THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF COUNSELING AS A PROFESSION

The following is an abstract of a funded paper written by Dr. Rex Stockton, Jeffrey Garbleman, and Jennifer Kaladow. The paper is a seminal work describing the evolving state of counselor education in the world. It has already been used in the development of strategies to gather information for WHO’s ATLAS project, which includes counseling along with other mental health professions in its database (see http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/atlas). NBCC has been instrumental in providing funding for this continuing project and represents the counseling profession in developing WHO’s Counseling ATLAS (look for an update in our next issue).

The authors have been engaged in a long-term study of the history and development of counseling, internationally. Their research has examined counseling in countries including, but not limited to: Canada, Germany, Great Britain, India, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States. The particular focus of this article is the development of counseling as a profession internationally.

Although no one study can encompass every aspect of this topic, this article attempts to provide an entry point for an international dialogue discussing emergent themes from our work. Overall, we have attempted to avoid the negative consequences of previous studies regarding professionalization by not looking for the presence or absence of certain predetermined landmarks necessary for “professional” counseling. Instead, we have attempted to uncover the emerging themes from the explicit goals of various counseling organizations studied and to present these in a systematic way. In this regard, we have tried to stay consistent with the notion that professional counseling is viewed differently in various parts of the world, while at the same time allowing for common themes to emerge and be used for comparison (Bond et al., 2001; Kashyap, 1998). This article presents several such emergent themes that come from various areas we focused on, including counseling organizations, national training, accreditation, and ethics codes.

This particular study has two major goals: to expand the knowledge base of counseling as a profession internationally and to create possible “maps” of how counseling develops as a profession. The first goal is to expand the current knowledge regarding counseling as a profession internationally. The development of good counseling practices depends on an appropriate body of knowledge (Bond & Baron, 1998; Stockton & Kaladow, 2002). As the world of counseling continues to become smaller and more interconnected, the need for counselors to become increasingly knowledgeable of how counseling is implemented in nations beyond their own becomes increasingly important (Guindon & Sobhany, 2001).

The second goal of creating possible maps of professional counseling development is reflected in national and international counseling organizations, such as the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) and the International Association for Counseling (IAC) that are “committed to encouraging a multicultural exchange of ideas and resources in order to expand helpful professional services and to develop new perspectives for research, training, and practice” (Bond & Baron, 1998, p. 7). In this spirit, we hope the mapping of the development of counseling as a profession in multiple countries may allow individuals and organizations to make informed decisions through collaborating, comparing, and contrasting their efforts with countries in similar, as well as dissimilar, cultural contexts.

NCCs of Note

Dr. Rose Xochitl AnaO Quinones delValle, NCC, MAC, chair of the Ohio Counselor Social Work Marriage and Family Therapist Board (CSWMFT), recently was recognized as a Distinguished Hispanic Ohioan. Quinones delValle has been working to change the educational plight of Latino students in Cleveland Schools through recruitment efforts to higher education and personally mentoring twelve Latino graduate students to attain their counseling degrees. When she arrived at Cleveland State, there were no Latino graduate counseling students in the program.

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Rex Stockton, Ed.D., NCC, is a Chancellor’s Professor at Indiana University in the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology. Jeffrey Garbelman and Jennifer Kaladow are doctoral students in the Counselor Education program at Indiana University. This is an ongoing project. We welcome any and all information you have regarding counseling in your country, as well as other countries you are familiar with. Please send any information to Rex Stockton at stocktor@indiana.edu. We appreciate your help with the international study!

REFERENCES


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