

PEDAGOGY

Kinesiology Career Club: Undergraduate Student Mentors' Perspectives on a Physical Activity– Based Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Program

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present university student mentors' perspectives on the impact of a teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) model youth program called the Kinesiology Career Club. Data sources in this qualitative case study included program observations, mentoring reflections, and semistructured interviews. Data analysis produced 320 raw meaning units coded into two high-level themes, six mid-level themes, and 14 low-level themes. Findings indicate that high school participants are able to transfer TPSR goals to their possible futures, explore kinesiology and other careers of choice, and effectively address potential life hopes and fears. Service learning–based outcomes of personal, intellectual/career, and social/community influence for the university student mentors were also revealed in the findings.

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Transitioning from today's school to tomorrow's career is an important and challenging task assigned to adolescents (Benson & Scales, 2004). The window of time for this task begins in high school and extends through college for 66% of Americans (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012). However, college is less of a possibility with a staggering 42% of urban minority youth not graduating from high school (Balfanz, Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hornig-Fox, 2012), a statistic which is linked to fewer role models and a higher exposure to unemployment, poverty, crime, and other social risk factors (Tsoi-A-Fatt, 2008). Youth programs in which effective strategies are provided to help in the developmental process of linking present school with potential adult possibilities are limited (Oyserman, Terry, & Bybee, 2002). High school should be a preparatory experience in a young person's life, especially with graduation from high school, going to college, and ultimately becoming productive citizens being favored in society. However, high school is the end of the educational line for many youth and the last opportunity to instill effective specialized youth development programs designed to help them envision their positive possible futures.

Programs in the field of youth development are holistic, strength based, and focused on the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical self. They include helping youth obtain vocational and avocational skill development (Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005), supporting their explorations, and identifying opportunities to make significant contributions to society (McLaughlin, Irby, & Langman, 1994). While youth development research is growing and researchers have consistently reported positive program effects with holistic development (Wright, Li, Ding & Pickering, 2010), limited research has been conducted on how to help youth from underserved communities envision their positive possible futures.

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model

Hellison's teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) model has been well-documented for over 40 years, with several researchers showcasing successful impact in their studies (e.g., Hellison, 2011; Hellison & Walsh, 2002). TPSR has become a benchmark in physical activity-based youth development, with a latest creation specifically designed to help youth envision positive possible futures. Called Career Club, the program was first introduced to promote the development of possible selves that could help youth become involved and connected with school and their futures. This

initial attempt was effective in providing a meaningful career exploration (Walsh, 2008). Lessons learned from the first attempt led to a new approach called the Kinesiology Career Club (KCC), which is the focus of this study (Walsh, 2012). Research has indicated that KCC was successful in helping students connect the TPSR goals of respect, effort, goal-setting, and leadership skills to possible futures; envision and explore a career in kinesiology; and link kinesiology to positive possible futures. Results were mixed in demonstrating a balance of hopes and fears as suggested by the theory of possible selves. The development, implementation, and research of TPSR was extended through the study; however, it is only the second attempt with “possible futures” as the main emphasis. Findings indicate that KCC is an effective TPSR program, but it is still in its infancy and in need of further research (Walsh, Veri, & Scobie, 2012).

KCC is also a university–community outreach effort with a service-learning component. University students enrolled in a service-learning course taught by the KCC program director, who is a professor in the Kinesiology Department. In the course syllabus, reading and reflection assignments based on a youth development textbook and journal articles to guide the service-learning experience were outlined. Site-specific assignments included mentor reflections and program observations. Postprogram interviews were also conducted with the participating university students. The purpose of this article is to present university student mentors’ perspectives on the impact of KCC. Examining the mentors’ perspectives on the program, including the service-learning impact, is a crucial component to the efficacy of KCC beyond research previously conducted solely on the youth participants.

Program Description

KCC occurred at a low-performing inner-city high school on the west coast of the United States. The program operated during second period physical education class for 10 to 12 weeks in fall and spring semesters on Tuesday and Thursday mornings for 75 min. The class consisted of mostly freshmen and sophomores. The physical education teacher and KCC program director recruited the KCC participants out of 45 youth in the physical education class. They selected most of the freshmen and a few sophomores. The physical education teacher assigned four of the youth participants to the KCC because they needed extra help due to not performing well academically, getting in trouble in school, or having difficulty at

home. The university students, who are the focus of this study, took on roles as mentors and assistant instructors of KCC, which fulfills the service component of the internship. The TPSR lesson plan format as follows was used in the KCC: relational time, awareness talk, physical activity lesson, group meeting time, and a combined reflection–mentoring session.

Program Format

KCC is delivered in four distinct phases. Each phase lasts approximately 3 weeks. For a more in-depth explanation of the phases and the service-learning component of KCC with a description of how the undergraduate students mentored the high school participants, see Walsh (2012). The following is a summary of the goals of each phase.

Phase 1 Goals

For Phase 1 goals, the TPSR daily format and strategies to introduce the program are used, including the various physical activities. This phase is focused on Level 1, respect, and Level 2, effort. Program leaders aim to begin building relationships with the students, have them voice their opinions about the program content and structure, and introduce the field of kinesiology. Leaders also introduce the combined TPSR reflection time and mentoring time. Mentoring time is a significant component for the positive “possible futures” emphasis throughout the program. Mentors talk about their choice to study kinesiology, connect the physical activities in KCC to the basis and foundation of the field of kinesiology, and encourage the youth participants to talk about their own career interests. Mentors also bridge Levels 1 and 2 to how to be successful in kinesiology, such as putting forth a lot of effort to get good grades and earn a college degree.

Phase 2 Goals

In Phase 2, students begin to feel empowered to take on the advanced TPSR responsibilities of Level 3, goal-setting, and Level 4, leadership. Students are asked to set goals in martial arts, weight training, dance, or fitness activities. They are also encouraged to take on small leadership experiences and teach the activities on which they worked during goal-setting time. Leaders encourage them to consider a career in at least one of the many subdisciplines of kinesiology; connect the physical activities, goal-setting, and leadership in the program to being successful in the field of kinesiology; and

begin to chart the steps to earning a college degree in kinesiology. Leaders also aim to have youth participants reflect on what they are currently doing in school and out of school that helps and hinders their futures.

Phase 3 Goals

In Phase 3, students are encouraged to continue to work on TPSR Levels 1 to 4. Goal-setting time and leadership roles are extended with more responsibility. Program leaders introduce the potential transference of the steps to a career in kinesiology with the necessary steps for the students' future careers of choice. The goal is to link Phase 2 experiences of understanding how to be successful in kinesiology to understanding how to be successful in their own careers of choice. Students actively reflect on what they would like to pursue as a career, effectively discovering ways to link what they learned about kinesiology to their own future career interests. Leaders also introduce the importance of having potential hopes and potential fears—as suggested by the theory of possible selves (Oyserman et al., 2002)—and having the hard work, positive attitude, and preparation needed to be successful.

Phase 4 Goals

Level 5 involves the transfer of Levels 1 to 4 outside of the gym, and youth participants are told how what they do in school, at home, and in the streets impacts their futures. Phase 4 discussions are focused solely on students' careers of choice. Leaders further highlight the connection between TPSR levels and what may be necessary for the practical realization of their possible futures, including potential hopes and fears. Leaders provide additional insight into the degree of hard work, positive attitude, and preparation needed toward the realization of their possible futures. The possibilities are endless and reflect current career interests of the students (e.g., firefighter, doctor, professional athlete, coach, teacher, construction worker). Mentors continue and complete charting the steps for students' careers of choice and provide extra documentation related to their choices.

Methods

Design

A qualitative case study design to examine the mentors' perspectives on the impact of KCC was employed in this study. Case study

methodology is appropriate when answering a descriptive question (e.g., What are the mentors' perspectives of the impact of KCC?) and is commonly used in program evaluation (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, evaluation case studies as a form of qualitative research have the elements of a good story with the purpose of understanding the program outcomes to make future decisions about the program (Patton, 2002). KCC is a service-learning program; therefore, it is important for the research team to evaluate the program and inform the direction of future youth development service-learning programs.

Participants and Setting

Eight students (4 males, 4 females) from a large west coast metropolitan university were selected to participate in KCC's service-learning internship for one semester. All students were kinesiology majors in their senior year of study. Service for this internship occurred at a low-performing inner-city high school. The graduation rate for this school was 72.73% for the semester of this study, which is below the national average, and more than two thirds of the student body qualified for "free" or "reduced"-cost lunch (San Francisco Unified School District, 2013). The school has a diverse population with the following breakdown: 14% African American, 23% Asian, 46% Latino, 9% White, and 8% Other.

Data

The data set was mined from three data sources for triangulation purposes: program observations, mentor reflections, and semistructured interviews. Researchers of good case studies benefit from using several sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). Mentors are referred to by pseudonyms throughout the study.

Program Observations

The first data source was the mentors' program observations, which were made in response to the goals of the program, high school students' responses to the program, and mentors' perceived impact of the program. Mentors recorded answers to questions on a weekly basis (every two sessions). Sample questions included "How did the participants handle their responsibilities?" and "Are the participants getting a better sense of their future?"

Mentor Reflections

At the end of each KCC session, a dedicated mentoring session between the university mentor and his or her designated youth par-

ticipant occurred. The mentors' reflections made up the second set of data for this study and were collected on a weekly basis (every two sessions). Reflections were focused on how mentors were making connections with students and what they were doing to help students work on the KCC goals. Reflective questions were aligned with the specific phases of the program. Sample questions included "What details did you learn about the participants?", "How did you connect TPSR goals to your kinesiology experiences?", and "In what ways did you connect goal-setting and leadership with the physical activities to being successful in kinesiology?"

Semistructured Interviews

The third data source included transcripts from semistructured interviews conducted with the mentors. The second author conducted one-on-one interviews with mentors at the end of their participation in KCC. Open-ended questions were used to gain relevant program information and perceptions from the mentors about each phase of KCC and its overall impact on the youth participants. The mentors were also asked about the influence of KCC on their lives and career aspirations. Questions included "Can you tell me about what the participants shared with you regarding what they hope to become?" and "Can you share an example of how KCC helped a participant think about their future college experience?"

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed in three phases: discovery, coding, and discounting (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). During discovery, questions from each data tool were read one at a time followed by all responses to that particular question. Word processing was used to organize the data in this fashion. Data were reviewed multiple times to increase familiarity. Annotations were made to help interpret data and any emerging themes were tentatively or "soft" coded. During the coding phase, a master inventory of codes (raw meaning units) and themes was produced. A raw meaning unit is a quote or excerpt that captures a particular thought (Côté, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993). Deductive analysis was used to code responses related to program goals, and inductive analysis was used to code for emerging themes. Amis (2005) believes this combined approach is appropriate for conducting qualitative studies. In deductive analysis, themes are developed from similar responses to the same question. For example, if several responses to the same question indicated

that participants exhibited a program goal of leadership, a deductive theme was coded as “LEAD.” Inductive themes are recurring responses that are not tied to any particular question; they are not known ahead of time (Merriam, 2009). Triangulation was used to corroborate data and validate identified themes. This involved verifying the data across all three data sources and across all perspectives. Electronic versions of all three data sources were obtained from the participants and stored on a hard drive. Print copies of all documents were also obtained and stored according to their respective source name: “interviews,” “observations,” and “reflections.”

Findings

The purpose of this data analysis was to examine the mentors’ perspectives on the impact of KCC. In the data analysis, 320 raw meaning units were produced. These raw meaning units were coded into two high-level themes, six mid-level themes, and 14 low-level themes (see Table 1).

Table 1
Results Summary of Themes and Raw Meaning Units

- 1. Positive Perception of KCC Goals
 - a. Transfer of TPSR Goals (7, 54)
 - i. Respect (4, 7)
 - ii. Effort (4, 5)
 - iii. Goal-setting (6, 30)
 - iv. Leadership (5, 12)
 - b. Career Exploration (8, 84)
 - i. Exploring kinesiology careers (8, 23)
 - ii. Exploring careers of choice (8, 61)
 - c. Hopes and Fears (8, 64)
 - i. Hoped-for-selves (8, 23)
 - ii. Feared-selves (8, 23)
- 2. Service Learning Impact
 - a. Personal Outcomes (8, 35)
 - i. Personal fulfillment (8, 28)
 - ii. Self-discovery (4, 7)

Table 1 (cont.)

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- b. Intellectual/Career-Based Outcomes (7, 15)
 - i. Career aspirations (7, 12)
 - ii. Life perspective (3, 3)

 - c. Social/Community Outcomes (8, 68)
 - i. Impact of mentorship (8, 40)
 - ii. Impact of civic engagement (7, 28)
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Note. Qualitative themes are quantified with the use of two numbers (x, y), with x representing the number of mentors that provided data that support a particular theme and y representing the number of raw meaning units assigned to that particular theme. The two high-level themes are preceded by numbers. The six mid-level themes are preceded by lower-case letters. The 14 low-level themes are preceded by lower-case Roman numerals.

(1) Positive Perceptions of KCC Goals

In interviews, reflections, and program observations, mentors provided evidence of the achievement of stated KCC goals. Their positive perceptions were mostly related to the mid-level themes of (a) transfer of TPSR goals to possible futures and (b) career exploration.

(a) Transfer of TPSR goals to possible futures (7, 54). Developing respect, effort, goal-setting, and leadership skills and then transferring those skills outside the gym is paramount to any TPSR program. One of the unique aspects of KCC is being able to link the importance of these goals with possible futures. Seven mentors provided a total of 54 raw meaning units that provided evidence of linking TPSR goals with possible futures (7, 54). This theme is represented across four low-level themes: (i) respect, (ii) effort, (iii) goal-setting, and (iv) leadership.

(i) Respect (4, 7). Four of the eight mentors described participants as able to link respect to their futures. For example, Joseph noted in a mentor reflection, “[A youth participant] explained that respect is important in the work field because you have to show respect to your boss if you want to continue working or striving for a promotion.” Jennifer reflected, “The kids are becoming more aware of the respect you need to give to receive. They are learning from their experiences teaching their peers,” indicating a connection between leadership and respect. In his interview, Keenan was asked if

mentees were connecting respect to their futures; he replied, “I think [a youth participant] understands it and applies it.”

(ii) Effort (4, 5). According to mentors, youth participants also viewed effort as being important for their futures. Cleo wrote in a mentor reflection that his mentee told him, “How far you can get depends on how much effort you put in.” Keenan wrote in a program observation, “They are starting to understand the importance of respect, effort, leadership, and goal setting.” Janessa reflected that her mentee said, “Effort is important because it keeps him trying to achieve his goal and not give up.” Half of the mentors provided data for this low-level theme, mostly in written program observations and mentor reflections.

(iii) Goal-setting (6, 30). According to the mentors, the program participants were able to develop education and career-oriented goals. In a mentor reflection, Cleo recorded that his mentee told him, “Before, I didn’t even have a goal or know anything. Now I at least know that I want to go to college.” Charlene wrote in a mentor reflection that her mentee “understands how goal-setting relates to her career.” In a program observation Brenda wrote, “Some of the kids are really taking the program seriously and talking about bringing up grades and getting jobs to stay out of trouble.” Similarly, Jennifer stated in her interview, “I think almost all the kids had raised their grades, as far as the ones that needed to.” In his interview, Cleo explained, “[A youth participant] was saying like he wanted to get back on the wrestling team or on the football team and he was like raising his grades so he could get back on the team and start playing again.” The students also indicated awareness of goal-setting as a process. When interviewed, Janessa pointed out, “They are also figuring out the importance of setting goals in their lives. They understand that it takes small steps to achieve a single goal.” In a program observation, Jennifer noted, “Not only are they coming up with ideas and goals for their futures, they are planning and discussing with us what it takes to get there.” Overall, the mentors were pleased with their students’ grasp of goal-setting. For example, Keenan observed, “The students that spoke up each had a different goal in kinesiology or about their job which was encouraging, knowing that what we are doing is actually getting through to them and helping.”

(iv) Leadership (5, 12). Five mentors believed the youth participants were able to view leadership as important for their future. Data indicated they gained confidence through leadership tasks and

understood the importance of leadership skills for their future goals. For example, Brenda's mentee told her, "If I want to help people, I need them to listen to me." In a mentor reflection, Cleo stated that his mentee "understood how leadership roles and goal setting, no matter how small, can translate to larger leadership roles and the ability to achieve goals later in life." As noted in a program observation, Jennifer's mentee told her, "I'm getting in shape, and learning about leadership and how to be a good leader."

(b) Career exploration (8, 84). A key goal of KCC was for program participants to learn about careers in kinesiology as a platform for exploring their own careers of choice. They envisioned kinesiology careers and then developed the steps required to achieve those careers. The intent was that this process will, in a later phase of the program, help them command a similar process with a career of choice. In Walsh, Veri, and Scobie (2012), evidence showed how strategically exploring a kinesiology career helped participants begin exploring their own careers of choice. All eight mentors cited evidence of the impact of kinesiology career exploration on students' ability to plan for the future and envision their own careers of choice (8, 84). This theme is represented across two low-level themes: (i) exploring kinesiology careers and (ii) exploring careers of choice.

(i) Exploring kinesiology careers (8, 23). Eight mentors provided 23 raw meaning units, indicating that program participants successfully explored kinesiology careers. In a program observation, Brenda revealed, "This week, the girls I am working with picked some careers in kinesiology that could be interesting to them." In her interview, Janessa stated, "They had no idea what kinesiology was and now [the mentee] is interested in many aspects of kinesiology like coaching, personal trainer, athletic director, and physical education teacher." Several mentors were specific about the kinesiology careers that were selected. Keenan stated in his interview, "We talked about maybe being a ref or a coach and he liked the idea of being a basketball coach." Janessa observed, "I would say they were most interested in the personal training, like being able to help other people." Similarly, Jennifer also observed, "A lot of them liked the coaching and teaching aspect." Exploring a kinesiology career also involved charting steps to success in that particular career. Mentors often described this process as "steps" or "procedural knowledge." Charlene explained in her interview, "We did our procedural knowledge, which was like a little flow chart of how you,

you know, advance and get into college.” In a mentor reflection, Janessa wrote about the impact this process had on her mentee:

The procedural knowledge chart for both of my kids has all their classes, the current and goal grades, their goal GPA, the two tests that they can take to get into college (SATs and ACTs), passing high school and the high school exit exam that their school requires them to take, applying for college and financial aid, declaring kinesiology as their major, and then we are going to go over the classes that they need to take.

Cleo observed his mentee

had a better grasp of how moving through college works and he even expressed a very loose plan of what he wants to do when he finishes high school. He plans on completing high school, going to [community college] and obtaining an associate’s degree, and then going to [a 4-year university] for a bachelor’s degree.

(ii) *Exploring careers of choice (8, 61).* Developing clear and robust kinesiology “charts” with the necessary steps to success was an intentional outcome designed for KCC to increase the likelihood that program participants would have greater success in the ultimate goal of exploring their own careers of choice and charting the necessary steps to success associated with those careers. All eight mentors provided 61 raw meaning units, suggesting that exploring careers of choice had an impact on the program participants. Charlene wrote in a program observation,

Almost all of the students were able to give a career that they may be interested in pursuing. I think that saying it out loud in front of all of their friends and classmates definitely gave them a better sense of their future. It has been truly rewarding to see the transformation among students who had no idea what their future held for them and now they have somewhat of an idea of what they are interested in and possible career choices for those interests.

During this phase of the program, Cleo observed, “I believe that the students are refining what they want to do for careers and are really

starting to think about them.” Janessa wrote in a mentor reflection, “One of my kids wants to be a video game designer and we talked about what kind of school he could go to.” The possibility of attending college came up frequently when mentors described the impact of charting procedural knowledge. In a program observation, Charlene wrote, “My individual mentor student is making great progress in seeing the steps she needs to make in order to make her future dreams a reality.” In a mentor reflection, Brenda explained how she and her mentee “moved up the chart from high school through college graduation to taking the MCAT (Medical College Admission Test) and applying to medical school and the 8 years following that would lead to becoming a specialty physician.” Cleo described a discussion from one of his mentoring sessions in a reflection: “I asked what are your options for college? [His mentee] then explained that he could either choose to go to community college first or try and apply to go directly to a university.” Mentors described some detailed steps that were a part of this exploration process. For example, in a mentor reflection, Charlene wrote, “[We] began to talk about scholarships and she was really interested in the process she must take in order to apply for such scholarships.” One student was interested in becoming a musician, and according to Cleo’s reflection, “His chart included the classes that he can take at high school in order to gain more experience in music.” Furthermore, it was clear that charting steps to success in kinesiology was a helpful link in the process of exploring other careers. In her interview, Brenda stated that her mentee “would always be able to connect kinesiology to her career.” Jennifer also supported this link in a mentor reflection: “This week we compared and contrasted their kinesiology charts to what is starting to be their own individual career charts. The transference of the kinesiology procedural knowledge by linking phase two experiences to their future careers was easy.” Charlene wrote in a mentor reflection, “This chart helped [her mentee] visualize the path she needs to take in order to succeed.” Finally, also of note in this part of the analysis was how exploring kinesiology careers influenced students’ own careers of choice. Keenan reflected about his mentee: “[He] really took to this and is interested in pursuing a career in kinesiology. He wants to be a strength coach for a college sports team.” Jennifer wrote in her mentor reflection, “[She] was able to connect kinesiology to her real dream of becoming a fashion designer by saying she wouldn’t mind designing sportswear or shoes.”

(c) Hopes and fears (8, 64). The KCC is informed by the theory of possible selves, which is predicated on the importance of achieving a balance between hoped-for-selves and feared-selves for enhancing motivation and regulating the direction of behavior (Walsh, 2012). However, little to no stated evidence from mentors that the program participants successfully achieved balance between their hopes and fears was revealed in the data analysis. Seven mentors indicated in their mentor reflections that they discussed the importance of balancing hopes and fears with their mentees, but only one mentor, Janessa, stated that her mentees “have the hopes and fears balance down.” It was revealed, though, that the program participants articulated hopes and fears in discussions with all eight mentors (8, 64). Hopes and fears are presented in the form of two low-level themes: (i) hoped-for-selves and (ii) feared-selves.

(i) Hoped-for-selves. Mentors provided ample evidence (8, 23) of the hopes of their mentees. For example, in her mentor reflection, Jennifer quoted her mentee as saying, “I hope to become a successful, happy person who has realized her life goal.” Cleo stated in his reflections that his mentee hoped to “go to college and get a good job.” In her interview, Janessa recalled that her mentee wanted to “make a lot of money.” Charlene wrote in a program observation that her mentee hoped to “become a doctor that works with children.” In an observation, Keenan wrote that his mentee “mentioned that he wants to get a scholarship to a university for football.” Joseph wrote in a mentor reflection, “[My participant] wants to go to college after he graduates from high school. He plans on studying engineering.” Jennifer’s mentee told her, “She wants to be a fashion designer.” Arthur revealed in his mentor reflections, “Randolph wants to become a lawyer.” Cleo observed, “My participant did tell me that he wants to be a videogame designer when he gets older.”

(ii) Feared-selves. The mentors also described evidence (8, 23) of the fears of their mentees. During his interview, Arthur stated that his mentee “was afraid of being homeless.” Brenda reflected that her mentee was afraid “of becoming addicted to drugs.” Charlene recalled in an interview that her mentee was afraid of “not getting into medical school.” In his interview, Cleo related that his mentee told him, “I just don’t want to get injured again.” In a mentor reflection, Cleo wrote that his mentee feared “going to jail” or “not finishing high school.” Janessa discussed her mentees’ fears in her interview: “Yeah, for them it was just [being] unsuccessful, [fear of having] no friends and no family.” Janessa reflected, “I also learned

that he has ADHD and that is something he fears will be an obstacle in achieving some of his goals.” Keenan wrote in a program observation that his mentee was fearful of “getting a girl pregnant.” Jennifer wrote in a mentor reflection that her mentee was “afraid to become a failure in the future.” Although all eight mentors were able to cite examples of hopes and fears expressed by their mentees, they did not provide evidence that the students achieved a balance between those hopes and fears per the tenets of the theory of possible selves (Oyserman et al., 2002).

(2) Service-Learning Impact on Mentors

Through service-learning courses, students have opportunities to gain valuable experience outside of the classroom and apply research-based theories and concepts to real-world situations (Veri & Walsh, 2012). Research in this area can serve as a guide for analyzing the impact of participation in service-learning programs. For example, Whitley and Walsh (2014) prescribed a framework for implementing and evaluating service-learning courses. The *student proximal outcomes* category of the framework is particularly relevant to this study. Student outcomes are grouped into personal outcomes, academic and intellectual outcomes, and social and community engagement outcomes (Eyler, 2011). To maintain consistency with this framework, service-learning impact data were deductively analyzed and presented across three mid-level themes: (a) personal outcomes, (b) intellectual/career-based outcomes, and (c) social/community outcomes.

(a) Personal outcomes (8, 35). The personal outcomes presented below indicate KCC had a positive impact on mentors across two low-level themes (8, 35): personal fulfillment and self-discovery.

(i) Personal fulfillment (8, 28). All eight mentors described their experiences in KCC as rewarding. Arthur wrote in a program observation, “Just knowing that I’m helping someone towards a better life is really fulfilling.” Charlene observed, “It has been a very rewarding process working with the students.” In his program observation, Keenan stated, “It brings me so much joy knowing that I can have this sort of impact on someone.” During her interview, Jennifer explained,

This is the kind of stuff I love, like I really love kids, and coaching and just being in that position where you’re relating to them, you’re talking to them, getting to know them,

having a positive influence on them. I think the power of that is, like, crazy.

Brenda wrote in a program observation, “I enjoy sharing time with them and talking about what they can do.” Arthur wrote in a program observation, “They are improving my life as much as I know I’m improving theirs.” Charlene wrote in a program observation, “The mentors are feeling great about themselves for being involved in such a project.” Janessa wrote in a program observation, “Even days where I don’t want to wake up and do anything or days that I am really depressed, they always brighten my day.” This low-level theme was not equally represented across all three data sources.

(ii) Self-discovery (4, 7). Data indicate that volunteering in KCC promotes self-discovery. Arthur shared in a program observation, “Deep down, I’m realizing things about myself that I didn’t know before. It’s allowing me to discover more of who I am.” Charlene wrote in a program observation, “I find myself more times than not talking about the program and explaining to people what our goals are and how it has made an impact in my life as well.” Janessa observed, “I am learning so much about myself and about these kids.” Jennifer simply noted in her program observations, “I am learning about myself.” This low-level theme was not equally represented across all three sources.

(b) Intellectual/career outcomes (7, 15). The intellectual and career outcomes that mentors associated with participation in KCC are expressed across two low-level themes (7,15): career aspirations and gained life perspective.

(i) Career aspirations. Evidence indicates that participation in KCC influences perceptions of career aspirations. Four mentors described how participation in KCC prompted them to reconsider their career paths. Arthur claimed in his interview, “It helped me transition like my mentality from I’m gonna go to PT (Physical Therapy) to almost like, I’m not gonna go to PT. I’m at that point where like I’m not gonna go to PT anymore.” Jennifer wrote in a program observation that she now knows, “I would like my career to revolve around youth in some way or another.” As a result of this experience, Brenda said in her interview that she will “probably coach in the future whether it’s high school or college.” Janessa wrote in a program observation, “This program has really gotten me interested in working with high school kids. Now I am considering coaching at high school for their volleyball team.”

For three KCC mentors, their experience in the program confirmed their career aspirations. Charlene pointed out in a program observation, “The program has reminded me how much I enjoy working with children.” Cleo explained in his interview that mentoring high school students through a physical activity program is “directly relatable to what I’d like to be doing.” This low-level theme was not equally represented across all three sources.

(ii) *Gained life perspective (3, 3).* In the program, three mentors gained life perspective. For example, in a program observation, Jennifer shared, “As I teach these life lessons to them I reflect on how I am using them in my own life.” In his interview, Keenan simply said, “They changed my life.” Brenda wrote in her program observation,

Working with kids helps put things in perspective in my life as well. When I talk to the kids about opportunity and possible futures, I realize that I’m not that old either, and I don’t have to rush into a career that will not leave me fulfilled.

This low-level theme was not equally represented across all three data sources.

(c) *Social/community outcomes (8, 68).* Social and community-based outcomes are presented in the form of two low-level themes (8, 68): (i) impact of mentorship and (ii) impact of civic engagement.

(i) *Impact of mentorship (8, 40).* Relationship characteristics associated with mentoring include learning or developing mentoring skills, developing relationships with mentees, and dealing with challenges associated with mentoring. Eight mentors provided 40 raw meaning units through which they described the impact KCC had on their mentoring relationships. After his first day, Cleo revealed in his mentor reflection that he was “already considering new ways to communicate with and encourage his mentee.” Several mentors noted how KCC participation influenced their leadership development. Joseph wrote in a program observation that he felt an increased confidence in his “leadership skills.” In one of her mentor reflections, Brenda shared, “This class is helping me to learn about how I can better coach high school kids and new personal training techniques.” One of the most critical aspects of a strong mentorship is the relationship between the mentor and the mentee. In her program observations, Charlene wrote, “I have developed a bond with

the kids in our program.” In her interview, Jennifer explained that she felt like “their older sister almost, and just created that bond.” Janessa stated in her interview that the mentorship went so well that “I’m actually gonna go coach there next fall.” Keenan poignantly observed,

If it wasn’t for them I might have taken this semester off because of the many difficulties that have been going on outside of school for me. But I didn’t want to leave them stranded, and they kept me motivated to keep going. If they can do it then so can I.

Mentors also described the challenges of mentoring high school students. In her interview, Charlene stated, “Some of the kids would act out and it made it difficult.” Cleo said in an interview that the “largest obstacle” was getting his mentee to “open up.” This low-level theme was not equally represented across all three sources.

(ii) Impact of civic engagement (7, 28). Civic engagement involves value for and commitment to improving the well-being of one’s community and a sense of shared social responsibility among citizens (Veri, 2006). Participation in KCC instilled value for civic engagement among the mentors and facilitated a greater understanding of communities different from their own. During her interview, Brenda shared that her KCC experience “was extremely helpful for [her] as far as working with these kids and getting an idea of, like, how extremely different their upbringing was from [her own].” Cleo noted in his program observations, “I now have a better understanding of the school system, especially in underprivileged neighborhoods, and can see how it isn’t always conducive to the kids’ needs.” Encouraging mentors to engage permanently in youth development community work was not an explicit goal of KCC, yet program data indicate that engaging in this type of work had a great impact on the mentors. They discussed feeling a sense of importance, a sense of civic duty, and a motivation to continue similar work. For example, Charlene shared in her program observations, “It is important for us to be there for [her mentee] and encouraging her in every way, every step of the way.” Arthur wrote in a program observation, “This is really changing the way I feel about how I serve...other than serving myself and for my own good, serving another and helping them for their own good.” In a program observation, Jennifer expressed a desire “to stay involved and assure that they will continue to be

successful through high school and not become that statistic (drop out).” Charlene wrote in a program observation that she wished to “be involved in something like this for the rest of [her] life.” As a result of this experience, Brenda observed, “I think that working with youth is something that I want to be a part of my future.” This low-level theme was not equally represented across all three sources.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to present KCC mentors’ perceptions of the impact of the program. Three data sources were analyzed: program observations, mentor reflections, and semistructured interview transcripts. Previous research (Walsh, 2012; Walsh et al., 2012) has indicated that through KCC underserved high school students were successful in envisioning possible futures. The findings from this study indicate that, according to mentors, the KCC program goals of transference of TPSR skills and identification of hopes and fears can be accomplished, but fall short of helping high school students balance hoped-for-selves and feared-selves.

Mentor perceptions indicate that high school participants are able to link the TPSR goals of respect, effort, goal-setting, and leadership to their possible futures. Mentors shared statements from their mentees that demonstrated awareness of the need for respect for a future boss, effort to get through medical school, and leadership to participate in the community. These findings indicate support for transference of TPSR goals among high school students and are consistent with previous research on TPSR and transference (Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright 2010).

According to mentors, KCC participants also successfully navigated career exploration. The mentors discussed how their mentees explored and charted careers in kinesiology. These findings show how high school students can engage in the planning of their possible futures. The capstone task of KCC was for high school students to develop detailed blueprints or procedural charts for careers of choice. For example, Brenda helped her mentee, who aspired to become a physician, to chart a plan of action that outlined the necessary steps from high school to college to medical school and then hospital residency and specialization. There is a great difference between thinking about doing something and documenting the plans to do it. This methodical process could be considered the key component of KCC through which youth were able to envision their own possible careers of interest beyond high school.

The KCC director infused the program with the theory of possible selves to guide participants into balancing hopes and fears associated with career exploration (Yowell, 2000). Although the data indicated that participants identified hopes and fears, only one mentor perceived an actual balance. The ability to articulate hopes and fears was an important achievement for students in KCC, but achieving balance between them was shown to be a difficult task. The findings indicate that the concept of balance needs to be more emphasized in future iterations of KCC for this goal to be achieved.

The findings also indicate that KCC is a successful service-learning program for the university student mentors. Although it is not an explicit program goal, KCC has a positive, and in some cases, profound, impact on the mentors. Many of them considered their KCC experience to be personally rewarding. If we as program planners could communicate the personal gains from service-learning experiences, we may see an increase in enrollment in such courses and ultimately bring more resources to underserved communities.

KCC also had an impact on program mentors' intellectual development and career aspirations. Mentors shared how this experience was "directly" connected to their future and, in some cases, how this experience "changed" their future plans to include working with youth. We know that resources in underserved communities are limited. Therefore, this finding is significant because it gives program directors specific feedback for future goals to encourage university students to become more active members of their respective communities.

The pro-social and pro-community-based outcomes of KCC also had a positive impact on the mentors. For example, mentors highlighted the strong relationships they developed with their mentees and noted increased coaching and leadership abilities. Mentors were engaged in KCC in ways that helped them better understand society and perceive their work as important and purposeful. If university administrators are expected to create bridges between the privileged and the underserved, they may consider incentive-rich programs such as KCC through which students are motivated to participate and develop a sense of civic engagement. In summary, examining mentors' perspectives of the impact of KCC provided valuable program feedback to support the continuation of KCC as a valid career exploration program for high school students. Through programs such as KCC, students can develop the tools and, in this case, the plans for going to college and transitioning into the workforce.

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