Impact of Culture, Language, and Gender Differences

**My Role as a Human Services Professional**

My role as a human services professional is to succeed in assisting individuals and organizations perform optimally. I strive to help people, groups, families, and organizations to build their capacity to function well. I believe that I play an important role in ensuring that organizations achieve work efficiency by executing interventions and services that enhance performance. My work entails understanding how people and groups interact and how such interactions influence one’s ability and functioning to attain their goals. Human services help develop their problem-solving and coping skills in various life aspects (Curran et al., 2019). It is imperative to note that the profession is multidisciplinary, but every professional has distinct responsibilities within the communities they work. One can specialize as an outreach worker and social work assistant. Apart from helping people and organizations improve quality of life, I also have a mandate to offer counseling for emotional, physical, and mental health issues.

Additional roles entail working with communities to improve social conditions. I would organize support groups to curb various forms of abuse while supporting those who cannot take care of themselves like older people. As a social worker, my advocacy role would entail connecting underserved communities and vulnerable groups to care services and healthcare resources. I would help Maria and Nick access the care and support they require to have quality life. I would also help immigrants such as Andres and Maria to settle in their new places. Human services professionals have important impacts on society. They help society in geriatric care, education, public health policy formulation, and criminal justice. Thus, the whole community benefits from efficient, affordable, and safer care.

**Celebrating Diversity and Cultural Differences within the Community**

Learning about other people’s culture is very significant in appreciating various perspectives about the world. Many racial and gender stereotypes permeate social work practice, but embracing diversity helps overcome them. For example, Nick may experience discrimination when accessing healthcare, education, and justice. A social worker should embrace him and seek to understand his healthcare needs. Cultural diversity helps people accept others’ being and include them in important economic, social, and political undertaking (Trinh et al., 2020). Andres’ letter to Dr. Rasmussen demonstrates the value of cultural diversity as Andres appreciated the support and welcome he received from the institution.

Cultural diversity also deepens learning and boosts personal confidence and growth. Andres had an opportunity to learn in a diverse environment, which enabled him to acknowledge diverse perspectives and lifestyles absent in El Salvador. Developing diverse knowledge and thoughts have given Andres an optimistic view of life. Working with people like Nick would enable a social service professional to understand the lifestyle and unique needs of transgender people like Nick. People learn to deal with mental health problems such PTSD that Maria struggled with in the past. Andres explains that he feels confident pursuing a career in social work because has gained confidence through inclusion.

**Cultural Beliefs/Customs, Language Differences, and Gender Differences**

Diversity means that people come from different backgrounds. Language, gender, and customs define those differences that social workers should understand. Andres provides details about life in El Salvador, indicating the unique challenges he faced while going to school. Dr. Rasmussen seemingly understood those challenges and offered support that Andres required to succeed in the new learning environment. Language could be a barrier for English foreign language learners like Andres. Andre’ is also a single African-American father who fights to meet his family’s needs. Understanding one’s gender helps improve mental well-being and personal growth. Nick’s family and community misunderstand him, making him socially isolated due to widespread discrimination in society. Language is useful in designing interventions and providing care to people considered illegal immigrants. Maria traveled with her family from Mexico and does not speak English well. Apart from language barrier, undocumented immigrants face systemic challenges accessing healthcare (Penn & Baartmans, 2020). Anne’s family background reveals that she comes from a culture characterized by domestic violence and a social health professionals should understand their perspectives about mental health care.

**Effective Cross-Cultural Communication Strategies**

Effective communication is key in maintaining cultural diversity. Foremost, human service professionals should maintain etiquette when communicating to people of diverse gender like Nick. According to Shapiro (2019), professionals should acknowledge the formality acceptable to people from various cultures. Another strategy is to avoid slang since they mean different things in different contexts. Additionally, effective communication requires empathic listening to identify, understand, and, prioritize healthcare needs of these people. For example, it would be necessary to employ empathic listening when caring for Nick since his experiences are different from other clients. Also, Ann and Maria would require supportive feedback and encouragement to effectively cope with their mental challenges. Further, communication should be made simple to ensure that patients understand the message. Taking turn to talk is also an important communication strategy as one feels part of the issue. Also, communicators should be use humor cautiously to avoid provoking those who are not used to it. Lastly, it is essential to avoid closed questions as they limit one’s opportunity to fully express their concerns.

**References**

Curran, V., Fleet, L., Simmons, K., Lannon, H., Gustafson, D. L., Wang, C. ... & Wetsch, L. (2019). Adoption and use of mobile learning in continuing professional development by health and human services professionals. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, *39*(2), 76-85.

Penn, S., & Baartmans, H. (2018). A Phenomenological Study on Meaningful Professional Experiences for Human Services Professionals. *Journal of Human Services*, *38*(1).

Shapiro, J. (2019). Protecting the Redwood Forests through Transformative Mass Transit Planning: An Examination of Emergent Cross Cultural Communication Strategies. *Journal of Promotional Communications*, *7*(1).

Trinh, N. H., Tuchman, S., Chen, J., Chang, T., & Yeung, A. (2020). Cultural Humility and the Practice of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry. *Psychosomatics*.