Belonging is when an individual person feels an emotional connection to a community. Belongingness has been reported to be a human need and can have an impact on college student outcomes. If collegians struggle to fit in or feel they do not have a strong social support, then they become unmotivated and therefore, are less likely to succeed (Strayhorn, 2012). The Theoretical Model of Belonging for College Students with Disabilities stated that disability belongingness was generated by three factors: self-advocacy, social relationships, and mastery (Vaccaro, Daly-Cano, & Newman, 2015). The factors influence one another, as shown: 

1. Disability stigma played a role in disability belongingness.
2. On-campus involvement impacted disability belonging development.
3. Cultural identities influenced disability belongingness.

The purpose of the study was to learn about the belongingness of students with disabilities. With the use of qualitative methods, belongingness of the students with disabilities was explored. With the use of qualitative methods, belongingness of the students with disabilities was explored. With the use of qualitative methods, belongingness of the students with disabilities was explored. With the use of qualitative methods, belongingness of the students with disabilities was explored.

Overall, findings indicated that the disability belonging model is complex and cyclical—as intended by Vaccaro et al. (2015). Participants with disabilities felt that every experience or encounter that influenced their overall belonging development had one or more disability belonging factor present.

Implications and Future Directions

The study implied that though the Theoretical Model of Belonging for College Students with Disabilities is a strong, foundational model for understanding the experiences of students with disabilities, there is room for theoretical growth. Future studies should:

1. Examine gendered experiences in disability belonging.
2. Investigate how belonging connect to the public versus private identities.
3. Seek to understand why medically beneficial on-campus activities promote disability belonging.
4. Explore how cultural identity impacts disability belonging.

Suggestions for Policy and Practice

1. Mandatory disability competency training for faculty members.
2. Mandatory cultural competency training for disability services staff members.
3. Partnership between faculty and disability services.
4. Better accessibility for on-campus opportunities.
5. A designated platform for students with disabilities to voice their concerns/opinions and be heard.