Notes from the Field:

Mobilize for Action: Interactive Poster Presentations

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Abstract

This is an overview of the posters presented at the 37th Annual Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity.

Keywords: communities, disability studies, diversity issues, education, employment, career, health, well-being

Notes from the Field:

Mobilize for Action: Interactive Poster Presentations

We sought to create a reflective digital space that highlights disability and diversity issues from across fields, a lifespan and the world. Derived from the 37th Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity on February 28th - March 1st, the goal of this article is to '*Mobilize for Action'* beyond the experiences of the virtual conference. Representing researchers, practitioners, students and advocates, the authors have assembled a collection of four summarizing perspectives presenting the conference's five strands— *Communities; Disability Studies & Diversity Issues; Education; Employment and Career; and Health & Well-being.* By building a common connection between the conference posters and live poster presentations, this article will continue to highlight actions done and actions needed.

Dr. Nicole Schlaack: Building Capacity within Communities

The Communities strand offered opportunities for presenters to share knowledge on: Autism & Neurodiversity; Deaf Community; Family Engagement; and Indigenous and Cultural Diversity. Communities offer a sense of belonging and are central to our human experiences. The presentations demonstrated that an engaging community allows us to share and relate with one another and to learn and develop new ideas. Communities become origins for knowledge and inspiration, a place to make connections and have access to resources, and a source for genuine support. Presentations included:

Communities for Learning

Galeai (2022) shared the rewards and challenges of social work internships.

Placements at national and international schools connected the social work student with the community of a school. Students valued the opportunity to be engaged, to build relationships, and to learn from the partners in the community for strong family-school partnerships. School social workers internationally continue their efforts to concurrently support the academic and social emotional needs of students.

Art as a Community Connector

Bell (2022) is part of the Navajo tribe. Learning the traditional skills of the Navajo weaver became her artform for expression and finding meaning in society. The strong connections of the Navajo weavers offer the community a sense of belonging.

Communities Provide Resources

The collaborative presentation by Robinson, Okihiro, Matayoshi, and Leslie (2022) presented the successes of interdisciplinary teams to support children with disabilities and their families across the Pacific. The CAP Academy teams share their perspectives across disciplines. Applying the method of Design Thinking, the team explored ideas and resources in response to the needs of students and families' priorities.

Relationship Building for Student Success

Chu and Jhou (2022) investigated parent professional partnership for promoting transition skills for young children with disabilities to be ready for the first-grade entry. Building this partnership was valued by families and the schools' professionals, making this an example of community building as an important pillar for connecting home and school environments.

Interactive Play

Koizumi and Kojima (2022) cautioned that the lack of interpersonal interaction due to a restrictive lifestyle during the pandemic can have negative effects on the language development in children with developmental disabilities. Evaluating play and toys that were

used at home to foster language development demonstrated that simple rules were most effective.

Responsibilities for Communities

Lindsay (2022) illuminates the relationships between race, ethnicity and school and work outcomes for youth with disabilities. Findings see a clear disparity for ethnic minority youth and call for more support and access to resources.

Understanding your Community

Tomas (2022) shares how autistic youth and young adults navigate workplace disclosure. While men attributed workplace accommodation as a reason for disclosure, women spoke to increasing autism understanding.

Erico Abordo: Building Capacity with Disability Studies & Diversity Issues

What is disability? How do the ways we as cultures answer this question impact access and equity? This strand invites contributions to the rich, diverse conversations that make up the interdisciplinary dialog of Disability Studies and Diversity Issues. The strand provides an exciting forum to explore some of the central questions animating Disability studies and inquiries into diversity issues. Identified topics this year include: Disasters and Emergency Preparedness; Disability Policy; Creativity, Media & the Arts; and Disability Studies & Intersectionality. This series of poster presentations offers a venue to understand issues in disability and diversity. No two topics are the same, as all issues are inherently different in terms of culture, experience, and approach to the identified issues or concerns. Presentations included:

Tenets of Resistance

Fuller (2022) realizes that ignorance is never bliss. And all individuals must stand against ableism and racism, as a way of becoming activists to bring about future change.

Defiance through Photography

Tourigny and Daniel (2022) hand out cameras to Persons with Disabilities and transform their self-awareness into a diaspora of expression outside the box. Photography transcends boundaries; talent abounds from everyone.

Evacuating Persons who Need Extra Care

Goto and Kawashima (2022) go in depth with the teachings of their culture on how to handle people during evacuations and how to treat them with respect and dignity. This is followed by a further discussion into its applicable components into other countries and contrasting cultural traits.

Skills for People with Intellectual Disabilities

Kojima (2022) shows that employment opportunities must be for all, especially for Persons with Disabilities. This presentation opens the fact that skills needed for employment for the sector are not being developed. But this study opens doors through its voice for exemplifying the voracious capacity of Persons with Disabilities to be independent and willing to learn new relevant skills.

Islamophobia and Mental Health

Abdullah & Hendricks (2022) sees religion in all aspects as a love letter to all: boundaries are broken with just a little more understanding about the beliefs of thy neighbor. Ultimately, we are all here to lighten the burden of everyday living. But only when we broaden our horizons can we alleviate everyone's mental health.

Inspiration may come from tragedy, or hardship, or even defiance. But all inspiration stems from hope, from the thought of making the future a better place for everyone. The presenters for this year's Disability Studies and Diversity Issues had struggles aligning what they see in front of them, and then bent them to become something acceptable and inclusive.

Their ideas awakened within them a raw power of will and determination. Their ideas and research now pave the way for something new and provide a pathway to a broader dream. And a little more hope.

Jared Galeai: Building Capacity within Employment and Career

The Employment and Career Strand represents the progress of workers with disabilities in finding inclusion and success. We must mobilize to combat the challenges and seize the opportunities of a turbulent global economy. Strand topics include Accessibility and Employment issues, COVID-19 and Employment, Innovations and Challenges in Workforce Development, and the Postsecondary Transition to Employment. Presentations included:

Comparative Study on the Employment of People with Mental Illness: Who Gave Up Working vs. Who Continues Searching for Jobs

Yuzawa (2022) shared her study on how to support people with mental illness who have barriers to work. Her study was conducted in Japan. The purpose of the study was to determine what influences and motivations of persons with mental illness who will continue to locate employment vs. those who choose to stop looking. The process of self-determination is coached towards making a final decision. Final findings supported that it is essential for supporters to keep positive and suggest that clients continue looking for employment.

The Maverick Entrepreneurs

Ruffner (2022) discussed neurodiversity in business today and the future that transcend cultural barriers. Businesses are looking for ways to better their hiring practices and introducing different ways their employees can create an advantage over competition. This doctoral dissertation study reviews a cross disciplinary view of neurodiversity's connection to

entrepreneurship, specifically those with dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Training Adults through Research, Group Education, and Treatment (TARGET): A Transition-Focused Program for Young Adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

Cleveland (2022) discusses the TARGET (Training Adults through Research, Group Education and Treatment) Program which is a virtual summer program for young adults with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in regards to employment and transition. The program was developed by the Arkansas Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities which encourages group involvement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employer Support in the Employment of Persons with Autism in Japan

Umenaga (2022) presents the lack of employment supports for people with developmental disabilities by companies in Japan. The development of a guide for employers to promote employment for persons with autism. The guide can be used to educate employers about the characteristics of autism which may lead to a progression of employment for persons with autism.

A Qualitative Study on the Function of ICT Utilization in Teaching Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Maebara, Yamaguchi, Suzuki & Imai (2022) conducted interviews with teachers who are working with students that use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in their classroom. ICT learning is one of the most effective considerations for promoting learning for students with intellectual disabilities. The study will give teaching/coaching techniques some ways to rethink the use of ICT.

Disability as a "Superpower": Understanding Marginalization and Equity in the Health Professions

Owen & McMillan (2022) present findings of recent research which explored the

everyday work experiences of health professionals marginalized by race, ethnicity, indigeneity, social class, disability and/or sexual/gender identity. The poster focuses on some innovative ways health care professionals with disabilities have reshaped their experiences.

Scavenger Hunt to Raise Awareness of Assistive Technology and Inclusion

Zheng & Pedersen (2022) look at Assistive Technology (AT) use and training on a college campus. Events were conducted on campus that were open to all students, faculty and staff to explore AT items in the Department of Special Education lab. Visitors to the events at the lab were invited to explore, given questions to come up with quick solutions and given prizes for responding to the poll. The scavenger hunt activity survey data was used for strategies about raising AT awareness.

School and Employment-related Barriers for Youth with and without Disabilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Lindsay (2022) explored barriers to school and employment for youth with and without a disability during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interviews were conducted with youth and young adults in regards to these barriers. Some of those barriers included difficult transition to online school and work, uncertainty about employment opportunities, and missed opportunities for career development because of the pandemic.

Trends of Home Based Vocational Training and Telework-based Employment Support for Individuals with Disabilities during COVID-19 in Japan

Yamaguchi, Yaeda, Maebara & Nozaki (2022) conducted a study to look at the status of home-based training for people with disabilities and the trend of telework based employment support during COVID-19 in Japan. The study also looks at what is available regarding the implementation of telework based vocational rehabilitation. The study also reviews how Information Communication Technology (ICT) is used and what struggles with work performance are due to issues with communication, training on ICT and daily

workflow.

Genesis Leong: Building Capacity within Education

The Education topic strand focuses on the experiences and outcomes of people with disabilities in education. Projects address barriers to access and participation as well as innovation and success in reimagining education across early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, higher education, and informal and alternative education and examine disability as a core component of diversity. Key takeaways and ways to Mobilize for Action include:

STEM Education

The emergence of STEM education is highlighted in an introduction presentation provided by Jenda (2021) on NSF INCLUDES Alliance TAPINTO-STEM that includes the history, successful interventions and improvements for STEM students with disabilities nationwide.

Accommodations and Assistive Technology

The growing need to create safe environments during the pandemic included Kirshira & Sasaki's (2022) students with disabilities in distance learning environments, Watanabe, Fujii, Hosho & Asaishi (2022) assistive technology for students with disabilities, and Kataoka (2022) learning disabilities obtaining reasonable accommodations.

Inclusive Campus Environments

To address the needs of students and educators with multiple identities and disabilities, the emergence of education projects, support services and curriculum were present at the conference. This included: Kim & Govin (2022), SPEDucators Project aimed at building community; Pham (2022), social support and school belonging for English learners

with disabilities; and Sedgwick (2022), activist learning activities for disabled learners.

Genesis Leong: Building Capacity within Health & Well-being

Mental health was the key connecting factor of the Health & Well-being strand. Research findings reinforce the importance of building capacity within our spaces. Key takeaways and ways to Mobilize for Action include:

Self-worth and Self-esteem

Ogawa and Kojima (2022) found that "athletic competence, academic competence, interpersonal relationships, and enthusiastic activity affect self-esteem." In line with *Mobilizing for Action!*, they suggested a "high level of enthusiastic activity promotes positive evaluation of the self by making it easier to have hopes for the future and to accept the past and [these are] factors that increase self-esteem" (Erico et al., 2021).

Dementia-friendly Gardening

Halzel (2022) proposes that gardening can "impact health and quality of life for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias." By removing barriers (attitudinal, communication, physical, programmatic, transportation) and using ADA guidelines, gardening can be used as an activity to provide sensory, memory, inclusive participation, and social interactions.

Equitable Use & Performing Arts

Potter (2022) shares a best practice guidebook, *Universal Design in the Performing Arts* by enforcing how equitable spaces help to improve "experiences for everyone." This is

done by integrating Universal Design Learning (UDL) practices into common performing arts practices such as ticketing, use of plain language, and sensory theme-colored lighting.

COVID-19 & Mental Health Maintenances

Lindsay (2022) aimed "understand the facilitators for helping youth and young adults with and without disabilities to copy during the COVID-19 pandemic." By taking the key themes (social support; financial support; keeping busy; and work-life balance), we are better able to provide coping strategies and personal growth within COVID-19's current and long-term effects.

Islamophobia Misconceptions & Mental Health

Abdullah & Hendricks (2022) provided awareness to the common misunderstandings shaping Islamphobia (terrorism; Middle Eastern; Arab; Shariah law; arranged marriage; polygamy; dressing). By better understanding cultures and religion, as individuals we can avoid the decline of mental health, hate crimes and trauma due to Islamophobia (Abordo et al., 2022).

The Health & Well-being live interaction sessions were integrated into the other strands. The ease of placement signifies that mental health, well-being and flourishing is in many cases the foundational factor that has driven much of research and best practices across the 2022 Pacific Rim Conference presentations.

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