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LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER
PEER MENTORING PROGRAM (LGBTMP)
MIXED METHODS ASSESSMENT REPORT

By

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ABSTRACT

The LGBT Peer Mentoring Program (LGBTPMP) at the University of Southern California strives to improve the overall student development of the mentee participants. For this assessment study, researchers developed four constructs to evaluate mentee development. The constructs included: (1) psychological and emotional support, (2) support for setting goals and choosing a career path, (3) sexual and gender identity, and (4) health and wellness through occupational engagement. This study utilized a mixed methods approach to uncover the development of mentee participants through pre/posttest online surveys and interviews.

The findings explain significant developmental achievements with three of the constructs: sexual/gender identity development, psychological and emotional support, and health and wellness. Results for support for setting goal setting and choosing a career path construct did not have a significant change from the pre to the posttest results. In addition, from the qualitative results, there was a decrease in the number of mentees that could envision their lives in the next five years. It is recommended that moving forward the LGBTPMP focus on improving support for long-term goal setting of mentee participants.

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Established mentoring programs for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students have traditionally focused on only student sexual and gender identity development, or more commonly known as the ‘coming out’ process. However, the LGBT student demographic is changing and many students today are more affirmed with their LGBT identities at earlier ages and some are already out when they attend colleges and universities. The University of Southern California’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Peer Mentor Program (LGBTMP) established a mentoring program that not only considers the coming out process for a mentee but also focuses on the development of a mentee’s multifaceted identity including support for setting goals, career decisions and health and wellness. LGBTMP created an assessment protocol to evaluate the overall developmental experience for mentee participants and assess corresponding areas of student development.

The LGBTMP assessment addresses the following:

- 1) Identify the specific needs of traditionally underserved students, such as LGBT students
- 2) Facilitate better program development and implementation to meet the diverse needs of students
- 3) Add to the evidence-based practice mentoring research
- 4) Develop an LGBT-specific mentoring instrument that will be a template for other student affairs practitioners to support students in a variety of education settings

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews were developed to assess four areas of research: (1) psychological and emotional support, (2) support for setting goals and choosing a career path (Nora and Crisp, 2007; Crisp, 2009), (3) sexual and gender identity (Chickering &

Reisser, 1993; Cass, 1979; D'Augelli, 1994), and (4) health and wellness through occupational engagement (Jackson et al, 1998; Law et al, 1998; Wilcock, 1998). To address the needs of LGBT students and the mentoring literature, we utilized two different theoretically rich disciplines, student development and occupational science. We used two mentoring construct domains identified by Nora and Crisp (2007) and validated by Crisp (2009): (1) psychological and emotional support, and (2) support for setting goals and choosing a career path. The third domain is identity development with a focus on sexual and gender identity as theoretically supported by Chickering & Reisser (1993), Cass (1979), and D'Augelli (1994). The last domain is health and wellness through occupational engagement (Jackson et al, 1998; Law et al, 1998; Wilcock, 1998).

Surveys and interviews were conducted with mentees in the program, whom are undergraduate and graduate student participants that self-identify as LGBT or questioning. Mentees were encouraged to complete an online 5-point Likert scale survey upon entering and exiting the program (see Appendix A). Additionally qualitative interviews were recorded with each mentee during their entrance and exit interviews to better understand the experiences and perceptions of students who receive mentoring. For the purpose of this report, the quantitative and qualitative data have been analyzed and included.

PROPOSED ANALYSIS

Researchers used a mixed methods research approach to analyze the four theoretically supported mentoring construct domains. The goals for the assessment are to examine the mentee's development as an individual, the overall development for the group, and produce an evaluation of the mentoring program. Following the recommendations made by Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2006), researchers strengthened their findings by incorporating data analysis triangulation

in a multi- stage model including: data reduction, data display, data correlation, data consolidation, data comparison, and data integration (p. 491).

Researchers performed a statistical analysis of quantitative data, comparing pre and posttest survey items to assess the group differences and progress. To increase research credibility and conformability, the evaluation was performed by a graduate student in the Postsecondary Administration and Student Affairs Program at the USC Rossier School of Education. Data analysis occurred during the summer, once all of the data was gathered from the academic year.

RESULTS

This section will explore the pretest and posttest results from the quantitative surveys, as well as the qualitative pre and post-interviews administered to the LGBTPMP mentees in the 2011-2012 academic year. Mentees were provided a link for an anonymous survey after admittance into the LGBTPMP, which occurred before their entrance interview. Consequently, mentees were provided a posttest survey before their exit interviews. Pre and post-interviews were administered by the LGBTPMP Program Coordinator.

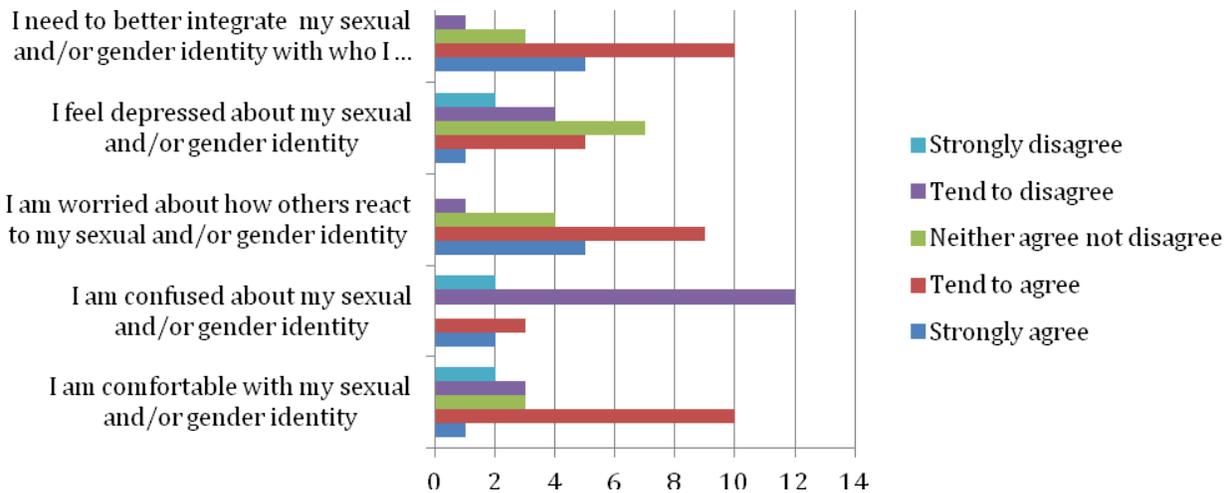
It is notable that the researcher combined agreement responses for “strongly agree” and “agree” into a combined agree analysis. Consequently, the researcher combined the disagreement responses for “strongly disagree” and “disagree”. The results including every response option will be represented in the figures for this section.

Sexual and gender identity development

The quantitative pretest results from the sexual and gender identity development construct presented significant findings about integration, anxiety, comfort and depression (Figure 1). A large portion of the mentees 78.95 % ($n=15$) were in agreement with the

statement: I need to better integrate my sexual and/or gender identity with who I am. A 73.68% majority ($n=14$) of mentees felt worried about how others would perceive their sexual/gender identity while 57.89% ($n=11$) of mentees agreed to feeling comfortable with their sexual/gender identity. The number mentees that reported feelings of depression associated with their sexual/gender identity was split with 31.58% ($n=6$) indicating feelings of depression, 31.58% ($n=6$) indicating that they did not hold feelings of depression, and 36.84% ($n=7$) indicating that they neither agreed nor disagreed to feeling depressed about their sexual/gender identity.

Figure 1 Pretest: Sexual and Gender Identity Development



Qualitative interviews revealed that mentees overwhelmingly experienced a dichotomous sexual/gender identity. Every mentee that participated in the pre and post-interviews ($n=22$) reported being comfortable expressing their sexual/gender identity to some people in their lives, while not being comfortable with others. In most cases, mentees felt comfortable expressing their sexual/gender identity to a friend once the friend revealed that they were comfortable with the LGBT community. One mentee expressed that:

For my friends, I will make sure that they are open (before expressing my sexual identity) . . . if they express they dislike homosexual people, I will not tell them. I confessed to a girl before because she said she had some lesbian friends and she does not hate homosexuality. That is why I had the courage to confess to her. At USC, the first people to whom I expressed my sexuality were people from the LGBT (community). Other than that, I have not disclosed my sexuality to anyone.

The same individuals reported being most uncomfortable expressing their sexual/gender identity to their family members. Mentees reported that they would be perceived to be a disappointment to their families if they expressed their sexual/gender identity. The majority of the mentees expressed that they were least comfortable with expressing their LGBT identity to their parents or grandparents. Mentees recalled instances when they heard oppressive discourse about the LGBT community from their family members and attributed this as the primary reason for why they would feel like a disappointment to their family for being LGBT. For instance, one mentee recalled the following experience:

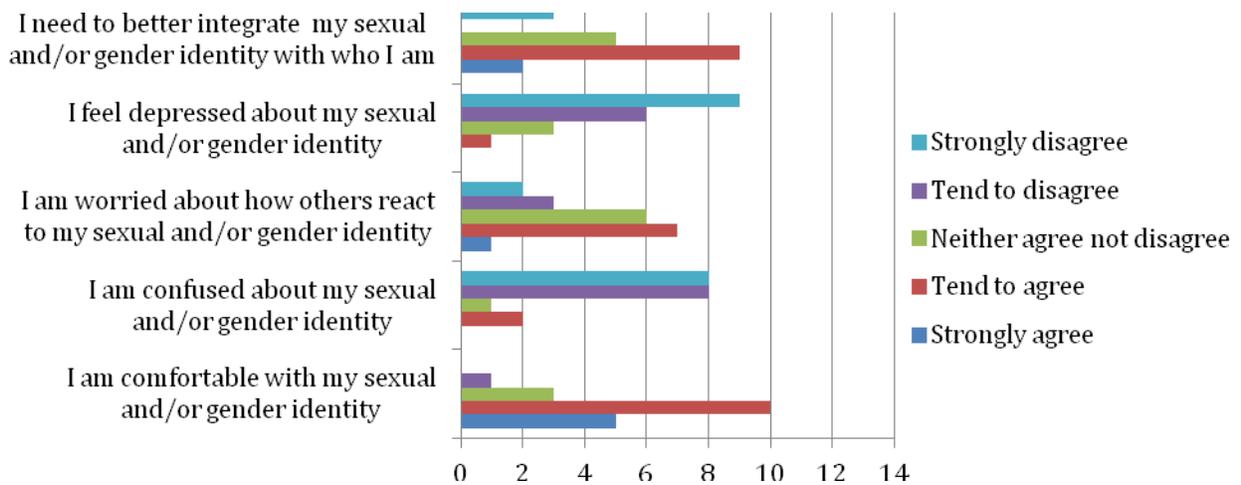
I am too scared to talk to my dad; both of my grandparents, just randomly, told me they would kill themselves if they ever thought I was (gay).

The majority of mentees expressed a dichotomous identity, where they were out to people that they felt safe with, while they were not out to people that had expressed resistance to the LGBT community.

In the posttest, mentees displayed improvements with depression, concern over the reaction of others to their LGBT identity, and comfort (Figure 2). A fewer number of mentees 5.26% ($n=1$) reported feeling depressed about their sexual/gender identity in the posttest,

compared with 31.58% ($n=6$) from the pretest. Significant differences also occurred with mentees whom reported feeling worried about how others would react to their sexual and/or gender identity, with a 31.57% decrease in concern. Additionally, there was a 21.06% increase in the number of mentees that felt comfortable with their sexual/gender identity and a 21.06% decrease in the number of mentees that felt they needed to do a better job of integrating their sexual/gender identity with who they were.

Figure 2 Posttest: Sexual and Gender Identity Development



Qualitative interviews revealed that mentees were leading less dichotomous lives after their participation in the program. Mentees expanded the circle of individuals that they felt comfortable expressing their sexual/gender identity with. In many cases, mentees verbalized a desire to come out to family members who they were completely uncomfortable expressing their LGBT identity to at the beginning of the program. Mentees successfully integrated their sexual/gender identity more fully into their other identities, including their family identity. For instance, two mentees expressed:

Mentee 1

I am really comfortable with my friends; they just see me as me not as just a gay person.

My dad came around this winter and told me he didn't care about my preference and that he loved me. That meant a lot.

Mentee 2

This program helped me to come out to my friends. I have straight male friends and I told them last semester. I didn't expect much, but they were really accepting, so my risk was rewarded. I haven't talked with (my family) about my sexuality because we don't see each other very often, but hopefully soon I will start sharing about the other side of me.

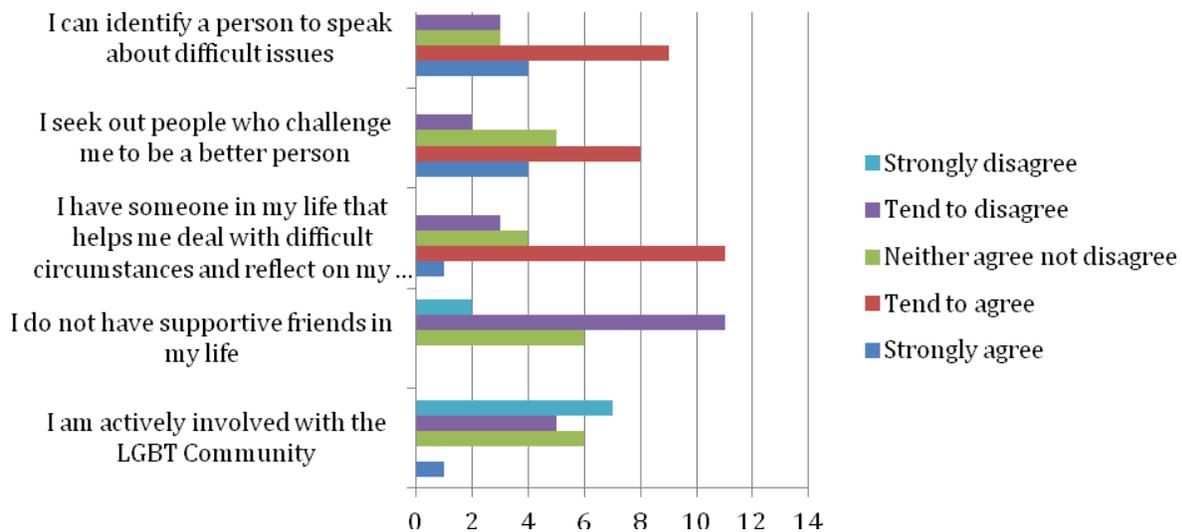
The findings for the sexual and gender identity development concentration indicate that by the end of the LGBTPMP mentees felt they had better integrated their sexual/gender identity, as evident with ($n=19$) mentees in pretest and posttest. Additionally, they felt more comfortable with their sexual/gender identity. Mentees reported a decrease in depression and less concern over the reaction of others to their LGBT identity. Qualitative interviews for ($n=22$) revealed that mentees developed less dichotomous identities. Overall, mentees integrated their sexual/gender identity more fully into their lives.

Social, psychological, and emotional support

The pretest results for the social, psychological and emotional support concentration showed that a small number of mentees felt that they were actively involved in the LGBT community with 5.26% ($n=1$) agreeing (Figure 3). 63.16% ($n=12$) agreed that they have someone that helps them deal with difficult circumstances and reflect on their lives; the same

number of mentees agreed that they seek out people that challenge them to be a better person. To the prompt: *I can identify a person to speak with about difficult issues*, 68.42% (n=13) agreed.

Figure 3: Pretest: Social, Psychological, and Emotional Support



Qualitative interviews allowed mentees to speak about the support they found in their social circles. Experiences ranged widely from a large group of supportive friends to one or two friends. The majority of the mentees revealed that they had at least one social system of support, usually in the form of a friend. One mentee expressed:

With select individuals, I feel like I can be completely who I am while with others I feel I have to hide it or mask it somehow.

A number of mentees named their religions and/or spiritual social circles as support networks, but they specifically mentioned not being able to come out to this social circle. One mentee stated:

I have been drawn to fairly conservative people because of the way I grew up; a lot of my closer friends are more religious . . . a lot of my friends have said they don't agree with

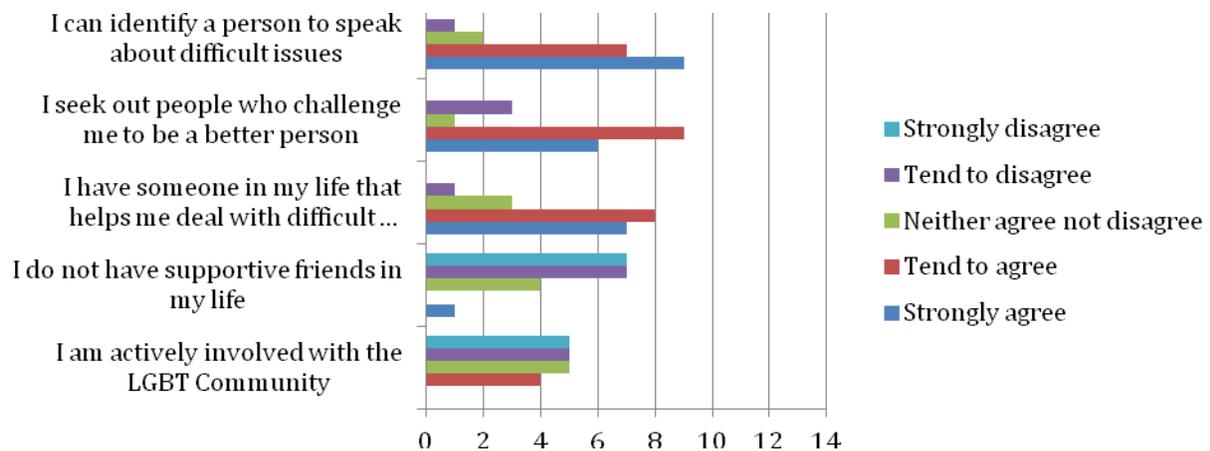
homosexuality. I am pretty uncomfortable talking with them (my friends) because the environment we grew up in, it's very conservative and very religious.

Mentees spoke of wanting to expand their social circle and make more supportive friends.

The posttest results indicated that the mentees were more actively involved with the LGBT community after the program, with 21.05% ($n=4$) agreeing to the involvement questions (Figure 4). An increased number, 78.95% ($n=15$) of respondents agreed with the following question: *I have someone that helps me deal with difficult circumstances and reflect on my life.*

There was an increase in the total number of mentees that seek out people to challenge them to be a better person with 78.95% ($n=15$). There was also an increase in the number of mentees that agreed they can identify a person to speak with about difficult issues with 84.21% ($n=16$).

Figure 4 Posttest: Social, Psychological, and Emotional Support



Qualitative interviews revealed that the majority of the mentees reported a positive increase in their social circles. From the total interviews ($n=22$), 86.36% ($n=19$) reported they increased the number and quality of their friends. A majority of the mentees reported that the activities they participated in with their social circles were beneficial and healthy. As stated by a mentee, *“I am much more sociable and confident than I was before, thanks to the program.”*

Post-interviews revealed an increased level of support and expanded social circles for the majority of the mentees.

I will be (more comfortable) once all my best friends know and I have made a lot of progress on that. I have good friends and I've met a lot of people (at USC). I have a goal to meet someone new every day. I really like my social circle and I know I will be friends with some of these people for the rest of my life.

Notably, while some mentees mentioned their spiritual and religious social circles during the pre-interview, no mentees mentioned their religion or spirituality during the post-interview.

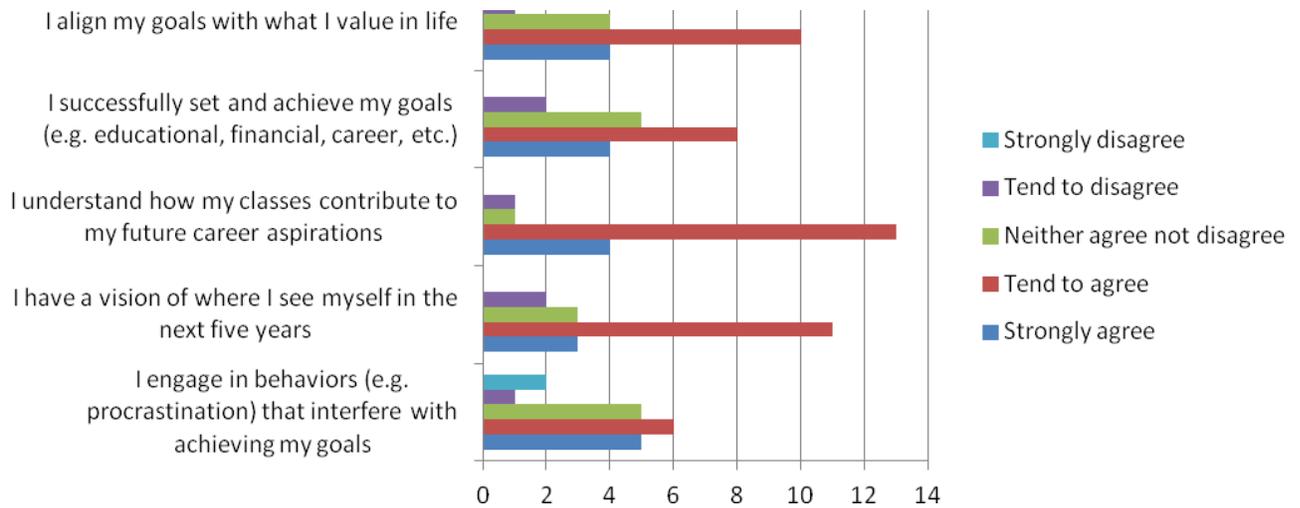
Results from the posttest for the social, psychological and emotional support concentration showed mentees had better support circles in place after the program. There were small increases in the following: 1) number of mentees involved in the LGBT community, 2) mentees that identified someone to help them through difficult circumstances and self reflection, and 3) mentees that seek out people to challenge them to be a better person. Qualitative interviews revealed that mentees were successful in their efforts to increase their social circles. The majority of mentees made a larger number of supportive friends by the end of the LGBTPMP.

Support for setting goals and choosing a career path

The support for setting goals and choosing a career path concentration had a 73.68% ($n=14$) agreement rating for the following statement: *I align my goals with what I value in life* (Figure 5). A 63.16% ($n=12$) majority of mentees agreed they successfully set and achieve their goals. In response to the prompt: *I have a vision for where I see myself in the next 5 years*, 73.68% ($n=14$) agreed, while a little over half of mentees 57.89% ($n=11$) agreed that they engaged in behaviors (e.g. procrastinating) that interfered with their goals. The next largest

percentage, 26.32% (n=5) neither agreed nor disagreed that they engaged in behaviors that interfere with their goals.

Figure 5 Pretest: Support for Setting Goals and Choosing a Career Path



Qualitative pre-interviews revealed that mentees had a general understanding of where they wanted to be in the next five years. When prompted to name career options, most of them could name 2-3 options they were considering. All of the options they named related to their major and it was clear that the mentees were taking steps towards their long-term goals. In addition to naming their career trajectory, all mentees conveyed that they would like to be out within the next five years. For instance, a mentee expressed:

Mentee 1

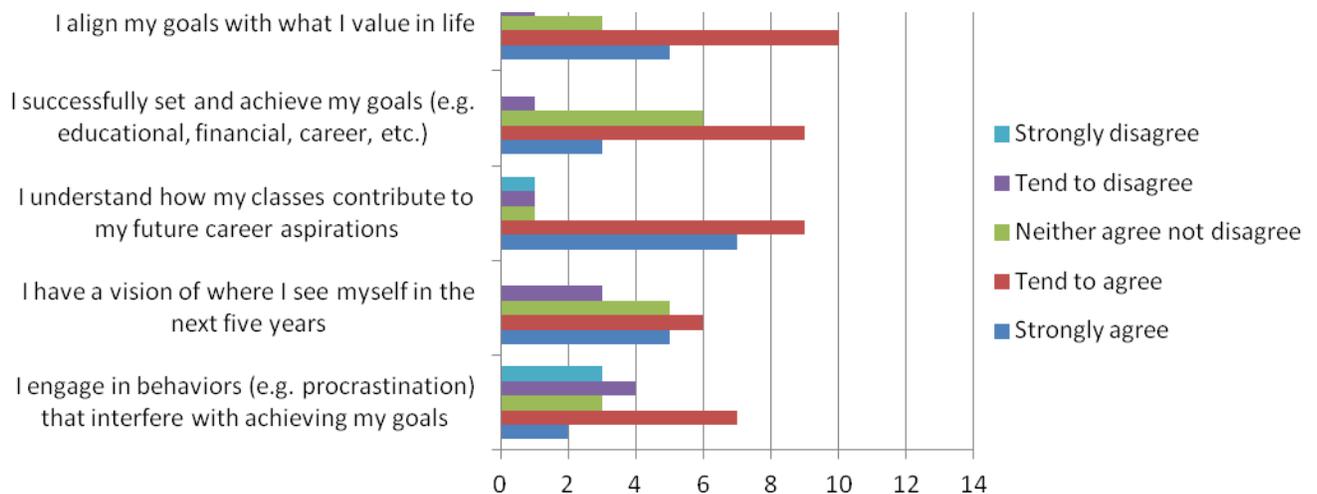
I want to be someone that is comfortable with the person I have become. I see myself with someone next to me. I want a partner.

Mentee 2

Hopefully I can come out . . . and be comfortable expressing my sexuality. Hopefully I can find really good friends who I understand who I am.

Posttest results showed 78.95% ($n=15$) agree that they align their goals with what they value in life (Figure 6). Similarly to the pretest, 63.16% ($n=12$), set and achieve their goals. There was a decrease in the number of mentees reported having a vision of themselves in the next 5 years with 57.89% ($n=11$). There was also a decrease in mentees that agreed they engage in behaviors that interfere with their goals, with 47.37% ($n=9$); the next largest percentage, 36.84% ($n=7$) disagreed with the statement.

Figure 6 Posttest: Support for Setting Goals and Choosing a Career Path



Post-interviews revealed that students had an evolving vision for themselves in the next five years. Most mentees answered this prompt similarly as they did in the pre-interviews; however they provided additional details. For instance, one mentee, who expressed wanting to enter the field of computer science upon graduation, narrowed their objective to working for a

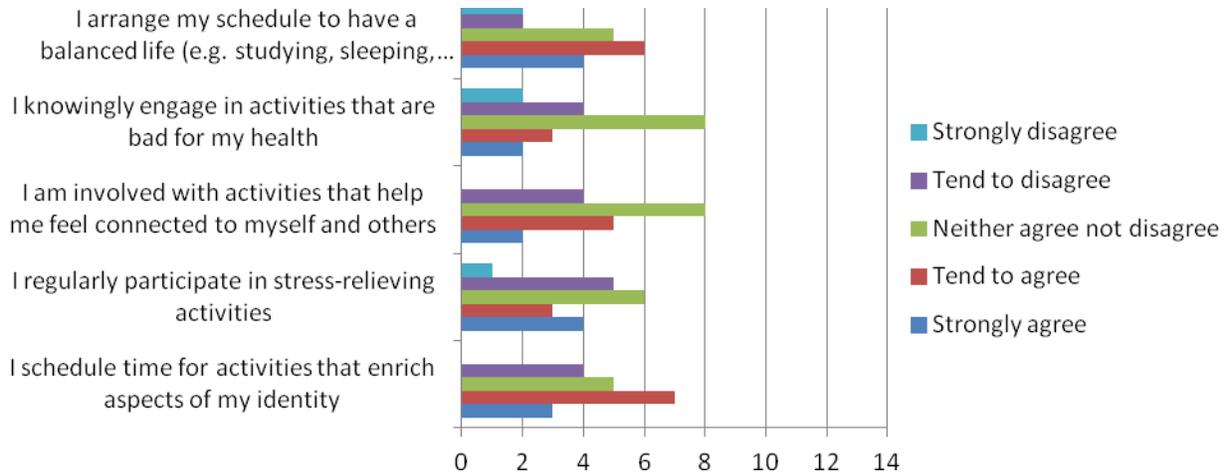
start-up and creating apps. Many of the mentees remained consistent with their goal of wanting to be out and added that they would like to be in a relationship.

Data remained relatively the same from the pretest to the posttest, with a small increase in the number of mentees that align their goals with what they value. Conversely, there was a small regression in the number of mentees that had a vision for where they see themselves in the next five years. Qualitative interviews showed the vision that mentees had for their lives remained relatively consistent. They were, however, able to fill in a few additional details regarding the direction of their lives like wanting to be out and in a relationship within the next five years.

Health and wellness through occupational engagement

The health and wellness through occupational engagement pretest results showed 52.63% ($n=10$) mentees agree to scheduling time for activities that enrich aspects of their identity and to arranging their schedules to have a balanced life (Figure 7). To the prompts: *I am involved with activities that help me feel connected to myself and others* and *I regularly participate in stress-relieving activities*, 36.84% ($n=7$) were in agreement. 31.58% ($n=6$) of mentees disagreed with the statement: *I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health*.

Figure 4 Pretest: Health and Wellness through Occupational Engagement



Pre-interviews revealed that a large number of mentees were struggling with depression and leading fairly unbalanced lives. Mentees focused on stressors such as academic burdens, social pressure surrounding their LGBT identity, and a lack of exercise. A mentee expressed:

I need to study more; I am still finding my balance. I really like kick boxing and going to the gym, but because I am not that comfortable in my body and expressing my (gender identity) I am not comfortable with those sports activities. When I don't have to be compromised physically, I am quite comfortable (working out).

Mentees were coping with these stressors in a variety of ways. Some spoke of engaging in healthy activities such as exercise, while others were coping by allowing their balance to be dictated by their academic lives. Many participants spoke of becoming “reclusive” during the work week and then partying during the weekend. One mentee spoke of drug and alcohol use, in addition to hooking-up with people of the opposite sex in order to cope with the pressure they

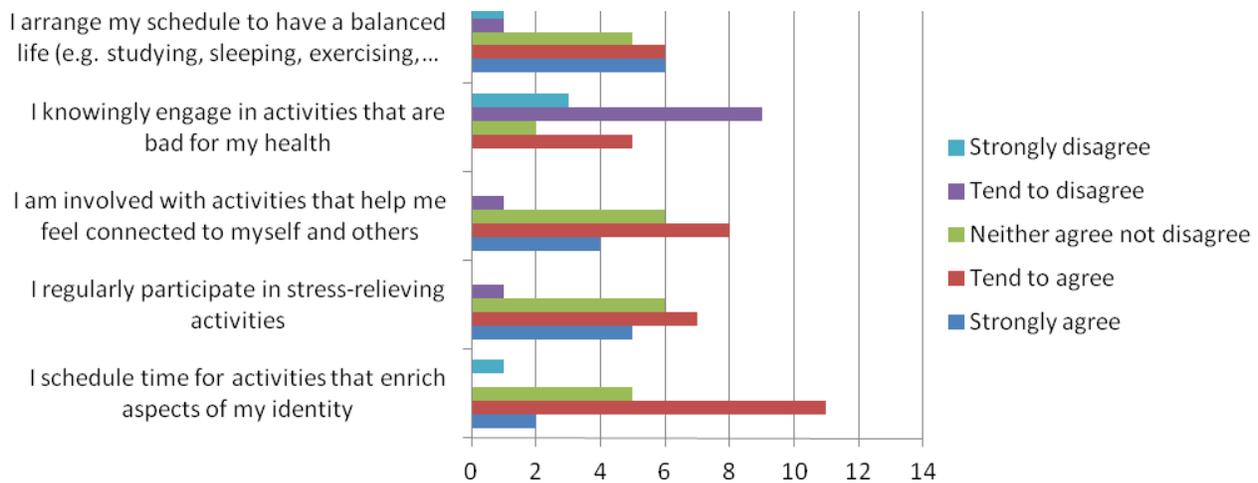
felt around being gay; this would only happen on the weekend, as the work-week was for school.

The mentee stated:

I feel pretty balanced, but I haven't integrated my sexuality into that. Sometimes, I do some destructive things with friends. Over the fall (last year), I started to use weed a lot . . . and get high like every day. When I thought about my sexuality while being high, I would be way more passive and scared about telling people. When I get very drunk at parties, I hook-up with girls (because I feel scared). Intoxication isn't the best for my emotional health.

The posttest results revealed 68.42% ($n=13$) of respondents agreed they schedule time for activities that enrich their identity (Figure 8). A majority of mentees, 63.16% ($n=12$) agreed to the prompts centering on the following themes: arranging schedules for a balanced life, participating in stress-relieving activities, and involvement in activities to feel connected to themselves and others. To the question *I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health*, 63.16% ($n=12$) disagreed.

Figure 5 Posttest: Health and Wellness through Occupational Engagement



Post-interviews revealed mentees were leading more balanced and healthy lives throughout their participation in the mentoring program. The mentee that identified drug and alcohol use and ‘hooking-up’ with people as a coping mechanism in the pre-interview, revealed they were spending time with gay and ally students in their major and there was less of a dichotomy between their work-week and weekend activities. The mentee expressed:

I balance doing well in school and being social. I don't drink as much as I did at the beginning of the semester. I have seen some of my friends with some very scary habits, being addicted to stuff. I respect my body. It's been very good for my emotional health to come out to my friends. I am much happier than I was in the fall.

Another mentee reported feeling, “...more and more balanced every day.”

This increase in balance seemed to be evolving and it was clear the mentees needed continued support for their health and wellbeing to evolve.

The posttest revealed that the number of mentees engaged in positive health and wellness through occupational engagement increased. There was a significantly large increase in the

number of mentees that regularly participate in stress-relieving activities and who are involved in activities to help them feel connected with themselves and others. Additionally, the number of mentees that disagreed with the statement about knowingly engaging in activities that are bad for their health significantly decreased. From the interviews, it was clear that mentee's health and well-being improved as a part of their participation in the LGBTPMP program. For many mentees, it was clear that continued support will assist them in maintaining healthy lives.

Results indicate LGBTPMP mentees improved in the sexual and gender identity development, social, psychological, and emotional support, and health and wellness through occupational engagement concentrations. For the support for setting goals and choosing a career path concentration, results were not significantly different from the pre to the posttest and fewer mentees had a vision for where they see themselves in the next five years.

DISCUSSION

Mentees in the LGBTPMP showed significant improvements in their sexual and gender identity development. These improvements were shown through the quantitative posttest results with every question in the sexual and gender identity concentration indicating improvement. In addition, post-qualitative results through entrance and exit interviews indicate that after their participation in LGBTPMP mentees were leading less dichotomous lives and better integrated their sexual and gender identities more fully into other aspects of their lives. LGBTPMP successfully executed the sexual and gender identity concentration because mentees showed significant improvements with their sexual and gender identity development through the qualitative and quantitative data.

For the social, psychological, and emotional support concentration, quantitative posttest and qualitative post interviews indicate that mentees felt supported with their social,

psychological and emotional well-being after their participation in LGBTPMP. The quantitative data indicated mentee improvements for each survey question for this concentration area. One can assume that within their participation in LGBTPMP, mentees initiated steps to establish a better supportive environment for themselves, which can be a direct result of their participation in LGBTPMP. Mentees admitted, through their post interviews, to expanding their social circles to develop new friendships with accepting individuals and participate in LGBT-inclusive activities.

The quantitative posttest results for setting goals and choosing a career path concentration indicated mentees struggled to acknowledge a clear recognition for this concentration. In fact, the data indicates the overall number of mentees that felt they had support with this concentration was a mere 5% increase – not as significant as the other three concentration areas. In addition, the survey results indicated a decrease in the number of mentees that indicated they had a vision for themselves in the next five years, which is the opposite of what mentees said in the pre-interviews. For the pre and post interviews, mentees clearly articulated their vision for themselves within the next five year and in the post interviews the mentee responses were more specific than the pre interviews. One can assume, the LGBTPMP did not assist mentees to develop a five year plan and help with setting goals, but rather the mentees had already developed goals and career aspirations on their own without LGBTPMP.

The posttest and post-interviews revealed that mentees obtained higher levels of health and wellness through occupational engagement after the LGBTPMP. There were significant improvements on each prompt including, participation in activities that enrich their identity, arranging their schedules to establish more balance, participation in stress-relieving activities, and involvement in activities to feel connected to themselves and others. Additionally, fewer

mentees engaged in activities that were bad for their health. Interviews revealed that mentees were leading more balanced lives and engaging in healthier behaviors after LGBTPMP. Overall, there were fewer dichotomies between their work week and weekend and they had integrated their responsibilities to create more consistent and balanced lifestyle.

IMPLICATIONS

The quantitative and qualitative results indicate LGBTPMP mentees made significant improvements in three concentration areas: 1) sexual and gender identity development, 2) social, psychological, and emotional support, and 3) health and wellness through occupational engagement. Mentees were able to integrate their identities more fully into their lives. They feel well supported and report a better life balance between academics and health/wellness. Moving forward, LGBTPMP should continue with similar curriculum addressing the aforementioned areas and should sustain curriculum related to sexual and gender identity development since it had the most significant improvement.

It is clear from the results that the LGBTPMP needs to improve setting goals and choosing a career path concentration since the survey indicated fewer mentees could articulate a vision for themselves in the next five years. LGBTPMP Coordinator should integrate workshops, speakers or trainings that address goal setting for mentees. It may also be an opportunity to educate mentors intervention strategies to assist their mentees with goal setting and career preparation. This concentration can be the subject of future mentor-mentee monthly meetings.

LIMITATIONS

There are a few limitations with this LGBTPMP assessment strategy, as listed below.

- Pre and posttest participation
- Enhance the interview process

- Frequency of mentor-mentee interactions

Pre and Posttest Participation

For the quantitative pretest, every mentee participant responded to the online survey ($n=27$), but for the posttest not every mentee responded ($n=19$). Due to the lack of participation in the posttest and to ensure that the overall data analysis was not skewed, only mentee participants that completed the pre and posttest were evaluated for this report. As a result, this report does not reflect the experience for every mentee in the program. The LGBTPMP Coordinator and LGBT Resource Center Director should institute a stricter mandate for mentees to complete the online pre and posttest survey. The Coordinator should send the posttest link before final exams to guarantee completion.

Enhance the Interview Process

Although the qualitative questions are open ended questions, some of the mentees unfortunately did not elaborate on their responses rather providing ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers. Since the Coordinator serves as the interviewer for the pre and posttest qualitative questions, he/she should use more prompts to encourage more details to be given for every question. Additionally, it would assist with the overall data analysis if the Coordinator evaluated the emerging themes for each mentee from the pre-interviews. The Coordinator can review the topics discussed in the pre-interview with a particular mentee in the post-interview to guarantee some cohesion and update on what was previously stated. This will assist with identifying a better detailed progression and/or regression in a mentee’s development.

Frequency of Mentor-Mentee Interaction

Moving forward, it may assist LGBTPMP to develop a documentation process of the mentor-mentee interactions to examine whether improvements with the concentration areas were

a direct result of the mentoring relationship. A suggestion may be to review the required goal sheet between the mentors and mentees as part of the data analysis process to identify whether the mentor-mentee goals directly relate with a mentee's development. This evaluation may help to discover whether mentees develop through participation in LGBTPMP or through some other actions taken in their lives. An improved linkage between a mentee's participation in LGBTPMP and their assessment results would determine the effectiveness of the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As discussed in the implications section, improvements should be made to LGBTPMP including programmatic changes. Below are recommendations for the next academic year.

Support for Setting Long-Term Goals and Choosing a Career Path

It is recommended the LGBTPMP improve programming as it pertains to setting long-term goals and choosing a career path. There was a 15.79% regression in the number of mentees that could envision their lives in the next five years. In order to improve this, programming should address this topic more directly. Perhaps one of the monthly mentee meetings could address resources for this concentration such as Career Center, Academic Support and other University departments. A long-term goals activity could be administered during a meeting and used to introduce the topic of goal setting. In addition, the mentor training should explain how to discuss long-term goals and career aspirations with mentees.

Integration of Spiritual/Religious Identity Formation

LGBTPMP can better address identity intersection for religion/spirituality with the LGBT identity. During the pre-interviews, 6 mentees mentioned their religious or spiritual identities being a part of their social circles. Mentees did this without being prompted by a question that specifically asked about religion or spirituality. However, in the post-interviews, no mentees,

even the mentees that address this topic before, mentioned religious or spiritual identity. One can assume that mentees enter LGBTPMP respectful or concerned with their religious/spiritual identities and then end the program without addressing this issue. Although such events and discussions are already established on campus, it may be beneficial to invite mentees to attend these selected events or meet privately with the guest speakers/facilitators.

Involving LGBTPMP students in campus events centering on spiritual and religious topics may benefit them in overcoming the dissonance they may feel between their religious/spiritual identities and facilitate identity reconciliation. While religious texts are often used to ostracize the LGBT community, deeming their lifestyle as sinful (Love, Bock, Jannarone, & Richardson, 2005), Poynter & Washington (2005) emphasize the significance of fluidity in student services within their discussion of identity regression. If identity development is viewed through a vacuum and emphasis is placed on just one attribute of a student, it is likely that their other identities will regress (Poynter & Washington, 2005). The regression of portions of a student's identity is a detriment, as studies show that significant benefits exist for those students that maintain a healthy balance between their spiritual and LGBT identities. Love et al. (2005) finds that reconciliation is linked to higher levels of self-efficacy, self-awareness, and self-acceptance. Additionally, spirituality is utilized as a source of strength in overcoming LGBT identity oppression (Love et al., 2005).

In an effort to ensure that mentees are not forsaking one identity for another, specific questions relating to religious and spiritual identity should be included in the pre and posttest, in addition to the pre-interviews and post-interviews. This may only be one prompt that includes the question: *what other identities (religious/spiritual) do you ascribe to, aside from being LGBT* and/or asking the student if they practice religion or spirituality. If the LGBTPMP can determine

which of their students are balancing more than one identity, they can work to support their students while they integrate their LGBT identity with their spiritual/religious identity.

CONCLUSION

The LGBTPMP is doing well in providing support for the following constructs: sexual/gender identity development, psychological and emotional support, and health and wellness. Adding programmatic components that specifically address long-term goal setting and career aspirations may help to improve outcomes pertaining to this construct. Representatives from the career center and academic support should speak during at minimum one mentee meeting; mentor training should include a component focusing on the ways in which a mentor can engage with their mentee to discuss long-term goals and career planning. In order to ensure that LGBTPMP participants are integrating their spiritual/religious identities with the LGBT identities to the extent they choose, the program should integrate questions into their analysis regarding these identity intersections. LGBTPMP students should be invited to participate in spiritual/religious events happening on-campus.

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APPENDIX A

Pre and Post Online Survey

Note: This survey is currently in a researcher format. This is not the student version.

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

1 = Strongly agree

2 = Tend to Agree

3 = Neither agree nor disagree

4 = Tend to Disagree

5 = Strongly disagree

Sexual and gender identity development construct domain:

1. I am comfortable with who I am and my sexual and/or gender identity.
2. I am confused about my sexual and/or gender identity. (Reverse score)
3. I am worried about how others react to my sexual and/or gender identity. (Reverse score)
4. I feel depressed about my sexual and/or gender identity. (Reverse score)
5. I need help to better integrate who I am with being gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender. (Reverse score)

Social, psychological and emotional support construct domain:

6. I am actively involved with the LGBT community.
7. I do not have supportive friends in my life right now. (Reverse score)
8. I have someone in my life (e.g. friend, family member) that helps me to reflect on my

experiences.

9. I seek out people who challenge me to be a better person.

10. I can identify a person to speak about difficult issues.

Support for setting goals and choosing a career path construct domain:

11. I engage in behaviors (e.g. procrastination) that interfere with achieving my goals.

(Reverse score)

12. I have a vision of where I see myself in the next five years.

13. I understand how my classes contribute to my future career aspirations.

14. I successfully set and achieve my goals (e.g. educational, financial, career, etc.).

15. I align my goals with what I value in life.

Health and wellness through occupational engagement construct domain:

16. I schedule time for activities that enrich one or more aspects of my identity.

17. I regularly participate in stress-relieving activities.

18. I am involved with activities that help me feel connected to myself and others.

19. I knowingly engage in activities that are bad for my health. (Reverse score)

20. I have arranged my schedule so that I am leading a balanced life (e.g. studying, sleeping, exercising, socializing, relaxing, etc.).

APPENDIX B

Pre and Post-Interview Questions

1. How comfortable to you feel expressing your sexual and gender identity?
2. How would you describe your social circle?
3. 5 years from now, what do you hope to be doing?
4. How balanced are you right now?