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Postgraduate University Students' Experiences and Attitudes Toward Culturally Diverse Learning Environments

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Abstract

In this paper we investigate the attitudes that Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on a large, metropolitan university campus. We employed a qualitative approach incorporating five individual semistructured interviews, and a focus group in order to gather data on the participants' attitudes toward cultural diversity, and the contributing influences on these attitudes. The findings of this study indicate that the participants' attitudes were impacted significantly by past and present experiences of cultural diversity, and the immersion in a culturally diverse university campus. The research contextualizes how these life experiences are responsible for shaping attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campus and provides an insight into the influence of cultural diversity on Australian university campuses, including how such diversity policies have influenced attitudes. Importantly it discusses how more culturally inclusive learning environments can be created on university campus to accommodate this increasing diversity and how this translates into a more successful learning environment.

Keywords

cultural diversity, university, internationalization, postgraduate student attitudes, culturally diverse learning environments, individual semistructured interviews, focus group

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In this paper we investigate the attitudes that Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on a large, metropolitan university campus. We employed a qualitative approach incorporating five individual semistructured interviews, and a focus group in order to gather data on the participants' attitudes toward cultural diversity, and the contributing influences on these attitudes. The findings of this study indicate that the participants' attitudes were impacted significantly by past and present experiences of cultural diversity, and the immersion in a culturally diverse university campus. The research contextualizes how these life experiences are responsible for shaping attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campus and provides an insight into the influence of cultural diversity on Australian university campuses, including how such diversity policies have influenced attitudes. Importantly it discusses how more culturally inclusive learning environments can be created on university campus to accommodate this increasing diversity and how this translates into a more successful learning environment.

Keywords: cultural diversity, university, internationalization, postgraduate student attitudes, culturally diverse learning environments, individual semistructured interviews, focus group

Societies have become increasingly culturally diverse within recent decades due to an increase in migration, significant movements of refugees across continents, and an increase in the ease of international travel. *Cultural diversity*, which is the coexistence of different behaviors, traditions, and customs within a society (UNESCO, 2017), is evident through the implementation of globalization policies including the increase in migratory patterns of people to different locations, and the diversification of societies through cultural and ethnic mixing (Chui & Leung, 2014; Hao, Li, Peng, Peng, & Torelli, 2016; Hue & Kennedy, 2014). Though globalization has led to increasingly diverse societies and an increase in worldwide interconnectedness (Goh, 2012), attitudes toward cultural diversity are mixed. This is seen through the reemergence of nationalism and social movements as a response to increasing cultural tensions and conflict, and the influence of identity politics on cultural identity (Cojanu, 2016; Kaldor, 2004; Urźua, 2000).

This study was undertaken to identify the attitudes that Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on university campus. There is a lack of extensive research focusing on attitudes toward cultural diversity within Australian university campuses, something this research addressed. In order to identify the attitudes held, this study conducted a close examination on a group of postgraduate domestic students attending a large, metropolitan Australian university campus.

For the purposes of this discussion, *domestic student* refers to a citizen, or permanent resident, of Australia currently enrolled and completing their studies at an Australian university. *International student* refers to a student born in another country who does not

possess Australian citizenship or permanent residency, and is currently enrolled and completing their studies at an Australian university. Within this context, *on campus* refers to students studying on university campus with a full-time study load. *Postgraduate university students*, defined as university students who have completed an undergraduate degree and have pursued further study, were relevant to this research due to their longer experience on university campus compared to undergraduate students. The postgraduate participants also have teaching experience on the university campus, and have been exposed to a wide range of students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, the time spent on university campus by postgraduate students translates to more learning experiences, which further translates into potentially more developed attitudes toward cultural diversity on campus.

Australia's identity has been shaped significantly by its cultural diversity (Arasaratnam, 2014; Moran, 2011). This research makes two contributions toward understanding attitudes toward cultural diversity. Firstly, it provides an insight into the attitudes that Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity, as a result of an internationalized university campus. Identifying these attitudes will help to provide educational researchers with further insight into the effects that internationalization has had on the university experiences of Australian domestic university students. This is key for informing future educational policies of any Australian university that seeks to help prepare its students to become global citizens.

Secondly, this research contributes toward filling a gap within the literature focusing on cultural diversity within the university context. This study will help to provide researchers who are interested in cultural diversity within an international context with a more rounded body of evidence, and will help to inform any further study on attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campus, or any changes to university policies.

This study was conducted to develop an understanding of the attitudes that Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on university campus. The research questions posed were; (1) What attitudes do Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on university campus? And (2) What individual experiences influence the development of attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campus?

Background

Australia has always been a culturally diverse nation due to its Indigenous populations. This cultural diversity begins with Australia's first inhabitants, the Indigenous Australians having lived here for more than 60,000 years, including Torres Strait Islanders for 2,500 years. The initial arrival of European settlers in 1788, followed by further waves of arriving European settlers up until 1868, also contributed to an increase in the diversity of populations living on Indigenous lands now known as Australia. Subsequently after the Second World War, Australia experienced an influx of Italian and Greek migration, resulting in the formation of ethnic Italian and Greek communities throughout the country (Faggion & Furlan, 2018; Jupp, 2007; Mascitelli, 2015). This was followed by an increase in Asian migration, and most recently influxes of immigrants from Africa and the Middle East into urban areas (Aboud, 2000; Dhanji, 2010; Fozdar & Hartley, 2013; Gao, 2017; Inglis, 1972; Lakha, 2001; Muchoki, 2015; Price, 1986; Ross, 1987). Australia's cultural diversity is attributed to these successive waves of migration that have resulted in a large and diverse number of cultural minorities in Australia.

Australian university campuses located within urban areas are reflective of the increased diversity of cultures. As a result of internationalization, Australian universities now incorporate domestic and international students of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (Rhoades, 2016; Urban & Palmer, 2014; Welch, 2002). The origins of internationalization are identified within tenets of 20th century neoliberalism, and its policies of market driven forces through the predominance of the English language in order to promote

the economization of education (Chang, 2015; Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2014; Ha & Barnawi, 2015; Harris, 2008; Lave, 2012; Majhanovich, 2014; Wang, Castro, & Cunningham, 2014). Furthermore, economization of education through managerialism and neoliberal diversity policies has fostered this increased diversity on university campuses, immersing students within these diverse higher-education environments (Britez & Peters, 2010; Greyser & Weiss, 2012; Pang & Wang, 2016; Rea, 2016).

Cultural Diversity

Attitudes toward cultural diversity on Australian university campuses is an area of increasing research among social scientists. Furthermore, studies centered on societal attitudes toward cultural diversity among the general Australian population have been well documented. This is similar to research conducted on European and U.S. students' attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campuses that has also been greatly studied. These attitudes are subsequently explored, and examined in order to understand the impact of immigration, and university internationalization in shaping the attitudes present on university campuses.

Defining Cultural Diversity and its Contexts

Understanding the contexts of cultural diversity appears to influence how the term cultural diversity is used. In relation to cultural policy, cultural diversity may be defined as the support of a society for cultural and ethnic minorities (Kawashima, 2011). Within the context of cultural pluralism, cultural diversity is defined as the interaction and coexistence of different groups and sharing of values, and the maintenance of one's own culture and identity (Brooks, 2012; Shamai & Ilatov, 2001). A distinction should be made however between notions of cultural diversity and assimilation. This is due to the notion of assimilation resulting in the loss of one's own cultural identity, and the acceptance of the dominant culture within a society, and is contradictory to how cultural diversity is defined (Shamai & Ilatov, 2001).

Australian Attitudes Toward Cultural Diversity

Australia is considered to be culturally diverse due to many immigrant populations residing in its major metropolitan cities (Jupp, 1997). Historically Australia's cultural diversity begins with the Indigenous Australian Aboriginals. The increase in the further development of cultural diversity in Australia appears to result from the arrival of European settlers to Australia and its subsequent colonization, and the eventual migration of other groups. This diversity in the cultural makeup of Australia can be seen through the diverse ethnic groups that make up a part of the Australian population (Jupp, 1995; Raymer, Shi, Guan, Baffour, & Wilson, 2018; Smolicz, 1997). It has been suggested that Australians hold mostly positive attitudes toward cultural diversity due to the implementation of liberal, progressive values such as inclusion and respect toward others (Bouma, 2016; Markus, 2014). These values may be responsible for creating the perception that Australia is a successful culturally diverse country (Ramakrisha, 2013). Such assertions are contrasted however by the mixed views held by some Australians toward cultural diversity, and is seen through harsh criticism of cultural diversity, and decreasing levels of support for multicultural values (Forrest & Dunn, 2010; Moran, 2011).

Attitudes toward certain immigrant groups appear to further contrast the perception of these receptive attitudes that Australians hold toward cultural diversity. This is evident through the fearful and negative perceptions sometimes expressed by Australians toward Arabic and Muslim immigrants (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010; Lentini, Halafoff, & Ogru, 2011). Research suggests that attitudes toward cultural diversity are influenced by age, education, and location

of birth (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). Age can be an influential factor as older participants have been shown to be more likely to hold anti-immigration attitudes (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). Previous research also notes that postgraduate university educated individuals were more likely to support cultural diversity than those without a university level of education (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). Women, immigrants, and members of minority groups were also noted to have reported high levels of positive attitudes toward cultural diversity (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). This is in contrast to males born in Australia who expressed higher rates of disapproval (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). The attitudes of minority groups toward cultural diversity may be supportive as it allows migrant cultures to be practiced more openly within separate communities. This could shape negative perceptions toward cultural diversity and immigration due to immigrants predominantly practicing their own culture instead of the host culture, further creating fearful perceptions, and an overall disapproval of immigrants and cultures that are considered different (Blair, 2015; Bulbeck, 2004). This may be linked to the integrated threat theory characterized by the fearful perception of the refusal of migrants to integrate into the host culture (Croucher, 2013).

Programs designed to encourage diversity have been identified as an influential factor in shaping university students' attitudes toward cultural diversity (Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998). These programs often incorporate intercultural leadership programs, and diversity courses that help to promote cultural diversity, and inclusion of diverse groups on university campuses (Helm et al., 1998). Although these programs exist, research indicates that such programs may be problematic, with few studies supporting their effectiveness (Helm et al., 1998; Rogers-Sirin & Sirin, 2009). This is due to such programs often focusing on students of minority backgrounds instead of students of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds. To ensure that such issues do not arise, previous studies suggest that programs that are inclusive of all students are much more likely to be successful, with university students indicating higher levels of positive attitudes toward cultural diversity on campus (Helm et al., 1998). The implementation of these programs appears to support the importance of social policies such as social inclusion and mutual respect to promote successful cultural diversity, and help communities reach goals that are essential in culturally diverse societies (Bouma, 2016).

Attitudes Toward International Students

Australian universities are considered increasingly diverse due to the internationalization of Australian campuses, and the increasing numbers of international students travelling to Australia to study abroad (Fozdar & Volet, 2016; Welch, 2002). It has been argued that interactions among domestic and international students on Australian university campuses is often lacking, with little contact made between both groups due to monocultural preferences (Colvin, Volet, & Fozdar, 2013; Fu et al., 2012; Glass & Westmont, 2014; Rienties & Nolan, 2014; Summers & Volet, 2008). Although there is a lack of contact, research in this area notes that Australian students expressed positive attitudes toward interacting with international students, though they were reluctant to do so (Fozdar & Volet, 2016). This may be explained by the presence of cultural differences, and in-group and out-group biases (Fu et al., 2012) that may further shape domestic students' attitudes toward those that are perceived as different.

In contrast to these findings, international students expressed higher rates of desire to communicate with Australian domestic students (Fozdar & Volet, 2016). This openness toward cross-cultural interaction is attributed to experiences of cultural and racial diversity, and intercultural confidence within social identity theory, that explains how an individual's perception of themselves, and others is influenced by the social groups they belong to (Cokley et al., 2010; Elmeroth, 2009; Fozdar & Volet, 2016; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart,

2010). Groups upholding a sense of belonging among all members are more open to culturally engaging with those that are considered different (Fozdar & Volet, 2016; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011). As a result, self-confidence and a sense of belonging within social groups influences the attitudes that students hold toward diversity. Research indicates that the more diverse Australian domestic students' backgrounds are, the more likely they are to culturally mix with others (Fozdar & Volet, 2016). This may be due to Australian domestic students of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds being more receptive toward international students who also come from diverse backgrounds. This was in contrast to students who identified as Australian only, who were less receptive toward those who did not identify as Australian.

Researcher Positioning

As the primary researcher, my relationship to this research stems from my interest in cultural diversity as a result of globalization. Furthermore, having worked as a classroom teacher has immersed me within culturally and ethnically diverse environments. Our environments are known to shape our identities and perceptions. As a result, my investment into this research comes from my strong interest in pursuing research to further understand how cultural diversity influences not only educational settings, but individuals and societies as a whole.

As the secondary researcher, academic and former teacher, I have a strong interest in contributing to a positive experience, both personally and academically, for university students on campus. My current work includes the development of effective approaches to the inclusion of all students in university life, particularly those from culturally diverse backgrounds. I hope this research will contribute to a greater understanding of how we can positively address racial prejudice at universities to improve the learning experience for all students in an increasingly culturally diverse educational system.

Methodology

Research Questions and Study Design

In this study we employed a qualitative research design (Creswell, 2014) in order to gather data on the participants' attitudes toward cultural diversity. Our data was gathered via individual semistructured interviews and a focus group consisting of all five participants. We chose these methods to provide us with rich and detailed data that enabled a deeper understanding of the research questions (Creswell, 2014; Dilshad & Latif, 2013; Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). The potential participants were sourced via flyers which were placed around the university campus by the primary researcher. Of the respondents, five were selected using purposeful sampling to ensure that the participants' context and experiences would make them well-placed to provide valuable perspectives to inform and illuminate our research questions (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 1990). All participants had to be domestic students who were enrolled full-time in a postgraduate on-campus course at the university at which the research was being implemented. These criteria ensured that the participants likely spent a considerable amount of time on a culturally diverse university campus. The sampling also considered a mix of male and female participants and age groups.

Two research questions helped guide this study. The first research question was (1) What attitudes do Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on university campus? The second research question was (2) What individual experiences influence the development of attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campus?

Ethical Approval

Appropriate ethics approval was gained from the relevant university ethics committee, and all participants were provided with an explanatory statement and a consent form that was signed and returned. The research was conducted in an ethical manner and all participants were aware of exactly what their participation required, and that all the data would be de-identified.

Background of the Participants

A total of five participants attending the same university campus, and completing postgraduate studies participated in this study. The participants come from a range of different tertiary qualifications. These tertiary qualifications include; Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Nursing, and Master of Education (see Table 1).

Table 1
Participant backgrounds

Participant	Pseudonym	Qualification	Currently Studying	Age
1	James	Bachelor of Education	Graduate Certificate of Educational Research	55
2	Sarah	Bachelor of Education	Graduate Certificate of Educational Research	62
3	Michael	Bachelor of Education	Graduate Certificate of Educational Research	40
4	Kaitlyn	Master of Education	Doctor of Philosophy (Education)	54
5	Taylor	Bachelor of Nursing	Master of Nursing	23

The participants shared their attitudes and perceptions of cultural diversity on the university campus. The interview component of this study obtained participants' experiences and insights toward cultural diversity, and was achieved by allowing the participants to share their personal experiences of cultural diversity. The focus group allowed the participants to share their experiences, and discuss their perceptions of cultural diversity on the university campus with the other participants.

Interviews and Focus Group

The primary researcher conducted the individual interviews with each lasting between 25 and 30 minutes. Participants attending the interview were required to share their attitudes toward cultural diversity on university campus by answering a series of open-ended questions. These open-ended questions ranged from the participants discussing their personal background, as well as their attitudes toward cultural diversity, and whether or not they considered cultural diversity to be successful on the university campus. The participants' responses were recorded using a voice recording application on the primary researcher's laptop. The recordings were then transcribed after all of the interviews were completed. To prepare for the focus group, the participants who attended the interviews were asked to attend a focus group at an allocated time one week later.

The focus group was also facilitated by the primary researcher and lasted for the duration of one hour. The participants attending the focus group were asked a series of open-

ended questions similar to the questions proposed in the interview. The focus group questions were tweaked to allow a deep group discussion about the participants' attitudes toward cultural diversity to occur. These questions included discussing whether or not cultural diversity had been beneficial for the university campus, as well as why differing attitudes toward cultural diversity might exist. The focus group allowed an in-depth discussion to occur that was not present within the individual interviews. During the focus group, the group discussion was recorded using the same voice recording application used in the interviews on the primary researcher's laptop. The focus group audio recording was then transcribed by the primary researcher.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was used in this study to appropriately analyze the interview and focus group data. Thematic analysis is a recommended analytical method to use when interpreting participant responses (Creswell, 2014). To conduct the data analysis, the data obtained from the individual interviews and the focus group by the primary researcher was transcribed from the audio recordings onto a Microsoft Word document. The Microsoft Word documents containing the interview and focus group data were printed into a hard copy format. In order to analyze the data, coding was used through the use of several differently colored highlighters that were used to highlight interesting and recurring themes, ideas, and words stated by the participants. Coding was considered an ideal method due to its use of categories and labels in order to separate and reorganize the data (Creswell, 2014; Green et al., 2007; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). After the relevant data was coded, the primary researcher reorganized the data into separate categories based on these recurring themes, ideas, and words highlighted. From these categories, the overarching themes were developed based on the commonly discussed ideas, perspectives, and attitudes focusing on the experiences of the participants.

To increase trustworthiness in the data and analysis, two data sets were obtained through the individual interviews and focus group. Member checking was implemented and all participants checked over their interview and focus group transcripts to ensure that the data was correctly transcribed (Creswell, 2014; Lub, 2015). No prior relationships existed between the researchers and the participants which ensured there was no possibility of any power imbalances. Despite the secondary researcher being an academic at the university where the research took place, they had no prior involvement with any of the participants and was not present at the interviews or focus group.

Findings

Within this study a total of five participants contributed to the individual interviews and focus group. All participants were given a pseudonym to ensure anonymity and to protect their identity when the research findings are reported (Creswell, 2014; Kaiser, 2009). The data indicated a total of three overarching themes identified as; Past experiences of cultural diversity, Present experiences of cultural diversity, and Benefits of university campus in the development of culturally inclusive attitudes. Both the findings and discussion sections will be structured according to these themes.

Overarching Themes

Past experiences of cultural diversity. This theme captured several of the participants' past experiences of growing up and living, studying, and working within culturally diverse environments.

During the interviews the participants were asked if they had been within a culturally diverse environment before. Several of the participants mentioned that they had lived or grown up in a culturally diverse environment. Michael explained, "my mother was an ESL teacher, so I grew up surrounded by other cultures." Sarah discussed, "I have a mother born in another country... my grandmother was born in another country... I am married to a person born in England... so I have been aware of Australia's cultural diversity." Kaitlyn recounted, "I grew up in a culturally diverse society with... people of many... nations of former USSR." Kaitlyn also mentioned, "there was mostly no issues about that intermix except for behind the back derogatory remarks or discrimination."

Two participants also described their experiences of cultural diversity through their employment. James stated,

> I've been living within Melbourne within a culturally diverse society... I worked for SBS for 20 years... mainly working within SBS where we had over 70 languages... I've quite a bit of experience and been exposed to a lot of cultural diversity working within and living there.

Taylor mentioned, "I work at a hospital with many colleagues and care for clients who are culturally diverse such as Indian, Muslim, Asian, etc." Taylor also briefly mentioned her on-campus experiences and stated, "I was also in a culturally diverse environment whilst studying at university."

Present experiences of cultural diversity. This theme focused on the participants' experiences with international students while on campus, and the attitudes the participants held toward them. The participants' perspectives on the acceptance of other cultures in Australia were also captured.

Several of the participants shared similarities in their responses when asked about their perceptions of international students while on campus. James believed that, "international students who come here... from what I see... they do well, you know? They make a real effort." Sarah agreed with James' perception of international students by stating, "my experience has been the same. I understand them [international students] to put in a lot of effort... and I admire people who go and study really successfully." Kaitlyn shared the views of James and Sarah by stating, "I agree with both of them... I was teaching uni with 99% of international students and they were working really, really hard."

Kaitlyn and three other participants indicated contrasting views when discussing the notion of acceptance. Kaitlyn discussed how, "people who live here have to be accepting of people who do come here... I think people who come here also have to accept the way we live." Kaitlyn further elaborated that, "there are some groups who are not accepting, and not willing to accept... and want to live in their own bubble", and also stated, "I don't want to use the word 'assimilate' or 'integrate', but they have to learn our way of life." Sarah contrasted what Kaitlyn said by stating, "in all my years of my life in Australia I have not met anybody who... doesn't want to be a part of Australia." Sarah further explained to Kaitlyn that, "my own experience has been the exact opposite... people coming here want to be in Australia... and want to fit in, but want to maintain their own cultural identity."

Benefits of university campus in the development of culturally inclusive attitudes. This theme encapsulated the participants' views that education on university campuses plays an influential role in shaping culturally inclusive attitudes.

James and Taylor held contrasting views when discussing whether or not the attitudes of Australian domestic university students, and the attitudes of the general Australian

population toward cultural diversity were similar. James believed, "coming to a university puts you in a different kettle of fish than the general population." James also insisted that, "it [attitudes] changes because you learn, you meet new people, you spend a bit of time... you change your views." Taylor however contrasted the views of James by stating,

> There's going to be a lot of people who have no issues [with cultural diversity]... and some that dislike a culturally diverse learning environment... these attitudes can apply within the whole society regardless of whether or not they are a university student.

Sarah, James, and Michael discussed how the attitudes of university students toward cultural diversity are shaped by their education. James suggested that, "with education comes a bit of confidence... because you're not threatened by others, as those within the society who are not educated." Sarah agreed with James by explaining how, "people who think about things more are a bit more intelligent... more accepting because they tend to be a little more confident about their own status in society." Michael also shared the views of James and Sarah by stating, "I think it makes me more confident to talk about differences... I think it has given me an appreciation for foreign students."

Discussion

The semistructured interview data provided a rich set of data that informed the research questions, and allowed for a more complex understanding of attitudes toward cultural diversity on an Australian university campus. Furthermore, the discussion will be structured according to the themes identified within the findings.

Past Experiences of Cultural Diversity

The participants' past experiences appeared to be an influential factor in shaping attitudes toward cultural diversity. Discussion of the participants' personal upbringing emerged in a variety of conversations. For example, Michael's past experiences of cultural diversity were derived from growing up, and being surrounded by other cultures due to his mother's work as an ESL teacher. Sarah described the cultural backgrounds of several family members including the background of her partner, while Kaitlyn recounted her experiences of growing up within a culturally diverse society in the USSR. Michael, Sarah, and Kaitlyn may have exhibited positive attitudes toward cultural diversity due to positive past experiences of cultural diversity. This connection is supported by Bouma (2016) and Markus (2014), who assert that liberally progressive values such as inclusion, and respect toward others is responsible for creating positive attitudes toward cultural diversity. As a result, the positive experiences of Michael, Sarah, and Kaitlyn while growing up within a culturally diverse environment, coupled with these values may be responsible for shaping their positive attitudes toward cultural diversity.

James and Taylor's past experiences of cultural diversity also appeared to shape their attitudes toward cultural diversity on campus. Within the interview data, James and Taylor discussed their experiences of cultural diversity through their education, and occupation. James mentioned having lived in Melbourne within a culturally diverse society and working for Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), providing James with many experiences with cultural diversity. The experiences of Taylor are centered on her work as a nurse within a culturally and ethnically diverse medical setting, and her studies on a culturally and ethnically diverse university campus. James and Taylor's experiences appear to have shaped their attitudes

toward cultural diversity on university campus due to their exposure to cultural diversity within their personal and professional lives. This explanation is also supported by the progressive values of inclusion and respect discussed by Bouma (2016) and Markus (2014). It may be suggested that the implementation of these values may have been present in the workplaces of James and Taylor through the enactment of diversity policies. As a result, James and Taylor's exposure to these values within the workplace may have shaped their positive and inclusive attitudes toward working with, and helping people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This may explain the positive and receptive attitudes of James and Taylor toward culturally diverse environments.

Present Experiences of Cultural Diversity

Present experiences of cultural diversity appear to have influenced the participants' attitudes toward cultural diversity. This was evident through the participants' perceptions of international students on campus. Within the focus group data, a conversation on the effort that international students put into their studies was discussed. For example, James, Sarah, and Kaitlyn all agreed from their classroom and teaching experiences that international students showed a strong work ethic, and made a real effort to learn on campus. The participants' responses appeared to indicate positive attitudes toward international students. These findings appear to contrast Fozdar and Volet (2016), and Summers and Volet (2008) who concluded that Australian university students were reluctant to interact with international students. However, it should be noted that the subjects obtained for this study were postgraduate students who possessed teaching experience, whereas the subjects within the works of Fozdar and Volet (2016), and Summers and Volet (2008) were first year undergraduates. As a result, the participants' exposure to international students while teaching may have shaped the positive attitudes expressed during the focus group. This may be due to the presence of a teacher-student dynamic involving the participants interacting with the international students when teaching.

The discussion of acceptance of other cultures by several participants provided further insight into the participants' attitudes toward cultural diversity. During the focus group, Kaitlyn, Sarah, and James contrasted views over the importance of cultures accepting each other. Kaitlyn explained that respect should be mutual between cultures in Australia due to the existence of some immigrant groups that are unaccepting of other cultures, and the need for different immigrant cultures and immigrant groups to accept an Australian way of life. Sarah disagreed with Kaitlyn's view by stating that she had no experience of cultures or groups within Australia who were unaccepting. Sarah further suggested that instances of unaccepting groups are heard of more than actually seen. In contrast, James supported Kaitlyn by sharing his own experience of individuals who have had difficulty integrating, and live within separate communities. Integrated threat theory may help to explain this perspective held by Kaitlyn. Croucher (2013) characterizes integrated threat theory as a response to fears, and concerns of migrants' refusal to integrate. Kaitlyn may have expressed concern about unaccepting cultures and groups due to these groups refusing to integrate. This may have been an issue for Kaitlyn due to the lack of acceptance associated with certain immigrant groups not having aligned with her definition of cultural diversity, which involves different cultures living and working together within the same environment.

Benefits of University Campus in the Development of Culturally Inclusive Attitudes

Attitude differences toward cultural diversity between Australian domestic university students, and the general Australian population was another idea discussed by two of the participants. James and Taylor held contrasting views toward the idea that differences between

the attitudes of both groups existed. James asserted that Australian university students were more accepting of cultural diversity due to the exposure to diverse university campuses helping shape and change students' views. James' view aligns with Dandy and Pe-Pua (2010) who noted that individuals who received a postgraduate level of education were more supportive of cultural diversity compared to individuals who did not receive a postgraduate level of education. Although this connection is evident, James' view, and the work of Dandy and Pe-Pua (2010) is contrasted by Taylor who suggested that no differences in attitudes exist due to there being university students who hold culturally exclusive attitudes toward cultural diversity, and individuals within the general Australian population who hold culturally inclusive views. This appears to suggest that university campuses may not necessarily shape culturally inclusive attitudes. This may be due to perceptions of in-groups and out-groups as discussed by Fu et al. (2012) within university campuses, and may be responsible for shaping how Australian university students view cultural diversity on campus.

Several participants proposed that education influenced attitudes toward cultural diversity. James, Sarah, and Michael agreed that education resulted in confidence, and not being fearful or threatened by different cultures. James described how university students were more educated, and that education builds confidence, making educated people less threatened. Sarah and Michael agreed with James by discussing how intelligent people were more accepting due to self-confidence, and the development of an appreciation for foreign students. This discussion suggests that education builds self-confidence due to the participants' education exposing them to diverse cultures, perspectives, and outlooks toward life. These experiences that the participants were exposed to may stem from the course content taught, and interactions with students of diverse backgrounds within tutorial classes. Cokley et al. (2010), Fozdar and Volet (2016), Wang et al. (2014), and Worthington et al. (2008) support this notion by explaining how cross-cultural interactions between students of diverse backgrounds increases cultural competence and cultural confidence. This is due to the dissipation of stereotypical and prejudicial attitudes through interacting with different students. As a result, the participants' interactions with students of diverse backgrounds may have increased their cultural competence, and cultural confidence to not view other cultures in a threatening way.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that postgraduate Australian domestic university students hold positive attitudes toward cultural diversity on Australian university campuses. Australian universities are generally culturally diverse spaces. The data suggests that the attitudes formed toward cultural diversity on campus are directly related to the participants' experiences. The past experiences, namely growing up and working within diverse communities where inclusion and respect are practiced were found to be responsible for shaping the participants' positive attitudes at a young age. Working within culturally diverse environments was also found to be important in shaping the culturally inclusive attitudes held. The present experiences of cultural diversity, seen through the participants' interactions with international students within the classroom, and on campus was also influential in the development of positive attitudes toward cultural diversity on campus. Subsequently the benefits of university campus in the development of culturally inclusive attitudes were also found to be responsible for shaping the inclusive attitudes of the participants. This was seen through the environmental dynamics of university campuses, and the role of education in shaping inclusive attitudes.

As the world becomes increasingly globalized, it is likely that cultural diversity will continue to grow on campuses, and that students will be increasingly exposed to it as a result. Though cultural diversity is increasingly present, understanding the influence that cultural diversity has had on Australian domestic university students is an area that would benefit from

further investigation. Understanding the attitudes that students hold toward cultural diversity will help provide researchers, educational policy makers, and university administrators with a deeper understanding of any issues that may be present on university campuses, and whether or not current levels of cultural diversity on campus have been beneficial in creating a successful learning environment. This can help inform the educational practice of university teachers in improving inclusivity within university classrooms.

Given the small sample size in this study, it would be valuable to conduct more broad-based research across a number of Australian universities. This will help to provide a more insightful understanding of the attitudes that Australian domestic university students hold toward cultural diversity on Australian university campuses. Through a deeper understanding of these attitudes toward cultural diversity, a more thorough understanding of the impact that cultural diversity has on university campuses may be understood, and will further provide a deeper understanding of how educational policy, and educational practice will continue to be shaped as a result of this increasing presence of cultural diversity.

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