

2014 Great Lakes Conference: Cleveland, OH

Theme: *Building Bridges within the World of Counseling Psychology and Beyond its Borders to Connect Diverse People, Communities, and Concerns: Benefits of Social Justice to All.*

Overall Symposium Summary -- Ripple Effects of a Minority Leadership Training Program: Beyond its target

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Discussant: Y. Barry Chung, Ph.D. (chungyb@indiana.edu) – Indiana University

The APA Commission of Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training in Psychology (2008) pointed out the underrepresentation of minorities in the field of psychology, particularly in leadership positions. In response to the shortage of minority leaders, the Council of National Psychological Associations for the Advancement of Ethnic Minority Interests (CNPAAEMI) initiated a Leadership Development Institute (LDI) in 2012. The major purpose of the LDI was to foster and nurture ongoing leadership development among early career ethnic minority psychologists.

This symposium addresses the ripple effects of this leadership development program. Although the LDI aimed to foster leadership development among a cohort of six early-career ethnic minority professionals, the training program had ripple effects that extended well beyond its primary purpose. This symposium draws from a collaborative project – interviewing ethnic minority leaders in psychology – initiated by the LDI fellows that provided unanticipated learning opportunities for both the fellows and students assisting the project.

The first presentation, led by a LDI fellow, will delineate the LDI mechanism and discusses the importance of connecting in-group and out-group members in minority leadership. The second presentation, led by racial minority graduate students, will emphasize the significance of empowerment and presence of role models when considering the pipeline of minority leadership development. The final presentation, led by White minority graduate and undergraduate students, will discuss the nature of White privilege at academic institutions as well as their own personal growth.

This symposium targets the following sub-themes of the 2014 Counseling Psychology Conference: training context and domestic/international diversity. A past president of the Society of Counseling Psychology will be a discussant. This symposium offers valuable information regarding leadership training mechanisms in order to enhance cultural sensitivity among all individuals in the psychology field regardless of their color, sexual orientation, or professional/academic levels.

294 Words

Presentation 1 – The Power of a Minority Leadership Training Program: Benefits of connecting in-group and out-groups at all levels

Michiko Iwasaki, Ph.D. (miwasaki@loyola.edu) – Loyola University Maryland

According to the Commission on Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training in Psychology (APA, 2008), a paucity of ethnic minority psychologists in the field remains. Racial and ethnic minority psychologists are underrepresented at all levels of the APA including leadership positions. In order to respond to the shortage of minority leaders, the Council of National Psychological Associations for the Advancement of Ethnic Minority Interests (CNPAAEMI) formed an inter-organizational Leadership Development Institute (LDI). This presentation outlines the structure of LDI and illustrates the importance of “connecting” in and out groups at all levels.

The first cohort of fellows was recruited from four ethnic minority psychological associations (Asian American Psychological Association, Association of Black Psychologists, National Latina/o Psychological Association, Society of Indian Psychologists) and APA’s Divisions 45 and 17. As a LDI project, fellows conducted twelve qualitative interviews aimed at understanding leadership trajectories of ethnic minority leaders from psychology organizations. An interpretative phenomenological analysis was applied to generate major themes.

Connecting in-group and out-group members at all levels was found to be an essential element in attracting minority individuals to leadership pathways and responding to challenges in taking leadership roles. Regarding pathways to leadership, *the power of mentorship* was identified. As undergraduate, graduate, or early-career psychologists, minority leaders were empowered by their mentors. Examples include “My leadership experiences were more influenced by my early mentors in psychology A, B, and C (naming psychologists from the same racial group) and “I had a white male mentor...he said that once people see you in action, they’ll elect you to other things.” As a minority leader, they acknowledged *the existence of microaggression* both in minority communities and larger psychological society. Thus, *encouragement of dialogue and communication* was found to be crucial. Implications of these findings for leadership training in counseling psychology will be discussed.

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Presentation 2 -- Minority Leadership Training: Impact of Minority Leaders on Minority Students

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According to social capital theory, the relationships that a person develops increase opportunities for success in their field (Rumala, 2012). Existing research, however, has shown that minorities often lack the social capital necessary to advance their careers due to a shortage of mentorship and networking relationships (Rumala, 2012). Scholars have emphasized the importance of mentors and role models particularly for minorities. These seasoned persons are able to show how one can successfully navigate through the challenges unique to minorities by defying stereotypes and sharing coping strategies (Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004).

Some researchers explored the characteristics of an effective mentor for minority students. Yet there appears to be no consensus. Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) proposed the similarity hypothesis which states that we choose mentors of the same race based on our assumption that someone who is similar to us is able to relate to our experiences. Others have stated that such effectiveness is more about complimentary personalities and mentorship skills (Burney, Celeste, Johnson, Klein, Nordal, & Portnoy, 2009). This presentation will evaluate these different views about mentorship and role models.

As a part of training in qualitative research, we as minority graduate students took notes to help us reflect upon the content of ten interview transcriptions with minority leaders in psychology. Our field notes supported minority graduate students benefit from but do not require guidance from a mentor of their own minority group.

The virtue of empowerment was essential. Minority leaders in the interviews genuinely presented their cultural identities compared to our own tendencies to minimize certain parts of our cultural identities to fit within a given situation. This presentation will provide insight into the importance of mentorship for minority students, which may students in order to continue discussions of how to increase the number of minority students in the field.

300 Words

Presentation 3 -- Awareness of White Privilege: White students' Perspectives on Minority Leadership Training

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Is ignorance really bliss? As a White student at a predominately White university, it is easy to overlook existing racism and prejudice in contemporary society. Baumgartner and Johnson-Bailey (2010) pointed out the existence of White privilege and oppression in academic institutions as observed in biased student admissions, academic curriculum, and classroom interactions. Lund (2010) stated “the journey can be lonely, as White friends and colleagues do not understand why this examination is necessary; educators and friends of color have no trouble understanding” (p.15). Due to the nature of existing educational systems, persistent efforts and creative interventions are needed to help White students and faculty members become aware of their privileged status.

This presentation will discuss how White students have increased awareness of White privilege in a research training setting. An undergraduate male and graduate female student, both White, reviewed ten interview transcriptions of minority leaders in the psychology field. They kept personal reflection journals during the process of understanding the worldviews of these leaders. Two major themes emerged in their journals. First, we as students were surprised to find that some “presidents of psychology” organizations struggle to receive credibility and gain legitimacy within their field because of the White dominant field. Second, we found ourselves more cognizant of the nature of our classrooms and campus as the result of reviewing the interview transcripts. For example, we now pay more attention to the representation of minority students in a given group and what kinds of interaction they experience with the majority.

Two educational levels of White psychology students (i.e., undergraduate and graduate) will share their awakening experience of what it means to be White and stepping out of “color blindness.” White students’ perspectives of promoting White privilege awareness in a college setting will be introduced in conjunction with existing literature.

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