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Article

**Redefining the Role and Practices of Leadership Educators: The Relationship
Between Multicultural Competence and the Use of the Social Change Model of
Leadership Development**

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This study demonstrates the need for leadership educators to become more multiculturally competent and presents select findings on the relationship between multicultural competence and the use of certain models and practices among student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education. Specifically, the results provide evidence that student affairs professionals who intentionally use a model for program development and use specific practices for infusing diversity into leadership programming demonstrate higher levels of multicultural competence than student affairs professionals who do not intentionally use a model for program development.

The changing demographics of higher education (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2011; Murdock & Hoque, 1999) are evidence and cause for reflection on the diverse needs of our students and the ability of student affairs professionals to address those

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needs. Research and demographics (Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller, 2004; Weigand, 2005) suggest that issues of diversity and diversity education can no longer be considered the responsibility of a relative few experts on campus, but rather it is the responsibility of all professionals on campus. Understanding how and to what extent we properly prepare student affairs professionals for this role is still unknown and questionable. Previous research has explored the multicultural competence of student affairs professionals and the relationship with multicultural education and experiences (Miklitsch, 2005; Weigand, 2005), which included the number of diversity courses taken in graduate school and the number of diversity workshops attended, among other measures. The research demonstrated a strong relationship between multicultural competence and multicultural education and experiences, supporting a lifelong learner approach to diversity and multicultural issues.

More recent research, within the functional area of leadership education and development, has demonstrated several distinct findings about student learning which may give reason for student affairs professionals to reflect on their own level of multicultural competence. Specifically, this research indicates there are differences between ethnic and racial groups with respect to their leadership development and leadership self-efficacy and that the opportunity for students to engage in socio-cultural conversations is the single-strongest environmental predictor of leadership outcomes (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Despite this research, which calls for student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education to consider inter group differences and provide opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue, there has been no research to date on the role of the leadership educator and whether they possess the knowledge or ability to

properly facilitate these conversations or learning experiences. In fact, there is very little research on college leadership educators as a whole, as it is a position that has only evolved in the last two decades (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

This article arose out of a larger study looking at the relationship between multicultural competence and several independent variables among student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education, including racial identity and multicultural education and experiences. However, this study focuses on particular findings that suggest the use of leadership models and methods of inclusive practice may also be an indicator of multicultural competence among student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education. Specifically, this study examined the relationship between multicultural competence and the use of the social change model of leadership development (SCM) among leadership educators. In addition, the extent to which diversity and multiculturalism were included or addressed in co-curricular leadership programs was also examined in relation to multicultural competence. The results may encourage professionals to reconsider their role as a leadership educator and their methods of practice.

Relevant Literature

The theoretical foundation of this study was built on previous research and models of multicultural competence, as well as the aforementioned leadership research, both of which will be highlighted briefly. The multicultural competence work of Pope et al. (2004), specifically their dynamic model of student affairs competence, served as the foundation for this work. Their proposed model of competence suggests that while

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multicultural competence, which Pope, Reynolds, & Mueller (2004) define as multicultural knowledge, awareness, and skills, is only one of the core competencies, it should be infused and applied to all other competency areas. This model can be applied to all functional areas within student affairs, which again emphasizes the need for all student affairs professionals to be multiculturally competent, not just the diversity experts on campus.

Leadership development has long been an espoused value and objective of higher education (Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack & Wagner, 2006; Roberts, 1997); however until recently, very little research or assessment had been conducted to evaluate the success of this objective and those who had looked primarily at students in leadership roles on campus (Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). In an effort to understand and assess the efforts and success of college student leadership, a team of 19 student affairs staff and academic affairs researchers came together to conduct the first Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007). The theoretical model used for the MSL is the social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996). The capacity for leadership, based on the social change model (SCM) (HERI, 1996), was measured using a revised version of the socially responsible leadership scale (SRLS), originally developed by Tyree (1998). In addition to the SRLS, a scale for leadership efficacy was created based on Bandura's (1997) social learning theory (as noted in Dugan & Komives, 2007).

In regards to differences across races, the study revealed the strongest difference between African American and Asian American students on the values of Consciousness of Self and Change. That is, African American students demonstrated higher levels of

self-awareness and ease with change as compared to their Asian American peers (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Similarly, students from other marginalized groups, such as gay/lesbian/bisexual students, first-generation students, Native Americans, Latino/Latina students, multiracial students, and students at community colleges also scored higher on the SCM value of Change, demonstrating greater comfort and ability in navigating and managing change (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

Finally, one of the most significant findings of the MSL and an important factor for consideration in this study, is the result that the opportunity to engage in socio-cultural discussions explained 3-9% of the variance in leadership outcomes and was the single strongest environmental predictor of growth across the SCM values as well as growth in Leadership Efficacy (Dugan & Komives, 2007). This finding suggests the frequency in which students engage in conversations about multiculturalism and other socio-cultural issues with other students who hold different personal and political views has a profound effect on the development of leadership outcomes (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Based on the findings of the Dugan and Komives (2007) study, the authors recommended that leadership programs should provide opportunities for deliberate discussions on a variety of issues. More importantly, leadership educators should ensure that diversity discussions are included formally and informally throughout a student's leadership experience and that socio-cultural discussions should be infused throughout an educational experience, not added-on as a separate component, and support the need for college leadership educators to be multiculturally competent as they may play an important role in students' leadership development (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

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In order to create leadership experiences that produce significant developmental outcomes for students, as well as prepare them to lead in an increasingly global and interconnected world (Bremer, 2006; Ostick & Wall, 2011), student affairs professionals need to further develop and demonstrate multicultural competence. This study explored the multicultural competence of student affairs professionals responsible for leadership development and education, and the ways in which various competence levels relate to leadership practice. More specifically, this study investigated the relationship between multicultural competence and the intentional use of the social change model (SCM) in leadership development programs. That is to say, do professionals who use the SCM as a theoretical framework for their programs demonstrate a higher level of multicultural competence?

The SCM was selected as the primary leadership model of comparison for several reasons. First, the SCM serves as the theoretical framework for the aforementioned research on the developmental outcomes of leadership education, the MSL (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Second, the inherent and explicit values of the SCM are closely aligned with that of multicultural competence, specifically the values of consciousness of self, collaboration, and controversy with civility. And finally, the SCM is one of the most popular models used by leadership educators, which was confirmed by the current study, when compared to the use of the leadership challenge (Kousez & Posner, 2002) or the relational leadership model (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007).

Method

Participants

Participants for this study were student affairs professionals who self-identified as responsible for some percentage of co-curricular leadership programming and education at colleges and universities throughout the United States. The sample included full-time student affairs professionals, who have earned at least a bachelor's degree, including entry level staff (e.g., program assistants, coordinators, or assistant directors) as well as mid-level to senior-level administrators (e.g., associate directors, directors, assistant deans, or deans). Graduate students in student affairs preparation programs who hold or have held graduate assistantships or internships in co-curricular leadership programming are also included in the sample, as well as some self-identified faculty. Descriptive statistics for the sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Sample Based on Demographics

Variable		Frequency <i>n</i>	Percent (%) of Sample
Gender	Male	52	31.5
	Female	112	67.9
Race/Ethnicity	African American/Black	17	10.2
	Asian American/Pacific Islander	8	4.8
	Caucasian/White	126	75.4
	Latino(a)/Chicano(a)/Hispanic	13	7.8
	Native American/Alaskan Native	1	.6
	Multiracial	2	1.2

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Highest degree earned	Bachelors	11	6.6
	Masters	132	79.0
	Doctorate	15	7.6
	Other	1	.6
Years as a full-time professional	Less than 1 year	7	4.3
	1 year	8	4.9
	2-3 years	19	11.7
	4-5 years	27	16.6
	6-10 years	48	29.4
	11-15 years	23	14.1
	16-20 years	13	8.0
	21-25 years	12	7.4
25+ years	6	3.7	
Current position level	Graduate student	9	5.4
	Entry level	35	21.0
	Mid-level	90	53.9
	Senior level	26	15.6
	Senior student affairs officer	6	3.6
	Other	1	.6
Time spent on leadership programming	0%	6	3.6
	25%	87	52.1
	50%	32	19.2
	75%	31	18.6
	100%	11	6.6

In terms of institution type, almost all (96.4%) reported working at a 4-year college or university, but the sample was nearly equally divided between public (48.5%) and private schools (47.9%). Almost a third (28.7%) reported working at an institution with an enrollment of 20,000 students or more, while 51.5% reported an enrollment of 10,000 students or less. This data is represented in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Participants by Institutional Type and Size

Variable	Frequency <i>n</i>	Percent (%) of Sample
Institution type		
4-year public	81	48.5

	4-year private	80	47.9
	2 year public	5	3.0
	Other	1	.6
Total institution	0-500	1	.6
student enrollment	501-1000	7	4.2
	1001-5000	53	31.7
	5001-10000	26	15.6
	10001-15000	17	10.2
	15001-20000	15	9.0
	20001+	48	28.7

An important and final descriptive of this sample is represented in Table 3 and explores participant's knowledge and use of various leadership development models as a framework for developing or structuring their co-curricular leadership programs. A majority of participants (N=111, 66.5%) reported using one or more theoretical models or frameworks, and of those who used a model, 55.7% (N=93) used the SCM (HERI, 1996). Smaller portions of the sample used the relational leadership model (N=44, 26.3%) and/or the leadership challenge (N=34, 20.4%). Nearly 17% (N=28) of the professionals

Table 3

Participants Use and Knowledge of Leadership Development Models (multiple models selected).

Use of model	Frequency <i>n</i>	Percent (%) of Sample
No model used as framework	56	33.5
Model used as framework	111	66.5
Model Group (n=111)		
Relational Leadership Model	44	26.3
The Leadership Challenge	34	20.4
The Social Change Model	93	55.7

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Other		28	16.8
Degree of Use	Not at all	25	17.9
	Once in a while	9	6.4
	Sometimes	37	26.4
	Most of the time	52	37.1
	All of the time	17	12.1
Familiarity with the Social Change Model	Not at all	8	4.8
	A little	15	9.0
	Somewhat	44	26.3
	Quite a bit	56	33.5
	Very	44	26.3

surveyed indicated other models or frameworks may be used on their campus (i.e., leadership identity development model, emotional intelligent leadership, or transformative leadership model). Nearly 37% ($N=52$) of the sample reported the degree to which they used or considered said models as “most of the time” and 12% ($N=17$) indicated “all of the time.” With regards to how familiar participants were with the Social Change Model of Leadership, almost 60% ($N=100$) of the sample indicated either “quite a bit” or “very.”

Research Design and Procedure

This study utilized an ex-post facto correlational research design (Tuckman, 1999), to determine the relationship between multicultural competence and the use of the SCM by student affairs professionals in co-curricular programming. Multicultural competence as the dependent variable was measured using the MCSA-P2 (Pope & Muller, 2000), which is based on the characteristics of a multiculturally competent student affairs practitioner, described by Pope and Reynolds (1997). Participant’s use of

the SCM, the independent variable, was obtained through the Personal Data Form, Part B, which also included questions about inclusive practices with regards to diversity and leadership education.

Data collection for this study took place between November 2010 and January 2011. Participants were solicited via e-mail through two national listservs affiliated with professional organizations focused on co-curricular leadership education and which provide support and resources for leadership educators on college and university campuses. Invitations were sent to both the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP) listserv and the Commission for Student Involvement listserv, which is one of several specific commissions within the American College Personnel Association (ACPA). Invitees were asked to complete the survey themselves and to forward the invitation to colleagues who may also identify one of their primary functional areas of responsibility as co-curricular leadership education.

Results

The first analysis examined the extent to which the use of the SCM predicted levels of multicultural competence. Familiarity with the model was also examined in relation to multicultural competence. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed and analyzed to determine the relationship and subsequent hierarchical regressions were run to determine the degree to which use of the model impacted multicultural competence. To further examine this relationship, participant familiarity with the model was also considered in this investigation and will be discussed first.

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The degree of familiarity with the SCM was ascertained from the following question on the PDF: “How familiar are you with the Social Change Model of Leadership Development?” Participants indicated familiarity on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 1 representing “not at all” and 5 representing “very.” Descriptive statistics for this question are presented in Table 4 below.

The level of familiarity with the SCM was significant in that over half ($N=100$, 59.8%) indicated their level of familiarity as “quite a bit” or “very.” An additional 26.3% ($N=44$) reported a familiarity of “somewhat,” while only 13.8% ($N=23$) indicated “a little” or “not at all.” A Pearson product moment correlation was computed to further examine the relationship between multicultural competence and participant’s level of familiarity with the SCM. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5 and indicate a significant and positive relationship between the participants’ familiarity with the SCM and their level of multicultural competence, meaning that participants who indicated a greater familiarity with the SCM also had a higher level of multicultural competence.

Table 4

Frequency and Percentage for Familiarity with the Social Change Model

Level of Familiarity	Frequency <i>n</i>	Percent (%) of Sample
Not at all	8	4.8
A Little	15	9.0
Somewhat	44	26.3
Quite a bit	56	33.5
Very	44	26.3

Table 5

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations for Multicultural Competence and Familiarity with the Social Change Model of Leadership Development

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Familiarity with the Social Change Model	167	.333**	.000

***p* < .001

The relative use of the SCM was determined from the following questions on the PDF: “Is your leadership program built/structured around a theoretical model/framework?” Participants who answered yes were then asked to answer the following question, “Which leadership model(s) serves a framework for your leadership program?” Participants were given the following responses, Relational Leadership Model, Social Change Model of Leadership Development, The Leadership Challenge, or Other. Descriptive statistics for these two questions are presented in Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6

Frequency and Percent for Use of a Leadership Model and Mean MCSA-P2 Scores

Use of model	Mean MCSA-P2 Scores	Overall Frequency <i>n</i>	Percent (%) of Total Sample
No model used as framework	168.22	56	33.5
Model used as framework	184.37	111	66.5
Model Group (<i>n</i> =111)			

For this particular sample, 66.5% (*n* = 111) indicated using a model for their leadership program(s). Of the participants who indicated using a model, nearly 56% (*n* = 93) reported using the SCM. An additional 26.3% (*n* = 44) indicated using the relational

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leadership model and 20.4% ($n = 34$) indicated they used the leadership challenge as a model or framework for their leadership program(s). Approximately 17% ($n = 28$) indicated they use some other model. These numbers reflect participants' ability to select one or more models of use and therefore use of models was further broken down into solitary use and overall use to control for the impact of compounding variables (see Table 7).

When the models were examined for solitary use, the results produced minimal samples for all other models, except the SCM ($n = 40$), and therefore, the other models were collapsed to create an inclusive "other" which was comprised of those who used only the relational leadership model, only the leadership challenge, or only some other identified model ($n = 20$).

Table 7

Frequency and Percent of Use of Specific Models

Model Type	Solitary Use of Model (n)	Solitary Percent (%) of Total Sample	Overall Frequency (n)	Overall Percent (%) of Total Sample
Relational Leadership Model	7	6.3	44	26.3
The Leadership Challenge	7	6.3	34	20.4
The Social Change Model	40	36.0	93	55.7
Other	6	5.4	28	16.8

In order to examine the relationship between multicultural competence and the use of the SCM, the above categories were collapsed to produce three distinct variables: participants who indicated using only the SCM, participants who indicated using the SCM plus one or more additional models, and then a third group combining all

participants who indicated using the SCM. A Pearson product moment correlation was computed and the results are presented in Table 8.

This simple correlation indicated there was no significant relationship between student affairs professionals isolated use of the SCM and their levels of multicultural competence ($r = .132$). However, the results suggested there was a strong and positive correlation between participants who indicated using the SCM in addition to at least one other model, and their level of multicultural competence ($r = .257$). Participants who utilized the SCM in addition to other models demonstrated higher levels of multicultural competence.

Table 8

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations for Multicultural Competence and Use of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development and Mean MCSA-P2 Scores

Variable	Mean MCSA-P2 Scores	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Only use Social Change Model	182.97	40	.086	.268
Use Social Change Model plus Additional Model(s)	188.05	53	.195*	.012
Combined group using SCM	185.98	93	.257**	.001

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$

A hierarchical regression was run to further examine the extent to which the use of the SCM predicted levels of multicultural competence, comparing three distinct groups: those who used only some “other” model, those who used only the SCM, and then finally, those who indicated using the SCM plus one or more other models. Results of this analysis are presented in Table 9.

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Table 9

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Use of Models Variables in Explaining Variance Levels in Multicultural Competence

Predictor	R ²	R ² Change	F Change	P
Only Use Other Model	.000	-.006	.031	.860
Only Use Social Change Model	.007	-.005	.615	.542
Use Social Change Model Plus Other	.079	.062	4.640	.004*

* $p < .05$

The results of this analysis demonstrated that the isolated use of other models and the isolated use of the SCM were not significant predictors of multicultural competence. Isolated use of the ACM accounted for less than 1% of the variance in multicultural competence. The use of the SCM in addition to one or more other models was significant ($t = 3.55, p \leq .001$), but not a strong predictor of multicultural competence, and use of the SCM plus one or more other models accounted for only 6.2% of the variance in multicultural competence.

To summarize, isolated use of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) by student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education did not significantly or positively correlate with multicultural competence. However, use of the SCM in addition to one or more models did positively and significantly correlate with multicultural competence. In addition, familiarity with the SCM correlated strongly with multicultural competence, suggesting student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education who indicated a greater familiarity with the SCM also demonstrated higher levels of multicultural competence.

Discussion

Use of a Model or Framework

The concept of theory to practice is a long standing philosophy within the field of student affairs and the understanding and application of theories or frameworks has been an often cited core competency for student affairs professionals (ACPA & NASPA, 2010; Barr & Desler, 2000; Creamer, Winston, & Miller, 2001; Pope & Reynolds, 1997) and specifically leadership educators (Wagner, 2006). Theoretical frameworks and models are intended to help student affairs professionals understand how students develop and learn and help design meaningful programs, curriculum, and services (Pope et al., 2004; Wagner, 2006). The simple nature of thinking about theoretical frameworks and using a model for program development involves a level of reflection and consciousness, or self-awareness that is critical in developing multicultural competence. This supports the finding that student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education, who indicated using a framework or model, had higher levels of multicultural competence, but does not necessarily lend specific support to the impact of the SCM.

The SCM was designed to “emphasize clarification of values, the development of self-awareness, trust, and the capacity to listen and serve others, and through collaborative work to bring about change for the common good” (HERI, 1996, p.11). The model has been said to be an ideal fit for social justice approaches to leadership, appealing to students who feel marginalized as a result of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, abilities or other social identities that suffer from societal or institutional forms of oppression (Bell, 1997; Wagner, 2006). That being said, the

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connection between multicultural competence and the use of the social change model can be easily ascertained. As this research implies, those who understand and use the model may have higher levels of multicultural competence, which in turn, may prompt them to consider the use of a social justice approach and model. Similarly, student affairs professionals who choose to use this model are likely implementing and facilitating activities that further their multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill, subsequently enhancing their multicultural competence. While correlational research does not allow for conclusive explanations about cause and effect, the findings do appear to support the strong relationship between multicultural competence and the use of the SCM.

How Multicultural Issues are Addressed

A more detailed examination of the ways in which multicultural issues were addressed in leadership programs provides further insight into the relationship between multicultural competence and student affairs professionals responsible for designing and implementing leadership activities. Student leadership programs are often comprised of a number of systematically organized elements that may be purely co-curricular or curricular, or a combination of both (Haber, 2006). Participants in the current study were asked to indicate in what manner multicultural issues were addressed in their leadership programs. The largest majority of participants (75.4%) indicated multicultural issues were addressed in workshops, followed by guest speakers (56.3%), targeted programming (50.9%) such as women's leadership conference or LGBT leadership conference, and specific leadership retreats (29%). Approximately 30% indicated multicultural issues were addressed through a section of a leadership course and only 7.2% indicated they were addressed as part of a full diversity leadership course (i.e.,

cross-cultural leadership). It is important to note that while many campuses have strong co-curricular leadership elements, not all student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education have the ability to teach credit-bearing courses, which may be reflected in the results above.

Further analysis within the current study provides insight into the relationship between these activities and levels of multicultural competence among student affairs professionals responsible for leadership programs. Student affairs professionals who indicated multicultural issues were addressed through workshops, targeted programming, retreats, and full courses, demonstrated higher mean multicultural competence scores and those who indicated that multicultural issues were addressed through guest speakers or through a section of a course demonstrated lower mean multicultural competence scores.

Perceived Effectiveness of Practice

A final analysis of the current study explored the effectiveness of how multicultural issues were addressed in leadership programs, as self-reported by participants as very effective, effective, neutral, ineffective, and very ineffective. Important to note at this point, 15.6% ($n = 26$) of participants indicated multicultural issues were not directly addressed in their leadership programs. However, there was no significant difference in the mean multicultural competence scores between those who indicated multicultural competence was addressed via one or more elements, compared to those who indicated multicultural issues were not addressed in their leadership program. There was a significant difference in the mean multicultural competence scores of participants who rated the effectiveness of how multicultural issues are addressed in their leadership program as effective or very effective as compared to participants who indicated neutral, ineffective or very ineffective. While not conclusive, the strong relationship between perceived effectiveness and multicultural competence may be an indication of a participant's skill level and comfort with addressing multicultural issues in their leadership programs. Multicultural competence requires awareness, knowledge, and skills, which are the behaviors that allow student affairs professionals to effectively address issues of diversity (Pope et al., 2004).

These findings and assertions echo those made in previous studies on student affairs professionals (Martin, 2005; Weigand, 2005). Weigand (2005) found no significant relationships between multicultural competence and the professional practices of orientation professionals, suggesting that by measure of the MCSA-P2 they may be generally multiculturally competent; however, they lack the ability to apply their

competence to their specific functional responsibilities. In the case of student affairs professionals responsible for leadership education, they may be very well aware of their own personal worldviews and biases, and may even be highly skilled in communicating across differences; however, they may lack the general ability to apply that knowledge to their specific responsibilities and programming initiatives. Previous research using the MCSA-P2 provides evidence that the instrument measures general multicultural competence versus three separate measures for multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills (Mueller & Pope, 2001; Pope & Mueller, 2000).

Implications for Leadership Educators and Practice

Very little literature exists surrounding the role of the leadership educator, particularly as it relates to their ability to create meaningful and high impact programs and activities for students. The most recent data from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007), suggested the strongest predictor of student learning (across specific learning outcomes) was the opportunity to engage in cross-cultural conversations. This finding is reason for leadership educators to pause and reflect on their own multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill, or multicultural competence, and how this translates into practice.

The results of this study provide strong evidence and support for using a model or framework in designing and developing leadership programs. Student affairs professionals who used a model, particularly the SCM, had higher levels of multicultural competence than those who did not use a model or framework. The SCM was the most frequently used model by leadership educators in this study, which suggests a dynamic shift in the way student affairs professionals are approaching leadership, emphasizing a

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more social justice and community based approach. Leadership educators should consider using a model or framework in designing and developing more high impact programs, giving particular consideration to the SCM. The values of the SCM are congruent with multicultural competence, and the use of the model indicates a higher level of thinking with regards to multicultural issues. Based on the MSL data regarding the impact of cross-cultural conversations, it would be prudent for leadership educators to consider ways to enhance their own multicultural competence and to consider evaluating the ways in which multicultural and diversity issues are addressed in leadership programs.

This study demonstrated that leadership educators who used particular methods in addressing multicultural issues in their leadership programs had higher levels of multicultural competence. Workshops, targeted programs (population specific), retreats, and full courses dedicated to diversity and leadership were most significantly related, and therefore should strongly be considered as programming methods to potentially further enhance one's own multicultural competence. Leadership educators who can effectively facilitate diversity workshops or programs focused on diverse populations may be more multiculturally competent and may feel more comfortable facilitating these experiences. However, leadership educators may be multicultural competent, demonstrating strong awareness and knowledge, but lack the skills and abilities to implement theory into practice. An example of this would be leadership educators bringing in their diversity expert colleagues to provide a diversity discussion in their program or course. While this example indicates a level of awareness and understanding of the importance of infusing diversity into a leadership program, it does not necessarily reflect a level of skill in the

leadership educator to facilitate the discussion on their own, as evidenced by the lower multicultural competence scores of those participants who indicated addressing multicultural issues in leadership programs via guest speakers or through only a section of a course. Leadership educators must take responsibility for furthering their own level of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill in order to more effectively infuse multicultural issues into their programs.

Limitations and Future Research

Survey research such as this involves a number of possible limitations that are applicable to the study of multicultural competence among leadership educators. The sampling method used for this particular study allows for several varying interpretations of professionals' level of responsibility for leadership education and a breadth of experience, from graduate student to faculty. This may limit the ability to generalize results for leadership educators as a specific population; therefore some caution is advised when evaluating these results.

The field of student affairs can only benefit from further exploration of multicultural competence within the profession, as it is a key competency for effective and ethical practice. While the findings of this particular study may be limited, they do raise potential and important questions about the role of the leadership educator and how multicultural competence plays out in practice. Additionally, the role of the leadership educator is not clearly defined on many college campuses. As demonstrated by this study, less than half indicated leadership programming was their primary or sole responsibility. Therefore, future research may examine the impact and influence of other experiences or responsibilities (i.e., a professional who is split time between residence

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life and leadership programs), which may have more impact on multicultural competence. And finally, a more in-depth investigation into the specific ways in which the SCM is used for leadership programming (e.g. community service, social justice programming, advocacy), may provide greater insight into the inclusivity of multiculturalism in leadership practice.

Conclusion

Student affairs professionals are in a unique position within postsecondary institutions and are often instrumental in facilitating and fostering a campus environment that is inclusive and affirming (Franklin-Craft, 2010). In order to succeed in this very important role, all student affairs professionals need to adopt multicultural competence as a core competency, continue to seek out opportunities to further enhance personal multicultural competence, and infuse it into daily practice (Pope & Reynolds, 1997; Pope et al., 2004). Specifically, the role of the leadership educator may need to be re-evaluated in light of recent research demonstrating the high impact of cross-cultural conversations in leadership development (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Leadership educators should also view themselves as diversity educators, finding ways to infuse these important conversations into their leadership programming efforts. Using a model or framework, such as the SCM may be helpful in creating those opportunities for discussion and also have an impact on the multicultural competence of the leadership educators themselves. As noted by Pope et al. (2004) “although not *all* student affairs practitioners will become experts in multicultural issues, every student affairs professional must have a level of awareness, knowledge, and skills that allows them to competently work with diverse groups of students and colleagues” (p. 9). This research study presents several

opportunities for additional exploration and follow-up studies, including continued research on multicultural competence as it relates to specific areas of practice or positions within the field, as well as an opportunity to further investigate how effectively multicultural issues are addressed in co-curricular programming. Future research related to multicultural competence and the field is an important and necessary endeavor.

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