CROSS CULTURE COMMUNICATION IN EDUCATION: NATIONS OF CULTURE,CROSS- CULTURAL AWARENESS AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

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Annotation: This article gives information about nations ofculture, cross-culture awareness and intercultural competence.

Introduction: cross-cultural competence is effective communication with people from other cultures and social groups. Being interculturally competent, someone can communicate appropriately without violating the norms, rules, and expectations.

Cultural competence, also known as intercultural competence, is a range of cognitive, affective, and behavioural, linguistic, skillsthat lead to effective and appropriate communication with people of other cultures. Intercultural or cross-cultural education are terms used for the training to achieve cultural competence.

Effective intercultural communication relates to behaviors that culminate with the accomplishment of the desired goals of the interaction and all parties involved in the situation. Appropriate intercultural communication includes behaviors that suit the expectations of a specific culture, the characteristics of the situation, and the level of the relationship between the parties involved in the situation.

Individuals who are effective and appropriate in intercultural situations display high levels of cultural self-awareness and understand the influence of culture on behavior, values, and beliefs.Cognitive processes imply the understanding of situational and environmental aspects of intercultural interactions and the application of intercultural awareness, which is affected by the understanding of the self and own culture. Self-awareness in intercultural interactions requires self-monitoring to censor anything not acceptable to another culture. Cultural sensitivity or cultural awareness leads the individual to an understanding of how their own culture determines feelings, thoughts, and personality.

Affective processes define the emotions that span during intercultural interactions. These emotions are strongly related to self-concept, open-mindedness, non-judgmentalism, and social relaxation. In general, positive emotions generate respect for other cultures and their differences.Behavioral processes refer to how effectively and appropriately the individual directs actions to achieve goals. Actions during intercultural interactions are influenced by the ability to clearly convey a message, proficiency with the foreign language, flexibility and management of behavior, and social skills.

Creating intercultural competence

Intercultural competence is determined by the presence of cognitive, affective, and behavioral abilities that directly shape communication across cultures. These essential abilities can be separated into five specific skills that are obtained through education and experience:

Mindfulness: the ability of being cognitively aware of how the communication and interaction with others is developed. It is important to focus more in the process of the interaction than its outcome while maintaining in perspective the desired communication goals. For example, it would be better to formulate questions such as "What can I say or do to help this process?" rather than "What do they mean?"

Cognitive flexibility: the ability of creating new categories of information rather than keeping old categories. This skill includes opening to new information, taking more than one perspective, and understanding personal ways of interpreting messages and situations. Tolerance for ambiguity: the ability to maintain focus in situations that are not clear rather than becoming anxious and to methodically determine the best approach as the situation evolves. Generally, low-tolerance individuals look for information that supports their beliefs while high-tolerance individuals look for information that gives an understanding of the situation and others. Behavioral flexibility: the ability to adapt and accommodate behaviors to a different culture. Although knowing a second language could be important for this skill, it does not necessarily translate into cultural adaptability. The individual must be willing to assimilate the new culture.

Cross-cultural empathy: the ability to visualize with the imagination the situation of another person from an intellectual and emotional point of view. Demonstrating empathy includes the abilities of connecting emotionally with people, showing compassion, thinking in more than one perspective, and listening actively.

Assessment

The assessment of cross-cultural competence is a field that is rife with controversy. One survey identified 86 assessment instruments for 3C. A United States Army Research Institute study narrowed the list down to ten quantitative instruments that were suitable for further exploration of their reliability and validity.

The following characteristics are tested and observed for the assessment of intercultural competence as an existing ability or as the potential to develop it: ambiguity tolerance, openness to contacts, flexibility in behavior, emotional stability, motivation to perform, empathy, metacommunicative competence, and polycentrism. According to Caligiuri, personality traits such as extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness have a favorable predictive value to the adequate termination of cross-cultural assignments.

Quantitative assessment instruments

Three examples of quantitative assessment instruments are:

- the Intercultural Development Inventory
- the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Measurement
- the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire
- Qualitative assessment instruments

Research in the area of 3C assessment, while thin, points to the value of qualitative assessment instruments in concert with quantitative ones. Qualitative instruments, such as scenario-based assessments, are useful for gaining insight into intercultural competence.

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