

More than lip service: Equality through authentic inclusion of spiritual knowledge and practices in social work

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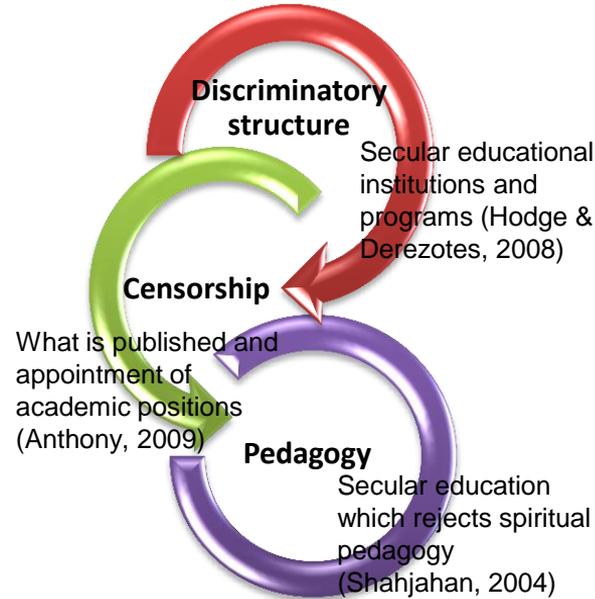
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Currently within academia scientific secular discourse has become the dominant unchallenged norm. Social work education has tended to inadvertently perpetuate this discourse because of its location within academia and its own tenuous history with religion and spirituality. However, this position clearly discriminates and excludes other ways of knowing and doing.

Although recently social work has attempted to include spirituality within education and practice it is often covered as a component of culturally sensitive practice rather than being authentically included as a viable alternative or equal option to that of the dominant discourse.

Barriers to authentic inclusion



The dominance of a secular and scientific approach to education clearly discriminates and excludes other ways of knowing and doing. The exclusion of such knowledge at a structural level impacts not only that which can be taught, how it can be taught but also impacts the student experience. Therefore discriminating and excluding students whose identity construct differs from that of the dominant discourse.

It is suggested that to achieve equality spiritual knowledge, practice and pedagogy must be recognised and acceptance with the social work curriculum and pedagogy (Carrington, 2010). This would require inclusion and acceptance of spiritual positions from an ontological level through to practice and pedagogy. of spiritual positions including

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