

It's PRSA Diversity Month, which calls for a discussion that seeks to improve diversity and inclusion in PR.

Question 1: Do public relations students believe that race and gender affected their education experiences and social development during their collegiate careers?

Let's review a study.

A study conducted by Kenon A. Brown, University of Alabama; Damion Waymer, North Carolina A&T University; and Ziyuan Zhou, University Alabama “used interviews and other qualitative approaches to uncover themes related to a diverse sample of young profession and their collegiate experience, specifically their education experiences and social development.”

The study of 294 public relations majors was based on the following research questions:

1. Are there differences in public relations students' educational experiences as they progress in the major based on their racial background?
2. Are there differences in public relations students' educational experience as they progress in the major based on their gender?
3. Are there differences in public relations students' social development as they progress in the major based on their racial background?
4. Are there differences in public relations students' social development as they progress in the major based on their gender?

According to the study, “findings showed that underrepresented students were less likely to build a professional network in PR, build a strong support group other public relations students, and experience comfort interacting with other students in the classroom and in extracurricular activities.”

[Read more on the study's findings.](#)

What are practical recommendations for recruiting and retaining underrepresented students (UREPs) within the PR major?

1. Males and UREPs must be informed that public relations is not a “white girl” major
2. Males and UREPs, once in the major, must be informed of the opportunities available to gain professional experience and guidance
3. Diversity must start at the classroom level in order to embrace diversity at the professional level
4. Make diverse professionals more visible to all public relations majors, and urge them to proactively mentor and network with male and UREP students
5. Proactively discuss racial and gender differences related to the public relations industry in the classroom

[Read the full study](#)

Question 2: What can PRSA do to improve experiences of males and UREPs in the PR major?

Let's discuss!

Post your replies via Twitter by including @ArkPRSA and the hashtags #PRDiversity and #PRdiversityAR in your tweet.