Introduction

There are currently 20.6 million individuals who identify as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander residing in the United States according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2020). However, only 4.9% of those who identify as Asian American reported actively utilizing mental health services (SAMHSA, 2012).

Potential Causes:

• Barriers include lack of financial resources, stigma associated with mental health care, language barriers, and lack of culturally competent care (Nguyen, 2014).

• There remains a notable dearth of information regarding culturally competent care for Asian American clients who do seek mental health services (Okazaki, 2014).

Goals for Study:

1. Identify counseling methods that provide the most culturally competent services to Asian Americans

2. Determine creative approaches* used by mental health professionals when working with Asian American clients

* Creative approaches include counseling techniques such as sand tray therapy, art therapy, clay therapy, and other expressive therapeutic approaches

Methods

• Interviews with licensed mental health professionals currently working in the field

• Interviews will be 30 minutes via Zoom consisting of predetermined questions in a semi-structured interview format

• Questions include interviewee’s experiences counseling Asian American clients, using creative counseling methods, and perceived results in utilizing creative counseling methods in a multicultural context

• Qualitative data will be gathered by categorizing each response based on counseling technique utilized and the effectiveness of each intervention

Result Hypothesis

• Using creative techniques can facilitate communication between the client and counselor (Capuzzi & Gross, 2013).

• The therapeutic relationship accounts for roughly 60% of growth in a counseling setting (Tishby & Wiseman, 2018).

• Poor communication may present a significant barrier for some Asian Americans when seeking counseling (Nguyen, 2014).

• Utilizing creative approaches such as sand tray therapy and other expressive art forms may lower barriers to communication and strengthen the therapeutic relationship

References


Discussion

• Data will add useful information to the fields of both multicultural counseling and creativity counseling

• Results will increase the limited literature regarding counseling Asian American clients

• Findings may reduce barriers to effective counseling for Asian Americans and thus aid in addressing the disparity in mental health utilization by this population

• Future research may identify differences in effectiveness of creative approaches to counseling used among groups within the Asian American community

• Understanding the differences and similarities among groups within the Asian American population may help further clarify best practice in counseling methods

Reported Benefits of Creative Counseling Methods (N=528)