THE SOCIAL IDENTITY EXPERIENCES OF INTERGROUP DIALOGUE FACILITATORS:

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

by

RODNEY EDWARD PENNAMON

(Under the Direction of Anneliese A. Singh)

ABSTRACT

This research study explored the experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators in the Southeastern United States (U.S.) and how they describe social identity. The role of facilitator in intergroup dialogue is the least understood (Maxwell, Nagda, & Thompson, 2011). Using a phenomenological approach, this study explored the lived experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators who led dialogue groups utilizing Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as the theoretical lens to examine this phenomenon. This dissertation was prepared in a manuscript style format for purposes of journal publication in an effort to add to the scholarship on dialogue facilitation for student affairs professionals and group workers.

The first chapter is an introduction to the topic of the study. The second chapter provides a rationale for conducting a study on the social identity experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators. The third chapter is a call to group workers and reviews the literature on intergroup dialogue, the role of the facilitator in intergroup dialogue, and social identity. The fourth chapter contains a literature review, highlights the research findings, and identifies several salient themes around social identity experiences and their descriptions by facilitators in the study. Implications for practice and suggestions for research and advocacy are also provided. The final chapter

examines the researcher's reflexivity and positionality through personal reflections. Additional research can increase the understanding about the role social identity plays in the lives of intergroup dialogue facilitators (Zuniga, 2003) and its influence on the dialogue outcome.

INDEX WORDS: Intergroup Dialogue, Facilitators, Student Affairs Professionals, Group Workers, Social Identity Theory, Phenomenology

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DEDICATION

To my late parents Mildred Agnes (Shank) Cheatham and Dobbin Richard Cheatham, I kept on going no matter what happened just like you said mom and I am finally heavy dad (highly educated). I wish you were here to enjoy this with me but I suspect that you are somewhere taking it all in and smiling.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine the social identity

experiences of a group of intergroup dialogue facilitators who reside in the Southeastern United

States (U.S.). This study addressed the following research question: what are the experiences

intergroup dialogue facilitators in the Southeastern U.S. describe of social identity? Eight

intergroup dialogue facilitators who led intergroup dialogues on race and gender participated in

the study. The collection of data included a demographic information sheet completed by

participants and face-to-face semi-structured interviews using audio recorders. Data was

analyzed by a research team that entailed a review of each individual participant's transcript,

coding that involved the chunking of data together (Hays & Singh, 2012), and the identification

of themes.

Narratives were provided from each participant's transcripts that allowed their rich

experiences and stories to be shared. Six themes were identified to illuminate how intergroup

dialogue facilitators experience social identity: (a) constructing your own identity as a social

identity experience, (b) social identity changes and your experiences are based on how you see

yourself and how others see you, (c) the interconnectedness of self-concept and social identity,

(d) making sense of social identity through the co-facilitative experience, (e) race: sensitive and

complicated, and (f) neighborhood locus helped to shape their identity. All the themes tied back

into their social identities. This manuscript style dissertation is structured in the following manner; introduction, review of the literature, methodology and findings, and implications, and conclusion. This introductory synopsis will provide an overview of social identity, intergroup dialogue, and the role of the facilitator in the dialogue process. These three areas formed the foundational basis for the exploration into the research study.

Social Identity and Social Identity Theory

Social identities sometime have a potent effect on the lives of individuals (Gurin-Sands, Gurin, Nagda, & Osuna, 2012). Social identity describes identities constructed by society such as race, class, gender, and sexual orientation as the most prevalent ones (Hackman, 1999). Social identity is intended to describe those identities that are tied to dominant or subordinate groups in society as they relate to systems of power, privilege and resources in our society (Hackman, 1999). The theoretical basis of social identity finds its origins in the pioneering work of theorists Tajfel and Turner (Hogg, 2006; University of Twente, n.d.). Social identity theory puts forth the idea that group memberships create in-groups who self-categorize and promote enhancements in ways that both enrich and favor the in-group (agents of oppression) at the expense of the out-group (targets of oppression) (University of Twente, n.d.). Social identity goes to the core of understanding the foundational principles behind intergroup dialogue. Central to this approach for those who undergo the dialogue experience is engaging their social identities (Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). Intergroup dialogues bring people together from different social identities (Schoem, 2003).

Intergroup Dialogue

The dynamics of intergroup dialogue can be complex; however the concept is rather direct. Schoem and Hurtado (2001) described intergroup dialogue as a face-to-face meeting

guided by facilitators who emphasize a democratic process between groups who hold conflicting viewpoints and possess different social identities that are broadly defined by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, socio-economic class and other social group identities (Program on Intergroup Relations, 2007). These dialogue groups can occur over a series of days, weeks, or months.

In every corner of the globe from small hamlets to major cities, educators, social workers, community leaders, activists, social scientists and other practitioners use intergroup dialogue in numerous contexts in their pursuit of social justice for all people (Mizobe, 2011). Globally, communities in disagreement make use of intergroup dialogue to deal with social unrest, to build understanding between parties, and to create possibilities for progress and transformation (Mizobe, 2011). Understanding both the role of social identity and the facilitator in the intergroup dialogue process is important.

The Role of the Facilitator in Intergroup Dialogue

According to Huang-Nissen (1999), the facilitator plays a key role in intergroup dialogue practice and a great deal of trust is afforded them by the process and by group members. The stages of intergroup dialogue highlight some of the important roles the facilitator plays in the dialogue experience: (a) introduces a "hot topic" that sets the stage for meaningful experiences to begin, (b) facilitates escalation in emotions as members from different social identities hold to their beliefs and stereotypes about the other opposing group members, (c) takes this opportunity to highlight the challenges of the group and meanings are highlighted throughout dialogue, (d) plays a key role in the intergroup dialogue process making sure that all group members are safe and no one is threatened with possible consequences after the dialogue, (e) facilitates group members' consensus or state of agreeing to disagree (Multi-university

Intergroup Dialogue Research Project, 2008). There are several models of intergroup dialogue facilitation (Zuniga, 1998). These may include a mixture of established group facilitation practices, models involving a transformative approach to the examination of conflict and social justice education, and group engagement which supports individual empowerment and community building (Zuniga, 1998).

Conclusion

This phenomenological study explored the social identity experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators. Salient themes were identified that supported the important role social identity plays in the lives of these facilitators. Upcoming chapters provide a review of the literature on social identity, intergroup dialogue, and the facilitative role, a description of the methodology used in the study and concluding thoughts by the researcher.

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CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL IDENTITY EXPERIENCES AND THE FACILITATIVE IMPACT ON

INTERGROUP DIALOGUE[1]

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Abstract

The exploration of our social identities is vital to understanding ourselves and others, given that both our internal and external experiences are shaped by them (Maxwell, Chesler, & Nagda, 2011). However, it is important to also be cognizant of the fact that our identity, consciousness, and skills are not stagnant and change constantly in response to novel information being received about ourselves (Watt, 2007). Social identity is defined as that portion of the individual's self-concept which comes from their understanding of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional importance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 2010). Social identity theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and later revised by John Turner, remains one of the most significant perspectives on the social psychology of group processes (Cinnirella, 1998) and was used as the theoretical framework for this study. Social identities are explored during intergroup dialogue with the aid of trained co-facilitators (Zuniga, 2003). During intergroup dialogue, the social identities of participants are unpacked as a way to increase intergroup understanding.

Intergroup Dialogue

Intergroup dialogue is a public process intended to engage individuals and groups in an examination of common issues such as politics, racism, religion, and culture that are often flashpoints for division and societal disagreement (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006). The process of intergroup dialogue has been compared with and contrasted to several other practices that seek to make relationships easier and resolve differences (Nagda & Gurin, 2007). Intergroup dialogue is different from debate, which requires taking a position and confronting others, and from group therapy processes, which center more on an individual's inner personal workings (Nagda & Gurin, 2007). Intergroup dialogue is also unlike mediation, which seeks to negotiate resolution of a disagreement (Nagda & Gurin, 2007). Intergroup dialogues occur mostly in university settings, however, with dialogues increasing popularity over the past few decades, many are also conducted in community settings, secondary schools, and corporate organizations (Stephan & Finlay, 1999; Nagda, Chesler, & Cryton-Walker, 2007). The facilitator is front and center during the dialogue process and plays an integral part.

Facilitator's Role in Understanding Social Identity

There is a dearth in the literature written about intergroup dialogue facilitation (Nagda & Maxwell, 2011) and the influence of social identities on facilitators (Maxwell, Nagda, & Thompson, 2011). Significant to the behavior, training, and practice of intergroup dialogue is social group identity (Maxwell et al., 2011). The facilitator makes it possible for the group to create its own processes and ways of obtaining knowledge while contemplating, sharing, and dialoguing about different perspectives, feelings, and desires that are both individually and socially relevant (Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007). Therefore, at least two areas are important for facilitators to have competencies in to properly conduct an intergroup dialogue;

an awareness and understanding of their own social identities and personal histories with identity development, as well as that of others, and the ability to lead small groups that focus on challenging conversations (Zuniga, 2003). In essence, facilitators, "teach who they are," (Griffin & Ouellett, 2007, p. 90), meaning there must be a sense of congruence between the identity and integrity of the facilitator.

Moreover, facilitators are expected to be involved on both a personal and intellectual basis by sharing their own experiences when needed in order to shed light on a discussion or bring issues forward for the group that have remained unspoken (Zúñiga, Nagda, & Sevig, 2002) Facilitating social justice programs like intergroup dialogue requires the facilitator to think on his/her feet (Griffin & Ouellett, 2007). A co-facilitative model fosters support for each facilitator and is encouraged (Griffin & Ouellett, 2007). A two-person facilitator team brings a whole host of social identities to the group leadership that allows for a greater exploration of identities that are often the focus of the dialogue (Griffin & Ouellett, 2007). Ultimately, leadership can become incorporated as a component of self-concept (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005).

Social Identity and Self-Concept

Social identity focuses on the idea of relationships and defines who we are as a result of our similarities and differences with others (Reicher, Spears, & Haslam, 2010). Moreover, social identity is jointly shared with others and provides a starting point for shared group action (Reicher, et al., 2010). Finally, the significance connected to any social identities is the result of our collective history and present that links us to the social world (Reicher et al., 2010). Social identity supplies the connection between the individual and society (Reicher,et al., 2010).

Theorists, Tajfel and Turner (1979) examined the idea of self-concept and honed in on inner mechanisms that allow individuals to internalize groupings and group memberships (Cinnirella, 1998). Much of our self-identification involves membership in groups and relationships with other people (Kilgore, 1999). Our self-concept consists of the thoughts that we have about ourselves, which include the beliefs we have about our social identities and individual characteristics, as well as our generalization about the self that is derived from experiences (Michener, DeLamater, & Myers 2004). Research has shown that when differing groups are given an opportunity to explore each other's social identities through intergroup dialogue, positive outcomes can result.

Social Identity and Intergroup Dialogue Research

The Intergroup Dialogue as Pedagogy Across the Curriculum (INTERACT) Pilot Project is credited with first identifying the lack of research studies on intergroup dialogue facilitator instruction (Clark, 2005). Most of the research on intergroup dialogue has centered on tracking its influence on participants and documenting the best practices for building and supporting a successful program (Nagda & Maxwell, 2011). Research study findings have varied with a reduction in stereotyping and bias among participants being reported to identifying important skills and experience needed for intergroup dialogue facilitators to most efficiently guide program participants through the experience (Zuniga et al., 2007).

For example, reporting on research at the collegiate level, Hurtado (2005) reviewed the results from a longitudinal study of 4, 403 college students who attended nine public universities. Outcomes demonstrated that campus efforts, such as intergroup dialogue, that offer opportunities for students to gain knowledge about diverse groups inside and outside the classroom have a considerable impact on students (Hurtado, 2005). Furthermore, additional findings suggest

negative interactions are likely to increase social identity awareness with others in the same racial grouping when left to chance, reinforcing differences between groups rather than including a serious exploration of similarities explored during programs like intergroup dialogue (Hurtado, 2005). Further research into intergroup dialogue found significant evidence for an increase in student's critical consciousness (Nagda & Gurin, 2007).

Nagda & Zúñiga (2003) studied 42 college students at a large Midwestern U.S. university who participated in five interracial/ethnic dialogues. All students were asked to voluntarily complete pre- and post-test surveys at the first and last sessions. Participants were told that the aim of the study was to understand how students learned in diverse settings. Only those participants who completed both pre- and post-test surveys were included in the subsequent study and analyses. The results yielded two overall findings; firstly, the intergroup dialogue program raised racial consciousness and secondly, the more the students valued the learning process within dialogue, the more likely they were to gain from the overall intergroup dialogue goals for these encounters. The encounters were valuable because they were aimed at making available conversational settings for students to increase racial awareness, discuss race and racism with people from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, and to build up a desire for building a bridge between interracial differences.

Reporting on research at the community level, the Study Circles Resource Center, created in 1989, works with people and groups that are organizing dialogues in neighborhoods and communities on both a local and state level. They offer best practices for communities to replicate sustainable democratic dialogue models (McCoy & McCormick, 2001). Furthermore, guidance on facilitating small-to-large groups while sharing their successes and challenges was

provided. Process and outcomes are shared with many individuals, groups, and communities and reported changes in attitudes and behaviors fostered a new commitment toward change (McCoy & McCormick, 2001).

According to Law and Suarez (n.d.), the experience of the facilitator has not been widely studied. Furthermore, Maxwell, Nagda, and Thompson's book (2011) was the first of its kind and had a specific focus on intergroup dialogue facilitation and its influence on facilitators. Rather, most of the research inquiry on intergroup dialogue facilitation has centered on how to manage and engage participants (Law & Suarez, n.d.). Identifying a gap in the literature on the facilitator's distinctive position as a co-learner and guide through the dialogue process, Law and Suarez (n.d.) developed a qualitative study that focused on the intergroup dialogue facilitator's experience and its impact on 16 facilitators who led dialogues on race, gender, religion/spirituality, and sexual orientation. Findings suggested that facilitators learn through preparation, leading an intergroup dialogue, and, the co-leader relationship.

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators about social identity at a Southeastern university in the United States. Participants in this study were eight trained intergroup dialogue facilitators who identified as males and females from different racial backgrounds (e.g. Black, White), who had conducted intergroup dialogues, and who were working professionals in college student affairs at the same institution. This study utilized a phenomenological method of inquiry (Hays & Singh, 2012). A phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to ascertain the lived experiences of the participants, along with the elements found in that experience (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the author reviewed the literature on intergroup dialogue, the role of the facilitator in the dialogue process, the influence of social identity on the facilitator, and counseling advocacy competencies

that dialogue facilitators should consider incorporating into group work practice. Findings supported the work of Maxwell et al., (2011) that the facilitator's social identity experiences figure prominently in the intergroup dialogue process. Intergroup dialogue facilitators are advocates for social justice. In order to advocate for social justice, individuals must elevate their understanding and reassess the prevailing value system that governs the American culture (Watt, 2007).

Social Justice and Intergroup Dialogue

Intergroup dialogue takes a social justice approach by focusing a lens on the challenges of social-group memberships and injustices that are well entrenched in the system of oppression and privilege that exist in our society (Nagda & Derr, 2004; Zuniga, 2003). An intergroup dialogue offers participants an opportunity to understand the historical basis and possible resulting conflicts of social injustices and to become cognizant of the social systems which serve to keep injustices in place (Rozas, 2007). Intergroup dialogue's focus on social justice encourages participants to reexamine ways to promote positive intergroup relations (Nagda & Derr, 2004).

Therefore, multiculturally competent student affairs professionals conducting intergroup dialogues must continuously seek to raise awareness and develop skills that will help them to effectively deal with diversity and social justice issues (Watt, 2007). Engaging in difficult dialogues demands resilience from participants and the ability to sit in discomfort and continuously seek critical consciousness (Watt, 2007). Within the group counseling field, numerous opportunities already exist to address social justice issues that are present in many of

the groups which counselors facilitate (e.g. task, psychoeducational, counseling, and psychotherapy) and these are excellent opportunities to open meaningful dialogue with participants (Singh & Salazar, 2014).

Dissertation Format

This dissertation is written in a manuscript style and allowed some degree of creativity for the researcher. Also, the researcher is hopeful the information provided will prove useful for student affairs professionals conducting intergroup dialogues, along with counselors who conduct group work with diverse clients where contentious issues may arise. In addition, this style of dissertation will allow the researcher to submit findings to academic journals and add to the scant information available on intergroup dialogue facilitator's experiences. Chapter one is an introduction to the topic of the study, offers highlights of the study, and provides a glimpse into current issues around intergroup dialogue facilitation.

A Review of the Literature and Call to the Group Work Field

Chapter three is a call to the field of group work. It is an effort to shed light on the facilitative role in intergroup dialogue and the influence of social identity (e.g. race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) on the intergroup dialogue facilitator. Belonging to a particular social identity is to possess the characteristics of others in the group, taking on the perspectives of the group, and being aligned with its members (Stets & Burke, 2000). Individuals and facilitators from opposing social backgrounds (e.g., Black, White, male and female), who have a history of conflict, are intentionally brought together in intergroup dialogue to discuss differences between groups (Kivlighan & Arseneau, 2009; Miles & Kivlighan, 2012). Group workers who work with members of different social identities in group settings will find useful

practice recommendations involving the integration of intergroup dialogue into their practice when working with diverse clients, facilitating difficult conversations through the use of dialogue, and gaining multicultural competence.

Social Identity Experiences: Study Findings

Contained in chapter four are the findings of this phenomenological study. The research inquiry was in response to the dearth of research on counselors who conduct group work (e.g. group workers) and college student affairs professionals conducting intergroup dialogues as facilitators. Furthermore, the researcher's aim was to examine the social identity experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators (Beale, Thompson, & Chesler, 2001). Using a phenomenological research tradition (Krathwohl, 1998; Creswell, 2009) the researcher used Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to frame the study. Eight trained dialogue facilitators working in Student Affairs were selected from a large Southeastern University to participate in the study. Identity influence, social identity, self-concept, co-facilitation, race, and worldview were identified as themes in the study. Limitations and implications of the study are discussed.

Researcher Reflexivity and Implications

In the final chapter of this dissertation, a reflective account of the researcher's experience in conducting a phenomenological research study that focused on the social identity experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators is discussed. The researcher's reflexivity is examined. The choice of qualitative format is discussed along with the researcher's struggle to narrow the themes down that were more salient to the participant's experiences. An account of the research team experience is provided along with a discussion on social identity as the theoretical lens used

to view the study. Positionality of the researcher is highlighted along with implications for social justice, social identity in relation to intergroup dialogue, and how group work is being impacted positively by intergroup dialogue.

<div align="center">**References**</div>

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CHAPTER 3

INTERGROP DIALOGUE AND THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL IDENTITY ON

FACILITATIVE PRACTICE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND CALL TO GROUP

WORKERS[2]

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Abstract

According to Maxwell, Nagda, and Thompson (2011), the role of the facilitator in intergroup dialogue is the least understood of all possible roles. Thus, this article aims to shed light on the facilitative role in intergroup dialogue and the influence of social identity (e.g. race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) on the intergroup dialogue facilitator. Belonging to a particular social identity is to possess the characteristics of others in the group, taking on the perspectives of the group, and being aligned with its members (Stets & Burke, 2000). Individuals and facilitators from opposing social backgrounds (e.g., Black, White, male, female) who have a history of conflict are intentionally brought together in intergroup dialogue to discuss differences between groups (Kivlighan & Arseneau, 2009; Miles & Kivlighan, 2012). Group workers who work with members of different social identities in group settings will find useful practice recommendations involving the integration of intergroup dialogue into group practice when working with diverse clients, facilitating difficult conversations through the use of dialogue, and gaining multicultural competence.

Introduction

Researchers have published several books (Maxwell et al., 2011; Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007) and written in professional journals (Dessel, Rogge & Garlington, 2006; Lopez & Zuniga, 2010; Nagda, 2006; Schoem, 2003) on the subject of intergroup dialogue. Conversely, there has been very little written about intergroup dialogue facilitation (Nagda & Maxwell, 2012) and the influence of social identities on facilitators (Maxwell, Chesler, & Nagda, 2012). Embedded in social identity, intergroup dialogue is built on theories of difference (Wayne, 2008). The design of intergroup dialogue was strongly influenced by the groundbreaking work of Gordon Allport (1954), who developed a theory known as "contact hypothesis" that proposed increased intergroup contact as a means of reducing prejudice (Rodenborg & Huynh, 2006; Sorensen, Nagda, Gurin, & Maxwell, 2009) as well as his landmark book, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Nagda, Troop & Paluck, 2006). Allport's theory further suggested prejudice can be reduced when those within the group have equal status, common goals, a cooperative relationship is established, and the group leader is supportive (Rozas, 2007; Wayne, 2008). Pettigrew (1998), researching the work of Allport (1954), added a fifth condition to the contact theory of the possibility of friendships being formed as the result of intergroup interactions. Intergroup dialogue has the potential to increase friendships among a group of diverse participants by bringing together individuals who possess common interests, appreciate each other's company, and have similar life goals (Rodenborg & Huynh, 2006).

The intergroup dialogue method was designed specifically to deal with intergroup conflicts (Rodenborg & Bosch, 2007). Intergroup dialogue brings together co-facilitators who represent two or more social identities (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) with a focus on building bridges across differences, an emphasis on consciousness raising about

inequalities in our society, an exploration of experiences across identity groups, and as a focal point promoting social justice both individually and collectively (Maxwell et al., 2011). Dessel, Rogge, and Garlington (2006) described intergroup dialogue as, "a facilitated community experience designed to provide a safe yet communal space to express anger and indignation about injustice" (p. 303).

The topics under discussion in the dialogues vary from race and ethnicity, immigration, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) issues, and international topics (Singh & Salazar, 2010a). Many of these discussions bring the social identities of both the participants and facilitator(s) to the front and center of the conversations. For example, in the diversity focused classroom where difficult dialogues (Sue et al., 2009) take place on a host of social justice and multicultural topics, the social identity of the teacher (facilitator) becomes central to the dialogue (Bell, Love, Washington, & Weinstein, 2007). Classroom facilitators who model openness to the exploration of their own identities as they relate to positions of power and privilege, make the classroom setting more comfortable for discussing these topics (Bell et al., 2007).

This article is a review of the relevant literature on different dialogues and intergroup dialogue, the facilitator's role within the facilitative process, social identity within the context of social identity theory and social justice's influence on intergroup dialogue. Finally, this article is a call to the field of group workers (facilitators) to increase the use of intergroup dialogue, "courageous conversations" (Singh & Salazar, 2010a), as part of an effort to infuse social justice awareness into their group practice. Recommendations are offered to the counseling field for implementation of intergroup dialogues. Group workers can benefit from this knowledge about different dialogues and use it to improve upon their group work.

<div align="center">**Review of the Literature**</div>

Dialogues for Diverse Settings and Groups

To the individual encountering dialogue for the first time, initially, the experience may be difficult to grasp. Moreover people come to the dialogue not fully understanding what they will encounter or what to expect. The following description gives some insight into the process:

> Groups of people from two different social identities (e.g. Black and White) gather together in a room. During the first phase, the facilitator introduces the dialogue concept and the purpose of the dialogue; expectations of the participants are made clear; ground rules are discussed and agreed upon; participants briefly introduce themselves; the agenda for the first session is reviewed; and the facilitator describes his or her role in the process. After all of these very important details are discussed, the dialogue begins (Heierbacher, 1999, p. 16).

The term dialogue has been increasingly applied to almost any conversation having substantive content and is used interchangeably with intergroup dialogue (Schoem, 2003). Moreover, the word dialogue has more than one meaning and has been used to describe casual conversations between individuals or discussions that focus on topics of common interest (Stanis, 2012). Dialogues have been called "courageous conversations" by Singleton and Linton, (2006) while Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo, and Rivera (2009) called challenging discussions led by student affairs faculty in the classroom, "difficult dialogues." Conversations held in schools, community settings, and on college campuses have been called "intergroup dialogues" (Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007). There have been different names assigned to these groups which exist in different forms and the terms are often used loosely (Schoem, 2003); courageous

conversations (Singleton & Linton, 2006; Singh & Salazar, 2010a), difficult dialogues (Sue et al., 2009), dialogues (Bohm, 1996), and intergroup dialogues (Zuniga et al., 2007). For purposes of this paper, the term intergroup dialogue will be used, however, an exploration of the different names assigned to the term is useful and will be examined in this article.

Courageous Conversations for Schools

Glenn Singleton, credited with the creation and development of courageous conversations in school settings, defined the conversations as; "utilizing the agreements, conditions, and human compass to engage, sustain, and deepen interracial dialogue about race in an effort to examine schooling and improve student achievement" (Singleton & Linton, 2006, p.16). Courageous conversations were viewed as an approach to dissolving ethnic tensions and raising racism as a subject of discussion, which enables those who possess knowledge on racial topics the chance to share it, and those who do not have the understanding, to learn and grow from the experience (Singleton & Hays, 2008). These exchanges often involve seizing the opportunity to have a courageous conversation with others who have different backgrounds and identities (Singleton & Linton, 2006). The courageous conversations center around four agreements; (a) stay engaged in the process, (b) speak your truth, (c) experience discomfort, and (d) expect and accept non-closure is a reality (Singleton & Hays, 2008). Another form of dialogue which encourages the exploration of challenging topics among diverse groups is difficult dialogues (Singh & Salazar, 2010a).

Difficult Dialogues for Classrooms

Difficult dialogues are used in diverse college classrooms to discuss polarizing topics such as race (Sue & Constantine, 2007). The National Resource Center (2006), through its

Difficult Dialogues Initiative, holds constructive dialogues around the country on race, religion, sexual orientation, and conflicts in the Middle East. Difficult dialogues have been defined as a verbal and written exchange of ideas or opinions between citizens within a community which focuses on arousing potentially contradictory views about ways of thinking and values (Watt, 2007). Expanding on the definition, Sue and Constantine (2007), defined difficult dialogues broadly as potentially hostile conversations or exchanges between different racial or ethnic groups, where an unequal status of power and privilege are present, a difference in worldviews exist, personalities and perspectives are challenged publicly, conversations are offensive to others, biases and prejudices are revealed, and intense emotional responses are triggered. According to Sue and Constantine (2007), in order to successfully manage a difficult dialogue, the facilitator must overcome their fears in four areas; fear of appearing racist, fear of realizing their racism, fear of confronting white privilege, and fear of taking responsibility to end racism.

Furthermore, facilitators conducting difficult dialogues must possess special skills similar to group counselors who are able to deal with group processes and group dynamics (Sue et al., 2009). Difficult dialogues can also be used to address issues around privilege, diversity, and social justice (Watt, 2007). Watt (2009) suggested individuals, during difficult dialogues, develop defenses to protect their personal and social identities; however, this process also allows various defenses to be identified. Similarly, dialogue fosters an in-depth process of self-reflection, which causes an examination of one's own experiences and conditions in their lives and often changes individual viewpoints (Nagda & Derr, 2004).

Dialogues in Our Community

Some people have suggested dialogue is not serious talk; scholars and practitioners disagree, and see it as rebalancing the dynamics of relationships within the dialogue group

(Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, Gurin-Sands & Osuna, 2009). Dialogues allow us to learn about the differences between us (Huang-Nissen, 1999). Dialogue allows individuals to be heard, creates understanding, and the opportunity to be understood within a group (Pyser, 2005). Furthermore, dialogue across differences promotes intercultural understanding of others experiences and how their experiences provide a framework for their lives (DeTurk, 2006). Within dialogue, there is a "stream of meaning" created, which allows for a flow between and through those in attendance (Dessel et al., 2006).

Dialogue is widely used to address numerous social justice issues and is a form of conversation which allows people to connect bridging cultures, enlivening communities, and supporting cultural creativity (Jenlink & Banathy, 2005). The dialogue process has been used to improve relationships between groups, promote discussion and an examination of issues, and to enhance the community and public in the decision-making process (Wayne, 2008). What has been called dialogue is often debate and dilutes actual dialogues which involve a difficult process (Schoem, 2003). The Conflict Research Consortium (1998) viewed dialogue as an ordered type of communication wherein respectful and attentive listening occurs, zeroing in on deeply rooted feelings, negative thinking, and adverse experiences. David Bohm (1996) believed deep within our thoughts and speaking are assumptions we hold about each other and, through a successful dialogue, these can be brought to the surface of consciousness. Moreover, there is generative power within conversation and dialogue allows for thoughtful understanding and insights (Bohm, 1996). Within these self-created scenarios lay our identities which comprise our "ideas, beliefs, opinions, feelings, desires, patterns, hopes and fears" (Hunter, Bailey, & Taylor, 1995, p. 5).

Each individual is unique and possesses divergent viewpoints that have been brought on by different events in life (Pyser, 2005). These internalized experiences and behaviors are, in

turn, overtly or covertly communicated and carried with us into a multitude of settings such as work and school. Oftentimes, these unresolved feelings are the source of conflicts when they collide with those possessing opposing views. These antagonistic encounters generate potential opportunities for facilitators to create a better understanding of themselves and among individuals, and find common ground using dialogue (Pyser, 2005).

Researcher William Issacs, reflecting on Bohm's dialogue model, understood dialogue as making meaning through the creation of a common understanding and an interactive process of listening, exploring beliefs and differences, and building a framework for thinking together (Burson, 2002). Furthermore, Isaccs (1999) called dialogue a conversation wherein individuals come together to think in relationship to one another. Participants in dialogue engage in intentional conversation based on agreements (rules) which move beyond discussion and allow for trust building so that each person is heard (Buie & Wright, 2010). Dialogue participants must be comfortable enough within the group to be willing to take risks that make the dialogue a meaningful experience (Heierbacher, 1999). Intergroup dialogue offers the possibility as a forum for significant engagement across societal barriers (Nagda et al., 2009).

Understanding Intergroup Dialogue in Higher Education

People have become stratified through social markers such as race and income, which promote the persistence of racial inequalities and privileges that can be seen in residential, school, religious, and occupational segregation (Nagda et al., 2009). This segregation separates people physically, socially, and psychologically (Nagda et al., 2009. A commitment to social action is one of the desired outcomes of participation in intergroup dialogue (Gurin-Sands, Gurin, Nagda, & Osuna, 2012). While intergroup dialogues have similar characteristics to other forms of dialogue, they holds a unique position in striving to increase personal consciousness,

bring about a greater awareness of systemic oppression, bridge differences which create interactions connecting people from differing social identities, and increase the ability to participate in anti-oppressive activities (Vaccaro, 2010).

Intergroup dialogues have been used in a myriad of milieus ranging from community, workplaces, homes, international disputes, high schools, and college and university settings (Hess, Rynczak, Minarik, & Landrum-Brown, 2010; Stephen & Stephen, 2001; Wayne, 2008). Through intergroup dialogue; students, members of the community, and adults in the workforce learn how to come out of their comfort zones and use dialogue to address urgent conflicts and pressing crises (Schoem, 2003). Intergroup dialogue can help educate participants on how to work through intergroup conflicts by building effective communication across differences and forging relationships amongst peers from diverse backgrounds (Sorensen, Nagda, Gurin, & Maxwell, 2009). While intergroup dialogue is used in numerous settings (Hess et al., 2010), of relevance to this article is the use of intergroup dialogue groups typically held within the higher education environment (Rozas, 2007). Intergroup dialogues are housed in both academic departments and student affairs units and can be taken for credit or non-credit (Zuniga, 2003).

A mission of many colleges and universities is graduating engaged citizens who will be able to face the challenges of today and tomorrow, ranging from local concerns such as safety, to more global issues like climate change (Diaz & Gilchrist, 2010). Colleges and universities have refined their core competencies of what they expect students to know and do (Diaz & Gilchrist, 2010). Colleges and universities have increasingly turned to intergroup dialogue as one approach that teaches skills in conflict management, collaboration, listening that requires active engagement, intercultural understanding, and public reasoning (Diaz & Gilchrist, 2010). Both participants and facilitators often hold the belief that there is something magical about the impact

of intergroup dialogue (Zuniga, 2011). The intergroup dialogue experience has been described as an open, non-judgmental environment where taboo questions are welcomed, it is ok to make mistakes, the sharing of experiences occurs, feelings, and opinions are encouraged, and not knowing everything about a particular issue is expected (Zuniga, 2011). Intergroup dialogue was first used in college courses in the late 1980's and was pioneered at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Clark, 2002a) as one way to show students how to resolve intergroup conflicts, improve communications, build relationships between peers from diverse backgrounds, and confront existing inequalities which minority groups face every day (Sorensen et al., 2009). Intergroup dialogue was also an outgrowth of a diversity effort to address racial and ethnic tensions on college campuses in the United States during this same time period (Nagda & Derr, 2004).

The inner workings of intergroup dialogue are complex (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Zuniga et al., 2007; Zuniga, 2011); it is however, simply, a face-to-face meeting guided by facilitators (Zuniga, 2003) who emphasize a democratic process between groups with different social identities and conflicting viewpoints (Stephan & Stephan, 2013). These groups are often held between people of color and Whites, women and men, or people with different religious backgrounds (Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, & Zuniga, 2009). Typically, two groups of eight to ten participants (16-20 people in total) representing two different social identities are brought together with two co-facilitators, one representing each group (Clark, 2002a, Nagda et al., 2009). Intergroup dialogue is; (a) not an event, it is a process which unfolds over time (b) addresses difficult issues through relationship-building and thoughtful engagement (c) necessitates a complete commitment, (d) takes place in person, (e) takes place in an environment of confidentiality, (f) addresses multiple social identities beyond just race, (g) about both intergroup

conflict and community-building, (h) led by skilled and trained facilitators, (i) about examining and understanding content and process, and integration of the two (j) involves talking that leads to action (Schoem, 2003).

The goals of intergroup dialogues are to; (a) engage students with issues of social identity development and social standing, (b) learn about each other as a member of different social identity groups, (c) understand the driving forces behind difference and dominance, (d) develop the ability to analyze issues from various perspectives (e) develop useful skills to work with cultural variations and conflicts, and (f) develop empowered approaches that will help build alliances and work collaboratively across differences of culture and power (Nagda et al., 1999). The key objective of intergroup dialogue is to raise the consciousness of participants (Rowley, Checkoway, & Richards-Schuster, 2012). Additionally, the aims of intergroup dialogue are to encourage greater intergroup understanding around issues of identity and inequality, advance deeper intergroup communication and interactions, and to move individuals to action and greater intergroup collaboration (Zuniga et al., 2007). There are several stages to the intergroup dialogue process.

Intergroup dialogue occurs in four stages (Zuniga, Nagda, & Sevig, 2002; Zuniga, 2003; Nagda & Derr, 2004; Rozas, 2007; Rodenborg & Bosch, 2007). Stage one (Group beginnings) contains the initial stage of dialogue where participants are prepared to engage in dialogue across differences, discussing learning objectives, establishing ground rules, origins and philosophy of intergroup dialogue, and the differences between intergroup dialogue and debate. Stage two (Learning about commonalities and differences in experiences) consists of an emphasis on understanding social identities, experiences with the process of socialization (Harro, 2010) and how this looks different for each person and group within the intergroup dialogue. In Stage three

(Working with controversial issues and intergroup conflicts), there is a focus on selecting and examining current intergroup conflicts or "hot topics" (Multi-university Intergroup Dialogue Research Project's, 2008; Wayne, 2008; Clark, 2002b; Zuniga, 2003) and the focus is on choosing intergroup conflicts which participants can explore further (e.g. historical, political, systemic) and have an impact at a personal and societal level. Finally, in Stage four (Envisioning change and taking action), participants are engaged in thinking about conditions and incidents of injustice which have occurred on campus and within their communities and how they can go about making a change as an ally or advocate. The role of the facilitator is crucial to the successfully implementing these stages.

The Facilitative Process in Intergroup Dialogue

Intergroup dialogue uses guided facilitation, which assists students in learning how to communicate more effectively (Sorensen et al., 2009). The role of the facilitator in intergroup dialogue is complex and the core competencies required for successful facilitation remain a challenge (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001). The training received by intergroup dialogue facilitators varies from campus to campus (Zuniga, 2003), however, facilitators receive training that provides them with important skills needed to work with diverse teams and small groups in educational settings (Nagda & Derr, 2004). This training should include guidelines for running effective groups as foundational knowledge and the dynamics of operating within co-facilitation pairs (Gurin-Sands, et al., 2012). Motoike and Nagda (1993) developed a comprehensive list of dialogue facilitator skills that included; communication, observation, emotional expressiveness, morale-building, ability to face and accept emotional situations, group logistics, interventions, and general skills that required a demonstration of involvement in the intergroup dialogue

process. Additionally, facilitators should understand stereotypes held about different groups so they can guard against reinforcing stereotypes as students come to understand differences (Gurin-Sands et al., 2012).

The process of intergroup dialogue while learning about self and others delves into deeply held and unexamined views (Kuhri, 2004). Thus, personal experiences of participants are brought into the intergroup dialogue, potentially impacting its outcome (Rodenborg & Huynh, 2006). Zuniga (2003) found at least two areas that were important for facilitators to have competencies in; an awareness and understanding of their own social identities and personal histories with identity development, as well as that of others, and the ability to lead small groups that focus on challenging conversations. Facilitators can be undergraduate or graduate students, faculty or student affairs staff, or a combination of the two (Lopez & Zuniga, 2010). Many facilitators come from counseling centers, student activities, human relations, and intercultural relations (Zuniga, 2003). Some of the topics covered in their training can include intergroup communication, social identity development, conflict management, group dynamics, observation and facilitation of groups, and team building between co-facilitators (Nagda & Derr, 2004). Clark (2002b) advised facilitators conducting intergroup dialogue to have extensive content knowledge about the experiences of both groups represented at the dialogue, the ability to both challenge and support participants, and extensive facilitation experience.

Facilitators encourage participants in the beginning of intergroup dialogue to express their hopes and fears along with co-creating a shared understanding around their needs and expectations and developing ground rules for the dialogues to occur (Sorensen et al., 2009). Intergroup dialogue facilitators must be aware of the communication (talking, listening, and writing) and psychological processes (critical reflection about feelings and engagement in the

process) at work during intergroup dialogues (Gurin-Sands et al., 2012). The facilitative role in intergroup dialogue allows the group to find ways of gaining knowledge and developing processes that enhance the experience of the group (Zuniga et al., 2007). Furthermore, facilitators promote communication among participants with guided questions, ask for clarification when needed, probe when necessary, summarize the dialogue, and focus on group dynamics (Gurin-Sands et al., 2012). Facilitators are also observing who is participating, or not, and how what is being said and communicated is related to social identity and inequality (Sorensen, 2009). Moreover, facilitators must be empathetic to the needs of participants and, like a therapist, attuned to the complex psychological phenomena taking place both internally and externally among participants (Khuri, 2004). Facilitators are expected to be involved on both a personal and intellectual basis by sharing their own experiences when needed in order to shed light on a discussion or bringing up issues that have remained unspoken (Zuniga et al., 2002). Maintaining impartiality as a facilitator is also an important skill, as dominant and counter narratives come into play during the intergroup dialogue (Routenberg & Sclafani, 2011). Difficult conversations emerge during intergroup dialogue and the facilitator must model behavior that is supportive, honest, respectful, and non-blaming (Rodenborg & Huynh, 2006). Of significance to facilitative practice and social identity, is a study conducted by Maxwell et al. (2011) with 49 peer facilitators to determine if race and gender identities influenced how they facilitated intergroup dialogues. Their findings suggest social identity influences facilitation style and behavior and is dependent on the circumstances surrounding the dialogue, make-up of the group, and purpose (Maxwell et al., 2011). Having a firm grasp on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) is important to understanding its influence on facilitators.

Social Identity Theory and Intergroup Dialogue

Embedded in the theory of social identity is the social psychological idea of intergroup relations, group dynamics, and the self as a social being (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). The basic assumption is that individuals fall into a category (e.g. nationality) based on defining characteristics of the group and one's self-definition (Hogg et al., 1995). Intergroup dialogues bring people together from different social identities (Schoem, 2003). In intergroup dialogue, students are challenged to take hold of the importance of social identity within a multicultural democracy that asserts the importance of taking action with others (Gurin-Sands et al., 2012) while having a profound imagination which can critically examine issues (Lopez & Zuniga, 2010).

A critical-dialogic model (Laman, Jewett, Jennings, Wilson, & Souto-Manning, 2012; Nagda, 2006; Wayne, 2008; Zuniga, 2003) of intergroup dialogue is used with college students in higher education settings. The critical-dialogic process of intergroup dialogue has been described as focusing on framing intergroup encounters within systems of power and privilege, and on constructing relations which cross over these differences (Nagda , 2006; Wayne, 2008). A critical component and emphasis of this intergroup dialogue model is its clear focus on identity and how our identities are deeply rooted in a system of societal power and privilege (Sorensen et al., 2009). Freire (1970) used the term "critical" to be reflective of having a critical consciousness which involves examining power and taking the required action. Students are encouraged to communicate differently in intergroup dialogue, using the critical-dialogic structure which directs students to focus on understanding, as opposed to arguing and convincing each other who is right (Nagda, 2006; Sorensen et al., 2009). The central focus of the critical

dialogic approach is on bringing participants together of similar and different social identities to address issues of power, privilege, and oppression with the aim of individual and societal change (Laman et al., 2012).

Social identities can have a potent effect on individuals (Gurin-Sands et al., 2012). Exposure to individuals who are different from each other through intergroup dialogue may cause an examination of one's own identity (Aldana et al., 2012). Intergroup dialogues make identity central and allow a multicultural approach, steering away from the notion of color-blindness, which assumes only minimal disparities still exist between the races (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). The significance of social identity and inequalities are examined in intergroup dialogue and participants put collaborating with each other and utilizing intergroup communication into practice (Lopez & Zuniga, 2010). A challenge for participants in intergroup dialogue is the focus on a single identity (e.g. race, gender) while participants bring multiple identities to the dialogue (Sorensen et al., 2009). However, the structure is in place to explore other identities, the intersections they have with each other, and their influences on individual life experiences and the broader world (Maxwell et al., 2011; Sorensen et al., 2009). Commonalities and differences are explored in intergroup dialogue and identity is a lens through which it is viewed (Sorensen et al., 2009).

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) can help us to better understand the relationship between our identity and how we relate to others. Theorists Tajfel and Turner (2001) believed people gain a sense of identity through membership in a social group and this categorization determines who is deemed different and who is favored. Another approach to better understanding social identity theory suggests that the individual defines who they are in terms of group membership within the in-group (i.e. our social identity), (Haslam, Jetten,

Postmes, & Haslam, 2009). Jones (2004) postulated that based on social identity theory, people

downplay the differences between those similar to them and highlight differences between those

who are different. Facilitators who conduct intergroup dialogues must possess a thorough

understanding of their own social identities (e.g. race and ethnicity, gender and class), and that of

dialogue participants. This self-knowledge is crucial to the success of the dialogue (Beale,

Thompson & Chesler, 2001). While prejudice reduction is the main goal of intergroup dialogue,

its underlying principle is social justice (Rodenborg & Bosch, 2007).

Intergroup Dialogue and Social Justice

Singh & Salazar (2014) reminded the group counseling field that social justice issues are

already present in many of the groups which counselors facilitate (e.g. task, psychoeducational,

counseling and psychotherapy) and these are excellent opportunities to open meaningful

dialogue with participants. The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW, 2012), in the

document *Multicultural and Social Justice Competence Principles for Group Workers*,

encouraged group facilitators who practice in a variety of settings to move toward social justice

change in group work, while honing their skills in group process and dynamics. Additionally, the

ASGW (2012) in its *Multicultural and Social Justice Competencies Principles for Group*

Workers, provided further guidance for "training group workers who seek competency on issues

of multiculturalism and social justice in group work" (p. 1). Intergroup dialogue is one approach

to obtaining this experience.

Intergroup dialogue takes a social justice approach and utilizes a lens which focuses on

challenges of social-group memberships and inequalities well-established in the system of

oppression and privilege (Nagda & Derr, 2004; Zuniga, 2003). Through intergroup dialogues,

participants come to understand the historical basis and possible conflicts as a result of social

injustice and become cognizant of the social systems which serve to keep injustices in place (Rozas, 2007). Intergroup dialogue's focus on social justice encourages participants to reexamine ways to promote positive intergroup relations (Nagda & Derr, 2004). A method of social justice education is involved in the intergroup dialogue process and holds promise for the field (Dessel, Woodford, & Warren, 2011). Through intergroup dialogue processes, participants make a commitment to contribute to social justice action (Gurin-Sands & Osuna, 2009; Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen & Zuniga, 2009). Information garnered from intergroup dialogue practices should be shared with communities outside of academe (Lopez & Zuniga, 2010).

Recommendations to Group Workers on the Use of Intergroup Dialogue as a Facilitative Practice

Group workers have a unique opportunity to explore and integrate into their practice challenging conversations, often called dialogues, on social justice topics which impact people in their daily lives (Singh & Salazar, 2010a). There is a movement underway in the group work field to utilize intergroup dialogue in their practices, and recently, the Association of Group Workers held a conference to assist group workers in paving the way to engage and encourage others "in deepening dialogues across polarizing perspectives" (ASGW, 2012, para. 3). Furthermore, group workers may be called into different settings such as workplaces, counseling agencies, or schools to address the influence of social justice issues on the dynamics of the group, and having this knowledge could prove invaluable to a successful outcome (Singh & Salazar, 2014). The topics or content of the dialogues can take place as a single event or can be reoccurring (Singh & Salazar, 2010a). The work of intergroup dialogue is intended as a process to engage individuals and groups in an examination of issues affecting society about which there are differing views, so much so that there is often division and conflict (Dessel et al., 2006).

Improving upon intergroup relations is a potent outcome of intergroup dialogue groups (Stephan & Stephan, 2012). Intergroup dialogue is a facilitated group experience which utilizes educational or experiential material that affords participants the opportunity to listen and be listened to in a caring fashion, speak and being spoken to respectfully, and the opportunity to learn about the views of others and self (Herzig & Chasin, 2006). Existing within intergroup dialogue is the opportunity for sincerity, openness, listening, and change (Dessel et al., 2006). Within the intergroup dialogue group, there is a direct encounter and exchange about controversial topics, which often center on social identity and social class (Zuniga, 2003). Utilizing the intergroup dialogue model, practitioners can promote involvement in the group and promise to participants increased understanding of and knowledge about others who are different from themselves (Wayne, 2008). Moreover, intergroup dialogue can be utilized as an opportunity for counselors to gain multicultural competence. According to Arredondo et al., (1996) multiculturally competent counselors should understand the influence of social identities on their own lives and that of their clients, and how this is interrelated to ethnicity, race, and culture.

Intergroup dialogue is not a therapy group (Schoem, 2003; Dessel et al., 2006; Rodenborg & Bosch, 2007), rather it is a structured non-therapeutic group work model (Rodenborg & Huynh, 2006) and it is important for group work facilitators to convey this to participants. Similar to group therapies, which involve multiple participants, there is an exchange between participants, an interpretation of what is being said, and a move toward transformation (Dessel et al., 2006). Having a skilled facilitator (and co-facilitator) who leads the group is important as there is no guarantee of confidentiality and individual concerns and inner dynamics are not addressed in intergroup dialogues (Dessel et al, 2006). Moreover, intergroup dialogues are small group encounters aimed at improving relations between different social groups and,

while intended to address differing issues, can mirror small change oriented groups (e.g. therapy, counseling, and encounter) that focus on communication, participation and interaction of participants (Kivlighan & Arseneau, 2009). Rozas (2007) found intergroup dialogue utilizes principles of group development to outline activities and promote effective group dynamics.

Of interest to group workers is the belief intergroup dialogue is hypothesized to promote psychological processes which foster intergroup empathy, relational outcomes, and motivation toward bridging differences that nurture intergroup understanding and collaboration (Sorensen et al., 2009). There are psychological processes at work in intergroup dialogue, which involve intergroup dialogue interactions or encounter-oriented features, and bridging differences that reduce prejudices and educate participants about others (Gurin-Sands et al., 2012). Intergroup dialogue can be used as a valuable form of education for lessening the psychological and social barriers to understanding and dissecting inequality, and then applying that knowledge to both commit and act to remedy inequality where we live and work (Nagda et al., 2009).

There is both qualitative and quantitative research data which shows promising results of the impact of intergroup dialogue on participants (Lopez & Zuniga, 2010; Nagda & Derr, 2004), which group counselors may find useful as they attempt to engage group members from different backgrounds. Additionally, of significance is the use of intergroup dialogue by the social work field to enhance capabilities in group work, communicating with diverse others, and the management of conflict (Dessel et al., 2006). Intergroup dialogue is also being used by social work practitioners to prepare students undergoing training to become social workers and to influence public policy (Dessel et al., 2006). Group workers should implement the use of intergroup dialogue using the following suggestions.

Putting intergroup dialogue into practice. The intergroup dialogue model is adaptable for one-time use or over an extended period of time (e.g. days, weeks, and months) if necessary. Intergroup dialogue can be utilized as a shift toward group transformation and social action. Intergroup dialogue can be used in a variety of settings (e.g. schools, communities, and corporations) and with diverse groups.

Appropriate application of intergroup dialogue. Group workers can integrate intergroup dialogues on current social justice topics into their group practice. Furthermore, the intergroup dialogue model and process can be implemented with groups to engage participants from diverse backgrounds as a bridge across differences and also to allow marginalized voices to be heard. When addressing controversial topics that center on social class and social identity, intergroup dialogue can be integrated as a model to facilitate the group.

Benefits of intergroup dialogue for group workers. Intergroup dialogue can improve understanding between diverse people and client groups, which improves the group climate. Group workers can gain multicultural competence through the use of intergroup dialogues. The research on intergroup dialogue can be examined as a promising practice and the positive outcomes for group participants explored. Group workers can investigate the field of social work and how the discipline has successfully used intergroup dialogue.

Table 1.1

Summary of Recommendations for Group Workers

Putting intergroup dialogue into practice	• Understand that the intergroup dialogue model is adaptable for one time use or over an extended period (e.g. days, weeks, or months) if needed • Understand how intergroup dialogue can be utilized as a shift toward group transformation and social action

Appropriate application of intergroup dialogue	• Utilize intergroup dialogue in different settings while conducting group work to improve upon intergroup relations • Integrate intergroup dialogues on current social justice topics into their group practice • Use the intergroup dialogue model and process with groups to engage participants from diverse backgrounds as a bridge across differences and allow marginalized voices to be heard • Integrate the use of intergroup dialogue into practice when addressing controversial topics that center on social class and social identity
Benefits of intergroup dialogue for group workers	• Improve their understanding of diverse people and client groups through intergroup dialogue • Gain multicultural competence through the use of intergroup dialogues • Examine the research on intergroup dialogue as a promising practice and the positive outcomes for group participants • Investigate how the field of social work has successfully used intergroup dialogue

Conclusion

Social identity matters and influences the training and practice of intergroup dialogue facilitators (Maxwell et al., 2011). An awareness and in-depth understanding of the role social identities play as facilitators interact with their co-facilitator and participants will ensure a rich dialogue as the facilitator models this behavior to others in the group. Intergroup dialogue offers participants the opportunity to go beyond the traditional understanding of differences between individuals. As diversity becomes more relevant, the multiculturally competent counselor must

be able to actively listen, understand differing points of view, and take action when necessary to address inequalities. Intergroup dialogues offer this opportunity and afford facilitators an important role in the change process.

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CHAPTER 4

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF SOCIAL IDENTITY THROUGH THE

EXPERIENCES OF INTERGROUP DIALOGUE FACILITATORS[3]

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Abstract

This current phenomenological study is a response to the dearth of research on counselors who conduct group work (e.g. group workers) and college student affairs professionals conducting intergroup dialogues as facilitators. Furthermore, the researcher's aim was to examine the social identity experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators (Beale, Thompson, & Chesler, 2001) in the Southeastern United States (U.S). Using a phenomenological research tradition (Krathwohl, 1998; Creswell, 2009), the researcher used Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) to frame the study. Eight trained dialogue facilitators working in Student Affairs were selected from a large Southeastern University to participate in the study. Identity, changing nature of social identity, self-concept, the facilitative experience, race, and neighborhood locus were identified as themes in the study. Limitations and implications of the study are discussed.

Introduction and Rationale for Study

The impact of social identity on the training and practice of intergroup dialogue facilitators is considered significant by current group work scholars (Maxwell, Chesler, & Nagda, 2011; Zuniga, 2003). For instance, Maxwell et al. (2011) concluded that facilitator's experiences during their intergroup dialogue training are viewed through a personal lens that exposes a myriad of social group categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion. Social identity refers to the process of defining oneself, or another individual, within a classification of a social group (Turner, 1982). Consequently, the social identities of intergroup dialogue facilitators penetrates their thinking and behavior as they interact with both their co-facilitator and participants (Maxwell et al., 2011). While the literature surrounding the topic of intergroup dialogue is replete with an exploration of social identities, current scholarship does not extensively speak to effects on professionals who lead dialogues (e.g. group workers, student affairs staff) or their experiences. Beale, Thompson and Chesler (2001) asserted that it is important for facilitators who lead intergroup dialogues to have a clear understanding of their own and other's social identities in order to create the most productive group dialogue environment and subsequent outcome from the group dialogue process.

According to Harro (2010), individuals are born into a particular set of social identities. Additionally, Harro surmised that as people mature and develop they are socialized to identify with different groups (2010). Social identity groups are broadly defined by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic class (Miles & Kivlighan, 2012). These identities relate to the various categories of difference that make us subject to unequal roles in the dynamic of oppression (Harro, 2010). Therefore, by the time a student decides to attend college, social identities have been reinforced by parents, relatives, friends, teachers, and the media (Harro,

2010). Bell (2007) held the position that humans are socialized into identities which make it such that individuals cannot separate from the groups and communities with which they identify. Likewise, it can be expected for the salient identities of intergroup dialogue facilitators to blend into their professional work. Therefore, understanding both the role of social identity and the facilitator in the intergroup dialogue process is important. Yet, Maxwell et al. (2011) reported that, even with an increasing number of books (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007; Maxwell, Nagda, & Thompson, 2011) and journal articles focused on intergroup dialogue, there remains a scarcity of writing and full understanding of the intergroup dialogue facilitation process.

While the dynamics of intergroup dialogue can be complex, the concept is rather direct. Schoem and Hurtado (2001) described intergroup dialogue as a face-to-face meeting guided by facilitators who emphasize a democratic process between groups with different social identities and conflicting viewpoints, which occurs over a series of days, weeks, or months. According to Huang-Nissen (1999), the facilitator plays a key role in the intergroup dialogue process and a great deal of trust is afforded them by the process and by group members. The facilitator develops the trust necessary for meaningful progression through the establishment and enforcement of ground rules, active listening, ensuring a safe open space for discussion to occur, encouraging shy individuals to speak and not be rushed, and meaningful connections among participants (Huang-Nissen, 1999). Moreover, Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo, and Rivera (2009) stressed the need for trained facilitators who can lead difficult dialogues while remaining comfortable discussing polarizing and highly charged topics, such as race and ethnicity. Additionally, literature points to the importance of co-facilitators being thoroughly trained and representing the social identities of participants (e.g. male, female, Black, White, Muslim, and

Christian) to effectively co-lead the dialogue utilizing a learning model that covers several components in the areas of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral domains (Maxwell et al., 2011).

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the experiences intergroup dialogue facilitators described regarding social identity at a Southeastern university in the US. In this article, the author reviews the literature on intergroup dialogue, the role of the facilitator in the dialogue process, the influence of social identity on the facilitator, and counseling advocacy competencies that dialogue facilitators should consider incorporating into group work practice.

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Literature Review

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Origins of Dialogue and Intergroup Dialogue

Around the world, educators, social workers, community leaders, activists, social scientists and other practitioners use intergroup dialogue in numerous contexts in their pursuit of social justice for all people (Mizobe, 2011). Worldwide, communities in conflict make use of intergroup dialogue to deal with social unrest, to build understanding between parties, and to create possibilities for movement and transformation (Mizobe, 2011). Plato, a student of Socrates, is credited with establishing an early form of dialogue that engaged participants in thoughtful discussions (Dessel & Rogge, 2008). Dessel, Rogge, and Garlington (2006) credited the work of physicist David Bohm for establishing dialogues in the 1980's, which were designed to encourage groups to engage in collective thought in a supportive setting. According to Bohm, dialogue has ancient significance called, "the flow of meaning between or among us" (van den Heuvel, 1997, para. 1). As a matter of practice, mediation, conflict resolution, negotiation, discussions, and dialogues have been used as nonviolent tools to settle differences (Conflict Research Consortium, 1998). Dialogue has been defined as a planned form of communication that encourages respectful and conscientious listening from participants about deep-seated

thoughts, values, and experiences (Conflict Research Consortium, 1998). Noteworthy is the fact that intergroup dialogues generally differ from dialogues as they purposely bring together two groups from different social identities such as race and ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation ("The Special Role of a Facilitator in Intergroup Dialogues: "Power Balancing," n.d.).

Intergroup dialogues have been used in a myriad of environments such as community settings, workplaces, homes, international disputes, high schools, and colleges (Hess, Rynczak, Minarik, & Landrum-Brown, 2010; Stephen & Stephen, 2001). Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler & Cytron-Walker (2007) are credited with the creation and development of intergroup dialogues utilized at educational institutions. Zuniga et al. (2007) defined intergroup dialogue as; "an innovative practice in higher education that promotes student engagement across cultural and social divides, fostering learning about social diversity and inequalities and cultivating an ethos of social responsibility" (p. 1). Intergroup dialogue in higher education has carved out its own place as a unique campus conflict reduction tool.

Intergroup Dialogue in Higher Education

Racial and ethnic diversity have become points of concern on many college campuses across the country (Clayton-Pedersen, O'Neill, & Musil, 2007). Diversity often fuels tensions and adversity between individuals who do not share similar ethnic identities due to a lack of understanding around diverse ethnicities. This lack of understanding is often directed at individual groups that result in negative intergroup relationships (Nagda et al., 2009). Adversity created by this lack of understanding on college campuses sets the stage for the creation of academic initiatives that stimulate students intellectually and encourage acknowledgement and acceptance of differences and inequalities (Gurin, Nagda & Lopez, 2004; Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, & Zuniga, 2009). Intergroup dialogue programs have been developed collaboratively

by academic and student affairs professionals as a means to involve students in important and meaningful engagements around their differences (Nagda et al., 2009). According to Diaz and Gilchrist (2010), institutions of higher education have started to recognize the importance of dialogue in engaging students in an exploration of diverse perspectives, along with providing essential skills and knowledge needed to become contributing citizens in our society. Subsequently, the practice of dialogue is emerging as part of the curriculum, co-curriculum, pedagogy, and administration and governance of higher education settings (Diaz & Gilchrist, 2010).

Intergroup dialogues may be structured to occur as singular episode or over time; ranging from four to fifteen weeks. At the center of intergroup dialogue is the creation of a safe environment, often through the establishment of "ground rules" that offer a structured opportunity to explore attitudes about polarizing issues in our society (Dessel & Rogge, 2008). Additionally, intergroup dialogues allow for a level of self-disclosure, which may encourage a trusting, friendly, and warm atmosphere where group members get to know each other (Association for the Study and Development of Community, 1999). The Multi-University Intergroup Dialogue Research Project (2008) described intergroup dialogue as an educational approach that stresses three important aspects; (a) intergroup dialogue is not debate or a discussion, (b) intergroup dialog is a method of communication that fosters understanding, and (c) intergroup dialogues occur in a series of stages that involve setting an environment for dialogue, developing a common base, exploring, questions, issues, or conflicts, and moving from dialogue to action (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001). Additionally, intergroup dialogues are guided by a curriculum involving written assignments and questions that stimulate conversation and reflection.

Intergroup dialogue groups are broadly defined by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, socio-economic class and other social group identities (Program on Intergroup Relations, 2007). Intergroup dialogue is still a relatively new discipline in higher education, but at present, a body of research (Lopez & Zuniga, 2010) has emerged that focuses on the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of intergroup dialogue, student learning experiences, and the underlying processes (Nagda & Derr, 2004). Hess, Rynczak, Minark and Landrum-Brown (2010) conceptualized dialogue as a process that enables people from all walks of life to open up and talk deeply and compassionately regarding major issues and realities that are dividing them. This discourse of vulnerability and process often leads to both individual and collaborative work.

Some higher education settings have woven intergroup dialogue practice into the content and process of courses offered to address ethnically-derived tension on campus. Hess, Rynczak, Minarik, and Landrum-Brown (2010) supported the use of intergroup dialogue as a teaching tool and suggested that students experience long-term change as a result of intergroup dialogue participation. According to Hess et al. (2010), experiencing the intergroup dialogue process provides opportunity for students to change their patterns of thinking well into the future. In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) wrote, "Dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person's 'depositing' ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be consumed by the discussants" (p. 70). One of the expected outcomes of the dialogue experience, according to the Multi-university Intergroup Dialogue Research Project (2008), is that participants walk away changed by their involvement. Moreover, as a result of the process, they become committed to taking action in some form of social justice participation, or speaking up

when bigotry and intolerance are observed. Ratts & Hutchins (2009), as cited by Vera & Speight (2003), suggested that, "The process of empowering individuals can also move them to a place of action" (p. 270).

Writing on the evaluation of intergroup dialogues through student assessment, Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, and Zuniga (2009) maintained the idea that colleges and universities have an obligation to create academic initiatives that engage students intellectually, while also bringing about an awareness of group-based inequalities and other influences that impede intergroup relationships. Furthermore, the ultimate challenge for institutions of higher education is to create safe spaces to honestly explore complex issues with respect for one another's stories, histories, and perspectives. When institutions fail to attend to this goal, bigotry and feelings of superiority are inadvertently heightened and reinforced (Nagda et al., 2009).

The Role of Facilitators in the Intergroup Dialogue Process

Sue et al. (2009) stressed the need for training of facilitators who lead difficult dialogues along with being comfortable discussing polarizing and highly charged topics, such as race. Yeakley (2011) supported the call for trained dialogue facilitators and espoused that having well-trained facilitators who can engage participants as important to the success of the dialogue experience. Facilitators engaged in intergroup dialogue workshops that address conflicts between differing groups must possess a level of training and support that enables them to do this important work. The training that facilitators receive determines how equipped they are to carry out this task (Gurin, 2011). Facilitators are generally faculty, staff, graduate, or undergraduate students trained in the dialogue process and are from each of the social identity groups represented in the discussion (e.g. race, gender, sexual identity, and religion) (Multi-University Intergroup Dialogue Research Project Guidebook, 2009). While scholars have clearly defined the

intergroup dialogue process, the impact the facilitators leading intergroup dialogues have on the process is least understood (Gurin, 2011; Maxwell, Nagda & Thompson, 2011).

One of the most important skills for a facilitator to have is the ability to encourage participants to express their feelings about conflict and controversy (Huang-Nissen, 1999). Facilitators must also be able to defuse conflict and understand that conflict can be used as an opportunity for dialogue participants to improve. Additionally, remaining aware of the uses and management of conflict among participants remains an imperative facet of intergroup dialogue facilitation. Facilitators can take the conflict occurring within the group and turn it into a powerful teachable moment, underscoring how dialogue conflicts mirror those over policies in modern society that were intended to help but instead, create social justice dilemmas and disparities (Maxwell et al., 2011).

The Multi-university Intergroup Dialogue Research Project's (2008) stages of intergroup dialogue highlight some of the important roles the facilitator plays in the dialogue experience: (a) introduces a "hot topic" that sets the stage for meaningful experiences to begin, (b) facilitates escalation in emotions as members from different social identities hold to their beliefs and stereotypes about the other opposing group members, (c) takes this opportunity to highlight the challenges of the group and meanings are highlighted throughout dialog, (d) plays a key role in the intergroup dialogue process making sure that all group members are safe and no one is threatened with possible consequences after the dialogue, (e) facilitates group members' consensus or state of agreeing to disagree.

Advancing the discussion of intergroup dialog process, Beale, Thompson, and Chesler (2001) wrote on training dialogue facilitators, that when volatile issues arise, facilitators must be aware of their own internal struggles about the topic and be prepared to work the group through

the dialogue process. During the dialogue process, facilitators must maintain an awareness of personal triggers and how to avoid anger generated by them that have the potential to derail the dialogue (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001). Numerous challenges can arise when communication to the group is unclear, agendas are ignored, and various intervention strategies are implemented (Zuniga et al., 2007). From "hot button" issues that arise during dialogues, to addressing polarizing issues on college campuses, intergroup dialogue has been found to be instrumental in working through conflicts (Zuniga et al., 2007).

There are several models of intergroup dialogue facilitation (Zuniga, 1998). These may include a mixture of established group facilitation practices, models involving a transformative approach to the examination of conflict and social justice education, and group engagement which supports individual empowerment and community building (Zuniga, 1998). A number of programs offer facilitator's training and view the following as core competency areas that require proficiency: "awareness of self as members of social groups in the context of systems of dominance and oppression, and 'in/out' intergroup dynamics; knowledge about the groups participating in the dialogue (including their histories, the history of their conflicts, and their current status); knowledge of group development and group process; and skills in facilitating dialogue and conflict exploration, leading discussions, designing, and leading experiential activities, and community building" (Zuniga, 1998, p. 2).

Social Identity and Intergroup Dialogue

Current literature on the topic of intergroup dialogue facilitation by counselors who hold multiple social identities point to the importance of being comfortable with their own multiple social identities and having an understanding of how this impacts their clients and influences their facilitation style as difficult conversations begin (Singh & Salazar, 2010). Baxter-Magolda

(2003) supported the idea of making student's social identities a core learning objective of intergroup dialogue. It is vital not only to create a meaningful experience but also to create inclusive educational practices. Additionally, institutions of higher education have an obligation to not only educate, but to also challenge students about their perceptions of themselves and others (Baxter-Magolda, 2003). As our communities and universities become more diverse, institutions have the responsibility of teaching tolerance and the acceptance of difference as a beneficial outcome of a multicultural world (Baxter-Magolda, 2003). King & Baxter-Magolda (2005), referencing the work of Ortiz (2000), emphasized the point that where institutions have embraced the importance of culture, opportunities for learning have been expanded and students are better able to integrate their ethnicity into their identity. The Program on Intergroup Relations (2007) expressed the opinion that social identity groups are based on the physical, social, and mental characteristics of individuals. For example, racial groupings are often ascribed as well as self-claimed. Other social identities are personally claimed but not often announced or easily visually ascribed, such as sexual orientation, religion, or disability status (Program on Intergroup Relations, 2007).

The theoretical underpinnings of social identity find its origins in the work of theorists Tajfel and Turner (Hogg, 2006; University of Twente, n.d.). Developed in 1979, it advances the idea that group memberships create in-groups who self-categorize and promote enhancement in ways that favor the in-group (agents of oppression) at the expense of the out-group (targets of oppression) (University of Twente, n.d.). Broido (2000) discussed the development of social justice allies in college, and pointed to research examining how students in the agent group come to develop affirming attitudes about issues of diversity and challenge oppression based on their membership in a social group. Baxter-Magolda (2003), writing on identity and learning, pointed

to the importance of self-definition in student's complex learning process and making identity central in their overall development. While the significance and implications of social identities are well documented, higher education has not thoroughly and consistently considered the role of social identities when planning pedagogically or within the curriculum (Baxter-Magolda, 2003).

Higher education has a responsibility to transform itself and, in the process, teach students to place themselves at the center of their collegiate experience as they meet the demands of college life (Baxter & Magolda, 2003). Student Affairs, in particular, has a place in helping students understand who they are and who they will become. Students must possess the abilities to make sound career decisions, understand the role of diversity in our society, and amicably work with others (Baxter-Magolda, 2003). Examining intercultural maturity among college students (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005) called for more research into how students can achieve the goal of understanding cultural differences, along with interacting effectively with others from different racial, ethnic, and social identity groups. They also supported the need for more work in this area that examines institutions of higher learning and how they can better address the many problems associated with educating students for intercultural understanding (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

According to King and Baxter-Magolda (2005), educators need to take a more holistic approach in how they go about the process of achieving diversity outcomes and how students progress toward these goals. Much of what college students learn about relationships, interactions with others from diverse backgrounds, and decisions about life choices happen outside of contacts with educators and are instead tackled within the culture of their own peers (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Arming students with the skills and tools necessary to achieve this outcome is extremely important and adds yet another layer of learning. Zuniga et al. (2007)

cited the works of several theorists who have explored the process of developing personal and social identity awareness in relation to systems of oppression, while highlighting the impact of social group membership on the self.

Intergroup Dialogue Facilitators: Guiding Competencies and Principles

The Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), and the American Counseling Association (ACA) Advocacy Competencies provide direction for the practice of intergroup dialogue facilitation. Specifically, the ASGW provides guidance on addressing internal struggles facilitators may face around beliefs and prior experiences facilitators had that can affect group dynamics within a dialogue (Singh, Merchant, Skudrzyk, & Ingene, 2012). The AMCD addresses multicultural competencies and the need to understand self and others beyond outward appearances (Arredondo et al., 1996). Finally, the ACA Advocacy Competencies offers guidance on addressing internalized oppression and developing self-advocacy skills, which facilitators can use to create awareness for participants during dialogue discussions (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002).

When conducting a dialogue, an understanding of intergroup dynamics is essential, as is a clear comprehension of the stages of group development (e.g. forming, norming, storming, and performing) (Tuckman, 1965). Intergroup dialogue has been publicized as an effective approach utilized in a variety of settings, including college campuses, to work across difference, challenge assumptions, and develop new insights (Buie & Wright, 2010). The ASGW, *Multicultural and Social Justice Competence Principles for Group Workers*, highlights the importance of group facilitators becoming more aware of how individual biases, values, and beliefs impact the facilitation and group dynamic process (Singh, et al., 2012). This revised document added

current and useful literature to the conversation around intergroup dialogue facilitation and included additional ideas on social justice and multicultural competencies (Singh, et al., 2012). Specifically, revisions to this document include: the integration of group workers and group members into one section that incorporated their worldview, inclusion of best practices guidelines, a section on social justice advocacy principles, and finally, what a group worker looks like who is attempting to gain social justice and multicultural competence (Singh, et al., 2012). The Association, in a call to group workers, emphasized the need to move towards multicultural and social justice advocacy competence when examining their own identities that have been impacted by individual experiences (Singh, et al., 2012).

In practice, group workers who facilitate intergroup dialogues and have a focus on social justice principles, are self-reflective, engage in learning and action, identify issues of internalized oppression operating within themselves and group settings, and act as agents of change (Singh, et al., 2012). While conducting groups, social justice issues are discussed, identity creation is examined within the context of differences, and there is a push toward being authentic when providing group work services (Singh, et al., 2012). Moreover, group facilitators are in a unique position to utilize social justice principles within the confines of the group that will provide a successful and empowering experience for those who participate (Burnes & Ross, 2010). Within the boundaries of this positive experience, group leaders have an obligation to address issues of power, privilege, and oppression that may occur within the dynamics of the group or derail the intended outcome (Burnes & Ross, 2010). Burnes & Ross (2010) suggested that successful facilitators closely analyze who is placed into the group by conducting pre-screenings to ensure balance, determine how conflicts will be handled, and create a safe space for all to be heard. Supporters of intergroup dialogue and the American Counseling Association's Association for

Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD) members can come together and add to the call for better training in the area of cultural competency and understanding of the individual.

The AMCD Multicultural Competencies (1992) were primarily developed for counselors. However, they may provide relevant guidance to intergroup dialogue facilitators in better understanding themselves (self) and others. In discussing cultural competencies, Arredondo et al., (1996) commented on social identity and wrote, "Few of us escape the tendency to buy into the labels of identity, limiting though they maybe" (p. 3). This type of labeling does not take into consideration the experiences of the individual. Instead, it focuses on the visible characteristic of the person (Arrendondo et al., 1996). The Multicultural Counseling Competencies (1992) help us to understand beyond the physical, the many ways in which individuals can choose to self-define, either culturally, racially or ethnically (Arrendondo et al., 1996). Throughout the Competencies there is a call for change individually, systemically, and societally (Arrendondo et al., 1996). Similarly, intergroup dialogue offers opportunities for self-reflection on ones' identity as well as a movement toward change (Zuniga, 2003). Pertinent to the intergroup dialogue experience for facilitators in creating a more just campus and community climate, is the work of the American Counseling Association (ACA).

Intergroup dialogue utilized at colleges and universities is aimed at involving student participants from diverse backgrounds in exploring similarities and differences in their social identities. Participants also learn about social inequalities and envision a campus and larger community that is multicultural and socially just (Nagda & Derr, 2004). The ACA, through its Advocacy Competencies, offers a unique perspective that can be utilized by facilitators to address the social inequalities that arise during the dialogue process and discussion topics.

Furthermore, the facilitator (through the ACA client/student level advocacy domain) can explore internalized oppression and the development of self-advocacy skills (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2002).

The Current Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the social identity experiences of facilitators participating in an intergroup dialogue program for undergraduate students at a large university in the Southeastern U. S. The overall aim of the current study was to examine intergroup dialogue facilitator's cognition about their social identity experiences in an effort to determine if there was an impact on the voluntary 4-week dialogue. Furthermore, this study added to the body of knowledge regarding intergroup dialogue facilitators and how they experience intergroup dialogue and their social identities.

A Phenomenological Examination of Social Identity in Intergroup Dialogue Facilitators

The research on intergroup dialogue is evolutionary in nature because it is relatively new as an educational approach (Zuniga et al., 2007). Zuniga et al. (2007) called for more research on the role facilitator's play in student learning and the impact on facilitator's own growth and development through the dialogue process. The effect of facilitator's emotional processes has been underestimated during intergroup dialogues (Khuri, 2004). In addition, Khuri (2004) suggested that the facilitator's emotional states and how the facilitators respond during the intergroup dialogue process could influence its outcome, and have an emotional impact on them equivalent to that of participators. The emotional response may vary for facilitators with different personalities and cultural backgrounds (Khuri, 2004). Two different research studies illuminated the influence of intergroup dialogue facilitators on the dialogue process.

Meier's dissertation study (2010) used a mixed-methods video-research methodology. The focus was on exploring communication and emotional processes within a subset of dialogue facilitators and undergraduate students who were part of a larger study. Findings suggested that during actual dialogues, facilitators exhibited reflection and redirection more frequently when they used supportive and listening behaviors. It was also discovered that inquiry and advocacy methods were utilized more often than what was predicted. The researcher found that this can sometimes make students less likely to engage in advocacy activities. Conversely, Maxwell, Chesler and Nagda (2011) were concerned with intergroup dialogue facilitator's reactions and responses to their social identities, and how this affected their own and the behavior of others. Utilizing a phenomenological methodology, 49 trained facilitators of intergroup dialogues were asked, "whether and how their social identities affected or might affect their dialogue facilitation approaches and behaviors?" (Maxwell et al., 2011, p. 165). Their findings clearly showed that facilitators struggled with social identities and that this friction could cause a constraining influence on a personal level and in the co-facilitation relationship (Maxwell et al., 2011).

The phenomenological approach was selected as the most appropriate research method to conduct this study because of its focus on the lived experiences of participants (Hays & Singh, 2012; Krathwohl, 1998). The lived experience has been described as:

All of the raw, unprocessed facts of an event and the myriad responses to them.

It is that which actually happened. There is a rich mine of data in any lived

experience, more than can be reported in any single account. (Russ & Stains, 2014, p. 3)

Krathwohl (1998) purported that phenomenological research involves the adoption of a particular point of view or emic view. What is important is how the participant in the study views things through their own experiences. Moreover, this will also have an effect on what data is

gathered and how it is interpreted. Qualitative researchers often want to know how those conducting studies view reality and the paradigm or worldview that will guide research (Krathwohl, 1998). A paradigm or worldview is "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). One approach that guides practice is called social constructivism. An inherent quality of being human is to seek meaning and an understanding of the everyday world in which we live and work. All individuals formulate opinions based on experiences living in the world, which frame the way research is carried out and how data is organized and analyzed (Creswell, 2007).

The social constructivist researcher wants to know how the individual views these experiences as participants who give meaning to these events (Creswell, 2007). The focus is on the way or manner of interaction (process) among individuals and their surroundings taking into consideration historical and cultural influences (Creswell, 2007). This worldview allows researchers to interact with the research and consider how individual, cultural, and historical experiences influence the outcome of a study. It also allows for an understanding of how others view the world. Relying as much as possible on the participant's views of the situation being studied is the goal of research presented in this study (Creswell, 2009).

Intergroup dialogue involves the exploration of social identities (Zuniga, 1998), which originates from personal experiences and allows for the telling of individual stories. The phenomenological tradition seeks to honor the participant's voices in their own words and strives to understand the truth as they see it, guard against researcher bias, and expose the experiences of those in the study (Hayes & Singh, 2012; Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), the challenge is to understand the components and meanings of the experience through the

phenomenological lens. Therefore, as a researcher, I will be able to better understand the participant's views of reality and, conceivably, their actions within the setting being studied.

Qualitative researchers operate from a worldview or paradigm. They also use a theoretical lens in order to better understand specific social issues or topics ranging from marginalization of individuals or cultures in society based on racism and sexism, to unequal power dynamics and inequities (Creswell, 2007). The theoretical lens through which this research study was viewed is Social Identity Theory. Social Identity Theory utilizes a social psychological examination of the role of self, analyzes the concept of self as a group member, and conceptualizes the process of groups and intergroup relations (Hogg, 2006).

Members of an intergroup dialogue group focused on race and ethnicity look at other intragroup differences like gender, religion, class, or sexual orientation (Zuniga et al., 2007). Therefore, this theoretical approach fit cleanly with the research topic of this dissertation and provided a solid framework to further examine the dialogic process and its influence on facilitators and their individual understanding of and experiences with their social identities. The exploration of race and multiple identities is a common thread between Social Identity Theory and intergroup dialogue. The objective of intergroup dialogue is to bring together individuals from different backgrounds based on their specific social identity (Zuniga et al., 2007). These individuals share a history of conflict between them and, therefore, find themselves at different societal levels based on power, privilege, and oppression (Miles & Kivlighan, 2012). Hence, Harro (2010) indicated that individuals learn the roles of social identities as they grow and mature through life. According to (Huang-Nissen, 1999), "The group leader's own comfort in the dialogue group situation is an important factor. The leader who is clearly aware of his or her own identity, motivations, and values is thereby a more effective leader" (p. 58). From this

foundational theory, the research question for the current study was: What are the experiences intergroup dialogue facilitators in the Southeastern U.S. describe of social identity?

Method

This study utilized a phenomenological method of inquiry (Hays & Singh, 2012). Phenomenology began as a philosophy around 1900 with the work of Edmund Husserl and other philosophers of that time period (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Phenomenology involves the narrative explanation by one or several people of an experience involving a phenomenon (lived experience) (Moustakas, 1994). The purpose behind this type of research is to obtain the personal perspective of the research participants and gain insight into how they prescribe meaning to the experience (Cope, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). Qualitative research is often used for the study of societal processes or for understanding the reasons underlying human behavior (Stenius, Makela, Miovsky, and Gabrhelik, 2008). Some scholars have offered the opinion that the purpose behind qualitative research should be the advancement of a social justice agenda that addresses marginalized individuals (Creswell, 2009). Intergroup dialogue aligns perfectly with this rationale and has social justice as one of its core educational goals (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001). Another component of qualitative inquiry is that it examines the individual participants from a point of authenticity (Collins-Brown, 2006). Further, Collins-Brown (2006) wrote that qualitative research seeks to gain a deeper understanding that mere statistics with its limiting variables cannot provide. It delves into both stories and experiences found in everyday settings.

Through qualitative research methods, the researcher finds a better approach to answering the 'why' and 'how' questions (Collins-Brown, 2006). In selecting a qualitative research study to conduct, this approach makes certain assumptions. One is the epistemological assumption where the researcher embeds themselves with the participants being studied (Creswell, 2007).

Phenomenology is both a philosophy and a method that utilizes a small number of individuals. The phenomenological approach to inquiry engages participant's over time and requires researchers to examine themes and patterns contained within the data (Creswell, 2009).

Participants

In this study, Social Identity Theory was selected as the theoretical lens to explore the research question; what are the experiences intergroup dialogue facilitators describe of social identity? Participants in this study were student affairs professionals at the institution who identified as Black or White, and male or female. The participants in the study ranged in age from late twenties to mid-sixties. The majority of participants were in their mid-thirties. Age is often considered a sign of maturity and depth of experiences. Older participants were able to provide a historical context within their responses (e.g., reference to past racial descriptors like "colored"). Additionally, they had undergone training in the University of Michigan's Intergroup Dialogue Model and co-facilitated one or more intergroup dialogues on race or gender at the institution. One of the participants, in addition to his training at the University of Michigan Summer Dialogue Institute, conducted additional research on training intergroup dialogue facilitators and worked with the University of Michigan to become a trainer for facilitators interested in leading intergroup dialogues. He formed the Intergroup Dialogue Fellows Program at the Southeastern university in the study, in which the researcher participated and led the train-the-trainer sessions. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to obtain participants who could specifically address the phenomenon under study. More detailed information regarding the participant's background can be found in (Appendix D). Data was collected using demographic information and from face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with participants.

The training provided to facilitators was based on the University of Michigan's Model from the Program on Intergroup Relations. Developed after years of research and practice, this training program utilizes an evidenced based approach that promotes real conversations and increases understanding of social identities among individuals on college campuses (Center for Faculty Innovation at James Madison University, 2012). Specifically, the training focused on; (a) Increasing an understanding of self and others and relating that knowledge to a specific social identity, (b) Providing the necessary skills and knowledge in facilitation needed to conduct dialogue conversations about social identities, (c) Reviewing and evaluating current literature on social identities, (d) Obtaining important skills and developing a mindset that allowed for participation and initiation of dialogues around social identity, and (e) Providing facilitators with methods and a toolbox of resources that allowed them to lead dialogue discussions on social identities (Center for Faculty Innovation at James Madison University, 2012; Program on Intergroup Relations, 2007). To obtain the participants, a purposeful approach was undertaken.

The researcher utilized a purposive sampling (Hays and Singh, 2012) method to recruit eight participants. This method is often employed in qualitative research in an effort to ensure participants are selected who meet the needs of the study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Furthermore, according to Devers and Frankel (2000), purposive sampling allows the researcher to examine individual or group experiences of those participants who are able to provide rich information and give the most insight to the research question under examination. To be selected for participation in the study, participants were required to possess knowledge of the intergroup dialogue process through training and facilitation of one or more intergroup dialogues on race, gender, or sexual orientation. Participants were initially contacted through e-mail, followed by phone calls inviting them to participate in the interview study. Open-ended questions about their

experiences co-facilitating an intergroup dialogue, utilizing a semi-structured interview approach, were used for the study (Appendix C). After the interviews were transcribed, participants reviewed their statements for accuracy, meaning, and essence. Participants were also sent the themes that developed from the study.

Researcher Positionality

Positionality gives the researcher the opportunity to clearly state the lens through which they interpret a social world (Beverly, 2011). The primary research investigator for this study had to be aware of personal values, assumptions, and biases from the beginning of this research investigation. Initially, there was concern about the study being co-opted because of the researcher's close association to the participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Moreover, the personal experiences and biases needed to be highlighted and bracketed in the collection and analysis phase of the study (Hays & Singh, 2012). Specifically, the researcher has over 13 years of experience working in higher education in a variety of capacities in both academic and student affairs. Unique to this role as researcher is the primary investigator's training in intergroup dialogue through the University of Michigan's Summer Dialogue Institute, training as an Intergroup Dialogue Fellow, and experience as a facilitator of dialogues on race at the same institution. Being an insider certainly afforded the primary researcher access to many of the individuals who performed the planning and preparation for the dialogues. However, care was taken by the researcher to insure that some findings are not ignored and others are emphasized to the detriment of the study (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The role of the primary researcher included: conducting face-to-face interviews, data collection, and data analysis. Therefore, the primary researcher of this inquiry had to dispense with the possible desire to act as the expert and become a vessel for gathering data from participants through interviews. As an African-

American male, there was the potential for the researcher to over-identify with participants who were similar in race and gender and inadvertently influence them to provide answers they thought the researcher wanted to hear. As a colleague, the possibility also existed for participants to be guarded in their responses, revealing only superficial details. Additionally, as a doctoral student knowledgeable about the intergroup dialogue process, participants could attempt to appear more informed than they really were and provide responses that sounded scholarly. The expertise of the researcher must be considered when considering validity issues along with issues of bias (Glesne, 1999).

At the center of researcher bias is the concept of "reflexivity" that entails the biases, values, and experiences that the researcher brings into the qualitative study (Creswell, 2007). One of the ways to reduce bias is to keep a journal, according to Watt (2007). Therefore, the primary researcher kept a reflexive journal to reduce any biases and reflect on experiences and observations as the study was conducted (Hays & Singh, 2012). In particular, it was important to highlight the primary researcher's social identities as an African American, heterosexual, and Christian male that may have influenced his thinking throughout the research process. For that reason, the primary researcher had to remain aware when these identities were affecting the research process. Just like the facilitator within the intergroup dialogue can influence the outcome of an intergroup dialogue with their intrusions and biases (Maxwell et al., 2011), a similar risk exists during the research process. Therefore, there was a need for the primary researcher to remain cognizant of this possibility, refrain from claiming authority as an expert, and remain a learner as the experience unfolded.

Research Team

      The research team for this study, in addition to the researcher, consisted of one doctoral candidate and one new Ph.D. graduate, both familiar with conducting phenomenological inquiries. At least one member had experience working as a professional in college student affairs. Specifically, one was a White female who was a middle school counselor and had recently obtained her doctorate, while the other was a Black female previously employed as a college counselor. The research team met prior to the start of the study to discuss and highlight any biases and recorded those appropriately through bracketing (Hays and Singh, 2012). Possible biases of the team included those related to the social identities of participants and their responses regarding the facilitation of intergroup dialogues on topics related to race, gender, and sexual orientation. The lead researcher developed a reasonable meeting schedule with other team members (e.g. twice monthly either in-person or over the phone). Onwuegbuzie, Leech & Collins (2010) recommended having a process for debriefing of the researcher. As a method of debriefing the researcher met with a peer to discuss the results of the study (Hays & Singh, 2012). To deal with potential conflicts in the analysis and interpretation of data and identification of themes, consensus coding (Hays & Singh, 2012) was employed. Each team member coded independently, followed by a group discussion of the themes that were identified. In those instances where disagreements took place, the themes that emerged most frequently were assigned to the study. Additionally, the researcher provided his rationale to the team based on available information from the transcripts and his knowledge of both the topic and the study. The researcher bracketed any biases in his reflexive journal. The researcher located an individual who was familiar with qualitative research, interviewing, and held no interest in the topic to be an auditor.

Procedure

The researcher in this study employed purposive sampling (Hays and Singh, 2012) to select participants. Participants are seen as "experts in relation to the phenomenon under study" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p.8). Moreover," the intention in purposive sampling is to select participants for the amount of detail they can provide about a phenomenon and not simply selecting participants to meet a certain sample size" (Hays & Singh, 2012, p. 8). Participants were selected from a group of trained intergroup dialogue facilitators, and were asked via email correspondence and phone calls to participate in the study. This procedure and sampling approach offered the researcher the best opportunity to identify and clarify themes as participants gave details about their social identity experiences and the influence of their social identities on the dialogic process. Participants in the study met the following criteria: (a) work as a student affairs professional at a large university in the Southeastern region of the U.S. (b) be a trained intergroup dialogue facilitator, and (c) have conducted at least one intergroup dialogue while working at the university.

Approvals from the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) at both the University of Georgia and at the participant's institution were obtained prior to recruitment. The researcher then utilized human subjects protocols from these agencies to recruit participants who met participant criteria. During the recruitment phase, participants were provided with a detailed description and design of the study. Informed consent was obtained from the participants that included both benefits and potential risks from being in the study prior to collecting data (Appendix A). This form was submitted as part of the application process to the IRB.

Ultimately, eight intergroup dialogue facilitators participated in face-to-face interviews for approximately one hour each with the researcher. After the interviews were transcribed, the

primary researcher asked participants to review transcripts of the interviews for accuracy (Hays and Singh, 2012). Additionally, participants were given the opportunity to review themes that were developed from the interviews by the research team. Securing this information from a possible breach of confidentiality was important. Maintaining confidentiality for participants in the study was imperative on both an ethical and legal basis. Furthermore, the researcher addressed rights regarding privacy and anonymity. Records involving interviews, transcripts, recordings, code books, and related research material were protected utilizing pseudonyms and maintained according to the guidelines of the IRB.

Data Collection and Analysis

Creswell (2007) recommended a variety of data collection approaches when doing qualitative research. Methods that were employed included: collection of background data, interviews involving face-to-face, semi-structured, open-ended questions, telephone interviews, emails, audiotapes of interviews, interview notes, research group feedback information, coding books, and a reflexive journal (Hays & Singh, 2012; Roulston, 2010). Demographic background data (Appendix B) was collected from each participant prior to the face-to-face interviews. Hays and Singh (2012) recommended obtaining foundational or background information about each participant. This was conducted before starting the actual interviews. Face-to-face interviews utilizing semi-structured, open-ended questions with each of the eight participants for approximately one hour in length were conducted (Hays & Singh, 2012). The interviews involved three stages: (a) background and social identity history of the participant, (b) experiences as a facilitator with intergroup dialogue and, (c) values and meanings of these experiences (Appendix C). Two additional follow-up questions about the participant's self-concept were posed to participants after the initial interviews, to garner additional thoughts about

the relationship between self-concept and social identity. Cope (2005) cited the work of Thompson et al. (1989), and specified that the research interviewer in a phenomenological study should put participants at ease and create a space that will allow them to share their experiences from every aspect. The participant should be allowed to set the pace, allowing every facet of the experience to be shared (Cope, 2005).

As a follow-up to the initial interview protocol and a form of member checking, participants were asked to review their responses to the interview questions. This helped to ensure that the essence of their experiences and statements were accurately reflected (Hays & Singh, 2012). Additionally, participants were allowed to review themes identified by the researcher and his team. While telephone interviews are not typically recommended (Hays & Singh, 2012), this method was utilized in the instances where participants were not available for a face-to-face interview, or if follow-up was needed with the participants. Email was used as the initial point of contact with participants and was used for any follow-ups where confirmation was needed (e.g. after a phone call) or as an effort to thank participants for their involvement in the study. Audiotapes of interview sessions were made for purposes of transcribing conversations and interview notes were kept to assist in the interview process, to record interview reminders, and to capture any unexpected occurrences and procedural details. The research team was very useful in providing constructive feedback, information, and direction to the researcher. A coding book (Hays and Singh, 2012) was kept to organize codes and patterns. Contained in the codebook were descriptions of the codes, examples of data collected, and quotes (Hays & Singh). Watt (2007) contended that reflexivity involves carefully considering the phenomenon under examination and being aware of how the researcher's own expectations and actions can

influence the outcome of the study. Therefore, a reflexive journal (Roulston, 2010) allowed personal thoughts, biases, and reactions of the researcher about the research study to be kept as well as a self-reflection tool (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Data analysis entailed organizing all of the information that had been collected, observed, reviewed, and read to bring about an understanding of what was learned from the study. Specifically, this involved (a) listening to interview tapes recorded during each one to one session, (b) comparing interview tapes to transcripts to determine accuracy, (c) reviewing transcripts and choosing salient comments that best described the experiences of the participants, (d) creating a table wherein participants statements were highlighted and clustered into themes, (e) creating a codebook that included themes from statements made by participants. Additionally the method of horizontalization (Moustakas, 1994) was utilized to discover themes that stood out in a non-repetitive pattern, reexamining findings, presenting findings to the research team for review and analysis, and an audit trail (physical evidence) was created that provided the researcher with evidence of the research process (Hays & Singh, 2012). An individual not connected to the study, but familiar with the research topic, was selected as an auditor.

Similarly, Creswell (2007) recommended the following steps for data analysis within a phenomenological study: (a) capturing the personal experiences of participants within the phenomenon under study, (b) creating a list of significant statements from participants that standout within the conversation, (c) put significant statements into themes that have meaning to the study topic, (d) provide word for word statements and examples of what happened during a specific event, (e) how did the experience occur, and (f) capture the lived experience of participants. The study being conducted employed the same steps using interviews to capture the experiences of participants, highlighting statements of significance that were turned into themes,

providing statements and examples, and discussing the context under which the experience occurred in an effort to capture the lived experiences (Creswell, 2007) of the participants in the study.

Trustworthiness

Maldonado (2010) wrote that qualitative validity is determined through the use of several strategies that allow for checking to determine the accuracy of findings. Trustworthiness is established through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Maldonado, 2010). Trustworthiness can be ensured through an analysis of the data that allows the research experience to be accurately reflected, keeping accurate reports, preserving data, reporting experiences of participants accurately, and connecting data that is collected to the appropriate sources (Maldonado, 2010).

The researcher employed several strategies to ensure trustworthiness of the study, such as clarifying personal biases and those of the research team at the beginning of the study and throughout. Participants were asked to review transcripts of their interviews as a way of "member checking" for accuracy of statements in the one to one interviews (Hays & Singh, 2012). Additionally, participants were given an opportunity to examine themes that were developed. An audit trail (Hays & Singh, 2012) was created to ensure that the process had a series of checks and balances for accuracy and to increase reliability of results. Hays and Singh (2012) encouraged the use of a process called triangulation that include several forms of supporting evidence that was utilized, such as: one-to-one recorded interviews, notes and memos from the interviews, transcriptions, codebooks, reflexive journal (Roulston, 2010), and research team meeting notes. The researcher also kept participants informed of all procedures within the study (informed consent) (Hays & Singh, 2012).

Findings

Many of the participant's descriptions of their social identity experiences included both family and community influences. Several participants used familiar labels like race or gender to define social identity when discussing their backgrounds. Some participants described their social identities as changing for them over time or viewed their identities as being complicated. Participant's held individual viewpoints about their identities. However, some felt those identities were defined by others they interacted with in society. As facilitators, participants worked with each other during intergroup dialogues they led together. Co-facilitation revealed the social identities of each facilitator and, like a two-sided coin, exposed their differences. However, in the end, race always appeared to be the common denominator in everyone's social identity experiences and can be complicated. Finally, where each participant lived and grew up figured heavily into their experience. After analyzing transcripts and coding of data, along with research team discussions, six overarching themes related to social identity experiences described by facilitators developed: (a) reconstructing self as a social identity experience, (b) social identity changes and the experience is complicated, (c) the interconnectedness of self-concept and social identity, (d), making sense of identity through the co-facilitative experience, (e) race is sensitive, and (f) neighborhood locus helped to shape their identity.

Reconstructing Self as a Social Identity Experience

Shirley, an African-American female who had experience facilitating in various settings, grew up with strict guidelines defined by her family, community, and church. She knew that she was expected to conform at an early age to the beliefs and values of those around her. It was important to construct an identity separate from her family that would be acceptable to those outside her community, once she left to go live and work in the larger society. It was as if her

race, while apparent, had to be reconstructed into a separate identity in order to assimilate into the larger culture. The message was you are Black when you are in your community but once you leave it you are this other person. Shirley saw this practice in her community, and reflected on the influence of identity on how people saw themselves once they became professionals and needed to construct an identity separate from their family of origin. Shirley said:

> So when you talk about privilege or you talk about constructing identity, these people who come from a dad who worked in a mill, and who are now physicians or lawyers, right, they had to construct a whole self to present to the world, that they knew not of, because there was nothing in their background to give it to them.

Conversely, Mary, a young White female who had never facilitated before prior to her introduction to intergroup dialogue, grew up without the pressure of reconstructing her self-identity. Her race and ethnicity were sources of pride and her family was a large influence on how she viewed the world. Mary was also taught to treat everyone regardless of race equally. She spoke about the influence of family on her self- identity:

> As I said, in the beginning, you know, family has been something that I think helps shape who I am and accepting I am of different social identities, and I think that that's a big part of it, is everything else around you.

Thomas, a White male who conducted several intergroup dialogues and was also the train-the-trainer for the dialogue program saw his race and being White as an influence on how he saw himself. His racial identity was reinforced by his family and community and he learned at an early age that being White was different from being Black. His interactions with Blacks were limited and he saw the privileges enjoyed by being a White Southerner in segregated Mississippi. Being White was a salient identity. He talked about the interconnectedness of identities:

You know just about identities […] being a White person, which I am and it's the only

way I can talk because I'll never be anything but White, it's just I think a lot of it goes

back to you know history and other identities, they're all so interconnected.

Janet, an African-American female who had some experience with group facilitation, viewed her

identity as being more fluid and shaped by friends and her environment because she has the

ability to adapt in social situations. Unlike Shirley, she did not have the pressure of

reconstructing an identity, although in some ways this was contradictory and she did change to

fit in with those around her. She seemed to enjoy the freedom of being who she wanted to be as a

matter of choice but also comfortable in her self-identity. Janet stated:

So if I'm with my best friend who's Italian and then I have another friend who's

Hungarian, I'm able to not […] not only identify in those particular groups, but be

comfortable in those particular areas. And then it's how I'm identifying myself socially,

so being comfortable with who I am within those particular groups. There are many

people who, whatever your identity is when you're in those particular groups, you're out

of your comfort zone. It's more of a culture shock and so you're not quite comfortable in

those social groups.

Michael, an African-American male who had facilitated in settings other than higher education,

viewed identity and its influence as being a matter of choice for some people. He did not feel like

he got a choice in the matter. It was always clear to him and other people that he is a Black male

and all his other identities come second. He shared:

Some people don't always have to acknowledge their identities and so if someone is a

White individual and they're Jewish, they don't always have to acknowledge that they are

Jewish or if they are Italian but people will know that they are White and then they may

or may not identify the other parts of their identity.

Within our own identity are those assigned to us by the society in which we live. According to

intergroup dialogue facilitators in the study, social identity is more than the labels assigned by

society.

Social Identity Changes and the Experience is Complicated

Michael recalled that social identity for him varied, however he was always cognizant of

his identities as a result of his upbringing. While he saw his identity as a constant defined by

society, he also saw himself defined by his other identities that may change. He said:

It's interesting cause I think about social identity for me is based on [….] it changes and

so it has changed. I'm clear about them because of how I was raised. My grandmother is

from Arkansas and has been very clear about you are Black. You are male. These are the

identities that you have.

Thomas unlike Michael was confident about his identity not changing and offered a more formal

definition of social identity as he understood it, although he saw social identity as defined by the

way we view the world through our own personal lenses. He offered this:

Social identities are identities that are I think of them as like lenses or things that we wear

the way that we see the world. Some of them are socially constructed and some of them

are genetic[…] I guess they are all socially constructed but I think some people think of

them more as what you're born with so to speak. You've got race, class, gender, sexual

orientation but especially socially constructed identities it's the way that it forms how

you view and take not only take in the world but the way the world perceives you as well.

Ashley, a third participant, new to facilitating intergroup dialogues, who described herself as Lebanese, unlike Thomas, struggled with her identity until she was able to resolve her internal feelings. She saw social identity similarly as:

> Any and everything that makes up the way a person identifies themselves, and that covers a lot of things from race and ethnicity to religion to socioeconomic status, to sexual orientation, all of that, all of those different elements, you know, gender and all of that sort of creates a person's social identity where they see themselves fitting into the world, and you know, in different pockets of the world, as well.

Ashley also had some conflicting thoughts about her social identity that had changed over time. She was raised as a White person but was often mistaken for other races. Classmates would often ask if she were Puerto Rican because of her complexion. While she was raised as a White person, unlike Thomas, who was clear about being White, she chose not to embrace that identity. She shared this:

> I would say I was brought up sort of more as a White person than anything else and more than I consider myself now, actually, because you saw from my demographic sheet that I definitely don't consider myself White.

Janet stated that social identity was complicated and she was still defining it for herself. While she clearly recognized her race and ethnicity, she also felt like it was determined by culture, the groups you belonged to, and the area you were in. She provided this insight:

> That's complicated. I think […] I think your social identity, obviously, is […] it's going to define who you see yourself as and so that could be whether it's culture, whether it's how you […] within your group, so how are you identifying yourself within whether it's

the overall group or within subgroups. And so […] so you're able to look at the […] your

identity and determine how that identity will play, depending on what area you're in.

Society assigns their own identity to individuals, however, people hold their own views about

themselves separate from societal assignments.

The Interconnectedness of Self-concept and Social Identity

Participants saw a connection between self-concept and social identity when discussing

their experiences. Thomas believed that both self-concept and social identity were intertwined

and ultimately impacted both the facilitator and the intergroup dialogue experience. He stressed

being self-aware. Thomas provided this explanation:

I believe these two are very interconnected; I see them like twins both influencing you

and your actions at the same time. IGD's are so personal that who you are and how you

see the world (i.e., self-concept) cannot help but influence the dialogue experience. One

can never separate themselves completely from their life experiences which make them

who they are. However, the key is to have self-awareness to recognize what is making

you (as the facilitator) say certain things or take the dialogue in certain directions. This

comes through much practice and being very attentive to yourself, your thoughts, your

words, while at the same time being very attentive of the same things in your dialogue

participants. It can be very exhausting, but a must for an IGD facilitator.

Participants viewed their lives through a combination of their own and the lenses of others. Janet

viewed her self-concept from two different viewpoints, one as a result of learned behavior, but

also self-determined by the individual. She offered this opinion:

>So […] so when we talk about the nature versus nurture, we know that nurture plays a big
>
>role in who we […] who we become and so then determining who we want to be outside
>
>of the learned elements, you determine that for yourself.

On the contrary, Annette reflected on being keenly aware, almost self-conscious, of who she was and watching the reactions of others toward her as she interacted with them. She felt as though her self-concept was being determined through others and by looking at their non-verbal reactions she was able to be aware of how she was being seen. She stated:

>Well, because it's something that I feel like I just pay attention to reactions, if I'm having
>
>a conversation with someone or saying certain things. I, I'm always looking at the non-
>
>verbal's, what are they thinking, what does that mean, are they surprised that, you know,
>
>I sound educated because of what I have on or what I look like and […] or just kind of
>
>how I'm treated in the store when I'm shopping and so I feel like those are things that I
>
>constantly think about.

>Self-concept emerged as a strong experience and the researcher asked two additional

questions (Appendix C) on how participants perceived this thought relating to social identity and facilitating intergroup dialogue. The researcher anticipated that participants might struggle with how to respond to this line of questioning; however, most were thoughtful about their responses around this topic and offered an introspective explanation. Carla, a White woman who had not facilitated intergroup dialogues prior to this experience, saw both her social identity and self-concept as being intertwined like Thomas. In some ways, like Annette, she felt that she was judged by her outward appearances but understood that her self-concept was so much more. She shared this viewpoint:

My social identity on some level is the same as my self-concept. I am an educated White woman. However, I would say that there are self-concepts that are not so easily identified by others; however, these self-concepts are still influenced by my social identity, as I am usually working to prove to others that what is physically seen does not always align with the self-concept.

Shirley believed that her social identities enlarged her self-concept and boosted her self-confidence. Unlike both Annette and Carla, she appeared to look beyond her physical appearance and focused on the gifts and talents that she brought into any situation. Shirley felt that the human experience is broadened by being cognizant of our own and others complexities. She shared this:

I believe that the range of my social identity (ies) has enlarged my self-concept in ways that have enhanced my self-confidence, and my understanding of the gifts that I bring to the table. My understanding of my own complexities and contradictions, and correspondingly those of others, has broadened and deepened in ways that could not have been predicted in my childhood. Both the formal and informal work circumstances and relationships that I have lived out only serve to expand my sense of self; not in a narcissistic or self-aggrandizing manner, so much as expanding what I think that I and others are capable of doing/accomplishing/being in our lifetimes, and the human experience more broadly.

It was notable that physical appearance played a determining role in the facilitator's self-concept and was mentioned by some of the participants. Sizeism is a concern for some participants in the study. Michael felt as though his physical appearance at the time may have

had an impact on how he was perceived as a facilitator conducting an intergroup dialogue. However there was clear ambivalence in his statements. Additionally, there was a link between his social identity and his self-concept. Michael said:

> My social identity has been gravely affected by a metamorphosis that occurred in my life during 2011. My journey to a healthier me started by me making sure that I was truly taking time for me and working out each day and me changing my eating habits. It is amazing how differently people respond to my physical appearance. I know that my social identity has changed in a manner that is healthier for me and also for the way that I tend to manage different situations. I'm much calmer in my response and I feel that is in part due to a stronger spiritual foundation. I don't think that my self-concept influenced the outcome of an intergroup dialogue. In some regards it may have influenced it due to my physical size. I know that I was very social during my intergroup dialogue experience.

Mary offered a slightly different opinion than Thomas, believing that her self-concept did not influence the outcome of the intergroup dialogue. Similar to a few other participants, she interjected the idea of her physical appearance as being a factor in her self-concept. Mary offered these thoughts:

> In my experience my self-concept did not influence the outcome of the intergroup dialogues I facilitated. In my opinion, a facilitators own self-concept should not affect the discovery of others self-concept through intergroup dialogue. During sessions it was important for me to help students discover ideals about themselves and others and not to parade my own ideals around. I do not believe that a facilitator whose own self-concept

does influence intergroup dialogue is wrong by any means. It is a great thing to be self

aware of how your thoughts and ideas can and will affect others opinions and discovery.

She went on to say:

My social identity influences my self-concept in a way that allows me to be aware of

what identities I have and can shape how I use those identities to form my overall self

concept. For instance I know I am a White woman because this is part of my identity and

I also know that this plays into my self-concept of social norms and my physical

appearance to others.

There was an obvious difference among facilitators on the influence of self-concept on the

intergroup dialogue process, however, most agreed that there was a connection between the two.

Making Sense of Identity through the Co-Facilitative Experience

Thomas believed that identity played a key role in the co-facilitation process and felt that

being open and honest with one another was very important to a successful intergroup dialogue.

He had this to say about identities and co-facilitation:

I definitely think identity plays into the facilitators and I think the more open they are

with themselves in training, the more beneficial they are gonna be for their students when

they get in front of them.

Participants recounted their experiences working with a co-facilitator who had a different

gender or racial identity from themselves and how this was a valuable learning experience for

them. They also believed it was important to be able to turn to someone when they felt confused

or stuck. The way two people are able to relate to each other and feed off each other's energy,

regardless of their differences, is like a well-choreographed dance. Much of what happens is

unspoken and unfolds before the players during these gatherings. The proper pairing of

facilitators appeared to be important. Mary, for instance, elaborated positively on her experience co-facilitating an intergroup dialogue and how social identity was at play in the process. She shared that it was important for facilitators to debrief and sort out their experience with each other. She had this to say:

> I liked the co-facilitator model because I think it gave you a chance, and especially when your co-facilitator was of the opposite of what you are, identifying that socially, but the other part of the social identity, issue that you're discussing and for me that meant someone that was not White. I think that helped because it […] you could have a conversation with that co-facilitator later, about how that maybe made you feel, you can kind of sort through some of those things where you did have an "ouch moment", and to have somebody else to kind of bounce off. I also think it's helpful in a group because they […] the students, who are with you, can identify with one leader or the other.

Thomas, who spent a significant amount of time leading train-the-trainer sessions, offered an additional point of view on the importance of pairing co-facilitators correctly and ensuring that there is an open exchange between them. The training is the place to do this before going in front of students who will sense the tension and imbalance. He provided this insight:

> I definitely think identity plays into the facilitators and I think the more open they are with themselves in training, the more beneficial they are gonna be for their students when they get in front of them. And what I've learned and you might not ask this but I do think it's important – is the pairing, if you are doing an IGD model where you have the two facilitators, you have you know the privileged identity and the oppressed identity to lead, you have to be careful who you pair together. Because they have to be comfortable with one another and they have to be willing to be open and honest and work together. The

students will notice if they're not modeling the facilitators the behavior that you want the

group to model […] you will not get as a fruitful conversation and dialogue.

Ashley attested to having a less-than-pleasant experience when she was paired with a facilitator

who was presented with some challenges and was frustrated by that fact. She felt that even if she

had given feedback about the performance to the other facilitator, it would not have made a

difference. She reinforced what Thomas said:

> My dialogue partner was very combative and as a dialogue, as a facilitator of dialogue,
>
> I'm not sure that they modeled that very well. It was difficult, because, you know, in a co-
>
> facilitator role, I know that there are opportunities for giving each other feedback, but I
>
> don't even think that me giving feedback would have helped the situation.

Facilitators who bring different experiences to the intergroup dialogue learn from each other in

the co-facilitator model and expand their knowledge regarding social identities. Participants

Janet, Michael, and Annette offered similar thoughts. Janet felt that it was important for

facilitators to find a common denominator and provide both perspectives to the group. Janet

stated:

> As I mentioned, if I am an African-American woman having a dialogue with all White
>
> women, it's […] you have to find that common denominator, we talk about social
>
> identity, but if you have a co-facilitator who may be White, then you […] then you're
>
> getting both perspectives. Because there's an actual physical common denominator there
>
> and so for those particular students. But it again, if you don't have the answers, your co
>
> may have an answer or a direction that will be able to enhance discussion or facilitation.

Michael believed that embracing differences between oneself and the co-facilitator was

important to a successful outcome to the intergroup dialogue. Michael shared:

> I think it's because we embraced each other's differences and celebrated those and
> appreciated those as well. As I had stated in one of my identities of being a Christian, it
> was neat because my co-facilitator didn't really identify with any religious view and so
> had kind of spent some time as an Atheist so it was neat to talk about that and what that
> experience looked like for them and how they arrived at that point in her life but being
> able to have a respectful dialogue around that.

Annette saw the importance in being open to learning from the other facilitator and being
respectful of differences. She echoed similar feelings:

> I feel like I learned some things from the person, the people that I facilitated with. And
> again, being able to see some commonalities, which is always nice to me, that we are
> different, but these are some common themes between the two of us. I don't feel like at
> any point even […] I think we learned from each other and it was respectful. I don't think
> at any point there were, you know, I disagree with you. It wasn't really about that. It was
> just kind of learning from each other.

Participants described how intergroup dialogue opened their eyes and allowed them to gain a
different outlook on themselves and others. Co-facilitating also allowed individuals to hear other
viewpoints. For instance, Thomas revealed how intergroup dialogue helped him to understand
his identities and how they influenced his worldview:

> I think the first time I realized how much my identities affected me and how much I
> viewed the world, I didn't realize that until I started working in the IGD program.

Co-facilitators do not always get along and conflict sometimes arises between them as a natural part of intergroup dialogue, as attested to by Ashley. Shirley expressed the notion that conflict is a natural part of the human experience:

So despite our best hopes for non-volatility or for judgment or for taking camps, that's how humans behave until or unless they feel safe to do otherwise.

Thomas shared how gender issues in intergroup dialogue between co-facilitators can inadvertently cause conflicts. He realized that as the male co-facilitator in the dyad, he was unintentionally taking the lead in the conversations and activities. His female co-facilitator pointed this out to him. Thomas also believed that some of the conflict was due to personality and presentation style. He discussed how this showed itself with two different female co-facilitators:

I think some gender issues comes in here and it's been called out before. I found myself […] and I guess cause of the dynamics […] always sort of stepping up and taking the lead and one of my facilitators said, is there some gender issues going on there. The dynamics were definitely different with both of them because they were two different women so it made me interact a little bit different with them because you as a facilitator have to modify based on the strengths and weaknesses of your co-facilitator. Yeah some of it is personality. It was more of what's their style, are they good presenters, do they step up or step back?

Ashley had this to say about another facilitation experience, and affirmed the importance of knowing your co-facilitator, being comfortable with their judgments, and also trusting them. She admitted that knowing the person ahead of time made it easier. She had this to say:

But we knew each other very well, we knew the topic but […] we both knew the topic

very well and I think we both had the trust in each other, that it didn't matter to me, like I

didn't […] I   knew whatever he was going to say, and this wasn't a dialogue, this was a

different situation, but just in terms of thinking of the co-facilitation piece […].

Meeting your co-facilitator for the first time at the opening dialogue workshop can be a recipe

for disaster. Janet echoed what the literature reinforced regarding the importance of getting to

know your co-facilitator by spending time with them well in advance of the actual intergroup

dialogue session. She offered this advice:

I think the biggest piece, when you do that, you have to make sure that you're meeting

with them well in advance. So you're all on the same page as facilitators, knowing that

there are many differences in your thoughts and your physical appearance, and your

beliefs. So making sure that you meet with your co-facilitator well in advance multiple

times, so that you're on one accord as you move forward in facilitation is really

important.

Race emerged as a fifth and very poignant theme for participants in the study.

Race is Sensitive

Facilitators bring experiences from their racial identities and experiences into the

intergroup dialogue. As one participant said, "You don't leave that at the door." Thomas related

his experience with conducting intergroup dialogues and how, for him, race triggered certain

feelings. He seemed closely connected to race an important part of his social identity but also

recognized that it was a very sensitive and complicated subject for many. Thomas, perhaps more

than any other participant, was firm in his racial identity. Growing up in segregated Mississippi

may have contributed to his ambivalence around the discussion. He shared this:

I'm more hyper-sensitive to race and I don't know why that is, it might be a lot of things going on, but when it comes to talking about gender issues, like women and men, I've done a few of those dialogues. Those dialogues were great but I didn't feel at least to me as the facilitator they were meaningful as my dialogues that I led around race.

He went on to say:

I've usually always felt like over the past four or five years of personal perception that my whiteness, is what others perceive me as over you know my maleness or my sexual orientation or my […] again I think probably it's the most visible besides me being a guy. I think I'm pretty obviously a guy so male […] but I guess all those factors together sort of make it where it's just a sensitive, complicated issue that especially if you're not comfortable with the people you're with.

Conversely, for Ashley, it was attempting to figure out her racial identity and the challenge of reconciling her identity as an Arab and Lebanese to also being Muslim. Unlike Thomas, she had some internal conflicts throughout her twenties but had been able to resolve some of those challenges. Many college students often question their identities around this age and she confirmed that uncertainty. She offered this insight into her internal struggle with merging her identities into one:

I remember figuring out what my identity was all through college and I remember even through my 20s, I was constantly trying to continue to shape that identity, as well as make sure that I was connecting to who I thought I was. So for me, I was always trying to find ways that if I wanted to identify myself as an Arab from the Middle East or as Lebanese, I wanted to make sure that I could at least say that with some knowledge about what that really meant. The moment I put my veil on, that identified me closer […]

people now don't say, oh, I, I thought you were […] you know, they say oh, that makes

sense. Oh, yes, of course you're, you're Middle Eastern because you're Muslim, you

know, and so I think that really sort of made it more entwined and really solidified that

part of my identity with my religious part of my identity.

Janet shared how she was forced into figuring out her racial identity because she looked so

different from her family. She grew up being asked what nationality she was and had to resolve

this internal conflict, not unlike Ashley's experience. Her concerns, like Ashley's, were tied to

her skin color. She shared her thoughts on her experience:

I always used to question, well, why am I so dark, because all of my family is lighter than

me. I think I was kind of forced into figuring out my identity. One, growing up, people

always wondered what I was, are you Spanish, are you this, are you that? Are you

African, are you […] and so having to explore that because I would get that question all

the time, you know. I know they knew the baseline was some […] somewhat of the

African descent, but not quite knowing what that was and so having to figure that out, so

talking with my mother, seeing my grandmother, who's French, going okay, she looks

absolutely nothing like me.

Shirley shared how growing up, it was clear to her who she was because it was impressed on her

that she held this racial identity. Unlike Ashley and Janet, she was not left to figure her identity

out by herself. She shared the stark realities of racial profiling and offered this:

Culturally, in terms of racial identity, we were real clear that we were Black. We were

Black before we were Black. I was raised when we were still Negro and colored. We

were very conscious of what we could and could not do and how we had to carry

ourselves, based on, on racial profiling and so forth.

For Carla, her views on race were influenced by her parents. She talked about only having White friends when she was growing up because her dad did not believe in associating with people different from him. However, once her parents were divorced, her mom encouraged her to associate with whomever she wanted. The struggle for her with race was how to embrace this newfound freedom as a young adult and how to associate with whomever she wanted free from familial influences. She had this to say:

> So that was interesting growing up and then after my parents got divorced, you know, my mom was like well, really you should be open to being friends with whoever you want to be friends with and it doesn't matter what their race or ethnicity is or even their religious beliefs, like as long as they're a good person and you are able to connect in a way, those are the relationships you should be building.

Communities where participants grew up was the sixth and final theme that emerged from this study.

Neighborhood Locus Helped to Shape Their Identity

Where participants lived and grew up seemed to have a large influence on how they viewed themselves and others. According to Shirley, her neighborhood had an expectation that people inside its walls behaved in a certain manner. Everybody was doing what everyone else was doing in an effort to conform to the dominant belief system. Shirley gave this glimpse into what her neighborhood was like:

> I think that if, if I were to talk about how my upbringing in my neighborhood locus helped to shape my identity, it would have to do with the qualities of mutual respect and responsibility. And those two characteristics were not only in our household, but seemed to be the neighborhood ethos as well we were expected to carry ourselves a certain way.

Thomas grew up in segregated Mississippi and saw little-to-no diversity in his immediate community. Everybody looked alike in his neighborhood, went to the same stores, and attended the same churches. When he told friends that he was moving to New York, he was met with shock. He had this to say about his community:

> Where I grew up, everybody looks like, everybody goes to the same church, everybody goes to the same grocery store, and when I say looks alike, you know they're all White basically. They go to where all the White people go […] they go […] and it's not bad per se it's just the way it is. You know? And when I moved to New York, I had a bunch of people going why do you want to move there? That's a big city, there are a lot of different people there and they would always say different people […] and I think that's code for, at least now, people that don't look like us. And I might be taking up for these folks – some of them are definitely actively, racist, consciously racist/sexist/homophobic […] but some of them, whether some people might say this [….] I'm making an excuse for them or something – it's just so ingrained that that's just the way it is. And I don't know how to get over that it's just the way it is.

Janet grew up in Newark, New Jersey in a very diverse city. Her experience was very different from Thomas. She saw different ethnic groups come and go. Janet previously talked about being able to fit in with any group. This experience definitely had a part in how she saw herself and others. However, this was also a struggle for her growing up in a city that lacked resources and this shaped her worldview. Janet provided this description of her community:

> Growing up in Newark, it was tough. It was […] its inner city, very poor. They have some areas that are much better off, and so culturally it was interesting because there's pockets of different cultures, so you have a highly populated Latino area, a highly

populated Portuguese, African-American, it used to be a huge Jewish community, but after the riots, after King's death, a lot of the Jewish community moved out. And so you had affluent African-Americans moved into those areas or shifted over, but slowly they started building projects around those big homes. And so it's quite interesting, depending on where you live, there's the Ivy Hill section that used to have a huge white American or Italian group that lived there and they started to move out as well and so […] but again, it was very difficult, because again, after the riots and people started moving out, it became a very poor city, a lot of people not paying taxes. So a lot of social programs, government kicking in, welfare, crime, things of that nature. So it was really was survival of the fittest pretty much, growing up in Newark.

Annette reinforced the idea that being normal is being like everybody else around you. She said that being a Christian in the South is the norm. But being educated also gives you a certain level of respect in certain communities. This goes back to Thomas's experience of not having a diverse experience. She stated:

For me the advantages it that I am educated and so I know that, that comes with a certain level of respect almost, people look at that a little bit different. It […] and it depends on the community as well. But that's something that can be viewed like that. And then being Christian, you know, because especially in the South, it's just almost like that's the norm. So I fall into I guess finally just being normal, you know, doing what everyone else is doing, so that's an assumption, so that's a positive.

Shirley explained that when people are constrained by their communities and churches, that it is difficult for them to step outside their boundaries. Shirley offered this:

It's not okay to step outside the church's boundaries, your neighborhood boundaries, your

class boundaries, yet they're almost like wearing corsets. And events, don't confuse me

with the facts, I know who I am, kind of reality.

Shirley, unlike Annette, disliked this almost constraining system where everyone was alike and

conformed to the same manner of thinking in an effort to get along and not be labeled as
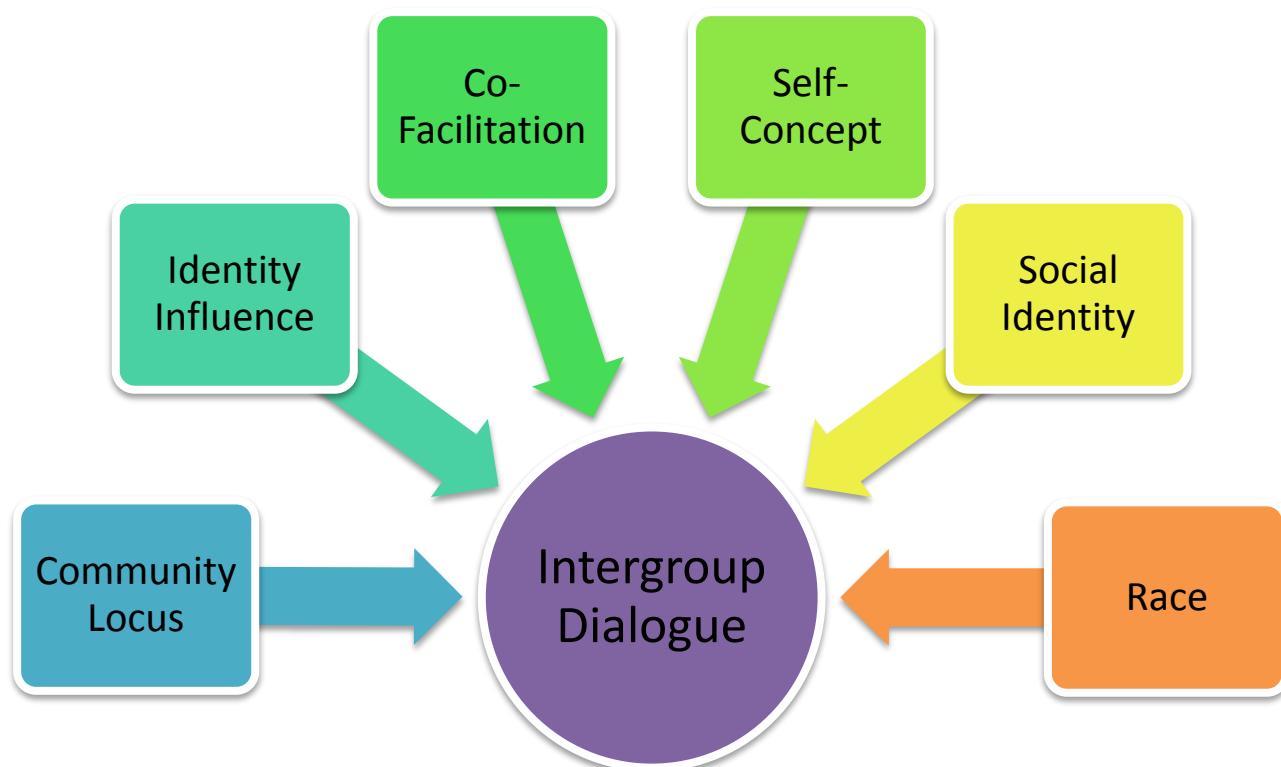
different, or worse, difficult.

Figure 1.1 Facilitator Experiences and the Influence on Intergroup Dialogue.

Figure 1.1 depicts the six themes (e.g. identity influence, social identity, self-concept, co-

facilitation, race, and community locus) identified in the study and their intersection with

intergroup dialogue.

Discussion

This study utilized a phenomenological approach that defined the procedures for the collection of data to understand how eight intergroup dialogue facilitators described their social identity experiences. Qualitative research blends the perspectives of both the researcher and the participant that includes race and ethnicity, gender, and class into the inquiry process (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The researcher designed this study to describe the lived experiences and worldviews of intergroup dialogue facilitators, who represented different racial and ethnic identities, and genders. Worldview can be simply defined as our beliefs about reality (Sire, 2009). Furthermore, this study may provide additional insight and guidance to trainers as they conduct training sessions for facilitators who will carry out intergroup dialogues with various populations in diverse settings.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews that aided in the collection of data, along with demographic information that served as supplemental data. Participants responded to questions based on their experiences with social identities and as intergroup dialogue facilitators. After analyzing the data, six overall themes were identified; : (a) reconstructing self as a social identity experience, (b) social identity changes and the experience is complicated, (c) the interconnectedness of self-concept and social identity, (d), making sense of identity through the co-facilitative experience (e) race is sensitive, and (f) neighborhood locus helped to shape their identity. In particular, results of this study, by and large, met with the most recent literature around social identity theory (Brown, 2000; Hogg, 2006; Stets, & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 2010; Tajfel, & Turner, 2004; & Trepte, 2006) intergroup dialogue (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Hurtado, 2001; Nagda, 2006; Nagda, & Zúñiga, 2003; Schoem, & Hurtado, 2001; & Zúñiga, Nagda, & Sevig, 2002) and intergroup dialogue facilitation (Beale, & Schoem, 2001;

Beale, Thompson, & Chesler, 2001; Maxwell, Nagda, & Thompson, 2012; & Zuniga, Nagda,

Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2011). The majority of participants stated that understanding social

identity was essential to a successful intergroup dialogue. Furthermore, the literature on

intergroup dialogue facilitation confirms that at least two areas are important for facilitators to

have competencies in; an awareness and understanding of your own social identities and

personal histories with identity development, as well as that of others, and the ability to lead

small groups that focus on challenging conversations (Zuniga, 2003). This study also supported

the research findings of Maxwell et al., (2011) who reported that social identity influenced

facilitation style and behaviors. Additionally, facilitators agreed training that focused on working

with a co-facilitator was important.

As stated previously, what intergroup dialogue facilitators describe of their social identity

experiences was the main focus of this present study. Social identity's interconnectedness with

identity influence resonated strongly throughout as participants spoke from personal experiences

and within the context of intergroup dialogue facilitation. Most people agree that their identity is

comprised of a complex mixture of things (Davis, 2007). Therefore, people are shaped by a

multitude of influences. An individual's identity is comprised of a mix of intricate beliefs and

details defined by cultural classifications such as race and societal characterizations like family

or career (Davis, 2007). It is also defined by natural gifts, strengths and capabilities that are

internal (Davis, 2007). One participant concurred that identity is complicated and talked about

the influence of identity on the individual depending on your identification with a culture,

particular group or subgroup. Another participant discussed the complexity of identity by sharing

that she had somewhat of an identity crisis growing up trying to decide which group she wanted

to belong to because of her racially and ethnically diverse family. According to Hogg, Terry, and

White, (1995) there is a basic assumption that people fall into a category (e.g. nationality) based on defining characteristics of the group and their own self-definition. Only one participant, Annette, stated that her social identity may have influenced the outcome of an intergroup dialogue. She felt that students needed to be aware of certain facts when it came to race as well as beliefs. Therefore, she would intentionally put information out there about her racial identity to create awareness for them about her identity and her experiences. Role sharing of personal experiences is an important part of intergroup dialogue (Nagda & Zuniga, 2003).

Gurin-Sands, Gurin, Nagda, and Osuna, (2012) found that social identities can have a potent effect on individuals. Social identity goes to the core of understanding the foundational principles behind intergroup dialogue. Central to this approach for those who undergo the dialogue experience is engaging their social identities (Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). Self-concept also plays a role in understanding and shaping your identity. Self-concept "is the concept the individual has of himself as a physical, social, and spiritual or moral being" (Grecas, 1982, p. 3). Having an understanding of who they are as people inclusive of their identities assigned by society, but also exclusive and separate as individuals, resonated with the participants. Intergroup dialogue forces individuals to come to grips with their own identity (Kardia & Sevig, 2001).

Several participants discussed how growing up in a particular community affected their sense of social identity. One participant spoke strongly about growing up in the south and how that shaped his own identity and views on race. Race is a sociopolitical construct created for societal and institutional gains and is not a biological construct (Bell, Castaneda, & Zuniga, 2010). Viewing one's self as being the same or different from others in society is often influenced by race (Fouad & Brown, 2000). Every day, people in the United States form their own identities shaped from racial categories that identify strangers and social situations (Baker,

1998). Throughout the interviews with participants, conversations about race occurred. The connection between social identity experiences and race was unmistakable, and without coaxing, race always entered the discussion. The literature supports the connection between race and intergroup dialogues and the facilitators that lead them (Zúñiga, 2003; Maxwell, Nagda, & Thompson, 2012). Another participant described growing up in a working class community in the Mid-Atlantic and how her identity was shaped by her parents, elders in the community, and the church. Race and color were often at the center of her experience and the idea of a color-blind society had not yet come into the national psyche.

Two participants, from their experiences with facilitating intergroup dialogue, spoke specifically to the belief of a color-blind society that today's young people seem to want to embrace. Color-blindness has been described as a contemporary form of racism that ignores race and institutionalized racism through distorting, minimizing, and ignoring its existence (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Carr, 1997; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee & Browne, 2000). Thomas discussed not wanting to lose his sense of color under the guise of color-blindness and Annette expressed fear that students are blindly assuming that color-blindness is a good thing. Within the intergroup dialogues she co-facilitated, students talked about not seeing color. There is a belief that only minimal disparities separate the races (Yeung, 2010) but intergroup dialogue makes identity central and utilizes a multicultural approach moving away from the notion of color-blindness (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Color-blindness would appear to mask the multiple identities that exist in society.

Several participants shared their regrets that only one identity was explored during the times that they co-facilitated intergroup dialogues. While dialogues on race and gender are the most prevalent dialogues, several participants shared their desire to do dialogues on religion and

class. This was echoed in the literature that a challenge exists for participants to explore other identities in intergroup dialogue, when the focus is on a single identity (e.g. race, gender) while participants bring multiple identities to the dialogue (Sorensen, Nagda, Gurin & Maxwell, 2009). These multiple issues that can arise during an intergroup dialogue point to the need for good facilitator training.

The role of the facilitator in intergroup dialogue is multifaceted and complex and ensuring that facilitators obtain core competencies required for successful facilitation remain a challenge (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001). Working together in a co-facilitative model is a cornerstone of the intergroup dialogue process, as demonstrated by the Michigan Intergroup Dialogue Model.

> Co-facilitating can be a source of support when challenges arise and provide greater opportunities for multiple social identities to be brought into the training and for connections to be made with a wider range of participants. If co-facilitation is chosen, it is important that co-facilitators collaborate in developing the session and spend time establishing a relationship with one another. Co-facilitators can develop their relationship by sharing their cultural experiences, background, and stories; discussing their facilitation style, strengths, and challenges; identifying teaching goals and philosophy; sharing feedback; and establishing how they will interact with participants, manage speaking time, and assess the process during the session (Landreman, Edward, Balón, & Anderson, 2008, p. 8).

Having an opportunity to discuss the intergroup dialogue curriculum and how that will work with the co-facilitator was referred to by several participants as being important. One participant shared her thoughts on the importance of observing as a facilitator what is not being said in the

group and almost "listening with a third ear" that helps to create a greater awareness of the

dynamics of the group. Zuniga et al., (2002) found that, when needed, facilitators had a

responsibility to shed light on a discussion that illuminated important points or to bring up issues

which had remained unspoken. Intergroup dialogue is challenging and causes individuals whose

life experiences and worldviews are different from other participants to stop and consider the

thoughts, feelings, and actions of others (Stains, 2012). Giving voice to participants in intergroup

dialogue allows them to explore both their group and individual identities (Mac, 2011). Within

intergroup dialogue, the facilitators are also observing who is participating, or not, and how what

is being said and communicated is related to social identity and inequality (Sorensen, 2009).

While observing the dynamics of the group, the facilitator must simultaneously manage conflicts

that arise with the dialogue.

Conflict has its origins in perceived threats to the values or identity of an individual or

group (Stanis, 2012). Dealing with conflict within intergroup dialogue is an integral part of the

process. Encountering conflict plays an important role that aids in the understanding of various

issues and how to work through conflict often reflected in society (Nagda & Gurin, 2007). While

it presents participants with a sense of uneasiness and sometimes triggers old feelings, the

expected outcome is growth and movement in a positive direction. Different personalities and

cultures engage and view conflict differently and facilitators must be aware of this (Yeakley,

2010). The implications for the practice, research and advocacy of intergroup dialogue from this

study are discussed below.

Implications for Future Practice, Research and Advocacy

This research study provided an examination of the social identity experiences of eight

facilitators who conducted intergroup dialogues, adding to the paucity of knowledge that exists

on this subject and filling in the gap, albeit slightly. There is a scarcity of literature that exists on intergroup dialogue facilitation (Nagda & Maxwell, 2011) and relatively little research on co-leadership in group work (Fall & Menendez, 2002; Miles 2010; Riva, Wachtel, & Lasky, 2004). The most important goal of this study was to obtain a better understanding of how intergroup dialogue facilitators experience their social identities. The results suggest that this study provided much needed insight into the experiences and perceptions of intergroup dialogue facilitators about their social identities. Even so, in order to obtain increased understanding of how intergroup dialogue facilitators and those who provide training to them can increasingly move towards gaining a greater knowledge of the impact of their identities on the intergroup dialogue process, more research is needed to explore factors that participants in this study brought to light. Such research may better inform future practice and research within the field of intergroup dialogue training and facilitation. This study also has implications for group workers and the co-leader relationship.

This study has implications for training intergroup dialogue facilitators about social identity. It also has implications for training co-facilitators, teaching group work students, and supervising counseling students in the use of intergroup dialogue. Acknowledging, learning about, and understanding the social identity experiences of facilitators is crucial to conducting successful intergroup dialogues and brings the co-facilitative process front and center, especially during intergroup dialogue training. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to offer opportunities for facilitators to examine their own social identity experiences and that of their co-facilitators. Furthermore, it is vitally important for facilitators to continue to explore the impact of social identity on the greater society and how identity plays out in all areas of our society, not only at an individual, but also at an institutional level.

The current study found that there were both similarities and differences in the experiences of intergroup dialogue facilitators around their individual and collective social identities. The process of intergroup dialogue while learning about self and others delves into deeply held and unexamined views (Kuhri, 2004). Thus, personal experiences of participants are brought into the intergroup dialogue, potentially impacting its outcome (Rodenborg & Huynh, 2006). Therefore, this research has implications for conducting intergroup dialogues and working with facilitators during training to explore these unexamined views.

In view of the fact that all of the participants were student affairs professionals, this study has some implications and recommendations for practice in the field. Participants were asked; "How has doing this type of work (intergroup dialogue) impacted you and your work in student affairs?" Several notable responses were recorded; (a) Giving voice: "*I make sure that voices that might go unheard are heard,"* (b) Creating awareness: *"It has definitely made me a more cognizant, aware administrator about issues such as race, gender, sexual orientation,"* (c) Keep the conversation going: "*Well, what are we doing, you know, as a division of student affairs to keep the conversation moving forward and to be a part of the conversation, not just hey, there's a program, you should go to it, but being a part of developing the program, you know what I mean, and being a part of being there in the conversation,"* (d) Intercultural relations: *"I think those are really important aspects when we talk about intergroup dialogue or intercultural relations. We really are starting to celebrate the differences and then understand the common denominator as well,"* (e) Understanding students needs: *"instead of how they identify it may be and how can I help this person to get to where they need to be. So I guess just understanding people are who they are,"* (f) Supportive role: "*I would say that, that the identities that I bring to student affairs enable me to approach students across identities in a supportive way,"* (g)

Understanding different identities: "*But it definitely helped me to be able to identify with many different social identities because, I think you know, have that kind of dialogue with them and ask them afterwards some questions,*" and (h) Leadership: "*I think I've also tied it into the leadership program I've created. And so we* […] *while we do diversity simulations with* […] *within the leadership program, you know, we're still able to facilitate those conversations and have those discussions.*" See Appendix E, The Role of Intergroup Dialogue in Student Affairs.

Intergroup dialogue is practiced nationally and more research is needed on the experiences of facilitators from colleges and universities, middle and secondary schools, communities, and corporations. Future research should look at ways to analyze social identity as it relates to facilitators and the intergroup dialogue process. Facilitators share common beliefs and experiences, however, each one is unique. Capturing that uniqueness and sharing it during co-facilitating training may broaden understanding between facilitators who hold a different perspective. Research with a greater number of participants would allow researchers to see if the same common themes exist among intergroup dialogue facilitators. This would aid in the development of a curriculum that addresses social identity in more specific detail. Finally, research on group co-leaders is sparse. Intergroup dialogue co-facilitation guidelines might be useful to group co-leaders.

Atieno, Okech, and Kline (2006) found that group co-leaders had competency concerns as they led groups together based on their experiences and perceptions of each other that strongly influenced their relationships and performance. Furthermore, only a modest amount is understood about the processes of co-leadership or the development of the co-leader relationship ((Fall & Menendez, 2002; Riva, Wachtel, & Lasky, 2004). Little research exists that would answer one important question on whether co-leaders of group interventions should be the same

as or different from each other (Miles, 2010). Intergroup dialogue already has a successful co-facilitation model that can be utilized by group co-leaders when they are conducting dialogues. This study illuminated useful information and practices for group co-leaders.

Intergroup dialogue is a noteworthy type of social justice education that can significantly address the disparities that exist between various groups who find themselves at odds with each other. Both student affairs professionals and group workers can utilize intergroup dialogue when working with diverse groups. In Appendix E possible advocacy roles for facilitators are highlighted (e.g. giving voice, creating awareness, and keeping the conversation going).

Limitations of Study

The findings of the current study gave further insight into intergroup dialogue facilitators and how they describe their experiences around social identity. As with any study, there are inherent limitations. The researcher was initially compelled to list the small sample size as a limitation; however Merriam (2009) suggested that no real answer can be provided as to the proper amount of participants needed to conduct a qualitative study. Hays and Singh (2012) supported similar findings that sample size is difficult to determine and should not be considered a limitation of qualitative studies. My familiarity with and closeness to the participants may have interfered with their objectivity and honesty, although the researcher did not sense that. Everyone appeared to genuinely want to assist in the effort because there was an established relationship with the researcher that was valued as well as an understanding of the topic under exploration. In fact, participants felt comfortable sharing their thoughts, some very personal, about their early experiences with social identity growing up. The experience level with facilitating intergroup dialogue varied from novice to experienced and more seasoned participants may have provided more in-depth responses.

The first participant interview did not elicit as deep of responses as I would have liked. After reviewing the transcript, there was a concern that the researcher did not inquire enough to garner more useful information from the participant. Moreover, there were some time constraints that did interfere with the interview process with this participant. The last two participants had to be interviewed over the telephone, which presented some technical issues with sound quality and the connectedness that is established in a face-to-face interview. Additionally, challenges can arise such as participant behavior and reactions, crafting, phrasing, and negotiating questions, along with responding to sensitive information during the interview (Creswell, 2007). I was very aware of these concerns and struggled with this issue with some participants. Being comfortable with your own inner processes and coping with intricate and potentially painful details and emotions of past experiences that participants have encountered puts the researcher in a less than ideal position (Josselson, 2007). One participant even stated that the interview felt like therapy (Josselson, 2007) when certain questions brought up memories from their past. The majority of participants in the study were in their thirties. Many lacked the hard experiences of the early Civil Rights Movement. More participants who were older (e.g. fifties or sixties) may have given additional insights around race and social identity. This is a possible limitation.

Another limitation to consider was that some time had passed since the last intergroup dialogue had been conducted by facilitators, so participants were not recalling a recent event. Time and memory of the experience tend to erode and people fill in what sounds good to them, although some participants did provide rich and vivid descriptions of their experiences. While it is difficult to put aside biases, I did my best to let themes emerge from the data by considering all themes and being as general and inclusive as possible. Finally, a more racially and ethnically diverse participant pool may have provided some additional insights into social identity

experiences. There were no Latinos or Asians in the participant pool. A few more male participants may have also allowed for additional perspectives, although the two interviewed did provide substantive thoughts and information about the topic under discussion in the study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine the social identity experiences of eight intergroup dialogue facilitators. The participants revealed rich stories about how they identified themselves within the context of social identity, how they came to that identification through experiences of growing up in diverse and not so diverse communities, and how they made sense of their identities within the framework of intergroup dialogue facilitation. Face-to-face interviews were conducted about these experiences and six themes were identified. Participants experienced their social identities in similar but also very different ways. Community and family were at the center of their experiences. Nonetheless, race and ethnicity were strong factors that influenced their self-concept. Intergroup dialogue facilitation training brought to light their social identities and connected them to other facilitators with similar and very different experiences. These findings contribute to the sparse literature that exists on intergroup dialogue facilitation. Implications for practice and research on the experiences of the facilitator were provided.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION: RESEARCHER REFLEXIVITY AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

Introduction

A colleague of mine advised me to conduct a quantitative rather than a qualitative study because of the straightforward approach. However, I soon realized that I valued the stories and experiences of participants offered with qualitative research rather than the statistical analysis found in quantitative research. The phenomenological procedure was selected as the most appropriate research method to conduct this study because of its focus on the lived experiences of participants (Hays & Singh, 2012; Krathwohl, 1998). Phenomenological research involves the adoption of a distinct point of view or emic view (Krathwohl, 1998). What is important is how the participants in the study view their own experiences. The researcher treasured the rich experiences of the participants and the phenomenological path provided the best manner to obtain this information. Qualitative research gives the researcher the opportunity to learn from the participants, unlike quantitative research that requires one to control for those in the study (Krefting, 1991). Moreover, qualitative research has, as its focal point, understanding and recounting the human experience (Polkinghorne, 2005). Finding meaning in how people understand their experiences, how they create their assumptive worlds, and what significance they attribute to them defines qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). Moreover as researchers, we enter qualitative inquiry in the midst of stories, ours and theirs (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I decided upon a phenomenological approach for this research study, as it is designed to examine

the lived experiences of an individual or group of people who share in a common phenomenon (Creswell, 2007) and who can recount for the researcher what being a part of that experience was like (Krefting, 1991).

Furthermore, in deciding to conduct a qualitative study, I chose the manuscript style of dissertation because it allows some degree of creativity for the researcher. Also, I am hopeful the information provided will prove useful for student affairs professionals conducting intergroup dialogues, along with counselors who conduct group work with diverse clients where contentious issues may arise. In addition, this style of dissertation will allow me to submit my findings to academic journals and add to the scant information available on intergroup dialogue facilitator's experiences.

Herein, I provided a reflective account of research undertaken with intergroup dialogue facilitators that has afforded me an opportunity to gain a better understanding of myself as a student of research and of the process of inquiry. This study was very personal for me. I feel that I have gone full circle in my experience with the subject, initially being introduced to the topic at a weeklong workshop, facilitating intergroup dialogues, and now delving deeper through research. As a reemerging social justice advocate, I hope to use intergroup dialogue to ensure that we keep conversations that matter going within our communities (Brown & Issac, 2005). I use the term reemerging because this is not my first experience with advocacy. Previously, I worked on behalf of adolescent survivors of maltreatment and individuals with disabilities. Intergroup dialogue allows me to reenter the discussion of social justice advocacy wearing a different hat, that of organizing and facilitating discussions that create better understanding between individuals and among groups. There is something "magical" about the intergroup dialogue process (Mallory & Thomas, 2003; Diaz & Gilchrist, 2010). People at odds with one

another are transformed through the process of exploring identities, actively listening, sharing stories, and working toward a common goal. Each time I experience intergroup dialogue, I walk away more convinced that this method of engaging people in conversations, albeit difficult at times, works.

The goal behind this dissertation research was to explore how intergroup dialogue facilitators describe social identity experiences. I would like to believe that I was very introspective about the process and answered the, "Why this topic question?" Simon Sinek, a self-described corporate coach, and author of, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*, encouraged us to begin everything we do with asking the question, "why?" He believed that we can accomplish so much more if we do this first before starting any task (Sinek, 2009). In this chapter, I highlight my reflexivity drawn from a reflexive journal (Hays & Singh, 2012), wherein I wrote down thoughts and questions as I conducted this study. This often occurred in the moment when I was acting as a human instrument (Hoepfl, 1997; Morrow, 2005; Paisley & Reeves, 2001) and data was being collected or analyzed. I also explored my biases and feelings encountered during the course of the study. I also discuss the study's relationship to Social Identity Theory, the lens through which I framed this work, assumptions made by the researcher and the research team, intergroup dialogue, social identity, group work and its relationship to social justice, and closing thoughts and implications.

Researcher Reflexivity

The inner workings of the research process often involve researcher reflexivity and in-depth personal reflections as part of the experience (Finlay, 2002; Ryan & Golden, 2006). In most of qualitative research, the researcher is encouraged to talk about themselves through a reflexive approach that is widely accepted (Ortlipp, 2008). The reflective process involves

researcher reflexivity, wherein the researcher examines his thoughts as a window for those outside of the study to view its development (Hays & Singh, 2012). There is a goal on the part of the researcher to improve credibility and attention to detail of the research through the reflexive process, while making observable the researcher's positionality (DeSouza, 2004). Further, the researcher's experiences and worldview can impinge on the research process and researcher reflexivity helps to guard against it (Morrow, 2005). I bracketed off assumptions and personal values I held while collecting data, which involved the use of a reflexive journal, research team meetings, and quick check-ins when needed to seek advice, notations, and member checking (Hays & Singh, 2012). I unpacked my personal experiences in an effort to comprehend the experiences of the study's participants without biases. Researcher bias is always a concern at any stage of the study (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2010; Ortlipp, 2008). The reflexive journal is a useful tool to confront and expose biases and assumptions that may have been preconceived by the researcher regarding the research process (Krefting, 1991).

My reflexive journal provided an avenue through which I could expose my research biases throughout this project and it was very important in providing assistance with this task (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Moreover, it was valuable in helping me to recall concerns I had and incidents that occurred throughout the experience. The reflexive journal has been described as being similar to a personal diary containing the researcher's thoughts, feelings, ideas, questions, problems and frustrations about the research being undertaken (Krefting, 1991). Writing in my reflexive journal, I was challenged by my closeness to the study participants and whether or not this would unwittingly influence the outcome of the study. However, the researcher is part of the research and not a distant observer who is separate from it (Krefting, 1991). My fears were abated as I began the interviews and interacted with participants. They were all interested in my

study and appreciated the opportunity to reflect back on their intergroup dialogue experience. However, one of the highlighted occurrences I found in my journal was the struggle with one participant who challenged me throughout every step of the process regarding confidentiality. Issues of power sometimes play themselves out between the researcher and the researched, who are truly collaborators in the investigation (Morrow, 2005). This person was initially reluctant to participate. Perhaps she was also guarding against judgment by others they knew who might read the study. The participant stated:

> Initially I was going oh […] I don't want to do that. You know. And so, no, this man's trying to do his work; you want somebody to help you with your work. Okay. Then let's do this.

This participant provided rich detailed descriptions of their experiences, which yielded insurmountable data valuable for my data analysis.

This encounter did, however, stir up emotions around challenges I have had in the past, as a Black man, with people almost intentionally standing in my way to thwart my professional progress. Even in the interview process, social identity can come into play as issues of equity arise between interviewer and interviewee (Seidman, 2012). Overall, participants were forthcoming and easy to work with, perhaps because of our connections professionally and through intergroup dialogue. Participants did not appear to hold back. There were similarities and differences in their experiences and stories that resonated. I always had to keep in mind that this was their interview and not mine. I was mindful of comments I made when a participant discussed a topic that was very personal to them and that I connected with. I was intentional about keeping my comments to a minimum and made every effort to encourage them throughout

the interview process (Seidman, 2012). I documented my feelings and views after interviewing each participant in my journal and returned to my notes regularly (Wall, Glenn, Mitchinson, & Poole, 2004).

I went into this research study unaware; unsure what to expect or the struggles that I might encounter. I was truly a blank slate, open to the possibilities and calmly optimistic. Again, I attribute this to my familiarity with both the topic and the participants. I have often heard about the multiple obstacles some researchers face in conducting their studies. One bias was determining what participant statements I should select for publication in the study. I did not want to make any comments seem negative (Ortlipp, 2008) or inadvertently portray someone despairingly. I discussed my concerns with the research team, revisited my biases that were bracketed (Hays & Singh, 2012), and made notes about this in my journal entries. I nudged the participants to go deeper during the interviews in hopes of yielding rich data. This worked, however I needed to be mindful of how I used their comments and not take them out of context or portray them negatively.

A researcher can unintentionally present data in a manner that can have an unintended impact on both participants and readers (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, I was touched by some of the participant's comments. I had always worked with my colleagues in a professional capacity and never really had the opportunity to talk with them about their personal lives in such intimate detail. Their stories revealed personal experiences with social identity around sizeism, the process of socialization, and race.

Viewing Social Identity through a Theoretical Lens

Social identity theory was selected as the lens to view this study as the researcher sought to understand the social identity experiences of the participants. This entailed utilizing a

phenomenological research plan. Until my experience with intergroup dialogue and this research project, I lacked a substantive understanding of social identity beyond it having a connection with social classifications of race and gender. Within social identity theory are the psychological construct of intergroup relationships, dynamics of groups, and the self in the context of a social-being (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). Researchers assume that the individual, as a person, is part of some larger category (e.g. ethnicity) based on major characteristics of the group and the self-definition used by the individual (Hogg, et al., 1995). Individuals can be greatly impacted by social identities that are thrust intentionally or unintentionally upon them (Gurin-Sands, Gurin, Nagda, & Osuna, 2012). Participants shared their social identity experiences in personal ways that revealed how they experienced the world around them and that also allowed their stories to be heard. Their stories shed light on the human condition. One participant described her struggle with her racial and ethnic identity during college and how she was thrust into coming to terms with her social identity:

> When I went to college, most of my friends were nonwhite and they would tell me, you're not white either. You're not black, you're not this, but you're definitely not white. So you need to figure it out. And so I started saying, huh, I remember, you know, these things growing up and I remember what my mom told me and I remember hearing this and that. But it was really those friends and those influences that were around me in that time that I really started thinking about my social identity and what that meant, you know, and why do people always think I'm Puerto Rican and why do they […] you know what I mean, and so I really started to shape like who I was, but I think it was sort of those people, sort of telling me through […] and you know, college is a time when students tend to develop in a lot of different ways and I feel […] I really like that's, you know, when people say,

you know, in college I went through this, I always say, in college I went through an identity crisis, because that's […] I was always trying to figure out really where I fit in to the mix.

As individuals, we can gain a better understanding of the relationship between our identities and how they relate to others through social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). People gain a sense of identity through membership in a social group and this categorization determines who is deemed different and who is favored (Tajfel & Turner, 2001). Conversely, another approach to better understand social identity theory suggests the individual defines who he/she is in terms of group membership within the in-group or group that receives favored treatment (Haslam, Jetten, Postmes, & Haslam, 2009). Moreover, based on social identity theory, people downplay the differences between those similar to them and highlight differences between those who are different (Jones, 2004). Participants shared their social identity experiences with the researcher, which revealed some personal insights.

Although not identified consistently enough by all interviewees to be listed as a theme, three participants brought up sizeism, discrimination experienced by people due to their size relative to their weight (Stevens, 2011) and body image as being a part of their social identity experience. I felt the need to share it as a part of the identity experiences of intergroup facilitators in this study. One participant's comments stood out, as he shared his feelings about being judged based on his size:

 I was having this conversation yesterday with a friend about how the old Michael, everything I socialized to was around food. And so that is what made me that person, which took me to a different place in being an overweight individual and obese. And I

feel like that is how people judged me. And so it's interesting how I have socialized in a

different way where as I will tell someone, let's meet to go for a run or walk whereas

before it was like lets meet for wings.

Identity can manifest itself in many forms, as it did for this participant who viewed body image

as a salient identifier:

The biggest part of me that I have a harder time accepting of my personal identity, is my,

my body image, and I think that influences me in a way of affecting perhaps my self-

esteem or my outward, we'll call it my image.

A third participant also viewed her size as a possible disadvantage:

I'm a plus size woman and I know that there are things that are perceived with that as

well, and so […] so those are some things that I'm probably more aware of that I think

can play into being disadvantages.

In a class on social justice I learned about the cycle of socialization, where people are

influenced by a multitude of collective social forces to accept societal norms and values (Harro,

2010) and the impact it has on us in all aspects of our lives. The literature points to the

socialization process as beginning at a very early age and affecting people into adulthood (Harro,

2010; Ochs, 1993). I was curious about how the subjects in the study would describe their

socialization experiences. Participants were asked about the impact the cycle of socialization had

on them. One participant commented on his struggle growing up in a conservative church:

But you know the way that I grew up, in a very conservative and small southern Baptist

church so I think that though I like to think I moved past a lot of that, I still think that I

work through some of the stuff that I went through for those 19-20-21 years growing up

in that church. Which weren't very affirming of a lot of different pieces of what I hold,

what I value and hold dear and the way I see the world is definitely not held dear and valued by that religious establishment that I grew up in and I'm still trying to reconcile those in some ways.

On the contrary, another participant viewed their socialization as allowing them to open up:

I think the amalgam of my cycle of social constructions of identity, it's easier to talk about what the effects are than to talk about how I perceive that I've been affected. Because, you know, if we go back to the Johari window, there are parts of me that have been affected that I'm not even aware of. And so I would say that the way that I've been impacted, primarily, is to open me up.

From sizeism to socialization to race, the participant's experiences unfolded. I did not intentionally steer the interviews in the direction of race, although this was a question on the demographic questionnaire, (Appendix B) and a theme identified in the study. I did relate very easily to several participants around the topic of race. However, comments about race occurred frequently within the course of the interviews and participants spoke openly about how they experienced the topic of race growing up. One participant shared how her skin color affected her:

I always used to question, well, why am I so dark, because all of my family is lighter than me. Especially on my grandmother's side, and so my grandmother used to say that my grandfather was blacker than the ace of spades.

Yet another participant provided a different perspective about race as an adolescent, in which she stayed within the confines of her family's wishes of not befriending someone different from her:

I think when, you know, I mean, when I was at home, especially when I was still in high school and I was living at home, you know, I definitely didn't stray a whole lot away from what the family view was. Mainly because I didn't want to bring a whole lot of like

drama into […] into my life or you know, have whoever I was bringing home experience a lot of the drama and you know, just some of the rudeness that goes along with that and things like that and all the questions and so, you know[….]

I grew up in the era of the Civil Rights Movement, so race is a key identifier of my social identity. So engrained is it, that at a recent conference I attended, when prompted to use words to describe personal identity, I led with my race and ethnicity rather than spiritual as an identifier. Through my statement, I inadvertently contributed to the cycle of socialization (Harro, 2010) that keeps identity salient and is supported by families, friends, communities, and the media. With an understanding of my own personal experiences around race, I was keenly aware of how the subject might affect my role as a researcher. Therefore, during conversations about race, I remained neutral and focused on the content of the interviews. I also bracketed my thoughts and feelings related to race. The research team was helpful in addressing my assumptions and biases.

Researcher and the Research Team Assumptions about Intergroup Dialogue

Initially, I struggled with the themes that developed from this study. My research team saw the themes more broadly and so it was necessary to work through those differences using consensus coding (Hays & Singh, 2012). The research team is another reflexive strategy in that they act as a mirror reflecting back to the researcher reactions to the research process (Hill et al., 2005; Morrow & Smith, 2000). They may also propose different interpretations of data to those of the researcher (Morrow, 2005). After the first review of the transcripts, a few themes and several subthemes came into focus. However, I believed that some of those themes took the study away from the research question. I needed to go back and identify themes that described how intergroup dialogue facilitators described social identity experiences, which then reduced the number of themes.

Even the development of the initial research question presented some challenges as the focus of the study needed to be on the experiences rather than the influences of social identity. Some of the tensions occurred with teasing out the facilitators' experiences around social identity rather than their intergroup dialogue experiences. We recognized that as the study developed, themes might change from what we identified in the beginning. Through consensus coding, team meetings, and discussions we were able to narrow the themes down to those that focused on their lived experiences. I also needed to recognize how some of my biases might influence my choice of themes. The research team discussions were invaluable in helping to address my concerns and bracket any biases that arose. I needed to ensure that what was being presented accurately portrayed the experiences of the participants. I found myself going back to the transcripts and rereading them to ensure that the participant's voices and stories were coming through.

There were awkward periods where I found myself second guessing the findings and needed the guidance of my research team to confirm that I was on the right path. Early on, I believed that a second theory beyond social identity theory was developing from the coding process. However, what I observed was not a second theory, but rather additional questions (Appendix C) that needed to be asked to participants about self-concept as it related to their social identity. The research team also advised me to be aware of any blind spots (Maxwell, 2012) that might be preventing me from seeing the data clearly or omissions of relevant information. Team discussions also centered on the concept of identity salience, "the likelihood that the individual's identity will be invoked in diverse situations" (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995, p. 257). We went back and forth on this idea and saw this as a related concept but not a theme. However, throughout this study social justice, social identity, and the role of group work in intergroup dialogue emerged as points of discussion.

Implications for Social Justice, Social Identity and Group Work in Intergroup Dialogue

I was drawn to this doctoral program and my dissertation topic on intergroup dialogue because they both focus on social justice. As students, we were taught to be more mindful of the inequalities that exist around us and how we can be agents of change, or perpetuate the oppression for those who have been disempowered. Intergroup dialogue is rooted in social justice with a goal of reducing prejudice among diverse groups (Rodenborg & Bosch, 2007). Additionally, intergroup dialogue has been described as a face-to-face meeting between individuals with opposing views often possessing different social identities and guided by trained facilitators (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001). Social justice embodies the individual's rights to the same freedoms enjoyed by all people and equal access to resources (Goodman et al., 2004). Social identity theory was used throughout the study to examine the identity experiences of facilitators who run intergroup dialogue, a non-therapeutic form of group work (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Norton, Russell, Wisner, & Uriarte, 2011).

Role of Group Workers

In order to do effective social justice facilitation, group workers must carefully consider and fully develop the necessary professional competencies (Landreman, Edwards, Balón, & Anderson, 2008). Group workers who facilitate intergroup dialogue must act as agents of change, incorporating social justice principles while being self-reflective and engaging in learning and action (Singh, Merchant, Skudrzyk & Ingene, 2012). An example of how social justice action can be applied to intergroup dialogue is revealed in one participant's concerns around student's belief in a colorblind society:

> I […] as I facilitated, is that for a lot of the participants, this was the very first time they
> ever even thought about someone's life or identity being different than their own, which

is […] makes me a little nervous, when we talk about social justice because it's a younger group of people, but their thought and what I heard quite often was I don't see color, I don't see race, I don't see this, I don't see everyone at their […] we're all just who we are and I don't believe that that's true. And I think if we don't acknowledge that, we are not going to be in a place where there can be social justice.

Colorblindness is the idea that group ethnic and racial differences should be ignored or minimized (Plaut, Thomas, & Goren (2009). Moreover race does not matter and membership in categories should be reduced, eliminated, or ignored in many areas like hiring and school admissions (Richeson, & Nussbaum, 2004). Finally, colorblindness not only ignores color but also the culture of ethnic and racial groups (Shields, 2004). I struggle with the idea of colorblindness because that has not been my personal experience. However my Christian upbringing influenced me to see the person first and not allow color to persuade my thinking or feelings about the individual. I can understand how students or individuals in a group who share similar Christian beliefs might be more apt to embrace this ideology. Group facilitators can be instrumental in dispensing social justice principles to group members.

Group facilitators can provide a successful and empowering experience for group members by utilizing social justice principles (Burnes & Ross, 2010). When providing group work services that involve conducting groups, discussing social justice issues, and examining the creation of identity, authenticity is vital (Singh, et al., 2012). One participant spoke about the importance of authenticity when doing social justice work:

I want to be somebody who people see as authentically passionate about a particular situation and fighting for that particular issue or two particular issues all the time, not just putting lip service to a bunch of different ones.

Within the boundaries of this positive experience, group leaders have an obligation to address issues of power, privilege, and oppression that may occur within the dynamics of the group or derail the intended outcome (Burnes & Ross, 2010). Group workers can also address issues within their communities using skills learned in the group. One participant who facilitated multiple groups shared his knowledge with using the intergroup dialogue experience to take action against what he perceived as an unintended social injustice against minority students at the institution where he worked:

For example, at my previous institution, I sat on the Student Activity Fee committee – it was primarily composed of students who were majority straight White males. One year we had to make cuts to different budgets and clubs and it just so happened that all the clubs that we're pulling money from were clubs for marginalized groups. I don't think that group was purposefully pulling money from the Black student union or the Socialist Student Society –again it's not just based on race and gender. But all this was going on and I'm like wait, you all do not realize that you are just taking this money from marginalized groups. This is like Social Justice 101 example of how the groups that are sitting around the table and you're not a part of these marginalized groups or have these identities. You're just not aware of the continued marginalization and discrimination you're doing. So I spoke up for 5 minutes about it and it did a little good and so we moved some money back around but had it not been for my work such as IGD, I don't think, at least for me personally, I would have been so cognizant of wow this is like playing out in front of us right now and nobody is really aware of what's going on here.

There has been a convergence between social justice and group work (Singh & Salazar, 2011). The group leader can introduce social justice into the group depending upon the

needs of the group and the manner in which the topic is presented to the group members (Singh & Salazar, 2011). Similarly, group workers are embracing intergroup dialogue and seeing the benefit when working with multicultural groups along with social justice issues that may arise within the group. At the 2014 biannual national conference of the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW), the conference theme was *Building Bridges Through Group Work: Facilitating Courageous Conversations.* Conference attendees were asked to offer their ideas on how they were currently incorporating dialogue into their work and ideas on how they would use the information presented to them. Attendees provided the following responses regarding the current usage of dialogue in groups by group workers (Stains & Russ, 2014, February, pp. 1-5):

(a) I use this in sessions with clients and in groups I run. I have also used this dialogue process in the classroom when teaching various topics.

(b) Use of nonviolent communications with community and conflict resolution

(c) Incorporating dialogue when working within a residential rehabilitation center to address any cultural or interpersonal differences

(d) I use some of this in my class work---teaching group

(e) This would be very useful in community conversations reducing stigmas about mental illness. Also useful for in---patient resident with conflict.

(f) Using in counselor education for facilitation class

(g) Using inquiry with patients in groups to facilitate discussion, using dialogue to get group members talking with each other.

(h) I am incorporating dialogue by attempting to ask the right questions to my group to initiate conversation and awareness.

Future uses of dialogue included the following suggestions:

(a) Using the structured dialogue technique in the classroom, focused on training future group counselors

(b) I wonder if and when/how to bring in realities of privilege and power into these dialogues (marginalization, oppression)

(c) As a teacher, using the dialogue exercise as part of a student's experiential/skills development

(d) As an academic administrator: use dialogue to develop admin/faculty cohesiveness and strategic planning

(e) Dialogue could be very instrumental in improving company morale; teachers and administration working together on same goals for same purpose with different gifts and talents

(f) This could be a useful strategy to teach to counseling students as a component into a group practicum cause.

The aforementioned thoughts and ideas generated by group workers form a good base for both current and future uses of intergroup dialogue. The significance cannot be ignored, as those who do group work embrace new approaches to address everyday challenges of running a group. I believe ASGW, through this conference, laid the groundwork for practitioners to further those "courageous conversations" (Singleton & Linton, 2005).

I have learned through this study that social identity cuts through all areas of our lives. It molds us and shapes us like the winds shape those oddly formed rocks in a desolate Western canyon. We learn from our families, friends, and communities our places of birth, the groups we belong to, and the process of socialization. This study has refueled my interest in qualitative research and the topic of intergroup dialogue. If I had to conduct this study differently, I would

add a focus group to the face-to-face interviews to further explore the participants' lived experiences. Participants also might behave differently in a group. I could further discuss their actions and reactions when we met individually.

Intergroup dialogue has shown me a different way to address conflict and to impact social injustices on many different levels. Dialogue addresses not only individual change but systemic change as issues of oppression and marginalization are exposed. I began this journey as a skeptic about the effectiveness of intergroup dialogue. Six years later, I am a true believer in its ability to transform and change lives. As a result of this study, I will be sure to explore social identity in more depth when conducting intergroup dialogues. Hearing individual stories is important to this process and I would encourage participants to share their experiences. Furthermore, discussing intergroup dialogue and the role dialogue plays in addressing social justice issues with participants would be an important step in creating awareness and advocacy in their communities.

Conclusion

We are an amalgamation of our stories and life experiences. We are shaped by those experiences and wear them like a new pair of tight-fitting shoes. We also grow into them if they were a little too big at the start. I have been impressed by the resilience of the study participants who, like all of us, have endured the pressures of a society that requires one to choose and demands conformity at the risk of losing one's individuality. The locations of their births and cities where participants grew up contributed greatly to shaping their worldviews. Race was a constant for all participants, however, less of an issue for some participants and helped to shape their views.

Gathering information from participants through recording, transcribing, coding, reflecting, and discussion can be a messy process. Qualitative research often involves making one's way through the messiness of a sometime awkward, confusing, and untidy process (Anzul, Downing, Ely, & Vinz, 1997). The process of qualitative research has been both eye-opening and rewarding. The lived experiences of the participants provided the rich data that revealed a multitude of stories for the researcher to analyze and make meaning from, not only through their individual experiences, but also through their intergroup dialogue experiences.

Intergroup dialogue holds the promise of bringing people together in a non-threatening environment to discuss differences that separate people. Dialogue can erode polarizing viewpoints and bring people together to begin the process of understanding each other. Facilitators who do this rewarding, but often difficult, work must understand themselves completely and unpack their social identities for inspection not only by themselves, but by others, especially in a co-facilitative process.

For group workers in the field of counseling, intergroup dialogue has the potential to open up new ways to work with groups who are in conflict. There will be skepticism from some and "light bulb" moments from many. The energy and magic of this process that I witnessed will turn unbelievers into believers.

More research is needed in this subject area that examines the co-facilitative process and the impact of social identity experiences of facilitators on intergroup dialogue outcomes. Identity does matter when polarizing topics trigger memories of past events and buttons are pushed in an effort to generate greater understanding. This study revealed that social identity is salient in each one of us and impacts our daily lives. Until we are at peace with those experiences, we will be like a raging river that overflows its banks when the contour of the river's edge is out of sight.

The untrained one in this process is beaconed by the vastness of the landscape ahead only to recede into self-imposed bondage when the rawness of the experience proves too much and old wounds reopen. Therefore, we must know ourselves. This process has taught me to look inside more and examine my own thoughts and feelings. The qualitative research process is rigorous because it involves delving into the experiences of people, but yields rich results. Intergroup dialogue has taught me that unresolved issues can be easily triggered while doing this type of social justice work and we can inadvertently do more harm than good. I still have a lot to learn.

> Because we do not live in a just and equitable society, we must be aware that our own social, historical, and political experiences in an unjust and inequitable society shape our conscious and unconscious perspectives. Our social group memberships—whether they are based on our race or ethnicity, gender, age, or other types of social identity—affect how we think and act. For those doing social justice education, it can be tempting to think that we, with our degrees and certified training, "get it" and don't have any work to do ourselves. This complacency often indicates when we have the most work to do. (Landreman et al., 2008, p. 3).

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APPENDIX A

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of study: The Social Identity Experiences of Intergroup Dialogue Facilitators: A
Phenomenological Inquiry

Primary Researcher: Rodney E. Pennamon, to fulfill partial requirement for Ph. D. at the
University of Georgia

Purpose of this research study: To examine the lived experiences of intergroup dialogue
facilitators from different social identities and their influence on the dialogue outcome.

Procedures

This research project is a phenomenological study which is intended to examine how intergroup
dialogue facilitators influence the outcomes of dialogues based on their social identities.
Participants will be asked several demographic questions followed by a Three-staged interview
consisting of questions geared at a) social identity history, b) details of lived dialog facilitation
experience and c) the value and meaning assigned to experiences. After the interviews, the
researcher and his team will create themes and codes from all participant data. Finally, the
primary researcher will ask participants to write out answers in a narrative form to the questions
posed to them during the interview.

Possible risks or benefits

There is minimal risk involved in this study. Potentially, participants could feel as though their
privacy was invaded. Additionally, participants may be sensitive to some of the material
discussed in the interview process – specifically discussion of social identity and experiences
during the intergroup dialogues. Furthermore, there is no direct benefit to participants of this
study. However, the results of the study may help participants to better understand and be aware
of how their social identities can influence the outcome of a dialogue and work toward more
objectivity.

Right of refusal to participate and withdrawal

Participants are free to choose to participate in the study. Participants may refuse to participate or
withdraw any time from the study without any prejudice or adverse effect.

Confidentiality

All information participant's supply during the research process will be held in confidence to the extent provided ethically and legally. No participant names will appear in any report or publication of research. Participant information will be assigned a code pseudonym. The list connecting participant names to a pseudonym and this informed consent form will be kept in a locked file. When the study is completed and the data has been analysed, the information will be destroyed.

Available Sources of Information

If you have further questions you may contact me **Rodney E. Pennamon**:
Tel: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: rodneyp@uga.edu
Furthermore, should you have any questions with regard to your rights of participation; you may contact the IRB office: Insert IRB Information here.

Participant's Consent Declaration

I understand that participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty. I understand that I may discontinue participation at any time without notice.
I declare that I am at least 18 years of age.

Participant's Signature:_____

Participant's Name: _____

Date: _____

Researcher Declaration

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedures in which the participant has consented to participate.

Primary Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please provide the following demographic data:

Place of Birth_____

Race_____

Ethnicity_____

Gender_____

Sexual Orientation_____

Religion_____

What is your job title and years of experience in that position? _____

_____

What type of training did you receive as an intergroup dialogue facilitator?

_____

_____

How many intergroup dialogues have you conducted? _____

What type of intergroup dialogues have you facilitated? _____

_____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Stage One: History and Experiences with Social Identity
1. What is your definition of social identity?
2. Do you have an awareness of your own identity (ies)?
3. How have you been impacted by the cycle of socialization?
4. What is the impact of your social identity on yourself?
5. Are you clear about your own privileges and disadvantages?
6. Do you have any blocks or blinders to your awareness about your social identity (ies)?
7. What is the significance of social identity to you as a facilitator?

Stage Two: Experiences with Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation
1. How knowledgeable are you about the principles and processes of intergroup dialogue?
2. Have you been able to facilitate a discussion about a controversial topic? What was that like? Did you feel like you needed to control the direction of the discussion to avoid conflict?
3. Have you been able to recognize and acknowledge your own personal discomfort with a dialogue topic?
4. What was it like to work in a co-facilitator (leadership) role?
5. Were you able to encourage and facilitate participation from all participants? Or was it easier to encourage members of your own social identity?
6. Were you able to give feedback and ask for and receive feedback?

Stage Three: Thoughts about Your Social Identity and its Influence on the Intergroup Dialogue Process
1. Do you feel that your social identity in any way may have influenced the outcome of an intergroup dialogue?
2. Describe your experiences working with a facilitator of a different social identity.
3. How has doing this type of work impacted your work in student affairs and your desire to be a social justice advocate?

Adapted with permission from Maxwell, Nagda & Thompson (2011) and Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler & Cytron-Walker (2007).

Additional Questions on self-concept posed to participants:

Self-concept, is the idea the individual has of themselves as a physical, social, and spiritual or moral being (Grecas, 1982).

Please answer the following in some detail (e.g. 3 or more sentences).

1. How has your social identity influenced your self-concept?
2. Did your self-concept influence the outcome of an intergroup dialogue?

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTIONS

Participant Pseudonym	Participant Descriptions
Michael	Black male, Age 30's born in Ohio. Associate Director of Student Conduct at a private university in Atlanta. Background encompasses Judicial Affairs Master's in Higher Education Administration.
Thomas	White male, Age 30's born in Mississippi. Is a Dean of Student Services at a 2-year college near Atlanta. Background encompasses Intercultural Relations, New Student Orientation and Judicial Affairs. Ph.D. in Educational Policy Studies.
Ashley	Lebanese and Muslim female, Age 30's born in Stockbridge, MA. Is a Coordinator of New Student Orientation at a large university in Atlanta. Background includes Student Activities and Multicultural Services. Master's in Public Administration.
Janet	Black female, Age 30's born in Newark, NJ. Assistant Dean of Students at a large university in Atlanta. Background in Judicial Affairs and Residence Life, Master's degree.
Annette	Black female, Age 30's born in Cleveland, OH. Coordinator of Student Assistance at a large university in Atlanta. Background in Student Support Services. Master's degree.
Shirley	Black female, Participant has requested to have demographic information remain anonymous.
Mary	White female, Age 20's born in Iowa. Program Advisor at a large institution in Illinois. Background includes Parent Relations and Student Orientation. Master's in Student Affairs.

Carla   White female, Age 30's, born in MI. Coordinator of
                                        Residential Leadership at a large university in
                                        Atlanta. Background includes Residence Life.
                                        Master's in Student Affairs Administration in
                                        Higher Education.

APPENDIX E

FIGURE 2.1

Figure 2.1 Intergroup Dialogue and key factors when used in Student Affairs.