn Maitoza

Introduction

With varying degrees of confusion and concern, "What are you going to do with a human services major?" is often asked of undergraduate students majoring in human services. The field of human services is a broad one, and as such, figuring out their career direction can be a daunting task for students. Many find themselves in their senior year not knowing exactly what they want to do. Therefore, providing human services students with an opportunity to explore career options at an early phase in their degree program could be helpful in terms of improving their career decision making.

Career exploration has long been recognized as a crucial process of career development leading to various positive short- and long-term career outcomes, such as better career decision and clarity of vocational identity (Gushue, Clark, Pantzer, & Scanlan, 2006). Blustein (1992) defined career exploration as the process of generating and assimilating career information relating to self and the world of work. Courses which embed career exploration are commonly applied in higher education settings (Folsom & Reardon, 2003; Halasz & Kempton, 2000; Osborn, 2008). Previous research on these career education courses has related them to improved career decision making (Fouad, Cotter, & Kantamneni, 2009; Johnson & Smouse, 1993; Peng & Herr, 1999; Savickas, 1990), reduced negative career thoughts (Reed, Reardon, Lenz, & Leierer, 2001), as well as enhanced career decision self-efficacy (Reese & Miller, 2006).

Beginning with the assumption that learning is the central task of career exploration, Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory provides an appropriate model for a career exploration course for undergraduate human services students. Kolb's model serves as a foundation with which to structure career exploration exercises and ensure a thorough investigation of self and the world of work in a manner that can provide students with an optimal amount of learning and personal development. Thus the goal of this brief note is to outline the role of career exploration in the human services curriculum and activities associated with career exploration coursework. These activities provide students with the opportunity to explore multiple careers in the field as well as to learn more about their unique strengths, with the intent that these activities will improve students' career decision making.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

Kolb's (1984) theory has been adapted and applied as a process model in numerous fields and training endeavors. Career counseling is an example of such an area. Kolb described learning as a four-step cycle based on orthogonal relationship of two continuums of cognitive growth and learning: the concrete-abstract continuum and the reflective-active continuum. The concrete-abstract continuum, which represents how individuals gather or grasp information from their environment, ranges from a preference for involvement with particular events to a preference for detached analysis. The reflective-active continuum, which represents how

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individuals process the information they gather, extends from learners who take a more observational role in learning to those who prefer active participation. Individuals must continually choose, along the respective continuum, how they will gather and process information to resolve the problems and conflicts presented by any learning situation.

According to Kolb (1984), experiential learning proceeds through these four modes, which require four different kinds of abilities. The concrete experience (CE) mode, or doing it, requires individuals to immerse themselves in the immediacy of the moment, relying on their intuitive and affective responses to the situation. Conversely, abstract conceptualization (AC), or making sense of the experience, calls for logical thinking and rational evaluation to create ideas that integrate their observations into logically sound theories. Reflective observation (RO), or reflecting on the experience, demands a tentative, impartial perspective toward a learning situation – a willingness to patiently consider many alternatives. Active experimentation (AE), or planning what to do, stresses action, participation, and risk-taking in learning, with an emphasis on pragmatically testing previously generated concepts.

Career Exploration Course Activities

If it is assumed that career exploration is a process of learning about self and the world of work, Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning may reasonably be applied as a method of structuring the way a student approaches this task in a course. When career exploration activities are arranged according to each mode, the student can examine the situation using all the abilities necessary for learning at increasingly greater levels of complexity.

Exploring the Self

Concrete experience activities should encourage the student to become involved in career-related outcomes in an open manner. An example of a CE task that can be incorporated in career exploration coursework includes self-assessment activities such as completing FOCUS 2 Career (Career Dimensions, n.d.), a career exploration and planning tool which examines one's skills, values, personality, and leisure interests. Reflective observation assignments should promote understanding through careful observation and impartial description. An RO activity students can complete is evaluating their values and ranking them in order of importance and seeking to discover any patterns or past life experiences. Another RO activity students can complete is CliftonStrengths (formerly StrengthsFinder 2.0) assessment (Rath, 2007) which helps students discover their unique strengths and how to maximize them. Both of these RO activities require students to also apply and integrate the abstract information they learn about themselves to their career plan. Active Experimentation tasks should engage the student in actively influencing people and events. Two AE exercises that can be built into coursework include writing a resume and conducting mock interviews with human services professionals.

Exploring the World of Work

In order to provide students with concrete opportunities to get a first-hand view of the work content and process entailed in various human services professions, the author collaborates with the County's Human Services Agency. Students visit seven human services agencies throughout the semester and interact with directors, staff, and consumers. These site visits expose students to the variety of career directions in which they can go upon graduation. In addition to

the site visits, students are also able to shadow case managers in aging, child welfare, mental health, and substance abuse to fully immerse themselves in a "typical" day the case manager experiences.

After each site visit or shadowing experience, students reflect upon what they learned. As a class, we engage in discussion of students' reactions to each site visit. For the AC mode, students look up job titles, descriptions, and classifications in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.), the Occupational Information Network or O*NET (U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, n.d.), or other resources available through the college's Career Center. Finally, students generate a career plan from the information gathered in the exploration of self as well as the world of work.

Taking the first steps in implementing their career plan is an active experimentation step that would lead to new concrete experiences encountered at a higher level of awareness. Although these steps may not occur before the end of studies, students can secure internships or volunteer experiences as a result of the class and career plan they established. They also develop relationships with professionals who might be able to connect them to jobs upon graduation.

Implications

Many human services students feel confused and overwhelmed with trying to determine their career direction as the field is broad. Providing human services students with an opportunity to explore career options at an early phase in their degree program, such as their sophomore year, can therefore help to improve their career decision making. Additionally, these activities offer multiple opportunities for students to explore the world of work as well as to develop professionally and personally. Developing a close partnership with agencies has been instrumental in the success of these activities. The partnership is a win-win for students as well as the human services professionals who are involved. Many of these agencies are able to find interns or volunteers through this course. Students make professional connections and learn more concrete information about the career possibilities in the human services field. Moreover, because learning and career development are both life-long pursuits, students may also learn tools or strategies from these activities they can apply continually to enhance their personal and professional lives. Moving forward, outcomes such as career decision making and career self-efficacy can be measured to fully determine the efficacy of this curriculum enhancement.

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Competency-Based Interprofessional Education: Lessons from the Field

Kandice Johnson Porter, Monica Nandan, Lynn Varagona, Mary Beth Maguire

Abstract

Interprofessional education (IPE) can assist students with generating creative solutions for complex health and social problems. Six faculty members from three fields, human services, public health, and nursing, designed an undergraduate interprofessional collaboration and care course and assessed the impact on students' interprofessional competencies. Implications for faculty and students are presented.

Background and Rationale

Today's complex health and human services environment necessitates professionals to work collaboratively with individuals from different fields of practice (Johnson, Sparkman-Key, & Kalkbrenner, 2017). In order to effectively prepare future professionals, educational programs must incorporate interprofessional teamwork and collaboration competencies into the curriculum (Thibault, 2012). Unfortunately, most in academe are continuing to train health and human services professionals separately, with limited or no emphasis on group process, team building and collaboration skills (Johnson et al., 2017; Thibault, 2012). Once socialization into one's profession or discipline occurs, it may become difficult for health and human services practitioners to understand the perspectives of other professionals and disciplines (Burbank et al., 2002).

The Council for Standards of Human Services Education (CSHSE; 2015) calls for human services professionals (HSPs) to be trained in an interdisciplinary knowledge base that focuses on prevention and intervention. Though limited literature exists within the human services field on infusing interprofessional competencies into the curriculum, extensive literature reviews (Abu-Rish et al., 2012; Brandt, Lutfiyya, King, & Chioresco, 2014; Reeves et al., 2010), as well as individual studies on the topic (Bain, Kennedy, Archibald, LePage, & Thorne, 2014; Chua et al., 2015; Wilhelmsson, Svensson, Timpka, & Faresjö, 2013) have been published in the last fifteen years. The literature on interprofessionalism in related professions speaks to the effectiveness of IPE and practice in health and social care. Interprofessional education-oriented studies found: (a) positive changes in student attitudes towards interprofessional practice (Reeves et al., 2010), (b) increased knowledge of interprofessional competencies (Reeves et al., 2010), and (c) enhanced team skills (Abu-Rish et al., 2012; Chua et al., 2015). Additionally, students involved in IPE demonstrated: (a) stronger communication and problem-solving capability, (b) increased cooperation with other professionals, (c) self-directed learning and participation in health prevention actions, and (d) enhanced ability to effectively care for acutely ill patients (Wilhelmsson et al., 2013).

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Course Development

Six faculty members developed a team-based IPE course that included didactic and clinical learning experiences (Young et al., 2011) and focused on both process (e.g., group dynamics) and product (i.e., the curriculum; Burbank et al., 2002). Teaching strategies included lectures, group exercises, videos, simulations, journaling, self and peer-assessment tools, and presentations by panels of experts.

Several authors have emphasized the importance of training faculty members for teaching interprofessional courses (Abu-Rish, et al., 2012; Hammick et al., 2007; Herie & Wells, 2014; Silver & Leslie, 2009). After extensively reading the literature and attending a three-day institute, faculty members structured an IPE course around the four IPE competencies, values/ethics, roles and responsibilities, communication, and teams and teamwork, (Business Wire, 2016). During course development and implementation faculty members exemplified open communication, trust, and a shared teaching philosophy (Stewart & Perry, 2005; Varagona et al., 2017).

The interprofessional faculty team employed a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design to examine the effectiveness of the course in improving students' interprofessional competencies, as evidenced by participation in simulations (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). Students completed the slightly modified Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Competency Survey (Dow, DiazGranados, Mazmanian, & Retchin, 2014) after the first and last simulation in the course. Modifications were changing "I" on the survey with "the team" on each of the 42 items The faculty evaluated the students' performance after both simulations as well. At the end of the semester, students also completed a self-reflection about themselves and their interprofessional teams. Data analysis indicated that students did learn and improve their interprofessional competencies in the four areas. However, group dynamics influenced the extent of students' improvement in interprofessional competencies and their perception of their team performance. These findings have several implications for human services, public health, and nursing educators.

Implications

Group dynamics influence one's ability to learn and practice IPE competencies. Relationship conflicts negatively influence team performance (Amason, 1998; Curşeu & Schruijer, 2010; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). The relationship conflicts that existed among students throughout the semester were consistent with Tuckman's (1965) storming phase of group development. Danganan (2001) found that groups which viewed themselves as being in conflict (i.e., in the storming phase) perceived themselves as less effective and less productive than groups which perceived themselves as being in the norming or performing stages. Hall (2015) found that the low cohesion characteristic of the storming phase is also associated with lower team performance.

The faculty members were not privy to the interactional challenges that existed in each of the interprofessional student teams and hence did not carve out time to address them within or outside of class. Each student team needed one-on-one coaching to address its group dynamics and then attend to the interprofessional competencies.

Interprofessional faculty members need to focus on the group development process throughout the semester and coach students to move from storming to norming stages as they

simultaneously develop interprofessional competencies. Multiple personality tools exist that can provide students with insights into their interpersonal styles when working on teams (e.g., PRINT, StrengthsFinder, DISC, Myers-Briggs). Utilizing findings from these tools to coach students to have "crucial conversations" with their teammates is very important.

Interprofessional competency courses may be the first courses where students interact with others from different fields. Different perspectives, values, and ideological frameworks, along with different styles of teamwork, can complicate the learning experience unless these nuances are attended to. Similar to Burbank et al. (2002), the authors propose that IPE courses should be process-oriented (e.g., group dynamics) in addition to being content- and product-oriented (e.g., group projects).

Finally, the authors recommend that students observe interprofessional teams in action at local health and human service agencies. It is critical for students to analyze how interprofessional teams perform outside the class setting. The faculty also strongly encourage that the course pedagogy include a *teach, watch, do, debrief* model of learning each week. In this model, (a) faculty members teach particular concepts and principles; (b) students watch the concepts or principles in role-playing, or real-life interprofessional teams; (c) students practice the IPE skills, then; (d) faculty debrief and coach the student teams accordingly.

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Guidelines for Authors

The *Journal of Human Services* (JHS) is a national refereed journal. Manuscripts judged by the editors that fall within the range of interest of the journal are submitted to reviewers without the names and identifying information of the authors. The principal audiences of JHS are human service faculty members, administrators, practitioners, and undergraduate and graduate students. Sample areas of interest include teaching methods, models of internships, faculty development, career paths of graduates, credentialing, accreditation, models of undergraduate and graduate study, clinical issues in human service treatment, and supervision of human service practitioners.

JHS publishes three types of submissions: 1) articles, 2) brief notes, and 3) critical reviews of instructional materials and scholarly books of interest to human service educators.

Directions for each type of submission include the following:

1. **Articles.** Manuscripts for articles should not exceed twenty-five (25) typed pages. The page limit includes all pages of the manuscript excluding the title page (i.e., abstract, reference pages, tables, and graphs). **Manuscripts may not exceed this page limit.** Following the title page, include an abstract of not more than 150 words. This statement should express the central idea of the article in non-technical language and should appear on a page separate from the text.

2. **Brief Notes**. Submissions appropriate for this format include brief reports of program innovations, curriculum design, or helping interventions. Manuscripts should not exceed four (4) double-spaced typed pages. Submissions should contain a brief review of literature to present background and rationale for the topic. It is recommended that implications occupy at least half of the brief note. A 50-word capsule statement should accompany the note.

3. **Critical Reviews.** JHS accepts reviews of textbooks, other instructional materials, and scholarly books of interest to human service educators and practitioners. Manuscripts should not exceed three (3) typed pages unless two or more related books are included in one review, in which case manuscripts should not exceed five (5) typed pages.

The following instructions apply to all three types of submissions:

1. Manuscripts should be well organized and present the idea in a clear and concise manner. Use headings and subheadings to guide the reader. Avoid the use of jargon and sexist terminology.

2. Manuscripts should be typed in 12-point type with margins of one inch on all four sides. All materials should be double spaced including references, all lines of tables, and extensive quotations.

3. All material should conform to the style of the sixth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

4. Avoid footnotes wherever possible.

5. Tables should be kept to a minimum. Include only essential data and combine tables whenever possible. Each table should be on a separate page following the reference section of the article. Final placement of tables is at the discretion of the editors.

6. Figures (graphs, illustrations) must be supplied in electronic format and must be in black and white with a minimum of gray shading. Use of submitted figures or a re-rendering of the figures for clarity is at the discretion of the editors.

7. Two (2) copies of the manuscript must be electronically submitted (Microsoft Word or text file versions only). The first version should include, on a separate page, the title of the article, the names of the authors, their professional titles, and their institutional affiliations. The second version must be free of any identifying information. Articles' titles and headings should be as short as possible.

8. Check all references for completeness; make sure all references mentioned in the text are listed in the reference section and vice versa. *Please include doi numbers when relevant.*

9. Manuscripts are edited for consistency of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In some cases, portions of manuscripts may be reworded for conciseness or clarity of expression.

10. Manuscripts are accepted for review with the understanding that they represent original work and are not under review by another publication.

NOTE: All manuscripts must meet the specifications detailed above or they will be returned to the authors before review for publication.

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