

P1: Developing Cultural Competence

Supervisor: Dr Majella Albion
Phone: 07 4631 1672
Email: albionm@usq.edu.au

Research Purpose: This study looks at the development of cultural competence by students completing the course PSY1030 – Cross-cultural and Indigenous Psychology

Research Description: The Australian Psychology Accreditation Committee (APAC) is the body charged with the task of ensuring the integrity of Psychology training programs in Australia. One of the training outcomes listed as being important by APAC is cultural competency, and as such there is a requirement for courses seeking accreditation to include cross-cultural and Indigenous content. At USQ, the course entitled Cross-Cultural and Indigenous Psychology (PSY1030) has been established as a means of meeting this requirement.

The proposed study will look at the perceived effectiveness of the course in enhancing the cultural competence of its students, and will be based on a similar study by Ranzijn, McConnochie, Day, Nolan, and Wharton (2008) who evaluated a series of programs at the University of South Australia.

As much of the impact of the program relies on the involvement of and interaction with Indigenous educators, the study will also compare the effectiveness of the course for internal and external students, with the latter group having only indirect exposure to the Indigenous personnel involved with the course.

Participants: All students (internal and external) who completed PSY1030 in 2008 will be invited to participate in the project. A comparison group of students commencing PSY1010 in S1 2009 and who have not yet completed PSY1030 will also be surveyed.

Recruitment will be via email contact by the student using an email list compiled by the supervisor

Methodology: This study will be a cross-sectional study, but will also form baseline data for an ongoing longitudinal study to be conducted over the next few years as these students progress through their degree.

Data will be collected using an online survey which will be sent to all students who completed PSY1030 in 2008 and to those students enrolled in PSY1010 in S1, 2009.

Demographic data to be collected will include gender, age, ethnicity, highest level of education, mode of study, languages spoken, previous experience with multicultural groups, previous multi-cultural training.

Questionnaires to be used will be: The California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale (Gamst, Dana, Der-Karabetian, Aragon, Arello, Morrow, et al. (2004); A short version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (M-C 2(10)

These data will be shared by students in subsequent years as the study continues.

Data Analysis: The student will be expected to perform basic procedures such as data screening, checking psychometric properties of questionnaires, separating participants into particular groups based on questionnaire responses, and so on.

The study will involve the use of simple quantitative analytic techniques such as t-tests, correlations, and regression. All these techniques will be within the expected ability of the student and will be taught (or have been taught) in concurrent or previous statistics courses taken by the student.

Student friendliness: The project is suitable for distance or oncampus students. Data collection will all be online so no travel will be involved.

Regular contact with the supervisor (by phone or email) is expected. Contact will be at least fortnightly, with more frequent face to face contact required during critical periods of the study such as survey development, data collection and, analysis.

Further reading: Ranzijn, R., McConnachie, K., Day, A., Nolan, W., & Wharton, M. (2008). Towards cultural competence: Australian Indigenous content in undergraduate psychology. *Australian Psychologist, 43*(2), 132-139.
Gamst, G., Dana, R. H., Der-Karabetian, A., Aragon, M., Arellano, L., Morrow, G., et al. (2004). Cultural competence revised: The California brief multicultural competence scale. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 37*, 163-183.

Expected research outcomes: This project could be written up and presented at conferences such as the APS Conference 2010 or the National Indigenous Psychology Conference 2010.

Ethics: This acts as a check for the supervisor

- Ethical approval will be sought by supervisor; or
- Ethics approved – number

Resources: This acts as a check for the supervisor

- Project able to be funded within \$150 departmental limit
- Project not able to be funded within \$150 departmental limit – additional funds will come from:

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