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Supporting the Development of Racial Identity and Cultural Humility in Higher Education

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Supporting the Development of Racial Identity and Cultural Humility in Higher Education

by

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A Banded Dissertation In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
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Abstract

This banded dissertation consists of three sections which provide a social work perspective on the impact of microaggressions on racial identity for students of color (SOC) in a predominantly white institution (PWI). The dissertation suggests a developmental paradigm for social work educators to increase student understanding of systemic racial oppression and support for the development of cultural humility. Critical race theory provides a framework to analyze inequities in higher education and a guide to the creation of inclusive learning environments.

Effective engagement in diversity assumes students understand the role of privilege and marginalization and how each contributes to one's life experiences. The first section of the banded dissertation is a conceptual paper that integrates concepts derived from Critical Race Theory and provides a developmental paradigm for social work educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice.

Critical Race Theory also provides the framework for second section of the banded dissertation, an exploratory, qualitative study. Study participants included thirty-one, SOC who attended a mid-sized, Midwestern, faith-based, PWI for at least one year. Respondents completed individual or focus group interviews which explored the impact of racial stress on student development, adaptive responses, and what recommendations SOC have for greater inclusiveness in spiritual life within the institution.

The third section of the banded dissertation is an overview of a peer-reviewed workshop. This workshop introduced a conceptual framework to engage professional social work educators in conversation and collaboration regarding teaching issues of race, privilege, and oppression.

This workshop integrated concepts from Critical Race Theory and will assisted in further development of an anti-racist, developmental model for social work educators

The data from this banded dissertation are consistent with studies on campus climate as well studies on the impact on racial microaggressions on SOC in higher education. However, this banded dissertation adds to the existing literature through examination of the impact of racial stress on spiritual development; evaluation of how experiences with racism have contributed to adaptive responses; and, recommendations from study participants as to how the institution can better support spiritual development and greater inclusiveness for SOC.

Dedication/Acknowledgements

Cohort One, the best part of this journey. Thanks for the laughter and sharing the tears. Michelle, faith and know-how, Will, compassion and wit, Marshelia, wisdom and grace, and Rebecca, patience and love.

Jon, Kaelyn, and Dylan. The best in me is from each of you.

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To those who shared their stories so others could have a safe space, this began with you.

Table of Contents

Supporting the Development of Racial Identity and Cultural Humility in Higher Education

Brown v. Board of Education ignited a range of systemic and institutional reforms in the past 60 years which have influenced education for students of color (SOC) in the United States. These changes have increased access to higher education for many SOC. In the year 2013, the percentage of SOC in higher education was 41 percent, greater than any other time in history (https://nces.ed.gov). Many faculty members and administrators cite these statistics as evidence that diversity and other multicultural initiatives are effectual. College officials commend these initiatives as foundational to improving campus climate and preparing students to live in a diverse world (Katz, 1989).

However, additional data collected over the past 40 years documents challenges for students of color (SOC), especially in predominantly white institutions (PWI). These data show many people of color continue to experience a negative campus climate marked by social isolation, negative stereotypes, racial incidents and systemic factors that contribute to significant stress (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2002; Feagin, 1992; Harwood, et al., 2012; McCabe, 2009; Solórzano & Yasso, 2001; Yasso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009). More recently, researchers have studied and documented negative campus experiences in terms of racial microaggressions: frequent, subtle, verbal or non-verbal minimization of people of color that contribute to racial stress (McCabe, 2009; Morales, 2014; Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007; Solórzano, Ceja & Yasso, 2000; Yasso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009). Despite this growing body of data providing evidence of racial oppression in higher education, inequities persist. These inequities have a profound impact on the psychological development and academic progress of SOC at PWI. (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1981; Schulz, Colton, & Colton, 2001; Tinto, 1983).

Further, racial tension on campus and in the classroom can interfere with learning and create barriers to the ongoing development of the cultural humility needed to interact in a diverse world. This banded dissertation provides a social work perspective on the impact of microaggressions on spiritual development and racial identity for SOC in a PWI. Further, it suggests a developmental paradigm for social work educators to increase student understanding of systemic racial oppression and support the development of cultural humility. For this banded dissertation, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is used as a framework to analyze inequities in higher education as well as to provide a guide to the creation of a more inclusive learning environment.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this banded dissertation includes several important concepts from Critical Race Theory (CRT). There are five primary components of CRT. The first component is the acknowledgment that racism exists in the daily experiences of people color and is not unusual but normative. Second, is the idea that race is a social construction or result of thought and behavior rather than attributable to physical or biological factors. Third, a color-blind perspective minimizes the contextual conditions of historical and current racist practices. Color-blindness not only makes subtle forms of discrimination harder to combat but also perpetuates racialization to advance the interests of the dominant group. Bell refers to this as 'interest convergence.' He points to Brown v. Board of Education as an example of change that occurred due to the benefits of whites in power rather than from the desire to help people who are black (Bell, 2008; Delgado and Stefancic, 2012). A fourth key component of CRT is the concept of intersectionality or the idea that human beings have multiple identities that cover a broad range of race, gender, class, ethnicity or other frames of reference. These identities may overlap or conflict with each other and create complexities in worldview. Fifth, CRT embraces

the importance of personal narrative. People of color experience oppression and this lived

experience presumes competence to speak about race and racism from a unique perspective that

those from dominant groups cannot fully understand (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Kolivoski,

Weaver, & Constance-Higgins, 2014).

Summary of Banded Dissertation

The first section of this banded dissertation is a conceptual paper that identifies the

importance of a developmental paradigm for social work educators to teach and support anti-

racist social work practice. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires social work

students to demonstrate competence in their ability to engage with diversity (CSWE, 2015).

Effective engagement requires students to understand the role of privilege and marginalization in

their lives and how each influences their social work practice. Students who are members of the

dominant group struggle to understand issues of systemic oppression and may adhere to a

colorblind perspective of race. Social work educators can provide a developmental paradigm for

students to understand their racial identities as well as strategies to deconstruct views that

contribute to and perpetuate systemic racism. Once this paradigm exists, students are more

equipped to engage in cross-racial dialogue and increased interaction in diverse settings that will

result in greater motivation to identify and practice as anti-racist allies throughout their careers.

The second section of this banded dissertation is an exploratory, qualitative research

paper based on data collected in 2010 at a mid-sized, faith-based university in the Midwest. The

purpose of this research was to conduct a needs-assessment of the academic, social, and spiritual

needs of students of color (SOC) at a predominantly white university (PWI). The study included

thirty-one respondents who identified as SOC and attended the University for at least one year.

The participants chose either a focus group or an individual interview. This section of the banded

dissertation explores the impact of racial stress on student development in a PWI. Respondents identified adaptive responses to racial stress and recommendations for greater inclusiveness in spiritual life within the institution.

The third section of this banded dissertation provides an overview of a peer-reviewed workshop presentation at the National Association of Christian Social Work (NACSW) annual conference in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 19, 2016. The first part of the presentation outlined content from the paper described in section one that integrated concepts derived from Critical Race Theory (CRT) and provided a developmental paradigm for social work educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice. The second part of the presentation was to engage professional educators in conversation and collaboration regarding teaching issues of race, privilege, and oppression. During this portion of the presentation, this presenter facilitated dialogue with social work educators who teach diversity courses in PWIs to determine the validity of this conceptual model. This feedback provided further input to the ongoing scholarship to support a developmental paradigm to inform anti-racist social work practice. Several workshop participants identified intergroup dialogue (IGD) as a promising new strategy to engage students in cross-racial dialogue and increased awareness of racial difference.

Discussion

The data from this banded dissertation are consistent with studies on campus climate as well studies on the impact on racial microaggressions on SOC in higher education. However, this banded dissertation adds to the existing literature through exploration of the impact of racial stress on spiritual development; examination of how experiences with racism have contributed to adaptive responses; and, recommendations from study respondents as to how the institution can better support spiritual development and greater inclusiveness for SOC in the spiritual life of the

institution. Study participants identified similar experiences with microaggressions and their

recommendations for the creation of more inclusive and welcoming institutional culture

replicated what was found in the literature. It is interesting to note that some SOC who

transferred from other institutions expected they would experience less overt racism at a faith-

based university. At the same time, other SOC expected racism on campus but were surprised by

the lack of institutional response as well as how isolated they felt after racist incidents occurred.

This sense of isolation was one of several key factors that emerged as being particularly

noteworthy in the research findings highlighted in the second section of the banded dissertation.

Further, many respondents identified this isolation, as well as difference or lack of

belonging, as primary factors that negatively influenced their spiritual development. Most SOC

were not prepared for the pervasive 'sea of whiteness' they experienced in this PWI. Many

reported they were one of a few or the only SOC in their classes or on their floor in their

dormitory. Students from the dominant culture rarely included SOC in their social plans or in

academic group projects which led to further feelings of isolation.

Social work educators utilize their professional experience and training to provide

support and resources for SOC as well as advocacy for change at the institutional level which can

lead to a more inclusive campus environment. The classroom is a microcosm of the broader

campus environment. White educators may feel ill-equipped to manage racial dynamics in the

classroom setting while meeting the learning needs of all students. Social work educators can

utilize a developmental paradigm for students to understand their racial identities as well as

strategies to deconstruct worldviews that contribute to and perpetuate systemic racism. Once this

paradigm is in place, social work students can engage constructively in cross-racial dialogue and

participate in lived experiences that provide ongoing motivation to identify and practice as anti-racist allies.

Implications for Social Work Education

During the workshop presentation in the third section of this banded dissertation, many white social work educators from PWI expressed concerns their mostly white students did not adequately understand systemic oppression. This feedback is troubling as many social work professionals are on the front lines providing support and advocacy to clients who may need to navigate racist systems to meet their families' needs. Social work students can become more effectual practitioners by learning about diversity and social justice from a developmental, systemic perspective that prepares them to understand and engage with diversity in their practice. The vast majority of social workers and social work educators in the United States are Americans of European ancestry. Most have been surrounded by a dominant white ideology which is seen as the societal norm. Social workers need to develop their awareness of how this dominant ideology has contributed to their racial identity and view of oppression. Understanding oppression requires learning about one's identity as well participation in lived experiences in non-dominant spaces. Social work students and educators often experience denial, minimization, and defensiveness as they attempt to understand their biases as well as the experiences of marginalized people.

Social workers can commit to an action-oriented approach that allows them to work with and advocate for those who are disadvantaged by systemic racial oppression. Through such an approach, social work educators and students can model advocacy in institutions of higher education to address systemic issues. These systemic influences are wide-ranging, including

financial and social barriers to retention and graduation rates for SOC, as well as faculty

engagement in administrative functions. For example, social work educators can sit on

institutional committees or advisory boards to address such issues as hiring practices. Qualified

applicants of color are often not aware of job opportunities in PWI and universities may lack

connection to diverse communities. Social work educators can provide insight to issues such as

tokenization and other barriers to retention of faculty and SOC. Social work educators can

provide leadership in higher education by offering networking and training for all faculty, staff,

and students to better understand the barriers to inclusiveness in higher education.

Social workers who do not have substantive, ongoing education about structural racism,

social identity, and its relationship to power and privilege and oppression may be ineffective in

cross-racial client relationships and stand the risk of perpetuating structural oppression in their

agencies and communities. A developmental teaching framework that integrates concepts from

CRT is an effective way to guide social work students to engage in anti-racist social work

practice. Students who make a commitment to anti-racist practice understand the pursuit of

critical consciousness is part of lifelong learning. These are the students who effectively engage

in diversity and difference; provide leadership in challenging oppressive structural barriers; and,

advocate for civil rights throughout their careers.

Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study lead to some potential areas for future research. The data

collected in this study provide a rich source of qualitative data to understand the experiences of

SOC in PWI. There is a paucity of longitudinal data from SOC who attended PWI related to the

long-term impact of racism on identity development. Developmentally, college students are

working on understanding and living out their identities which encompass among other things, issues related to gender, sexual orientation, race, and spirituality. The numbers of SOC in higher education will continue to increase. Institutions of higher education will need to attract, retain and graduate students at the highest levels to maintain financial viability as well as their reputation for inclusiveness. Faith-based, PWI will need to listen to the voices and experiences of students and faculty of color and address systemic inequities if they hope to compete for diverse students.

Further research on the spiritual development of SOC in PWI is also needed. Students who attend faith-based institutions expect they will be nurtured and grow in their faith. They chose a university where they hoped to be accepted and treated as a member of the campus community. Cervantes and Parhem (2005) highlight the dearth of information related to identity development for SOC and how a negative campus climate and microaggressions contribute to a negative self-image for SOC. Finally, there is an absence of empirical research documenting best practices for teaching diversity and cultural humility in social work education. There is a lack of agreement on terminology used, as well how to best measure progress and growth in understanding diversity. Social work educators can continue to collaborate and develop diverse teaching models as well as strategies to measure and document student growth and development of anti-racist practice.

Another area of potential research is the use of intergroup dialogue (IGD) as a strategy for faculty and students to have meaningful conversations across racial difference. IGD provides individuals and groups a structured method to explore attitudes and beliefs about divisive social issues. Participants are instructed to let go of assumptions, collaborate willingly, believe in the authenticity of all members, speak from their experiences, and be open to a range of possibilities

(Dessel, Rogge, and Garlington, 2006). IGD fosters an environment that allows participants to listen and give voice to the present while understanding past contributions and engaging in future possibilities (Dessel, Rogge, and Garlington, 2006). The skills that comprise IGD would be highly useful as part of a developmental model to teach diversity.

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Deconstructing Colorblindness: A Paradigm for Teaching Anti-Racist Social Work Practice

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Abstract

Social work students must demonstrate competence in their ability to engage in diversity and difference in their practice and a level of self-awareness that allows them to recognize and manage their biases as they engage with diverse individuals and communities. Effective engagement in diversity assumes students understand the role of privilege and marginalization and how each contributes to one's life experiences (CSWE, 2015). Students who are members of the dominant group may adhere to a color-blind perspective which minimizes the contextual conditions of historical and current racist practices (Bell, 2008; Delgado and Stefancic, 2012). This conceptual article integrates concepts derived from Critical Race Theory (CRT) and provides a developmental paradigm for social work educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice.

Keywords: structural racism, white privilege, oppression, anti-racism

Deconstructing Colorblindness: A Paradigm for Teaching Anti-Racist Social Work Practice

Social work students must demonstrate competence in their ability to engage in diversity and difference in their practice. Social work programs address diversity in their curriculum through a myriad of strategies dependent on their context. In doing so, social work programs must demonstrate how their curriculum teaches students to understand diversity and how difference impacts one's life experience and contributes to identity development (CSWE, 2015). As a result, social work students must understand how cultural values may contribute to oppression and marginalization or create power and privilege (CSWE, 2015). Students must also apply their knowledge of diversity, oppression and privilege to understand strategies to dismantle 'oppressive structural barriers' and advocate for civil and human rights (CSWE, 2015).

While these principles are complex, they are essential for competent, ethical, social work practice. However, white social work students in predominantly white institutions (PWI) may lack awareness of their cultural identity, have limited interactions with those outside the dominant group and lack a willingness to engage in conversations with people from diverse backgrounds (Abrams & Gibson, 2007; Abrams & Moio, 2009; Bonilla-Silva, 2012; Chaison, 2004; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Tatum, 1997). These factors impede the student's ability to engage in diversity and difference and instead contribute to the development of a color-blind perspective which minimizes the context of historical oppression and current racist practices (Bonilla-Silva, 2012; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Critical race theory (CRT) provides a lens to analyze systemic racism as well as 'counter-narratives' which impart content on lived experiences through the voices and experiences of people of color (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007; Bell, 2008; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). CRT also provides a framework for social work educators to challenge students to transcend adherence to

dominant ideologies and raise their level of racial consciousness (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Some authors tout color-blindness as a strategy to combat racism. However, color-blindness

makes subtle forms of discrimination difficult to address and perpetuates racialization that

advances the interests of the dominant group (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Bell, 2008; Bonilla-Silva,

2012; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Bell (2008) refers to this as interest convergence.

Social work educators must provide a developmental framework for students to

understand their racial identities as well as strategies to deconstruct their views that contribute to

and perpetuate systemic racism. Once this framework exists, social work students can

practically engage in cross-racial dialogue and increase opportunities to participate in lived

experiences that will provide motivation to identify and practice as anti-racist allies. Allies are

described as people who acknowledge privilege, take responsibility for ongoing learning, and

demonstrate a willingness to take risks, face confrontation, change behavior and commit to

action despite personal risk or negative consequences (Adams, et al., 2007). Relevant to social

work education, students who make a commitment to anti-racist practice understand the pursuit

of critical consciousness is part of lifelong learning. These are the students who effectively

engage in diversity and difference; provide leadership in dismantling oppressive structural

barriers; and, advocate for civil rights throughout their careers. The purpose of this conceptual

article is to integrate concepts derived from CRT into a developmental paradigm for social work

educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice.

Conceptual Framework

For the purpose of this article, the definition of racism will emphasize structural racism

rather than individual racism. Also while there are many forms of privilege, this article focuses

on white (racial) privilege. The conceptual framework for this article includes several important

concepts from Critical Race Theory (CRT). There are five primary components of CRT: (a) the acknowledgment that racism exists in the daily experiences of people of color and is not unusual but normative; (b) the idea that race is a social construction or result of thought and behavior rather than attributable to physical or biological factors; (c) a color-blind perspective minimizes the contextual conditions of historical and current racist practices, makes subtle forms of discrimination more difficult to combat, and perpetuates racialization to advance the interests of the dominant group; (d) the concept of intersectionality, or the idea that human beings have multiple identities that cover a wide range of race, gender, class, ethnicity or other frames of reference; (e) and CRT embraces the importance of personal narrative (Bell, 2008; Delgado and Stefancic, 2012). People of color experience oppression and this lived experience presumes competence to speak about race and racism from a unique perspective that those from dominant groups cannot fully understand (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Kolivoski, Weaver, & Constance-Higgins, 2014). Several key assumptions central to this article include people may or may not be individually racist, but rather are the product of a racialized society. Further, white people have been socialized to have an internalized sense of racial superiority, while people of color may have internalized racial inferiority. This internalization process perpetuates and maintains racialization (Pyke, 2010). CRT provides a lens to analyze structural racism as well as a framework for social work educators to support white students as they move beyond a colorblind perspective and increase their level racial consciousness. The following literature review provides an overview of several models for teaching diversity and social justice, defines key concepts, outlines factors that contribute to colorblindness, and provides teaching strategies to deconstruct colorblind ideologies and support students in the development of anti-racist social work practice.

Literature Review

The social work profession emphasizes core values that include diversity and social justice. Social work education programs guided by Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) write and revise education policies that guide curricular modification as to how justice and diversity are taught. The two most common models for how social work programs teach students about diversity and social justice are cultural sensitivity (sometimes called multiculturalism) and cultural competency.

The purpose of this conceptual article is to integrate concepts derived from CRT to provide a developmental paradigm for social work educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice. This section will briefly outline each of these models to provide a comparison to an anti-racism model. First, the cultural sensitivity model highlights an understanding of cultural norms as well as acceptance and respect for individual and group differences (Goldberg, 2000; Lee & Greene, 2003).

Cultural Sensitivity Model

Social workers and students are provided diversity training to increase sensitivity to cultural differences, improve cross-cultural communication, and move away from ethnocentric biases (Potocky, 1997). While this model continues in a small number of programs, social work educators of color and white allies are critical of cultural sensitivity models as they often present biased views that emphasize a deficit model of non-white individuals and communities (Abrams & Moio, 2009).

Cultural Competency Model

This criticism and ongoing advocacy contributed to the development of a second model taught in many social work programs. This model emphasizes the importance of cultural competence for social work educators and students. Cultural competency models were originally developed and facilitated through a significant increase in writing and research from the perspective of educators of color (Abrams & Moio, 2009). Cultural competency, or ethnic-sensitive practice, highlights the importance of the awareness of values and their impact on worldview; the impact of structural racism; and the responsibility for social workers to develop competence in working with racial minorities and those from multiple ethnic groups (Abrams & Moio, 2009). Also, content in social work education has expanded from a focus on race and ethnicity to a more comprehensive list of isms such as classism, ageism, and sexism as mechanisms for understanding the role of oppression on marginalized groups (Abrams & Moio, 2009).

Critics of cultural competency models argue the focus on working with diverse individuals minimizes the importance of understanding terminology and developing skills to combat systemic racism and oppression at all levels (Abrams & Gibson, 2007; Van Soest, 1994). Further criticism includes curricular content in social work education on cultural competency focuses on individual intervention while virtually ignoring intervention strategies at the macro or systems level (Van Soest, 1994). Allen-Meares (1992) adds social workers, and social work educators may lack awareness of systemic issues and have a worldview that contributes to racism and sexism. This dynamic creates a limited perspective of discrimination in their institutions or agencies which significantly limits the ability to practice culturally competent social work. One

final area of debate in teaching diversity and social justice is a lack of agreement in social work

and related fields as to how to define key concepts. There is a lack of consensus in defining

terms including diversity, social justice, cultural competency and multiculturalism, and whether

these concepts should be taught in one course or developed and repeated across the curriculum

(Nicotera & Kang, 2009). While the Educational Policy Standards (EPAS) provide guidance as

to what social work programs teach about diversity, the lack of consensus, shared language and

use of various models contributes to wide variance in student ability to demonstrate their

competence to engage in diversity and difference.

Cultural sensitivity and cultural competency models introduce social work students to

fundamental concepts in understanding diversity and social justice. While each contains essential

elements, neither adequately addresses the development of social identity and how these roles

contribute to marginalization, oppression, and structural racism. Denial of white privilege and

minimization of structural racism may be deeply ingrained in the values and behaviors of white

students. Social work students need to learn about diversity and social justice from a

developmental, systemic perspective and commit to an action-oriented approach that allows them

to advocate against racial oppression and begin to dismantle racist systems. CRT integrates key

concepts including structural racism, social identity, and its relationship to power and privilege

and oppression. These concepts provide essential building blocks for a developmental approach

to teach and support anti-racist social work practice.

Structural Racism

There are several important concepts in a developmental model that teaches diversity and

social justice from an anti-racist perspective. The first concept is that of structural racism as the

primary cause of racism. Many white students view the underlying cause of racism as individual

acts of discrimination and prejudice based on race. This definition may include the use of racial

slurs or refusal by a white landlord to rent property to people of color. These are examples of

individual racism. The cultural sensitivity model mentioned previously is viewed as the best

approach to address individual racism. For this article, the definition of racism will emphasize

structural racism rather than individual racism. Structural racism is systems of advantage based

on race. This definition includes such aspects as cultural values, organizational policies and

procedures, and values and behavior all of which contribute to benefits for white people (Tatum,

1997). CRT and anti-racist scholars adhere to the view that structural or institutional racism is

the primary cause of racism today and the only way to combat racism is to dismantle racist

systems. This strategy goes beyond education and diversity training and requires a long term,

developmental approach. Further, this view holds that every institution in the U.S. was

developed and structured to meet the needs of white citizens and that inequality continues

through institutional practices and policies that provide advantages to white people (Omi &

Winant, 1994). Miller and Garran (2007), refer to a 'web of institutional racism' or systematic

oppression that prevents people of color from accessing economic, social and political resources

while providing advantages to white people that allow them open access to jobs, bank loans,

higher education or medical care without fear of discrimination. These authors highlight the

importance in defining and understanding structural racism. This perspective is a critical

component for students as they move from viewing race as an individual problem and begin to

understand the systemic nature of racism. This concept is fundamental in teaching a

developmental paradigm for anti-racist social work practice.

Social Construction of Race

Another key concept in the development of an anti-racist practice model with underpinnings in CRT is the theory of race as a social construct. This idea means that rather than a basis in genetics or biology, race is determined by social interactions and the meaning given to race in our society. Those in the dominant group have the social and economic power to determine racial categorization which is not static but evolves over time (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

The concept of the social construction of race also includes the impact of racism on oppression and how this contributes to the development of social identity (Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Garran & Rozas, 2013). Miller & Donner (2000) identify the importance for students to examine their social identity regarding whether they identify with the dominant or marginalized group. Both groups often have a distorted view of themselves or others and must develop a more balanced view of the social order. This complex process based on one's life experiences that impact multiple areas including values, beliefs, expectations, and worldview. Understanding the development and meaning of social identity is a challenging but important first step for social work students in learning about privilege and oppression.

White Privilege

Another important concept in teaching a developmental framework for an anti-racist social work practice model is that of white privilege. Privilege can include economic, gender, or religious status but this article will focus on white (racial) privilege. Social work students who are members of the dominant group must engage in the process of understanding the role of white privilege in their personal and professional lives. Privilege evolves from the historical

oppression of marginalized groups and encompasses unearned advantages that provide

opportunities simply by being a member of the dominant group (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). The U.S.

is a racialized society where people of color often have very different life experiences than those

from the dominant group. For example, people of color often resonate with historical racism and

identify with a cultural group that supports social change. On the other hand, people from the

dominant culture do not have lived experience with racism and discrimination which limits their

perspective on the impact of race and whether we live in a racialized society. People from

privileged backgrounds may lack awareness of racism and may react in defensive, non-

supportive ways. Wildman & Davis (1997) identify several other elements common to privilege

which include the characteristics of privileged groups are used to define societal norms, and

privilege is invisible to those that have it. There are many references to privilege in social work

literature about teaching diversity and social justice. Several authors explicitly identify the

importance of content related to the meaning and significance of white privilege (Abrams &

Gibson, 2007; Abrams & Moio, 2009; Van Soest, 1994). Social work educators must support and

encourage students over time to understand the role of white privilege and how it contributes to

systemic oppression as part of the development of anti-racist social work practice model.

Racial Oppression

The concepts of race as a social construct and the understanding of social identity and

how it contributes to white privilege are essential building blocks in teaching a developmental

model of anti-racist social work practice. In a racialized society the structural factors that

contribute to white privilege also create racial oppression. Racial oppression does not occur in

isolation but is closely related to sexism, classism, ageism, and other forms of social oppression.

However, there are several common factors related to oppression. First, is the use of power and

control by the dominant group over people of color. Power does not refer to the physical power

but rather the ability to access and control institutions in society. This encompasses such areas

as decision-making, leadership, and inclusiveness. Secondly, people from oppressed groups are

vulnerable to organizational beliefs that result in unfair access and allocation of economic, social

or political resources (Aguirre & Baker, 2000). These dynamics create racialized systems that

provide unearned privilege to the dominant group while denying access to people of color. The

purpose of this section is not to argue that racial oppression exists but rather to highlight the

importance of moving students beyond the awareness of oppression to an action-oriented

development of strategies to dismantle the structural or systemic causes of racial oppression

(Schriver, 2001; van Wormer & Snyder, 2007).

Barriers to Awareness of Systemic Oppression

Development of awareness of systemic oppression must be supported and encouraged

over time. Social work educators must reassure students through periods of denial and

minimization so they can continue to overcome barriers to learning about these challenging and

emotion-laden topics. Students may experience guilt, despair, shame or anger as they learn

about the role of privilege in their lives and how privilege contributes to oppression. Several

barriers to learning about systemic oppression include resistance by faculty and students, and

lack of institutional commitment (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Chaison, 2004; Garcia & Van Soest,

2000; Garran, Kang & Fraser, 2014). While these barriers are challenging, the biggest roadblock

to learning about systemic oppression is that students are impacted by societal views and have

often internalized a colorblind perspective of race. Students who do not understand and work to

move beyond colorblindness will be ineffective in cross-racial client relationships and stand the

risk of perpetuating structural oppression in their agencies and communities. Colorblind racism

is the view that race is no longer a primary issue; and if one does not 'see' race, they cannot be racist. Therefore racism no longer exists (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Garcia & Van Soest, 1997). Tatum (1997) adds for white people; colorblindness is a lack of awareness of racial socialization processes. White people often see themselves as lacking prejudice or assumptions about other racial groups and see racism as individual racist behaviors rather than an institutionalized system from which they benefit. If white students are blind to race, then they do not have to think about the invisible aspects that contribute to privilege or marginalization. There are three basic factors that support and maintain a colorblind perspective, as well as related strategies to combat each. These factors include: (a) lack of awareness of one's cultural identity, (b) limited interactions with those outside the dominant group, (c) and lack of willingness to engage with and learn about diversity (Abrams & Gibson, 2007; Abrams & Moio, 2009; Bonilla-Silva, 2012; Chaison, 2004; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Tatum, 1997). A brief summary of each of the factors is provided, followed by strategies of how to deconstruct this ideology. This deconstruction process is a crucial step in teaching a paradigm that challenges colorblindness and supports anti-racist social work practice.

Colorblindness and Lack Awareness of Cultural Identity

Social workers who have a positive racial identity are better able to understand and value the racial identities of their clients (Pinderhughes, 1989). Further, if we lack understanding of our own culture it is more onerous to understand the culture of another. White students often deny they belong to a racial or ethnic group and have trouble articulating the meaning of whiteness. Garcia & Van Soest (1997) state a lack of curricular content on whiteness limits opportunities for white students to reflect on their ethnic and cultural identity. Understanding whiteness is a developmental process which also includes insight into how racism affects one's

personal and professional life as well as how this view may contribute to the perception that

racism as a problem that belongs to people of color. Lipsitz (1998) adds the 'invisibility of

whiteness' is a key factor in racial stratification in the United States. "It is everywhere but hard

to see" (p. 1) and becomes the norm by which all other races are compared (Lipsitz, 1998). It is

apparent how a lack of ethnic and cultural identity contributes to a lack of consciousness related

to whiteness. White students will not be able to interrupt and dismantle systemic oppression if

they fail to understand the role of race in their lives and in U.S. society (Berg & Simon, 2013).

The development of racial identity is an ongoing, developmental process for white students and

an essential component of teaching a model for anti-racist social work practice.

There are several ways to support the identity development of white students. Tatum

(1997) has studied and written extensively about racial identity development, and Helms (1990)

has created a well-known and often cited model for white identity development. Many social

work educators use the Helms model to facilitate understanding of white identity development.

They argue this model allows white students construct a more positive view of what it means to

be white (Abrams & Gibson, 2007; Berg & Simon, 2013; Garcia & Van Soest, 1997; Van Soest,

Garcia & Graft, 2001). A positive view of whiteness can also create a sense of ethnic pride

which can help students when they experience guilt or shame related to white privilege. Also,

unpacking white identity and bringing to awareness the accompanying social benefits

counteracts the invisibility of whiteness and provides an alternative to colorblind ideology

(Abrams & Gibson, 2007). This process is an essential building block to the development of

teaching a paradigm for authentic, anti-racist, social work practice.

Colorblindness and Limited Interaction Outside Dominant Group

Another factor that contributes to colorblind ideology is significant levels of racial segregation and isolation for white students who grow up in segregated communities and schools. This pattern of segregation often continues into adulthood in the areas of housing, employment, and education (Bonilla-Silva, 2012). Further, those from the dominant group do not view segregation as racial but rather the way it is. Many white students report close relationships with people from other races, but these relationships often lack trust and shared intimacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2012). Other white students believe people from other races self-segregate and seem disinterested in interracial relationships. The lack of interracial association perpetuates white superiority and results in negative stereotyping which goes unchallenged in white institutions. People from the dominant group lack opportunity to unlearn stereotypes and negative views of people of color (Feagin, 1992).

There are several ways to support white students as they increase their interaction with those outside the dominant group. First is the use of counter-narratives, a central component of CRT which gives testimony to the experiences of underrepresented individuals and groups. This recognition serves to honor the experiences of those who have historically been silenced or marginalized (Ledesma & Calderon, 2014). Counter-narratives may include storytelling, family histories, or personal experiences with oppression that those from the dominant group may not know or understand (Kolivoski, Weaver, & Constance-Huggins, 2014). CRT advocates for the use of historical accounts that include the lived experiences of people of color from their perspective in their words. The use of these counter-narratives confronts neutrality and a colorblind perspective (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Another way to encourage interaction outside the dominant group is to support the development of lived experiences for white students. Students of color have lived experience navigating through life in a racialized society. Many white students have grown up in all-white communities and attended all-white schools which have blinded them from issues of racism and does not allow for them to experience what it is to be the other. Educators can require students to engage in service-learning in diverse communities, attend events hosted by communities of color, and interact in spaces where their privilege does not benefit them. This strategy requires intentionality by educators as white students often report 'reverse discrimination' when required to interact in non-white spaces. Students may need ongoing dialogue as to how their experiences are similar to people of color but most importantly how they are different. Ongoing dialogue is important when teaching a developmental model for anti-racist social work practice. Discourse allows students to process their experiences which can include a continuation of biased thinking about race. It takes time and dialogue for white students to move away from the dominant ideology through which they view race. Educators can help students look at situations through a non-dominant lens. This alternative worldview is an important piece in the developmental process.

Lack of Willingness to Engage with Diversity

Another factor that contributes to a colorblind perspective is a lack of willingness to engage with diversity. While this is related to limited interactions outside the dominant group there are several important differences. First, many white students are fearful that they will offend people of color, or if they speak, they may unknowingly say something offensive or racist. This often results in silence or avoidance of diverse settings. Educators need to emphasize the importance for white students to take risks when learning about race. Deeper

learning occurs through taking risks, making mistakes, and learning from one's misperceptions. Risk-taking also requires vulnerability which can be conducive to deeper learning. Educators need to encourage social work students to take risks and support them through the learning process. Teachers can share their own stories of making insensitive comments and what they learned from their experiences. In addition, if the goal is to develop relationships with people from different racial backgrounds, then white students must intentionally engage with diversity. A second and more difficult barrier is that students can retreat into their mostly white world to avoid the discomfort of cross-racial interactions. The very nature of the invisibility of privilege allows students to avoid settings and conversations where they are a racial minority. It is easy for white students to cope through the use of denial and minimization of racism because they have often been surrounded by this ideology most of their lives. The subtle nature of this behavior makes it difficult to counteract, but educators can create discussion and assignments that provide accountability. Educators can also provide support and training for how to engage in difficult conversations. Stone, Patton & Keen (1999) refer to the importance of 'learning conversations' which dialogue across difference and utilize empathy, genuineness and the willingness to take responsibility. Several strategies can be employed including use of conversation circles, role plays, or racial caucus groups (Miller & Donner, 2000; Stone, et al.,1999). Teaching and supporting anti-racist social work practice requires educators to create learning opportunities for students to dialogue and interact with people of color in non-white spaces. Students will need ongoing encouragement to push through their avoidance of difficult conversations.

Discussion

Social work educators must provide a developmental paradigm for students to understand their own racial identities as well as strategies to deconstruct worldviews that contribute to and perpetuate systemic racism. Once this framework is in place, social work students can engage constructively in cross-racial dialogue and participate in lived experiences that provide ongoing motivation to identify and practice as anti-racist allies. It is important to note that authentic, anti-racist social work practice requires a commitment to social action. Adams, et al. (2007), describes allies as white people who are *actively* involved in ongoing work to eliminate racism, and those from the dominant group who *take a stand* against inequality. This stage of development often takes place outside the classroom or after students graduate. However, social work educators can support and encourage students and alumni to engage in anti-racist practice in their field placement and communities. Anti-racist allies acknowledge their privilege, take ownership and responsibility for ongoing learning, face confrontation, and commit to action despite personal risk or negative consequences (Adams, et al., 2007).

Not all social work students are at the point where they are able to commit to social action to dismantle racism. Some need more time to understand their racial identity or the meaning of white privilege. However, social work educators who teach a developmental model for anti-racist social work practice need to model ally behavior and support students and alumni who engage in ally work.

Implications for Social Work Education

Racial tension continues to dominate the headlines in newspapers across the U.S. Often this tension has to do with systemic oppression related to jobs, education, policing, or housing.

Social work students are on the front lines providing support and advocacy to clients who must

navigate racist systems to meet their families' needs. Social work students need to learn about

diversity and social justice from a developmental, systemic perspective and commit to an action-

oriented approach that allows them to advocate against racial oppression and begin to dismantle

racist systems. Social workers who do not have substantive, ongoing education about structural

racism, social identity, and its relationship to power and privilege and oppression will be

ineffective in cross-racial client relationships and stand the risk of perpetuating structural

oppression in their agencies and communities. A developmental teaching framework that

integrates concepts from CRT is the most beneficial way to teach social work students how to

engage in anti-racist social work practice. Students who make a commitment to anti-racist

practice understand the pursuit of critical consciousness is part of lifelong learning. These are

the students who effectively engage in diversity and difference; provide leadership in

dismantling oppressive structural barriers; and, advocate for civil rights throughout their careers.

Further Research

There are several challenges for developmental models that teach frameworks for anti-

racist social work practice. First and foremost, learning about complex social dynamics such as

race, oppression, and privilege is not a linear process. Learners make progress and digress

depending on many individual factors. No one teaching strategy will impact all learners as some

resonate with experiential learning while others prefer one to one or small group discussions.

Educators must measure and document the learning process over time. Also, there is a lack of

empirical research documenting best practices for teaching diversity and cultural competency.

Social work educators and researchers need to continue the development of teaching models as

well as tools that evaluate and document student growth and development of anti-racist practice.

Another area of research is the development of inclusive teaching strategies in diverse classrooms. This developmental teaching model focuses primarily on teaching students from the dominant group in predominantly white institutions. As more and more students of color attend college and students represent a broader range of diversity, it will be important to teach in ways that introduce topics of race and oppression to white students while at the same time respecting and acknowledging the lived experiences of students of color. There may be a need to develop a differentiated curriculum based on the level of knowledge and experience of the racialization process.

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We Are One Body: Spiritual Development in a Faith-Based Predominantly White Institution

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Abstract

Institutions of higher education report increased enrollment and greater access to higher education, but students of color, SOC still face a negative campus climate and frequent microaggressions especially in predominantly white institutions, PWI. Critical Race Theory, CRT provided the framework for this exploratory, qualitative study. Study participants included thirty-one, SOC who attended a small, Midwestern, faith-based, PWI for at least one year. Respondents completed individual or focus group interviews which explored the impact of racial stress on student development, adaptive responses, and what recommendations SOC have for greater inclusiveness in spiritual life within the institution. Respondents from this study recommended how the institution can better support spiritual development and provide a more inclusive environment for SOC in the spiritual life of the institution.

Keywords: predominantly white institutions, microaggressions, spiritual development

We Are One Body: Spiritual Development in a Faith-Based Predominantly White Institution

A range of systemic and institutional reforms influenced the education of students of color (SOC) in the United States over the past 60 years (Feagin, 1992; Flowers, 2004). These changes have increased access to higher education for many SOC. For example, in the year 2013, the total percentage of SOC enrolled in institutions of higher education was 41 percent, higher than any other time in history (http//nces.edu.gov). Many faculty members and administrators cite this and other reports as evidence that diversity and other multicultural initiatives are effective. Administrators point to growing numbers of diverse college students as evidence that higher education prepares students to live in a diverse world and as an indicator of improved campus climate (social and academic environment) for SOC (Katz, 1989).

However, while more SOC than ever are attending college, racial oppression on college campuses persists which can result in poor retention and graduation rates (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1981; Schulz, Colton, & Colton, 2001; Tinto, 1983). Although institutions of higher education report increased enrollment and greater access to higher education, SOC still face significant challenges and a negative campus climate especially in predominantly white institutions (PWI) (Feagin, 2002; Feagin & Sikes, 1995; Flowers, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1981). More recently, negative campus experiences have been researched and documented as racial microaggressions, frequent, subtle, verbal or non-verbal minimization of people of color that contribute to racial stress (McCabe, 2009; Morales, 2014; Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007; Solórzano, Ceja & Yasso, 2000; Yasso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009).

While civil rights legislation has been the law of the land for over fifty years, news headlines of today are eerily similar those of the 1960's. Racial tensions explode on college

campuses and in urban communities as people of color and allies take action to protest racial

profiling, police brutality and other forms of systemic oppression. The literature clearly outlines

factors that contribute to a negative campus climate for SOC in higher education, but little data

exists on the impact of racial stress on spiritual development for SOC in faith-based institutions.

This study used an exploratory, qualitative method to understand the unique stressors

experienced by SOC at a small, Midwestern predominantly white institution (PWI). The study

explored the impact of racial stress on spiritual development, adaptive responses as well as what

recommendations SOC have for greater inclusiveness in spiritual life within the institution.

Literature Review

Campus Climate

Historically, much of the literature regarding SOC in PWIs relates to the exploration of

campus climate through the experiences of black college students. Initially, these studies were

conducted to explore a decline in graduation and retention rates for black students. Yasso,

Smith, Ceja, and Solórzano, 2009) describe campus racial climate as the comprehensive

environment of the university that could potentially contribute to superior academic outcomes

and graduation rates for all students but more often result in poor academic achievement and

high attrition rate for SOC. Studies on campus climate during the 1970's and 80's often focused

on presumed internal deficits within black students and their communities. These included such

factors as increased drug use, perceived poor attitude, and breakdown of families as primary

causes of college drop-out rates (Keller, 1988). By contrast, Feagin (1992) highlights systemic

barriers and discriminatory practices by white administrators, students, and professors as key

factors that negatively influence graduation and retention rates for black college students.

Furthermore, while campus climate studies originated through exploration of the experiences of black students, as other racial groups entered higher education, researchers began to compare the campus experiences of Latina/o, Asian, and/or Indigenous students with the experience of black students (Fisher, 2007; McCabe, 2009; Yasso, et al., 2009). Results of campus climate studies are similar across racial groups, but solutions and adaptive coping behaviors may vary by race.

Early studies on campus climate rarely included qualitative data, but as Critical Race Theory (CRT) rose in prominence, more studies included the voices and experiences of SOC (Cerezo, McWhirter, Pena, Valdez, & Bustos, 2013; Perez Huber & Solórzano, 2015; Villalpando, 2003; Yasso, et al., 2009). Qualitative studies on campus climate began to illustrate and document specific experiences SOC have in PWI institutions and identified patterns of marginalization and discrimination. SOC often feel isolated and excluded both in the classroom, as well in residence halls and social activities (Hinderlie & Kenny, 2002). Fries-Britt & Turner (2002), add racial stress stems from immersion in a mostly white, sometimes hostile community which can be a constant reminder of past discrimination as well as reinforce a lack of belonging. Morley (2003) examined the influence of racial dynamics on academic and social integration and found higher rates of homesickness, role strain, and identity confusion for SOC as compared to their white classmates. Many PWIs have a pervasive white culture and operate through the lens of colorblindness which creates additional barriers to social and academic adjustment (Feagin, 1992; Flowers, 2004; Morley, 2003).

Qualitative studies of campus racial climate also identified a pattern of discrimination or negative stereotypes about SOC. A study by Harwood, Huntt, Mendenhall, & Lewis (2012) highlights assumptions by white peers that black students are admitted due to affirmative action

policies. Other stereotypes include the perception that black males are more likely to be

involved in criminal behavior. This can increase scrutiny by campus or local police, residence

life staff, and campus administration (Feagin, 1992; Feagin & Sikes, 1995; McCabe, 2009;

Morley, 2003). Some SOC report discrimination can take the form of overt derogatory comments

(Feagin, 1992; Feagin & Sikes, 1995). Qualitative studies provide evidence SOC routinely

experience a negative campus climate which correlates with high levels of stress and poor

retention and graduation rates (D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Feagin, 1992; Pascarella &

Terenzini, 1981; Solórzano, et al., 2000).

Further studies of campus climate explore the importance of adjustment in how SOC

adapt to a persistent, negative campus climate. Woldoff, Wiggins, & Washington (2011), argue

that adjustment or the students' ability to adapt successfully to expectations in higher education

depends on institutional integration to both social and academic life. These findings mirror those

of Tinto (1987), which highlight the importance of academic performance and social integration

as key aspects of college persistence. Many PWI create programs to address academic and social

challenges for SOC.

Racial Microaggressions in Higher Education

In the early 2000's campus climate studies evolved due to greater awareness of the role

of racial microaggressions and how they impact students of color. Pierce (1970) was among the

first to introduce the concept of microaggressions through his research on how African-American

people experience racism on a daily basis. Many scholars have built on Pierce's work through a

critical examination of racial microaggressions in higher education often through the lens of

CRT (Perez Huber & Solórzano, 2015; Solórzano, et al., 2000; Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998;

Yasso et al., 2009). Racial microaggressions are defined as subtle, unconscious, verbal or non-verbal insults directed towards SOC which have a profound, negative, cumulative effect on psychological, physical and academic performance (McCabe, 2009; Morales, 2014; Perez Huber & Solórzano, 2015; Sue, et al., 2007; Solórzano, et al. 2000; Yasso, et al., 2009. Sue, et al. (2007), advanced the concept of racial microaggressions to categorize the cluster of insults, isolation, and discrimination experienced by SOC in PWI. A growing number of studies of microaggressions on college campuses examine the experiences of SOC through personal narratives of their experiences in PWI. Harwood, Huntt, Mendenhall, and Lewis, (2012) studied experiences of SOC in residence halls and identified frequent microaggressions which included racial jokes and verbal insults; segregated campus spaces, denial or minimization of racism, and racial slurs written in public places. Perez Huber and Solórzano, (2015) further argue racial microaggressions are evaluated through systems of institutionalized racism and guided by white supremacy. This contributes to an environment where microaggressions continue and provide no accountability for systemic change. Further studies of microaggressions on college campuses focus primarily on how SOC cope with racial microaggressions and how institutions can better support SOC as they combat microaggressions.

Coping with Microaggressions

SOC cope with racial microaggressions in a variety of ways including speaking with other SOC about their experiences, use of humor, support from others from targeted groups, involvement in student organizations for SOC, and raising awareness of this more subtle but equally destructive form of racism (McCabe, 2009). Strong supportive relationships and open dialogue with professors, staff, and community leaders also enhance coping skills (Grier-Reed, 2010). Guiffrida and Douthit (2010) argue that while family and friends from home communities

and involvement in groups for SOC can enhance adaptive coping skills they can also distract SOC from completing their academic work and may interfere with integration to campus life.

Institutional Responses to Microaggressions

While opinions may vary as to how SOC cope with racial microaggressions, researchers agree on the importance of the creation of counter spaces or safe spaces for SOC (Solórzano et al., 2000; Yasso, et al., 2009). These are intentional spaces in which students are free to explore their identities and feel respected and validated in contrast to feeling marginalized. Counter spaces also serve as a place for SOC to share collective wisdom and offer mutual support (Grier-Reed, 2010) Institutions can also provide academic counter spaces for SOC to enhance their learning in a nurturing environment where their unique experiences are valued and accepted as essential pieces of knowledge (Solórzano et al., 2000).

Institutions can also provide peer mentoring programs, connections to local communities of color, racially based campus organizations, and development of faculty/student mentoring programs (Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010 & McCabe, 2009). In addition, Shultz et al., (2001) studied proactive intervention programs, also called early intervention programs, to address academic challenges faced by SOC. This type of program includes frequent advising, careful monitoring of academic progress, building personal accountability networks and mentoring relationships (Shultz, et al., 2001). Guiffrida & Douthit (2010) recommend student-centered programs as well as training faculty to avoid tokenism, how to facilitate difficult conversations about race, and to increase support and engagement with students inside and outside the classroom.

Impact of Racism on Spiritual Development for SOC in Faith-Based Institutions

The data on campus climate and racial microaggressions in higher education are extensive but focus primarily on the impact of racism on academic performance and social integration. Very few of these studies include the impact of racism on the spiritual development of SOC, and none of these studies are qualitative. Paredes-Collins (2014) and Paredes-Collins & Collins (2011) explored the racial differences in students' spirituality at faith-based institutions, but their emphases were on comparing the spiritual development of white students with that of SOC and what factors contribute to spiritual development in faith-based institutions.

In addition, Cervantes, & Parhem (2005), state the connection between spirituality and diversity has not been well described in mainstream literature. Psychological and psychiatric studies related to race rarely include the spiritual dimension of a person's identity, despite strong evidence that one's spirituality is significantly impacted by racism, coping skills and identity development. Despite significant data on the role of negative campus climate for SOC and the prevalence of microaggressions on college campuses a dearth of information exists on the profound impact of racism on the spiritual development of SOC in faith-based institutions. This study used an exploratory, qualitative method to understand the unique stressors as well as adaptive responses demonstrated by SOC at a small, faith-based, predominantly white institution (PWI). The study is unique as it is a qualitative examination of the impact of racial stress and adaptive responses on spiritual development, as well as what recommendations SOC had for greater inclusiveness in spiritual life within the institution.

Conceptual Framework

Critical Race Theory (CRT) provided a guiding framework for this study from the initial planning phase and throughout the entire study. While many studies explore factors that contribute to a negative campus climate, fewer utilize narratives to document daily experiences of SOC in higher education or their collective wisdom to address systemic inequalities. Delgado & Stefancic (2012) identify five primary components of CRT that guide the use of the framework: (a) the acknowledgment that racism exists in the daily experiences of people of color and is not unusual but normative; (b) the idea that race is a social construction or result of thought and behavior rather than attributable to physical or biological factors; (c) a color-blind perspective minimizes the contextual conditions of historical and current racist practices, makes more subtle forms of discrimination more difficult to combat, and perpetuates racialization to advance the interests of the dominant group; (d) the concept of intersectionality, or the idea that human beings have multiple identities that cover a wide range of race, gender, class, ethnicity or other frames of reference; (e) and CRT embraces the importance of personal narrative.

Methods

This study used an exploratory, qualitative method to understand the unique stressors and adaptive responses of SOC at a small, Midwestern, faith-based, PWI. Two researchers collected data as part of a collaborative faculty/student research project. The faculty researcher was an Associate Professor of Social Work, and the student researcher was a junior student in the Social Work Program. The study explored the impact of racial stress on student development, adaptive responses, and what recommendations SOC have for greater inclusiveness in spiritual life within the institution.

Data Collection

Recruitment. Both researchers met with multi-cultural student leaders and allies to explain the project, develop trust, and ask for referrals of students of color who may be interested in participation in the study. Key informants including multi-cultural student leaders, fellow students, staff, or professors referred participants to the study. Participants chose to participate in either a one to one interview conducted by the student researcher who is a student of color, or a focus group facilitated by a faculty member of color. Individual interviews or focus group participation also depended on the participant's comfort level and availability**.** This snowball sampling method was used to engender trust and utilize existing social networks.

Participants and sample size. Qualified participants were at least eighteen years of age or older, attended this small, Midwestern, faith-based university for at least one year, identified as a student of color, and were willing to participate in an individual interview or focus group. The sample size for this qualitative study was thirty-one participants. Focus group participants were divided randomly into two groups, one with 7 participants and one with 8 participants. Sixteen individual interviews were conducted, 2 with alumni and fourteen with current SOC.

Protection for Human Participants-- Risks and Protection. A request for Approval of Research with Human Participants in Social and Behavioral Research was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the small, faith-based, Midwestern PWI. Several risks were inherent to participants in this study. First was the risk of privacy. Every effort was made to respect the privacy of participants. Interview data was labeled with codes rather than participant names. Students shared only their first names, and names were not used during the audio

recordings of the focus groups. Transcripts did not include student names or identifying information.

The second risk was that of sensitive information. The nature of this study asked students to reveal information that was personal and sensitive in nature. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Some of the participants experienced discrimination based on their race. The interviews or focus group discussions might illicit strong emotional reactions from study participants. All participants were provided a list of resources to obtain additional support if needed. The informed consent form also highlighted potential adverse reactions participants may experience. Participants were encouraged to use informal and formal resources for emotional and psychological support. Participants were debriefed after their interview or participation in a focus group.

Finally, confidentiality was important to this study. Participants in focus groups were asked to sign confidentiality statements that information shared during focus group sessions was not be shared with anyone outside the group, and that names of focus group members would not be shared by participants. A research code number was used to identify participants. Names, addresses, and other identifying information were not used or associated with information gathered. When data was summarized in written form or presented to outside audiences, it did not refer to participants by name and no identifying information was included. Audiotapes and transcripts were identified by participant codes and no names or identifying information were included.

Measures/qualitative questions. Qualitative survey questions were designed based on a literature review, preliminary assessment of existing data and through several discussions with

key informants. Existing data on this topic came from institutional assessment data regarding

students' attitudes towards diversity, race, ethnicity, and campus climate; exit interviews; and

other assessment data provided by the Associate Dean of Institutional Assessment and

Accreditation. Discussion and collaboration with key informants and other cultural insiders

including the Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Dean for Multi-Cultural Student Affairs,

contributed to the development of interview questions. The interview questions were the same

for individual interviews and focus groups. The structured interview questions were divided into

four main categories to assess spiritual, academic, relational, and psychological needs of SOC.

This research focused on spiritual development. There were two main questions related to

spiritual needs. First, what were the opportunities and experiences in the area of spiritual

development and second, how can the institution grow in the area of providing opportunities for

spiritual growth and development of SOC in the institution.

Procedures. The researchers assigned each participant a code number, and a copy of

signed consent forms was stored in a locked filing cabinet. Individual interviews were

audiotaped and transcribed. Student participants chose a 'safe space' on or off campus where the

45-60 minute interview was conducted.

Students were given the option of individual interviews or participation in focus groups.

Students were randomly assigned to one of two focus groups. One focus group had seven

participants and the other had eight participants. Experienced facilitators who were also faculty

of color at this PWI conducted focus groups. Focus groups were audiotaped and transcribed and

each lasted for 90 minutes.

The individual interviews and focus groups used structured interview questions.

Interview questions were developed into four categories which centered on spiritual, relational,

academic, and psychological needs of SOC at the University. Each focus group lasted ninety

minutes and was guided by faculty person of color with extensive experience as group

facilitators. Sixteen, sixty minute, individual interviews were conducted in a safe space as

identified by the interviewee, 2 with alumni of color and fourteen with current SOC. Interviews

and focus groups were audio recorded and the researcher and focus group coordinators took field

notes during the interviews and focus groups.

Data Analysis

Both researchers used open coding as they independently read field notes and listened to

recordings from both focus groups and individual interviews. Recurring themes and exemplar

quotes were identified independently by both researchers. The interview questions were already

organized into four categories, so researchers listened for themes and subthemes. Researchers

met to compares note and lists of themes. At this stage in the research process, a transcriber

created transcripts for each of the individual interviews and both focus groups. Next, the

researchers utilized a deductive approach as they reviewed transcripts line by line to test the

initial hypotheses and to continue to flush out themes and subthemes. Each researcher tallied the

number of times each theme was identified and made notes of their questions. During this

process relational needs was relabeled as social needs and the category psychological needs was

collapsed into social needs due to significant overlap. Researchers identified and compared

major themes for each of the remaining three categories.

Next, the researchers invited all participants back to campus to review the preliminary

data. All identified themes were recorded on large sheets of paper and respondents could walk

around the room to view the lists. Member checking was used to ensure the researchers correctly

interpreted the themes and to make sure all themes important to student participants were captured. Respondents reported the data was a thorough and accurate depiction of their experiences as SOC in this PWI.

The respondents also requested these data would be used to support institutional change. The results were compiled and distributed to leaders in Campus Ministries, Student Life, and the Academic Support Center. The researchers and several respondents met with staff and administrators from each of these areas to review results and present recommendation for greater inclusiveness. These data themes were also shared with the university's Executive Leadership Team, the Chief Diversity Officer, the Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion, and General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC)

Results

Themes that emerged from the interviews were grouped into three main categories: 1) the impact of racial stress on spiritual development. 2) development of adaptive responses as a coping strategy for SOC, and 3) recommendations for how the institution can better support spiritual development and greater inclusiveness for SOC in the spiritual life of the institution. Each category and relevant subthemes are discussed in the summary below using quotations from participant interviews that clearly illustrate each of the themes.

Impact of Racial Stress on Spiritual Development

Perception that strength of faith is measured by western ideals. *The barometer of faith is based off a Western, white ideal of what Christianity means. So if my prayer life looks different than what the institution endorses, my faith isn't good enough. I speak to God through meditation and have been told that isn't okay or that I am opening myself to evil.*

Many students spoke of how they have integrated their cultural practices and spiritual

practices. Often this integration occurred through conversations with pastors or other spiritual

mentors. Several students talked about how they were able to find references to cultural

practices in the Bible. One student said,

> *My pastor did a really good job in like explaining that and using Scripture behind it like we have in Hmong culture we have white bracelets that we wear, yarn that you wear on your wrist and if you look back into Deuteronomy there's a verse it talks about how you wear it on your hand.*

Another student said,

> *I think one big thing for me is how can you bring your culture and Christianity together, so like I'm Haitian, my culture is like different, it's different than Christianity so why can't it be fused, why can't my culture be incorporated into Christianity?*

Culture of university needs to include greater understanding of pain of racism. One

of the interview questions asked respondents about their experiences in the area of spiritual

development. Many respondents spoke about personal experiences with racism or racist acts on

campus in response to this question. Several students articulated they expected white peers to

say and do ignorant things but few SOC were prepared for the lack of institutional response to

racist events and how damaging this was to their spiritual development. One student said,

> *I had high expectations when I came here, but I would've been better off in a public school. The recent racist events and the reaction (or lack of) by the community, There is so much hatred and hateful comments that I never expected in a Christian environment.*

Participants also reported surprise at the lack of accountability for racist comments and actions

and how in many cases, it was student leaders or professors who made insensitive comments or

failed to address comments by others. The cumulative effect of racism over time contributed to

internalized racial oppression. One participant said,

> *There is a disconnect between the practice and the preach. We are supposed to be loving, understanding and forgiving, and confront people head on who aren't, but not*

even the leaders or the professors do it. They lack understanding, fail to love, fail to follow through.

Another said,

While at this institution I have learned to hate myself more than love myself. I hear I need to love myself before I can love others but no matter what, I am not liked let alone loved in this community.

Finally, many students initially expected on-campus Chapel services, which are offered three times a week, would provide the opportunity to connect with their faith and spirituality.

Almost all of the respondents reported they no longer attend chapel services. One student stated,

sometimes the Chapel speakers do the worst damage. They don't look like me, their lives aren't like mine…they have no clue what it is to experience racism day in and day out yet they stand up there and tell me to live like they do, do things like they do, and if I do then I too can live the good life. They some kind of famous preacher but they don't know nothing about me or my life.

Respondents reported an emphasis on sinful behavior was common from chapel speakers.

This emphasis on sin and individual accountability seemed to contribute to a further sense of isolation and sometimes even self-hatred which can already be problematic for some SOC.

Focus on judgment and lack of understanding. Finally, many respondents reported their experiences with racism on campus brought challenges to their faith. Some began to doubt God's presence in an environment where SOC felt judgment and hate. One respondent stated,

Even the way I read the Bible is judged because I am supposed to focus on my sin and what is right and wrong. I get enough of how I don't fit in, let me read my Bible to find my source of joy and hope.

Another respondent said*, "For my faith to grow I needed to be able to ask questions and get answers or maybe not answers but just have freedom to question my faith without being judged or reprimanded."* Another respondent looked to small groups as a place to get spiritual support.

She said,

> *when I came in, I wanted to spiritually grow and even though people wouldn't go to small groups I still went to them at first. I opened up, but after a while, I found myself closing off because my experiences were so different, like you know you didn't want to be judged by the main culture, but you know you don't feel safe even like in the small groups. The message was I was doing something wrong if I had doubts and if I got upset about racist comments I was probably overreacting.*

Coping with Racism and the Development of Adaptive Responses

While experiences with racism were painful and led to feelings of isolation, for some SOC, their experiences also led to greater resiliency and stronger relationships with other POC. This occurred both through increased internal strength as well as deeper bonding with other POC.

> *I've learned in the two years I've been here that you can't depend on white people to talk about faith or to keep you accountable. The first thing out of their mouth is "have you prayed"? As a SOC, I don't really have people who I trust that much to do that spiritual discussion with, so it's just between me and God and the growing is just with me for me.*

Several respondents stated that for them, spiritual growth happened through chaos. The lack of support from administrators and peers forced reliance on God during times of deepest pain.

Regarding deeper bonding with SOC, many respondents mentioned finding other SOC especially during times of racial harassment or racist events. One respondent said, "*I don't trust people easily but had a best friend at this university who was also a SOC and we shared all our struggles and really had each other's backs.*" Many respondents reported seeking out other SOC or faculty for support. It didn't seem to matter that faculty were POC, but more that they were available, willing to engage in problem-solving, listened non-judgmentally and helped connect students to resources.

Recommendations for Better Institutional Support for Spiritual Development

Many respondents highlighted their hope that their personal stories would be used for institutional change. This theme came up many times in individual interviews as well as during member checking. Respondents reported they were tired of being asked to speak their pain over and over in campus surveys. They asked that these data be shared with administrators, staff and faculty, and students as evidence of the need for institutional change. There were four main subthemes in this category. These included: 1) the need for greater diversity in the spiritual life of the institution, 2) need to emphasize social justice requires action, 3) need for greater contextualization of theology, and 4) need for greater emphasis on the community and less on individual salvation.

Need for greater diversity in spiritual life of institution. The most common response in this subtheme related to greater diversity in the background of people who speak in chapel as well a greater diversity of music. One respondent said simply*, "there needs to be more speakers of color in chapel and a bigger variety of music."* Another said*, "it doesn't have to be gospel all the time but I hear the same songs over and over. They must be popular at white mega churches or youth groups but I never heard of them and they don't speak to me."* Another respondent said,

> When it comes to faith, it is important who they bring to Chapel or to teach. There needs
> to be a greater diversity of thought and in the way they preach and teach. It is really
> uplifting to see someone who looks like me on stage or in front of the classroom. I get so
> tired of listening to the white, male view.

Students of color in a PWI are constantly reminded they are different. They may be stared at, excluded from social activities or group projects or feel isolated. Many SOC go to Chapel to feel more connected to God but instead are reminded they are different when they listen to speakers from the dominant group and music that is unfamiliar to them. Several respondents

recommended a bus so SOC could go to diverse community churches and others suggested

bringing diverse groups to campus.

Emphasis that social justice requires social action. Many SOC were disillusioned by

the lack of support they received particularly after racist events. One respondent said, *"reading*

that racist graffiti on my door was way less hurt than the fact that no one, not even my RA said

nothing about it afterwards. That's messed up." Other respondents reported when they tried to

express their pain they were told to pray. One respondent said,

> *They also want to use the Bible and say 'just pray about it' and that pisses me off. We're*
> *not praying about it. Jesus never said let's pray about nothing, he went out and did stuff*
> *so stop saying pray about it and go out and do something. It's extremely frustrating and*
> *happens over and over and over.*

Need for greater contextualization of theology. While this comment was less common,

several respondents felt very strongly this was an important aspect of institutional change. One

respondent said, *"Why we all gotta take Western Civilizations and not a course in Contextual*

Theology?" Another respondent said,

> *Egypt was in Africa, Jesus was not white. Most white students don't get this and it's*
> *mostly ignored in the Bible/Theology classes. This contributes to marginalization for*
> *SOC. They need to require at least one course from a non-Western lens.*

Greater emphasis on community and less on individualism. Many respondents were

surprised by the emphasis on individual spiritual growth and the lack of emphasis on growth as a

community. Many respondents reported coming from churches and communities that focused on

unity and collectivism. One respondent reported great excitement when she read the chosen

verse for new students during Welcome Week. She said,

> *When I first came to Bethel and saw our class verse was 'One Body' from Philippians I*
> *felt so hopeful but then every message in Chapel, my Bible class, Bible studies, and small*
> *groups was about individual salvation. Spiritual growth requires us to be one body, one*

mind, one spirit. The institution needs to work on unity. One body can't do it on their own. We need every part of the body to be strong. If one part is hurt, the whole body hurts. Most white students grab onto focus on individual faith but for SOC that is hurtful and isolating.

One respondent summed it up best when he said,

SOC to be able to have their opportunity at the highest potential to grow spiritually, we have to be able to be in an environment that is safe and welcoming, that is open-minded and accepting of differences. SOC have to feel they are accepted, and they are being understood, and in my experience, I don't think this has happened at least not to the extent that is needed for SOC to grow spiritually.

Discussion

The data from this study are consistent with studies on campus climate as well studies on the impact on racial microaggressions on SOC in higher education. However, this study adds to the existing literature through exploration of the impact of racial stress on spiritual development, how experiences with racism have contributed to adaptive responses, and recommendations from study respondents as to how the institution can better support spiritual development and greater inclusiveness for SOC in the spiritual life of the institution. Study participants identified similar experiences with microaggressions and their recommendations for the creation of more inclusive and welcoming institutional culture replicated what was found in the literature. It is interesting to note that SOC who transferred from other institutions, expected they would experience less overt racism at a Christian university. Other SOC had no expectations regarding racism on campus but were surprised by the lack of institutional response as well as how isolated they felt after racist incidents occurred. This sense of isolation was one of several key factors that emerged as being particularly noteworthy.

Further, many respondents identified isolation, difference, or lack of belonging as primary factors that negatively influenced their spiritual development. Most SOC were not

prepared for the pervasive 'sea of whiteness' they experienced. Many reported they were one of

a few or the only SOC in their classes or on their floor in their dormitory. Students from the

dominant culture rarely included SOC in their social plans or in academic group projects which

led to further isolation. In some cases, professors also asked SOC to be spokespeople for their

race in class discussions.

Many SOC sought spiritual support as a way to cope with isolation and loneliness. Some

strategies included attendance at Bible studies, Chapel or Vespers, an on-campus worship

service. SOC who participated in these events reported greater awareness of difference due to the

cultural context of their worship style or faith traditions. SOC reported feeling judged when their

worship style was questioned or deemed inferior to traditional, evangelical Christianity. In

addition, worship style, music, and chapel speakers seemed to represent the dominant student

body. SOC felt marginalized by the lack of diversity represented in the primary forms of

spiritual expression in the institution.

Another key factor that negatively impacted spiritual development for SOC was the

emphasis on individual spiritual growth as opposed to the spiritual growth of the community.

This illustrates a significant conflict in cultural norms. Many faculty, staff and students come

from cultural groups that value individualism and faith as a private endeavor. In these traditions,

salvation requires a personal relationship with the Creator and an introspective view of one's

personal commitment to faith.

SOC are frequently more accustomed to a collective view of community and often come

from churches that view each member as part of the body of Christ. When one person is

suffering the whole body suffers. Members of the community surround one another during times

of strife and prayer, music and messages from the pulpit emphasize bearing one another's

burdens. SOC who do not have a strong spiritual background, often come from cultures and

communities with similar communal values. Institutional leaders may not understand this clash

of cultural norms which can lead to further feelings of isolation and judgment for SOC in a PWI.

Strengths and Limitations

This study contained both strengths and limitations. Strengths of the study included

detailed interviews with SOC by a student researcher of color and focus groups facilitated by

faculty of color. The respondents were open, honest, and provided invaluable commentary of

their experiences in a PWI. It is likely the respondents' familiarity with the student researcher

and focus group facilitators allowed for trust and safety that provided significant depth and

vulnerability in respondent answers. This also indicates a potential limitation in the area of

researcher bias. The student researcher was a SOC and a junior in the institution being studied.

She experienced marginalization, isolation, and frequent microaggressions. Bias and previous

experience may also have influenced the faculty researcher who was in her tenth year of teaching

full-time in the institution. She served on the institutional Anti-Racism Committee and was

frequently sought out as a support person for SOC during periods of racial unrest or racial

harassment. The researchers took precautions to minimize bias through the use of structured

interviews, member checking and use of detailed transcripts but the complete elimination of bias

would be unrealistic.

Further Research

In addition, there is a significant need for further research on the spiritual development of

SOC in faith-based, PWI. Cervantes & Parhem (2005), highlight the dearth of information

related to identity development for SOC and how a negative campus climate and

microaggressions contribute to a negative self-image for SOC. Longitudinal studies with alumni

from PWI could help determine the long-term impact of racism on identity development.

Developmentally, college students are working on understanding and living out their identities

which encompass among other things, issues related to gender, sexual orientation, race, and

spirituality. The numbers of SOC in higher education will continue to increase. Institutions of

higher education will need to attract, retain and graduate students at the highest levels in order to

maintain financial viability as well as their reputation for inclusiveness. Faith-based, PWI will

need to listen to the voices and experiences of students and faculty of color if they hope to

compete for diverse students. Further research also needs to include factors that contribute to

retention of SOC as well as how campus staff and curricular and extra-curricular offerings help

nurture and support spiritual development.

The respondents from this study recommended how the institution can better support

spiritual development and provide a more inclusive environment for SOC in the spiritual life of

the institution. These recommendations include greater diversity in the spiritual life of the

institution which may include more diverse music, speakers, and forms of religious expression.

Other recommendations include greater contextualization of theology, and stronger emphasis on

social justice and unity in the student body as it exemplifies the body of Christ. PWI must be

intentional about creating a more flexible, inclusive spiritual environment where students from

diverse backgrounds can become unified as members of the body of Christ. Failure to create

more inclusive environments will have a negative impact on enrollment and retention of SOC as

well as reinforce systems of marginalization for people of color.

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Dismantling Racial Injustice: Teaching Anti-Racist Social Work Practice

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Author Note

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Abstract

Engagement in diversity assumes students understand the role of privilege and marginalization

and how each contributes to one's life experiences (CSWE, 2015). Students who are members of

the dominant group may adhere to a color-blind perspective which minimizes the contextual

conditions of historical and current racist practices (Bell, 2008; Delgado and Stefancic, 2012).

This workshop introduces a conceptual framework to engage professional social work educators

in conversation and collaboration regarding teaching issues of race, privilege, and oppression.

This workshop integrates concepts from Critical Race Theory (CRT) and will assist in further

development of an anti-racist, developmental model for social work educators

Keywords: cultural identity, privilege, and marginalization, and colorblindness

Dismantling Racial Injustice: Teaching Anti-Racist Social Work Practice

This peer-reviewed workshop was presented at the National Association of Christian

Social Work (NACSW) annual conference in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 19, 2016. Appendix

A provides documentation the workshop was accepted by NACSW. The goal of this presentation

was two-fold. The first part of the presentation outlined content from a manuscript that integrated

concepts derived from Critical Race Theory (CRT) and provided a developmental framework for

social work educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice.

The second part of the presentation was to engage professional educators in conversation

and collaboration regarding teaching issues of race, privilege, and oppression. During this

portion of the presentation, I facilitated dialogue with social work educators who teach diversity

courses in predominantly white institutions (PWI) to determine the validity of this conceptual

model. This feedback provided input to my ongoing scholarship to support a developmental

model to further inform anti-racist social work practice.

Presentation Abstract

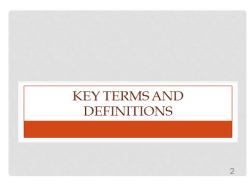The abstract printed in the NACSW conference brochure is as follows: Engagement in

diversity assumes students understand the role of privilege and marginalization and how each

contributes to one's life experiences (CSWE, 2015).This workshop integrates concepts from

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and provides a beginning developmental framework for social work

educators to teach and support anti-racist social work practice.

Presentation

The PowerPoint presentation is copied below and contains three main sections. These

sections include key terminology and definitions; barriers to racial awareness; implications of

colorblindness and teaching strategies to combat colorblindness. The first part of the presentation

(Slides 2-9) provided a definition of key terms. The definitions of many of the terms used in the

presentation such as race, privilege or white fragility can vary, so listing and defining key terms

allows for a common frame of reference. The second section of the presentation, (slides 10-13),

outline how defense mechanisms including denial and minimization create significant barriers to

the development of racial awareness and cultural identity. The use of the concepts of white

fragility and colorblindness provide examples of barriers to understanding systemic oppression

The third section, slides (14-20) reiterates implications of colorblindness and includes

three primary factors that reinforce and maintain a colorblind perspective, as well as related

strategies to combat each. A brief summary of each of the factors is provided, followed by

strategies of how to deconstruct a colorblind ideology. This section also provided structure for

ongoing discussion about effective teaching strategies to increase awareness of systemic

oppression and overcome an internalized colorblind perspective of race. The PowerPoint slides

are presented below.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

2

PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION (PWI)

- Predominantly White Institution (PWI)
  - Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment

  - Also recognizes the binarism and exclusion supported by the United States prior to 1964.

  - It is in a historical context of segregated education that predominantly White colleges and universities are defined and contrasted

3

RACE AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

- Race as a social construction

- Not based on biological factors but through social interactions and meaning given by society

- Social construction impacts privilege and oppression

4

CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

- Everyone goes through a process of Cultural Identity Development

- This process is unique to each individual and looks very different for people of color vs. people who are white.

5

CULTURAL IDENTITY MODELS

- This process is especially challenging in PWI

- https://studentdevelopmenttheory.wordpress.com/racial-identity-development/

- Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? By Beverly Tatum

- Racism Without Racists by Edward Bonilla-Silva

6

POWER AND PRIVILEGE

- Society gives **privilege** to groups by assigning **unearned over**advantage to some groups and **unearned under**advantage to others.

- Privilege is often subconscious and invisible; it is part of the air we breathe but we may not be aware of it
- May lack lived experience with racism which limits perspective on race

- Definers of social norms—acceptable behavior

7

EXAMPLES OF POWER AND PRIVILEGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Lack of diverse faculty , staff and students

- Access to resources

- Coping with microaggressions may take energy away from studying and academic performance

- Other examples?

8

MARGINALIZATION AND OPPRESSION

- Privileges for some members of society create marginalization for others.

- Marginalization creates barriers and prevents access to resources and processes of decision-making

- The pattern of historical systemic oppression in the U.S. perpetuates ongoing marginalization

9

BARRIERS TO RACIAL AWARENESS

10

DEFENSE MECHANISMS

- Denial

- Minimization

11

WHITE FRAGILITY

- Minor racial stress becomes intolerable, resulting in defensiveness. Whites may lack experience coping with racial stress

- Emotional response
  - Anger, fear, guilt

- Behavioral response
  - Argumentation, silence, or avoidance.

DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. International Journal of Critical Pedagogy, 3(3), p 54-70.

12

COLORBLINDNESS

- Race is not longer an issue; we live in a post-racial society

- Lack of awareness of racial socialization processes

- Racism is seen as an individual problem rather than structural

13

IMPLICATIONS OF COLORBLINDNESS

TEACHING STRATEGIES TO COMBAT COLORBLINDNESS

14

LACK OF AWARENESS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

- Do your own work

- Understand ethnic identity and how it impacts interaction with other ethnic groups

- Understanding whiteness as an ongoing, developmental process

15

TEACHING WHITE STUDENTS ABOUT CULTURAL IDENTITY

- *Ethnicity and Family Therapy* by McGoldrick & Garcia-Nieto
- Critical Family History
- http://christinesleeter.org/use-this-blog/
- http://www.tolerance.org/supplement/white-anti-racism-living-legacy

- https://www.facinghistory.org/professional-development/upcoming-webinars

- Other teaching resources

16

INTERNAL WORK FOR WHITE PEOPLE

- UNtraining www.untraining.org

- White Awareness by Katz

- White Fragility by DiAngelo
  - Defense mechanisms and emotional triggers

- SURJ—Showing Up for Racial Justice
- www.surjmn.org

17

LIMITED INTERACTION WITH THOSE OUTSIDE THE DOMINANT GROUP

- Segregated schools, churches, workplaces and communities

- White people often report close relationships with people of color but these relationships may lack trust and shared intimacy

- White students report "self-segregation or racial hostility" as a barrier w/o understanding context

18

LIMITED ENGAGEMENT IN CONVERSATION WITH THOSE OUTSIDE DOMINANT GROUP

- Silence as way to avoid saying something offensive BUT Silence = Privilege and prevents learning

- Need to take risks, make mistakes learn from mistakes

- Avoidance of settings where white students are racial minority

19

INCREASED INTERGROUP DIALOGUE

- Cross-cultural interaction in settings where privilege is not a benefit

- Addressing Incivility in the classroom

- https://igr.umich.edu/article/video-preventing-and-addressing-incivility

- Deep listening

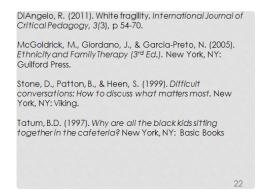Stone, Patton & Heen (1999). Difficult Conversations

20

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22

Summary of Feedback from Attendees

There were two sources of feedback on the content of the workshop. The first source of feedback came from discussion during and after the workshop presentation. Workshop participants appreciated the ability to share teaching resources as well as the opportunity to dialogue with other social work educators. Several participants commented on the challenge of finding resources to teach systemic oppression. Several white educators expressed concern they did not feel adequately trained to facilitate meaningful conversations about race in their classrooms. This difficulty was more pronounced in classes that included both white students and students of color. Several attendees commented training and the use of intergroup dialogue skills were helpful in the facilitation of conversations about race.

The second source of feedback came from the workshop evaluation forms (see Appendix B for a summary of the evaluation). This summary also provides documentation of the completion of the presentation. Positive feedback stated each of the learning objectives were clearly met; the 'presenter responded effectively to participants' (4.9/5) and participants 'would recommend this session and the session leader to others' (5/5). After the workshop, I received several requests to present this information at a state NASW conference and to faculty members of a large social work program working to infuse diversity into their curriculum.

While the evaluation forms did not include any critical comments or scores below 4.2/5, several comments alluded to areas for improvement. One participant wrote, "A bit of experiential (doing) would have been good; great content, broad and comprehensive." I thought about how to include an experiential learning exercise to the presentation. I agree an experiential activity may have helped demonstrate some of the teaching strategies. I also considered the time needed for debriefing an experiential activity. I determined there wasn't enough time to review the content, complete and debrief a learning activity, and discuss the validity of a conceptual, developmental model to teach issues of racial oppression and cultural identity. Another comment in the evaluation form stated, "I rated the objective "4" because I could only absorb a little of the great content." I think both comments speak to the broad scope of the presentation.

Reflection on Learning

The opportunity to present a portion of my scholarly work enhanced my overall banded dissertation. The process of proposing and preparing a presentation to my peers was helpful to my professional development. I was able to preview my workshop in a faculty development session in my institution. This trial run allowed for feedback to improve and better organize the presentation. Also, a presentation at a national conference enhanced my confidence and provided confirmation of the importance of this topic in social work and higher education. The process also reinforced the development of my expertise. I have developed an area of scholarly expertise that will continue to grow as I provide consultation and ongoing development of a conceptual, developmental model.

The presentation of my work was largely positive, but there were some challenges. One of the challenges related to the format of presentations. Many national conferences do not allow

the presenter to specify a particular format. Some conferences clearly state presenters must

accept whatever format is assigned to them. The differences between a roundtable discussion, a

poster presentation, and a ninety-minute workshop are enormous. I realized a roundtable

presentation/discussion would have been a better venue to obtain feedback to determine the

validity of a conceptual, developmental model. A roundtable would allow me the opportunity to

provide a brief overview of strategies to combat a colorblind perspective. Then I could ask

specific questions focused on the model and further development of the model.

Finally, I have considered strategies to increase the overall effectiveness of my

presentation. Based on feedback and my own reflection, I learned I tried to cover too much

content in my workshop presentation. While the content was well received and deemed helpful

by participants, there was simply too much content. It would have been useful to narrow the

scope of my content. For example, I could have focused solely on the third section of my

presentation, the implications of colorblindness, three factors that reinforce and maintain a

colorblind perspective and related strategies to combat each of the factors. A more specific focus

would provide more time for depth and analysis of the developmental model and related teaching

strategies.

Annotated References

Adams, M., Bell, L.A., & Griffin, P. (2007). Teaching for diversity and social justice: A

    sourcebook (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

    This text provides a broad range of teaching resources and activities for educators and

    students. The text is divided into three sections: Theoretical foundations and frameworks;

    curriculum designs for addressing diversity and social justice; and issues for teachers and

    trainers. I recommended this text to workshop participants as a resource to guide infusing

    diversity and social justice into their social work curriculum.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2012). *Racism without racists: Colorblind racism and racial inequality in*

    contemporary America. (3rd ed.). Lanham, MD: Littlefield Publishers Inc.

    This text was helpful in furthering my understanding of color-blind racism. This revised

    edition provides critical social commentary on contemporary issues of race in America.

    The author argues America is not engaged in a post-racial society but rather has entered a

    new period of colorblind racism.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (2nd ed.). New York,

    NY: University Press.

    This classic text outlines the primary tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and builds on

    the work of legal scholar Derrick Bell. This text provided a clear theoretical framework

    for my presentation and overall banded dissertation.

DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, *3(*3), p 54-70.

This article explains white fragility as a response to race-based stress. White people are

often insulated from racial stress which lowers their ability to tolerate racial stress. People

who are white may respond to racial incidents or conversations about race through

defensive emotional expressions such as fear, guilt, or anger. They may also respond

behaviorally through withdrawal, silence, or argumentation. The outcome of white

fragility is to reinforce racial hierarchy. The content in this article is essential for

educators who facilitate classroom conversations about race. White fragility must be

addressed as it is a significant roadblock to understanding issues of oppression and

marginalization.

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Garcia-Preto, N. (2005). *Ethnicity and Family Therapy (3rd*

Ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

This text was compiled to allow readers to increase understanding of their cultural and

ethnic heritage. Thirty-two ethnic or cultural groups are represented including most white-

European groups. Each chapter covers a particular ethnic group and outlines historical

issues, cultural values and norms, coping with stress, and family dynamics for each unique

group. This text is used to allow students to explore their background and to understand

how cultural values, and norms may conflict or contribute to cultural understanding.

During my presentation, I explained and shared a course assignment I created using this

text.

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (1999). *Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most.* New York, NY: Viking.

This book provides a framework for structuring conversations about race. Discussions of race can often be divisive and result in frustration and misunderstanding. One component of my presentation addressed how to facilitate difficult conversations about race in the classroom. Many workshop participants had read this book and recommended the use of intergroup dialogue as an effective strategy for cross-racial discussion. Several other presenters presented intergroup dialogue as a strategy for difficult conversations about religions and sexual orientation.

Tatum, B.D. (1997). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?* New York, NY: Basic Books.

A black psychologist with expertise in cultural identity development wrote this text. It provides a clear overview of cultural identity and subsequent behaviors. It addresses racial stereotypes and ties behavior to cultural norms. The text also includes several theoretical models for cultural identity development.

Appendix A

Documentation of Acceptance

Hi, Amy Lary White.

It is our pleasure to inform you that **your workshop proposal entitled "Dismantling Racial Injustice: Teaching Anti-Racist Social Work Practice" has been selected** for inclusion in the program at NACSW's 66[th]Convention 2016 in Cincinnati, Ohio. **Your workshop has been scheduled for Saturday, 11/19/2016 from 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM.** This year over 190 quality proposals were submitted, making the competition for the limited number of available workshop slots particularly rigorous. Congratulations on the selection of your proposal for our program!

The following represents additional information related to your workshop presentation. Please retain this email as it contains important information regarding your session:

1. As we outlined in our call for presentations, NACSW will provide an LCD data projector (for PowerPoint presentations), VGA or HDMI connecting cables, and a screen for your presentation at no cost. Please contact the Hilton's AV company, Prestige, at their Hilton office 513-784-1625 to make arrangements to rent this additional equipment at your own cost.

2. NACSW will again be producing an online publication of conference proceedings – our Convention 2016 Proceedings. To view a copy of last year's proceedings, you can go to:
      http://www.nacsw.org/Convention/Proceedings2016.htm

4. To help you with your workshop preparation, you can access a copy of a sample workshop evaluation form by going to: http://www.nacsw.org/Convention/Evaluation.pdf.

For your convenience, **you can register for the convention online by going to: http://www.nacsw.org/cgi-bin/eventpro.cgi.** Additional information regarding the convention, hotel accommodations, etc. can be found

at: http://www.nacsw.org/conv_head_text.html, or you can contact the NACSW office (info@nacsw.org) if you have questions or need assistance.

We are delighted you will be providing this important contribution to our convention. On behalf of the North American Association of Christians in Social Work, congratulations and we look forward to seeing you in Cincinnati in November!

Blessings,

Rick Chamiec-Case
NACSW Executive Director

Appendix B

Documentation of Completion of Presentation

NACSW Convention 2016 Workshop Session Evaluation

Session J (1.0 CEU)	Workshop 20120868	Date 11/19/2016	Time 4:45 - 5:45pm	Location Mayflower 1&2

Workshop Title: Dismantling Racial Injustice: Teaching Anti-Racist Social Work Practice

Presenter(s): Amy Lary White
Number of Completed Evaluations: 11
Ratings based on: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

Learning Objectives	Average
1. Understand and apply teaching strategies that raise student awareness of the role of white privilege and social identity	4.54
2. Understand color-blindness and articulate teaching strategies that support students of faith to move beyond a color-blind perspective to anti-racist practice	4.54
3. Understand and begin to apply a framework for teaching anti-racist social work practice in predominantly white, Christian institutions of higher education.	4.54
Workshop Session and Presenter	**Average**
4. The session material was appropriate to my education, experience and/or license level	4.72
5. The session material was relevant to my practice	4.72
6. The session material was current	4.72
7. The session presented the content effectively	4.72
8. The teaching aids (PowerPoint, handouts, other technology, etc.) enhanced the content of this session	4.50
9. The presenter was knowledgeable about the content of this session	4.72
10. The presenter communicated the content of this session clearly	4.72
11. The presenter responded effectively to participants	4.9
12. The presenter used the technology effectively	4.5
13. The presenter integrated faith and practice effectively	4.2
14. The setting (room size, temperature, seating arrangement, etc.) was adequate	4.4
15. I would recommend this session and session leader to others	5
OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE (Questions 4 – 15)	4.64

Comments & Suggestions:

- "Practical teaching activities & references. Thank you!"
- "A bit of experiential (doing) would have been good. Great content, broad and comprehensive"
- "I rated the objective "4" because I could only absorb a little of the great content"