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Mindfulness, openness to diversity, and color-blind racial attitudes among White undergraduate students

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Mindfulness, Openness to Diversity, and Color-Blind Racial Ideology among White
Undergraduate Students

Abstract

Despite negative impacts of color-blind racial ideology (CBRI) both at the macro- and micro-levels among White college students, limited research has examined factors associated with CBRI. This study explored associations of mindfulness and openness to diversity with CBRI above and beyond pre-college and college diversity experiences. The sample included 221 White undergraduate students recruited from two public universities located in the Southeastern United States. A multiple regression analysis revealed seven statistically significant predictors in the model: openness to diversity, mindfulness nonjudging, mindfulness observing, mindfulness nonreactivity, pre-college perceived emphasis on diversity, college quality of interracial contact, and college formal diversity experiences. The model accounted for 31% of the variance in CBRI. The results of the study have several practical implications for secondary and postsecondary professionals in addressing CBRI among White college students.

Keywords: color-blind racial ideology, mindfulness, openness to diversity, pre-college diversity experiences, college diversity experiences

Mindfulness, Openness to Diversity, and Color-Blind Racial Ideology among White Undergraduate Students

Colleges in the United States are becoming more diverse (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2019). Increased diversity on campuses of predominately White institutions has benefits of enhancing cultural awareness and pluralistic orientation (Jayakumar, 2015), and reducing discrimination and prejudicial attitudes (Davies et al., 2011). Despite the positive outcomes, troubling beliefs exist among White college students regarding their racial attitudes (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Jayakumar, 2015). One such belief that has received growing interdisciplinary attention is color-blind racial ideology (CBRI; Neville, 2009).

CBRI refers to beliefs serving to deny, minimize, distort the existence of racism, white privilege, and institutional discrimination; and holds the notion that acknowledging and discussing racial differences perpetuates racism (Neville et al., 2014). Although CBRI appears egalitarian in its claim to reduce discrimination and prejudice through treating others equally regardless of race, it is a dangerous ideology in that those who do not encounter racial oppression may have an illusion that interpersonal discrimination and structural racism no longer exist (Carney, 2016). Furthermore, the adoption of CBRI creates the opportunity for macro- and micro level negative outcomes (Jayakumar, 2015). At the macro level, racial disparities on social indicators (such as housing, health, and educational attainment) are no longer acknowledged or seen as problems worthy of attention. At the micro-level, these ideologies can lead to alienation and discrimination of minority students, while reinforcing the cultural ignorance of White students (Lewis et al., 2000). Ditomaso et al. (2003) stated, “an affirmation of color-blindness allows Whites to ignore, deny, or disregard any notion that race matters in people’s lives” (p. 197). Thus, learning is often truncated when White students do not have the stamina needed for interracial healing and addressing societal and institutional problems (Flynn, 2015).

It is important to understand factors that may impact color blindness development to address CBRI among college students. Research is warranted to assist a comprehensive understanding of factors related to CRBI from a conceptual perspective.

Theoretical Framework

Gurin et al.'s (2002) theory of diversity and educational outcomes provides a general framework for understanding factors and processes that may impact learning outcomes such as respecting diversity and addressing the CBRI of college students. The college years mark a significant stage in social development, in which college students gain exposure to new diversity experiences and relationships through structural diversity, informal diversity, and formal diversity experiences (Gurin et al., 2002). Structural diversity refers to the numerical representation of diverse groups on campus/community/neighborhood; informal diversity refers to the frequency and quality of diversity-related interactions outside of the classroom; and formal diversity refers to learning about diversity and gaining experience with diverse peers within the classroom. Gurin et al. (2002) acknowledged that pre-college diversity experiences should not be ignored. Although college and pre-college diversity experiences serve to assist the positive learning outcomes of college students, Gurin et al. (2002) suggested that merely offering opportunities for diversity-related experiences did not mean that students would actively engage in such opportunities and/or benefit from them. For example, exposure to new experiences and relationships may leave some students feeling uncertain or in a state of disequilibrium, and thus cause them to retreat to the safety of familiar worlds (Gurin et al., 2002). Underlying the tendency to retreat to familiar worlds may be the automatic, or mindless processes associated with previously developed cognitive schemas (Langer, 1989).

Active thinking is required in the disruption of such automatic processes to prevent students from retreating to the safety of familiar worlds (Gurin et al., 2002). Gurin et al. (2002) suggested that the features necessary for active thinking included: 1) "novelty and unfamiliarity...upon the transition to college", 2) "opportunities to identify discrepancies

between students with distinct pre-college social experiences”, and 3) acceptance of “diversity as a source of multiple and different perspectives” (p. 338). Thus, openness to diversity is crucial to active thinking. Openness to diversity refers to an attitude of awareness and acceptance of both differences and commonalities that exist among people (Shrivastava & Gregory, 2009). Lenes et al. (2018) highlighted that training to become more conscious of responding with openness to different worldviews and experiences can help individuals develop greater humility in the face of increased diversity.

Gurin et al. (2002) also suggested that the conditions for positive learning outcomes consist of “perspective-taking, mutuality and reciprocity, acceptance of conflict as a normal part of life...”(p. 341). Shifting one’s perspective may require attention to both the internal and external experience. Shapiro et al. (2006) highlighted the transformative properties of mindfulness by suggesting that ‘intentionally attending moment by moment with openness and nonjudgmentalness’ facilitates significant shifts in perspective. Bishop et al. (2004) defined mindfulness as “a process of regulating attention in order to bring a quality of relating to one’s experience within an orientation of curiosity, experiential openness, and acceptance” (p. 234). Thus, mindfulness may play an important role in building awareness of racial stimuli, while maintaining an open and receptive stance. As such, mindfulness serves as a way to prevent students from reverting to automatic and mindless cognitive processes in the face of disequilibrium, foster acceptance of other races, and build racial awareness within society.

Literature

Past research highlights the importance of pre-college diversity factors on lowering color blindness. Pascarella et al. (2012) suggested that college student outcomes such as preparedness for life within a diverse society and cognitive development are conditionally based on pre-college diversity experiences and student background characteristics. In addition, positive parental diversity attitudes, as well as diverse neighborhood and high school environments, were found to be related to a lower level of color blindness and higher levels of racial awareness among

White college students (Jayakumar, 2015; Liao et al., 2017). College diversity experiences are associated with a decrease in color-blindness among college students. Specifically, informal diversity experiences such as diversity activities outside of the classroom (Spanierman et al., 2008; Neville et al., 2014) and formal diversity experiences such as training and activities inside the classroom (Cole., 2011), were found to reduce the CRBI of college students.

Research shows that openness to diversity is positively related to perspective-taking, empathy, and diversity orientations (Poteat & Spanierman, 2010), while being negatively related to homophobia, racism, social-dominance orientation, and right-wing authoritarianism (Poteat & Spanierman, 2010). Two studies (Neville et al., 2014; Spanierman et al., 2008) provide support for Pascarella et al.'s (2012) view that openness to diversity is negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes both directly and indirectly through greater participation in diversity-related experiences.

Mindfulness has received growing attention in the racism, prejudice, and implicit bias literature. Past research supports the utility of mindfulness in combating prejudice and bias (Lueke & Gibson, 2015), while facilitating greater acceptance (Gervais & Hoffman, 2013), greater multicultural competency (Campbell et al., 2018). Lenés et al. (2018) examined the impact of color-conscious multicultural mindfulness on training on color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural competence, and found those in the training group reported statistically significant changes in multicultural competence and color-blind racial attitudes.

Past research provides a foundation to understand factors associated with CBRI and/or racial prejudice, though with a few limitations. First, the lack of research regarding CBRI and mindfulness presents a gap in the literature. Past research (except for Lenés et al. 2018) focuses on the effectiveness of mindfulness as an intervention for addressing racist and prejudicial beliefs. However, due to the changing nature of racial attitudes from overt (e.g., prejudice) to covert (e.g., color-blindness), the focus of research needs to center on mindfulness and CBRI (Bonilla-Silva, 2016). Second, limited research, except for Jayakumar (2015) and Liao et al.

(2017), has explored how pre-college diversity variables might impact the color blindness among college students. Research in this area is warranted, as Hurtado (2005) pointed out the need to capture both the frequency of pre-college formal diversity experiences and the quality of participation in these experiences. Third, most of the studies reviewed were completed in the Mid-western United States (e.g., Cole et al., 2011; Neville et al., 2000, 2014). As racial attitudes may vary across different regions of the U.S., there is a need for more research that utilizes samples from other regions of the country. Fourth, two key studies examining color-blind attitudes (Neville et al., 2014; Spanierman et al., 2008) utilized the same data set, collected between the years of 2004 and 2008. Updated research is needed to capture the current state of CBRI among White college students as racial attitudes are continually changing and evolving (Bonilla-Silva, 2016).

This study aimed to explore the relationship among mindfulness, openness to diversity, and CBRI while controlling for pre-college and college diversity experiences in a sample of White undergraduate college students from two large public universities located in the Southeastern United States. This study included the following research question: Do mindfulness and openness to diversity explain additional variance in the prediction of lower CBRI, above and beyond pre-college and college diversity variables? We hypothesized that mindfulness and openness to diversity will explain additional variance associated with lower CBRI, above and beyond pre-college and college diversity variables.

Method

Participants

The sample consists of 221 students from two large, public, predominately White institutions in the Southeastern United States, with 201 (91%) from one institution and 20 (9%) from the other. All participants are traditionally-aged (18 - 24 years old) undergraduate students, who self-describe as White (of non-Hispanic) and as U.S. citizens. One hundred seventy five (79.2%) participants reported as female, 44 (19.9%) as male, and 2 (.9%) as non-

binary. Participants reported different years in school: 16 (11.8%) as freshmen, 49 (22.2%) as sophomore, 82 (37.1%) as junior, 53 (24%) as senior, 8 (3.6%) as the 5 year in school, 2 (.9%) as other, and 1 (.4%) did not report. Additionally, participants reported different hometown types: 33 (15%) from rural, 163 (74.1%) from suburban, 23 (10.5%) from urban, 1(.5%) as other and 1 (.5%) did not report. Participants represent a wide range of fields of study, with 49 different majors (or intended majors) being reported. The top four majors are exercise physiology (38/18.9%), education (32/15.9%), psychology (18/9%), and nursing (18/ 9%).

Procedures

Among three institutions approached for this study, all the participants self-reported from two of the institutions. The following recruitment procedures were followed. First, email invitations were sent to the executive assistant to the Dean of each college at the universities, requesting them to distribute the information to undergraduate students within their respective colleges. Second, the Office of Institutional Research at each university was contacted for information regarding recruitment. Only one of the institutions provided a distribution list containing email addresses of 600 randomly selected students who met the inclusion criteria for this study. Subsequently, the recruitment email was sent to the distribution list. Lastly, the survey was uploaded to a College of Education participant pool and the Human Subjects Research Studies website at one of the universities. After completing the survey, participants participated, if interested, in an online raffle to have a chance to win one of six \$25 Amazon gift cards.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

The survey began with five inclusion criteria questions as a part of the demographic questionnaire. The inclusion criteria assessed for age (*18-24 years of age*), undergraduate status, race (*White*), ethnicity (*Non-Hispanic*), and nationality (*U.S. citizen*). The demographic

questionnaire also included participants' gender, name of institution/university, year on campus, (intended) major, and hometown type.

Pre-College and College Diversity Experience

The pre-college and college diversity experience instruments were adapted from works of Spanierman et al. (2008) and Leonard (2013) and includes: formal diversity experiences, perceived emphasis on diversity, informal diversity experiences, and quality of diversity contact. The pre-college formal diversity experiences refer to numbers of diversity-related classes and trainings that participants completed prior to college, while college formal diversity experiences refer to number of diversity-related classes, trainings/workshops, and campus-sponsored events that they were taking or had completed while enrolled in college. We calculated a total score by combining the numbers reported to reflect the total number of pre-college formal diversity experience and college formal diversity experiences, respectively. Participants rated their perceived emphasis on diversity within their secondary education and post-secondary education using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*None at All*) to 5 (*A Great Deal*). Pre-college informal diversity experience was assessed through answering four questions pertaining to the racial make-up of their high school, neighborhood, family, and closest friend group prior to college. College informal diversity experience was assessed by responding to questions pertaining to the racial make-up of their closest friend group, roommates, and social events most often attended. Participants responded by using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*All My Race*) to 5 (*All Other Race(s)*). We calculated a total score by combining the items to reflect participants' opportunity for pre-college informal diversity experience and college informal diversity experience, respectively. Participants reported the quality of pre-college diversity contact/college diversity contact through answering the questions: "Overall, how would you describe your feelings about the experiences that you had with people from different racial backgrounds prior to attending college/since attending college?" Participants responded by using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Very Negative*) to 5 (*Very Positive*).

Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS)

CoBRAS (Neville et al., 2000) is a 20-item measure assessing CBRI. Higher scores on the CoBRAS indicate a greater denial or unawareness of color-blindness. A sample item from the scale include: “Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.” The CoBRAS demonstrated acceptable reliability ranging from .70 (Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues) to .86 (Total CoBRAS) in a sample of college students (Neville et al., 2000). Neville et al. (2000) also provided evidence of concurrent validity and discriminate validity. Within the present study, the CoBRAS was found to demonstrate good reliability ($\alpha = .90$).

Miville-Guzman Universal-Diversity Scale-Short (M-GUDS-S)

M-GUDS-S (Fuertes et al., 2000) is a 15-item scale measuring openness to diversity. Higher scores on the scale indicate higher levels of openness to diversity. A sample item include: “I attend events where I might get to know people from different racial backgrounds.” The M-GUDS-S demonstrated convergent and divergent validities, and good reliability ($\alpha=.92$) (Fuertes et al., 2000). The M-GUDS-S demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .84$) in the current study.

Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ)

FFMQ (Baer et al., 2006) is a 39-item instrument measuring one’s level of mindfulness on five facets: (a) observing, (b) describing, (c) acting with awareness, (d) nonjudgment of inner experience, and (e) nonreactivity to inner experience. Observing refers to attending to one’s inner and outer experiences. A sample item includes: “I pay attention to sensations, such as the wind in my hair or the sun on my face.”; Describing refers to the use of words in labeling one’s internal experience. A sample item includes: “I can easily put my beliefs, opinions, and expectations into words.”; Acting with awareness refers to being present in one’s experience. A sample item includes: “I find myself doing things without paying attention”; Nonjudging of inner experience refers to refraining from evaluating one’s experience. A sample item includes: “I think some of my emotions are bad or inappropriate and I shouldn’t feel them”; Nonreactivity

to inner experience refers to the acknowledgement of thoughts and feelings as they pass without getting caught up in them. A sample item includes: “When I have distressing thoughts or images, I just notice them and let them go.” Higher scores on the scale indicate a greater degree of mindfulness (Baer et al., 2006). The FFMQ demonstrated good convergent and divergent validity (Christopher et al., 2012), and good reliability among facets, with alphas ranging from .75 to .91 (Baer et al., 2006). Within the present study, the FFMQ indicated good reliability ($\alpha = .86$). FFMQ facets used in the present study also demonstrated good reliability with alphas ranging from .74 (Nonreactivity to inner experience) to .89 (Acting with awareness).

Data Analyses

Using the input parameters of a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$), an alpha of .05, a power level of .95, and 14 total predictors, it was determined that an adequate sample size for this study would include a total of 146 participants. Among a total of 307 participants that started the survey, 86 cases were excluded from the data analysis due to missing one half or more of the items on the CoBRAS, M-GUDS-S, and FFMQ. After the data cleaning process, one of the 221 cases was missing data for one item on the M-GUDS-S. We used the person mean substitution to rectify the missing data point based upon the suggestion by Downy and King (1998). Additionally, the independent and dependent variables were examined for outliers, normality, and multicollinearity. Through the inspection of residual plots, it was determined that the assumption of homoscedasticity was met. The variance of inflation factor (VIF) for all variables was found to be under 2, which suggests no problems with regard to multicollinearity (Abu-Bader, 2010). No significant mean differences on the scales of interest were found between participants from the two institutions.

A hierarchical regression was used to address the research question. Using the enter method, covariates were first entered into the hierarchical regression analysis, followed by openness to diversity, and lastly, mindfulness facets. Entering the variables of interest in different steps served to explore the unique variance accounted for by the variables on CBRI.

Mindfulness facets were used in the current analysis as past research has found support the theoretical conceptualization of mindfulness as a coherent yet multifaceted construct (Gu et al., 2016). The use of mindfulness facets also provided information on the unique associations between mindfulness facets and CBRI.

Results

Pre-College and College Diversity Experiences

Of the 221 participants, 121 (54.8%) reported having no pre-college formal diversity experiences compared with 18 (8.1%) reported no college formal diversity experiences; 146 (66.1%) reported feeling as though there was “no” or “a little” emphasis placed on diversity/diversity issues within their pre-college educational experiences while 50 (22.6%) reported “no” or “little” perceived emphasis on diversity within their universities. A majority of participants (71.9%/60.2%) reported their pre-college informal diversity and college informal diversity experiences consisted of all or almost all White individuals, respectively. Among those who had informal interactions with non-White individuals, 76.4% and 87.3% described their pre-college interactions and college interactions as being “positive” or “very positive.”, respectively. See Table 1 for details.

<Insert Table 1 about here>

Correlation Results

Among pre-college and college diversity variables, college formal diversity, college informal diversity, and college quality of contact each had a negative and significant correlation with CBRI, while pre-college perceived emphasis on diversity had a positive and significant correlation with CBRI. CBRI had had significant and negative associations with both openness to diversity ($-.42, p < .01$) and the describing facet of the mindfulness ($-.19, p < .01$). However, the nonjudging and nonreactivity facets of mindfulness were positively associated with CBRI though not significant. In addition, openness to diversity and mindfulness were positively associated ($.30, p < .01$) with one another. See Table 2 for details.

< Insert Table 2 about here >

Hierarchical Regression Results

The initial model of pre-college variables and college variables were significant in predicting CBRI, $R^2 = .17$, $F(8, 211) = 5.19$, $p < .01$. The addition of openness to diversity to the model led to a significant increase in the prediction of CBRI $\Delta R^2 = .08$, $\Delta F(1, 210) = 7.88$, $p < .01$. The addition of mindfulness facets to the model (Model 3) yielded a significant increase in the prediction of CBRI, $\Delta R^2 = .06$, $\Delta F(5, 205) = 6.70$, $p < .01$. Overall, the full model explained 31% of the variance in CBRI. The results of the full hierarchical regression model revealed that seven factors emerged as significant predictors of CBRI. Openness to diversity, mindfulness describing facet, college quality of contact, and college formal diversity significantly predicted lower levels of CBRI. However, mindfulness nonjudging and nonreactivity facets and pre-college perceived diversity emphasis significantly predicted higher levels of CBRI. See Table 3 for details.

< Insert Table 3 about here >

Discussion

This study explored whether mindfulness and open to diversity were predictive of CBRI above and beyond that of pre-college and college diversity variables. The results of the analysis revealed the full model accounted for 31% of the variance in CBRI. Diversity related factors (both pre-college and college levels) accounted for 17% of the variance in CBRI; openness to diversity accounted for an additional 8% of the variance in CBRI, while mindfulness facets accounted for an additional 6% of the variance in CBRI. Among the pre-college diversity experience variables, perceived emphasis on diversity was the only variable to share a significant and positive relationship with CBRI and emerged as the only significant predictor of CBRI. The positive relationship between the pre-college perceived emphasis on diversity and CBRI could be triggered by students' resistance to authoritative figures, a hallmark of this developmental stage. The rather weak relationships found among other pre-college diversity variables and CBRI could be attributed to the retrospective nature of this study (asking students to recall high

school experiences) and relating of these experiences to current CBRI rather than pre-college CBRI. Additionally, the lack of significance of pre-college diversity variables with CBRI could be attributed to the fact that emphasis on diversity and the opportunity to engage in diversity-related experiences were altogether low. For example, more than half of participants in the present study reported having “0” formal diversity experiences, while 66% of participants reported perceiving “no” to “a little” emphasis on diversity. These findings suggest an urgent need to strengthen diversity and diversity-related experiences in secondary education and create campus wide culture that values and promotes diversity.

As for the college diversity experience variables, formal diversity experiences and quality of diversity contact were both significantly and inversely related to CBRI and were predictive of less CBRI. These results align with previous research that highlights diversity-related classes and educational interventions to be effective in reducing CBRI among college students (Cole et al., 2011; Neville et al., 2014). The current findings also echo past research that has emphasized the quality of diversity contact in reducing CBRI (Spanierman et al., 2008). On the other hand, the lack of relationship between perceived emphasis on diversity and CBRI may suggest that emphasis placed on diversity by university administration may not be perceived as meaningful or may be met with resistance. The finding underlines that peer influence serves as an important factor related to attitude change (Gurin et al., 2002). A lack of association between college informal diversity experiences and CBRI could be due to the limited variability of this variable: the majority of participants reported a low number of diverse informal experiences who are coming from suburban or medium city home environments. With more apartment-style housing (e.g., fraternity and sorority housing) on campus, students may continue to live similarly to their home environments. As such, students may gain exposure to diversity while in class but are able to easily return to their previous mode of being while off-campus/outside of class. Students may be aware of race and racism at a distance, yet can avoid such topics as such factors do not personally impact them. Despite some exposure to diversity, feelings of disequilibrium may be

minimized by being surrounded by other White peers, particularly considering the nature of the participating universities in this study (i.e., large, public, predominantly White universities in the southeast part of U.S.).

Openness to diversity was inversely related to CBRI and emerged as a significant predictor of lower CBRI. These results partially support previous findings. For example, Neville et al. (2014) and Spanierman et al. (2008) found that openness to diversity was negatively related to CBRI, though not a significant predictor. Given these mixed results, more research is warranted to examine the relationship. Specifically, it may be valuable for future research to examine the mechanism of openness to diversity on impacting CBRI. For example, Spanierman et al. (2008) suggested that openness to diversity might serve to increase engagement in diversity-related experiences, which in turn might reduce the endorsement of CBRI.

The hypothesized relationship between mindfulness facets and CBRI was partially supported. On the one hand, mindfulness facets accounted for an additional 6% of variance on CBRI. The mindfulness Describing subscale was found to be significant in the prediction of lower CBRI. The findings were consistent with Lenes' (2018) study in that a significant negative correlation was found between the Describing subscale and CoBRAS total score, as well as the CoBRAS Privilege subscale. These findings highlight that participant's ability to describe their inner experience and acknowledge their racism and White privilege may enhance their awareness of CBRI. However, other mindfulness facets were either found to be non-significant (i.e., mindfulness observing and acting with awareness scales) or, though significant, were not in the hypothesized direction (mindfulness nonjudging and reactivity scales). These findings though unexpected, were perhaps not surprising, given the mixed results of mindfulness within the prejudicial and biased attitudes literature (Lueke & Gibson, 2015). The lack of relationship between the mindfulness total score and CBRI is also supported by the findings of Lenes' (2018) study. It is possible that participants within the study who reported higher levels of mindfulness may have been more willing and/or able to accurately report their CBRI when compared to

participants acting with mindlessness, which may explain the positive relationship between some mindfulness facets (i.e., nonjudging and nonreactivity) and CBRI.

Limitations

A number of limitations exist within this study. First, the convenient sample used in this study may not be generalizable to other settings. Additionally, females were over-represented in this sample (79.2%). This over-representation is not consistent with the national statistics in which female students constitute approximately 56% of the college student population (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017). Thus, caution should be taken in interpreting the results. Second, the responses of an online survey study might be affected by impression management and social desirability, as well as subject to the accuracy of participants' recall of their past diversity experiences. Potential inherent differences between those who self-select to participate in a survey study and those who do not may present another limitation. For example, participants who self-selected into this online survey study might be more open to and interested in diversity-related issues than those who did not. Third, the cross-sectional research design of this study presents another limitation. Due to the cross-sectional research design, only relationships among the variables of interest can be observed and causation cannot be assumed.

Implications for Practice

Professionals in the secondary education should provide more exposure to formal and informal diversity experiences to White students as more than half and two-thirds of participants in this study reported no formal diversity experiences and informal diversity experiences during their secondary education, respectively. School teachers and administrators should be aware of the taboo nature of discussing racism and be more proactive in integrating diversity topics in curriculum through class assignments and campus events. DiAngelo and Sensoy (2014) suggested using a silence breaker, a technique aimed at addressing fears and taboos in racial discussions, to promote curiosity and humility. School administration may also consider taking full advantage of resources such as building connections with racially diverse

schools to enhance diversity awareness, knowledge, and skills to combat CBRI. Secondary education school personnel may foster a more positive environment and put more emphasis on diversity issues through the use of culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate strategies to minimize defensiveness and resistance from students. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, the use of social media technology (i.e., Facebook, WeChat) to encourage the discussion of diversity related issues or extracurricular diversity related activities. School professionals need to prepare for and welcome difficult conversations, encourage self-reflection, and foster the building of a diverse learning community.

Given the results of this study, college administrators and faculty need to facilitate positive engagement in formal diversity related classes and trainings and quality of diversity experiences. Postsecondary education, especially predominantly White institutions, should adopt positive recruitment and admissions practices to increase the diversity of the student population, which may serve to increase the opportunity for diversity contact while reducing CBRI. Postsecondary institutions should create opportunities for positive diversity interactions through accomplishing shared tasks and/or finding commonalities. For example, moving away from apartment-style dormitories and back to communal-style living may increase opportunities for diversity contact, while also encouraging students to work together to resolve conflicts that may arise. Creating a campus culture that values and celebrates diversity may serve to make conversations about race and racism more commonplace. For example, offering incentives and rewards to student groups who value inclusivity to increase diversity on campus. In addition, it may be helpful to hold events that promote interracial interactions in common spaces on campus. For example, holding an event outside at the center of campus (rather than in a building) may foster the engagement of students passing by, while also indirectly communicating a culture of inclusivity and fostering openness to diversity on campus.

Secondary and postsecondary educational professionals should establish creative approaches and create spaces for White students to explore the role of privilege and systems of

oppression within their own lives. For example, encouraging students to explore the discomfort that may arise through private reflection (e.g., journaling), rather than reacting or disengaging, may help students develop a deeper understanding of their experiences. Furthermore, communicating the difficult nature and life long process of acknowledging and addressing privilege and racism may serve to reduce the defensiveness of these topics. Considering the impact of the describing-facet of mindfulness on CBRI and the positive relationship between mindfulness and openness to diversity in this study, educators may consider using mindfulness-based interventions to facilitate openness to diversity, thus effecting engagement in diversity-related experiences and reducing CBRI. Through doing so, students may become more cognizant that racism and white privilege are not only found within overt display of cruelty but also be manifested in covert and systemic oppression.

Implications for Research

The final model, accounting for 31% of the variance in CBRI, highlights a need for more research aimed at understanding other factors that may impact the endorsement of CBRI among White college students. Understanding more about the antecedents or factors related to CBRI may help practitioners and educators alike to develop more effective diversity-related classes and campus-wide trainings.

Future research within this area may want to use qualitative methods to help understand the potential links among mindfulness and diversity-related variables. Understanding systems of oppression and how one (as a White individual) has benefited from such a system often elicits a strong emotional response, which highlights the need for future research to take into account the internal processes, emotional reactions, and racial affect elicited when confronted with such topics. It is also helpful to understand the extent to which power and privilege are being discussed and/or addressed in both formal and informal diversity experiences through qualitative approaches.

Future research may need to explore further the relationship among mindfulness and its facets, openness to diversity, and CBRI. As openness to diversity was found to be positively related to mindfulness and inversely related to CBRI, it may be fruitful to explore the indirect effect of mindfulness on CBRI through openness to diversity.

Conclusion

Despite a number of negative impacts of CBRI both at the macro- and micro-levels, limited research has explored the contributing factors associated with such beliefs. The findings of this exploratory investigation found that openness to diversity, mindfulness facets, pre-college perceived emphasis on diversity, and college formal diversity experiences have mixed associations with CBRI among White college students. More research is warranted to gain a better understanding of the factors that may contribute to or decrease CBRI among White college students.

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