

ABSTRACT

CATHERINE ANN BELL

LOCUS OF CONTROL WITH QUEER-SPECTRUM AND TRANS-SPECTRUM
STUDENTS ANT THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Under the direction of ARTHUR J. WILLIAMS, Ph. D

This mixed-methods study was informed by the Queer Theory and used a transformative framework with an advocacy lens to determine if there was a relationship between locus of control and the college experience for queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum students. Participants were queer-spectrum and/or trans-spectrum students who volunteered from the Gay-Straight Alliances and similar support groups at southern regional universities and colleges. The goal of this study was to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum students' locus of control and the general college experience. The researcher implemented Rotter's Internal-External (I-E) Locus of Control Inventory Scale and Marlowe-Crowne's Scale of Social Desirability as well as conducted semi-structured interviews where the researcher asked, "How do you describe your college experience?". The researcher collected data using a sequential transformative mixed-methods design. First, demographic information, Rotter's I-E Locus of Control Inventory Scale, and the Marlowe-Crowne's Scale of Social Desirability were implemented followed by semi-structured interviews. The researcher coded interviews based upon an open round of coding using the affective methods of emotion coding and values coding. A second round of theoretical coding was

conducted to dichotomize the codes into two core categories of positive college experiences and negative college experiences. These two core categories served to identify the primary themes of this research. Results identified a significant relationship between Rotter's I-E Locus of Control Inventory Scale and the college experience for queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum students. The researcher used results from this study to develop socially conscious means and lay the foundation for effective advocacy work that directly impacts queer-spectrum and/or trans-spectrum students within the counseling community.

Keywords: locus of control, queer-spectrum, trans-spectrum