

## **Graduate Research Symposium Proposal**

**Title** – Counselor Responses to Culturally Embedded Sexism

**Program of Study** – Clinical Mental Health Counseling

**Presentation Type** – PowerPoint

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This paper examines the nature and psychosocial effects of culturally embedded sexism and explores how counselors should respond to clients who are impacted by these effects. There are varying degrees and manifestations of sexism that occur in societies around the world. Cultural sexism ranges from female enslavement and subjugation to a culture's promotion of traditional gender roles. On the other hand, a number of cultures promote androgyny as well as gender equality. Sexism across cultures has been the subject of extensive research, with the discussion focusing on components such as ambivalent sexism, benevolent sexism, and gender role conflict. The discrepancies that lie within the various cultural expressions of gender contribute to psychological distress, and this is especially true for individuals that belong to minority cultures. In an increasingly diverse society, counselors should strive to empower their clients while taking clients' cultures of origin into consideration. In addition, counselors need to be aware of their own belief systems so as to avoid the potential of negatively influencing their clients; this may occur if counselors and their clients have different cultural or religious backgrounds. This paper seeks to first identify the origins and effects of cultural sexism; this is done by presenting applicable research literature that discusses the measures and studies pertaining to sexism and gender role conflict in various cultures. Secondly, this paper uses the relevant research to

highlight appropriate guidelines for counselors so that they may increase their awareness and competency in working with clients impacted by culturally embedded sexism.