Background of Issue

The Diversity Ad hoc Committee, a branch of SGA, is a student group that addresses issues of diversity on James Madison University’s campus. The committee was established in 2014 to promote inclusivity and diversity among students and faculty.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

RQ1: What factors influence JMU student engagement with campus diversity issues?
RQ2: How do JMU students view diversity on campus?
RQ3: What is the current level of involvement of JMU students in campus diversity-related groups?
RQ4: What is the level of cultural intelligence among JMU students?
RQ5: What communication channels do JMU students use most?

Methods

Sampling: A survey was conducted online using an online survey tool to gather primary research data on the JMU student body. The survey was conducted online using a non-random sample of students. All participants were randomly selected from the JMU student body.

Procedure: The survey was made up of 61 questions and was distributed using the SONA research participation pool and the JMU email system. The questionnaire utilized a variety of question types including yes and no, multiple choice, and Likert scale. During the focus group, six questions were asked that encouraged participants to reflect on diversity and explore the relationship between diversity and student involvement on campus.

Results

RQ1: 86.5% of JMU students are currently involved in one or more campus organizations. A connection with other people (N=286), 2nd sense of belonging (N=222), and 3rd Friends are a part of the same group (N=212) are the most important factors for students when joining an organization.
RQ2: 45% of white students view JMU as welcoming to minority students. 25% African Americans, 25% Asians, and 22% of Hispanics feel the same way. Females are more involved than males in diversity-related organizations.
RQ3: See Chart 1 for findings.
RQ4: JMU students report their level of cultural intelligence just beyond neutral on the Cultural Intelligence scale (M=4.74, SD=1.10). All factors, cognitive, have the lowest mean value (M=3.77, SD=1.28).
RQ5: JMU students preferred method of communication is Facebook. Their second preferred method of communication is the organization’s website.

Chart 1. Student Involvement in Diversity Groups

Chart 2. Cultural Intelligence of JMU Students

References