Original Paper

What can Counselors do to Lessen the Trauma to the DACA Population Caused by the 2016 Election Cycle Rhetoric?

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Abstract

This case study focused on the impact to DACA participants in a mid-western city enrolled at an urban school setting in a region where 30% of all residing immigrants are unauthorized (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2016). The investigation aimed to understand if the language used during the 2016 election cycle altered trauma-related behaviors in the DACA population. The data collected during the study suggested that students who identified with the DACA group exhibited trauma-related behaviors different from behaviors previously observed, and the new behaviors were a result of election cycle rhetoric. Implications for counselor training were significant.

Keywords

Trauma, Counselors, Latino

1. Introduction

During the 2016 election cycle, observed was candidate language never been seen previously in the United States (Zeff, 2017). Because of the harsh language used against perceived targeted groups, children across the United States who identified within these groups became frightened (Costello, 2016), and consequently more susceptible to trauma experienced by the rash of negative media attention given to such rhetoric (Viana et al., 2017). Counselors and educators took notice (American Counseling Association, 2016) as these new behaviors occurred in classrooms and soon were identified as trauma (Zeff, 2017). Additionally, the end of the 2016 election season did not see the end of the use of this inflammatory rhetoric (Aslanian & Pekow, 2017). On the contrary, it increased all over the country, on the Internet, in social media, and on websites (Hanna et al., 2017; Pinedo, 2020). This has led to concern by professionals in how first to identify and then address these trauma behaviors. For

this reason, the following research questions guided this investigation: *What can counselors and educators do to protect children in perceived targeted groups once election cycle trauma has been identified? How can counselors and educators minimize impacts on cognitive development in children of recognized targeted groups caused by election cycle trauma*?

1.1 Conceptual Framework

Prior researchers across educational and counseling professions have utilized Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a theoretical framework in which to view development and behavior (Collins, 2008; Maslow, 2005). Maslow likened his theory to a pyramid. The pyramid has five levels each person achieves throughout their development. At the foundation of the pyramid are the necessities for life that include food, water, and shelter (Maslow, 2005). While on the second level, safety and stability reside (Collins, 2008). There are three more levels to Maslow's theory, at the top: loving and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 2005). However, Maslow argued human beings could not progress through the higher, three levels without first meeting the basic needs of survival, and then safety. For this reason, it is essential to understand where election cycle trauma fits with Maslow's theory and to understand how young adults identifying in perceived targeted groups view current election rhetoric.

Maslow's (2005) theory highlighted behavior caused by election cycle trauma in two ways. First, the theory was used to exam the safety of students, and second, it examined how safety leads to a feeling of belonging. When children do not feel safe, they will not be able to develop a sense of belonging, which leads to well-being (Maslow, 2005). This lack of belonging will hinder their development, both physically and emotionally (Danese & Baldwin, 2017; Darragh & Petrie, 2019).

Furthermore, perceived trauma experiences caused by election cycle rhetoric could lead to long-term effects later in life, like mental health disorders (Horowitz, 2015). Byrd and Carter Andrews (2016) emphasized that the impact of discrimination based on targeted identities like religion, race, gender, and sexual orientation can have consequences on engagement in learning and overall academic achievement. Their argument became significant when thinking about the 2016 election cycle, and the rhetoric used by candidates. Zeff (2017) argued language since the election has seemingly been directed toward immigrants.

Currently, in 2020, with a new election on the horizon, this anti-immigrant rhetoric has only increased. At the time of this writing, in Florida's 21st District, Laura Loomer is running for congressional office with increasing support (Obeidallah, 2020). Ms. Loomer is outspoken about her hatred of those of the Islamic faith, proclaiming on Twitter to be a proud Islamaphobe (Obeidallah, 2020). She is not the only person to have run for office with support. In 2018 Steve King, a known White Nationalist, ran for and subsequently won, the 4th district of Iowa using anti-immigrant sentiments as his platform (Bort, 2019). Similarly, political policies continue to target immigrants. On February 5, 2020, the Department of Homeland Security suspended the residents of New York's access from enrolling or re-enroll in the Trusted Traveler Programs over a state law in New York that allows undocumented immigrants to gain driver's licenses (News & Guts, 2020). This type of retaliation against sanctuary cities further

44

reinforces the idea that certain groups are targeted. In this case, undocumented immigrants. Additionally, not only do people identifying within perceived targeted groups interpret this language as targeting them, but others also recognize this as targeting specific groups. Evidence for this can be observed when looking at the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) statistical data on hate crimes. In 2017, the FBI hate crimes statistical report was released and confirmed that hate crimes against the Muslim population saw the most significant jump with more than a 19% increase over 2015 (FBI: UCR, 2017; Willingham, 2017).

When looking at more recent hate crimes making national news, evidence of this can be found. On August 3, 2019, a mass shooting occurred in El Paso, Texas, killing 22. After this shooting, the Latinx population across the country have reported living in constant fear due to "One of the deadliest hate crimes in American history against Latinos" (Nanez et al., 2019, para. 1). The targeting of undocumented immigrants can unintentionally send a message that all people who are from other countries are residing in the United States illegally.

White House correspondent Carrasquillo (2020) confirmed this when he discussed an analysis of several thousand news articles since November 8, 2016, showing that the verbal abuse President Trump uses at his rallies and on the campaign trail is being used by children to bully other children. Moreover, Carrasquillo noted that school employees, people tasked with student safety, are also using this language to intimidate children and teens. Even students of kindergarten age are using this language to bully other kids (Natanson, Cox, & Stein, 2020).

In Tennessee, middle school children linked themselves arm and arm to imitate a border wall, and would not allow non-white children to go to class (Natanson, Cox, & Stein, 2020). Additionally, Carrasquillo (2020) cited an incident in New Jersey where a teen had told a student of Mexican-American descent to go behind the wall and then later assaulted the child. Even as these reports come in, the defense from public relations teams is that the sentiment is not against immigration; it is against illegal immigration (Carrasquillo, 2020). However, as noted later in the article, the problem is no one is asking for immigration papers before attacking someone (Carrasquillo, 2020). Furthermore, it was found that "Trump-connected persecution" has not quit since the 2016 election (Natanson, Cox, & Stein, 2020, para. 4). Unfortunately, more and more evidence demonstrated the consequences of election cycle language, coupled by the actions of both media and the administration, can inadvertently spill over into society, unintentionally causing trauma to children (Byrd & Carter Andrews, 2016; Crawford & Valle, 2016; Crethar & Rats, 2016; Zeff, 2017).

When reflecting on this information, it can be determined children identifying within these targeted groups feel defenseless, helpless, and exposed - all terms, which lead to the definition of trauma (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Whether the threat is perceived or real, the subsequent election cycle trauma experienced by children in these groups jeopardized the basic needs they require to develop in a learning environment (Danese & Baldwin, 2017; Guliz Mert et al., 2016). As Darragh and Petrie (2019, p. 187), noted, "Every student has the right to feel safe physically and emotionally in

45

school. If political trauma causes fear, worry, or anxiety for students, education will likely be impeded". Therefore, when counselors and educators contemplate how to keep students safe to deflect election cycle trauma, Maslow's theory is the most concise conceptual framework to address the current problem of practice (Collins, 2008; Maslow, 2005).

2. Method

This investigation used the basic qualitative study design proposed by Merriam (2009) and followed the case study method to collect data (Creswell, 2009). A case study, as discussed by Creswell (2009), is a "…strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals" (p. 13).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with counselor/liaisons and educational leaders to provide "…comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and the differences of information" (Creswell, 2009, p. 13). Additionally, counselors came from different perspectives and theoretical backgrounds as educators, but share similar theoretical approaches (Collins, 2008; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016; Willis & Nagel, 2015). Moreover, counselor's viewpoints are valuable to data collection about determining the impact of election cycle trauma on the children they work with (Bray, 2016; Byrd & Carter Andrews, 2016; Costello, 2016; Crawford & Valle, 2016). Counselors have unique training in trauma and how to identify trauma-related behaviors (American Counseling Association, 2016; Collins, 2008), and often work with children and can report the behaviors they observe in the classroom (Costello, 2016).

2.1 Participants

For this study, purposeful sampling included counselors, district administrators, and DACA students. Four participants from the counselor group at KCPS were interviewed (n=4). All worked with children from kindergarten through the high school level. Interviews were conducted with two administrators (n=2) of the district to explore organizational concerns for students in perceived targeted groups (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, one focus group of DACA students was conducted (n=4).

The information from participating counselors and educational leaders provided what Merriam (2009) considered an observational case study. The observational case study, according to Merriam (2009), could focus on a particular group of people. The observational case study sampling coincided with the method of collecting data suggested by Creswell (2009) because these two groups of participants were "…bounded by time and activity…" and the researcher could "…collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures…" (Merriam, 2009, p. 13) due to their contact with children at varying levels of cognitive developmental stages.

2.1.1 Instrumentation Protocol

Used in this study were semi-structured interviews with district administrators. The interview questions were open-ended and consisted of what or how items to generate useful feedback (Creswell, 2009). For the two focus groups, the protocol used a multiple-category design to compare how adult DACA

students of KCPS viewed the 2016 election cycle rhetoric (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Additionally, a review of documents was used, looking at the KCPS five-year strategic plan to understand the vision of KCPS for student success (Merriam, 2009).

Interviews were conducted with two district leaders of KCPS to help explore issues that initially drove organizational concerns for students in perceived targeted groups (Creswell, 2009). The two leaders chosen for interviews were able to provide their expectations and shared experiences of the newly identified election cycle trauma. Specifically, leaders of KCPS brought insight into organizational stakeholder concerns and were able to view the worries of counselors and educators collectively to address needs in classroom environments (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Additionally, leaders of KCPS hold community connections that bring together stakeholders outside the organization to assess the anxieties of the community and address the collective concerns of the stakeholders (Northouse, 2013).

One focus group was done with students of the immigrant community to offer understanding into how the current program implemented by KCPS had ameliorated concerns for children and families in perceived targeted groups (Krueger & Casey, 2009). The idea of this focus group was to help the organization glean insight into the overall effectiveness of the program (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Additionally, understanding from this focus group addressed the additional needs of the community and maintained quality improvement efforts of the program (Krueger & Casey, 2009) because this group had the most knowledge about how the 2016 election cycle rhetoric influenced their lives (Merriam, 2009).

The second focus group was composed of counselors. Counselors were valuable to this research because they can identify trauma-related behaviors and understand the impact trauma exposure has on cognitive learning development, and essential steps taken with relation to minimizing these effects (Danese & Baldwin, 2017; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016). Additionally, counselors understand trauma's impact on social and emotional well-being (Banyard, Hamby, & Grych, 2017; Font & Berger, 2014). Finally, counselors can help educators understand perceived discrimination (Byrd & Carter Andrews, 2016). In addition, they can provide the meaning of microaggression and how to minimize microaggressions in the classroom (Sue, 2015; Sue & Constantine, 2007). Furthermore, counselors with educators and leaders of the community to garner advocacy, and assure social justice for students and their families who have been impacted by the 2016 election cycle rhetoric.

Counselors bring value because they can provide a unique insight into the atmosphere of the school environment, and the impact of the 2016 election cycle rhetoric on behaviors of the students they teach (Collins, 2008; Crawford & Valle, 2016). Furthermore, counselors observe interactions between students and can attest to how election cycle trauma manifests itself during classroom exchanges (Collins, 2008).

As in any investigation that involves human subjects, the following ethical guidelines were essential to protect the participants. These protections included safeguarding the participants from harm, assuring confidentiality, and avoiding any deception for the participants involved in the research (Creswell,

2015). Gathered were data from interviews of special education administrators, focus groups of teachers, and a focus group of college students. Triangulation of the data occurred using rich, thick descriptions provided from the interviews and focus groups (Creswell, 2015).

2.1.2 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves the organization and interrogating of data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories (Hatch, 2002). According to Kitzinger (1995), this analysis of the data ends as the researchers compare similar themes and examine how these relate to the variables within the sample population. This understanding of the data requires conceptual level processes of exploring the meanings, patterns, or connections among the data (Fossey et al., 2002).

After the collection of data, the transcription of the interviews was conducted, and field notes were completed. Performed in a systematic manner was the coding of the transcripts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Employed was a two-part coding process to label the segments of data to identify themes (Fossey et al., 2002). First, open coding involving the researchers examining the units of analysis and formulating basic descriptions of the studied phenomena, then grouping them into general categories that described the participants' experiences (Nelson & Quintana, 2010). Next, the researchers employed an axial coding method that created inferential descriptions of the processes and giving them meaning that was relevant to the research questions (Nelson & Quintana, 2010). Coding included meanings, patterns, and connections among data, thus giving an understanding of the data about the research questions (Fossey et al., 2002). As an additional level of data triangulation (Creswell, 2015), field notes were interpreted about the findings in the transcriptions.

3. Settings

Selected for this case study based on the demographics of immigrant and minority populations within a district was a large urban school district in Kansas City, Missouri (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2016). According to Zeff (2017), the Kansas City Missouri Public School (KCPS) District has been proactive in addressing trauma-related issues as a direct result of the 2016 election cycle rhetoric. The organization has created a program to address election cycle trauma and provide a safe environment for students who belong to the DACA demographic. This program falls in line with KCPS's five-year strategic plan (Kansas City Public Schools, 2017). Creswell (2009) discussed that in qualitative research, the researcher would "identify the purposefully selected sites or individuals for the proposed study" (p. 178).

Because the KCPS strategic plan was designed to work with DACA and other groups regarding the 2016 election cycle rhetoric, it became a logical place to begin research into the impact of election cycle trauma on cognitive learning development in children of perceived targeted groups. Chosen was the Kansas City Missouri Public School District for the setting of this research. KCPS is located in Kansas City, Missouri, and is part of western Jackson County. It has a large, diverse population of

48

students who speak two common languages: English and Spanish (Kansas City Public Schools, 2017). Additionally, Kansas City holds a large population of immigrants. In 2015, an estimated 135,000 immigrants were living within the Kansas City, Missouri city limits, which represented seven percent of the population (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2016). According to Capps and Ruiz Soto (2016), the immigrant community for Kansas City has grown by 300 percent since 1990, and this statistic is comparable to other cities of similar size.

Additionally, from 2010-2014 children of immigrants who reside in the area were at an estimated 63,000 and roughly 52,000 were born in the United States (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2016). Of the number of children born in the United States, approximately 20,000 have at least one parent who is an unauthorized immigrant living in the United States, and roughly 4,000 children of these parents are also unauthorized (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2016). Moreover, the Migration Policy Institute estimates about 2,000 of these children are eligible for DACA in Jackson County alone (Capps & Ruiz Soto, 2016).

In KCPS, 15,500 students are attending K-12, and approximately fifty languages are spoken there (Kansas City Public Schools, 2017). Demographics for students within KCPS show 57% Black, 28% Hispanic, 9% White, and 6% Asian/Other (Kansas City Public Schools, 2017). Furthermore, of these students, for 20% of them, English is not their first language, 92% are in low-income brackets, and 17% are in special education (Kansas City Public Schools, 2017). Additionally, there are thirty-four academic locations (Kansas City Public Schools, 2017). This made KCPS the ideal setting for the start of research regarding election cycle trauma, and the impact of 2016 candidate rhetoric on children who identify with perceived targeted groups.

4. Results

Using these methods of data collection, the researchers were able to identify three themes; *social-emotional well-being perceived threat to safety* and *trauma*. Trauma behaviors differed from behaviors seen before the 2016 election cycle. Variables identified were *vulnerability*, *uncertainty*, *perception of racism against immigrants*, *internally conflicted*, *lack of trust*, and *attendance issues*.

The researchers asked leader and counselor participants to give insight into what types of services were already in place to help immigrant student populations cope with their perceived threats. According to most participants, KCPS had already started implementing services that were targeted to help immigrant students acculturate to their new environment. Many of the participants alluded to services such as ELL classes being provided. For example, one counselor participant stated, "We have assigned ELL teachers that will teach you the new American role. Social workers had already been a part of the KCPS district to help students adjust culturally".

To help protect children who have been identified as exhibiting election cycle trauma, additional services suggested by the counselors included making sure those children can be enrolled regardless of having the proper documentation. Other recommended services could involve collaborating with the public libraries to help immigrant families, "We are working with the public library to bring in

49

citizenship classes for those individuals who are ready to take the citizenship test", stated one participant. Thus, helping children overcome their apprehensiveness of receiving services because of their fear of being identified as DACA participants. Having social worker support for social-emotional wellness was also mentioned. Educating school staff, teachers, and leaders. One leader participant stated,

> I think the easiest thing we can do at this point continues to go to the schools and say, look, we recognize what's happening out there…make sure you talk to your teachers and your staff members about some of the frustrations that are occurring, and you know in particular in response to some of the things that the results of the election have yielded for us.

Furthermore, "Give people hope and help them if they need to be successful such as "counseling" and "tutoring of classes" were the suggestions given by DACA participants to protect children during this time. Participants gave several ideas to minimize the effects of election cycle trauma. One DACA contributor mentioned community outreach by school officials, noting, "Teachers, leaders, and counselors need to reach out. Presence in Hispanic and other events with immigrants. Post informational posters in places heavily frequented by immigrants". KCPS school leaders are already thinking about ways to address and minimize these effects. Other services are already being implemented, or in the process of being implemented due to variables mentioned, as was stated by one leader participant,

> The poverty, the extreme poverty of immigrants that are coming in. So, we've started a food pantry at Northeast High School. The mentoring piece that we have put in place, the trauma-informed program that we have, our three-year program…which kind of deals with us being more proactive and restorative…We need our kids to be healthy, so we are trying everything in our power to create these partnerships and to create these systems that would help control for as many of these variables that we think contribute to kids being socially and emotionally down.

Still, more services could be put in place, according to participants. Therapy resources in multiple languages and which could be in-home or in school were talked about by counselor participants, "I think we need access to mental health resources available in multiple languages that can meet folks where they're at. So, asking somebody to get to Truman to an office is difficult. So, in-home services and in-school services would be phenomenal". Also mentioned by counselor/liaisons was cultural sensitivity when stating, "I mean we have something like 1400 refugees, and like 4,000 ESL students… and it's hard to keep a consistently positive environment related to cultural competence".

Other therapy services were also suggested by counselor participants, as noted by a counselor, "Just to work with a group and to provide group therapy or counseling. You know, or one on one counseling". Also mentioned by another was using play therapy, "Play therapy… so having services that meet the needs of children that may express themselves nonverbally, so for our elementary-age students, there is a lack of services available. Quality play therapy or other modalities that are suited to young children".

50

Other ideas mentioned by counselor participants were keeping kids involved and together using social organizations, "A lot of that can be done through increasing social organizations, and increasing extracurricular or offerings after school". "We need to train teachers about what has resulted from the election cycle". Another stated, "We had already educated our principals on the issue and for them to listen, making sure you talk to your teachers and your staff members about some of the frustrations that are occurring, and in particular in response to some of the things the results of the election has yielded for us".

Another participant said, "We need better training. We need more understanding of the ELL community in this district and their needs, and of what they're going through. But you know we need training from all different hierarchies".

Another stated,

> Helping students and families who are preliterate is a concern, we have lots of folks that are preliterate, and they're in their primary language. So, figuring out ways to engage and communicate with them…it…has to be verbal and there is no other way to convey the information".

It is clear that participants do have ideas on how to address the cultural aspect.

4.1 Discussion

A vast amount of literature suggests that trauma has an impact on cognitive development and the ability to learn (Banyard et al., 2017; Bryant & Foord, 2016; Collins, 2008; Danese & Baldwin, 2017; Font & Berger, 2014; Guliz Mert et al., 2016; Le Dorze & Gisquet-Verrier, 2016; Zeanah & Sonuga-Barke, 2016). Leaders in both the counseling and educational professions have noticed an alarming amount of trauma in children because of election cycle rhetoric (Costello, 2016; Keierleber, 2017). This research sought to uncover, identify, and define election cycle trauma. Additionally, once election cycle trauma was identified and described, an examination of its impact on cognitive-developmental learning ensued. It is incumbent upon the researchers to note that some words and phrases were consistent across all time frames regardless of election cycle rhetoric. Anger, fear, bullying, anxiety, safety, racism, lack of concentration, and lack of motivation were consistent keywords used to describe the experiences of immigrant students regardless of the outside climate. Social-emotional distress was mentioned as one of the realities of learning to live in a new country and adapting to the new culture. Many students were described as being "quick to be ready to fight" because of the frustration of being new to the country, thus showing their anger.

Additionally, participants noted, "there has always been a fear" of deportation for family members. Across all participant data, themes of *well-being, perception of safety, and trauma* were consistent with Maslow's theory. Leaders, counselors/liaisons, and DACA participants all mentioned the same three themes. These three categories found align directly to the second level of Maslow's pyramid, safety (Maslow, 2005).

Once the researchers were able to recognize critical terms that presented before the 2016 election cycle,

attention could examine any new conditions that surfaced. New variables presented during and after the 2016 election including; *vulnerability*, *uncertainty*, *perception of racism against immigrants*, *internally conflicted*, *lack of trust*, and *attendance*. Although all of these variables are essential, the researchers chose to focus on a lack of trust for this investigation.

Lack of trust uncovered during analysis presents a significant barrier which if not overcome, will hinder K-12 organizational plans to help students succeed. Lack of trust between students and teachers, along with lack of trust between students and other stakeholders of the organization such as security personnel, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and other employees is disturbing because if students lack trust in their educational institution, it will, in turn, affect well-being, safety, and trauma. Lack of trust can lead to an increase in safety concerns for students (Horowitz, 2015; Le Dorze & Gisquet-Verrier, 2016; Willis & Nagel, 2015). Trust is the foundation of all relationships and is necessary for people to feel safe (Collins, 2008; Maslow, 2005; Sharp, Hodge, & Danish, 2015).

When thinking of the trust component for this research data, lack of trust can be a term, which commensurate with internally conflicted, perception of racism against immigrants, and the other identified new variables identified as election cycle trauma. It is difficult for trust to be garnered in the current environment according to the data collected. It was mentioned by one participant that a girl had her hijab pulled, and she brought her concerns forward to teachers and counselors. Her trust in the school was broken during this incident because it seemed to her that her concerns been dismissed as general bullying, or kids' stuff. One counselor/liaison participant felt the event was a result of culture shock, "If somebody pushed them down the line, they start crying. Oh, this person pushed me, somebody pulled my hijab… it's a culture shock. It's a different culture". Another counselor/liaison participant stated, "There's a lot of trauma with undocumented students. There's a lot more pressure now, with you know… with the new political environment".

This new political environment is seeping out into the school and causing students to lack trust in their teachers and even their counselors and liaisons. "Students were talking about some teachers openly supporting Donald Trump's vision and philosophy, thus creating a sense of, well, she's with Trump. If Trump wants to deport us, then so does she or he", said one participant. This contributes to the previous variable of internally conflicted and creates an environment where students do not trust the leaders, teachers, or even the bus drivers and cafeteria staff in their school culture.

Additionally, this lack of trust variable creates us versus them mentality, "All they're thinking about is, are you against me or for me? Are you for the president or against the president, and are you for his tactics? So, you keep thinking about whether or not I can trust you…well, in my mind, I wouldn't be able to trust you because I don't know if you are going to turn me in", said one leader participant. Another participant stated, "They're in a state of protection, in my opinion".

Lack of trust goes back to Maslow's (2005) pyramid and contributes to the level of safety at the foundation of the pyramid. If students are unable to trust leaders, their counselors and educators, bus drivers, security, and even janitorial staff, it becomes an impediment to safety and hinders their level of

52

developmental learning.

The trauma identified in children of perceived targeted groups can hinder their cognitive-developmental learning and subsequent well-being (Gungor & Perdu, 2017; Shoshani, Steinmetz, & Kanat-Maymon, 2016; Thornburn, 2015; Viana, Paulus, Bakshaie, Garza, Valivieso, & Ochoa-Perez, 2017; Willis & Nagel, 2015; Zeanah & Sonuga-Barke, 2016). The themes identified and variables found can lead to an understanding of how counselors and educators can intervene to minimize election cycle trauma inflicted by the harsh language of the 2016 election cycle (Banyard, Hamby, & Grych, 2017; Collins, 2008; Willis & Nagel, 2015).

5. Conclusions

One conclusion which can be drawn from findings regarding question one is that counselors and educators can protect children in perceived targeted groups right now by remaining supportive of students in these groups. Counselors and educators can continue to use liaisons to offer support for families and children who are still unfamiliar with the culture, and unable to speak the English language. Additionally, they can continue the support of their students, regardless of status, and continue to use social workers to support social-emotional wellness.

A second conclusion drawn from these findings regarding question two is that counselors and educators can minimize the effects of election cycle trauma to children in perceived targeted groups. They can do this by implementing additional outreach programs, posting informational posters in places heavily trafficked by immigrants, continuing their mentorship program by providing people from the community who are part of perceived targeted groups opportunities to mentor students in their schools, and by training their teachers and other stakeholders to understand election cycle trauma.

6. Implications

An examination of the research showed that Maslow's hierarchy could guide the culture of school organizations. To begin the healing process and build trust with the students, it is necessary to address the possibility of racial bias. Because the language of candidates has caused heightened sensitivity to the stigma surrounding perceived targeted groups (Danese & Baldwin, 2017), this stigma can, in turn, can take away validation of self, causing anxiety and depression (Horowitz, 2015).

One way in which school personnel can address anxiety and depression caused by this stigma and provide a safe climate for students is to implement protocols for helping counselors and teachers prepare safe spaces to have discussions surrounding bias and race. Offering cultural, as well as trauma sensitivity training workshops for all teaching staff, will assist counselors and teachers in broaching tough subjects such as these. This, in turn, will foster a climate of trust between teachers and leadership without the fear of reprisal.

Helping counselors and teachers navigate the diverse culture of school districts will foster the growth and success of their students. School organizations can implement community support by having

outside speakers come in and help facilitate discussions that would build upon trust with teachers. Providing a safe space for teachers to teach is as important as providing a safe space for students to learn. Having differing opinions is healthy and encouraged for growth to happen (Bolman & Deal, 2007).

Moreover, training needs to extend beyond the classroom and counseling environment and include all other staff of the organization. All personnel needs to learn how to have critical conversations about race. Providing other school personnel with the proper training on cultural sensitivity, and recognizing trauma in students will help foster trust with all students (Collins, 2008). Furthermore, it will allow other staff the skills necessary to handle delicate situations with the same genuineness, empathic understanding, and unconditional positive regard as teachers and counselors (Rogers et al., 2014).

Workshops and learning type activities must continue to happen regularly throughout the year to help stakeholders come together to learn how to facilitate these robust discussions in classrooms, break rooms, boardrooms, and communities. Most of the time, teachers, counselors, and leaders will not be aware of the trauma being experienced by children, because children will not report incidents (Anti-Defamation League, 2016), or ask for help (Leahy, 2015). Suggesting the willingness to have these types of discussions is crucial. Lack of discussion surrounding racial bias in the current atmosphere will not foster change nor build trust with students unless teachers, counselors, and others can learn how to facilitate healthy discussions surrounding race relations (Anti-Defamation League, 2016; Minikel-Lacocque, 2013; Sue, 2015).

This study uncovered insight into how election cycle rhetoric can cause election cycle trauma to children. The research revealed that perception by the DACA group not only showed a feeling of being targeted due to their race but precisely their immigration status. Furthermore, there is a perception of racism against immigrants, but more damaging was the lack of trust variable found between students and faculty and staff of the school district.

Stakeholders are unprepared for the complex issues that surround election cycle trauma. According to McDavid, Huse and Hawthorn (2013), to foster a working relationship with stakeholders, it is necessary to gain trust. It is incumbent upon leaders in K-12 institutions to address the lack of trust variables found in this research to have a successful implementation of student success. The use of Maslow's hierarchy to address the lack of trust (Maslow, 2005), will further enhance the ability of organizations to build trust with their students and community. Enactment of implications should help foster trust between students, faculty, and other personnel working in K-12 organizations.

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