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Campus policies and attitudes contribute to the segregation and lack of minority integration
within a predominantly white university

ABSTRACT

Segregation, and the lack of minority integration, is still pervasive across predominantly white American universities. This research endeavor analyzed the experiences undergraduates have in the context of race. Five students enrolled at Adelphi University were interviewed, during which permission was given to record their responses. Their experiences were coded and subsequently compiled based on notable commonalities. The participants provided insight into the factors contributing to the chilly racial climate on campus, as well as the role campus policies played in fostering the lack of inclusion of ethnic groups the interviewees vehemently expressed. Further analyses compared the reactions between white students and students of color, in response to the acceptance of counterspaces in the form of multicultural organizations. Instances of microaggressions were a prominent cause in the apprehension minorities felt when dealing with white students and certain services on campuses. Moreover, a number of Adelphi policies seem to have contributed to a lack of integration, which in turn fostered systemic segregation throughout the campus. Such policies included the following: housing the majority of international students in racially isolated dormitories away from the heart of campus activities, financial aid services antagonizing students of color, and the lackluster treatment, concern, and respect for struggling multicultural organizations. More research is needed to ascertain the source(s) and severity of the possible mismanagement of policies enacted by campus-sanctioned mediators, such as the Center for Student Involvement, of which multicultural organizations are the most susceptible of being marginalized.

INTRODUCTION

Although many herald the modern era as being post-racial and fully integrated, in reality this claim may be far from the truth. Throughout various fields of society, discrimination and segregation are systematically encouraged through policies and practices that provide whites with substantial advantages over other races. On the other hand, minorities are often deprived, or otherwise isolated, from the fields where meaningful success can be reasonably acquired. Among those fields, the educational system may continue to perpetuate the greatest acts of segregation, particularly among higher educational institutions, such as college universities.

Largely thanks to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, *de jure* segregation has been outlawed across the country. The reformers of this period endeavored to secure equal rights for all groups of people – rights which whites once monopolized. However, acts of *de facto* segregation continue to play a significant role in preventing minorities from competing on equal footing as whites, despite the spirit of the Civil Rights Acts. Furthermore, key socioeconomic factors serve as deterrents with regards to integration within college universities: grossly disproportionate income and access to opportunities, minorities lacking social capital on par with whites, school policies perpetuating segregation, and even everyday microaggressions from college faculty and staff (Solórzano *et al.*, 2000). Most of these factors provide whites with an overwhelming advantage in determining their options for further education, which in turn develops into professional and economic success.

Considering the value of a college degree in the employment market, a disadvantage in the educational field serves as a major handicap early in an individual's career. The importance of educational attainment has become so profound, that the college degree can be considered as nothing less than a commodity – a form of currency which has a demonstrable impact on how

well an individual competes in the current global-based economy (Pitre, 2004). Without at least a bachelor's degree, an individual is substantially deprived of opportunities in pursuing a decently paying career which may later negatively impact his/her ability to financially support a family. If whites continue to dominate the educational domain, then in essence, the centuries-old system of whites hoarding opportunities will continue unabated. Unfortunately, this means that minorities will lack the ability to challenge this racially stratified paradigm. This reality is made all the more bleak considering that a myriad of laws have been set in place for the explicit purpose of eliminating this extant system of racially-based segregation. Rather, it seems that efforts in fostering greater diversity have failed in establishing a field wherein all groups of people truly have fair and equal access to educational opportunities.

In this paper, it will be argued that predominantly white universities suffer from a plethora of factors reducing the inclusion and integration of racial and ethnic students. These factors include: segregation, campus policies favoring whites while simultaneously reducing the platforms minorities have in becoming involved in campus-life, and instances of white privilege enabling whites to exonerate themselves from impeding racial integration. Adelphi University, a predominantly white private institution, served as the field of this research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies have shed light onto the factors denoting why and how whites are able to benefit from this racist system, even though they themselves may not shelter racist ideologies. Racial inequality is perpetuated across the educational system through means that most whites are of unaware of, yet are active beneficiaries. Nancy DiTomaso (2013) explored this concept in great detail in her book, "The American Non-Dilemma: Racial Inequality Without Racism." She argued that whites employed a dichotomous system characterized by individuals who either

perceive others as racists refusing to acknowledge the rights of minorities, or as non-racists who respect the equal rights afforded to all groups under the law. However, most fail to accept the existence of the gray area that most fall in-between – an area in which whites have always benefitted from centuries of white oppression, by monopolizing a disproportionate amount of capital, resources, and opportunities (DiTomaso, 2013). This white privilege provides whites with the best of both worlds: the ability to maximize the rewards associated with racist ideologies latent within the American culture, while still exculpating themselves from actively engaging in racism or racist practices.

The educational institution remains a field where whites have historically had a major advantage over minorities. A study by Warikoo and Novais (2014) suggested that students enrolled in most elite secondary institutions employed a color-blind/mute frame; these settings actively resist the discussion of race, with some going as far as refusing to acknowledge race in the context of prevailing socioeconomic issues (Warikoo and Novais, 2014). The intent of this ideology underlies the efficacy of the color-blind frame; through the denial of race as a deterministic factor in the distribution of capital, opportunities, and resources, whites are able to abnegate their role in the system of white privilege, while still benefitting from the inherent rewards associated with their own whiteness. On the other hand, the study reported that a small portion of white students exhibited a diversity frame, which emphasizes the difference in the perception of the world between races, cultures, and ethnicities. Those who adopt a diversity frame adhere to the belief that race plays a valuable role in altering one's view and approach to issues, scenarios, and group settings in general (Warikoo and Novais, 2014). This lens is often used as a genuine means to promote greater diversity among environments that would otherwise be segregated.

Another issue brought on by unequal access to education, concerns underrepresented groups of people feeling alone or isolated in settings dominated by whites. Minority groups require counterspaces, or settings that encourage the free expression of ideas cherished by marginalized people. Counterspaces allow minorities to feel that their cultural interests, desires, and identities are inalienable and free from oppression amongst institutions dominated by whites (Grier-Reed, 2010). Oppression, as psychologists and critical sociologists contend, exerts a psycho-social toll which may leave the victim in a state of despair and dread (Mays *et al.*, 2007). The deleterious effects of such trauma are not regulated solely to the social area, but may also corrupt all major aspects of a victim's health and aspirations (occupational, political, etc.), effectively hindering that individual's capability in realizing their desired quality of life (Prilleltensky and Gonick, 1996). Under these circumstances, tenable counterspaces function as the foundation of the mental and emotional well-being of marginalized groups, by facilitating adaptive responses in three key areas: coping, resilience, and resistance (Case and Hunter, 2012). Adaptive responding provides the means for marginalized groups to reconcile grievances, by operating in independent, secured spaces where the power dynamics are more transparent and in their favor. Without safe counterspaces dedicated to marginalized people, not only is the feeling of inclusion for non-white individuals suppressed, but through this process minorities are once again impeded from securing a meaningful platform to be properly represented within their communities.

This sense of isolation becomes exacerbated among universities, in large part due to the internal politics within clubs, organizations, and other social settings wherein students are able to form inclusive groups based on similar interests. Often times, the amount of participants who are part of a campus organization underlie that group's success in recruiting and maintaining agency

across campus. Accordingly, groups that give focus to a minority race(s) or ethnicity often struggle to maintain their autonomy throughout predominantly white universities; due to the inherently lower enrollment of minorities, these groups struggle with recruitment as opposed to white organizations, thereby resulting in weaker political influence across the campus. As a result, multicultural organizations are at the greatest risk of fading into obscurity before disbanding due to a lack of support. When this happens, students of color either defer to more mainstream, white-dominated clubs or cease involvement in established campus organizations altogether; in either case, students of color suffer a massive loss in securing safe counterspaces to practice their cultural identity without the need to assimilate or conform to white ideologies (Harper and Quaye, 2007).

METHODS

This research model was conducted employing a semi-structured format; a tentative interview guide of about 60 questions was followed and supplemented with probes and follow-up questions when necessary (Rubin and Rubin, 2011). The discussions encompassed topics such as what racial diversity meant to the individual, how prevalent racial diversity was perceived across campus, and personal experiences regarding the racial climate on campus. Above all, the setting allowed the interviewees to have more control over the manner in which the questions were asked, as well as the overall tempo of the interview. The conversational nature of the interview allowed the interviewees to openly express their perspectives on each subject without feeling judged or otherwise pressured to deliver any particular response. Above all, establishing a comfortable environment was of the utmost concern, considering the sensitive nature of this research model.

The interviewees that took part in this research were exclusively students enrolled at Adelphi University. Several groups of students were asked whether or not they would be interested in being interviewed for the explicit purpose of having their experiences compiled and analyzed; the snowball method was used to acquire subsequent participants. The interviewees were of different racial and ethnic backgrounds in an effort to establish a holistic perspective related to the research foci. Individuals who were heavily involved on campus were more actively sought out. In particular, those who were at one point actively engaged in multicultural organizations, Greek Life, sports, and clubs were valued especially high based on their greater exposure to the more diverse facets of campus-life.

Adelphi University is located in suburban Garden City, New York, which is part of Nassau County. Long Island is one of the most affluent and racially segregated regions in the United States. Ironically, the community is located very close to New York City, which is the most diverse city in New York and among the most diverse in the entire county. Adelphi University had 4,852 undergraduate students enrolled for the Fall 2015 semester (August 31 – December 23). Of those undergraduates enrolled full-time, their race/ethnicity was identified as the following: 9.8% as Asian/ Pacific Islanders, 8.4% as Black, 15% as Hispanic, 0.1% as Native American, 54.9% as White, 2% having two or more races/ethnicities, 4.5% as non-residents (more than likely international students), and 5.3% had an unknown or undisclosed race/ethnicity (Adelphi.edu, 2015). Unsurprisingly, it is clear that the location of Adelphi directly contributes to its racial demographics.

On average, the interviews ranged between 30 – 75 minutes and were recorded throughout the duration. Later, each recording was transcribed by the interviewer in order to ensure that each interviewee's experience was represented with as little distortion as possible;

each interviewee was given a unique title/identifier based on the impressions from the interviewer. The students were given the option to pause the tape recorder whenever they felt uncomfortable discussing a topic, or were unclear of the wording of a question; some chose to exercise this option. Following each session, the participant was permitted the right to access a transcribed version of the corresponding interview, of which none expressed any interest.

After reviewing the transcript, an analytical memo was written; the overall experience of each interview was discussed in great detail with a heavy emphasis on paralinguage (inflection of the voice, hand movements, eye contact, long pauses, gestures, etc.), as well as other notable aspects of the interview that might have added a deeper layer of context behind what was merely being vocalized. It was apparent that each interviewee had different experiences with regards to the racial climate on the Adelphi campus; some felt marginalized by key campus policies, and others felt weary of expressing their opinions due to fear of being taken out of context. Furthermore, it was apparent that the racial and ethnic background of each interviewee highly impacted his/her outlook and opinions regarding racial diversity.

A total of five interviews featured participants who identified themselves from the following racial/ethnic backgrounds: two white students, one student with mixed racial ties (Haitian and Hispanic), one black student, and one Mexican student. In order to arrive towards a more generalized understanding of the collective student experience, key concepts, themes, and subtexts were coded. Well-known sociological concepts from relevant literature, such as color-blindness, counterspaces, microaggression, and white privilege, were applied to categorize the experiences of the interviewees. Accordingly, the codes were further divided under sub-categories in order to narrow those experiences into central themes. After the central themes of

the research were ascertained, a more in-depth review of relevant literature was conducted to gain a more thorough understanding of the data acquired from the interviews and codes.

The limitations of this study were few, but are worth mentioning. The greatest limitation involves the small pool of interview sessions; a more accurate representation, of the trends on the Adelphi campus, would have included the analysis of at least 30 interviews. Additionally, some of the interviewees belonged to the same network of multicultural organizations. A more efficient protocol would have included interviewing students involved in diverse activities (intermural clubs, sports, honor societies, etc.) across campus, and not just from the same multicultural organizations. Moreover, key questions or topics that could have depicted a richer understanding of the undergraduate experiences at Adelphi may not have been asked. Such unexplored topics include their age, major(s) and/or minor(s), whether or not they were transfer students, what convinced them to attend Adelphi, as well as whether or not they expressed any interest in pursuing additional degrees at Adelphi if they had the opportunity and funds. Nonetheless, the information obtained from the interviewees presented an invaluable perspective on the racial dynamics on the Adelphi campus.

DISCUSSION

Although the interviewees came from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, as a whole, their experiences outlined the factors contributing to self-segregation on campus as well as a general lack of minority integration. Impressively, their estimations on the relative percentages of each major race were in agreement with the statistical demographics on the Garden City campus. Moreover, the intricate relationship between segregation and policies enforced by the campus were drawn with trenchant accounts from the students. In order to gain a deeper comprehension on the extent of the lack of diversity, the reactions to clubs/organizations

centered on a minority group were compiled and analyzed. Collectively, the five interviews were paramount in delineating not only the degree of the diversity at Adelphi, but how that diversity affected the interactions amongst racial groups.

Theme 1: Demographics and experiences on campus

Adelphi University is a private college located in Garden City, New York – a suburb with an overwhelmingly white population of 93% as reported by the 2010 US census (United States Census Bureau, 2011; United States Census Bureau, n.d.). In the Fall 2015 semester, the Garden City campus (graduate and undergraduate) had a white demographic of 60%; Asians, blacks, and Hispanics constituted 9.7%, 12.4%, and 15.6% respectively (Adelphi.edu, 2015). The unequal racial demographics clearly reflect the white-centric atmosphere of Adelphi – a sentiment which all of the interviewees expressed as well. Accordingly, the lack of integration, or otherwise intermingling between the different races, was the main topic of discussion for students of color. In particular, an interviewee (identifier: H♀ATV), who identified herself as being of mixed racial backgrounds, expressed her discomfort with the daily instances of segregation rampant throughout the campus:

For the students, I feel everyone stays in their circle. Like in the UC [University Center] you clearly see where the white students are, you clearly see the Asians in the black, you see the Hispanics and blacks sitting together. Very rarely do you see intermixing unless it's a frat or sorority, but even then it's like one or two. Why is it like this? There is a lot of self-segregating going on.

Amongst social settings, such as the school cafeteria, white students seem to prefer to heavily associate with other white students. On rare occasions, the “token” minority is sprinkled into each white clique, but the dominant white composition is clear. What is also interesting is that interactions between Hispanics and blacks seem to occur more frequently and are more

socially acceptable. As conveyed by this quote, the interviewee identified this daily practice as self-segregation, implying that students associate almost exclusively with members of their own race completely of their own volition. However, this may not be the case; some students are left with no other option but to engage in social settings with members of their own race due to concerns of not being accepted by members from other races. For example, a female black student (identifier: B♀RZPK) recounted her traumatic experience as a freshman in a new setting inundated with whites.

It's even a feeling you get when you first come here. I came here for orientation and my orientation was terrible. It was horrible. I was one of three black girls in my group. We may have been the only people of color in that group and we hung on to each other for dear life, because we didn't feel accepted by the other kids in our group. And it was an instant thing.

Another interviewee (identifier: H♀ATV) mirrored this sense of isolation and feeling of being unwelcomed.

Its more students of color do not feel initially accepted in white social groups, so we cling to each other because we are able to relate to each other's difficulties and grievances and similar experiences. So we are going to look for people of the same experiences so we feel we are not crazy. That's why the self-segregation keeps happening because white students are not aware of our experiences or even negate them as what happened to me.

These accounts reflect the sometimes crippling anxiety associated with being a minority in an environment where the uncontested majority of peers belong to a single unfamiliar race. Furthermore, the fact that people of color and whites clearly exhibit distinct physical variations contributes to the notion of being an outsider – someone who could not hide even if he/she wanted to because of the obvious features (accent, skin tone/complexion, hair type, etc.) that stick out. Interestingly enough, even white students, who demographically are the majority on

the campus, experience feelings of social anxiety when forced into situations where they themselves are the minority. This was the case for a white interviewee (identifier: C♀Azn) who expressed discomfort when her professor assigned her to work in a group of predominantly international students from France. In this scenario, she struggled to get to know her peers, because they already had preexisting relationships with one another stemming from a similar national and ethnic background, whereas she felt “just thrown into the group.” Thus, it seems that the malaise of being an outsider may not be a race-exclusive feature, rather the result of a lack of familiarity in social settings involving indeterminate race relations.

Even so, this experience was universal amongst the three minorities, with one interviewee (identifier: B♀RZPK) using the term “safe zone” to explain the subtle segregation on campus. This term sheds light onto the source of the anxiety minorities feel among social environments; they very well may defer to social settings that they are more accustomed to out of convenience as opposed to earnest conviction. However, it is also likely that negative experiences and grievances, in the context of race relations, have jaded or otherwise made students of color weary of interacting with white students, or at least to the same degree of interaction observed with minorities from the same background. One such instance was recounted by an interviewee (identifier: H♀ATV). During a die-in protest at the University Center, in response to the murder of Eric Garner, students posted egregious comments on an anonymous forum known as Yik Yak; the comments were anonymous, but the location of such comments revealed that they were made within a 1.5 mile radius of the Garden City campus.

The resulting Yik Yaks, they were so terrifying and horrifying that I even went home to cry. The most racist and inappropriate things were said to students protesting police brutality. So it's not like we can even discuss our issues in a safe place, because they don't want to hear it...One of them said, “I wish black people

understood that they were bred to be physically stronger but inferior.” Another said, “I wish you die; the police don’t come just because you want to protest the police.” It’s just these horrendous things explicitly mentioning slavery and it’s like why are we making these connections between breeding, slavery, and protesting police brutality?

This harrowing episode reveals the racist undertones latent among Adelphi University – beliefs which are exercised behind closed doors, or via anonymous forums, where members cannot be held accountable for their words. In this scenario, the die-in protest served as a counterspace for students to voice their dissatisfaction with overzealous policing, and general lack of accountability for the murders of marginalized, unarmed black men. However, the fulminatory Yik Yak posts not only compromised the system of security established by this counterspace, but more so, the emotional well-being of the students of color who participated in this protest. Without a secured platform to freely express matters at the forefront of civil rights, minority students develop a sense of oppression – an incessant feeling of dread knowing that they attend a university where the greater percentage of their peers view their race as inferior.

Appropriately, underrepresented groups may be justified in their skepticisms and apprehension in stepping out of their “safe zones” if the white majority secretly shelter prejudice attitudes. At the very least, the blatant lack of concern and respect for topics important to minorities, such as racially-based police brutalities, serves as a deterrent in getting to know others outside of their racial group. The interviewees of colors presented an unfiltered perspective on the racial climate at Adelphi – one which is characterized by microaggressions, racial isolation, and sordid instances of closed-door prejudices. If left unchecked, repeated acts of racial insensitivity foster an unwelcoming atmosphere and overall chilly campus climate, both of which are the greatest contributors to reduced campus involvement for minority students (Sutton

and Kimbrough, 2001). After all, who would want to risk their emotional security on the chance that their interests would be trivialized or even negated by a group that already has a history of such actions?

Theme 2: Adelphi policies perpetuate self-segregation and lack of racial integration

The Garden City campus provides on-campus housing facilities for students; about 23.8% of undergraduates who dorm are international students stemming from more than 45 countries (Admissions.adelphi.edu, n.d.). A few of the interviewees made reference to these international students; two, one white and another from a mixed background, were adamant that the most represented ethnic background were Asians, more specifically from an Eastern Asian descent. However, without access to more detailed demographics of the enrolled international students, such claims cannot be accepted as anything other than speculation. Still, the interviewees drew correlations between the more obvious instances of self-segregation of Asians belonging to the international program, and the manner in which Adelphi conducts housing. An interviewee of mixed background (identifier: H♀ATV) stated:

What I do find odd though is that international students, I believe in Linen or Chapman, are so far away from the main campus. It calls into question whether or not we want those students to be included in campus-life.

Whether intentional or not, current housing policies aggregate foreign students into isolated dormitories instead of dispersing those students equally throughout the campus. It is also interesting that Linen Hall, where most of international students are housed, is located behind the baseball field and away from where the majority of campus functions take place: University Center, Performing Arts Center, and the enclosure of dorms at the heart of the campus. Not only do current housing policies contribute to racially-based segregation on campus, but when the

international students are observed to “always hang out together,” as remarked by a white interviewee (identifier: C♀Azn), it gives off the impression that those students are committed to remain within their racial sphere. In actuality, the structure of the housing policies establish a system in which minorities are more likely to be exposed to one another, thus forming stronger social ties with members of their own background. In this sense, the perceived self-segregation is a misnomer, because international students are systemically isolated to begin with; this in turn reduces their options and opportunities in who they can reasonably associate with outside of their ethnic enclave.

Another topic of racially-based campus policies concerns the Financial Aid Services, of which the staff is majorly white. Neither of the white interviewees mentioned any complaints about this department, but all of the interviewed minorities expressed discontent and reluctance when dealing with financial aid employees. The ethnic interviewees openly discussed secondhand stories of friends who were subject to microaggressions when seeking assistance with tuition payments. Specifically, a Mexican interviewee (identifier: M♂ACT) spoke of a friend who was accosted for supposedly abusing governmental loopholes, resulting in American citizens having to pay for that person’s education just because he/she was a Mexican in need. Another black interviewee (identifier: B♀RZPK) was offended by an employee who stated in a matter-of-fact tone that there was an outstanding balance of \$1000 – as though the amount was trivial and could be effortlessly paid off. The third interviewee of color (identifier: H♀ATV) expressed disapproval for Adelphi being one of the few institutions that does not set aside scholarships for minorities. In fact, Adelphi contains an assortment of scholarships and grants, but none are explicitly reserved for applicants of color or marginalized groups (Financial-aid.adelphi.edu, n.d.). All of these scenarios reflect the profound disconnect, and sometimes

indifference, with regards to the difficulties students of color face when resolving tuition payments and seeking extra avenues for financial assistance.

Theme 3: Complications multicultural organizations face from CSI policies

The final and arguably greatest contribution to the difficulties minorities experience in adjusting to campus life, concerns the rigid policies enforced by the Center for Student Involvement (CSI). CSI is a department which oversees, directs, and has jurisdiction over all campus-acknowledged clubs, fraternities/sororities, and organizations; it also distributes funds to campus-based clubs, grants full status to any club which satisfies CSI accredited regulations, and can dismantle an organization if the necessary conditions are not met. Neither of the white interviewees made reference to CSI, yet all of the minorities expressed their dissatisfactions with this department, and even accused CSI practices as being inherently against minority-oriented clubs. Two students of color (identifiers: H♀ATV and M♂ACT) belonged to one of the few multicultural organizations on campus, Spanish club, before it died out due to an inability to keep up with membership payments. An interviewee (identifier: H♀ATV), who was an active member throughout various organizations on campus, conveyed her frustrations with certain CSI regulations:

Interviewer: Are you comfortable talking about why it wasn't successful?

Interviewee (H♀ATV): The problem with Spanish club was that it was always perpetually dying. One semester we were on probation then another semester we would be fine and get out of probation, but because of a lack of students we would be put back on probation the next semester, and then we would be fine again. In the instance of last time, we didn't meet the requirements just because when you are on probation you already have limited means to work with, so we just died. And there was no sympathy from CSI, no way to work with them, and it was a disorganized mess because we had to adhere to these stupid rules, whereas orgs

that are not on probation can totally do these things, because they have the capacity power and people there; with no people, how can we save ourselves?

Interviewer: Can you mention some of the requirements?

Interviewee (H♀ATV): There is a community service requirement; there needs to be at least eight people for that. I think that you need 15 to 20 committed members to be considered an org, but it's ridiculous because the timeline they measure that is not at the end of the semester. So you know at the end of the semester people are joining clubs to get recognition rewards? They cut it off before then. So they actually measure for the first two and a half months of the semester. In actuality, you don't even have a full semester to do what you have to do. It was very annoying.

This sentiment was supported by a Mexican interviewee (identifier: M♂ACT) also involved in multicultural organizations on campus:

I know something can be done. I feel cultural organizations need to have more room to grow. I feel like CSI doesn't give enough money to cultural groups because they don't have enough members, but I feel like they are at a disadvantage because they don't have the membership area. They don't have that many students to take in anyway. Like if they had more money they'd have more footprint. There needs to be a different way to systemize it.

These quotes reveal how the inflexibility of CSI policies exert greater strain on organizations with low membership, which tends to be a defining characteristic of most multicultural clubs on predominantly white campuses. In turn, these organizations are deprived of the financial capital needed to incorporate much needed changes or bolster recruitment endeavors. For example, considering that merely 15% of full-time Adelphi undergraduates identify themselves as Hispanics, unless the entire Hispanic population joins the club, the difference in memberships would have to be supplemented with members from other races. Of course, this inherently serves as a limiting factor in the pool of students likely to recruit.

However, another major aspect concerned the attitude of multicultural organizations opting to remain inclusive and limit collaborations with other groups due to internal strains also caused by CSI policies and lack of interest.

On the other hand, interviewees reported that fraternities and sororities experienced little to no conflict with CSI regulations, and attributed that to the fact that Greek organizations were morally white, and thus had at least 60 % of the Adelphi population at their disposal as potential recruits. As a result, fraternities, sororities, and thriving non-multicultural organizations are able to persevere through CSI regulations, pay dues, and collaborate amongst one another, effectively strengthening their membership and concomitant agency across campus. Through this process, the legitimacy of power that white clubs hoard is never challenged, whereas minorities are perpetually struggling to hang onto the dwindling organizations fleeing before them.

Theme 4: Student reactions to groups focused on one racial or ethnic group

The white interviewees expressed disapproval for organizations that centered only on one racial or ethnic group contending that such groups “excludes certain people if they are not from that race,” as suggested by a white interviewee (identifier: C♀Azn) subscribed to the Adelphi chapter of the Tri-Delta Sorority. However, the students of color interviewed were not only in favor of such groups, but emphatically supported initiatives that celebrated a single race or ethnicity. Furthermore, they contended that the majority of the campus-wide organizations on campus were already dedicated to whites, albeit not in title, but in composition and through the structure of CSI policies.

In essence, marginalized students adopted a diversity frame through their positive outlook on the expression of distinct races across campus. On the other hand, the white students exhibited classic white privilege and color-blind rhetoric in opposition to racially homogenous

clubs, when in fact the majority of the fraternities and sororities on campus were predominantly white. The stark discrepancy in the views and practices of Adelphi students reveals an intriguing sentiment; the supposed desire to fully integrate clubs may, in actuality, be velleities expressed by affluent parties who recognize the tenable campus-wide segregation, but still wish to maintain the status quo. In other words, rather than outright admit opposition to unabated minority inclusion, it may be a safer escape, a more socially acceptable alternative, to adopt a color-blind lens by trivializing the importance of different composition of races within clubs.

By adopting a color-blind approach, whites hope to be perceived as being in favor of total integration by dissolving organizations with clear cultural affiliations. However, this is implausible as not only is the campus located in an area with a distinctly white culture, but the student demographic itself is predominantly white. Refusing to preserve multicultural organizations sends an unfortunate, but powerful message – having established counterspaces, and thus investing into non-white racial and ethnic identity on campus, conflicts with the desired climate on campus. With regards to power dynamics, marginalized groups are once again subjugated into a familiar position – a position where they are unable to lobby their concerns and maintain fair representation due to the sheer demographic disparity, as well as the lack of structured involvement in politics. Meaningful integration cannot be achieved within a paradigm where the practices belonging to a single culture are upheld as sacred, whereas other racial and cultural identities are treated as profane and are routinely undermined. Appropriately, it seems as though prevailing attitudes, reinforced through campus policies, emphasize assimilation under the guise of promoting racial integration.

CONCLUSION

Adelphi students have made it clear that racially-based tension exists throughout the campus, resulting in segregation and a general lack of integration of minorities. This paper has presented a number of factors which contribute to the dearth of ethnic and racial intermixing experienced by many undergraduate minorities attending this institution. These include the following: campus policies which inadvertently promote segregation of international students, financial aid services unable or unwilling to acknowledge the economic difficulties minorities are likely to face, and CSI policies systematically making it more difficult for underrepresented groups to support their organizations. Another major contributor to the latency of this system does not stem from administrative policies, but the attitudes of the students themselves. In particular, this is present in the double standard white students adopt; by opposing the existence of multicultural organizations, on the basis that they exclude other races, white students obfuscate the fact that the majority of the successful fraternities, sororities, and clubs are majorly white themselves. Further research can delve into the ways in which CSI manages clubs and organizations on campus; these results may ameliorate the overwhelming challenges multicultural organizations are subjected under. Also, the extent of white privilege on the Garden City campus can be exposed by stratifying the acts of favoritism shown to campus organizations composed of predominately white students – acts which are not extended to multicultural organizations.

This research served as a model to present common obstacles reducing racial integration on predominantly white campuses. The general strategy for most colleges, with an uncontested white demographic, in fostering richer diversity, involves an intense focus on bolstering the admission of minorities. The short-term benefits may appear to reflect an increase in minority

enrollment, but fails to address long-term struggles underrepresented groups are likely to face, such as instances of microaggressions and an implicit lack of integration among campus-life. As such, endeavors to enhance campus-wide racial diversity should be reevaluated. The flaw in the current mentality is that it assumes that marginalized groups have access to the same social, economic, and cultural capital as white students, when navigating through campus resources. However, the experiences from these interviewees, along with other research models, suggest that this assumption is far from the truth. Instead of initiatives (advertisements, website photos, social media, etc.) geared towards projecting an image of the melting of culture and races on campus, which are often ostensible claims at best, a better alternative may be to improve the existing racial climate at a university. More importantly, this can only be achieved through genuine support of multicultural organizations, and other secured counterspaces that marginalized students can truly make their own. But before efforts can be pursued in improving the racial climate on campus, universities must first reassess policies that may perpetuate segregation and diminish minority integration/inclusion.

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