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In presence session 4 English: Youth in educational contexts

Time: Thursday, 22/Sept/2022: 4:15pm - 5:45pm Location: Resilience Room (in presence)
Session Chair: PATRIZIA MERINGOLO

The role of institutional natural mentors in first-generation college students' social belonging and academic outcomes

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Enrollment of first-generation college students (i.e., had parents who never received a bachelor's degree) is increasing in the United States (US), (RTI International, 2019); however, the retention of these students at universities is still lower than their counterparts (i.e., continuing-education students; Cataldi et al., 2018). The differences in graduation rates between first-generation college students and continuing-education college students could be attributed to the barriers that they encounter during their undergraduate studies, including a lack of knowledge regarding how to navigate their institution (Dumais & Ward, 2010; Engle, 2007). One source of support that may help first-generation college students complete their undergraduate studies are institutional natural mentors (e.g., university faculty, staff). Yet, few researchers have examined factors that contribute to the development of these relationships, and how these relationships influence factors related to retention (e.g., sense of belonging, grades). Thus, the proposed study aims to explore both predictors and outcomes of having an institutional natural mentoring relationship among first-generation college students in the US. Specifically, we hypothesize that having stronger help-seeking attitudes during the first year of college will predict having an institutional natural mentoring relationship during the second year of college, and in turn, these supportive relationships will predict a stronger sense of belonging and a greater grade point average during the third year of college. To test these hypotheses, we will use data from a longitudinal study of first-generation college students. The baseline sample includes 359 first-generation college students attending one of three four-year colleges/universities. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 23 years old ($M = 17.95$, $SD = .63$), and the majority (77.6%) reported being female at birth. The sample included students from various ethnic/racial backgrounds, including 27.3% Latinx, 25.9% White, 24.2% African American, 8.2% Asian American, 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.3% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 1.7% other, 12.1% multiracial. To analyze the data, we will conduct a path analysis model. This study will contribute to the literature on the natural mentoring relationships of historically underrepresented college students in the U.S. The findings will fill a gap in the literature on the formation of institutional natural mentoring relationships of historically underrepresented college students. Study findings will also have implications for interventions aimed to support underrepresented students to persist in higher education.

Experiences of microaggressions among Greek University students with disabilities

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Increasing the participation of students with disabilities in postsecondary education is a social policy movement that enables students to connect with the university community, interact with peers, and communicate with academic staff. Despite the social and legislative actions taken toward the provision of equal opportunities in education, university students with disabilities often confront difficulties in their academic lives and social interactions with peers and staff, which provoke social racism or social bullying. The aim of the present study is to investigate difficulties concerning the experience of microaggressions and how these difficulties affect the academic life of students with disabilities. Ninety - one undergraduate university students with disabilities completed a series of questionnaires concerning ableist microaggressions and college adaptation, as well as mental health aspects. The findings of this study showed that the type of impairment is associated with the experience of microaggressions. Mental health aspects were found to be more crucial for the adaptation of students with disabilities than experiences of microaggressions. Given that students with disabilities face many types of emotional and psychological pressures, such as the degree of contentment with the resource office for disability, bonding issues with parents and peers, and participation in non-academic activities as they strive to adjust to university, special attention should be given to institutional support services.

The model of schools for health in Europe: startup of the IGEA network for the city of Palermo

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The contribution analyses the process of creating of the IGEA network (Integrated Generativity Actors) inscribed in the framework of the Schools for Health in Europe (SHE network). This model moves from a focus on school context only (as single setting) to the integration of schools and their surrounding community services, sports clubs, hospitals, workplace, informal contexts (building integrated multi-setting approach) (SHE, 2019; Novara & Guidi, 2022).

According to an eco-social approach in health promotion, actions at the school level should always be linked with actions in the local community (Laverack, 2020) in order to develop healthy cities that are inclusive, safe and resilient (WHO, 2016). That is the priority assumption of the European network of schools that promote health, which includes 43 European countries since 1992, as well as Italy.

An agreement between ASP (Agency Healthcare Local) and the University of Palermo supports, technically and scientifically, the SHE network (called IGEA) of the metropolitan city of Palermo, in the process of building and starting up it. The aim is to implement a structured and systematic plan for the health, well-being and social capital development of all pupils and teaching and non-teaching staff.

The partnership between ASP and University of Palermo had enable the realization of this plan trough different phases:

1. Information and sharing of specialist documentation and sources relating to the network of schools that promote health, according to the indications of the European model (SHE network manual and related annexes), disseminating concepts, terminology, assumptions, actions, values, goals and a common language.
2. Analysis of training needs, consisting in the design and implementation of an electronic form for the collection and analysis of preliminary information about the general orientation of schools interested in health issues.
3. Training aimed at school managers, with face-to-face and interactive work sessions, in order to stimulate their awareness of the global model of health, pursued by the SHE network.

4. Group work, composed of all school actors (students, managers, families, technical staff, local stakeholders), to investigate and develop the four components of the SHE Model (healthy school policy, school physical and social environments, community and services links, health personal skills).
5. Drafting of the health plan of each school from a health global perspective.

Phases to become / remain a health promoting school will be illustrated and particularly the way in which the process had initiated, upscaled, sustained, and inspired in Palermo and in Sicily, bringing together 18 schools in a new network agreement capable to drive a bottom up decisional process about policy and actions promoting global health.

Non suicidal self - injury at school age: an aggression that comforts?

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Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) is a phenomenon that has been increasingly present in the routine of elementary school students in Brazil. In addition to being a risk factor for development, this practice carries a pathologizing stigma and is still seen with prejudice and underestimation within the school community. NSSI is mostly practiced by women, which reveals a gender bias in relation to the phenomenon and the need for actions that aim to strengthen women within collective spaces. This research aimed to understand the NSSI phenomenon, grounded on Critical Psychology. The information was obtained from the insertion of a Psychology professional in a public school. The school psychologist and researcher was a facilitator of a girl's group self-titled "Warrior Girls", in which issues of everyday life were discussed, in the search for a community space for coexistence, action and reflection regarding the narratives lived by them. The school is located in one of the most socioeconomically vulnerable city's region. From the knowledge about the territory, it was possible to understand these students in a more contextualized way and guide the discussions aiming at the knowledge of the concrete reality experienced by them, encouraging collective dialogue and awareness of the elements that determine daily life. In this space, the students created a diary – "Emotion's Dairy", in which they could express themselves about the issues they experience in everyday life and talk about the NSSI episodes they experienced. Such narratives could be socialized and discussed collectively, which made possible a space for belonging and strengthening in the face of these students' experiences. The present research was carried out following the Qualitative Epistemology and the Participatory Action Research as methodological foundations, understanding the importance of the psychologist and researcher inserted in the daily life of the school community seeking to understand what are the demands to build collective actions. The results showed that NSSI is configured as an attempt to face daily suffering, permeated by conflicts and violence arising from the family environment and the oppressive forces present in the community. The lack of spaces for dialogue and expression in the face of these issues led the students to seek in NSSI a way to deal with suffering, characterizing it as an individual and isolated expression. Within a collective environment, it was possible to encourage community values that enabled the strengthening to deal with the suffering experienced, seeking to ensure the development of these girls.

Collective School Resilience for growing wellbeing in school communities in Europe and Latin-America: a multisystemic resilience approach.

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School communities play a central role in youths' development, and in the reproduction of exclusionary practices embedded in the school systems. Among others, hostile peers', or adult-pupils' relations, organizational norms, normalized segregation, and top-down educational policies build school curricula and practices that ignore and reinforce systemic discrimination. Besides, in the last decades, the uprising interest in fostering mental health and wellbeing in schools has introduced uncritical intervention models. For instance, decontextualized positive and resilience-based interventions reproduce systems of exclusion by focusing on individuals' capacities or responsibilities, which bring about detrimental psychosocial and educational consequences for vulnerable youths, their families, and the community (Hart, et al 2016). In a multisystemic resilience framework (Ungar, 2021), we will present a newly developed collective construct, named School Resilience, and its use in researching the school environment and youths' positive development. School Resilience evaluates the quality of the relationships, sense of school belonging, practices of inclusion, meaningful participation, and mental health awareness of the members of the school community (Morote et.al 2020). We will discuss the results of two applied research projects developed in Europe (studies 1 and 2) and Peru (study 3).

In the frame of an *H2020 EU Project*, study 1 characterized the collective protective factors of School Resilience in five European countries (n = 340, parents and schoolteachers); then, in study 2, a Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) found that adolescents in profiles characterized by low personal and school resilience show less subjective wellbeing, higher levels of stress, bullying and cyberbullying behaviors (as perpetrators and victims), and substance use (tobacco and alcohol) (n = 1741, adolescents, 10 to 15 years old) in Spain, Italy, Poland, Denmark, Iceland. In Study 3, we examined multisystemic profiles of School Resilience and adult protective factors in rural schoolteachers in Peru (LPA, n = 230). We found that socio-economic and work conditions influence teachers' protective factors profiles, and the interaction of higher personal and collective School Resilience factors influence their socio-emotional, and culture-oriented skills (i.e., teamwork, self-knowledge, perseverance, openness, critical thinking, decision making, social awareness, cultural belonging, and competence), as well as their capacity to act against school-dropout.

Our research seeks to demonstrate that systems of collective and individual protective factors of resilience act together to foster skills (i.e., socio-emotional, culture-oriented), school outcomes (i.e., dropout prevention), and individual and collective wellbeing while accounting for contextually relevant socioeconomic and demographic risk. We advocate for the critical and multisystemic use of resilience. This means avoiding hegemonic and decontextualized frameworks that ignore the micro, meso- and macro systems where exclusionary practices intersect, reinforce, and ultimately, harm children and adolescents' development, as well as the networks that support schools and communities.