Chapter 3

Implementing and Evaluating Culturally Responsive Teaching for Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Through Study Abroad Programs: Effective Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies Suitable for HBCUs

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on social work methodology as a means of developing effective study abroad programs at HBCUs. Moreover, the chapter proposes ways to implement social work standards into study abroad programs for HBCU students. The chapter provides meaningful case studies to examine the impact of service-learning programs that employ culturally responsive teaching and learning strategies as well as social work standards for HBCU students on short-term programs. The chapter provides a myriad of strategies for culturally responsive teaching. While the focus is on social work education, the methods developed in this chapter may be used in service-learning settings.

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INTRODUCTION

U.S. society is gradually changing into a hybrid of different races accompanied by various cultures, languages, religion, and diverse people (Hofstede, 2010). These changes are being observed in the changing demographics in classrooms and school environments all over the U.S. According to a 2019 report by the National Education Agency (NEA) of the United States, classrooms have become significantly diverse in recent years. Dennis Van Roekel, the National Education Agency president, noted that, "For the American system of education to effectively serve students, there must be a system of acquiring knowledge skills and attitude that will create value among diverse students" (NEA, 2019). Cultural competence is a key factor in enabling educators to be effective with diverse students. It is therefore necessary for educators to know about cross cultural interactions, and to be able to acknowledge their students’ individual differences and cultures. Instructors should not only wish to know basics about their student backgrounds, but also seek to understand aspects of the individual cultural practices of students (Hofstede, 2010). Discussions of cultural competence should bring to light feeling of awareness, an eagerness to learn about diverse people and communities, and the ability to build on related cultural information. In terms of teaching methodology, there is limited knowledge about social education practices, but social work as a profession has experienced rapid changes and new emerging developments with time (Franklin, 2001). Incorporating social work practices takes into account students and family relationships and expati ate on the differences that make the U.S. as a country stronger than other underdeveloped countries (NEA, 2019). However, there exist norms and standards for topics related to race and culture within the social work discipline. Unfortunately, this practice is largely limited to the context of the developed communities and white majority cultures. The same model may not be effective for some developing communities and countries due to several reasons. In terms of study abroad, Black students make up about 14% of all students enrolled in U.S. higher education, but account for just 6.1% within travel abroad programs. At HBCUs, just 3.4% of students study abroad during their undergraduate careers, compared to a 10.4% participation rate for students across all institutions nationally (Redden, 2018). Most of the times, social work is only instituted into the study abroad programs as part of a crisis management operation (Openshaw, 2008). Therefore, it is important to understand the best practices available to support the ever-increasing awareness of how learning to learn and the respect of not only one’s culture, but also of different cultures, can orchestrate a series of social interactions and change within the social worker contexts. The following questions then arise:
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