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Assessment of world views of black and white South African adolescents: implications for cross-cultural counselling

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Significant differences in mean scores on the SAWVAC between the Black and White groups were found for the four categories of (a) Human Nature, (b) Human Relationships, (c) People/Nature and (d) Time Orientation. Accordingly, the mean score for White adolescents was significantly higher than black adolescents in one of the sub-categories of Human Nature (HN3). In comparison, significantly higher mean scores for Black adolescents occurred within the four major categories as follows: Human Nature (HN1), Human Relationships (HR1 & HR2 & HR3,) People/Nature (PN2) and Time Orientation (TO1 & TO3).

The prediction of significant differences in world view within Black and White groups, as a function of race, age and sex was supported, as is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Analysis of Variance of Main Effects and Interactional Effects of Race, Age & Sex on Individual Scores on the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	1 HUMAN NATURE			2 HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS			3 PEOPLE/ NATURE			4 TIME ORIENTATION			5 ACTIVITY ORIENTATION		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
RACE (R)	17.17**	0.09	8.00**	19.64**	5.57*	22.49**	0.91	22.09**	3.22	15.38**	0.06	14.75**	0.38	0.01	0.00
AGE (A)	5.89*	0.15	4.54*	0.19	0.09	1.43	0.15	1.36	0.02	0.90	0.01	1.23	0.77	0.32	0.00
SEX (S)	2.72	0.01	0.44	19.66**	3.32	6.36*	6.23*	0.50	3.47	4.22*	0.04	16.87**	3.38	0.08	0.82
R x A	0.51	0.10	3.50	0.04	0.67	0.06	5.08*	1.88	0.24	1.36	0.00	0.22	1.76	0.07	0.80
R x S	10.31**	0.08	1.27	1.43	1.99	4.17*	2.65	0.00	0.05	0.42	0.26	0.36	1.31	0.36	0.20
A x S	0.63	4.29*	1.00	21.36**	2.71	3.34	2.80	0.17	1.76	1.80	4.34*	0.02	0.75	4.48*	0.65
R x A x S	3.82*	0.00	1.89	4.05*	1.15	5.57*	0.05	0.14	0.81	0.41	8.61**	0.03	0.05	0.39	0.09

* $P < .05$

** $P < .01$

Results for within group differences showed that race had a significant influence on individuals' responses to world view for eight sub-categories in the categories of Human Nature (HN1 & HN3), Human Relationships (HR1 & HR2 & HR3), People/Nature (PN2), and Time Orientation (TO1 & TO3). Age showed a significant influence on individuals responses to world view for two sub-categories of Human Nature (HN1 & HN3). Sex showed a significant influence for five sub-categories, namely; Human Relationships (HR1 & HR3), People/Nature (PN1), and Time Orientation (TO1 & TO3). The significant interactional effects of race and age were found only in a sub-category of People/Nature (PN1). The significant interactional effects of race and sex were found in both a sub-category of Human Nature (HN1), and a sub-category of Human Relationships (HR3). The combined influence of age and sex on individual variation in world view was found to be significant for four sub-categories in Human Nature (HN2), Human Relationships (HR1), Time Orientation (TO2) and Activity Orientation (AO2). Finally the interactional influence of the independent variables race, age and sex on within group differences in Black and White groups was found to be significant for four sub-categories in the categories of Human Nature (HN1), Human Relationships (HN1 & HN3) and Time Orientation (TO2).

DISCUSSION

A major finding of differences in world view, was that Black adolescents scored higher in the belief that human nature is evil whereas White adolescents scored higher on the view that human nature is good. In comparison to White South Africans who have lived a privileged existence, Blacks have suffered both human degradation and oppression in apartheid South Africa, and because of this may not see people as good.

A second finding is that Black adolescents scored higher on all three types of human relationships, lineal-hierarchical, collateral-mutual and individualistic. In the South African context, one might reasonably expect Blacks to score higher on lineal-hierarchical relationships since they have typically experienced dominant-subordinate positions in society. Moreover, the finding that Black adolescents scored higher on collateral-mutual relationships is not surprising in the sense that Black people generally ascribe to communal life and extended families, where primacy is given to the goals and welfare of lateral extended groups. However, the fact that Black adolescents also scored higher than Whites on individualism, which is regarded as more of a White,

Western, middle-class phenomenon, is an interesting finding. One explanation may be that the finding reflects the peculiarities of the particular Black sample utilised from a private, non-racial school. Black adolescents may be influenced by the somewhat esoteric nature of the school and because of this "ethos" show more interest in personal ambition and achievement.

With regard to the People/Nature category, Black South African adolescents scored higher than their White counterparts in the idea of people subjugating and controlling nature One possible explanation may be that Blacks, as a function of the more pressing need for survival skills, are better able than Whites to utilise elements of their natural environment. Finally, in comparing between group differences in Black and White culture, it was found that black adolescents scored higher than White South African adolescents in the past and future Time Orientation categories. Whilst it is known that Blacks value the past since ancestors play a vital spiritual role in their lives, it may be conjectured that the future is also becoming of increasing value, due to changing socio-economic and political conditions, as well as the strength of the Black consciousness movement. Differences between Black and White groups in the Activity Orientation category did not reach significance.

In considering the effects of race, age and sex on individual variation in scores on the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture, it appears that of the three variables race accounts for most of the individual differences in world view within groups. This is not necessarily surprising if one considers that in South Africa race is correlated with class, and the interaction of mediators such as socio-economic status and political background may tend to influence the way persons view their world.

To a lesser degree, sex accounted for differences within groups. It might be expected, however, that world view is influenced by sex-role socialisation practices. In South Africa, which adheres to a western model, it is generally recognised that males are more conditioned to be assertive, independent, stoic and ultimately successful breadwinners. On the other hand, females are encouraged to be passive, dependent, nurturant and are moulded into good wives and mothers.

Age showed the least significant differences within groups. Nevertheless, according to many developmental models the adolescent years are a period of identity crisis and it is during these years that the value clarification process gets most emphasis, and that values will change over increasing age and therefore influence world view. With a more mature sample age

may prove to be a salient influential variable of individual world view.

Finally, the interactional effects of race, age and sex were more significant than other combined effects in influencing individual perceptions of world view. This is an important finding, and possibly indicates the necessity of considering varied interactional components in the making up of individual world views.

The research reported here was exploratory, and further study on the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture is in progress. The purposes of the present study, however, were realised, namely; (a) to use the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture in a South African context, and (b) to discuss possible implications for cross-cultural counselling.

The use of the scale in South Africa confirmed the idea that the scale provides a measure of world view through testing and analysing the individual responses of Black and White adolescents. Only race, age and sex were assessed, yet, there are numerous and various interactional components which make up world view, for example; lifestyle, lifestage, educational background, political history, environment, family, etc. It would be interesting to investigate what additional factors influence world view, and the combining influence of those factors. Furthermore, it must be remembered that

the sample was limited to a private non-racial high school. For these reasons, the results must be interpreted with caution and the generalisability of results are suspect. Finally, although the scale appeared easily adaptable to a South African context, it is important to recognise that the scale was not validated before use.

The results of the present investigation show promising implications for a cross-cultural counselling in a South African context. This study provides evidence that world view is an important consideration in relation to between and within group variation. Individual differences are necessary to consider, especially in South Africa where the tendency has been to see groups of people in static and biased terms, like "Western" or "Traditional" culture. Instead, world view shows a group people, or culture, as both heterophilous and homophilous. Another important implication is that the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture can help to increase a counsellor's sensitivity to his or her own culture, and also provide an understanding of the client and the corollary development of appropriate skills.

The five categories in the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture can provide relevant information to enhance effective counselling. For example, it could perhaps be more difficult for a counsellor to establish

a warm, trusting, open and secure relationship with a client who adheres to a view of human nature as evil. In this instance, it might be expected that the client will be more cautious, suspicious and even resentful of human intervention. Similarly, the helping relationship, especially if left to the client to define, will be parallel to other human relationships in the client's life. Thus, it may be safe to assume that a Black person for example, who is socially conditioned into an inferior or insubordinate relationship, may gain more from a therapeutic encounter which is structured, directive and supportive as opposed to permissive and ambiguous. Being aware of how a person views the relationship between nature and people will yield some information pertaining to whether that person is intrinsically or extrinsically controlled, and may also give insight into how freedom and responsibility are perceived. These are important facets of any counselling process and outcome. Finally, whilst a client's time orientation may suggest whether counselling should focus on the past, present or future, the client's activity orientation will guide the therapist towards choosing a cognitive, emotive or active counselling style appropriate for that particular client.

It is incumbent on helping professionals to gain knowledge, awareness and skills for helping across culture, and to be sensitised to discrepancies in world

view and their effects on the counselling relationship, process and outcome. Therefore, the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture could be used in cross-cultural counselling, preparation and training to enhance effectiveness in helping culturally different clients.

In sum, whilst world view and specifically the Scale to Assess World View Across Culture is of significance for facilitating effective cross-cultural counselling in South Africa, and for the subsequent relevant delivery of psychological services, further investigation is required into the following areas: (a) an assessment of the influence of different variables on world view, (b) validation of the scale in South Africa and, (c) the actual use of the scale in cross-cultural counselling, preparation and training.

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