Cultural Humility: A Concept Analysis

CYNTHIA FORONDA, PHD, RN, CNE, DIANA BAPTISTE, DNP, RN, MAREN REINHOLDT, MSN, BSN, RN, KEVIN OUSMAN, MSN-HSM, BSN, RN
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, BALTIMORE, MD

Introduction

The value and understanding of the term diversity has evolved and progressed over the past several decades. Diversity has been increasingly recognized as an area of emphasis or core value in health care through leading organizations such as the Institute of Medicine (2010) and the National League for Nursing (2013). To attend to the increasing diversity in a globally connected society, there has been a movement of use of the terms cultural sensitivity and cultural competency to that of embracing cultural humility. Cultural humility has been endorsed as more profound and politically correct than cultural competency, but this shift begs the question, “what is cultural humility?”

Rodger’s and Knafl (2000) advocated the importance to understand the meaning behind terms as they morph and change over time. Performing a concept analysis is one way to determine society’s current meaning and understanding of a term. A concept analysis involves a systematic approach of reviewing the literature to tease out the antecedents, attributes, and consequences of a term. Concept analysis involves a search and exploration with the goal of achieving a definition.

Purpose

The aim of this poster was to conduct a concept analysis and provide a current definition for the term cultural humility.

Methods

Databases of CINAHL Plus, Academic Search Complete, Anthropology Plus, ERIC, Human Resources Abstracts; Humanities Full Text and PsychINFO were explored using the search terms of “cultural humility” or “culturally humble” yielding 123 citations. PubMed was investigated using search terms of “humility” or “humble” revealing 154 more citations. Duplicates were removed resulting in 206 articles. Articles published prior to 2009 were removed resulting in 116 articles published from 2009-2014. Book chapters and articles written in languages other than English were excluded. The remaining 108 articles were read for relevance and 46 more articles were excluded as they did not discuss cultural humility within them; thus, 62 total articles were included in the review.

Analysis

Rodgers and Knafl’s (2000) method of concept analysis was used to guide the process.

Results

Antecedents: Diversity and Power Imbalance
Attributes: Openness, Self-Awareness, Egosciousness, Supportive Interaction, Self-Reflection & Critique
Consequences: Empowerment, Partnerships, Mutual Benefit, Optimal Care, Respect

Conclusion

This article served to provide an analysis of the concept of cultural humility with a proposed definition to attend to the needs of an increasingly connected multicultural society. With a firm understanding of the term, individuals, healthcare providers and communities will be better equipped to understand and accomplish an inclusive environment with mutual benefit and optimal care. Realizing cultural humility is possible when one is open, self-aware, humble, reflective, and supportive with others.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge Nathan Poole, Instructional Designer, at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, for artistic assistance with figure development. The corresponding manuscript is currently under review: Foronda, C., Baptiste, D., Ousman, K., & Reinholdt, M. (In Review). Cultural humility: A concept analysis. Journal of Transcultural Nursing

Figure 1. A concept analysis of cultural humility.

Definition of Cultural Humility

In a multicultural world where power imbalances exist, cultural humility is a process of openness, self-awareness, being egoscious, and incorporating self-reflection and critique after willingly interacting with diverse individuals. The results of achieving cultural humility are mutual empowerment, respect, partnerships, optimal care, and lifelong learning.