

Evaluation of “Cultural Competency”

A workshop presented by

The Missouri Training Program for Child Welfare Workers

July, 2006

David J. Dixon, Ph.D.
Center for Research and Service
Department of Psychology
Southwest Missouri State University

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In July, 2006, The Missouri Training Program for Child Welfare Workers (MTP) presented a workshop entitled “Cultural Competency” to Missouri Children’s Division employees.

Prior to the workshop, five competencies were identified as those to be addressed in the workshop. These competencies came from the an analysis of the proposed objectives of the workshop and are closely related to some of the 140 child welfare worker competencies identified through the work of the MTP to date. These competencies were reworded for use in a retrospective pre-test-post-test design using a self-report questionnaire with closed-ended questions. Attendees were instructed to complete the questionnaire at the end of the program. The questions directed attendees to identify their level of agreement with statements asserting aspects of their cultural competency and practice. An additional closed-ended question requested attendees’ opinion as to whether the information from the workshop would lead to positive cultural change in the workplace. In addition, three open-ended questions were asked, and attendees were asked to indicate whether they had received cultural competency training in the past. Finally, respondents were requested to identify their job classification and work specialization. Responses to all of these questions form the basis of this evaluation. (Please see Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire.)

At the end of the workshop, questionnaires were collected and submitted for analysis. Fifty questionnaires with complete or partial responses were collected.

Characteristics of Respondents

Job Classification: Respondents were offered five closed-ended alternatives and an “other” alternative to report their job classification. Of the 47 respondents to this item, 33 (70.2%) clearly identified themselves as Social Services Worker II, eight (17.0%) identified themselves as Supervisor, three (6.4%) identified themselves as Regional Staff, two (4.3%) identified themselves as Social Services Worker I, and one (1.4%) identified himself or herself as Circuit Manager.

Work Specialization: Respondents were offered four closed-ended alternatives and an “other” alternative for to report their work specialization. Of the 46 respondents to this item, 17 (37.0%) identified themselves as Family Permanency workers, eight (17.4%), identified themselves as Generic workers, three (6.5%) identified themselves as Investigations workers, and three (6.5%) identified themselves as Adoption / Licensing

workers. The remaining 15 (32.6) identified themselves as “Other,” with most of these indicating Family Centered Services.

Prior training in cultural competency: Of the 47 respondents to this question, 43 (91.5%) indicated that they had received previous training in cultural competency and four (8.6%) indicated that they had not received previous training in the subject. Responses to the question of when they had received this training included “6 months,” “2004 w/ another job,” and “Sociology major.”

Responses to the Closed-ended Questions on Competencies

Data collected regarding the five competencies lent themselves to matched t-test comparisons, comparing self-reported levels before the workshop to those after the workshop. Means, standard deviations, t-test values and levels of significance for each of the six items and for an aggregate of the specific items for this training (Item 1 + Item 2 + ... + Item 5) are displayed in Table 1, below.

Table 1: *Item Data, Contrasts and Statistical Significance by Item*

Item	n for paired contrast	Pretest average	Posttest average	Gain (loss)	standard deviation of gain	t-value (17df)	$p \leq$
1. I understand the Children’s Division mission, goals, organizational structure and the development of cultural competency.	48	4.17	4.19	.02	.385	.375 (47df)	.710
2. I understand the fundamental concepts of culture and recognize that an ethnocentric perspective can interfere with serving clients from different cultures.	48	4.10	4.35	.25	.484	3.580 (47df)	.001
3. I understand the potential impact of cultural and ethnic differences in establishing client-worker relationships, and utilize strategies to develop relationships with those of other backgrounds.	48	4.06	4.38	.31	.512	4.230 (47df)	.000
4. I demonstrate sensitivity to differences in culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, language, religious beliefs and other forms of human diversity and conduct assessments appropriately.	48	4.02	4.31	.29	.459	4.399 (47df)	.000
5. I establish positive working relationships with clients from different cultural backgrounds and develop plans to help families improve the care of their children within their own cultural context.	47	4.15	4.36	.21	.463	3.149 (46df)	.003
Column averages	47.8	4.10	4.32	.22			
Aggregate scores (Item 1 + Item 2 + ... + Item 11)	47	20.55	21.62	1.06	1.660	4.393 (46df)	.000

There is evidence, trusting the methodology, of a statistically significant gain on four of the five items, and a statistically significant gain on the aggregate scores. Across all items, as a group, respondents reported a level a bit above “agree” (average = 4.10) with the positive assertions associated with each question presented in the pre-workshop condition, and they reported a level between “agree” and “strongly agree” (value = 4.32) with the positive assertions presented in the post-workshop condition.

Looking at individual profiles, between 23% and 33% of respondents indicated that they had gained from pre-workshop to post-workshop on Items 2, 3, 4 and 5—those associated with significant pre-workshop to post-workshop gains. Table 2 presents information on the number of respondents who indicated no change from pre- to post-workshop, the number who indicated favorable change (gain) and the number who indicated unfavorable change (loss).

Table 2: *Value Changes (No Changes, Gains and Losses) by Item*

Item	n for paired contrast	# no change	% no change	# gain	% gain	# loss	% loss
1. I understand the Children’s Division mission, goals, organizational structure and the development of cultural competency.	48	41	85.42%	4	8.33%	3	6.25%
2. I understand the fundamental concepts of culture and recognize that an ethnocentric perspective can interfere with serving clients from different cultures.	48	34	70.83	13	27.08	1	2.08
3. I understand the potential impact of cultural and ethnic differences in establishing client-worker relationships, and utilize strategies to develop relationships with those of other backgrounds.	48	31	64.58	16	33.33	1	2.08
4. I demonstrate sensitivity to differences in culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, language, religious beliefs and other forms of human diversity and conduct assessments appropriately.	48	34	70.83	14	29.17	0	0.00
5. I establish positive working relationships with clients from different cultural backgrounds and develop plans to help families improve the care of their children within their own cultural context.	47	35	74.47	11	23.40	1	2.13

Responses to Closed-ended Question on Cultural Change

One additional closed-ended question (Question 6) probed attendees’ reactions to the possibility of the workshop supporting culture change in the workplace environment. This was asked as a post-workshop question only. Summary data appear in Table 3.

Table 3: *Frequency and Percentage of Responses to the Item of Culture Change*

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
6. I believe I can use the information from today's workshop to "change the culture" of the workplace environment (i.e. in my office, among my colleagues) for the better.	Post-workshop only	3 6.3%	3 6.3%	11 22.9%	18 37.5%	13 27.1%

More than 64% of the respondents report agreeing or strongly agreeing that the information acquired from the workshop would support culture change at the workplace.

Responses to Open-ended Questions

Three open-ended questions assessed respondents' views of the value of the workshop. Results are arranged by question and summarized below. A full display of the responses, verbatim (except for changing all capitalizations to standard upper and lower case), appears in Appendix B.

7. What is the one principle you learned today that you will immediately apply to your job?

Of the 50 response sheets returned, 32 (64.00%) displayed written responses to this question. Of those responses, direct reference or strong implication was made to the following keywords / key issues. (Note that the number of responses may not sum to 32 due to some responses being counted in more than one category.)

- Filters (14 responses)
- Differences / diversity (5)
- Understanding self-biases (2)
- Not classified above (17)

8. What part(s) or topic(s) of the workshop did you find most helpful and why?

Of the 50 response sheets returned, 29 (58.00%) displayed written responses to this question. Of those responses, direct reference or strong implication was made to the following keywords / key issues. (Note that the number of responses may not sum to 29 due to some responses being counted in more than one category.)

- The panel (20 responses)
- All / everything (4)
- Not classified above (11)

9. *What part(s) or topic(s) of the workshop did you not find helpful and why?*

Of the 50 response sheets returned, 30 (60.00%) displayed written responses to this question. Of those responses, direct reference or strong implication was made to the following keywords / key issues. (Note that the number of responses may not sum to 30 due to some responses being counted in more than one category.)

- None / NA / All was good (5 responses)
- Too few cultures discussed; too much Black and White [races]; need more about other cultures (5)
- Too slow; too drawn out (3)
- Was to be about clients in this area [southwest Missouri] (2)
- Not classified above (16)

Conclusions

The workshop on cultural competency presented during July, 2006 appears to have been effective in an overall manner. When attendees were asked to rate the effectiveness of the workshop, statistically-significant gain was evident on four of five evaluation questions and on an aggregate variable measuring the intended outcomes of the workshops; this in spite of the fact that attendees rated their prior knowledge and skill in cultural competence rather high; and this in spite of the fact that only a sizeable minority of attendees reported gains on any of the five evaluation items.

The reception of the workshop appeared to be mixed as there were a variety of criticisms among the accolades offered in response to open ended questions. However, attendees agreed that the information gained at the workshop could be used to facilitate a “culture change” in their workplaces.