

DISRUPTING SILENCE

GATE Fellowship

By Laura Chavira Razo, 2021

RESEARCH QUESTION

How to disrupt silence when discriminatory events happen in academic and workplaces?

BACKGROUND

In 2020...

I witnessed and experienced discriminatory comments towards the LGBTQ2S+ community and other minority groups in an academic space

Silence is a constant I perceived from multiple stakeholders

This project aims to turn these experiences into an actionable path to disrupt silence

RESULTS

What determines speaking up or not?



Victims and bystanders make a rapid assessment focused on the risks of speaking up



Bystanders tend to overlook the benefits and positive effects of speaking up



Victims need confidence and evidence that there is a safe space and support to speak up

"...one thing that was really helpful was the professor because he really encouraged everyone to express themselves freely without punishment or ridicule..."

Person who has spoken up in the past

"...a lot of the time I didn't speak up because I was worried that it would impact my own reputation and cause potential repercussions like loss of job."

Bystander

What happens after speaking up or not?

People who experienced discriminatory events have a higher emotional burden after the event happens, either if they speak up or not



The bystander's support is key to lighten that burden



"After a while I would get tired and I would be hoping that there will be other people who speak up. So it always comes up in my head like: "oh boy, me again."

Person who has received discriminatory comments

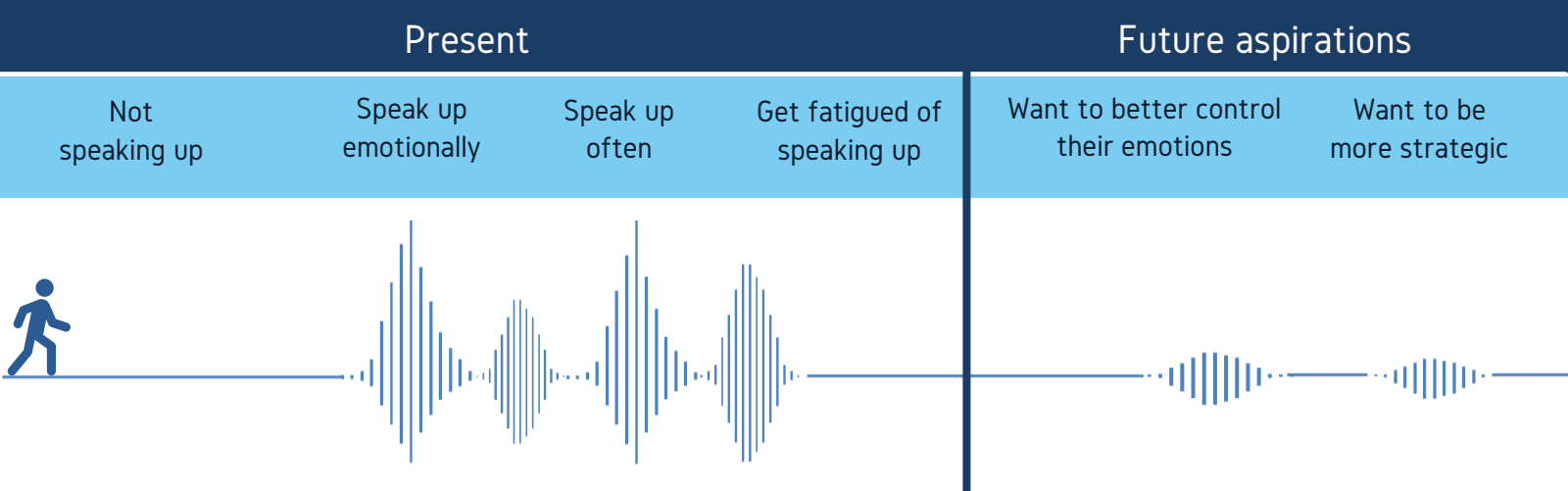
"...I can think back, and there's still times when I hadn't spoken up, but still to this day, they bug me. I still have some regrets."

Person who has received discriminatory comments

HOW TO DISRUPT SILENCE?

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First Know your journey



Speaking up is a learning journey for victims and bystanders

Don't wait to speak up until you are "perfect"



The goal is not trying to nail your first attempt, but starting the learning journey



Every time that you try, you will learn to do it better



Second As a victim of discriminatory events

Identify

- Peer role models to learn from them

Find safe spaces to learn and practice:

- Do it
- Refine it
- Get feedback

Know where you stand

- Identify your alternatives
- Know your rights and anti-discrimination policies in your school and workplace

Third As a bystander

Identify

- Role models of bystanders who have spoken up to learn from them

Find safe spaces to learn and practice:

- Do it
- Refine it
- Get feedback

Know where you stand

- Identify your alternatives
- Know the anti-discrimination policies in your school and workplace

Learn

- To recognize discrimination
- To leverage your power
- The effects of acting or not acting