

Advancing Counselor Education: Fostering International Perspectives and Open Access Scholarship

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Professional counselors and counselor educators have been active in the global mental health movement. This article overviews the history and growth of counselor education internationally and provides a rationale for establishing an open access, peer-reviewed, online journal that fosters international counselor education and supervision.

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For several years professional counselors and counselor educators have actively participated in a global effort to promote mental health awareness, treatment and access. Leaders of developed and developing countries are recognizing the significant impact that mental health issues are having on their citizens (Shah & Beinecke, 2009). Mental health problems contribute to a significant percentage of disabilities worldwide (Prince, 2008), with as much as 14% of the global burden of disease being related to mental health issues (Prince et al., 2007). Yet many countries lack current information, organized delivery systems and policies to deliver mental health services appropriately (Satcher, 2001). Mental health prevention and treatment programs are often under-funded and understaffed, particularly in countries with limited resources and high poverty rates (Tomlinson et al., 2009). As a result, many mental health researchers

have called for increased leadership and transformation of mental health services worldwide (Adams, Daniels, & Compagni, 2009; Beinecke, Daniels, Peters, & Silvestri, 2009).

As the global mental health movement has evolved, professional counselors, counselor educators, and professional organizations have advocated for the unique roles of professional counselors in addressing global mental health. The *National Board for Certified Counselors International* (2009) has worked to establish the profession of counseling internationally by promoting practice standards and credentialing of professional counselors around the globe. Hoskins and Thompson (2009) have called for the development of an international professional counselor identity which builds upon research, collaboration, and training of counselors across the globe. Such work, however, requires counselors and counselor educators to understand and respect cultural differences and indigenous helping practices (Raney & Çinarbaş, 2005). In addition, an awareness of the socio-political processes which govern systems of care and mental health policies is essential for counselors working internationally (Adams et al., 2009).

The academic literature on international counseling has grown since the 1970s. Early studies recognized the importance of international connections for counselors and the value of international travel for developing multicultural awareness and competencies (e.g. Drapela, 1975; Wehrly & Deen, 1983). More recently, counseling researchers have focused on the connection of international counseling with human rights and social justice (e.g. Chung 2005) and the evolution of counseling specialties, including career counseling (e.g. Van Esbroeck, Herr, & Savickas, 2005) and school counseling (e.g. Low, 2009), from an international perspective.

Counselor education plays a pivotal role in the advancement of counseling internationally. Today's counselors need to be skilled at recognizing and responding to client concerns related to globalization issues (Paredes et al., 2009). Therefore, counselor education programs need to help counselors-in-training develop awareness and an understanding of global influences upon their counseling practice (Hoskins & Thompson, 2009). We believe that the globalization of counseling is heralding a paradigm shift within counselor education, one that builds upon recent work on multiculturalism and social justice. The new face of counselor education is

international counselor education, a profession devoted to training and supervising counselors around the world.

Mission of the *Journal for International Counselor Education*

In an effort to support the global advancement of counselor education, the *Journal for International Counselor Education* (JICE) was established in 2009 as a peer-reviewed scholarly journal for promoting professional counselor education, preparation, training, and supervision of counselors internationally. The principal goals of JICE are the development of global connections, the enhancement of counselor education competence, and the presentation of diverse perspectives as they relate to counselor preparation and competent practice worldwide. The journal features original research, theory, pedagogy, and practice oriented articles that reflect the diverse and growing population of counselors globally. As an open-access journal (Suber, 2007), JICE is dedicated to the free dissemination of scholarly work that advances counseling and mental health around the globe.

Philosophy of Open Access Scholarship

Open access journals represent a significant shift in academic publishing. Therefore counselor educators, supervisors, and practicing counselors might ask the following questions: What is the relevance of an open access journal? Why should publication occur in an online format when print publications have traditionally held more prestige? And finally, why should we publish in a journal that is not affiliated with a professional organization or established publishing house?

Relevance of Open Access

We support open access to scholarly, peer-reviewed journals without publication fees, membership costs, special accounts, passwords or other privileged systems. Open access removes institutional and organizational barriers often associated with academic journals sponsored by professional organizations. Furthermore, publication in an open access journal provides authors with more visibility and a worldwide audience for their work versus subscription-based journals (Suber, 2007). Ultimately, by providing access

to scholarly research to all individuals, regardless of affiliations or memberships, open access publishing advances social caring and social justice.

Online Publication

There are several reasons we have chosen an online publication format. First, it is green; we do not use paper. Instead we have chosen to utilize twenty-first century technology for publishing scholarly work. Second, online publication allows worldwide access for counselor educators, supervisors and practicing counselors who may work outside of the academic setting. Third, publication of new scholarly work is expedited, without delays that are commonly seen with printed academic journals. When authors submit manuscripts to JICE, they can be sent to editorial board reviewers for immediate electronic review. If an article is accepted for publication, and once final revisions are made, it can be published quickly, generally within two weeks.

Independent Publishing

Publishing in a journal that is not affiliated with a publishing house or professional organization has many advantages. Commercial publishers have profit motives which may result in publication barriers and therefore prevent scholars from having their work disseminated. In addition, professional organizations in the United States appear to be Western centric and often lack responsiveness, openness and access required to navigate across borders, cultures and societies. With JICE, we seek to eliminate such barriers and provide a more invitational stance to scholars. Independent publishing promotes the free exchange of ideas and information, without restrictions that may be imposed by publishing houses or professional organizations.

Conclusion

As the editors of JICE, we are joined by editorial board members with rich professional experiences and a passion for advancing counselor education globally. We are committed to publishing scholarship that is

rigorous and furthers the knowledge-base of international counselor education. A minimum of three editorial board members will blind review each manuscript submitted to JICE. Drawing upon their expertise, editorial board members will provide feedback to authors and they will make recommendations to the editors regarding the final disposition of submitted manuscripts. Ultimately, JICE aims to support and promote creative approaches within counseling and counselor education that meet emerging needs across countries and continents.

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