A Nationwide Study on the Impact of Racial Battle Fatigue on Black Student Affairs Professionals
A Survey-Based Study on the Impact of Racial Battle Fatigue on Black Student Affairs Professionals
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Abstract
The purpose of this qualitative, survey-based, narrative study was to explore racial battle fatigue and its impact on Black student affairs professionals. How do Black student affairs professionals describe racial battle fatigue and its impact on their professional lives?

Methodology
12 professionals participated in this study from schools in the Midwest, South, and East of the United States.

A survey was sent out across multiple electronic mediums (email, Groupme, and Facebook) for participants to complete.

Participants who had opted to be contacted post completion of the survey (n=11) were sent follow up questions to assess discovered themes.

Findings
Fatigue Relievers

Fatigue Generators

Definition
“Racial battle fatigue addresses the physiological, psychological, and behavioral strain exacted on racially marginalized and stigmatized groups and the amount of energy they expend coping with and fighting against racism. To be sure, the historically White campus is just one of the many lingering environmental conditions that produce racial battle fatigue for far too many people of color. Racial battle fatigue has three major stress responses: (a) psychosocial, (b) physiological, and (c) behavioral. These responses are not separate but rather intertwined; it is now widely recognized that personalities, emotions, and thoughts both reflect and influence physical condition” (Smith, 2008, p.617).

Conclusions
Best practices moving forward include but are not limited to:

- Developing spaces for Black student affairs professionals to vocalize their experiences in relation to their identity.
- Generating training programs for colleagues of majority populations (White, Cis, etc.) to become more aware of cultural competencies to boost staff morale.
- Listening to Black professionals and then creating initiatives based on those suggestions to indicate follow-through and support.
- Developing programming that encourages connections beyond the superficial to encourage inclusivity and support.

Select References