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Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers
Editor

Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology

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Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers (Ed.)

Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology

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To Julian, Isabel, and Sabrina—whose love and support
throughout this work speaks volumes!

Preface

It is with great anticipation that I hope you, the reader, will learn from the pages that follow. The field of school psychology is becoming increasingly prominent. School-based mental health centers provide counseling and services to youth in one of their primary natural environments—the school. They give children and families access to counseling, assessment, intervention, resources, and referrals, among a host of other services. Access is enhanced when interventions are delivered where children live their lives and experience their world. This is unlike going to an outside environment for support such as a private practice setting. This in-life intervention is further enhanced when it is provided in a way that reflects the youth's experience. The *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology* puts the practice of school psychology in a cross-cultural context. It explores how school psychology is culturally and linguistically relevant for students who represent various dimensions of diversity. When selecting topics to write, contributors were instructed to consider how each subject area played out in a cross-cultural context. Hence, the concept of academic achievement considers the experiences of diverse racial/ethnic groups of youth. The term 'cultural resilience' explores the cultural implications of overcoming adversity.

The *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology* has several goals. First, it seeks to respond to the increasingly diverse nature of schools—this considers what is happening nationally as well as implications for global outreach. Second, the volume organizes a community of science that provides current information about a far-reaching range of topics that are inextricably related. Individual entries are broadly categorized as follows: administrative issues; children at different stages of development; alternative school considerations; assessment within a cross-cultural context; community partnerships; counseling concepts; cultural competence; curriculum issues; ethnic identity; gender identity; health insurance and healthcare access; home-school connections; initiatives and innovations in the discipline; language and communication; religious schools; public policy; professional and community organizations; school climate; cross-cultural issues in special education; and a host of additional critical issues such as terrorism, teacher burnout, and culturally competent teaching strategies. The third goal is to offer an easily accessible major reference work. School personnel are busy. Countless challenges arise on a daily basis. Consider the incident where a child makes a racist comment to his classmate. In the moment, the teacher may be understandably nervous—she wonders how to respond and what action to take. This volume is geared to give teachers in this situation an avenue where they can quickly access topics like racism and bullying so as to respond from a base of new knowledge.

The *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology* is formatted and organized in a purposeful way. Five foundational topics provide an overall grounding for the more than 400 entries that follow. The content of these five chapters includes an overview of the history of cross-cultural school psychology in the United States, a review of cross-cultural competencies, discussion about disparities in school services, consideration of multicultural assessment tools, and future directions in the field of school psychology. These foundational areas are followed by an A to Z listing of the topics themselves. Formatting within each topic is designed to maximize access to information. Entries range in length from small (approximately 600 words), to medium (1,500 words), and large (4,500 words). Subheadings highlight specific areas of interest associated with each topic. (Of course, for smaller entries, there may not be any subheadings.) Cross-references are provided at the end of each entry. These help the reader to seek out additional topics that relate to the major reference heading. For many topics, additional sections present suggested reading and suggested resources like websites.

A text such as this is not without limitations. Because of the growth and increasing development of cross-cultural school psychology, certain limitations are bound to develop. The changing nature of information is a case in point. Even within the course of this project, for instance, new scientifically based evidence and treatments emerged. The fact that this is an issue is exciting—it means that sufficient work is being done that warrants consideration about new developments and innovations in the field. This is good news. A second limitation is more concrete and concerns the topics themselves. It was easy to identify contributors for topics with substantial research and applied knowledge to back them up. This was not necessarily the case for some of the more esoteric,

less researched topics. Indeed, some of these topics were ultimately not included because potential contributors could not be identified. It is hoped that as the field progresses, scholarship will occur not only for those more recent innovations, but also across an even greater range of content than that presented here. For topics that are not included, I invite readers to consider how research can move such areas forward for future publication. I am open to this conversation. Readers, for instance, are welcome to send me emails or letters sharing their recommendations about additional topics to be included in possible future editions of this volume.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the many individuals who contributed to this work. An overall acknowledgement goes out to the authors. It has been a great pleasure to work with them and learn from their many perspectives. I am also quite proud of the fact that, just as this encyclopedia focuses on diversity, so too are the contributors whose words fill the pages that follow. Contributor diversity includes demographic variables, country of origin, area of study, and even professional position. With regard to the latter, for instance, it was wonderful that some of the contributors actually developed the measures they wrote about, whereas others were undergraduate and graduate students organizing their first publication. Just as the diversity of topics makes this work interesting, so too does the variety of authors who present their work from their particular worldviews.

Finally, there are specific entities and individuals who deserve mention. I give a heartfelt thanks to a wonderful Advisory Board. The Board provided timely feedback and access to their expertise throughout the process of compiling this project. Many thanks also goes to Dr. Thomas H. Bornemann, Director of the Mental Health Program at The Carter Center, author of the foreword for this text, who shares great knowledge and compassion about this area. The collaboration at Springer has been truly gratifying. Judy Jones, the Senior Editor who first approached me about this project, has always been supportive and helpful. Sharon Panulla, Executive Editor, has been an ongoing source of steadfastness throughout project development. Editorial Assistants Heike Richini and Ulrike Eggert-Neben have amazed me with their accuracy and precision where the written word is concerned. Susanne Friedrichsen has been a thoughtful Reference Development Editor and Chris Purdon has shared his talent for detail and meticulousness as Freelance Copy-Editor. Antonia Hernandez, my former student and now a professional in her own right, has been a loyal colleague and contributor. Kristina Metz never ceased to amaze with her clarity, and Matthew J. Mayer provided timely feedback and insight.

Of course, no acknowledgment is complete without the mention of those who make a family. My husband Julian has been a consistent support with his encouraging, gentle way that says anything is possible. Isabel, my oldest daughter, was present during initial discussions about this project at the American Psychological Association conference in Honolulu, Hawaii. She has thrived throughout, even pulling the occasional chair into my home office to sit down and do her research. And Sabrina, who actually came into existence during the middle part of this work, is now four and proudly says the word “research.” All three have provided great joy during this writing. To think about children in general, and then to think about my children, my nieces, nephews, and my friends’ children, is to be inspired. It is a call to action. A call to consider seriously how what we know as a “school” can be a place of egalitarianism, social justice, a love of learning, ongoing curiosity, and overall joy for children and those charged with helping them learn. What a world this would be.

Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers

Foreword

As the U.S. population increases each year, it continues to diversify. In the past 35 years, the percentage of foreign-born people living in the U.S.—both those who are naturalized and those who are not citizens—has increased from nearly 5% in 1970 to over 19% in 2005.¹ This racial, ethnic, and cultural movement is reflected in many aspects of society, including the educational system, and is bringing with it cultural, attitudinal, and linguistic variance. To best address the depth of this diversity, school systems need to change the ways that students of various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups are engaged in the classrooms, and to better recognize and serve the needs of these students and families.

It is imperative that educators receive training around the cultural and ethnic diversity in mental health services, and the necessity of making those services linguistically and culturally appropriate. School psychologists, guidance counselors, teachers, and administrators will counsel, teach, and serve children more effectively if they acknowledge the variety of ways in which students display mental health problems and the reasons why they may not receive necessary services outside the school system. As the *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology* indicates, the development and implementation of cross-cultural school psychology is essential in illuminating the significant challenges posed by increasing population diversity. Furthermore, cross-cultural school psychology facilitates the adaptation of instructional environments, the availability of critical resources, and the extent to which teachers and parents remain informed about their children.

In assessing potential barriers to mental health services, it is important to acknowledge that language is directly and intimately linked with an individual's sense of identity, social confidence, and feelings of security.² Although services may be available, insensitivity to linguistic differences may preclude access to mental health services and lead to erroneous evaluations of a student's academic capability. For instance, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students are sometimes classified as learning disabled after taking standardized tests in English, rather than in their native languages.³ Students in U.S. schools today speak more than 400 different languages. Most standardized tests are given only in English, and as a result, evaluation of individual knowledge and competence may inaccurately reflect cultural and ethnic differences. Unreliable assessments of strengths and weaknesses can unnecessarily leave students behind.

Aside from possible language barriers to services, recognition of culturally variant attitudes about mental health and the seeking of services is essential. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has indicated that prevalence rates of mental disorders are higher among U.S.-born children of immigrants than among their parents.⁴ One possibility for this trend may underscore cross-cultural attitudinal differences in the acceptance and expression of mental illnesses. There are similarities in mental health problems across cultures, with substantial differences in the cultural context of these problems.⁵ In my 35-year career in public health, my work developing, planning, and implementing mental health programs for refugees and other populations has shown most clearly these cultural commonalities and differences in the acceptance of mental health problems and programs for treatment and recovery.

Individuals and organizations committed to working with schoolchildren of different cultures and ethnicities should be educated on the contextual issues of mental health and the potential for language barriers. To be most effective in their jobs, school psychologists, counselors, teachers, and administrators should then transfer this knowledge into the formation of appropriate acculturation policies and services for addressing these differences. With estimates for the year 2040 suggesting that no one ethnic or racial group will compose a majority of the U.S.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFacts?_event=&geo_i; Historical Statistics of the United States Millennial Edition Online.

² Holtzman, W. H., & Bornemann, T. H. (Eds.). (1990). *Mental health of immigrants and refugees*. Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health.

³ Rogers, M. R., & Lopez, E. C. (2002). Identifying critical cross-cultural school psychology competencies. *Journal of School Psychology, 40*(2), 115–141. <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/culturalcompetence/cultcompmhservices.pdf>

⁴ http://www.nimh.nih.gov/press/immigrant_mentalhealth.cfm

⁵ The World Health Report, 2001.

school-age population,⁶ adapting to the increasingly heterogeneous population is no longer an option; it is a necessity.

The focus of the *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology* is to demonstrate how concepts in school psychology have a cross-cultural application. It is particularly relevant to school psychologists, clinical child psychologists, developmental psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers, administrators, teachers, and other allied professionals. The content is divided into two principal sections: “Foundation Topics in Cross-Cultural School Psychology” and “Topics in Cross-Cultural School Psychology.” The former is further divided into five subsections, and it provides a valuable historical context from which to understand the “Topics in Cross-Cultural Psychology.” Each entry includes cross-references and suggested reading and online resources where appropriate.

The content is designed to provide readers with the necessary demographic and statistical background from which to gauge the need for cross-cultural psychology in U.S. schools. Additionally, several entries focus on specific areas of cultural and ethnic variance, giving in-depth and substantive information on diverse groups in the U.S. population, information that readers should keep in mind in their daily interactions with and treatment of culturally diverse students. For example, because language barriers may present problems in assessing students’ capabilities, there is a section devoted solely to language and communication. It includes content to address the language needs in multicultural classrooms, the intricacies of ESL instruction, culturally competent assessments of English language learners, transitional versus maintenance approaches to language, context communication, and other topics. These data are complemented by information on the assessment of culturally diverse groups, multicultural assessment instruments, community partnerships and organizations for diverse youth, the specifics of counseling children with mental and behavioral health problems, and initiatives to incorporate cross-cultural awareness.

The *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology* is an excellent and essential resource with which to guide educators, counselors, and others. It is the first comprehensive guide to cross-cultural efforts in schools, and one that identifies the formation of cross-cultural school psychology as essential in elucidating the significant challenges posed by increasing population diversity. Furthermore, it highlights issues applicable to children in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, providing a lifespan approach that addresses cultural variance. With noted increases in population diversity, the need for culturally relevant materials on mental health services in schools will only continue to increase in the coming years. The introduction of this encyclopedia is therefore very timely, and should prove indispensable in ushering U.S. schools into a new era of cross-cultural competency. With this in mind, allow it to remain on your desk with its pages open, for only those who engage in the knowledge that it so adeptly compiles and accessibly organizes will use it to its fullest potential.

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⁶ National Association of School Boards of Education, 2002, as cited in Williams, B. B. (2006). *Culturally competent mental health services in the schools: Tips for teachers*. National Association of School Psychologists. <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/culturalcompetence/cultcompmhservices.pdf>

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American Psychiatric Association (APA)

American Psychological Association (APA)

American Psychological Association (APA) Minority Fellowship Program (MFP)

American Psychological Association (APA): Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) and Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA)

American School Health Association (ASHA)

Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi)

Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies

Council for Indian Education

Mental Health-Education Integration Consortium (MHEDIC)

National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)

National Association for the Education of African American Children with Learning Disabilities (NAEAACLD)

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

National Education Association (NEA)

National Information Center for Children and Youth
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UCLA School Mental Health Project, Center for
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Dr. Clauss-Ehlers is co-editor of the book *Community Planning to Foster Resilience in Children* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004) and author of *Diversity Training for Classroom Teaching: A Manual for Students and Educators* (Springer, 2006). She is a 2004–2005 Rosalynn Carter Fellow for Mental Health Journalism, a contributor to the international publication *Ser Padres*, the Spanish-language version of *Parents* magazine, and a guest commentator on *Univision*. She has appeared on media outlets such as Channel 13, ABC's *Eyewitness News*, and the CBS *Early Show*, where she has discussed parenting and child development. Dr. Clauss-Ehlers received her bachelor's degree from Oberlin College and her Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University. She completed her predoctoral internship at the New York University/Bellevue Hospital Center. She lives in New York City with her husband and two daughters, ages 4 and 6.

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