Diversity and Cultural Groups

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Diversity is Not Just About Race

- Primary Characteristics
- Secondary Characteristics
Demographic Trends

- About 1 in 5 Americans have some type of disability.

- United States – 3 largest racial groups
  - Whites – 237,854,954
  - Hispanics – 42,687,224
  - Blacks – 37,909,341

- 30,521,800 Americans speak Spanish at home
  - Illinois 79.6% speak English, 11.9% Spanish
  - Indiana 91.3% speak English, 3.9% Spanish
  - Michigan 91.1% English, 2.7% Spanish
Demographic Trends

By 2030 approximately 20% of the U.S. population will be older adults

Religion in the U.S.
- Catholic: 159,506,000
- Baptist: 50,873,000
- Protestant: 33,830,000
- Jewish: 7,740,000
- Atheist: 902,000
Ethnic Diversity Projections for the Future (Cortes, 1991)

- Caucasian
- African-American
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino American, Pacific Islander, Native Americans
Cultural Influences on Recreation Programming

Hispanics
- Barriers to Participation
  - Perceptions of discrimination
  - Fear that staff will not be Hispanic
  - Fear of not being liked

Recreation
- Family oriented
- Informal
- Outdoors
Cultural Influences on Recreation Programming

**Blacks** (McGuire et al., 1990)

- Blacks have traditionally held stronger preferences for attending sporting events, picnicking, fitness related activities, and traveling.
- Not as interested in outdoor recreation including camping and other forms of wildland recreation.
Cultural Influences on Recreation Programming

Preferences based on age
- Active to individual fitness to passive

Programming with consideration for disabilities
- How do preferences/do preferences change?

Programming around religion
- Sabbath – Saturday/Sunday
- Different holidays – which are recognized, programmed around?
- How do blue laws impact recreation?
What is Cultural Competence?

a continuous, developmental process of pursuing cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, encounters, sensitivity, and linkages among services and people (Smith, 1998).
Cultural Diversity Education and Training Model

Unconsciously Competent

↓

Consciously Competent

↓

Consciously Incompetent

↓

Unconsciously Incompetent


[Diagram showing the model with arrows indicating the progression from Unconsciously Incompetent to Unconsciously Competent.]
Assumptions Regarding Cultures

- All professionals need similar information about cultural diversity.
- One culture is not better than another culture; they are just different.
- All cultures share core similarities.
- Differences exist among, between, and within cultures.
Assumptions Regarding Cultures

Culture has a powerful influence on one’s interpretation of and responses to recreation programming.

Individuals and families belong to several cultural groups.

Each individual has the right to be respected for his or her uniqueness and cultural heritage.

Programmers need both general and specific cultural information to provide sensitive and culturally competent programming.
Assumptions Regarding Cultures

- Learning culture is an ongoing process and develops in a variety of ways but primarily through culture encounters.

- Cultures change slowly over time in a stable society.

- The primary and secondary characteristics of culture determine the degree to which one varies from the dominant culture.
Assumptions Regarding Cultures

- Prejudices and biases can be minimized with cultural understanding.

- Cultural awareness improves the programmer’s self-awareness.

- Professions, organizations, and associations have their own cultures, which can be analyzed using a grand theory.

Adapted from Purnell (2002).
Case Study on Cultural Competencies of Park and Recreation Professionals
Purpose of the Study

To examine the self-reported cultural awareness, knowledge and skill levels of parks and recreation professionals and the influence that various demographic and training variables have on these self-reported competencies.
Research Questions

1. What levels of cultural awareness, knowledge and skills do parks and recreation professionals perceive themselves to possess?

2. What are the differences between self-reported cultural competence scores of parks and recreation professionals and demographic and training variables, such as race, sex, certification, educational level and amount of diversity training?
Methods

Sample

NCRPS Members (population of 1053)

Response Rate: 45%
Methods

Questionnaire

- Literature Review
- Focus groups
- Individual semi-structured interviews
- 23 items
  - Skills
  - Knowledge
  - Awareness
Demographics

**Men** (n=261)
- 79% White
- 20% African-American
- 59% B.S. Degree
- 13% High School
- 52% Middle Mgmt.
- 31% Executive Mgmt.
- 36% Certified
- 29% Diversity Training

**Women** (n=205)
- 85% White
- 8.2% African-American
- 63% B.S. Degree
- 13% M.S. or Ph.D.
- 51% Middle Mgmt.
- 30% Executive Mgmt.
- 45% Certified
- 43% Diversity Training
Components

Value Cultural Differences

- I am aware of my own cultural heritage.
- I acknowledge cultural differences.
- I value cultural differences.
- I treat all participants based on individual needs when possible.
- I am aware of my own cultural biases.
- I think more attention needs to be paid to cultural diversity in parks and recreation.
- I have a responsibility to be aware of participants’ cultural backgrounds.
Components

Possess Cultural Competency Skills

- I can speak at least basic phrases in Spanish.
- I can understand at least basic phrases in Spanish.
- I can understand at least basic phrases in sign language.
- I can speak at least basic phrases in sign language.
Components

Acceptance of Cultural Differences

- I respect cultural differences.
- I am comfortable with cultural differences.
- I am able to effectively communicate with culturally different participants.
Components

- Desire to Learn Language Skills
  - I would like to learn basic sign language.
  - I would like to learn basic Spanish.
Components

Value Customer Service

- I ensure brochures are reflective of cultures served by our agency.
- I use bi/multilingual staff to serve diverse participants.
- The agency I work at stresses being skilled in culturally sensitive customer service.
- I have a strong understanding of recreation activity preferences held by different cultures.
- I do a good job of making people who are different from me comfortable.
Components

- Value Cultural Training
  - Cultural diversity training is important for parks and recreation professionals.
  - It is important for parks and recreation professionals to be aware of differences in communication styles.
Sex

Women scored higher:
- Value Cultural Awareness
- Desire to Learn Language Skills
- Value Cultural Training

Men scored higher:
- Possess Cultural Competency Skills
- Acceptance of Cultural Differences
Race

Non-Whites scored higher:

- Value Cultural Awareness
- Acceptance of Cultural Differences
- Value Customer Service
Education

- **Value Cultural Awareness**
  - Grad > B.S. and Less than B.S.

- **Acceptance of Cultural Differences**
  - Grad > B.S.

- **Value Cultural Training**
  - Less than B.S. > Grad and B.S.

- **Possess Cultural Competency Skills**
  - Less than B.S > Grad and B.S.
  - B.S. > Grad
Management Level

- **Possess Cultural Competency Skills**
  - Entry > Middle and Executive
  - Executive > Middle

- **Value Cultural Training**
  - Middle > Entry and Executive
  - Entry > Executive

- **Value Customer Service**
  - Executive and Middle > Entry
Certification Status

- Certified scored higher:
  - Value Cultural Awareness
  - Value Customer Service
Diversity Training

With Diversity Training scored higher:
- Value Customer Service

Without Diversity Training scored higher:
- Possess Cultural Competency Skills
- Acceptance of Cultural Differences
- Desire to Learn Language Skills
- Value Cultural Training
Discussion

- Parks & recreation professionals self-reported relatively high levels of cultural awareness and knowledge.

- Parks & recreation professionals self-reported not possessing specific skills needed to work with diverse groups.

- Findings suggest that parks and recreation professionals fall between “consciously incompetent” and “consciously competent” on the Wheeler model.
Non-white parks & recreation professionals perceived themselves more culturally aware, knowledgeable, and skilled than non-minority professionals.

Respondents with the lowest levels of education scored higher on cultural skills required to work with minorities perhaps due to having more direct contact with diverse groups.

Certified respondents scored higher on value cultural awareness and value customer service leading one to question whether the certification process addresses cultural competence and diversity issues.
Inconsistent findings related to diversity training may be due to timing of training, whether training was voluntary or mandatory, or training format.

Parks and recreation professionals in upper level management positions may not recognize need for basic skills due to lack of front-line interaction with participants.

Since significant age differences were found between management levels of respondents, differences in cultural competence may be a result of generational differences in how much cultural competence and diversity were stressed earlier in their education or during their careers.
Implications for Practice

- Examine your own cultural biases and prejudices
- Examine your personal verbal and nonverbal language for inclusiveness
- Avoid qualifiers that reinforce stereotypes
- Consider hiring bilingual staff
Implications for Practice

- Consider hiring staff that represents a diverse constituency

- Identify by sex, race, or ethnicity only when relevant

- Solicit feedback from diverse groups – “clients as colleagues”
Implications for Practice

- Design assessment instruments that are culturally sensitive
- Provide pre-service and in-service training for park and recreation professionals on diversity issues
- Design and provide multicultural written, audio, and video promotional materials
- Respect the individuals you are working with! When in doubt, ask the client!!
Remember, becoming a culturally responsive person is a lifelong process.

It’s okay to say, “I don’t know, and I want to learn.”
QUESTIONS?