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Generalizability. My initial exposure to the reality that scientific findings do not necessarily have broad application occurred during my undergraduate career as a psychology major. Like so many others in my shoes, the "training wheels" research I conducted with my faculty involved fellow university students as participants. Attending college in central Nebraska perhaps exacerbated generalizability limitations due to largely homogeneous student demographics. After college, I continued my research involvement at the graduate level. I assumed that "demographic generalizability" in research would become less of an issue on larger, more diverse campuses. My assumption was erroneous. It wasn't until analyzing data on trends in student psychiatric hospitalizations during my postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) that I was able to confidently stand behind the diversity in our data. UCB is rich in terms of cultural differences across students. Most campuses are not UCB.

Student Involvement & Academic Outcomes
IMPLICATIONS FOR DIVERSE COLLEGE STUDENT POPULATIONS

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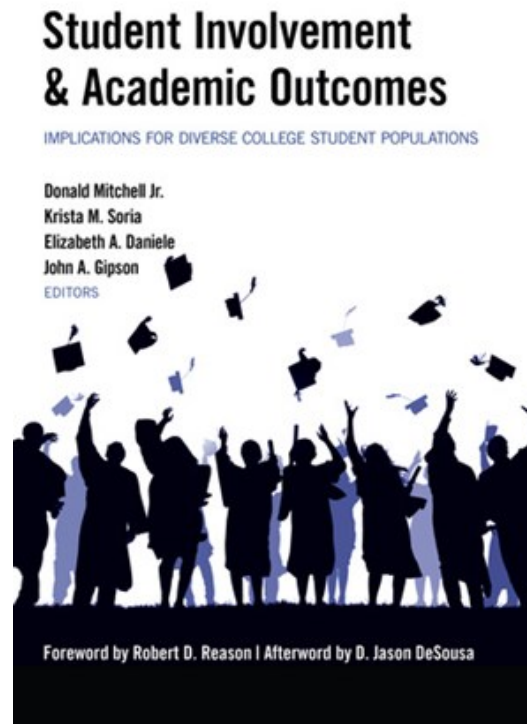
The contributing authors to *Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes* were appropriately attentive to this reality in research, emphasizing: "…the tendency to normalize the experiences of the majority… and the unexamined assumption that all students do – or at least should – have the same experiences as these students" (p. xi). My experiences at six institutions of higher education in the varying roles of student, clinician, and now faculty have demonstrated the stark differences in campus culture from one school to the next. In the opening section on theory and research, the authors give an appropriate nod to the critical importance of the campus environment, outlining the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) model (Museus, 2014). While space does not permit me to review this model here, the thorough summary provided in the text gave me pause to consider the cultural relevance of my current department in counselor education. *Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes* focused on undergraduate students. Although I teach exclusively at the graduate level, I found myself aware of the potential shortcomings of our program relative to the text content. Does our all-white faculty provide *cultural familiarity* for our diverse students? Do we expose our students to *culturally-relevant knowledge* supplemented with meaningful *cross-cultural engagement* in the classroom? While I can attest that these are values held by our faculty as a whole, I am now questioning how intentionally and effectively we infuse these values into our classrooms.

Given the connection between CECE's and student belonging, self-efficacy, and motivation, I appreciated the concrete considerations offered for educators to "(re)think and (re)construct involvement and engagement opportunities on their campuses" (p. 17). While I appreciated this idea as a researcher, I struggled to consume this content through the lens of an educator. A case study example might have more clearly and concretely illustrated the broad considerations offered (e.g., does this space or program encourage collaboration toward a common goal?) As an important step in creating shared responsibility for student success on college campuses, it is imperative to encourage, support, and provide developmental training to faculty in their efforts to familiarize themselves with the experiences of first-generation students. This is important for non-faculty student affairs professionals as well. Academic advisors play a critical role in assisting vulnerable student populations throughout their higher educational pipeline. Advisors may carry caseloads of 500+ students, and could benefit from supports such as online software tools help them manage their workload. Lack of support for advisors translates to lack of support for the students they serve. Inequalities in student support and access to other resources across college campuses nationwide are systemic, and the editors offered a deliciously common sense the approach to addressing these disparities through basic provision of resources.

The editors of *Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes* clearly possess ample expertise. They paint an accurate picture of the complexity of supports and barriers to overall college experience for marginalized students, and support their review of current literature/trends in student involvement and engagement with heavy-hitter outcome assessment initiatives. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which "helps measure the extent to which students are engaged in important personal learning and development domains, making it a widely used instrument to inform institutional quality" (p. 58) was referenced throughout this text. The NSSE benchmarks for student engagement (Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment) served as a framework for a recent study of student engagement at historically Black colleges and universities

(HBCU's). Students exhibiting higher engagement in these five areas were found to be more persistent in college, and less likely to withdraw. The authors of this chapter were successful in linking specific, practical suggestions to each benchmark, resulting in seamless research-to-practice, data-driven interventions easily digestible by educators and researchers alike.

Current research on organizational involvement for specific student groups highlighted empirically-supported benefits of minority college student membership. Student organizations provide "opportunities to become involved with campus student life, as well as in community service and leadership development" (p. 94). I appreciated the overview of the benefits and potential challenges of organizational membership relative to trends of group-differences in involvement. For example, African-American students who join in Black Greek-lettered Organizations (BGLO's) at primarily white institutions receive a boost in social capital through increased social networking, leading to a stronger sense of community, and increasing institutional integration and engagement. However, the authors caution against over-involvement in BGLO's when co-curricular responsibilities overpower academic commitment. Additionally, Latina/o student organizations often prioritize activism and "giving back". "The Latina/o student leadership…takes on a deeper meaning as these students become role models for their peers, as well as spokespersons for their community" (p. 100). Latina/o students must maintain a balance between developing leadership skills, identity, community advocacy with negative stereotypes relative to the angry and hostile activists depicted so often in the media. The editors of *Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes* were successful in providing a 360-view of co-curricular involvement, offering a critical expansion from the "the more involvement the better" sentiment that seems to pervade in higher education relative to student retention.

The importance of fostering leadership skills and abilities seemed to be thematic in this text, appearing in discussions of student organizations for African-Americans, Latina/o's, Native Americans, and first-generation/low-income (FGLI) students. Evidence of the overwhelmingly positive impact of leadership experiences was woven throughout the text. Students who are FGLI may be less likely to pursue leadership roles, often due to the time and money they perceive to be necessary. The importance of leadership training and experience for FGLI students in terms of academic outcomes (grade point averages) contributed to the argument that the notion of leadership should be expanded: "Beyond holding leadership positions in organizations, researchers have also discovered students' involvement in student organizations or participation in community service to be positively associated with students' development and engagement in socially responsible leadership, growth in cultural awareness, and development of interpersonal skills" (p. 109). Educators and student affairs practitioners should encourage free-of-charge leadership experiences such as community service. The editors included "practice-ready" interventions (e.g., structured activities in the residence halls; intentional mentoring arrangements with faculty and more advanced first-generation students; liaisons in counseling) to facilitate leadership experiences for FGLI students.

Additionally, the editors reviewed programmatic initiatives (e.g., the First Scholars program) aimed to boost institutional involvement for FGLI students, who may be more likely to attend college part-time, to live off-campus, and to work more hours in outside employment than non-FGLI students. Powerful statistics conveyed that 40% - 50% of undergraduate students have first-generation status (depending on the definition used), and over 40% of first-generation students ultimately leave college prior to obtaining a degree. These numbers have propelled initiatives to develop programming

exclusively for FGLI students, which aim to transform their unique cultural and contextual experiences into skills transferrable to higher education. Having received my doctoral training in a program known for its emphasis on positive psychology, the strengths-based focus of such programming resonated with what I understand to be important when working with students.

I found the chapter on Mexicano male students' engagement with faculty at community colleges to contain some of the most captivating content in the entire book. As a primarily qualitative researcher, I appreciated the illustrative comments from students outlined in the featured qualitative study. The authors concluded that interactions with supportive *and* challenging faculty matter – a lot – and called for more faculty to engage Mexicano male students academically without challenging their masculinity. "Comprehending the effect that gender roles have on males' success in college is essential for facilitating the success of men of color" (p. 187). The four domains of masculine identity for Mexicano male students – *breadwinner orientation, help-seeking behavior, school as a feminine domain, and competitive ethos* – provided me with innovative and enlightening content, and expanded my lexicon for discussing the priorities of Mexicano male students in higher education.

Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes emphasized the importance of social, familial, and other interpersonal support and influence. While the impact and function of relational experiences differ between (and within) groups of students, an inclusive campus climate with space for culturally-responsive programming and interventions is foundational to the overall student experience. As a licensed psychologist, the notion of validation – feeling heard, understood, and recognized in our identities and experiences – is a staple of my daily professional (and personal) life. The emphasis on validation theory (Rendon, 1994) within this text served as a contemporary conceptualization of

student involvement, particularly with regard to multiracial students who cannot be easily categorized,: "…the quality of multiracial students' involvement is related to the validation they receive for the unique aspects of their racial identity development" (p. 32). The authors of this section used a helpful case study example to illustrate practical strategies for boosting validation at the institutional level, framing the fluidity of racial identity through a social constructivist lens. As an educator, this section also provided helpful language to address these topics in the classroom. I am confident that the clear examples and suggestions for practice would be ready-to-wear for student affairs professionals working with multiracial students in higher education as well.

My professional focus on vocational psychology and career counseling contributed to my particular interest in the section of *Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes* related to student employment. I valued the critical analysis offered in this section, as opposed to sweeping statements related to primarily negative impacts of competing responsibilities on academic performance: "...there is some research evidence that working, particularly in on-campus jobs, can help to integrate students into campus life. This integration is a key element in student retention, academic achievement, and eventual graduation" (p. 158). My research on the career development of college student-athletes (including first-generation student-athletes) has shown me that competing demands for student time (school, sports, and work) can lead to differing academic and social outcomes depending on the particular student. I work at a metropolitan university, and the mission of our college is to teach dedicated practitioners, reflective scholars, and responsible citizens. The most recent freshman enrollment statistics for our institution illustrated that 45% are first-generation students, and nearly one-third are students of color. Given the research on the likelihood of these students working throughout their time in college, it is

our responsibility as educators and practitioners to support them in balancing multiple commitments – a skill that will also be valuable after graduation.

The transferrable skills that students acquire through managing the competing demands of school and work (e.g., time management skills) may boost academic achievement and facilitate their transition to the world of work. However, the number of hours a student works each week can exert drastic influence on the relationship between employment and academic success outcomes, with "…the higher threshold of 20 hours or more a week as the critical tipping point for work negatively impacting studies" (p. 160). For example, as a form of student involvement, employment can be associated with positive academic outcomes (e.g., greater social integration and time management skills) for African-Americans at elite colleges. Location of employment may also be a factor in social and academic outcomes. On-campus jobs tend to be part-time in nature, and often afford student workers with opportunities for social integration without significant compromise to class schedule and co-curricular involvement. The same cannot necessarily be stated for off-campus jobs, which may be full-time work in a setting completely separate from the world of higher education.

One critique I have for this text concerns the misnomer of the title. While "diverse college student populations" undeniably includes the variables of race and ethnicity, I believe that, as educators and researchers, we do our student and scholarly audiences a disservice by failing to acknowledge the broad nature of diversity in all forms. Demographic variables such as religion, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity are no less relevant to "diverse college student populations" than are race and ethnicity. The editors might have considered acknowledging a more broad array of diversity variables, as well as the impact of intersecting minority

identities on involvement and engagement. To the credit of the editors, however, the specific intersection of race, social class, and financial variables was mentioned in multiple portions of the text. As a researcher, I fully recognize the impractical nature of providing adequate "air time" to all forms of diversity in a single book. Therefore, perhaps a more specific title would have more accurately conveyed the content of the text.

I have an additional cosmetic critique involving chapter placement. Specifically, the section on Native American students was second to last. Although potentially trivial on the surface, Native Americans tend to receive less attention as a minority group, and I found myself wondering if the placement of this content at the end of the book may serve to replicate the relative invisibility of this group within society. I can echo this disparity on a personal level: in spite of preponderance of Native American populations in my home state (Nebraska), I wasn't exposed to any of their cultural elements until I was required to attend a *Native American Hand* game as part of a graduate course. In a similar vein, I question the choice of closing the book with a chapter on undocumented Latina/o students, who are equivocally marginalized in society and higher education alike. Legislative and programmatic initiatives (e.g., distribution of information to parents to promote their involvement) have been spearheaded on college campuses in certain states to boost enrollment and matriculation from college for undocumented students. Growing up in relatively homogenous, near-rural community, I was exposed to derogatory labels such as *illegal aliens* from an early age. My postdoctoral experience at UCB expanded my awareness of undocumented students – I distinctly recall a panel of undocumented students discussing the *DREAM Act*, and our impactful group discussion that followed. I was once told that exposure to diversity "blows stereotypes out of the water". Pervasive marginalization continues to exist for many groups, and stereotypes are the only reality we know if we

lack exposure to information/experiences that teach us otherwise.

In summary, *Student Involvement and Academic Outcomes* painted the current climate of higher education as a microcosm of society: "…in many ways, colleges continue to perpetuate income disparities rather than serving as pathways to upward mobility" (p. 124). The antideficit framework reviewed at the end of the text discussed the need for active and culturally-responsive classrooms, emphasizing the importance of faculty holding high expectations for the performance of every student (challenge) within a culturally-inclusive approach (support). High impact educational practices such as first-year experience courses, service learning, internships, and research with faculty can be particularly powerful for students socialized in working-class upbringings (often FGLI students). The resulting gains in social capital, and comfort in communication with authority figures may help to level the playing field with across social class in higher education. The authors acknowledge the sobering reality of the resources needed to provide high impact practices for every student, noting that the U.S. Department of Education considers such practices to be unallowable expenses. Faculty and student affairs practitioners are responsible for informing students of ways they can seek high impact experiences in the absence of funding (e.g., encouraging leadership through community service, involving students in research or outreach opportunities). In reflecting on both my personal and professional experiences with diverse populations, I have grown to understand that *we believe what we see.* As leaders in academia, we must advocate and act to change what we see.

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