



LCC INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

Programming for Cultural Competence: Positive Effects for Moral Development

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February 1, 2008

LCC International University

LCC Context:

- Students demographics: 21 different countries
 - 55% Lithuanian
 - 45% non-Lithuanian (Eastern & Western Europe, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa)
- Christian liberal arts tradition
- Language of instruction: English
- Faculty demographics:
 - 1/3 Lithuanian
 - 1/3 North American & Western European

Lithuania

- Former member of Soviet Union until 1991
- Member of the European Union as of 2004
- 3.5 million citizens



Definitions

Cultural Competence:

“Refers to a set of attitudes and skills that make it possible for organizations and staffs to not only acknowledge cultural differences but also incorporate these differences in working with people from various cultures.” (Bucher, 2004)

Diversity Consciousness:

“Understanding, awareness and skills in the area of diversity.” (Bucher, 2004)

Kohlberg’s Theory of Moral Development:

A cognitive-developmental theory focused on how people make moral judgments

The Monkey and the Fish

“Well-intentioned actions, when guided by ignorance can result in disaster”
(Cassellius)

How often do we make this same mistake as educators?

Diversity Consciousness

- Understanding, awareness and skills in the area of diversity (Bucher)
- This is NOT:
 - Simply common sense
 - The result of good intentions
 - The result of some simple formula or strategy
 - Important for just some of us
 - Simply ignoring differences and treating everybody the same
 - A passing fad
- Achieved through diversity education

Cultural Competence

- Refers to a set of attitudes and skills that make it possible for organizations and staff to not only acknowledge cultural differences but also to incorporate these differences in working with people from various cultures
- What attitudes and skills do you have that allow you to create an environment of cultural competence on your campus?

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

- Six stages grouped into three levels.
- Each stage represents a different relationship between the self and society's rules and expectations
- “The principle central to the development of moral judgment... is that of justice. Justice, the primary regard for the value and equality of all human beings, and for the reciprocity in human relations, is a basic and human standard.”
(Kohlberg)

Kohlberg's Moral Dilemma

In Europe, a woman was near death from cancer & only one drug was known that could save her. The drug was expensive to make and the druggist charged 10 times what it cost to make. Heinz, the husband of the sick woman, tried to collect money for the drug, but was only able to get half of what the drug cost. He told the druggist his wife was dying & that he would pay the other half of the price later. The druggist refused because he owned the rights to the drug and wanted to make money from it. In an act of desperation, Heinz broke into the drugstore & stole the drug for his wife. Should Heinz have done that?

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

- Level I: Preconventional
 - STAGE 1: HETERONOMOUS MORALITY - obeys rules, avoids punishment, refrains from physical harm- authorities have superior power- others' rights not considered
 - STAGE 2: INDIVIDUALISTIC, INSTRUMENTAL MORALITY - follows rules if in own interest, realize that others have rights and that values can conflict so right is defined by fairness, equal exchange or agreement

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

- **Level II: Conventional**
 - STAGE 3: INTERPERSONALLY NORMATIVE MORALITY: right is defined by living up to expectations of friends/family and carrying out one's social roles- concerned with maintaining "good person" image- shared feelings/agreements trump individual interests but there is no connection to greater society
 - STAGE 4: SOCIAL SYSTEM MORALITY – upholding laws established by society and carrying out duties is most important

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

- **Level III: Postconventional or Principled**
 - STAGE 5: HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL WELFARE MORALITY-the rightness of laws and social systems are evaluated on how they promote fundamental human rights.
 - STAGE 6: MORALITY OF UNIVERSALIZABLE, REVERSIBLE, AND PRESCRIPTIVE GENERAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES- decisions are based on universal generalizable principles that apply in all situations- the process by which a contract is made is viewed as equally important with the fairness of the procedures that underlie the agreement

One of Kohlberg's conditions to facilitate moral development:

- “**Disequilibrium** occurs when individuals face situations that arouse internal contradictions in their moral reasoning structures or when they find that their reasoning is different from that of significant others” (Kohlberg, 1976)
- Patricia Gurin (summarizing Coser (1975)):
“Complex social structures are social situations that are not familiar to us and are often quite discrepant with our past lives.” (2003)

Disequilibrium at LCC

- At LCC, disequilibrium occurs for all of our students because our educational style/university values strongly differ from their past lives.
- Living in an international dorm environment (4 roommates, each from a differing culture)
- Intentional programming through the Office of Intercultural Programs.

Creating Disequilibrium Through LCC Programming

- Intentionally confront students with real issues such as discrepancies between EU standards/laws on human rights with the reality of life for minorities in Lithuania, aggression against students of color, Roma (gypsy) oppression
- Create inter-group dialogue through small group program
- Visit sites of historical injustice/ethnic cleansing and persecution in LT
- Create events that allow for education as well as discussion

Creating Disequilibrium on Your Campus

- Know yourself
- Know your institution: administration & student population
- Be intentional about providing opportunities for dissonance/perspective taking within programming
- Provide opportunities for students to dialogue about these issues

Disequilibrium on Your Campus

- How are you attempting to place students in complex social structures (disequilibrium) on your campus?
- What are the opportunities your institutions intentionally provide for students to discuss these key issues of cultural competence?

Resources

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