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“There Are Many Social Evils...and Only We Can Cure It”: A Thematic Content Analysis of Privileged Indian Youth’s Perspective on Social Issues

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate how socioeconomically privileged students at a private school in India understood social issues in their communities, and it explored whether their understanding of and discourse about working against social and economic oppression changed after they took a field trip to a nearby under-resourced village. The sample included 75 youth from high-income backgrounds in Bhubaneswar, India, most of whom reported never having spent time in a poverty-stricken village. Students responded in writing to reflection prompts before and after the field trip. Participants’ responses were thematically coded to capture their perspectives of social injustice and ideas of change. A codebook of participants’ reflections was then developed, consisting of thirty-five themes and seven overarching domains: (1) positionality; (2) discrimination; (3) structural issues; (4) village-level issues; (5) strategies for problem solving; (6) experiences of helping; and (7) reasons for or barriers to problem solving. Descriptive frequencies revealed the prevalence of themes before and after the field trip. Implications and limitations of the study and directions for future research on enhancing awareness of privilege and social oppression are discussed.

Keywords: social justice education; immersion trips; youth; privilege; poverty

Introduction

International development initiatives in India often focus on providing resources to the marginalized, with little analysis of systems and structures that maintain marginalization (International Development Research Centre, 2007). Liberation psychology calls psychologists to critically examine and intervene at the structural levels of oppression (Moane, 2003). In India, interventions aimed at reducing injustice rarely include those who hold or soon will hold material power, in this case, privileged Indian youth. In this paper, privileged youth are those who benefit from systemic, unearned advantage through economic class, social class (McIntosh, 1988), and specifically in the Indian context, caste (Bhattacharyya, Woods, & Lykes, 2017). This study focused on intervening with socially and economically privileged Indian youth, the very people most likely to grow up to control critical resources, systems, and structures in India. It also explores novel strategies being utilized to promote social justice advocacy in some privileged schools and describes an immersion intervention, in this case, a field trip to an under-resourced village, designed to foster social justice engagement in privileged students. Further, we describe efforts to understand how these students conceptualized issues related to social and economic privilege and marginalization, and whether student understanding differed after their poverty exposure experience and after reflecting on that experience. Implications for practice and future research in India are discussed.

Liberation Psychology Framework

A psychology of liberation develops critically and historically contextualized psychological theories and practices from the perspective of “the people,” wherein marginalized voices contribute to developing a community’s vision (Moane, 2003). In India, development initiatives are often guided by outsider perspectives on social issues and solutions. Instead, by accompanying the poor and oppressed, a psychology of liberation calls psychologists to “create relationships among groups of people and transform society by making people aware of dehumanizing social inequities, and accompanying them in processes through which they analyze the causes of their marginalization” (Lykes & Sibley, 2014, p. 211). The current research aims to better understand privileged Indian youth’s understanding of social issues by seeing how their perspectives qualitatively shift after an immersion field trip to an under-resourced village in their community. One assumption we want to explore is whether persons that experience power or oppression can change based upon context. In this study, Indian youth are seen to have had little voice or representation in psychological literature. However, within their communities, the youth in this study are, for the most part, privileged. Facilitating awareness of social issues and critical consciousness development is important to do with these youth so they can be a part of a liberatory societal transformation. Liberation psychology calls psychologists to critically examine the political, economic, and cultural forces that cause oppression. This study takes one step in attending to the factors that contribute to oppression by engaging privileged youth in an immersion project in a small community in rural India.

Immersion Strategies for Promoting Social Justice Awareness Among Students

In the educational setting, international educational institutions have implemented immersion programs with the intent of increasing socio-political involvement and social justice awareness amongst their students (Bowman, Brandenberger, Mick, & Smedley, 2010; Choi, VanVoorhis, & Ellenwood, 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009; Panwar et al., 2014). While immersion programs can vary based on duration, program structure, field of study etc., the significant factors of immersion programs discussed provide students the opportunity to learn

about how others live, the social issues that impact them through involvement in the field, and the space to reflect upon their experiences of immersion individually and in groups (Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009). In the current study, immersion is defined through this lens.

Published studies focused on U.S. university and graduate education-level students engaging in an immersion program overseas (e.g., South Africa, Puerto Rico) demonstrate that immersion experiences foster cross-cultural learning for students when given the opportunity to engage in self-reflection through cross-cultural interactions and journaling (Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009). Choi et al. (2015) focused on U.S. students participating in a 14-day immersion program in South Africa and found that through this process students demonstrated an increased awareness around social justice issues such as “...poverty, lack of educational resources, weak social infrastructure, employment inequality, and racial segregation” (p. 253). Furthermore, an increase in students’ awareness around social issues and their own role in relation to these issues appeared to effect change in their behaviors (Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009), including the development of advocacy behaviors such as lobbying for change (Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009) and helping the homeless or donating to charities on a local level (Choi et al., 2015).

While immersion programs are practiced at the university level due to their ability to instill social awareness and social advocacy (Bowman et al., 2010; Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009), there are limited studies focused on school-age students participating in immersion studies. There are, however, school-based social justice initiatives practiced at the grade school and high school levels in India (Ashley, 2006; Jessop, 2001), illustrating the school’s role in addressing social injustices within its community. In many instances, a school’s engagement in any social justice oriented work in its community marks the school as an agent of change in its community. This was found to be especially true for affluent Indian schools that implemented social justice programs (Ashley, 2006; Jessop, 2001). Furthermore, findings from multi-country studies, including India, suggested that both mandatory and optional social justice initiatives in high school and at a university led to higher participation in general volunteering (Brudney et al., 2010), demonstrating the long-term effects of these initiatives on a social level.

Immersion Intervention via School Field Trip

While international research has demonstrated immersion initiatives in educational settings to be useful in social justice awareness development among students, much of the literature explores immersion experiences that are long-term, over the span of a school semester or longer (Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009; Panwar, et al., 2014). The literature is limited to assessing the effects of brief immersion interventions on social justice awareness, specifically using field trips to sites such as under-resourced villages in rural areas. This is especially relevant in India, the country with the largest population of people experiencing extreme poverty in the world (302 million) with 73.2% (221 million) of its poor living in rural areas (Mehta, Shepherd, Bhide, Shah, & Kumar, 2011). While exposure to poverty occurs on a day-to-day basis in India, as these statistics indicated, exposure is not synonymous with immersion. Although many Indian residents see poverty and other social injustices daily, they are not required to give attention to these issues as they would in an immersion experience, which includes engagement with those impacted by social injustice and critical thinking or reflection upon the experience. Heybach (2015) addressed the desensitization and “anesthetization” to visual imagery of social injustices among her students, in a U.S. undergraduate college setting, as responses to the constant flooding with images of mass violence, war, tragedy, etc. In this way, residents in India cannot be expected to critically think about social injustices in their communities and country as passersby, as daily images of social injustices may trigger feelings of desensitization (Heybach, 2015). Sites of economic injustice, such as under-resourced communities in rural India can provide urban youth ways to engage in these social injustices directly with the aim of building awareness of the struggles of marginalized people.

Privileged Indian Youth as Agents of Change

Social justice research in India has focused primarily on social engagement (Ashley, 2006; Jessop, 2001) with insufficient research exploring Indian youth's beliefs surrounding issues impacting their communities. Youth's attitudes and social beliefs preclude how they may engage in social and political change (Perrin, Bhattacharyya, Snipes, Hubbard, Heesacker, Calton, Perez, & Lee-Barber, 2013), and therefore may provide insight into social justice engagement for this population.

Current research indicates that Indian youth are disillusioned by the political system, which may facilitate their involvement in social change. As such, they tend to engage in public advocacy through employment with NGOs and involvement in community outreach (Ilavarasan, 2013). This may be the result of the Indian political system's well-known reputation for corruption (Pring, 2017). Furthermore, a recent study conducted by Acharya et al. (2010) utilized a representative sample of Indian youth and reported 80% of young men and 75% of young women in the sample did not believe the political process would make positive change in their communities, regardless of which political party was elected into office. Despite these profoundly negative views of the political system, over 80% of this sample reported viewing the political process in India as fair, with no fear or pressure when voting in elections (Acharya et al., 2010). Recent Indian elections have shown increased voter turnout. Election data indicated a 66.4% youth voter turnout in the 2014 Indian elections, the highest in any Indian election to date (Sharma, 2014). This recent surge in political engagement may reflect Indian youth's desire for political change.

Privileged youth, identified in this paper as those holding economic and social class advantages, have a unique role in combating oppression as upcoming leaders and professionals in their communities (Thomson-Miller & Feagin, 2007). These youth have access to material and social resources that will keep them in high social ranking as they enter adulthood, which means they will likely hold positions of power in their later years. As allies to the oppressed, privileged youth can invest their privilege for social good (Perrin et al., 2013), which potentially can have a large impact on dismantling oppression in the future. Therefore, consciousness-raising among the privileged is critical for a liberatory social transformation (Case, 2013).

Unfortunately, little literature has examined the ways in which Indian youth experience and understand social issues. To help address this absence in our knowledge base, the current study was designed to examine whether engaging privileged Indian youth in their greater communities may coincide with their increased interest in and more thoughtful analysis of social justice issues. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How do privileged Indian students understand social issues in their communities?
2. Will Indian students' understanding of and discourse about working against social and economic oppression change after they take a field trip to a nearby under-resourced village?

Though India does not systematically implement national immersion educational schemes, by assessing the link between individual school programs and youth's social justice awareness development the results may help to guide researchers and educators in choosing interventions to engage privileged students in political and social justice issues. As such, this study examined the link between a one-time field trip to an under-resourced village and changes in participants' awareness about injustice and their propensity to engage in social change.

Methods

Participants

The sample consisted of students in social studies classes at a private English-medium high school in Bhubaneswar, India, where the first author was a research fellow. The project included 75 economically privileged Indian youth whom each participated in a field trip to an under-resourced rural village as a part of his or her

social studies class. Participants included 53 males (70.7%) and 22 females (29.3%) who were 12-16 years of age ($M = 14.49$, $SD = 8.44$). Participants identified as Hindu (97.3%), Muslim (1.3%), or not believing in a specific religion (1.3%). All participants were from a 'General' (upper-caste) background. They received credit for their social studies class and a certificate of participation for engaging in the study. The University of Florida IRB approved this study as research of archival data from students' schoolwork.

Field Trip Experience

During the field trip, participants were immersed in a nearby rural village community for approximately five hours. The village was significantly less resourced than the boarding school the participants lived in. For example, there was irregular electricity, no running water, limited healthcare services, and the village children had no school supplies. Houses in the village were made of mud and straw, juxtaposed to the air-conditioned, brand new building where the participants attended school down the road. Despite being in the same geographic locality, the circumstances in the village were drastically different from participants' daily surroundings. The field trip was organized by the high school social studies teacher who had a personal connection to the village and the first author. Social science teachers, whom all had at least bachelor's level degrees in humanities, were selected as chaperones. The chaperones met with the social studies teacher and the first author to understand the purpose of the field trip and obtain instructions for the students. Participants were broken into 4 groups when visiting the village and were chaperoned by their teachers. As the focus of the field trip was to learn about inequality and what role people with privilege have in resolving it, each participant was given these instructions verbally and in writing: "We will be going to visit a village. Observe the village activities carefully. Be sure to notice social problems faced by the villagers. In your notebook, take notes on the problems you see. Think of ways you, personally, could help them, and take notes in your notebook about what specific actions you could take to help them. Please be as personal and specific as possible. These notes will be important to you later."

At the village, all of the groups had an opportunity to visit the village panchayat (government), hospital and local doctor, school classrooms and students, and village merchants. The participants were able to ask questions and dialogue with villagers, and kept notebooks of their observations. Upon return, depending on their teacher, some participants reflected on their experience by completing a writing assignment for their social studies class that asked them to reflect on their experience and what they learned in the village. Other participants were asked by their teachers to create and put on a theatrical play for the school to convince peers about their role and the importance of helping others. Due to the extensive amount of data collected during this project, data obtained from participants' written and theatrical reflections will be shared in a future paper.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

Participants responded in writing to three open-ended prompts about social issues, ideas about and perceived responsibilities towards social injustice, and past experiences with helping others both a week prior to and one day after the field trip. All prompts and responses were written in English. To prevent inadvertent inclusion of preconceived categories, the researchers used open-ended prompts:

1. What do you think is unfair about society? Do you see any problems that could be changed?
2. Do you think you have a role in helping society? If so, what is your role?
3. Have you done anything in your past to help others who are less fortunate? (If so, explain. If not, why not?)

Responses to the three questions were transcribed from hand-written responses to typed digital files by research assistants in the U.S. Participants did not have an opportunity to re-check their response transcriptions. Transcriptions were then inductively coded to create a codebook.

Analysis

The Development of the Codebook

A conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) utilizing inductive thematic coding (Charmaz, 2014) was used to analyze the data from the above prompts. A codebook was developed from the qualitative analysis to obtain the presence of codes across the data before and after the field trip intervention.

In content analysis, the participants' narratives are condensed into content-related categories, and when the participants' words are classified into similar categories, they reflect shared meanings (Elo & Kyngas, 2007). Qualitative content analysis focuses on the interpretation of text data through the identification of themes or patterns that emerge directly from the narratives of the participants, and a systematic process of coding (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). As such, this approach allows for the researchers to gain in-depth understandings of participants' experiences, and the meanings and context that are accompanying these experiences, without the imposition of pre-existing categories (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Pre-intervention and post-intervention data were analyzed using Charmaz's (2014) in vivo coding strategy. The interview transcripts were coded by each member of the data analysis team (e.g., the first, second, and third authors). The team consisted of one doctoral and two master's level counseling psychology students at Boston College with experience and coursework in graduate level qualitative research. Two senior doctoral-level faculty members, one in community psychology and the other in counseling psychology, rigorously reviewed the coding and consulted extensively on the study design and analyses. The researchers immersed themselves independently in reading the transcriptions several times, carefully attending to the participants' responses word for word. The first and second authors carried out first, second, and third-level coding (described below). They identified phrases, words, or sentences in the transcripts, preserving the participants' original words. These first-level codes were selected because of their significance vis-à-vis the overarching research question regarding youths' awareness of injustice and propensity to engage in social change.

The second-level codes emerged through an inductive process of collapsing codes into categorical themes. These themes continued to be named using participants' original words. Finally, the third-level codes were derived through analysis of the relationships between the second-level codes, and are the domains presented in the final codebook and analysis (Charmaz, 2014). Discussion and deliberation occurred between the first, second, and third authors to reach consensus as they developed the third-level domains, and subsequently, as they defined the themes in the codebook.

Two additional coders, the third author and a research assistant, subsequently coded the data using this codebook. The third author coded the full data set using the codebook developed by the first and second author, and added additional codes, which emerged through conversations and eventual consensus with the first author. The research assistant blind coded the dataset with the fully completed codebook. To ensure accurate use of the codebook, the research assistant only rated 10 transcripts at a time and asked the first author for clarification if necessary. This led to the achievement of at least 70% agreement between the research assistant and the first author across all 35 codes for both pre- and post-intervention transcripts. This process assured accuracy and consensus of themes and domains in the data.

With respect to self-reflexivity, as indicated in recent guidelines for qualitative studies (Morrow, 2005; Yeh & Inman, 2007), the researchers engaged in regular discussions concerning biases and assumptions throughout the study that may have influenced the process of data interpretation and codebook development. Of the authors involved in the coding process, two identify as South Asian Americans, and one identifies as Filipino American. The two supervising authors identify as White American. They discussed the potential influence of their cultural backgrounds on the research process and the participants' responses to the interviews. Specifically, the two authors discussed their own backgrounds as privileged South Asians who live in the United States and

have visited India regularly for work or to see family. The non-South Asian authors engaged in open discussions of their understanding of Indian culture and leaned on the two South Asian American authors for insight into cultural issues. The authors aimed to center participants' narratives in data analysis and interpretation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The participants' words are reflected in the reporting of the findings as we provide quotes from the transcripts.

Results

The data analysis revealed that participants explored seven general domains that will be detailed in the following sections. These domains include: positionality, discrimination, structural issues, village level issues, strategies for problem solving, experiences of helping, and reasons for problem solving. Within each domain, various themes developed as they represented a common thread that participants reported. We will present quotes that illustrate the themes as well as provide frequencies of the themes seen in participants' responses. These frequencies are represented as both pre (t1) and post (t2) intervention.

Positionality

The first domain reflects how participants positioned themselves in relation to those they identify as affected by social issues and problems. Many participants approached discussing social issues by aligning themselves with a perspective of either the collective, the other, or the inquisitive outsider. Through this perspective, the participants delved into their understanding of societal issues.

Collective (t1 = 36, t2 = 28). The participants aligned themselves as a part of the greater society in which problems exist.

“Yes, I do have a role in helping the society as a good citizen I could help my society to be the best because I love my society and the people of the society those who help each other.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“There are many social evils in the society like gender discrimination, untouchability, caste systems, etc. These all are created by us and we can only cure it.” (Male, Age 13, t2)

Otherness (t1 = 41, t2 = 46). The participants separated themselves from those impacted by the problems in society. Some participants took the role of expert on the experiences of others.

“We can change many problems like by making understand the people about the problem.” (Female, Age 16, t1)

“Yes I have donated a few of my things to the poorer society and participated in activities to help the poor through my school. I have been motivating others to help the unprivileged society I have not gotten many opportunities to help them but whenever I see a needy I always help them by some means.” (Male, Age 16, t2)

Inquisitive outsider (t1 = 0, t2 = 4). While this theme did not have a great presence in the data, few participants differentiated themselves from those affected by societal problems and also sought some expertise on the topic from those impacted first hand.

“We should go for research work and learn about the people so that we actually understand what is important to the people.” (Female, Age 15, t2)

Understanding problems (t1 = 5, t2 = 9). Some participants discussed how they understand, know, and ask about the problems others face.

“Why this thing happen in Society? In constitution there is a word ‘Equality,’ but nobody follows it. As in French revolution, the only 3rd estate has to pay the taxes which are not rich. I feel this all things are unfair.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“If we don’t do it, we should at least try to solve the problem, or we should take advice from any experts or from our elders and then try to solve the problems.” (Male, Age 13, t2)

Discrimination

The second domain explores the various forms of discrimination identified by participants. These forms of discrimination are depicted as issues within the society that pose a hardship for individuals.

Caste discrimination (t1 = 27, t2 = 18). Participants identified problems related to the caste system present in India. Some specific castes mentioned by participants include SC, ST, OBC, Dalit, and untouchable. Some participants also framed solutions as targeting untouchability or the caste system.

“It is inequality among the lower caste and upper caste and poverty is the big problem.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“(1) People of lower castes are not given equal chances. (2) People of lower castes are discriminated. (3) People of lower castes are not [given] equal rights.” (Male, Age 13, t2)

Gender discrimination (t1 = 22, t2 = 20). Participants referred to problems related to gender inequality or framed solutions in targeting gender injustices. Gender inequality was addressed as the differential treatment of men and women or girls and boys, especially in the way of boys or men receiving greater privileges than girls or women.

“Males are given more privileges but females are not” (Female, Age 14, t1)

“I can raise awareness among the people regarding different issues like gender discrimination, etc.” (Male, Age 13, t2)

Religious discrimination (t1 = 5, t2 = 5). Some participants identified religious discrimination as an issue in society and explored solutions to religious-based injustice. Specifically, the idea of individuals from different religions being unable to marry was identified as an injustice.

“It is inequality among Hindu and Muslim ... it’s the big problem.” (Male, Age 15, t1)

“Religious discrimination example two people from different religions cannot marry each other.” (Female, Age 15, t2)

Economic discrimination (t1 = 35, t2 = 27). Many participants discussed economic discrimination in society as a great injustice. Specifically, they referred to problems related to economic differences (class, rich, poor, monetary resources) or framed solutions as targeting class injustices. Within this theme, caste was as brought up due to the parallels of caste and economic status in Indian society.

“Their attitudes, behaviour towards each other or the attitudes, the behaviour of rich for the poor people.

Yes, I think that there should be a balance between rich and poor people. For this the poor people should be educated.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“Most of the poor people are not allowed to go to the temples where the rich people go.” (Female, Age 15, t2)

Age discrimination (t1 = 5, t2 = 3). Participants referred to discrimination based on age (e.g., between seniors & juniors/ragging, parents/elderly & children, etc.).

“I think in which society I live people are not given a chance to participate only the seniors are likely to participate. They are discouraged by the seniors.” (Male, Age 15, t1)

“There is no respect for the elders. All people should be treated equally.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Sexual orientation discrimination (t1 = 0, t2 = 2). Few participants identified discrimination endured by individuals who identify as gay or homosexual. These participants referred to the illegality of homosexuality in the Indian justice system.

“Homosexuality is noted as a crime.” (Female, Age 15, t2)

“Becoming gay is illegal.” (Female, Age 15, t2)

Unspecified discrimination (t1 = 24, t2 = 28). There were participants who generally referred to discrimination or inequality in India but did not specify types of discrimination. Some of these participants approached general discrimination as a barrier to societal progression through the lens of problem-solving.

“There are too many problems in the world, and the basic thing is we can’t change the world or our society.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“Yes, I see many problems that are to be changed/like there should be any discrimination injustice in the society.” (Male, Age 13, t2)

Structural Issues

The third domain addresses issues within the society that are based on structure and organization, affecting the quality of life of individuals. These structural issues range from individuals having access to clean water and sanitation to access to education. Also, explored within this domain are structural issues that participants felt the government was responsible for or has a hand in improving such as corruption within the government, increasing systemic resources like employment opportunities, and addressing human rights issues.

Basic needs (t1 = 13, t2 = 23). The first theme refers to individuals lacking the basic amenities needed for survival (water, food, shelter, clothes, & employment). Participants addressed the issue of basic needs as an identified problem in society and formed solutions in how to increase access to basic needs. Some participants used specific examples from their field trip in identifying the lack of basic needs they witnessed first-hand in the village.

“India, the land of the common man, has the major problem of poverty. People are poor; they don’t always get their necessities.” (Male, Age 13, t1)

“Helping the people to get food. Helping the people to get proper employment. Helping the people to get a proper living place.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Sanitation (t1 = 10, t2 = 13). Some participants identified a lack of cleanliness, sanitation, or hygiene as a pressing issue in society. The issue of sanitation may address water sanitation, access to toilets, litter in the streets, or many other concerns present within Indian society.

“Keeping my society clean, not waste water... Like if nobody will throw paper, plastic bags, etc. on roads at Mumbai than [then], there would not be a flood there.” (Male, Age 15, t1)

“Yes, we must see that there is proper sanitation in our society and it is kept clean.” (Male, Age 15, t2)

Illiteracy/lack of education (t1 = 19, t2 = 25). Participants identified illiteracy and lack of education as an issue. There was an increase in participant identification of illiteracy/lack of education post-field-trip intervention. Some participants referred to their exposure to illiteracy in the village, and some participants found illiteracy to be social injustice.

“Girls face many problems. They don’t get an education, and some are not even literate. Many are homeless and as they are illiterate no occupation.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“The main problem that could be changed is illiteracy.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Crimes (t1 = 10, t2 = 1). There were some participants who found people involved in crimes (e.g., stealing, murder, and kidnapping) as a problem in society. This theme was much less represented post field trip exposure.

“There are many unfair activities going on in our society like stealing, murdering, kidnapping, etc.” (Male, Age 14, t1)

“There is no unity amongst the people. People are killing each other.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Lack of systemic resources (t1 = 16, t2 = 37). Participants identified systemic issues like employment and health services as prevalent in society. Some participants also discussed long-term strategies of helping or improving this lack of resources. The presence of this theme increased following village field trip.

“The unfair thing is that the stronger always get to enjoy more opportunities but the needy people are left behind. The government should introduce new policies for the poor.” (Male, Age 15, t1)

“Giving job opportunities to poor.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Corruption/not working government (t1 = 16, t2 = 18). Participants referred to corruption within systems or a lack of action from the government as the source of societal problems or a barrier to overcoming these problems (e.g., need for new policies from the government).

“The Indian government does not do anything to help at all.” (Male, 14, t1)

“From my view, many people are corrupt in this society; the government is also corrupt and it could only be solved by the government.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Human rights (t1 = 6, t2 = 18). Participants referred to groups of people not having access to rights such as issues of child labor or child marriages, and others offered solutions as to obtaining rights for others. This was a theme that increased in presence post field trip intervention.

“In India, the children who are less fortunate are sent as bonded labour to other parts of India to work in very harsh conditions. The industries that they are sold to don't give them a proper place to stay, eat or anything.” (Male, Age 14, t1)

“I think there are many unfair things about society like, discrimination, child rights and the rights for the poor people ...inequality and the rights which the poor/and old people are not getting, etc.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Village Level Issues

The fourth domain is comprised of participant-identified problems encountered while visiting the village “Madhuban.” Participants referred to a variety of problems such as unemployment, medical-related issues, lack of infrastructure in the village, and access to food and water.

Employment (t1 = 0, t2 = 3). Some participants described problems relating to jobs, vocation, and/or unemployment.

“When we went to the village Madhuban we find lack of employment there.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Education (t1 = 0, t2 = 21). Many participants discussed the problems they saw in the village school. Specifically, they referred to problems related to lack of schools, and insufficient educational facilities and resources available to the children.

“There were many problems of the village which could only be solved by the government. In 4 villages there was only 1 hospital and 3 small schools which was not sufficient for the children over there.” (Male, Age 16, t2)

Medical (t1 = 0, t2 = 10). Some participants referred to the problems in the village related to medical facilities and corresponding resources. In most cases, participants described the spaces used for attending to patients and the lack of trained professionals.

“The hospital of the village was very small. The hospital which was there that was only for minor injuries. There were no well-trained doctors. The medical shop was 1.5 km away from the hospital. There should be more well-trained doctors, and the hospital should have modern facilities.” (Male, Age 16, t2)

Infrastructure (t1 = 0, t2 = 24). Many participants referred to problems related to the electrical, drainage facilities, and amenities in the village. Participants referenced the ways in which infrastructure made life difficult for the people they saw living in the village.

“The life was too hard for them and no electricity, no proper drainage system and many more small factors which the people were having.” (Male, Age 16, t2)

Food (t1 = 0, t2 = 2). While not many, some participants talked about the lack of food in India and its poor quality.

“The children who are riding [writing] in that school they are not getting good education, they are not getting proper food to eat, they are not getting good dress to wear.” (Male, Age 15, t2)

Water (t1 = 0, t2 = 7). Some participants referred to water issues in Madhuban village, specifically the quality of water that they saw.

“The water was so poor over there and was not fit to drink.” (Male, Age 16, t2)

Strategies for Problem Solving

The fifth domain explores various approaches participants suggested to resolve the issues described in the other domains. Participants reported a wide variety of strategies to solving problems ranging from donating resources to the less fortunate to spreading awareness about social issues and needs.

Giving/donating (t1 = 45, t2 = 43). Many participants described temporary strategies for helping related to giving, donating clothes, food, shelter, money or their time.

“Yes, I have helped the less fortunate that I have given money to poor to buy the crackers in Diwali and helped old people by doing their work which they cannot do.” (Male, Age 14, t1)

“I can help the society by donating money to the poor ones. I can also provide shelter to them... I can also provide food to the poor ones.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Access to structural opportunities (t1 = 8, t2 = 27). Participants also discussed ways of helping that involved long-term strategies targeting ingrained systemic or structural barriers that lead to differential access to resources. Specifically, participants would recommend improvements that would help employment, health services, and general rights.

“Once there was a water shortage in the society’s tube well. I saw the problem two days before, but no one complained about it. So I told my parents to complain about it to the water stations, and they gave a nice scolding to them & the next day water was there.” (Male, 15, t1)

“I would like to make an orphanage for the orphan people and a hospital in my village for the people of my village and also a school for them. I will make a company in which I will keep some of the people to work there. I will also provide some food in the small village near my village, and I will make a better road, and I will try my best to help the people of my village and other how much I can.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Access to literacy and educational opportunities (t1 = 15, t2 = 22). Other long-term strategies that participants suggested specifically targeted increasing literacy and access to education. Participants discussed how this could be done through teaching or encouraging more people to go to school.

“Yes, I think I have a role in helping society by making the children literate. As they can move forward in their life by being literate.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“We will help them by giving them education as well as proper studies.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Conservation/environment (t1 = 2, t2 = 4). While not prevalent in the entire sample, some participants discussed the importance of conserving resources or taking care of the environment as ways to solve problems in India.

“Yes, I have done things to help my society that is keeping my society clean, not waste water.” (Male, Age 14, t1)

“By planting trees and making aware of planting, which can make my society green...” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Awareness/motivation/advising (not specified/everyone) (t1 = 18, t2 = 20). Participants further explained how to solve problems in India through advising others (either unspecified or everyone) to care about injustices and think of solutions. In the following instances, participants did not make it clear whom they were targeting specifically in these problem-solving strategies.

“Yes, of course, I have a role in helping society. I have gone for many campaigning to make aware people about many diseases, history and caste system, discrimination.” (Female, Age 13, t1)

“I can raise awareness among the people regarding different issues like gender discrimination etc.” (Male, Age 13, t2)

Awareness/motivation advising (among privileged) (t1 = 14, t2 = 12). Similar to the previous theme, participants also explained how advising other privileged individuals about injustices and similar solutions would solve problems in India. In these instances, participants targeted those who were a part of the same social group or held the same level of privilege as they do.

“I helped my friends I told them to adjust in all the situation because we are living in a society where many people live.” (Male, Age 13, t1)

“I should create awareness among others peoples also to help them. I should have requested the government to provide better means of education to the children. I would have organized programs to make my school aware of it. I would have helped them in any manner I can.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Awareness motivation/advising (among those facing problems) (t1 = 12, t2 = 24). In this theme, participants described how they would advise and/or bring awareness to those currently facing identified problems (underprivileged) in India.

“I had done something in my past to help others like help the poor, like talking with them and tell them to send their children to school.” (Male, Age 13, t1)

“Spreading awareness about the new programmes that have been implemented to help the underprivileged groups, starting a fundraising society that should be situated in their own locality to help them in their time of crisis, convincing more people to modernize themselves.” (Male, Age 15, t2)

Overcoming discrimination through unity (t1 = 11, t2 = 9). Finally, the last theme that emerged in the Strategies for Problem Solving domain explores participants’ plans to overcome discrimination (one social injustice in India) through unity and interaction with one another. While this theme decreased in frequency post-field-trip intervention, participants consistently talked about coming together with both privileged and underprivileged groups to solve issues.

“I can also break the discrimination by playing games with them.” (Male, Age 14, t1)

“We should discuss the problems by sitting together.” (Female, Age 13, t2)

Experiences of Helping

The sixth domain reflects participant experiences of helping others. It covers how participants have used their own privilege to help people within various sections of their ecological system. It also encompasses participants’ feelings about helping.

Friends (t1 = 14, t2 = 4). In this theme, participants discussed their experiences in helping their friends, underclassmen, or carrying out household duties in the home. Specifically, they described instances in which they were able to solve problems on their own.

“Yes, I have helped others but very little of them. I helped my friend when he is in need.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“Yes, I do have a role in helping society by helping mom by buying vegetables and helping her by cooking some food helping dad in the money matter I also use to help my small brothers and sisters in studies.” (Male, Age 14, t2)

Family (t1 = 10, t2 = 11). Similar to the previous theme, participants discussed their experiences in helping their families or instances in which they were not able to help their family. This theme appears in similar frequency pre- and post- field-trip intervention.

“I am the eldest son, so I have to help my parents in many ways and of course my brother for his studies.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“My parents have a great role, but I don’t have any role because I am not capable of helping them as I am not earning money.” (Male, Age 15, t2)

School (t1 = 0, t2 = 3). In this theme, participants articulated how they would help others specifically in school. There was a small increase in participant identification of school-based helping post- field-trip intervention.

“Yes, I have donated a few of my things to the poorer society and participated in the activities to help the poor through my school.” (Male, Age 16, t2)

Evaluative feelings and reflections (t1 = 15, t2 = 11). Some participants shared their personal feelings and reflections when discussing their experiences with and reactions towards social injustice. There was a decrease between pre- and post- field-trip intervention within this particular theme.

“We have also arranged so many festivals to feed the poor people. It makes me feel good, and it satisfies me.” (Male, Age 13, t1)

“The most unfair thing in our society is gender discrimination. For me, it’s hard to tolerate if I see.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Reasons for or Barriers to Problem Solving

The seventh and final domain explored reasons it is crucial to solve social injustices while labeling the barriers to most solutions. Participants described themes that related to both internal and external motivators to problem-solving, such as the duty to their nation, a responsibility they hold, and for simple external needs.

Reasons for solving problems - duty/responsibility/should (t1 = 19, t2 = 22). This theme explored participants’ expressed interest in solving problems because it was their duty or responsibility as a member of society. This theme increased post-field trip intervention as participants described their duty as a new generation that shares the world with less privileged individuals.

“Every individual has a role to play in society without which any society could go off balance. Every role is in one way or the other interrelated.” (Male, Age 16, t1)

“I have a major role in helping my society because it today’s modern world the young, energetic children are responsible for the upcoming generations.” (Male, Age 15, t2)

Reasons for solving problems - progress of nation (t1 = 10, t2 = 12). Similar to the previous theme, the participants described how they must solve problems because it would help improve India. Some participants described the needs of the country and how their own identity also indicated their need to help the nation improve.

“Yes, I do have a role in helping the society as a good citizen I could help my society to be the best because I love my society and the people of the society those who help each other.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“As I am an Indian, I will try to progress India.” (Female, Age 14, t2)

Reasons for solving problems - self (t1 = 4, t2 = 3). Participants described the reasons they want to solve problems as a way to receive personal benefits in the future. The presence of this theme slightly decreased between pre and post-field trip intervention.

“If we help them little but also they will be very happy and pray for us.” (Male, Age 13, t1)

“If we help them those are being ragged by seniors they would also help us in our needy time” (Male, Age 15, t2)

Barrier - not able to help (t1 = 11, t2 = 15). Lastly, this theme articulated the reasons participants do not engage in helping others or feel that the responsibility lies with someone else. This theme increased from pre- to post-field trip intervention.

“I haven’t helped. Actually, I never realized that there are people who really suffer from so many things.” (Female, Age 15, t1)

“I do have many roles in helping society, but sometimes it’s either not the right place or not the right time.” (Female, Age 15, t2)

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate how socioeconomically privileged students at a private high school in India understood social issues in their communities. Specifically, it explored whether their qualitative understanding of and discourse about working against social and economic oppression changed after they took a field trip to a nearby under-resourced village.

In India, privilege is not only based upon economic wealth and social class, but also on one’s caste, a hereditary social organization of occupation and status (Bhattacharyya, Woods, & Lykes, 2017; Thorat & Neuman, 2012). As privilege is embedded within the social stratification of India, privileged Indian youth have a unique role in their communities as future leaders and can be the change agents in combating systemic injustices. While social injustices like mass poverty (Mehta et al., 2011) and corruption (Pring, 2017) are embedded in everyday aspects of Indian society, desensitization is a barrier to building insight into social injustices (Heybach, 2015). Indian youth are surrounded by these injustices but are not required to examine them in their daily lives. The field trip intervention in this study was a method to break through patterns of desensitization to increase social justice awareness. The qualitative findings based on the participants’ perspectives following the field trip intervention are discussed below.

Seven domains from participants' written reflection prompts pre and post field trip intervention revealed youth's attitudes towards and perspectives of social justice issues in India. *Positionality* codes about how youth aligned themselves in relation to those they identified as affected by social issues stayed relatively constant before and after the field trip, suggesting that positionality may be more innate and harder to shift through a one-time intervention. The *Discrimination* domain included seven forms of discrimination participants viewed in society on the basis of caste, gender, religion, economics, age, sexual orientation, and general unspecified discrimination. Caste, gender, age, and economic discrimination slightly decreased post field trip, perhaps because they were not overtly present during the field trip. Otherwise, forms of discrimination discussed stayed relatively stable pre and post field trip. Discussion of *Structural Issues* increased after the field trip, with the exception of crimes. Participants described systemic access to basic needs such as clean water or education and structures responsible for these issues -- such as the government and the law. A fourth domain, *Village Level Issues*, were mostly present post field trip, as it reflected topics participants discussed specific to the village they visited. The final three domains were about how participants understood how to help and solve the very problems in society they discussed. *Strategies for Problem Solving* reveals diverse ways youth consider to address social issues. They include giving and donating, creating access to structural opportunities, access to literacy and educational opportunities, increasing conservation and environmentalism, overcoming discrimination through unity, and raising awareness of issues among the privileged and those facing injustice. Participants' discussion of access to structural opportunities and access to education as solutions increased after the field trip, reflecting an increased awareness of the structural level of injustice. Raising awareness among those who face problems also increased after the field trip, potentially indicating a perceived responsibility, lack of knowledge, and attribution of the agency of those who face injustice after meeting with these very people. Giving/donating, increasing awareness among the privileged and overcoming discrimination through unity decreased slightly post-field trip. *Experiences of Helping* reflected participants' descriptions of helping their friends, family, and people in school, including emotions participants described experiencing while helping. Themes in this domain stayed relatively constant pre and post field trip, with a decrease, however, in participants discussing experiences of helping friends and their emotions associated with helping after the field trip. The final domain, *Reasons for or Barriers to Problem Solving*, described participants' reasoning for solving social issues which ranged from benefits to the self, the progress of the nation, a sense of duty toward society, and barriers to helping such as not having the time or needing to do their schoolwork. The progress of the nation and duty toward society as reasons to help increased post-field trip as did identification of barriers to problem-solving.

In further organizing the themes that emerged from this study, the social-ecological framework can be used for more in-depth insight into Indian youth's perspectives on social issues. In this framework, social justice endeavors can be characterized as occurring at three distinct levels: (a) work addressing the needs of individuals and families operating at the micro level; (b) work with communities and organizations operating at the meso level; and (c) work to influence existing social structures, ideologies and policies operating at the macro level (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Goodman et al., 2004). Consistent with previous studies which explored social justice awareness through school-based initiatives (Ashley, 2006; Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009), this study's results indicated an increased understanding of social justice issues and solutions across micro, meso, and macro levels, prominently the latter two.

For example, increases in the codes such as Lack of Systemic Resources and Access to Structural Opportunities post-intervention reflect sample-level changes in the number of participants who displayed an awareness of meso- and macro-systemic levels of oppression and awareness of how systems need to change to remove structural barriers for the marginalized. More specifically, participants' direct experiences of people who lacked access to jobs, medical care, water, and electricity appeared to contribute to students' awareness of meso- and macro-level systemic challenges facing Indians living in rural and impoverished areas. Relatedly, after

the field trip, participants cited meso- and macro-level strategies of helping, including improving access to such structural resources as employment, health services, and legal rights. While some students did describe micro-level issues (e.g., interpersonal caste discrimination or gender discrimination), participant responses following the field trip reflected a more nuanced understanding of meso- and macro-level social injustices and avenues to address them than earlier responses had. For example, a higher frequency of participants post-intervention referred to groups of people not having access to Human Rights, a macro-level issue.

Multiple codes decreased pre- to post-intervention, most prominently Crimes, where participants described stealing, murdering, and kidnapping as a problem in society; Experiences of Helping, where participants described their own experiences of personally helping others; and Helping Friends and Family, where participants discussed helping their friends and family as a solution to social injustice. These decreases reflect that youth's preconceived notions and understanding of issues changed after the field trip and that with deeper insight following a direct experience with impoverished people, these micro-level issues and strategies seemed less relevant or practical. A higher frequency of participants post-intervention described a solution to social injustice as raising Awareness and Motivation Among those Facing Problems. After meeting people who lived in poverty, participants may have seen greater value in working to increase awareness of social injustice among those who experience it, though, this may reflect their understanding that the marginalized were responsible for their living conditions and place in society. Consistent with the previous literature on immersion outcomes (Choi et al., 2015; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009), participants in the current study examined their own role in relation to the social justice issues they witnessed and strategies to solve these issues. However, the frequency changes reported in this study are solely changes in qualitative data counts so they must not be over-interpreted.

The field trip intervention's impact on changes in the frequencies of the obtained codes can be useful when observing the effect of educational interventions on privileged youth's consciousness building. Educational interventions are a useful approach in increasing the likelihood that privileged groups will engage in advocacy and activism with and for the oppressed (Bhattacharyya, Woods, & Lykes, 2017; Perrin et al., 2013). In addition to greater social benefits, engagement in social-justice interventions benefit young people in personal development, increased career opportunities, confidence, prosocial behavior (Brudney & Schmahl, 2010), self-esteem, and social responsibility (Wade, 2011). While the benefits of immersion trips are evident, there are limited immersion options for youth in India (e.g., high school students), possibly due to safety concerns of long-term immersion trips for this population. A field trip intervention may facilitate the early stages of ally development, such as how privileged youth think about poverty and privilege.

Overall, the current findings suggest that the Indian youth in the study thought thematically differently after paying attention to conditions in an under-resourced village in their community. A fundamental tenet in liberation psychology, conscientization (Martín-Baró, 1996), calls psychologists to help society learn how to "perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 35). More specifically, liberation psychology focuses its efforts on raising the consciousness of the oppressed to analyze the situations contributing to their marginalization (Lykes & Sibley, 2014). Based on the findings from this study, a field trip may be one practical step in transforming the consciousness of youth in India who may experience oppression in the wider global community but hold relative privilege in their Indian context.

Limitations and Future Research

Participants in this study reported that they had never gone on a field trip of this nature before nor had they ever participated in a psychological study, so generalizing these findings must be done with appropriate caution. In the Indian school context, students are rarely asked their opinions on their relationship with their broader community and the social issues that surround them. Expressing their opinions and writing down

their self-reflections were new practices for these participants. This novelty may have influenced the depth and elaboration of their reflection. Handwritten data also can be limiting in assessing areas of perceptual change, which interviews may have been better able to capture. Additionally, the balance of gender and religion in the sample was skewed due to the high enrollment of males and hindus in the school. Futures studies should be conducted with more female and religiously diverse participants, participants for whom such practices are not novel, or should be conducted over an extended period of time so as to familiarize participants with the process of research and expressing opinions.

Without the collaboration with village leadership in the design of the immersion intervention and proper follow-up with schools, this study could be read as promoting “poverty tourism.” Immersion interventions need to be thoughtful, sustainable and mutually beneficial, deliberate in promoting collaborations with local village leaders and should take the needs and comfort of the villagers into consideration first and foremost. Witnessing injustice coupled with critical self-reflection can inspire those with the privilege to be concerned about oppressive conditions, however, witnessing injustice alone can lead to poor villages such as the one involved in the current study being exploited in new ways. Educating the privileged is not the burden of those who are most adversely impacted by unjust systems, especially when that education can deplete local resources further, or lead to a sense of shame among those facing poverty. Resourced schools can listen to the needs and desires of villages with whom they collaborate and can respond to their requests for resources or advocacy. Furthermore, the perspectives of the youth living in the village targeted in the current project could be explored in future studies, including the perceptions of marginalized, “lower-caste,” or Dalit youth about social oppression and social change.

Regarding researcher-participant dynamics, the first-author and field researcher has a South Asian, Bengali-U.S. background and interacted with the participants extensively, which may have inadvertently created a demand characteristic and influenced how the student participants responded to the questions they were asked. Participants may have wittingly or unwittingly provided answers that they thought were desired by the researcher or perhaps they did the opposite, providing answers that challenged their perceptions of the first author’s desired answers. Future studies aiming to minimize this should vary the data collectors, minimize researcher-participant interactions, or integrate the researcher as a participant-observer.

Building on this research could contribute necessary scholarship to the field of counseling and psychology. This study took a step in developing and refining categories of privileged Indian youth’s reflections both before and after exposure to an under-resourced village. Future research can build on these results by developing a scale to assess young Indians attitudes and beliefs regarding social and economic injustice in India. This scale would facilitate future research, inform future interventions, and assess the effectiveness of interventions with a contextually relevant tool. Future studies also could target a more in-depth examination of the constructs reflected in the current participants’ responses, such as caste discrimination, reasons for wanting to solve problems, and which factors contribute to or affect their beliefs. Further, long-term effects of immersion trips on Indian students’ attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (including changes in their career trajectories) could be assessed to inform school-based interventions.

Implications and Conclusions

This study can have implications for developing interventions with economically privileged Indian students that could facilitate their awareness of social injustice and, perhaps, their greater intentionality to address it when they see it. On an individual level, reflecting on experiences with impoverished people and on the importance of helping others can facilitate privileged Indian youth’s development of a deeper understanding of social oppression. At the local school level, educators can take Indian students on field trips to spend extended

time in conversation with under-resourced communities, to develop their awareness of social issues and to inspire students to use their privilege to serve as advocates for the marginalized. On a national level in India, socio-economically privileged schools can be encouraged to incorporate field trips into their curriculum to provide students exposure to social issues impacting people in their country. Research on Indian youth's social justice engagement may be able to inform interventions that leverage privilege to reduce oppression beyond India, as well. At a global level, investing in future local stakeholders of power (e.g., youth in developing nations) may produce local avenues for social change and may reduce dependence on international aid in overcoming global social issues.

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Social Distance from Mental Illness Among Counseling, Social Work, and Psychology Students and Helping Professionals

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Abstract

Negative stereotypes of people with mental illness may lead to stigma of those with mental illness, impacting their self-confidence and willingness to seek mental health treatment. Few studies have looked at the health professional's role and the impact they may have on the stigmatization process of people with mental illness. The purpose of this article was to better understand the concept of social distance among individuals in the helping professions of counseling, social work, and psychology. A total of 305 students and 95 professionals from counseling, social work and psychology participated in this study. Results revealed that counseling, social work, and psychology students, and helping professionals do not differ in their need for social distance from people with mental illness. Helping professionals reported significantly more social distance from people with mental health problems in close personal relationships, compared to their social relationships. In conclusion, there were no significant differences in social distance observed as a function of professional experience.

Keywords: social distance from people with mental illness; counselors; social workers; psychologists

Introduction

The way in which individuals with mental illness are viewed unfavorably by society has been of great interest to researchers. People with mental illness experience social distance, loss of credibility, and social status (Lauber, Nordt, Falcato, & Rossler, 2004). Research suggests that negative stigma tends to extend into the families of people with mental illness and those of non-relatives who live near people with mental illness (Ahmedani et al., 2013), thus making the experience of mental illness and stigma multi-generational, which in turn magnifies both its reach and power.

The degree to which professionals from counseling, psychology, and social work (“helping professionals”) engage in stigmatizing individuals with mental illness as clients is currently gaining traction. While medicine has explored ways to be open-minded and express compassion toward their patients (a traditional hallmark of such work) paradoxically physicians still hold significant levels of negative attitudes toward their patients especially those with mental illness (Brown et al., 2015; Feeg, Prager, Moylan, Smith, & Cullinan, 2014; Kassam, Glozier, Leese, Henderson, & Thornicroft, 2010; Lammie, Harrison, Macmahon, & Knifton, 2010; Lars Hansson, Jormfeldt, Svedberg, & Svensson, 2011; Pattyn, Verhaeghe, Sercu, & Bracke, 2013). However, less is known about how the helping professions perceive their clients with mental illness. For example, a recent study of Mullen and Crowe (2017) found that school counselors held biases and negative attitudes about people with mental illness, and these stigmatizing beliefs drove how school counselors treat them. In another study, Covarrubias et al. (2011) found that social work students distant themselves socially in situations of close contact with individuals with mental illness, despite having a general positive attitude towards people with mental illness. Furthermore, Mannarini and Boffo (2015) in a sample of psychology students found a strong tendency to judge people with addiction disorders; these students were also likely to reject engaging in any interpersonal relationships with them. Other studies suggest that mental health professionals, including therapists and psychologists have more positive attitudes toward people with mental illness when compared to the general population, but therapists and psychologists still continue to hold negative beliefs about the dangerousness of people with mental illness and their desire for social distance (Stuber et al. 2014).

The quality and effectiveness of mental health treatment provided by helping professionals may be extremely contingent upon practitioners’ biases and personal views of people with mental illness (Wang, Locke, & Chonody, 2013). Stigmatizing attitudes may create barriers to forming a partnership and empowering clients (Covarrubias et al., 2011), discourage treatment participation (Corrigan, 2004), and negatively impact recovery expectations of the patient or family unit (Overton & Medina, 2008). Thus, the training received by students in counseling, psychology, and social work is now being discussed in the literature as one pathway to either increase or lessen stigma among people with mental illness. The effectiveness of traditional and didactic teaching about mental health (Cates, May, & Woolley, 2009; Gable, Muhlstadt, & Celio, 2011; Gyllensten et al., 2011; Kendra, Cattaneo, & Mohr, 2012) and specific stigma reduction interventions for helping professional students (Aggarwal et al., 2013; Dipaula, Qian, Mehdizadegan, & Simoni-Wastila, 2011; Ferrari, 2016; Rubio-Valera et al., 2018) have been investigated. Because of this discourse, public awareness campaigns are being implemented and gauged for effectiveness in countries such as the United Kingdom (Henderson et al., 2016) and Sweden (Hansson, Stjernswärd, & Svensson, 2016), but very little is known in the United States on how social distance affects the relationship between the client and helping professional.

Thus, this study aimed to investigate the differences in social distance from people with mental health illness at different milestones of career development in the helping professions of counseling, social work, and psychology, starting from the beginning of professional education and through their long-term professional

career. The study also sought to compare the level of social distance and its trajectories between students and those who were in their career as helper professionals.

Methods

Sample and procedure

Helping profession students were recruited by sending information and invitations about the study using university e-mails and approaching students during classroom instructions. Study participants were representative of a medium-size Midwestern state university. Professionals were invited to participate by sending emails to professional organizations, and approaching them during professional conferences and scientific meetings. The Institutional Review Board approved the study's protocol for the Protection of Human Subjects at a Nebraska University in the United States. Demographic characteristics of the final sample are displayed in Table 1 including gender, age, ethnicity, profession, and professional experience.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the sample

	Students ($n = 302$)	Professionals ($n = 95$)
	$M (SD)$ or $n (%)$	
Gender		
<i>Male</i>	55 (18.2%)	14 (14.7%)
<i>Female</i>	247 (81.8%)	81 (85.3%)
Age (years)	23.4 (5.9)	41.9 (12.3)
Ethnicity		
<i>White / Caucasian</i>	251 (83.1%)	89 (93.7%)
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	27 (8.9%)	3 (3.2%)
<i>Black/African American</i>	8 (2.6%)	0 (0%)
<i>Other</i>	16 (5.3%)	3 (3.2%)
Profession		
<i>Counseling</i>	87 (28.8%)	34 (35.8%)
<i>Social work</i>	104 (34.4%)	23 (24.2%)
<i>Psychology</i>	111 (36.8%)	38 (40.0%)
Professional experience		
	Students ($n = 302$)	Professionals ($n = 95$)
1-2 years of bachelor studies	66 (21.9%)	Up to 5 years of professional experience 28 (29.5%)
3-4 years of bachelor studies	140 (46.4%)	6-15 years of professional experience 41 (43.2%)
Master studies or higher	96 (31.8%)	More than 15 years of professional experience 26 (27.4%)

Participants in the study could choose to complete the online questionnaire or to answer an equivalent paper and pencil version. All participants could withdraw their participation at any time of the study. Three hundred and five counseling, social work, and psychology students from their first year of bachelor studies to Ph.D. studies, and 95 psychology, social work, and counseling professionals participated in the project. Data from three students were excluded from further analysis due to the high number of missing items.

Measures

The Social Distance Scale was created for the purpose of this study based on the Bogardus Social Distance scale (Wark & Galliher, 2007). Traditional social distance questions of the scale were expanded with specific aspects of social distance relevant for distancing from people with mental illness (Mann & Himelein, 2004). Nine different situations to assess close contact (see Table 2) were provided to the respondents. For example, we asked respondents to evaluate, on a 5-point scale (1 = very uncomfortable; 5 = very comfortable), how comfortable they would feel in close contact with someone who had a mental illness. Participants were asked not to give their reactions to the best or the worst person with mental illness, but consider the entire group of people with mental illness in general.

Table 2

Summary of Exploratory factor analysis results for Social Distance Scale using Maximum Likelihood estimation with Oblimin rotation (n = 397).

Items	Factor Loadings	
	Social contact	Close personal contact
1. Having a conversation with a person with mental illness	0.86	0.15
2. Sharing a living space with a person with mental illness	0.44	-0.43
3. Having a person with mental illness as a neighbor	0.67	-0.13
4. Collaborating with a person with mental illness on a work project	0.81	-0.05
5. Being friends with a person with mental illness	0.70	-0.12
6. Dating a person with mental illness	0.05	-0.80
7. Having a person with mental illness take care of your children when you are away	0.02	-0.80
8. One of your children marrying a person with mental illness	-0.08	-0.92
9. Recommending someone with mental illness for a job	0.34	-0.49
Eigenvalues	5.29	1.16
% of Variance	58.71	12.85

Note: Factor loadings over 0.40 appear in bold.

We used exploratory factor analysis of the scale items using the Maximum Likelihood method with Oblimin rotation which revealed a two-factor structure, representing two aspects of social distance: social distance in close personal relationships and social relationships. Examples of close personal relationships are dating or marrying someone with a mental illness, trusting a person with mental illness to take care of your children, and recommending someone with a mental illness for a job. Examples of social relationships are having conversations with a person with mental illness, collaborating on work projects, being friends, or having a neighbor with mental illness. Responses to the factors were moderately correlated, $r = -0.63$. Results of the factor analysis are displayed in Table 2.

As item 2 had very similar factor loadings on both factors, it was removed from the scale in further analysis. Reliability analysis of the two developed subscales supported the high reliability of this instrument in our study sample: social distance in social relationships Omega = 0.86, 95% CI [0.84, 0.89]; social distance in close personal relationships Omega = 0.88, 95% CI [0.86, 0.90]. Scores on the subscales ranged from 4 to 20, with higher scores representing the stronger need for social distance.

Possible bias of social desirability was evaluated using The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) (Paulhus, 1991). The BIDR consists of two subscales: self-deceptive positivity, which measures the respondent's tendency to give self-reports that are honest, but positively biased; and impression management, which measures deliberate self-presentation. Respondents were asked to evaluate each statement on a 7-point scale from 'not true' to 'very true.' Higher scores represent stronger self-deceptive positivity and more expressed deliberate self-presentation. Both subscales demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency in this study: self-deceptive positivity Omega = 0.64 [0.59, 0.70]; impression management Omega = 0.67 [0.62, 0.73].

Statistical analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20.0. Descriptive statistics were conducted to describe the study sample and are expressed as means and standard deviations for quantitative variables, and as numbers and percents for categorical variables. Repeated measures ANCOVA was used to compare levels of social distance in personal and social relationships and to compare levels of social distance between professions controlling for social desirability and other variables in the study. MANCOVA was used to analyze differences in the desire for social distance in subgroups with different professional experience controlling for social desirability and other variables. Reliability of the scales was computed using the R package 'Userfriendlyscience' (Peters, 2014). The criterion of statistical significance in all tests was $p < 0.05$.

Results

Comparison of social distance between professions

When we compared the social distance measures between counseling, social work, and psychology students and performed an ANCOVA, we also controlled for age, gender, impression management, and self-deceptive. Our findings revealed no significant differences between levels of social distance in close personal and social relationships in students' sample ($F(1, 291) = 0.90, p = 0.34, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = 0.003$) (Figure 1). There was no statistically significant interaction between age ($F(1, 291) = 0.16, p = 0.69, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = 0.001$), gender ($F(1, 291) = 0.43, p = 0.52, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = 0.001$), impression management ($F(1, 291) = 0.86, p = 0.35, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = 0.003$) and self-deceptive positivity ($F(1, 291) = 1.07, p = 0.30, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = 0.004$) that we observed. Furthermore, no within-subject effect of profession in students was found ($F(2, 291) = 0.52, p = 0.59, \text{Partial } \eta^2 = 0.004$).

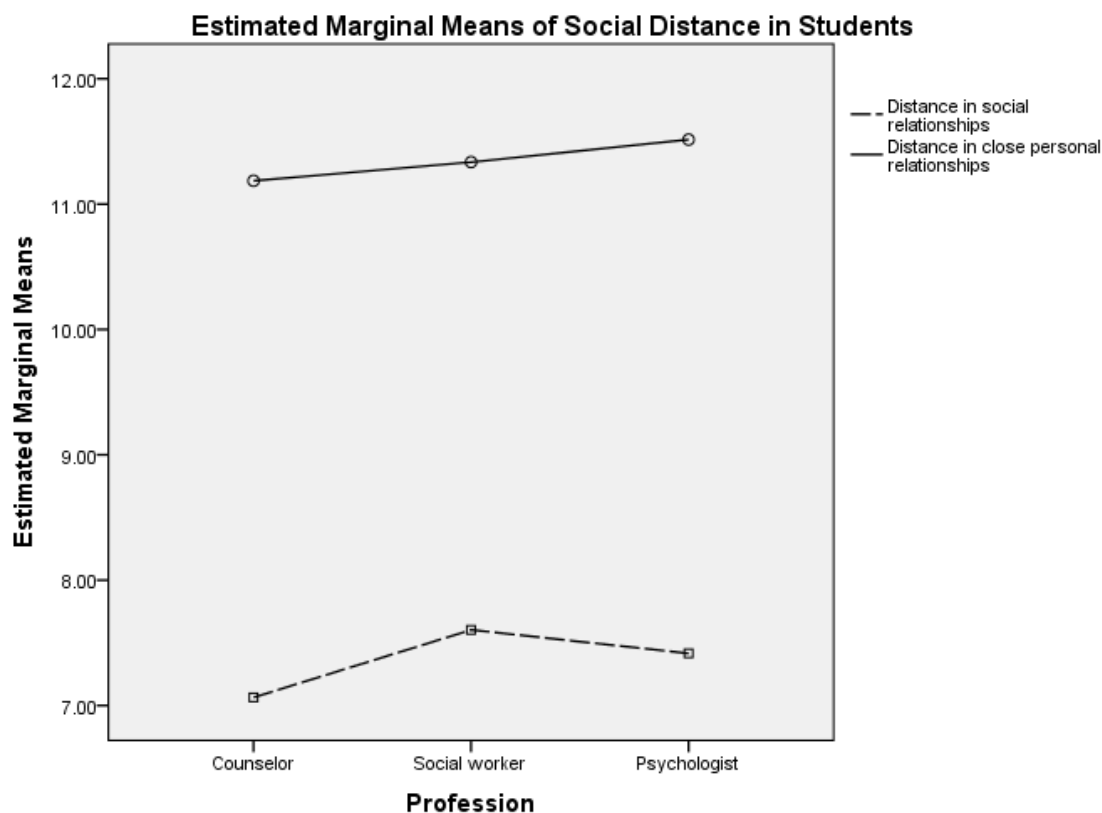


Figure 1. Distributions of social distance scores in counseling, social work and psychology students, when age, gender, and social desirability is controlled.

However, when we compared the social distance measures among counseling, social work, and psychology professionals and controlled for age, impression management and self-deceptive positivity (gender was not included into analysis due to uneven distributions between professions), the findings revealed significant differences in levels of desire for social distance from people with mental illness in close personal and social relationships ($F(1, 89) = 5.32, p = 0.02, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.056$) (Figure 2). Pairwise comparison with Bonferroni adjustment revealed that professionals reported significantly a stronger desire for social distance from people with mental illness in close personal relationships than in social relationships (estimated marginal means 11.29 ($SE 0.36$) and 6.48 ($SE 0.24$), $p < 0.001$). In addition, self-deceptive positivity ($F(1, 89) = 3.28, p = 0.07, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.036$), impression management ($F(1, 89) = 0.47, p = 0.50, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.005$), and profession ($F(2, 89) = 0.85, p = 0.43, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.019$) were not related to the desire for social distance, but a significant interaction with age among professionals was observed ($F(1, 89) = 6.49, p = 0.01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.068$).

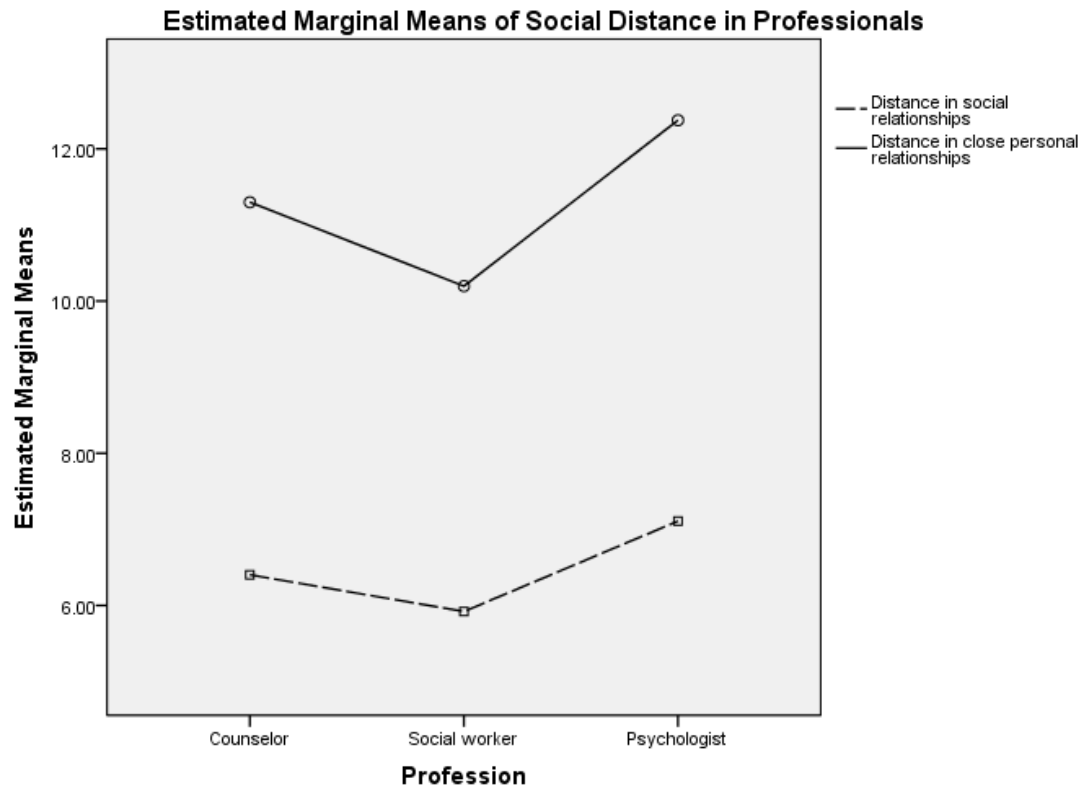


Figure 2. Distributions of social distance scores in counseling, social work and psychology professionals, when age and social desirability is controlled.

Analysis of social distance as a function of professional experience

To evaluate the impact of professional experience on social distance, we divided the study sample into six groups of professional experiences: 1-2 years of bachelor studies, 3-4 years of bachelor studies, master and doctoral studies, up to 5 years of independent professional practice, 6-15 years of professional practice, and more than 15 years of professional practice. We included gender, age, and social desirability measures as covariates in the analysis.

A non-significant Box's M test ($p = 0.07$) indicated sufficient homogeneity of covariance matrices of social distance scores. A significant multivariate effect on social distance was observed for level of professional experience (Wilks's lambda = 0.95, $F(10, 764) = 2.07$, $p = 0.03$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.26$) and self-deceptive positivity (Wilks's lambda = 0.98, $F(2, 382) = 3.84$, $p = 0.02$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.20$). Age (Wilks's lambda = 1.00, $F(2, 382) = 0.48$, $p = 0.62$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.003$), impression management (Wilks's lambda = 1.00, $F(2, 382) = 0.68$, $p = 0.51$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.004$), and gender (Wilks's lambda = 1.00, $F(2, 382) = 0.09$, $p = 0.91$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.000$) were not related to social distance from people with mental illness.

Moreover, univariate tests showed that professional experience was significantly related only to social distance in close personal relationships ($F(5) = 2.71$, $p = 0.02$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.03$), but not in social relationships ($F(5) = 1.30$, $p = 0.27$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.02$) (see Figure 3 and 4). However, pairwise comparisons of main effects based on estimated marginal means with a Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons revealed no statistically significant differences in the desire for social distance as a function of professional experience (counseling, social work and psychology) ($p > 0.05$).

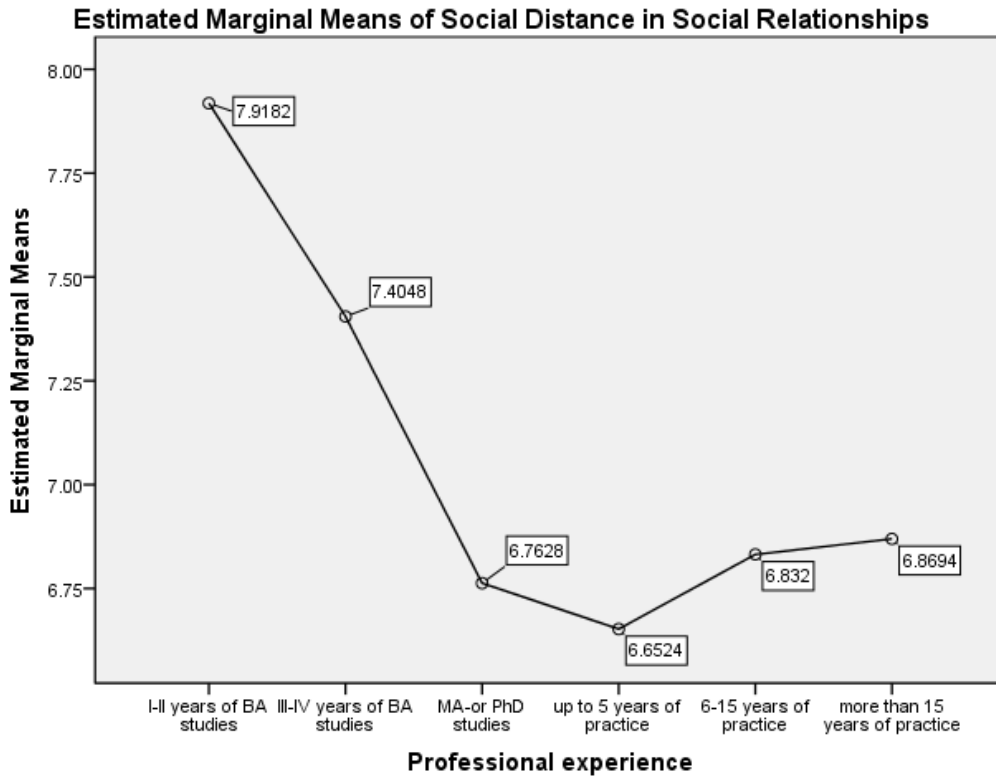


Figure 3. Relationship between professional experience and social distance in social relationships when age, gender, and social desirability is controlled.

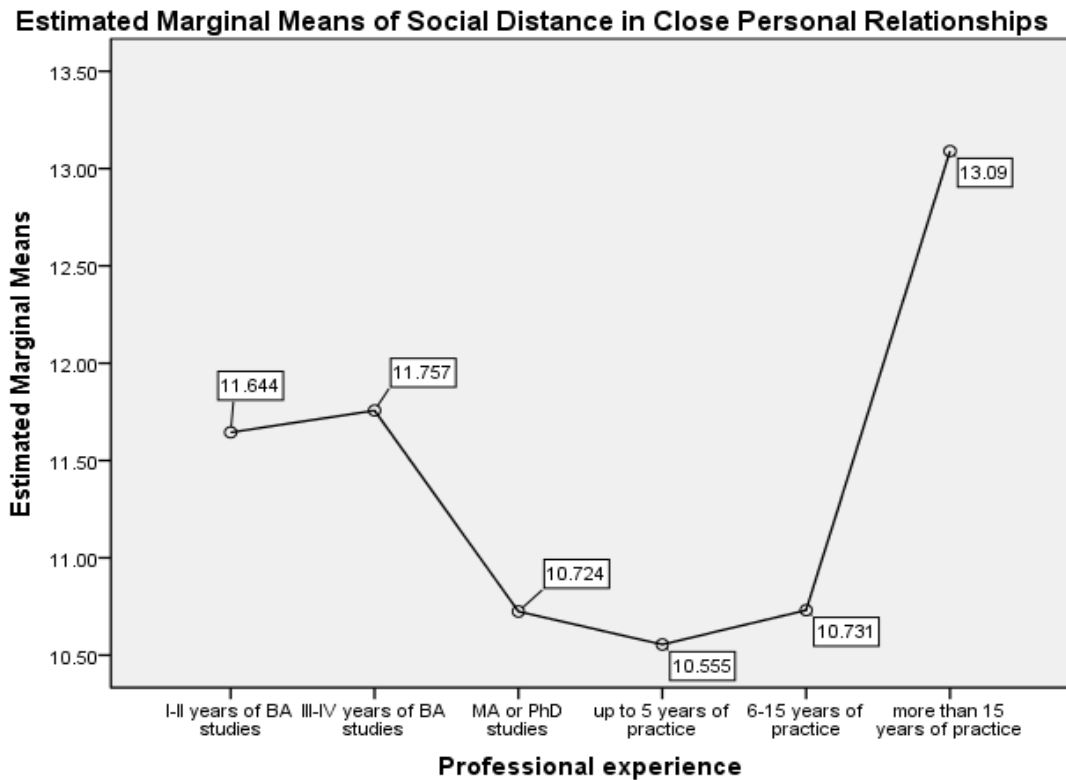


Figure 4. Relationship between professional experience and social distance in close personal relationships when age, gender, and social desirability is controlled.

Discussion

In the present study, we aimed to compare the need for social distance from people with mental illness among helping professional students and helping professionals of three disciplines counseling, social work, and psychology. We also assessed their desire for social distance at different milestones of professional career development.

Traditionally, the phenomenon of social distance has been analyzed as a single construct (Covarrubias et al., 2011). However, our results imply that at least two components of social distance – distance in social/formal relationships and distance in more intimate/personal relationships - may be extracted. A significant discrepancy in these two aspects might be observed through the career of the helping professionals. Helping professionals expressed significantly more desire for social distance in personal relationships than informal social relationships. These results are in line with previous findings. Covarrubias et al. (2011) found that social work students held positive feelings about people with mental illness who were in their social network. Interestingly, they were not willing to hire people with a history of mental illness as a babysitter and were less willing to support the possibility of marriage with children with someone with a mental illness. In another study involving a sample of healthcare professionals, Stuber et al. (2014) found that the majority of helping professionals stated they would not accept a person with mental illness as a coworker or for marrying into their family. Looking at this phenomena from a different angle, Hansson et al. (2011) demonstrated that negative attitudes held by professionals are clearly understood and recognized by patients and that these stigmatizing beliefs are shared between patients and staff.

Our results indicated that counseling, social work, and psychology students and professionals did not differ in their need for social distance from people with mental illness when age and social desirability were controlled. Our research study adds to the already limited number of studies comparing stigmatizing attitudes towards people with mental illness between professionals of different helping professions. Interestingly, Smith and Cashwell (2010) found that social work students and professionals expressed a stronger need for social distance than psychology and counseling students. Similarly, Endriulaitiene et al. (2016) found that psychologists expressed less stigma of people with mental illness compared to social workers and professionals in medicine.

Previous research has revealed that understanding mental health generally helps to decrease the stigma of mental illness (Mårtensson, Jacobsson, & Engström, 2014; Pranckevičienė et al., 2016). However, in our study, no significant positive differences in social distance were observed as a function of professional experience. Although a slight trend might be observed in this study that social distance in social relationships decreases while in school, an opposite trend was found in close personal relationships. Highest social distance scores were found in most experienced professionals. Several factors might explain these results. Firstly, due to the cross-sectional design of our study, the cohort effect could not be excluded. However, other studies also reported an increase in stigmatizing beliefs of mental illness among counselors, social workers and psychologist. For example, a recent study of Lithuanian psychologists and social workers found the stronger desire for social distance from people with mental illness is most experienced by psychologists with more than ten years of professional experience and social workers with less than five years of professional practice (Pranckeviciene et al., 2018). Overton and Medina (2008) noticed that stress and workplace toxicity affected how helping professionals perceived their clients who exhibited considerable stereotypes of mental illness. Thus, their stigmatizing beliefs are constantly reinforced in the workplace. Finally, professional burnout might be related to increasing negative attitudes towards people with mental illness (Dattilio, 2015; Di Benedetto & Swadling, 2014), suggesting the importance for professionals to practice self-care and monitor their levels of burnout. Moreover, self-deceptive positivity was significantly related to social distance measures in our study, indicating that students and helping professionals still have some level of self-illusion. Even though the participants in this study may have felt they were unbiased, the results suggested differently. These results illustrate the importance of social desirability

measures in stigma research even when the respondents are mental health professionals. In a study by Casad et al. (2013) it was stated that increasing students awareness about their own implicit biases is an important goal of professional education. Our results imply that not only students, but mental health professionals might benefit from anti-stigma interventions and personal myth busting (Knaak, Modgill, & Patten, 2014; Ungar, Knaak, & Szeto, 2016).

Implications

An implication from this study would be that stigma orientated interventions need to be developed to change staff-patients relationships. Further research is needed to determine to what extent helping professionals are aware of their implicit biases and its personal and social impact. Despite some of the differences in professional education in this study, it might be expected that psychology, social work, and counseling students, and professionals need additional training about mental illness, social distance, and stigma. More research into what is explicitly done to work with implicit bias in training programs may shed more light on this process. Furthermore, regardless of the training or work being done with people with mental illness, biases still exist. Practitioners may need to have an ongoing process of self-evaluation to determine how their biases influence their treatment services with people with mental illness.

Strengths and Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, this is a cross-sectional study. A longitudinal design is needed to more thoroughly investigate the trajectory of social distance from people with mental illness through the course of a professional career. A larger representative sample of mental health professionals would have helped to increase the statistical power of our findings. It may be useful, therefore, to replicate this study using a larger sample size. There are other limitations to this study including the use of self-report data and the fact that validity was not reported for the measures employed.

Additionally, a more diverse sample across both gender and ethnicity might lead to greater understanding of this topic. A control group of students and professionals from non-mental health-related fields is needed to evaluate the level of social distance in broader contexts. Only the phenomena of social distance were analyzed in this study. Examining individual, environmental, and cultural aspects might be relevant to the understanding of stigmatizing attitudes of mental health students and helping professionals. Lastly, there is a need to examine the training programs' effectiveness on implicit bias in the fields of counseling, social work, and psychology to understand social distance from mental illness. One strength of the study, however, was that a wide range of professional experiences were examined to include comparisons of different professions (counseling, social work and psychology) controlling for social desirability occurred.

Conclusions

Based on this study counseling, social work, and psychology students and helping professionals do not differ in their need for social distance from people with mental illness. Helping professionals reported significantly more social distance from people with mental illness in close personal relationships, compared to social relationships. No significant positive differences in social distance were observed as a function of professional experience.

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Seeing “RED” to Serve Students: An Example of Advocacy for Counseling Services for Refugee and Immigrant Adolescents

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine to what extent a U.S. newcomer school for adolescent English language learners lacked adequate mental health services for immigrant students. School counseling professionals at this school sought data to advocate for additional mental health professionals without asking inappropriately invasive questions about family legal immigration status. Leveraging the expertise of school administrators, refugee resettlement experts, and university researchers yielded a creative method for collecting student demographic information without violating student privacy. Looking specifically at refugee students from high-conflict backgrounds (the “refugees likely to have experienced distress” or “RED” variable) allowed researchers to pinpoint psychosocial acculturation differences in comparison with other immigrant students. A survey of students revealed differences in reported attitudes toward school and perceptions of discrimination among refugees from high-conflict backgrounds compared to other immigrants and refugees from lower-conflict backgrounds. Findings also supported the notion that immigrant students were likely to have experienced trauma prior to enrolling in this school. Results of this engaged scholarship allowed the resident school counselor to advocate effectively for a full-time mental health counselor position for newly arrived secondary students.

Keywords: acculturation; refugees; immigrants; adolescents; education

Introduction

Recent international news headlines have been filled with stories about immigrant and refugee children, and many of these stories involve children suffering trauma. From Syrian families taking treacherous journeys on rafts to escape civil war to migrant children being forcibly separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border, current events related to international migration often involve trauma inflicted upon children. Research at refugee camps has shown that posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms among Syrian refugee children may be ten times more common than among children globally (Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). Refugee camps themselves, which are intended to provide temporary safe havens for families fleeing life-threatening circumstances, can be overcrowded and violent and present additional sources of childhood trauma (Ghumman, McCord, & Chang, 2016). Children whose immigrant parents have been deported or detained have higher reported incidence of psychological stress than other children with immigrant parents (Rojas-Flores, Clements, Hwang Koo, & London, 2017). Even immigration policies and practices themselves—such as the forced family separations at the U.S.-Mexico border—can exacerbate the trauma of treacherous and exploitative migration journeys (Roth, Crea, Jani, Underwood, Hasson, Evans, & Zuch, *In press*; Torres, Santiago, Walts, & Richards, 2018).

Despite the prevalence of traumatic stress among immigrant and refugee children, many schools in the United States do not have the necessary resources and personnel to provide counseling and mental health services to these children. School officials often do not know the background of newly enrolled students, and schools are legally prohibited from asking about students' or families' immigration status (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2014). How can schools collect data about students likely to need counseling resources and thus justify more resources for mental health services? This case study gives one example of a school using a creative method of collecting information about increased need for counseling services among immigrant students while still protecting their privacy. The study began with the following questions:

1. Do students who came to the United States as refugees from distressed areas report different areas/levels of acculturative stress compared to students who came to the U.S. through other immigration channels?
2. How can schools use other data points to predict whether their student population is more likely to need mental health or school counseling services?

The aim of this exploratory study was to create a method that would allow school counselors to anticipate how many newcomer immigrant students were likely to need counseling or mental health services, all while respecting the confidentiality of immigrant families' legal status or personal histories of trauma. Our hypothesis was that students who entered the U.S. as refugees from countries where they were more likely to have experienced traumatic stress (such as conditions of war) would be more likely to demonstrate a need for mental health services.

The impetus for this study came amid sharp enrollment increases in a public school serving adolescent English language learners. The school counselor was frustrated by inadequate resources to address the needs of increasing numbers of students with symptoms of trauma. For example, two students arrived in the United States and immediately enrolled at the newcomer school during the same week researchers collected data for this study. One of these students had lost a limb to an explosion in Iraq and was suffering from constant pain due to shrapnel still in her body. She also displayed symptoms that school staff assumed to be undiagnosed and untreated post-traumatic stress disorder. The other new student was 16 years old but had not attended school for the previous ten years due to multiple displacements and years spent in refugee camps in Thailand. The

acculturation stress and psychological needs of these two students could differ significantly from the needs of students who did not experience such trauma prior to their arrival in the United States. The school counselor saw a need for more mental health resources for the school but needed data documenting the need in order to request resources from her school district. She turned to a local university researcher for help. Although the project had no budget and a limited timeframe, a small team of researchers agreed to try to find ways to answer the research questions. The school counselor took the findings to the school district, which funded her request for a dedicated full-time mental health counselor on campus to serve immigrant and refugee secondary students. We share this success to encourage other school systems and social service organizations to seek creative avenues for increasing counseling opportunities for immigrant and refugee children.

Literature Review

The effects of trauma on students' long-term mental health and ability to learn has been well-documented (Hurt, Malmud, Brodsky, & Gianetta, 2001; Rossen & Cowan, 2013). Scholarship on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the lifelong consequences of untreated traumatic stress has highlighted the need for "trauma-sensitive" and "trauma-informed" school and community services (Cole, O'Brien, Gadd, Ristuccia, Wallace, & Gregory, 2005; Oehlberg, 2008; Craig, 2016; Felitti, Anda, Nordenberg, Williamson, Spitz, Edwards, Koss, & Marks, 1998). Among immigrant students, traumatic experiences in the home country can affect adjustment to life in the new country (Ghumman, McCord, & Chang, 2016; Porter & Haslam, 2005). When students enter a school district from another country, school officials often do not know the circumstances behind their immigration. School psychologists and school counselors need to understand the acculturation issues and stresses that immigrant and refugee students are likely to face (Cisneros & Lopez, 2016). Previous research has shown that refugee adolescents prefer accessing mental health services at school rather than home or clinical settings (Fazel, Garcia, & Stein, 2016). Researching immigrant students' needs is a critical way for psychology and counseling professionals to advocate for social change among marginalized populations (Yakushko & Morgan Consoli, 2014).

Distinctions between Refugees and Immigrants

Both political and sociological definitions of immigrants and refugees can differ. The United Nations considers a refugee to be someone forced to flee a home country because of persecution, war, or violence (UNHCR, 2018a). Common sociological definitions include Segal and Mayadas's (2005) distinction between immigrants *pulled* to a host country by its attraction as compared to life in the home country, and refugees *pushed* from their home country due to extenuating circumstances such as war or life-threatening persecution. However, this description does not reflect the experiences of many recent migrants to the U.S. from Central America. Popular media documents many migrant families fleeing gang-related violence—being "pushed" from their homes, in other words—yet these families do not enter the U.S. with refugee status. From a legal standpoint, the United States labels as "refugee" only those immigrants who have applied for refugee status before they enter the U.S. and who have been granted legal refugee status by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security while they are still overseas (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2015). An individual who arrives to the United States and then asks permission to stay due to threat of violence or fear of persecution is applying for legal asylum ((U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2015). Both asylees and refugees have legal status in the U.S. However, refugees received their legal acceptance before making the trip to the United States. Asylum can only be granted once an individual has already reached U.S. soil.

While the titles "refugee" and "immigrant" may indicate distinctions in immigration pathways, the two groups are not clearly differentiated in other ways. Both refugees and immigrants may come from widely divergent economic circumstances, cultural backgrounds, and political systems which may affect the immigration experience. For clarity, this paper refers to "refugees" as those who have legal refugee status conferred by the U.S. government. We use the term "immigrant" to refer to those who have come to the U.S.

by any other channel besides formal refugee resettlement. We do not know if any students in this study have legal asylee status because, as we will explain below, schools are not allowed to ask students or families about their immigration status. However, the number of legal asylees in this community in general was very small at the time of this study, particularly compared to the number of refugees in this community; using categories of “refugee” and “immigrant” is more salient to the community demographic at the time of data collection.

A key point underpinning this study is that the legal distinction between refugees and immigrants does not necessarily correspond to a distinction in experiences of trauma. Historically, many refugees come from high-conflict situations such as countries experiencing war. Indeed, Doran-Myers and Davies (2009) found that refugees from countries in conflict are more likely to have experienced trauma prior to arriving in the U.S. as compared to other immigrants. Yet not all refugees fit into this category. For example, at the time of data collection the largest single group at the school in this study were Cuban-born refugees. Although these students had legal refugee status, most did not come from violent or high-conflict situations. Conversely, non-refugee immigrants may have been exposed to significant violence and significant trauma in their home countries. For example, after the data collection for this study, the newcomer school saw an increase in students arriving from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras—countries with high rates of gang-related violence. Most students from these countries do not have refugee status, but they may still have experienced traumatic stress similar to children coming from countries at war. Much media attention has focused recently on Central American “border crossers” who seek asylum upon first setting foot in the United States and risk deportation if asylum is denied. For the purposes of considering student trauma, though, it’s worth noting that many asylum seekers enter the country on tourist visas or work visas or student visas and then hire private attorneys to handle their asylum applications. The largest number of asylum applicants in the U.S. is actually from China (Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, 2016). Whether legal asylum is granted or denied may not correspond to the experience of traumatic stress or physical danger in one’s home country. Asylees from China may be less likely to have experienced traumatic stress or migratory stress than asylees from Guatemala. Yet increased reports of violence in Central America notwithstanding, asylum denial rates by U.S. immigration courts have risen each year for the last five years. Asylum seekers from Mexico are the most likely to have asylum status denied, with an almost 90% denial rate in immigration court (Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, 2016).

Regardless of a student’s path to the United States, schools do not keep records of immigration status or whether a student arrived as a refugee or not. The 1982 U.S. Supreme Court ruling *Plyler v. Doe* determined that children have a right to free public schooling regardless of their immigrant status. This directive also prohibits schools from requiring any information that would necessitate parents revealing potential undocumented status. These guidelines protect the rights of all children in the U.S. to attend school and are also intended to allay parents’ fears that schools might report children who do not have legal immigrant status (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Schools’ sparse background information about students drives this study’s investigation of ways schools might appropriately obtain valuable information to serve students with extra psychosocial needs due to immigration-related stress.

Trauma and Adjustment to a New Culture

School psychologists and researchers alike have long noted the importance of understanding the struggles and issues facing immigrant and refugee students (Dodds, 2010; McCloskey & Southwick, 1996; Reyes & Elias, 2011; Zhou, Peverly, Xin, Huang, & Wang, 2003). Whether a child enters a new country as a refugee or an immigrant, he or she may experience high levels of stress due to experiences of immigration and acculturation. Birman and Chan (2008) identified *traumatic stress* from acutely distressing experiences suffered prior to immigration, *migration stress* from the process of uprooting from previous support systems, and *acculturative stress* from the process of adjusting to a new host culture.

Refugee children's exposure to traumatic events has been linked to increased difficulty adjusting to a new culture and an elevated risk of mental health problems (Birman, Ho, Pulley, Batia, Everson, Ellis, Stichik Betancourt, & Gonzalez, 2005; Doran-Myers & Davies, 2009; Shannon, Vinson, Wieling, Cook & Lett, 2015; Walick & Sullivan, 2015). Commonly reported effects of *traumatic stress* among refugees include depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, survivor's guilt, aggression, internalization of problems, learning difficulties, and impacted academic performance (Center for Victims of Torture, 2005; Hurt et al, 2001; Nugent & Roberts, 2013; Rossen & Cowan, 2013; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). However, the acculturation process of refugee youth is multidimensional (Trickett & Birman, 2004) and the direct effect of refugees' traumatic stress, migration stress, and acculturative stress on mental health is not well understood (Kartal & Kiropoulos, 2016).

Migration stress refers to trauma caused by the process of immigration. Examples of migration stress could include Syrian refugees crossing the Mediterranean in an overcrowded raft or unaccompanied children from El Salvador sneaking on a train to Mexico and then crossing the desert to the U.S. with human smugglers. In some cases, the process of migration itself may take decades. Refugees from many countries live in stress-inducing circumstances in refugee camps for years before being resettled in the U.S. (Ghumman, McCord, & Chang, 2016).

Once in the host country, *acculturative stress* can also be linked to posttraumatic stress symptoms among refugees (Bentley, Thoburn, Stewart, & Boynton, 2012; Ellis, MacDonald, Lincoln, & Cabral, 2008). Regardless of the circumstances precipitating immigration, the process of creating a new life in a new country can be stressful for any child. By definition, immigrant and refugee children are separated from home cultures, communities, and extended family members (Knipscheer, Drogendijk, Gülsen, & Kleber, 2009). School-based interventions are among the recommendations for overcoming acculturative stress (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; Tyrer & Fazel, 2014).

Creating a Construct for School-Based Data Collection

The literature noted above supported the researchers' concern that the newcomer school needed to increase capacity to meet the mental health and acculturation needs of their growing student population. Increasing capacity would necessitate predicting how many newcomer children would be likely to need counseling services. However, asking students or parents about their immigration experiences would not be appropriate due to the legal restrictions discussed above. Asking refugee resettlement agency caseworkers for a client list could also pose a privacy problem for families; in addition, it may not yield the data the school needs because legal refugees did not all undergo high-conflict or traumatic experiences. Using a single data point such as students' birthplace would not be enough, either. By definition, refugees flee from their home country to another country. (People fleeing for their lives who do not cross a nation-state boundary are instead called "internally displaced persons.") Refugees resettled in the United States are usually in at least their third country. Because of this, a refugee child who is part of a persecuted ethnic group in Myanmar (Burma) may have been born in a refugee camp in Thailand, Malaysia, or Bangladesh. Sorting students by nationality, ethnic group, or language poses additional complications. Some refugees are "stateless people," such as Meskhetian Turks who are an ethnically Turkish minority group in the former Soviet Union who were deported by Stalin from Georgia to other countries of the former U.S.S.R. during World War II. Some Meskhetian Turks, including many in Russia, had no citizenship or national identity in any country until being resettled by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in the last decade (Aydingün, Harding, Hoover, Kuznetsov, & Swerdlow, 2006). Students from this group of resettled refugees had no former citizenship in any country. They might record their ethnicity and/or nationality as Turkish, Russian, Georgian, Ukrainian, Uzbek, or any of a number of other identifiers.

After discussing these complications and the need for this study with both school personnel and refugee resettlement agency caseworkers, we realized that we needed a construct which could be continually adapted

and updated to reflect quickly-changing immigration patterns. Adaptability in data collection is critical because the U.S. State Department sets different quotas each year to limit the number and countries of origin of refugees admitted to the United States. In one year the U.S. may have accepted many Meskhetian Turks, for example, but in the following year no Meskhetian Turks may arrive and the Office of Refugee Resettlement may plan to accept the largest number of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Immigration patterns change from year to year among non-refugees, too. Economic and political upheavals often affect annual arrivals of non-refugee immigrants from different parts of the world. For example, fewer immigrants arrived to the US from Mexico in 2017 than in 2016. However, more individuals from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras sought asylum from 2013–2015 than in the previous 15 years combined (Mossaad, 2016). These examples illustrate that immigration trends and patterns among both refugees and non-refugee immigrants can change quickly and often.

The analytical construct we developed, “Refugees likely to have Experienced Distress” (or “RED”), allowed us to be adaptable and responsive to current events and changing immigration patterns as we analyzed student data in order to be sensitive to the needs of students who have experienced trauma. Understanding the needs of English language learners—and all newcomer students—requires attention to the social and political realities that shape their acculturation needs. When it comes to serving students, context matters—and educators and counselors alike must stay abreast of the social and cultural contexts of students’ lives.

Methods

The study seeks to identify differences in the acculturation experiences of English Language Learners (ELLs) using a cross sectional survey of students in a magnet program for ELL students. The primary investigators recognized acculturation was likely to vary between students arriving from war-torn or otherwise violent or oppressive countries (often via refugee camps) and those immigrating under less stressful conditions. Grappling with inconsistencies in student knowledge of their national and ethnic backgrounds, the research team identified the need to develop a tool for identifying group differences based on exposure to traumatic stress—something we could not directly ask about and that we could not directly ascertain using only incomplete responses to questions about students’ country of origin. Inconsistencies in student responsiveness combined with complex interactions between place and ethnicity meant we needed a method to determine which students were likely to have experienced distress prior to their arrival in the U.S. We expected that triangulating parents’ origins and language would give us a more accurate understanding of students’ experience prior to arrival than would just the students’ responses to the question of their own country of origin.

Survey responses allowed us to look at relatively standard indicators of acculturative stress and migration stress. Following the creation of the analytical construct for prior experiences of distress, our objective was to examine group differences in various measures of acculturation and migration stress including perceptions of discrimination. If the construct worked as we hoped, we expected that those we identified as likely to have experienced distress would indicate symptoms of acculturative or migratory stress and experiences of discrimination with greater frequency than those who were not identified as REDs.

Setting of the study

The study was conducted at a public school serving secondary students who have recently immigrated to the United States. The school is in an urban Midwestern city in which students speak over 100 languages and around ten percent of public school students are born outside the U.S. (Oyler & Kulkarni, 2015). Although this state has not historically been an immigrant magnet, the population of English language learners in the state increased by over 300% in the past decade (Horsford & Sampson, 2013). Such growth is not unique. Across the U.S., recent growth in immigrant populations has increased the most in communities that were previously

unaccustomed to large populations of immigrants (Baird, Adelman, Reid & Jaret 2008; Izyumov, Nahata & Coomes, 2002).

Middle-school and high-school-aged students attending this school all have minimal English language skills and/or interrupted formal education. “Newcomer programs” such as this have become more common in the U.S. over the last two decades as the population of older immigrant children with both academic and language needs increases (Short, 2002; Short & Boyson, 2012). In a newcomer model, newly arrived secondary students are segregated from the general population for 1-3 semesters for intensive English instruction. In addition to English, students also take grade-appropriate content area courses taught with accommodations to help support English language development. Once students reach a certain level of English proficiency, they exit the newcomer program to a mainstream school where they continue to receive English language classes and language support within a regular middle or high school building. In order to avoid a *de facto* segregated educational system for immigrant students, students use a newcomer school as an intensive “jump start” in English but are not permitted to stay there indefinitely.

The school in this study began in 2009 with fewer than 100 students. At the time this study was planned, enrollment was approximately 280 students representing 39 countries of origin. School enrollment continues to increase rapidly, highlighting the importance of funding staff and services for newcomer adolescent students.

The school district assigned one school counselor to the newcomer school based on the number of students enrolled. This was the only staff member on site with any training in addressing student psychosocial issues. However, the school counselor had mostly administrative duties rather than counseling duties. The school district does not provide a trained school psychologist to every school and uses school psychologists primarily for educational evaluation services.

Participants

Two hundred and sixty-one students chose to respond to some or all of the questionnaire used to collect data. Of the 261 questionnaires, 257 provided usable data on non-demographic items. Respondents ranged from age 10 to age 21 with a mean age of 14.74 and a reported average age of arrival in the U.S. of 13.33. A total of 123 girls and 114 boys responded to the sex item on the survey. Respondents reported 39 different countries of birth (see Figure 1). The largest numbers of students were born in Cuba ($n = 50$) and Nepal ($n = 42$). Both Cuban and Nepalese groups held legal refugee status at the time of this study.

At the time of this data collection, the school was providing interpretation for ten languages for instructional purposes. While students’ linguistic diversity is more varied than ten languages, many students were already multilingual before entering the U.S. school system. For example, students from a number of West African countries who already spoke French as a second or third language grouped together with a French interpreter for particular events during the school day. The study used the same student groupings of ten languages with the same familiar school-sanctioned interpreters to ensure that every participant would receive instructions in a familiar setting and language.

The participant demographics in this study represent a single moment in time that cannot be replicated even within the same school in the same community. Immigration patterns shift dramatically in relatively short periods of time based on U.S. federal policy changes, global geopolitics, and economic factors. Since the data collection, for example, at least three major changes have dramatically altered the demographic composition of the school in this study. First, U.S. immigration policy has shifted regarding Cuban arrivals and they no longer automatically receive parolee/refugee status. Second, widely publicized executive orders under the Trump administration have labeled refugees from 11 majority-Muslim countries (including Somalia, Sudan, and Iraq) as “high risk” and have delayed or denied entry to thousands of refugees due to much slower security screening procedures (Robbins & Jordan, 2018). Third, a large number of both unaccompanied minors and entire families seeking asylum have entered the U.S. from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The United

Nations High Commission for Refugees reports a 25 percent increase in asylum requests from 2016 to 2017 from those three countries due to increased violence (UNHCR, 2018b). These three developments represent shifts in the constantly changing demographics of this newcomer school as well as schools across the country.

Instrument

The survey used in this study included two parts: a demographic questionnaire and a modified version of the Immigrant Adolescent Questionnaire (IAQ) (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006). The fourteen demographic questions included student's and parents' ethnicity, student's place of birth, mother's place of birth, father's place of birth, student's first language, mother's first language, father's first language, and student's age of arrival in the United States. The International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth administered the Immigrant Adolescent Questionnaire (IAQ) to 7,997 immigrant youth from diverse cultural backgrounds living in 13 countries of settlement around the world (Berry et al, 2006). The instrument includes subscales measuring attitudes toward school, ethnic identity, language, cultural traditions, friends, social activities, family relationships, perceived discrimination, self-esteem, psychosomatic symptoms, and negative activities. Each subscale uses a 5-point Likert scale in which responses range from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The IAQ is public domain, but the researchers also contacted the lead author, John Berry, for permission to use the instrument. Examples of questions in the subsections analyzed for this project are as follows:

- School Adjustment: 9 questions such as "I have problems concentrating during classes" and "I care about my grades and how I do in my school work." Six items load on two constructs, one related to indicators of acculturative stress, such as "I have problems concentrating during class" and the other related to feelings about school, such as "I believe my teachers care about me and my success" (see Table 1).
- Perceived discrimination: 9 questions such as "Teachers have treated me unfairly or negatively because of my ethnic background" and "I don't feel accepted by Americans." When all 9 are included, Cronbach's Alpha is .809, but some items have low loadings. When we reduce to four items reliability declines slightly, but strong loadings suggest valid and reliable measurement of one underlying construct (see Table 2).

Data Collection

School administrators granted the research team one class period with students. This fifty-minute time segment had to suffice not only for the administration of the questionnaire used for data collection, but also for the survey instructions and student practice with the response sheet. This time period also included handling of the multilingual informed consent approvals distributed prior to survey administration in accordance with the university Institutional Review Board and school district research office protocols. The study would not have been possible without a team of dedicated and patient interpreters. Multilingual interpreters had become familiar with the questionnaire in advance and already knew the students well, as they were all certified interpreters employed by the school district as bilingual associate instructors. Students each had a response sheet with a five-point Likert scale for each question, and interpreters needed to take time to ensure students' understanding of the response sheet prior to survey administration.

The research team and multilingual school staff administered the survey instrument on two separate days to account for staffing needs related to linguistic diversity. On the first day of data collection, approximately 90 Spanish-speaking students—the largest language group at the newcomer school—gathered in the school auditorium for the administration of the survey in Spanish. The written survey was translated into Spanish by a local translation agency. Per Institutional Review Board requirement, the translated survey was then verified by an outside native Spanish speaker for clarity and authenticity to the original survey document. Throughout the advocacy period, a Spanish speaking instructional assistant was present to give the students directions as

well as read the questions aloud, since school staff affirmed that not every Spanish-speaking student was highly literate in Spanish.

School staff and the research team administered the surveys for students from all other language backgrounds on a second day. Students who wished to participate were invited to gather in rooms according to their preferred language. Students who moved to the rooms but later decided they did not wish to participate were allowed to stay in the same room if they wished to avoid social awkwardness or peer pressure to participate. To ensure that the participants were able to accurately understand the survey questions, an interpreter in each room read the questions aloud to the students in their respective languages. These interpreters had been given the English language survey in advance so they would be prepared to interpret the questions into their respective languages. They had also taught students about marking a five-point Likert scale response sheet. Students marked their responses on their own response sheet while multilingual assistants circulated in each classroom to answer questions. A similar multilingual data collection method had been used previously by the school for other purposes, so students had prior experience listening to their interpreters read questions and then indicating a response in writing.

While this data collection method has obvious limitations and raises validity questions, we were constrained not only by lack of budget for multiple translations but also by wide variations in student literacy. School administrators report that a number of students are not literate or have low literacy skills in their first language. This is one reason the school uses verbal interpretation far more often than written translation. In addition, some of the students' first languages are primarily oral languages rather than written languages. For examples, most Somali students at the school speak MaiMai (or Maay Maay) but have never read it. Without survey items to control for limited literacy, language in which the survey was administered, and first language, we were unable to interrogate potential problems created by these factors.

Creation of an Analytical Construct

Student responses to demographic questions about their nationality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background were inconsistent. A student, for example, may not respond to country of birth but was able to answer questions about their parents' ethnicity or language. The response patterns likely reflect varied knowledge of factors related to social and economic background.

In order to determine whether students who came to the United States as refugees from distressed areas report different aspects or levels of acculturative stress compared to students who came to the U.S. through other immigration channels, we needed to find a way to identify which students were likely to have experienced traumatic stress related to their immigration experience. Since we did not want to ask questions related to immigration status directly, we looked for other data points to predict whether some students might be more likely to need counseling services. The research team made a list of students' place of birth, students' self-described ethnicity, parents' place of birth, parents' ethnicity, students' first language(s), and parents' first language(s). University researchers consulted with both school district personnel and two refugee resettlement agencies for feedback on the combination of factors used to determine a students' likelihood of experiencing traumatic stress. Based on this background information, we created a variable for "Refugees with likely Experiences of Distress" (RED) for those whose place of birth, language, and/or ethnicity suggest that push factors for migration to the U.S. likely include traumatic stress in the form of violence or some form of persecution (see Table 3). This was designed to be a more accurate gauge than any one of the demographic factors considered alone. For example, a student who listed her place of birth as Thailand, her parents' place of birth as Thailand, and her primary language as Thai would not be flagged with potential "RED" status. However, a student who listed her place of birth as Thailand, her parents' place of birth as Myanmar or Burma, and her primary language as Karen would be flagged with "RED" status as that confluence of factors indicates that she was likely born in a refugee camp as a refugee from Burma.

The RED construct allowed the research team to triangulate the information we received from students to better understand the circumstances of their arrival in the U.S. By using language, ethnicity, and geographic variables related to themselves and as many as two parents, we were able to determine whether they were likely to have come to the U.S. from a place experiencing war or civil unrest. The RED construct differentiates newcomers who are more likely to have experienced traumatic distress from those who have either immigrated under less stressful conditions or who sought refugee status under less violent or volatile circumstances (such as Cubans, for example). Using this construct, each item in the survey was analyzed based on grouped output for “potential RED” participants, “non-RED” participants, and “participants for whom RED status could not be determined.” About 49% of participants were identified as having potential RED status, and 51% were identified as likely non-RED. The use of a combination of variables allowed us to maximize the ability to identify “likely RED” students despite some missing data in the demographic questionnaire preceding the survey. For example, a survey which had no response for “ethnicity” but which listed language and place of birth may still include enough data for likely RED status to be determined.

We created a construct that takes into account current migratory patterns and ethnic aspects of conflict in various parts of the world. The construct can be changed to reflect changes in the geopolitical landscape. The ever-changing nature of working with immigrant and refugee students is one reason we chose to create an analytical construct that can be updated by different counselors or schools in different areas. Cronbach’s alphas indicate levels of reliability for the psychometric survey items and chi-square analyses identify whether differences between “Non-RED” and “RED” perceptions, feelings, and experiences are statistically significant.

Schools or social service agencies using a similar construct would need to update the factors determining “RED status” frequently based on immigration trends and current events. At the time of this data collection, for instance, the Spanish-speaking students in this school were all either from Cuba or Mexico. Since that time, students from Central America have enrolled who would likely not have legal refugee status but would have a high likelihood of experiencing traumatic stress. Were we to do the study again now, we would change the name of the construct so that it did not suggest refugees as the only group of students likely to have experienced distress.

Results

Two hundred and sixty-one students completed some or all of the School Counseling Needs Assessment and IAQ. Respondents ranged from age 10 to age 21 with a mean age of 14.74 and reported an average age of arrival in the U.S. of 13.33. A total of 123 girls and 114 boys responded to the sex item on the survey. The school has a school-wide Title I designation indicating a high poverty rate earning the school the right to flexibly use federal funds to provide systemic programming to meet the needs of the impoverished student population.

Students ranged from sixth to 12th grade with one reporting “15th” which likely reflected the years they have spent in school. The bulk of respondents, however, were in grades six through ten so our analyses of grade-based differences in response omit the one 12th grader and the one who indicated “15th” grade. There were no 11th grade participants. Respondents reported 39 different countries of birth, with the largest numbers born in Cuba ($n = 50$) and Nepal ($n = 42$) (see Figure 1). When asked about country of citizenship, ten students reported that they are not citizens of any country and another 61 did not know how to respond. An additional 34 simply did not respond to the questions, 14 reported U.S. citizenship, and an additional respondent indicated the U.S. as his or her second country of citizenship.

Null Hypothesis 1: a variable constructed from student responses to questions about their own country of origin, the parents’ country of origin, and they and their family members’ first languages will not provide a valid

construct for identifying students who have experienced distress. Findings suggested the “Refugees with likely Experiences of Distress” (RED) variable is a valid construct. We rejected the null hypothesis.

The subsections of the instrument addressing language, cultural traditions, friends, social activities, family relationships, and self-esteem did not show statistically significant differences between likely RED and non-RED students. Despite these findings, further analysis of subgroups provides support for use of a RED variable. When we compare Cuban and Nepali Bhutanese students, the two most populous linguistic and cultural groups in the school, the two groups’ responses are significantly different for several categories of the Immigrant Adolescent Questionnaire. Both Cuban and Nepali Bhutanese students are refugees. Yet Cuban immigrants were not as likely to have experienced an extreme level of distress before their arrival, whereas ethnic Bhutanese immigrants from Nepal were seeking resettlement after decades of instability in refugee camps. For this reason, students born in Cuba were coded “likely non-RED” and students born in Nepal were coded “likely RED” for the purpose of this research. The differences in lived experience between these two groups serve as an example that the likelihood of traumatic stress differs even among youth entering the U.S. as refugees.

Null Hypothesis 2: student responses will indicate the same levels of acculturative and migratory stress for those who are likely to have experienced distress compared to those without such a history. Results indicated that the majority of students at the newcomer school report positive attitudes toward school, do not report difficulties concentrating or strong feelings of loneliness (Table 1). Likely RED students reported more positive attitudes toward school than likely non-RED students in terms of “liking” school, believing that their teachers care about them and their success, and caring about their own grades and performance. However, likely RED students showed potential signs of acculturative stress regarding questions about school performance: they were more likely to agree that they have difficulty concentrating during class and while doing homework (Table 1). Likely RED students were also more likely to say they wish they “could quit school for good” (see Table 1). We rejected the null hypothesis that prior experiences of distress have no impact on acculturative and migratory stress.

Null Hypothesis 3: student response will indicate the same perceptions of discrimination for those who are likely to have experienced distress and those without such a history.

The IAQ includes nine indicators of perceived discrimination. In our sample, only four of those indicators appear to load on the same factor (Cronbach’s Alpha = .71). Students at the newcomer school generally report a positive and supportive school environment with little difference between students who are likely to have experienced trauma prior to their arrival and the rest of the group (see Table 2). However, the school is not necessarily a multiethnic utopia. Chi-square tests indicate an association between likely experiences of distress (RED) and perceptions of discrimination on the following items:

- “I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background,” $\chi^2(4, N = 207) = 10.25, p < 0.05$.
- “I have been threatened or attacked because of my ethnic background,” $\chi^2(4, N = 207) = 12.24, p < 0.05$.
- “Other students have treated me unfairly or negatively because of my ethnic background,” $\chi^2(4, N = 207) = 10.74, p < 0.05$.

Students identified as having likely RED status are more likely to perceive ethnic discrimination and their responses differ significantly ($p < .05$) from non-RED student responses for each of the statements (see Figure 2). We reject the null hypothesis of no association between prior experiences of distress and perceptions of discrimination. The instrument does not specify a time-frame for these experiences, so students may report experiences from prior to their arrival at the newcomer school. Most students at the school enroll immediately upon arrival in the community, so most would not have much prior experience in U.S. culture (and thus few prior discriminatory interactions, one might assume) before attending the current school. Teasing and harassment based on ethnicity do not appear to be common problems, but the differences in responses between

RED students and non-RED students is both statistically significant and reflective of a clear divergence in perceptions of discrimination.

In previous research, perceived discrimination among adolescent refugees has been linked to greater posttraumatic stress symptoms (Ellis, MacDonald, Lincoln, & Cabral, 2008) and has been studied in the context of bullying of refugee students (Mthethwa-Sommers & Kisiara, 2015). This literature supports our assertion that perceived discrimination among newcomers—and culturally and linguistically diverse students in general—should remain an issue of concern among school psychologists, school counselors, and other school staff.

Discussion

When school systems plan instructional and non-instructional services for English language learners, too often they focus almost exclusively on linguistic needs. In this assessment-focused era when the results of high-stakes testing may be closely tied to resource allocation, administrators and educators tend to emphasize reaching English language proficiency above all other educational priorities. Yet as decades of research on immigrant acculturation and as more recent research on childhood traumatic experiences has shown, positive educational outcomes rely on more than high-quality classroom instruction. The findings of this study support the significance of traumatic stress on adolescent students' experiences of acculturation by showing that students who were more likely to have experienced situations of trauma responded differently—regardless of any single other variable—than students who were less likely to have experienced such trauma. The findings also support the value of being aware of immigration trends and patterns in refugee resettlement and creating or adapting an analytical construct such as the RED variable. We hope these findings will encourage other school counselors, educators, and social service providers to provide increased support for immigrant and refugee students who need treatment due to traumatic experiences—as well as to take the social and political context of students' backgrounds into consideration when planning for such services. Educational funding is limited nationwide, and schools need evidence to justify requests for more mental health services. This study is one approach to collecting such data.

Limitations

Limitations of the study include methodological weaknesses which raise questions about the validity, reliability, and generalizability of specific data points. Although school administrators requested this study, numerous logistical barriers constrained the research design and data collection, including limited available classroom time, inadequate resources to fund paper survey translation to all languages, participant literacy limitations in multiple languages, participant age, parental consent, the large number of languages spoken by students, and the need to train interpreters.

One critical error in research design was choosing an instrument too long and complex for the time allowed for data collection. The school counselor noted the length and linguistic complexity of the instrument and requested that we shorten it. While we worried about affecting the validity of the research instrument, we also shared her concerns. We ultimately chose to remove five of the original ten questions in the negative activities subscale and three of the original thirteen questions in the ethnic identity subscale. Our rationale was that any data we collected might help school administrators advocate for increased services to meet the needs of its most vulnerable students. However, we failed to do any tests to explore how the instrument's validity would be affected by those changes. Because of those methodological problems, we report only on findings from sections of the IAQ with unaltered questions. We also underestimated how long administering the instrument would take when interpretation was taken into account. Due to this issue, the response rate of subsections among students who chose to take the survey plummeted from 94.6% in the first two sections of the survey to

53.3% in the final section of the survey. Because of these issues, we report here only on findings with at least 60% completion rates (thus removing the subsections of psychosomatic symptoms and negative activities.)

Any construct such as RED/non-RED status is built on broad generalizations and therefore has many limitations. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that looking at a confluence of factors in a student's background may yield more insight than the information schools often consider, which is that students from both groups are simply "English language learners."

Because of the rapidly changing demographics of immigrant and refugee students in our school system, the conditions of the study would not be replicable if we undertook this project again today. We welcome others to modify and improve this preliminary effort with more robust studies to meet the needs of the current refugee and immigrant populations in their communities.

Implications

Results from the study support the claim that trauma and distress affect students' attitudes toward school and perceptions of discrimination. As such, the RED construct may serve as a useful tool for local education agencies and social service providers as they collect demographic data for the purposes of planning distribution of resources to meet the needs of their immigrant and refugee populations. While a factor such as "RED status" would certainly not replace standard professional practice for serving individual students, creating such a construct to fit the population of a school district could allow schools to estimate numbers of students who have a higher likelihood of needing services beyond the figures that a school district would typically provide. This estimating capacity is powerful for school administrators who must project and substantiate any need for additional personnel or training in their budgetary requests. The data collected from students' likely RED status would preserve the privacy of students' immigration status while still providing the administration with data that could bolster its case in a petition to the district for an additional school counselor or mental health professional on staff.

Lessons learned include the need for a construct such as "RED status" to change over time to reflect shifting geopolitical realities. Since immigration and refugee resettlement patterns differ across the country, schools in different communities work with students from nations and cultural groups that may not be reflected in our sample. We hope the example of constructing the RED variable sparks further thinking about how to better understand the needs of newcomer students based on the paths that brought them to the U.S. and the trauma they may have experienced before, during, and since their arrival. Since the cultural and historical experiences of each cultural immigrant group are different, school counselors and psychologists who work with refugee and immigrant populations would need to adapt this construct just as they adapt other service strategies for newcomer groups (Walick & Sullivan, 2015). As global migration patterns continue to shift, school personnel will continue to need information and resources to empower them with the knowledge and skills to plan and implement effective programs for immigrant and refugee children.

Conclusion

The school counselor at this newcomer program was able to use the statistically significant findings from this study to advocate successfully for a full-time mental health counselor. We offer the lessons learned from this study as both an example of the value of engaged scholarship and an encouragement to other counseling professionals who work with immigrant and refugee adolescents to think creatively about ways to capture useful data to advocate for increased services students may need.

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Figure 1. *Participants' Country of Birth.*

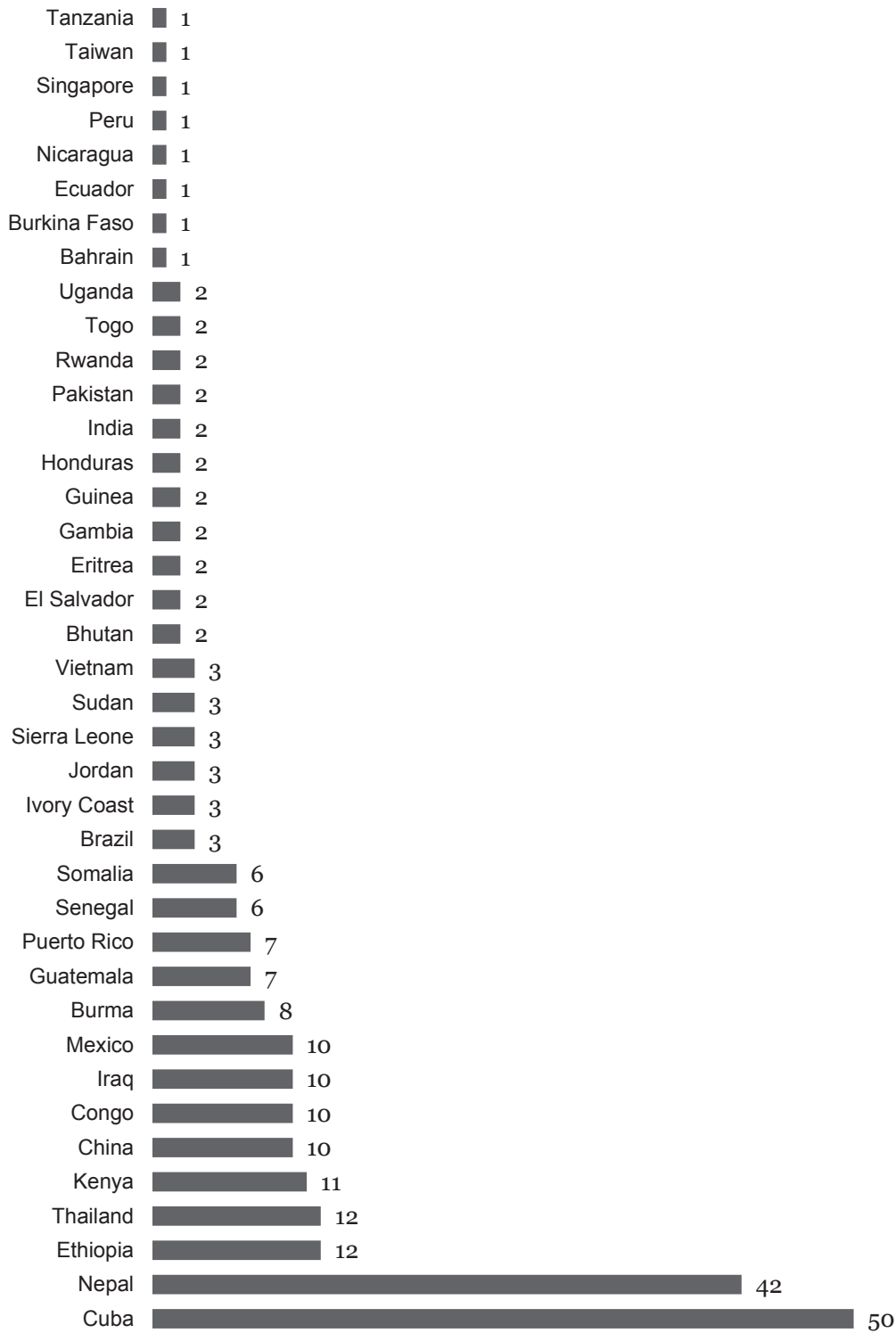


Figure 2. Responses to item: "I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background."

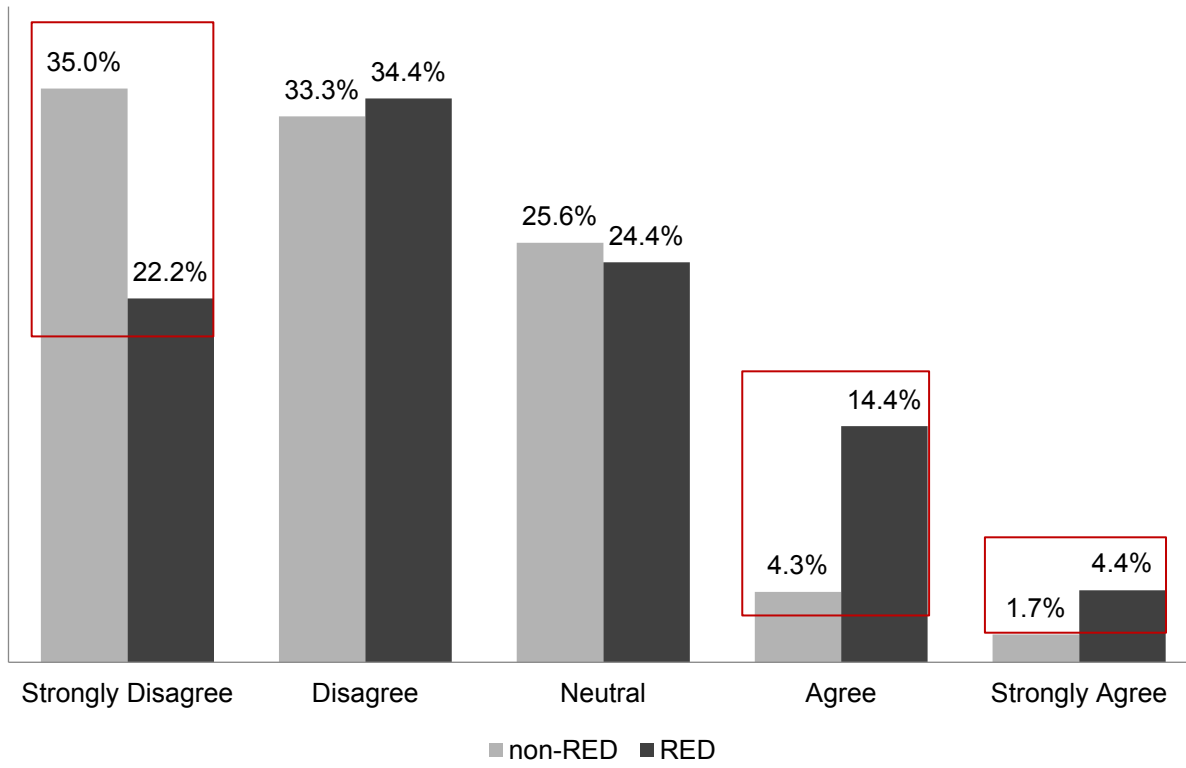


Table 1

School Adjustment—Acculturative Stress and Feelings about School, All Students, non-RED^x, and RED

School Adjustment: Component 1—Acculturative Stress and School Adjustment [#]					
Survey Item	Survey Response	All Students	Non-RED	RED	Chi-Square
I have problems concentrating during class. (Loading = .83)	Strongly Disagree	26.8%	28.1%	24.4%	10.09* (4, n = 244)
	Disagree	24.5%	24.8%	25.2%	
	Neutral	24.1%	24.8%	23.6%	
	Agree	18.3%	20.7%	15.4%	
	Strongly Agree	6.1%	1.7%	11.4%	
I have problems concentrating when doing homework. (Loading = .76)	Strongly Disagree	28.8%	35.5%	22.0%	15.97** (4, n = 244)
	Disagree	31.1%	28.9%	33.3%	
	Neutral	15.6%	14.0%	16.3%	
	Agree	16.3%	19.0%	13.8%	
	Strongly Agree	8.2%	2.5%	14.6%	
I wish I could quit school for good. (Loading = .67)	Strongly Disagree	53.3%	62.8%	44.7%	11.49* (4, n = 243)
	Disagree	23.7%	22.3%	26.0%	
	Neutral	12.1%	9.1%	14.6%	
	Agree	5.8%	1.7%	8.1%	
	Strongly Agree	5.1%	4.1%	6.5%	

School Adjustment: Component 2—Feelings about School^{##}

Survey Item	Survey Response	All Students	Non-RED	RED	Chi-Square
I believe my teachers care about me and my success. (Loading = .85)	Strongly Disagree	8.2%	12.5%	4.9%	13.10* (4, <i>n</i> = 243)
	Disagree	4.7%	5.0%	4.1%	
	Neutral	16.0%	22.5%	10.6%	
	Agree	34.8%	28.3%	39.0%	
	Strongly Agree	36.3%	31.7%	41.5%	
I care about my grades and how I do in my school work. (Loading = .83)	Strongly Disagree	2.3%	3.3%	1.6%	7.89† (4, <i>n</i> = 243)
	Disagree	4.3%	5.8%	2.4%	
	Neutral	10.5%	12.5%	9.8%	
	Agree	34.4%	38.3%	29.3%	
	Strongly Agree	48.4%	40.0%	56.9%	
At present, I like school. (Loading = .68)	Strongly Disagree	5.8%	9.1%	3.3%	35.15** (4, <i>n</i> = 244)
	Disagree	4.7%	9.9%	0.0%	
	Neutral	7.8%	14.0%	1.6%	
	Agree	40.1%	36.4%	43.1%	
	Strongly Agree	41.6%	30.6%	52.0%	

[†]RED stands for Refugees Experiencing Distress. Non-RED refers to students whose responses indicate they are not likely to be experiencing distress.

[#]Component 1: The acculturative stress and school adjustment indicators hang together and the common construct explains 56.9% of the variance, but the reliability is weaker than preferred, Cronbach's Alpha = .58. Loadings are higher than in Berry's et al. multinational sample, and the construct appears to explain more of the variance than in the multinational immigrant sample.

^{##}Component 2: The attitude toward school indicators hang together well, and the attitude construct is estimated to explain 62.23% of the variance and is relatively reliable with a Cronbach's Alpha of .69

†Chi-Square borderline significance $.05 < p < .10$. Not statistically significant, but borderline.

*Chi-Square significant at $.01 < p < .05$ level.

*Chi-Square significant at $p < .01$ level.

Table 2*Perceived Discrimination, All Students, non-RED^x, and RED*

Survey Item	Survey Response	All Students	Non-RED	RED	Chi-Square
I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background. (Loading = .80)	Strongly Disagree	29.8%	35.0%	22.2%	10.25* (4, n =207)
	Disagree	33.0%	33.3%	34.4%	
	Neutral	26.1%	25.6%	24.4%	
	Agree	8.3%	4.3%	14.4%	
	Strongly Agree	2.8%	1.7%	4.4%	
I have been threatened or attacked because of my ethnic background. (Loading = .81)	Strongly Disagree	33.0%	40.2%	23.3%	12.24* (4, n =207)
	Disagree	32.6%	29.9%	36.7%	
	Neutral	25.7%	24.8%	26.7%	
	Agree	6.4%	5.1%	7.8%	
	Strongly Agree	2.3%	0.0%	5.6%	
Other students have treated me unfairly or negatively because of my ethnic background. (Loading = .81)	Strongly Disagree	28.0%	31.6%	22.2%	10.74* (4, n = 207)
	Disagree	29.4%	29.1%	32.2%	
	Neutral	27.5%	30.8%	22.2%	
	Agree	8.7%	5.1%	12.2%	
	Strongly Agree	6.4%	3.4%	11.1%	
Other kids/ teens outside school have treated me unfairly or negatively because of my ethnic background. (Loading .68)	Strongly Disagree	27.6%	34.2%	30.0%	3.31 (4, n = 207)
	Disagree	26.8%	31.6%	34.4%	
	Neutral	20.7%	27.4%	22.2%	
	Agree	6.1%	5.1%	8.9%	
	Strongly Agree	2.3%	1.7%	4.4%	

^xRED stands for Refugees Experiencing Distress. Non-RED refers to students whose responses indicate they are not likely to be experiencing distress.

*Pearson Chi-Square test for significant differences in ordinal responses by respondent group is significant with $01 < p < .05$ level, Cronbach's Alpha = .709. When all 9 IAQ discrimination items are included, Cronbach's Alpha is .809, but that seems to reflect some statistical noise as several items have low loadings and even some negative loadings. This construct has slightly lower reliability, but strong loadings that are clearly loading on just one component. The component explains an estimated 55.1% of the variance. Loadings are higher than the averages in Berry et al.'s multinational work.

Table 3*Variable Construction for Refugees with Likely Experiences of Distress (RED)*

 Place of birth

When students indicated that they or either of their parents were born in one of the following countries, they were coded as RED (with a few qualified cases noted below).

Bhutan

Burma (may be listed as Myanmar)

Burundi

Congo

Eritrea

Haiti

Iraq

Kenya - IF ethnicity OR language OR either parent's ethnicity or language is listed as

Burundian or Sudanese or Dinka; or if either parents' place of birth is listed as Burundi or Sudan.*

Liberia

Malaysia - IF ethnicity OR language OR either parent's ethnicity or language is listed as

Karen, Karenni, Chin, or Burmese; or if either parents' place of birth is listed as Burma or Myanmar.*

Nepal

Somalia

Sudan

Thailand - IF ethnicity OR language OR either parent's ethnicity or language is listed as

Karen, Karenni, Chin, or Burmese; or if either parents' place of birth is listed as Burma or Myanmar.*

Language

If students indicated one of the following languages as a first language (with additional qualifications noted), they were coded as RED.

Arabic - IF place of birth is listed as Iraq or ethnicity is listed as Iraqi.

Bhutanese

Burmese

Chin

French - IF ethnicity OR either parent's ethnicity is listed as Haitian or Congolese; OR if either parents' place of birth is listed as Haiti or Congo.

Karen

Karenni (may be listed as Red Karen or Kayah)

Kikongo

Lingala
 Nepalese (may be listed as Nepali)
 Somali
 Swahili - IF ethnicity OR either parent's ethnicity is listed as Congolese; OR if either parents' place of birth is listed as the Congo.
 Tigrinya

Ethnicity

If students indicated their own or either of their parent's ethnicity as one of the following, they were coded as RED. Some participants may have listed nationality, so many options are possible.

Arab - IF place of birth is listed as Iraq.
 Bhutanese
 Burmese
 Burundian
 Chin
 Congolese
 Dinka
 Eritrean
 Haitian
 Iraqi
 Karen
 Karenni
 Kurd
 Liberian
 Meskhetian Turk
 Nepali (may be listed as Nepalese)
 Somali
 Sudanese
 Tigrinya

* These items are designed to capture data from students born in refugee camps.

Remembrance and Gratitude to Tod “Theo” Sloan

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Tod (Theodore) Sloan, co-founder of the *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology* (JSACP) passed on Monday morning, December 17, 2018. He was surrounded by the love of his family and many friends and colleagues.

Tod's impact on critical psychology, community psychology, and counseling has been far reaching despite what his humility might have suggested. His work co-founding and then co-editing the *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology* (JSACP) for its first decade really grew from his vision for a forum that could feature and share work that addressed social inequities in an accessible format. More specifically, the Journal would provide actual examples of transformative work psychologists and counselors were doing to address systemic oppression and help to construct a more just world. His critique of academia, and counseling and psychology included, went beyond calling out their oppressive history and structures. In the first issue of the Journal, Tod summarized our perspective as I served as the Journal Co-Editor, “First, we do not believe that sustaining and expanding the business of counseling and psychology as currently constituted will play a tangible role in the achievement of social justice or the construction of peace and social justice either locally or globally. Second, we are concerned that some practices associated with counseling and psychology are worse than ineffective and are, in fact, either part of the problem or do direct harm” (Sloan & Toporek, 2007, p. 1). Nevertheless, he believed there was the potential for the disciplines to have a liberatory function. He went beyond critique to seek out liberatory approaches and alternatives to oppressive practices. This was his vision for the Journal, as well as what I observed to be guiding his work. Our collaborative article as outgoing editors of the Journal (Toporek & Sloan, 2016) autobiographically shared a bit about his journey academically and what brought him to shape *JSACP* as well as the challenges and his recommendations for scholars, counselors, and psychologists working toward social change.

Tod's path to critical psychology and social change culminated from a lifetime of engagement in diverse cultural and economic environments. His childhood was spent moving from place to place including Japan, Afghanistan, and others. He spent his later childhood immersed in his Mormon family and community members and in early adulthood began to reshape his beliefs and commitments. Tod described the shift in his perspectives that came after a missionary year in France, as "cracks" in his beliefs. He became interested in psychology, social change and qualitative research, studying with noted personality psychologists and later becoming immersed in psychoanalysis and the impact of oppression and modernity on the psyche. In a biographical interview in *The Community Psychologist* (2004), Tod noted, "I realized that individual personality was also sociological and cultural and political. Embedded in that is inequality and class, race, gender" (p. 14). In his first faculty position at the University of Tulsa, Tod became interested in how psychologists could address global social problems and he engaged in peace organizations focused on issues in Central and South America. He married and had a son, Daniel, shortly before receiving a Fulbright and moving to Venezuela, his wife's home country. There, he taught and conducted interviews about the effects of modernization on communities and individuals, culminating in his book, *Damaged Life: The Crisis of the Modern Psyche* (1996). He returned to his teaching position and, despite conflicts of priorities within the department, continued to teach and reach out to the community, facilitating actions toward peace and community capacity building. As a full professor 18 years later, Tod left the university to contribute to efforts of non-profits and community organizations seeking to engage in social change. Through serendipity, Tod began work with Psychologists for Social Responsibility on September 11, 2001. Anne Anderson, then Coordinator of the organization, described how this came about.

My dear friend and comrade, Tod Sloan, had contacted me in 2000 and offered to come do some volunteer work for PsySR when he moved to DC. So, on September 11, 2001, we planned to meet in the PsySR office on Connecticut Avenue. I arrived at the office about 8:30 and opened my email, getting organized for the day, just like all days. About 9:20 I turned on the radio just to find out what was happening in the world, so the first thing I heard was that there was a plane headed for the Pentagon. Within a couple of minutes of the newscast, I learned that the Twin Towers has been struck. Then, within a couple more minutes, Tod called to find out if I was in the office and still wanted to meet, given all the events.

I said, "Absolutely! I need some company." So, while he came on up Connecticut Avenue—walking, everyone was walking—I held on to my email connection and also was able to contact my son, who had been evacuated from the EPA building downtown and was walking home to his house on Capitol Hill. It is hard to remember how confusing and terrifying that time was, because we did not know what was going to happen next. Would the Metro be attacked? Were there more planes headed for DC? What else did we need to be concerned about? And, what was Psychologists for Social Responsibility going to do about this crisis?

Tod came into the tiny 2nd-floor walk-up office while I was on the phone with someone who had called in to see if I was okay. We certainly did not know each other well then at all. I had seen him around, been in various meetings with him, had chatted at the PsySR Hospitality Suite at APA. So, I actually had no idea what he could do, or how he thought, but he was a PsySR member and was offering to volunteer at the national office, so I said, "Hi, please sit down at that other computer and draft a statement for the PsySR Steering Committee to review about what is happening today." He said, "Okay," and sat down and proceeded to write the statement in about half an hour. The Steering Committee adopted it on September 11th, changing not more than three words in the review process.

We spent the rest of the day fielding frantic calls from people all over the country, talking with Steering

Committee members about the PsySR statement and how to distribute it, and doing regular office chores like opening the mail and answering letters, while the day of 9/11 unfolded. Needless to say, I recommended to the Steering Committee that they hire Tod as Co-Coordinator and he served with me for the next four years. His coolness under fire, ability to keep thinking in stressful situations, his clarity on ways forward that would preserve PsySR's commitment to building peace with social justice—all those qualities came to the fore on our first day of working closely together and lasted throughout. He was lovely to work with, a dear friend, and I will miss him forever. (Anderson, personal communication, December, 25, 2018).

Tod continued with PsySR as Co-Coordinator for four years before taking a faculty position at Lewis and Clark University in Portland, Oregon, teaching in the Counseling Department. In Portland he continued to mentor students, new professionals, and community members interested in social change. He continued to expand his relationships internationally with peace activists and scholars, teaching and speaking in Guatemala, Chile, Iceland, and numerous other places. His reflections on activism and the challenges of community organizing led him to consider the importance of facilitating the sustainability of groups and individuals engaged in activism. In an effort to develop some of these supports, Tod and local colleagues established the Cascadia Center for Social Ecology and the new Social Justice Action Center in Portland. Although Tod spent much of his time traveling, even joking that he was nomadic, when he and his son Daniel purchased and began sharing a house in Portland in March 2018, Tod described that as one of the highlights of his life. More complete stories of his path can be found in Levin's (2004) interview of Tod as well as his autobiographical reflections in Toporek and Sloan (2016). As Tod described in the 2016 reflection, around the time he transitioned from PsySR co-coordinator to full time faculty member, he became interested in the role PsySR could play collaborating with counseling professionals engaged in social justice and alternative venues for scholarship devoted to social justice in action. This was the impetus for the *Journal for Social Action*.

Insights and Memories

In the weeks since Tod passed away, myriad people have shared how his work and his personhood impacted them. The lessons and insights I gained from working with, and talking with, Tod are too numerous to count. I wish to share two conversations in particular that shifted my thinking so much that they have become mantras of hope and guidance for me. As with the theme shared by many people, Tod was so humble and curious that wisdom seemed to evolve from questions and ponderings rather than be pronounced. One of these came after a talk he gave in San Francisco to a group of students in the Anthropology and Social Change Program at the California Institute of Integral Studies a couple of years ago. A student raised a question about why Tod had shifted from his early work in community organizing in Latin America to return to the U.S. on a more permanent basis. Tod responded by describing a pivotal conversation he had with a colleague in Latin America in which Tod had asked what role or work would be most helpful in advancing the cause they were working toward. His colleague responded that U.S. policy was a large part of the problem and so it would be most helpful if Tod would actually work in the U.S. to try to promote change from there. Further, Tod shared that he was aware that, as a white American citizen, there were arenas and conversations that he could access differently than his Latin American colleague. After the session, Tod and I walked and debriefed the student event. I reflected the tension I, and many liberal white people, often feel that I should be off somewhere doing something really big. We talked about how the more appropriate place for us is less glamorous and adventuresome, even mundane. We discussed how U.S. policy has shaped so much injustice and that this may be the core of where change needs to happen even though that work is often less satisfying and more frustrating.

Over our ten-year editing collaboration, familiar patterns emerged seasonally in our monthly phone calls. Every August, I lamented that, here we were, trying to prepare a new journal issue that emphasized

systems level change and the limitations of individually focused interventions while at the same time I prepared my syllabi for the upcoming fall semester, training a new generation of counselors in the art of individual counseling. Although I attempt to integrate systems level change, the heart of counseling is individual and group relationships. Counseling seeks to help the many people who are hurting and benefit from the human connection and interventions but historically does not seek to remove the cause of the harm at a systems level. As I explained my discomfort and apparent hypocrisy of advocating for systems level change in the journal but then training students in individual counseling, Tod listened and validated my feelings. He then pondered that sometimes people may be in a place of pain and trauma that makes it difficult for them to fully participate in liberatory action. Perhaps the value of individual and group counseling is to help people heal so that they are better able to maintain their health and impact their world. Thus, our role as counselor educators may be to facilitate counselors in developing the skill to help heal while understanding the larger harmful systems at play, facilitating liberatory potential, and simultaneously working to dismantle the oppressive systems. He also talked in depth about the importance of connecting with communities so that what we were teaching was consistent with the wisdom and needs of the communities of our clients and students.

Tod's insight, scholarship, personal warmth and connection reached far beyond me. Many, many people have expressed the significant impact his work and his humanity has had on their lives, their work and their growth. I include just a couple of contributions here.

Edil Torres Rivera (past President of Counselors for Social Justice [CSJ], Professor and Editor of the *Interamerican Journal of Psychology*) shared the following memory.

I first met Tod at one of the American Counseling Association (ACA) conferences and during one of the receptions I had just learned that I was elected president-elect for CSJ. As someone that always like to move toward change and given the nature of the genesis of CSJ, I commented to him that I want to make major changes to the organization to redirect the purpose of the organization. Tod in his ultimate calm, collected and wise manner told me “Edil, always listen to the need of the people and not to the need of the leader...” Now many years later I understand that he was talking about “Inedito viável expresses” meaning that concepts are action-words. If I listen to what might not be expressed in words but in actions, I will understand the liberating effects of one's consciousness liberated by what hasn't been expressed yet. (Edil Torres Rivera, personal communication, December 23, 2018).

Deanne Bell, Senior Lecturer at East London University, and a close colleague and friend of Tod's wrote,

In grieving the loss of Tod, I'm reminded of the many gifts of his life... of his precise mind, uncommon intellect and encyclopaedic knowledge of critical social theory, critical psychology and insights from psychoanalytic theory...of his vision for psychology becoming a socially meaningful and transformative body of understandings and practices... of his unwavering commitment to the possibilities to be realized through genuine dialogue, and for the way his gentle soul prized human connection. (Deanne Bell, personal communication, December 22, 2018).

Michael Hutchins (past President of Counselors for Social Justice) shared,

I believe that lasting social justice advocacy and change is grounded in love and respect. I first met Tod at a conference in Portland in 2005. Since that time, I got to know him as a committed and creative advocate whose work has always been grounded in love and respect. He brilliantly articulated a world view that encouraged me to examine my own views, take action, and become a more compassionate member of this world community. Tod was a man of humble courage and integrity who had the wonderful capacity

to see the “big picture” and translate that picture into meaningful social action. In the past year, we had all-too-infrequent discussions about the nature of mentoring and ways to lovingly encourage the next generations to live lives of authenticity and inclusion. We acknowledged that our time was limited and, yet, we behaved as if we would be here for many more years. Tod, I already miss you and know that the lessons I learned from you will continue to be woven into the fabric of my life. With much love, Michael Hutchins (Michael Hutchins, personal communication, December 20, 2018).

Anthony J. Marsella (Professor Emeritus, University of Hawaii, Honolulu) described how he first met Tod at an American Psychological Association Convention and was able to share how pivotal and beautiful his book, *Damaged Life*: (1996), was in examining power distribution and how society impacts people’s well-being. He described Tod as a “transcendent person who could get things done without drawing attention to himself.”

Tod’s thinking in critical psychology and his values can be seen in much of my writing. He brought people together and his work opened us up to power and the meanings of power distribution. He was a friend, colleague and mentor.

Bradley Olson, PsySR colleague and community psychologist, summarized it well. “Tod has influenced so many of us, multiple generations, and has always had the most kind, fun and loving heart.”

Closing Thoughts

Over the ten years that Tod and I shared the work of editing this Journal, we traversed the trials of trying to maintain the ideals we started with, the ups and downs of our personal lives, and the inevitable cycles of discouragement and hope that come from wanting to work toward positive change. Although we were from slightly different generations, we shared our attempts to develop consciousness about our positions of privilege as white, middle income academics. He gently challenged constraints of academia, traditional psychology and counseling training. He brought me along, virtually, in his global adventures through his stories and phone calls whether from Iceland, Guatemala, Chile or other destination. His ability to connect with people, maintain curiosity and respect, and strive toward greater understanding provided me with a model to aspire to while always communicating affirmation and appreciation for my work, my commitments and my choices; a beautiful balance of challenge and support. I am forever changed and grateful for his caring gifts and persistence toward illuminating and questioning power. He was a visionary whose humility, constant awareness of action and building community, remains a model for reflexivity and social action.

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