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The Impact of a School-Based Cultural Awareness Program on Students' Ethnic Identity and Self-Esteem

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THE IMPACT OF A SCHOOL-BASED CULTURAL AWARENESS PROGRAM ON

STUDENTS ETHNIC IDENTITY AND SELF-ESTEEM

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the influences of a school-based cultural awareness program on ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade early adolescents. The development and implementation of a school-based cultural awareness program was intended to offer students a basic foundation for the development and/or enhancement of ethnic identity and self-esteem. 106 fifth grade early adolescents participated in this study. All participants were recruited from one elementary school in the southeastern part of the United States. Participants completed a research packet including the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) both before and after the program. Results indicated a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. Also, results of this study showed a significant difference between ethnic identity and self-esteem after participation in the cultural awareness program. The findings of this study are related to previous research. The implications of this study, limitations, and suggestions for future research are discussed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Various reasons for a culturally attentive guidance and counseling program exist, but it is possible that the most important is the need to recognize and appreciate the ethnicity of all children in order to enhance their self worth and dignity (Roth, 2005). Connolly and Hosken (2006) confirmed that once children begin to notice cultural and physical differences, they also develop the potential to negatively associate dissimilarities with individuals who are different from themselves. Subsequently, uniquely different children can experience setbacks in many forms including, but not limited to self-esteem. Umaña-Taylor and Updegraff (2007) indicated that children with high self-esteem have more positive life outcomes. Furthermore, ethnic minority children knowledgeable about their cultural background often have higher self-esteem. "It is possible that ethnic identity can serve as a protective role for individuals' self-esteem in that it provides a positive sense of self" (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007, p. 552). Fisher, Wallace and Fenton (2000) proposed that an engagement with diversity, whether it be in the form of a conversation or a chance meeting with a different population, affects the way a child sees himself in the world. With that being said, it is imperative that school counselors understand this and plan accordingly.

It is important to note that one of the most significant components of adolescents' overall development is identification (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980). Erikson describes identity formation as an exploration process in which youth develop a sense of self and begin to understand and join together inner-self and personal well-being. Young people begin to answer

the question, "Who am I?" Ethnic identity helps to answer this question as it is a large part of an individual's personality (Bernal & Knight, 1993).

According to Phinney, Lochner, and Murphy (1993), there should be two main areas of focus when working with adolescents to enhance their ethnic identity: 1) lack of knowledge and/or prejudice against themselves and their cultural group, and 2) recognition of the dominant culture, their own culture, and the impact both have on their lives. Through exploration, minority youth can begin to deal with such issues and eventually arrive at a sense of belonging and commitment to culture.

Minority membership coupled with adolescence can lead to an at-risk status (Phinney et al., 1993). Although several issues associated with adolescence can lead to such a status, failure to explore ethnic identity is certainly among the list. Children who fail to explore their ethnic identity are more susceptible to self-esteem exploitation. Without a stable sense of self, children are less likely to be successful, personally and academically (Roth, 2005). A need for school counselors to focus on ethnic identity exists because it is an important factor in the development of self-esteem in children and adolescents.

Statement of the Problem

A lack of cultural awareness or cultural recognition equates to a lack of basic essentials for the development of self-esteem (Roth, 2005). Because the number of minority youth in America is increasing at a staggering rate, cultural awareness must increase as well (Bernal, Knight, Ocampo, Garza, & Cota, 1993). School counselors are in a critical position and can have an overwhelming effect on students' self-esteem. It is important for school counselors to attend to students' differences while appreciating them at the same time (Bernal & Knight,

1993). Working with students without recognizing their differences can prove to be unproductive.

>Coleman and Lindwall (2008) advised that school counselors know how to conceptualize, structure, and implement a CGCP [comprehensive guidance and counseling program] that is attentive to the cultural needs of youth in today's society and allows the school counselor to continually be cognizant of how his or her work impacts the development of youth (p. 205).

In addition, the authors asserted that by the time a child enters grade 12 he should be able to demonstrate: a) knowledge and understanding of his own culture; b) the ability to effectively explore, rationalize, and express cultural ideas; c) an understanding of the American culture; d) the ability to work with diverse populations; and e) application of interpersonal conflict resolution. Students demonstrating the aforementioned skills feel more self-assured and comfortable discussing cultural issues than their uninformed counterparts (Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007).

In schools, counselors should advocate for equal opportunity in order for equal achievement to be obtained (Aboud & Doyle, 1993). Each student has particular characteristics, traditions, and experience distinct issues and challenges (Bernal et al., 1993; Phinney & Kohatsu, 1997). Ignoring ethnic differences denies a central part of the individual. Ethnic individuality needs to be recognized as it can serve as a key to educational success. It has been stated that students with higher ethnic identity also possess higher self-esteem, which, in turn, leads to higher academic achievement (Chappell & Overton, 2002; Cokely & Chapman, 2008; Phinney, 1992; Okwumabua, Wong, Duryea, Okwumabua, & Howell, 1999; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). Therefore, a need for culturally supportive educational environments is present.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative study is to examine the effectiveness of a school-based cultural awareness program as a means to enhance ethnic identity and improve self-esteem in fifth grade early adolescents. Over the past few decades researchers have begun to investigate the effectiveness of culturally relevant guidance and counseling programs. More importantly, research studies on multicultural concerns have positively influenced schools and communities (Chappell & Overton, 2002; Cokely & Chapman, 2008; Phinney, 1992; Okwumabua et al., 1999; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). Unfortunately, studies focused on actual school-based cultural awareness programs and their relationships to self-esteem are limited.

Significance of the Study

Because there is little research on actual programs for youth that focus on cultural awareness, this study will add significantly to existing research and will inform future research. In addition, students' participation in the program will enhance their cultural awareness. Not only will the students be more aware of their own culture, they will also be more aware of others' cultures. This too will lead to improved cultural sensitivity among the participants.

Specific Research Questions

This quantitative study is designed primarily to examine the influences of a school-based cultural awareness program on ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students. The overarching research question is as follows: What effect does a school-based cultural awareness program have on students' ethnic identity and self-esteem? The study addresses the following secondary research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between self-esteem and ethnic identity in fifth grade students?

2. Is there a significant difference in mean self-esteem pretest and posttest scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale for fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program when compared to fifth grade students who have not participated in a school-based cultural awareness program?

3. Is there a significant difference in mean ethnic identity pretest and posttest scores on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure for fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program when compared to fifth grade students who have not participated in a school-based cultural awareness program?

It is predicted that student involvement in a cultural awareness program will increase the level of ethnic identity and the level of self-esteem.

Hypotheses

The central research hypotheses most important to this study are presented in both the null and alternate form and are as follows:

H_o1: There is insufficient evidence of a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students.

H_a1: There is sufficient evidence of a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students.

H_o2: There is insufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean self-esteem posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

H_a2: There is sufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean self-esteem posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

H$_o$3: There is insufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean ethnic

identity posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest

scores.

H$_a$3: There is sufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean ethnic

identity posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for

pretest scores.

It is important to note that in hypotheses two and three the phrase "method of instruction" refers

to the following: 1) participation in the school-based cultural awareness program, and 2) no

participation in the school-based cultural awareness program.

Definition of Terms

Ethnic identity. Having a "commitment and sense of belonging to the group, positive

evaluation of the group, interest in and knowledge about the group, and involvement in social

activities of the group" (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997, p. 168).

Self-esteem. "How individuals evaluate themselves favorably or unfavorably" (Ward &

Redd, 2007, p. 184).

Affirmation, belonging, and commitment. An affective element of ethnic identity that

includes satisfactory feelings towards and meaningful interactions with a particular ethnic group

(Erikson, 1968; Phinney, 1992).

Ethnic identity search. A developmental and cognitive element of ethnic identity that

includes exploration of what it means be a member of a particular ethnic group (Erikson, 1968;

Phinney, 1992).

Cultural awareness program. A six-week series of classroom guidance lessons that lend to the development of an awareness of one's own culture, history, lifestyle, and experiences while also learning the same about others.

Cultural diversity. "The coexistence of different ethnic, gender, racial, and socioeconomic groups within one social group" (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cultural+diversity).

Limitations

The major limitation of this study is that the generalizability of the results will be limited to the particular grade level assessed within the specified school. Also, the participants may not include a broad range of ethnic groups, which would limit the study's generalizability for most ethnic groups. The development of the program by the researcher must also be taken into consideration.

Delimitations

Although not including all possible ethnic groups, research for this study will be conducted in a diverse inner-city elementary school. Intact groups will be chosen on the basis of their inherent diversity. A pre-test/post-test design will be utilized in the collection of the data. Both tests were originally developed to be used with children and adolescents. The researcher will be present for data collection to ensure that similar methods are employed.

Conclusion

This quantitative study is designed primarily to examine the influences of a school-based cultural awareness program on ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade early adolescents. The study addresses the following research question: What effect does a cultural awareness program have on students' ethnic identity and self-esteem? It is predicted that student

involvement in a cultural awareness program will increase the students' level of ethnic identity and self-esteem. More specifically, it is believed that, initially, the level of ethnic identity will increase, which is a direct catalyst for the increase in the level of self-esteem.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I provides an introduction to the study that includes the purpose statement, statement of the problem, significance of the study, research questions, hypotheses, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Chapter II consists of a review of the literature covering the areas of ethnic identity development, the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem, the impact of ethnic identity and self-esteem on academic achievement, and ethnic awareness programs for children and adolescents. Chapter III provides the methodology, which contains information about the selection of participants, instrumentation, experimental design, procedures, statistical tests, and data analyses. Chapter IV presents the results by way of an in-depth explanation of the findings of the study. Chapter V provides a discussion that links the findings of the study with implications for school counselors and comprehensive guidance and counseling programs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of the literature will present research in the areas of ethnic identity and self-esteem. In an attempt to better understand ethnic identity, ethnic identity development literature will be examined. When discussing the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem, particular attention will be given to African-American, Latino-American, Asian-American, and Biracial children. This will highlight issues that may require particular attention when working with diverse youth. In order to further establish importance for school counselors' awareness, academic success as it relates to ethnic identity and/or self-esteem will also be considered. Furthermore, a review of ethnic awareness programs will be included.

The literature will be presented in the following manner: 1) ethnic identity development, 2) relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem, 3) impact of ethnic identity and/or self-esteem on academic achievement, and 4) various ethnic awareness programs involving children and adolescents.

For the sake of this study, the operational definition of ethnic identity is having a "commitment and sense of belonging to the group, positive evaluation of the group, interest in and knowledge about the group, and involvement in social activities of the group" (Phinney et al., 1997, p. 168). The operational definition of self-esteem is "how individuals evaluate themselves favorably or unfavorably" (Ward & Redd, 2007, p. 184).

Ethnic Identity Development

Connolly and Hosken (2006) found that children begin to notice differences in culture and physical appearance as early as age three. Such recognition could be the foundation for identification with one's ethnic group. Furthermore, ethnic identity begins to develop in middle childhood and adolescence (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). Holcomb-McCoy proposed that during adolescence, children begin to mature and develop their worldview. Children start to realize they are members of a certain group of people and begin to identify with said group (Phinney et al., 1997). Some researchers characterized ethnic identity as a developmental process occurring most often in adolescence (Phinney, 1990; Whitehead, Ainsworth, Wittig, & Gadino, 2009). As children enter this stage of their life, knowledge about and interactions with their culture begin to resonate with them. Adolescents are developmentally capable of receiving and understanding cultural contexts.

It is important to note that one of the most significant components of adolescents' overall development is identification (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980). When adolescents begin to form an identity, they are developing a sense of self and attaching meaning to it. Sometimes the meaning of one's existence is closely linked to that individual's ethnic identity. It is, therefore, important to understand how such an identity comes about.

In a research study, Phinney (1989) developed and tested the applicability of an ethnic identity developmental model. The study included 91 African-American, Asian-American, Latino-American and Caucasian adolescents from urban high schools. The study was mixed-methods, having both interviews and a questionnaire. Phinney found that minority adolescents experienced a period in which the need to deal with their ethnicity was apparent. Additionally, issues of prejudice, American standards of beauty, culturally-based academic pressures, and job

discrimination were found to plague the minority adolescents. Also, Caucasian adolescents deemed their ethnicity as synonymous with American culture. This revealed a deficiency in pluralistic ethnocentrism among this group of adolescents. Moreover, it was discovered that this group of adolescents considered American culture to be centrally important in a society that is made up of diverse members that value their traditional culture as most significant.

Phinney (1989) discovered that a large number of the participants had not yet explored their ethnicity as an entity of their personal identity. One fourth of the participants had explored their identity and another fourth felt confident as part of a particular ethnic group. Using the Bronstein-Cruz Child/Adolescent Self-Concept and Adjustment Questionnaire, Phinney (1989) postulated that those minority adolescents having explored and understood the meaning of their ethnicity provided evidence of "higher scores of self-evaluation, sense of mastery, social and peer interactions, and family relations" (p. 47). This conclusion suggests that a connection to one's ethnicity is central to one's sense of self.

Based on the previously discussed research study and the developmental models of Erickson (1968) and Marcia (1980), Phinney (1990) provided a model of ethnic identity development in adolescence that consists of three stages: unexamined ethnic identity, ethnic identity search/moratorium, and ethnic identity achievement. According to Phinney's model of ethnic identity development, adolescents who have not yet explored their ethnic identity are in the first stage of the model. These adolescents have little to no desire to become more knowledgeable in their cultural context. Therefore, a lack of a clear understanding exists.

Adolescents in the ethnic identity search/moratorium stage are attempting to explore their ethnic identity, but have not fully committed to what their findings may mean (Phinney, 1989, 1990). Adolescents in this stage are confused about what it means to belong to a particular

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ethnic group. The last stage of the model is ethnic identity achievement. Adolescents in this stage have explored and now understand and accept their ethnic group. Characteristics of adolescents in this stage might be ethnic pride, a sense of belonging, and self-confidence (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Phinney, 1989, 1990).

Whitehead et al. (2009) presented research that supports the stages of Phinney's (1990) ethnic identity development model. The authors developed and implemented two models that measured adolescents' level of ethnic identity exploration as well as ethnic identity affirmation and belonging. The models were temporal in nature and participants included 571 adolescents from various ethnic groups. Whitehead et al. determined that, over time, adolescents progress from exploration (stage two of Phinney's ethnic identity development model) to affirmation and belonging (stage three of Phinney's ethnic identity development model). This is opposed to the alternative model that suggested a progression from affirmation and belonging to exploration. The findings suggested that it is essential for adolescents to first explore their ethnicity in order to achieve comfort and security in their ethnic identity. In addition, the results indicated that once adolescents explore and discover the meaning attached to their ethnicity, they will then develop a connection with their ethnic group, which brings about positive feelings for that group and others.

Umaña-Taylor, Gonzales-Backen, and Guimond (2009) performed a longitudinal study in order to determine if ethnic identity was a developmental process for 323 Latino adolescents. As indicated in this study and previously discussed studies, ethnic identity appears to be a process beginning with exploration and ending with understanding. Over the course of four years, the researchers aimed to determine whether Latino adolescents' ethnic identity exploration,

resolution, and affirmation increased with time. The authors reported significant positive linear growth for each of the three variables ranging in time from middle to late adolescence.

Relationship Between Ethnic Identity and Self-Esteem in Children

It has been said that ethnic identity is a major contributor of self-esteem in children (Phinney et al., 1997). This is said to be true across all ethnic/cultural groups of young people. Furthermore, studies have revealed that the higher the ethnic identity of children, the higher the self-esteem (Alvarez & Helms, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Phinney et al.; Smith, Levine, Smith, Dumas, & Prinz, 2009). As stated in the operational definition, a sense of belonging is an important entity of ethnic identity. Holcomb-McCoy (2005) and Phinney et al. stressed the significant relationship between positive identification with one's ethnic group and positive self-esteem. It appears that a sense of belonging, in particular, is essential to the self-esteem of children. Those children with strong feelings of belonging and high levels of ethnic identity are often the same children cognizant of discrimination and racism. Even still, children's self-esteem remains in tact because they have more effective ways of dealing with such issues (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). It can be inferred that children in healthy relationships are well adjusted and equipped with the tools needed to handle everyday-life issues.

Feeling a positive connection with one's ethnic group carries a great deal of weight in a child's development. It is important that school counselors recognize this relationship and plan accordingly. Before ethnic awareness efforts can be put in place, there are other factors regarding ethnic identity and self-esteem in children that need to be addressed. The next section of this literature review will focus on specific ethnic groups and corresponding areas for consideration.

African-American Youth. With age, African-American children have a particular need to feel close to their ethnic group (Phinney et al., 1997; Smith et al., 2009). Smith et al. declared that a positive sense of belonging to the African- American culture is almost synonymous with healthy development. This is an extremely important factor to consider when working with African-American youth. Even more, group identification may be a greater issue for African-American girls. According to Smith et al., African-American boys possessed a higher level of group identification than their female counterparts. Because group identification is such an essential component of African-American youth's healthy development, it is apparent that special attention should be given to African-American girls whose sense of belonging may be wavering. African-American girls and boys depend upon the support of parents, friends, the community, and so forth. Phinney et al. and Smith et al. stated that girls may tend to need a bit more emotional support.

Latino-American Youth. There seems to be little research on this population in regard to ethnic identity and self-esteem. Nonetheless, a group of particular researchers (Phinney et al., 1997) discovered a few factors that influence the ethnic identity and self-esteem of Latino-American children. Similar to African-American youth, Phinney et al. found that gender plays a role in the ethnic identity and self-esteem of Latino-American youth. Latino-American boys have a more positive ethnic identity, thus, more positive self-esteem. Latino-American girls may require more in-group support and validation. Family is very important within the Latino-American community. Furthermore, familial relationships affect the levels of ethnic identity and self-esteem in their children. Level of acculturation is yet another factor to consider. Phinney et al. proposed that low levels of acculturation tend to associate with poor language skills, which translates into little communication with others that can then result in few friendships. One more

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area of consideration regarding Latino-American youth is the manner in which they take in other groups' attitudes toward their culture. Phinney et al. concluded that the way Latino-American children perceive other groups' view of them affects the way they feel about their cultural identity and self-worth.

Asian-American Youth. As with Latino-American children, little research was found pertaining to ethnic identity and self-esteem. According to Alvarez and Helms (2001) myths exist that suggest Asian-American children are accepted in America and do not experience issues like racism, low self-esteem, or low levels of ethnic identity. On the contrary, Asian-American youth do encounter these problems and it is important to address them. One very important area to consider when assessing ethnic identity and self-esteem is racial "messages" (Alvarez & Helms, 2001, p. 218). The authors explained that racial messages are communications related to race sent by family, friends, schools, churches, and other social groups that attach value to Asian-American youth's culture and sense of self. These messages shape the perceptions these children have about themselves. When Asian-American children receive positive racial messages, they tend to have a greater sense of ethnic pride, which, in turn, leads to a higher self-esteem. Moreover, Asian-American children hold a very high regard for other Asian-Americans. This being so, it is imperative that parents, peers, and the community play a positive role in the development of their youth.

Biracial Youth. Biracial children are met with a unique set of circumstances. Because biracial children stem from more than one ethnic group, they often experience a lack of social acceptance and group identification (Benedetto & Olisky, 2001; Ward & Redd, 2007). This can lead to feelings of inadequacy, estrangement, or paranoia. Ward and Redd suggested that another area of concern for biracial youth is skin color. The degree of color in the skin is said to

affect the relationships biracial children have with others. Family and community members as well as society as a whole are sometimes unsure about the type of interactions they wish to have with biracial children based on their skin color. More than any other ethnic group of children, biracial children encounter prejudice from all sides, sometimes not even being accepted by either ethnic group.

Impact of Ethnic Identity and/or Self-Esteem on Academic Achievement

The Education Trust's National Center for Transforming School Counseling (TSC), one of the nation's leading school counseling organizations, supports the idea that school counselors are an integral part of students' academic achievement (Pérusse & Colbert, 2007; Pérusse, Goodnough, Donegan, & Jones, 2004). In demonstrating the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem, it is also important to show how these entities contribute to academic success. Even today, schools are plagued with ethnic/racial segregation and these disparities are mirrored in academic achievement.

Steele (1999) suggested that stereotypical views of minorities' academic abilities could be detrimental to their ability to achieve. In this particular study, Steele tested both African-American and Caucasian individuals using sample questions from a standardized test. The test was given twice under different circumstances. The first test was given under the instruction that it was to measure intellectual ability. The second test was understood to be a task invented to study how individuals solve problems differently. Steele determined that the African-American participants performed as well as their Caucasian counterparts when the test was presented as something other than an assessment of intellectual ability. Steele deducted that susceptibility to stereotypes could negatively affect academic performance across ethnic groups. Furthermore,

internalized views about one's ethnicity can result in damaged self-esteem, which may lead to low overall performance.

Chappell and Overton (2002) performed a research study that related socioeconomic status, ethnic identity, and self-esteem to 330 African-American adolescents' ability to deductively reason and perform in school. The research revealed that participants with higher ethnic identity scores also demonstrated higher reasoning abilities. The authors inferred that adolescents possessing a positive view of their ethnic group held a more positive view of their cognitive abilities.

Cokley and Chapman (2008) performed a study that examined whether ethnic identity had an impact on the academic self-concept of African-American students. The participants included 274 African-American college students within a predominantly African-American university in the south. The research determined that a positive ethnic identity predicted higher academic self-concepts among the participants. Those students with higher academic self-concepts also had higher grades. This conclusion suggested an indirect yet significant link between ethnic identity and grade point average.

In a similar study, Phinney (1992) examined the level of ethnic identity exploration as a potential method to increase academic confidence. The author noted that negative attitudes about minority groups' intellectual abilities could lead to low academic performance. Phinney investigated the level of ethnic identity in high school students from multiple ethnic groups. The study found that high school students with a 3.0 grade point average or higher also scored higher in regards to ethnic identity. Students with grades averaging in the C or D range scored lower on the ethnic identity measure. Phinney proposed that ethnic identity could serve as a protective force against stereotypes that weaken students' academic self-concept.

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Whitesell, Mitchell, Spicer, and The Voices of Indian Teens Project Team (2009) investigated important factors related to the academic success of American Indian adolescents. Among these factors were self-esteem and ethnic identity. The sample included 1,611 adolescents from the Voices of Indian Teens Project. The study was longitudinal in nature and occurred over the course of three years. The results showed a strong relationship between self-esteem and positive academic achievement. Furthermore, it was determined that self-esteem had a larger impact on academic success than did academic success on self-esteem. In contrast to other studies, there was no significant relationship between American Indian identity and academic success. Whitesell et al. implied that further research of the American Indian culture might be necessary in order to understand this discrepant view.

Research on the impact of ethnic identity and self-esteem on academic achievement varies, but overall support for the enhancement of ethnic identity as an agent for academic success exists. With this in mind, it is important to review how ethnic awareness is being communicated to school-aged children.

Ethnic Awareness Programs for Children and Adolescents

National standards insist that school counselors "develop comprehensive guidance and counseling programs that appropriately address multicultural issues" (Coleman & Lindwall, 2008, p. 204). Furthermore, research has indicated that ethnic identity and self-esteem have a positive relationship. It is believed that children educated about their ethnic identity are often times the children with high self-esteem and academic success (Chappell & Overton, 2002; Cokely & Chapman, 2008; Phinney, 1992; Okwumabua et al., 1999; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). The following is a review of past research in respect to specific cultural/ethnic identity programs and their influences.

Cultural awareness activities can be infused very early in a child's education. Kirk and Anicich (1996) developed a cultural awareness program for kindergarten students. The program consisted of many activities including, but not limited to journal entries, theatrical play, arts and crafts, culturally specific music and songs, as well as diagramming variations of physical appearance. The program ended with the assembling of a "Culture Quilt" (Kirk & Anicich, 1996, p. 312). Through intense observation, the authors were able to convey that, after being educated, the children felt empowered and accepting of every student in the class. The students were holding hands and sharing hugs. The innate goodness of each child was revealed and a community was formed.

Similarly, Connolly and Hosken (2006) worked with children of a very young age. Their program included eight classes made up of students ages six and seven. The program aimed to increase students' awareness of cultural differences. The students participated in activities such as theatrical play as well as various activities led by teachers in the classroom during circle time. The study had the following objectives: "increase children's ability to recognize, without prompting, instances of social exclusion; reduce children's tendency to stereotype others by increasing their awareness of the many different things that children share in common; increase children's willingness to be more inclusive of others who are different from themselves" (Connolly & Hosken, 2006, p. 111). The authors used pictures to measure the effects of the program. For example, students were asked to describe what they saw in a photograph of a group of children playing on the playground. The students' responses were recorded and then coded. Connolly and Hosken claimed a "significant degree of success" (2006, p. 122). They found the program to be effective in that it increased the children's ability to notice differences

and examples of exclusion. Although the study did not intend to measure a change in students'

attitudes, the teacher interviews revealed that the students began to realize their individual worth.

African-American male youth are more likely to become involved in criminal activity

than youth from the majority culture (1994 West Tennessee Juvenile Court Report as cited in

Okwumabua et al., 1999, p. 62). Okwumabua et al. suggested a need for culturally relevant

programs that help young people develop a more positive disposition and attitude toward their

own culture. In turn, these young people will have better relationships with others, a more

positive self-esteem, and eliminate antisocial behaviors. Okwumabua et al. performed a study

intended to reduce criminal activity within a group of African-American youth. The study had

the following objectives: enhance self-esteem, teach decision-making and conflict-resolution

skills, and improve cultural awareness. Regarding cultural awareness, the youth were exposed to

encouraging places and information that related to their culture. The authors determined, by way

of two attitudinal scales, that the youths' self-esteem, impression of their physical traits, and

cultural identity greatly improved after completing the program.

Umaña-Taylor and Updegraff (2007) conducted a study that examined self-esteem as it

relates to Latino adolescents' ethnic identity and other cultural factors. Because of the ever-

increasing number of Latino youth coupled with the common mental health issues associated

with this population, the authors deemed their study significant. Their study indicated that the

higher the levels of ethnic identity the higher the levels of self-esteem in Latino boys and girls.

Umaña-Taylor and Updegraff were determined to discover and reveal the cultural factors, both

developmental and psychological, that can negatively or positively affect Latino youth. Equally,

the authors concluded that high self-esteem and a high level of ethnic identity prove to buffer the

risk of mental illness. Furthermore, ethnic identity shields a child's self-esteem by providing confidence and solidity within the sense of self.

A review of the literature indicates there are no researched programs on ethnic awareness for fifth grade students. For the purpose of this study, an ethnic awareness program was developed by the primary researcher (see Appendix A). The program activities include art, music, writing, sandtray, and games.

Conclusion

In closing, it has been revealed that ethnic identity and self-esteem are related. In some instances, a higher ethnic identity and/or self-esteem can result in higher academic achievement. Nevertheless, empirical evidence varied throughout the literature, therefore, calling for further research. Past literature has, however, shown that higher degrees of ethnic identity tend to positively affect a child's sense of self. Also, past literature indicates that educational programs aimed at cultural awareness can increase students' sensitivity towards diversity. Given this information, it is important that a clear understanding of successful awareness programs and their effectiveness exist.

The following chapter will discuss the study's methodology. Moreover, the methodology will present the way in which the research will be conducted. The chapter will include an in-depth explanation of the study's design, participants, procedures, and statistical analyses.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLGY

Introduction

Although there are several studies regarding ethnic identity and self-esteem in children and adolescents, there is very little research that focuses on the effectiveness of school-based cultural awareness programs on ethnic identity and self-esteem. There is a major gap in our knowledge of effective multicultural school counseling programming. Moreover, multiculturally sensitive services are vital to school counseling as the student population is becoming more diverse. The following section will discuss the design of the study, participants, instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis.

Design of Study

The study involved the use of a quasi-experimental design and more specifically, a non-randomized pre-test and post-test control group design (Creswell, 2009). In this design, there is one experimental group and one control group. Both groups completed a pre-test before treatment and post-test after the experimental group finishes treatment. The experimental group participated in the cultural awareness program. The control group was not involved in the cultural awareness program at that time. However, the control group will receive the treatment after the research has been completed. The quasi-experimental design of this study intends to determine the effectiveness of the cultural awareness program on students' level of ethnic identity and self-esteem. Respectively, students' ethnic identity and self-esteem was

measured using the Multigroup Measure of Ethnic Identity (MEIM) and the Rosenberg Self Esteem Inventory (Phinney, 1992; Rosenberg, 1965).

Participants

The target population for this study consists of inner-city early adolescents in a large Southeastern city in the United States. More specifically, the researcher aimed to study fifth grade students during the 2010-2011 academic year. The school and student sample was chosen based on the diversity of its fifth grade demographics. Fifth grade was chosen in order to assess students at the elementary level, but also students having the ability to understand and comprehend the assessments and actively participate in the classroom guidance activities. Fifth grade is often the final grade level within an elementary school.

A non-random sample of 100 students (approximately four classrooms) was recruited from one elementary school (Germanshire Elementary) within an inner-city school system. The participants included both male and female fifth grade students. Ethnic affiliation included Caucasian, African-American, Latino, Asian American, American-Indian, and Bi-racial. Fifty subjects participated in a cultural awareness program. The other 50 subjects served as the control group. The school notified parents and obtained informed consent (see Appendices B and C), in writing, and discussed issues of confidentiality with parents and the participants. The participants were instructed verbally that they have a right to participate or not participate in the study. The students assented by completing the assessments.

Procedures

First, the researcher obtained approval from the dissertation committee members and the University's Institutional Review Board, which includes approval by the participating school

district. Written confirmation from the authors of the Multigroup Measure of Ethnic Identity and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory is not needed to make use of the items from the surveys.

Near the beginning of the school year, the school counselor selected the four most diverse fifth grade classrooms and 106 of those students were chosen to participate. The school counselor was sure to choose diverse classrooms that are comparable in demographics. A diverse classroom is one that is made up of children with varying ethnicities. Demographics for each classroom were obtained from the school in order to make this distinction. The school counselor assigned two classrooms to serve as the experimental cultural awareness groups and the remaining classrooms were assigned as the non-experimental control groups (Hinkle et al., 2003). In order to be as fair as possible, the school counselor blindly pulled classroom names from a box to determine which two classrooms served as the treatment group and which two classrooms served as the control group. The school counselor distributed informed consent documents to the fifth grade teachers who had students involved in the research study. The teachers sent the informed consent documents home with the students. Parents of students from the selected classrooms received notices from their child's school describing a study about cultural awareness and self-esteem. Interested parents returned an informed consent document signed by both the parent and student. Once received, fifth grade teachers returned the informed consent documents to the school counselor. The school counselor then gave the documents to the principal researcher. If students did not return an informed consent document signed, they were able to participate in the cultural awareness program, but did not take the aforementioned inventories. Students were instructed verbally that they may or may not participate in the program. An oral assent form was completed by the researcher for each participant (see Appendix D).

Once all materials were obtained, the principal researcher numbered all informed consent documents. The students' inventories were numbered in a manner that corresponded to their consent form. The principal researcher was the sole individual handling the inventories, therefore, the students' information was confidential and de-identified to all others.

Following recruitment, all groups of students were asked to complete the MEIM and RSE, which will serve as pretests. Both groups spent one hour per week for six weeks participating in classroom guidance programs. The experimental group participated in the cultural awareness classroom guidance series and the control group participated in the Project Wisdom classroom guidance series, the school's character education program. Classroom guidance is an efficient way for school counselors to deliver services to large groups. This particular cultural awareness classroom guidance series was developed by the researcher. The experimental group spent the first week getting to know one another and setting group goals. During subsequent classroom guidance lessons the following topics were covered: all about me and my unique family, personal heroes, music, our school culture, and discrimination in our school/city (Washington et al., 2003). The school counselor was properly debriefed on each topic and corresponding activity. In addition, a detailed resource packet was provided by the researcher. The non-experimental control group did not receive cultural awareness classroom guidance, but participated in the school's Project Wisdom classroom guidance series. At the end of the program, both groups of students were asked to complete the post-tests.

Instrumentation

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (see Appendix E for complete instrument). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure was used to measure "three aspects of ethnic identity: positive ethnic attitudes and sense of belonging; ethnic identity achievement, including both

exploration and resolution of identity issues; and ethnic behaviors or practices" (Phinney, 1992, p. 164). Because ethnic identity is recognized as an important part of development, the MEIM was created to use with all young people. Fifteen items make up the questionnaire. Questions are scored using a four-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1 = strongly disagree; 4 = strongly agree). The mean of the 15 items is calculated in order to obtain an overall score. The higher the overall score, the higher the overall ethnic identity. The MEIM has a Chronbach alpha of 0.81 which suggests a high level of reliability for this instrument (Phinney, 1992).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (see Appendix F for complete instrument). The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory consists of 10 items assessing individual feelings about self (Rosenberg, 1965). Fisher, Wallace, and Fenton (2000) argued that this particular measure of self-esteem could assist in the exploration of negative self-evaluations that may originate from issues regarding race and ethnicity. Questions are scored using a four-point scale ranging from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). When scoring the items, 3 = strongly agree and 0 = strongly disagree. Some items are scored in reverse order (0 = strongly agree; 3 = strongly disagree). The RES has a Chronbach alpha of 0.77 which suggests a high level of reliability for this instrument. Robins, Hendin, and Trzesniewski (2001) performed a study to measure the construct validity of the RSE. The study included men, women and children, from varying ethnic groups, in school, college and in the community. The authors found the construct validity of the RSE to be between 0.72 and 0.76 across all populations involved in the study.

Specific Research Questions

      This quantitative study was designed primarily to examine the influences of a school-based cultural awareness program on ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students. The study addresses the following research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between self-esteem and ethnic identity in fifth grade students?

2. Is there a significant difference in mean self-esteem scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale for fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program when compared to fifth grade students who have not participated in a school-based cultural awareness program?

3. Is there a significant difference in mean ethnic identity scores on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure for fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program when compared to fifth grade students who have not participated in a school-based cultural awareness program?

It is predicted that student involvement in a cultural awareness program will increase both ethnic identity and self-esteem. It is also predicted that there is a relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem.

Hypotheses

The central research hypotheses most important to this study are presented in both the null and alternate form and are as follows:

    H_o1: There is insufficient evidence of a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students.

    H_a1: There is sufficient evidence of a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students.

H$_o$2: There is insufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean self-esteem

posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

H$_a$2: There is sufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean self-esteem

posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

H$_o$3: There is insufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean ethnic

identity posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for

pretest scores.

H$_a$3: There is sufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean ethnic

identity posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for

pretest scores.

It is important to note that in hypothesis two and three the phrase "method of instruction" refers

to the following: 1) participation in the school-based cultural awareness program, and 2) no

participation in the school-based cultural awareness program.

Statistical Tests and Data Analysis

For hypothesis one, a Pearson *r* correlation statistical analysis was used to analyze the

data. A Pearson *r* correlation is a "mathematical expression of the direction and magnitude of

the relationship between two measures that yield continuous scores" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007,

p. 649). The level of self-esteem as measured by the RSE served as the dependent variable and

the level of ethnic identity achievement as measured by the MEIM was the independent variable.

A Pearson *r* correlation assumes that the relationship between the dependent variable and the

independent variable will be linear (Hinkle et al., 2003). An independent and dependent variable

must be specified in a correlation even if the relationship is not believed to be causal. The

correlation ranges from +1.00 (perfect positive correlation) to −1.00 (perfect negative correlation). A correlation of zero represents no relationship at all.

Hypothesis two was investigated using an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). ANCOVA are used to determine whether the mean differences of groups on the dependent variable are statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). More specifically, in a quasi-experimental design, the elemental purpose of an ANCOVA is to regulate the mean posttest scores for differences that are likely to be present in intact groups. ANCOVA analyze one independent variable, one dependent variable, and one or more covariates. In addition, ANCOVA adjust for differences in the dependent variable in order to reduce error caused by the relationship between the dependent variable and the covariate. This allows for all participants to have an equal starting point. The independent variable is expected to have at least two levels. The independent variable in this study is method of instruction. The two levels of method of instruction are 1) participation in the school-based cultural awareness group, and 2) no participation in the school-based cultural awareness group. The dependent variable is self-esteem posttest score as measured by the Rosenberg Self Esteem Inventory. The covariate is self-esteem pretest score.

Furthermore, hypothesis three was also be examined using an ANCOVA. The independent variable is method of instruction. The two levels of method of instruction are 1) participation in the school-based cultural awareness group, and 2) no participation in the school-based cultural awareness group. The dependent variable is ethnic identity posttest score as measured by the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. The covariate is ethnic identity pretest score. For both hypothesis two and hypothesis three, the ANCOVA was used to determine

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whether there is a significant difference in the sample means of the dependent variables among the two groups.

Limitations

Selection bias is a concern in this study. The groups were chosen by the school counselor. As a result, there is a possibility that the selection of the fifth grade classrooms was biased.

Conclusion

This quantitative study was designed primarily to examine the influences of a school-based cultural awareness program on ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade early adolescents. The development and implementation of a school-based cultural awareness program is intended to offer students a basic foundation for the development and/or enhancement of ethnic identity and self-esteem. It is predicted that students having participated in the program will show a significant increase in both ethnic identity and self-esteem. The following chapter contains the results of the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the effectiveness of a school-based cultural awareness program as a means to enhance ethnic identity and improve self-esteem in fifth grade early adolescents. This study attempted to determine whether a difference existed before and after the implementation of a cultural awareness program in students' self-esteem and ethnic identity. The instruments used to measure this difference were the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure provided information concerning the students' ethnicity and the ethnicity of their parents. This measure also has subscales that will be mentioned later in the discussion section, chapter five. A score ranging from 1-4 was used to measure ethnic identity. Regarding the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a score ranging from 0-40 was used to measure self-esteem.

Data Examination and Management

Before the data was analyzed, it was properly screened and checked for possible errors or missing data. Although there were a few instances in which data was missing, all the participants information was able to be used. Participants in this study were composed of fifth grade students from a public elementary school in the southwestern part of the United States. Participation in this study was dependent upon the return of a parental permission form. The number of participants in this study totaled 106.

Assumptions and Related Statistical Concerns

Before reporting the results, the statistical analyses performed will be discussed. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (Pearson *r*), the univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), the univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the multivariate analysis of variance, repeated measures (MANOVA, repeated measures) were used to analyze the data.

First, a Pearson *r* correlation statistical analysis will be used to analyze the data. A Pearson *r* correlation is a "mathematical expression of the direction and magnitude of the relationship between two measures that yield continuous scores" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 649). The level of self-esteem as measured by the RSE will serve as the dependent variable and the level of ethnic identity achievement as measured by the MEIM will be the independent variable. A Pearson *r* correlation assumes that the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable will be linear (Hinkle et al., 2003). An independent and dependent variable must be specified in a correlation even if the relationship is not believed to be causal. The correlation ranges from +1.00 (perfect positive correlation) to −1.00 (perfect negative correlation). A correlation of zero represents no relationship at all. For the purpose of this study, the correlation coefficient will be calculated to examine the relationship between scores on ethnic identity as measured by the Multi-Group Ethnic Identity Measure and self-esteem as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

The second statistical analysis conducted in this study was a univariate analysis of covariance or ANCOVA. An ANCOVA is used to determine whether the mean differences of groups on the dependent variable are statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). More specifically, in a quasi-experimental design, the elemental purpose of an ANCOVA is to regulate the mean posttest scores for differences that are likely to be present in intact groups. An

ANCOVA analyzes one independent variable, one dependent variable, and one or more covariates. In addition, An ANCOVA adjusts for differences in the dependent variable in order to reduce error caused by the relationship between the dependent variable and the covariate. This allows for all participants to have an equal starting point. The independent variable is expected to have at least two levels. More specifically speaking, the independent variable is expected to be categorized into at least two groups. There are several underlying assumptions associated with the ANCOVA. Some of which include randomness, independence, normality, and homogeneity of variance. In addition, there are three very unique assumptions associated with the ANCOVA and are as follows: a) the independent variable should not affect the covariate variable, b) homogeneity of within-group correlations, and c) linearity (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). These unique assumptions will be discussed first and the more common assumptions will follow.

The first of the three unique assumptions specifies that the independent variable should not influence the covariate (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). If the data is collected before treatment, then this assumption will be met. The second unique assumption requires that the correlation between the dependent variables and the covariate be equal within each population included in the study. The last unique assumption, linearity, requires a linear relationship between the covariate and the dependent variables. A statistical test exists that computes linearity, but is not often discussed in research.

The first of the more common assumptions, randomness, refers to a methodological concern. The sample should be a random subset of the population it represents (Huck, 2000). Independence is also a methodological concern. This refers to an independence of observation,

meaning the score of any given participant should not be affected by any other participant in the study.

The third assumption, normality, assumes that the data were sampled from a population having a normal distribution (Huck, 2000). In other words, the dependent variable should be normally distributed which means there should be an equal number of participants with scores both above and below the mean. More commonly, the participants scores should be closer to the mean rather than very different from the mean. The fourth assumption, homogeneity of variance, assumes that the population variances among the dependent variables are the same across all groups. The variance associated with each mean should be equal. If the groups' covariance is unequal the results of the ANCOVA are questionable.

The first two assumptions, randomness and independence, are rarely discussed by researchers in their reports. However, normality and homogeneity of variance are often discussed (Huck, 2000). PASW Statistics 18 (2010) is able to measure normality and homogeneity of variance using Levene's test of equality of error variances. This test works by computing the absolute difference between each value in its group mean. When normality or homogeneity of variance assumptions are violated it is serious and an ANCOVA should not be performed. The homogeneity of variance assumption was violated in this study. Levene's test of equality of error variances reported $F(1, 104) = 8.852$, $p = 0.004$. This significance level is less than the alpha significance level of 0.05, and is, therefore, significant.

As a means to compensate for the lack of homogeneity of variance other test procedures were performed. With an awareness that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not met, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data in order to determine pre-existing differences between groups. In its simplest form, an ANOVA provides a statistical test

of whether or not the means of several groups are all equal (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). Because conducting multiple *t*-tests would result in an increased chance of committing a Type I error, an ANOVA was used to reduce this possibility. For this reason, an ANOVA is helpful in comparing two, three, or more means (Huck, 2000).

In this study, the ANOVA indicated there was an overall significant difference between groups on self-esteem. Levene's test of equality of error variances reported $F(1, 104) = 8.062, p = 0.005$ for the groups based on the self-esteem variable. However, there was no significant difference between groups based on the ethnic identity variable. For ethnic identity, Levene's test of equality of error variances reported $F(1, 104) = 0.751, p = 0.388$. After having discovered the pre-existing differences between groups on self-esteem, a repeated measures MANOVA was conducted because this particular statistical analyses provides numerous tests of significance that can validate the findings of the study. In order to answer the hypotheses, a repeated measures ANOVA could have been used, however a repeated measures MANOVA was used to explore a variety of statistical results.

A more detailed explanation of the repeated measures MANOVA will be provided because it is this statistical procedure by which two of the hypotheses will be explained. In addition, it was earlier stated that an ANCOVA was the original statistical analysis to be used and this analysis was explained in the methods section of this dissertation. Repeated measures MANOVA was not discussed in the methods section, therefore will be explained in detail here.

A repeated measures design refers to studies in which the same measures are collected multiple times for each subject but under different conditions (Hinkle et al.). This is a powerful and efficient design because it reduces error variance (Weinfurt, 1995). For this study in particular, repeated measures were collected before and after the sampled population

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participated in a classroom guidance series. Half of the students participated in a cultural awareness program while the other half of the students participated in a character education program. Both groups of students were given the same measures before and after the programs. Measurements that occur over a period of time, like in an analysis such as this, attempt to show change over that period of time. Main and interaction effects are meant to be revealed when using a repeated measures MANOVA.

Some important terms associated with repeated measures MANOVA include (a) within-subjects variable, which refers to the independent variable, and (b) between-subjects variable, which refers to the grouping variable (Weinfurt, 1995). There are several assumptions that underlie the repeated measures MANOVA. The first assumption, independence, means that the observations of participants at each measurement period are independent. Another assumption, normality, declares that population sample is normally distributed. The third assumption, homogeneity of variance, refers to the equality of the variances of the dependent variable at level of measurement. Lastly, repeated measures MANOVA assume that time periods are equal between measurements.

Multivariate tests of significance for a repeated measures MANOVA include Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root. Pillai's test has the most statistical power and is the most vigorous. However, Wilks' Lamba is most often reported when testing significance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006). These tests specify whether there is a significant difference on the dependent variable and whether it can be classified as a main or interaction effect.

In order to test for equality of variance, Mauchly's test of sphericity is commonly utilized.

> The sphericity assumption says that the population variances associated with the levels of the repeated measures factor, in combination with the population correlations between pairs of levels, must represent one of a set of acceptable patterns. One of the acceptable patterns is for all the population variances to be identical and for all bivariate correlations to be identical. There are, however, other patterns of variances and correlations that adhere to the requirements of sphericity (Huck, 2000, p. 477)

Because there are only two groups in this study, Mauchly's test of sphericity was unable to compute. However, Epsilon adjustments can be made to compensate for the lack of this test. Epsilon adjustments presume the sphericity assumption has been violated. As a result, these adjustments modify the degrees of freedom values (*df*s) to more appropriate ones in order to determine the critical *F* value used to assess the computed *F* value (Huck 2000). Greenhouse-Geisser is the most traditional Epsilon adjustment and is referred to in the data analysis section of this report. Once these adjustments are made, main and/or interaction effects may show a significant difference. After which, more post hoc analyses are necessary to deem a result as significant. For example, in this particular study, the Bonferrroni post hoc analysis was conducted.

Data Analysis

The following section will restate the research questions and hypotheses. A presentation of the results will follow. Demographic information is presented below in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

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Table 1

Participant Ethnicity

Group		Frequency	Percentage
Control	Asian	2	3.4
	African American	43	74.1
	Hispanic	3	5.2
	Caucasian	1	1.7
	American Indian	1	1.7
	Biracial	7	12.1
	Other	1	1.7
	Total	58	100
Experimental	African American	40	83.3
	Hispanic	4	8.3
	Caucasian	1	2.1
	Biracial	2	4.2
	Other	1	2.1
	Total	48	100

Table 2

Father Ethnicity

Group		Frequency	Percentage
Control	Asian	1	1.7
	African American	46	79.3
	Hispanic	3	5.2
	Caucasian	1	1.7
	American Indian	1	1.7
	Biracial	4	6.9
	Other	2	3.4
	Total	58	100
Experimental	African American	36	75
	Hispanic	4	8.3
	Caucasian	1	2.1
	Biracial	4	8.3
	Other	3	6.3
	Total	48	100

Table 3

Mother Ethnicity

Group		Frequency	Percentage
Control	Asian	1	1.7
	African American	47	81
	Hispanic	3	5.2
	Caucasian	2	3.4
	American Indian	3	5.2
	Biracial	2	3.4
	Total	58	100
Experimental	Asian	1	2.1
	African American	39	81.3
	Hispanic	5	10.4
	Caucasian	1	2.1
	Biracial	1	2.1
	Other	1	2.1
	Total	48	100

The overarching research question is as follows: What effect does a school-based cultural awareness program have on students' ethnic identity and self-esteem? The study addresses the following secondary research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between self-esteem and ethnic identity in fifth grade students?

2. Is there a significant difference in mean self-esteem pretest and posttest scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale for fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program when compared to fifth grade students who have not participated in a school-based cultural awareness program?

3. Is there a significant difference in mean ethnic identity pretest and posttest scores on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure for fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program when compared to fifth grade students who have not participated in a school-based cultural awareness program?

It is predicted that student involvement in a cultural awareness program will show an increased level of ethnic identity and level of self-esteem.

There are three major hypotheses that were the subject of this data analysis. The central research hypotheses most important to this study are presented in both the null and alternate form and are as follows:

H_o1: There is insufficient evidence of a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students.

H_a1: There is sufficient evidence of a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students.

H_o2: There is insufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean self-esteem posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

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H$_a$2: There is sufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean self-esteem posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

H$_o$3: There is insufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean ethnic identity posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

H$_a$3: There is sufficient evidence of a significant difference in mean ethnic identity posttest scores by method of instruction when controlling for pretest scores.

It is important to note that in hypotheses two and three the phrase "method of instruction" refers to the following: 1) participation in the school-based cultural awareness program, and 2) no participation in the school-based cultural awareness program. The following section presents the results of the data analysis as it relates to each of the three hypotheses.

Hypothesis One. The first hypothesis predicted that there would be a significant correlation between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students having participated in a cultural awareness program. A Pearson r correlation statistical analysis was used to analyze the data. Self-esteem served as the dependent variable and ethnic identity served as the independent variable. Two Pearson r correlations were used to determine the relationship between the two variables on both the pretest and posttest. The first correlation between the scores on the ethnic identity pretest and the self-esteem pretest were moderately correlated at $r = 0.329$. This means there is a significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. The level of significance reported was $p = 0.001$. For the correlation to be statistically significant, the significance level needs to be less than 0.01, the alpha significance level. Therefore, this particular correlation is statistically significant.

The second correlation between the scores on the ethnic identity posttest and the self-esteem posttest were moderately correlated as well at $r = 0.381$. The results indicate that there is a positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. As ethnic identity increased, so did self-esteem. Furthermore, the results suggest an important relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students after participation in a school-based cultural awareness program. The reported significance level for this correlation was $p = 0.000$ which is less than 0.01, therefore the relationship between the variables is statistically significant.

Table 4

Pearson r Correlations between the ethnic identity and self-esteem pretests and posttests

	Pretest and Posttest Correlation Results	
	r	Significance level (p)
Ethnic Identity/ Self-Esteem Pretests	0.329	0.001*
Ethnic Identity Self-Esteem Posttests	0.381	0.000*

* Level of significance p<0.01

In summary, through analysis of scores of both the ethnic identity and self-esteem pretests and posttests, it was discovered that there are significant relationships between the two variables.

Hypothesis Two. The second hypothesis predicted that there would be a significant difference in the self-esteem posttest scores when controlling for the pretest scores. Because it was found that the homogeneity of variance assumption associated with an ANCOVA was violated (based on the difference between the self-esteem dependent variable by group), this

hypothesis will be tested using the repeated measures MANOVA statistical method. Repeated measures MANOVA can be used to describe a difference in groups before and after treatment. The major purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the participation in a school-based cultural awareness program makes a difference in the ethnic identity and self-esteem of fifth grade students. According to this particular research hypothesis, it is predicted that there is a significant difference between students' self-esteem scores before and after treatment. See Table 5 for item content used to determine the self-esteem pretest and posttest scores.

Table 5

Item Content for Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Item	Item Content
1	On the whole I am satisfied with myself.
2	At times I think that I am no good at all.
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6	I certainly feel useless at times.
7	I feel that I am a person of worth, at least the equal of others.
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
10	I take a positive attitude toward myself.

There were several multivariate tests performed to understand the difference in the level of self-esteem in fifth grade students. At times, the level of self-esteem was measured by group. The dependent variable in this analysis is self-esteem. The independent variable is the method of instruction (group), which refers to participation in a cultural awareness program (experimental group) or a character education program (control group). For the purpose of the study, the independent variable was coded as two groups: group 0 (control group) and group 1 (experimental group).

First, the descriptive statistics showed that there was an increase in the students' self-esteem after having participated in the program. The mean score reported at the time of the pretest was 33.17. The mean score reported at the time of the posttest was 35.21. The mean score for the self-esteem of fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program increased by 2.04. The highest score possible on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale is 40. The mean scores and standard deviations for both groups is shown below in Table 6.

Table 6

Mean scores and standard deviations on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

	Group	Mean	SD
RSE Pretest	0	31.19	5.552
	1	33.17	3.991
RSE Posttest	0	31.78	6.232
	1	35.21	3.010

Box's tests of equality of covariance matrices was another test performed during the repeated measures MANOVA statistical analysis. Box's M = 40.931, $F(10, 47663.534) = 3.921$, $p = 0.000$. Box's M is significant, which means there are violated assumptions. This indicates that there are unequal variances across the groups. This is similar to the violated assumptions reported by Levene's test of equality of error variances within the ANCOVA results discussed earlier. However, there are other tests performed in the repeated measures MANOVA data analysis that ensure the significance of the results. These tests will be discussed in the following section.

The repeated measures MANOVA revealed that the difference between the self-esteem scores on the pretest and the self-esteem scores on the posttest is significant, with Wilks' Lambda = 0.902, $F(1, 104) = 11.310$, $p = 0.001$. The main effect of self-esteem as determined by group was reported using Wilks' Lambda as well with Wilks' Lambda = 0.967, $F(1, 104) = 3.537$, $p = 0.063$. There is no significant difference in the self-esteem pretests and posttest scores by group.

Mauchly's test of sphericity was unable to compute due to the fact that there are only two groups in the study. As a routine part of the analysis, tests of within subject main effects were conducted. For this research study the Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment will be mentioned. The F value, its degrees of freedom, and significance level will be reported. Based on the significance level it will be determined whether or not the main effect is significant. The Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment is to be considered in addition to the Wilks' Lambda values. The Greenhouse - Geisser adjustment continued to show a significant difference between self-esteem pretest scores and self-esteem posttest scores at $F(1.000) = 11.310$, $p = 0.001$. The main effect of self-esteem as

determined by group revealed no significance, with the Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment at $F(1.000) = 3.537$, $p = 0.063$.

Next, paired sample t-tests were utilized to determine the difference between groups on self-esteem before and after participation in the cultural awareness program. The paired sample t-tests reported $p = 0.001$, which is significant. Finally, the Bonferroni adjustment technique (Huck, 2000) was applied to paired sample t-tests and used to determine significant differences. Paired sample t-tests (with a Bonferroni adjustment; $p<0.05$) revealed that the results reported for self esteem remain significant. The paired sample t-tests with a Bonferroni adjustment reported $p = 0.001$.

In summary, through the analysis of self-esteem as reported by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale using the repeated measures MANOVA, it was discovered that there is a significant difference in self-esteem after participation in a school-based cultural awareness program in fifth grade students.

Hypothesis Three. The third hypothesis predicted that there would be a significant difference in the ethnic identity posttest scores when controlling for the pretest scores. The previous hypothesis was tested using a repeated measures MANOVA because it was found that the homogeneity of variance assumption associated with an ANCOVA was violated regarding the self-esteem dependent variable. In order to establish continuity, a repeated measures MANOVA will be utilized to test this hypothesis as well. However, it should be noted that the ethnic identity dependent variable did not violate the homogeneity of variance assumption. According to this particular research hypothesis, it is predicted that there is a significant difference between students' ethnic identity scores before and after treatment. See Table 7 for item content used to determine the ethnic identity pretest and posttest scores.

Table 7

Item Content for Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

Item	Item Content
1	I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
2	I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.
3	I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
4	I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
5	I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
6	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
7	I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
8	In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
9	I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.
10	I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
11	I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
12	I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.
13	My ethnicity is (1) Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others (2) Black or African American

(3) Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others

(4) White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic

(5) American Indian/Native American

(6) Mixed; Parents are from two different groups

(7) Other (write in): _____

14   My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above)

15   My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above)

There were several multivariate tests performed to understand the difference in the level of ethnic identity in fifth grade students. At times, the level of ethnic identity was measured by group. The dependent variable in this analysis is ethnic identity. The independent variable is the method of instruction (group), which refers to participation in a cultural awareness program (experimental group) or a character education program (control group). For the purpose of the study, the independent variable was coded as two groups: group 0 (control group) and group 1 (experimental group).

First, the descriptive statistics showed that there was an increase in the students' ethnic identity after having participated in the program. The mean score reported at the time of the pretest was 3.25. The mean score reported at the time of the posttest was 3.47. The mean score for the level of ethnic identity of fifth grade students who have participated in a school-based cultural awareness program increased by 0.22. The highest score possible on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure is 4. The mean scores and standard deviations for ethnic identity for both groups is shown in the table below.

Table 8

Mean scores and standard deviations on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

	Group	Mean	SD
MEIM Pretest	0	3.1667	0.43287
	1	3.2535	0.39311
MEIM Posttest	0	3.2184	0.42573
	1	3.4688	0.37134

Box's tests of equality of covariance matrices was another test performed during the repeated measures MANOVA statistical analysis. Box's M = 40.931, $F(10, 47663.534) = 3.921$, $p = 0000$. Box's M is significant, which means there are violated assumptions. This indicates that there are unequal variances across the groups. It was found (by Levene's test of error variances as reported by the ANOVA conducted) that the unequal variances across groups were related to the self-esteem variable and not the ethnic identity variable. Nonetheless, there are other tests performed in the repeated measures MANOVA data analysis that ensure the significance of the results. These tests will be discussed in the following section.

The Wilks' Lambda test of significance revealed information about the level of ethnic identity after treatment as well as the main effect of ethnic identity as determined by group. With Wilks' Lambda $=0.21$, $F(1, 104) = 4782.643$, $p = 0.000$, the difference between the ethnic identity scores on the pretest and the ethnic identity scores on the posttest is significant. The main effect of ethnic identity and group was reported using Wilks' Lambda as well. With Wilks'

Lambda = 0.922, $F(1, 104) = 8.802$, $p = 0.004$, there is a significant difference in the ethnic

identity pretests and posttest scores as determined by group.

Mauchly's test of sphericity was unable to compute due to the fact that there are only two

groups in the study. Still, as a routine part of the analysis, tests of within-subject effects were

conducted. For the ethnic identity dependent variable, the Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment will

be mentioned to further indicate the significance of the within-subject main effects of the level of

ethnic identity and ethnic identity as determined by group. The F value, its degrees of freedom,

and the significance level will be reported. Based on the significance level it will be determined

whether or not the main effect is significant. The Greenhouse-Geisser interaction effect is to be

considered in addition to the Wilks' Lambda values. The Greenhouse-Geisser adjustment

reported $F(1.000) = 4782.643$, $p = 0.000$, which indicates there is a significant difference

between ethnic identity pretest scores and ethnic identity posttest scores. For ethnic identity as

determined by group, Greenhouse-Geisser reported $F(1.000) = 8.802$, $p = 0.000$. Therefore, the

main effect of ethnic identity as determined by group is significant.

Next, paired sample t-tests were utilized to determine the difference between groups on

ethnic identity before and after participation in the cultural awareness program. The paired

sample t-tests reported $p = 0.000$, which is significant. Finally, the Bonferroni adjustment

technique (Huck, 2000) was applied to paired sample t-tests and used to determine significant

differences. Paired sample t-tests (with a Bonferroni adjustment; $p<0.05$) revealed that the results

reported for ethnic identity remain significant. The paired sample t-tests used to calculate the

Bonferroni adjustment reported $p = 0.000$.

In summary, through the analysis of ethnic identity as reported by the Multigroup Ethnic

Identity Measure using the repeated measures MANOVA, it was discovered that there is a

significant difference in ethnic identity after participation in a school-based cultural awareness program in fifth grade students.

Summary

Through analyses of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, it was discovered that there is a relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. Also, there is a significant difference between self-esteem and ethnic identity pretest scores and self-esteem and ethnic identity posttest scores in fifth grade students who have participated in a cultural awareness program.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the effectiveness of a school-based cultural awareness program as a means to enhance ethnic identity and improve self-esteem in fifth grade early adolescents. It is believed that a lack of cultural awareness or cultural recognition equates to a lack of basic essentials for the development of self-esteem (Roth, 2005). Furthermore, ignoring individual and unique differences denies a central part of a person. Ethnic individuality needs to be recognized as a key element in the overall success of a person. More specifically speaking, it is believed that enhanced ethnic identity leads to a higher self-esteem which leads to higher academic achievement (Chappell & Overton, 2002; Cokely & Chapman, 2008; Phinney, 1992; Okwumabua et al., 1999; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007). Because there is little research on programs for youth that focus on cultural awareness, this study was intended to explore and confirm the significance of cultural awareness. Moreover, the number of minority youth in America is increasing at a staggering rate and cultural awareness as well as sensitivity must also increase. School counselors are charged with the duty to attend to students' differences while appreciating them all at the same time.

Connections Between Hypotheses and Obtained Findings

The relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem was investigated in this study. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to determine this relationship.

The effectiveness of a school-based cultural awareness program on students' scores on ethnic identity and self-esteem pretests and posttests was also investigated. A repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (repeated measures MANOVA) was used to determine this effectiveness.

The first hypothesis predicted that there would be no significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in fifth grade students. It was expected that there would be a positively correlated relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. Furthermore, it is believed that as ethnic identity increases, self-esteem increases as well. Based on the results, it was found that ethnic identity and self-esteem were moderately, yet positively correlated and statistically significant on both the pretests and posttests. It is important to note that the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient increased in both ethnic identity and self-esteem after students' participation in the cultural awareness program.

The results of this study confirm the assumptions of previous literature that suggest the higher the ethnic identity of children, the higher their self-esteem (Alvarez & Helms, 2001; Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Phinney et al.; Smith et al., 2009). Holcomb-McCoy (2005) and Phinney et al. stressed the significant relationship between positive identification with one's ethnic group and positive self-esteem. It appears that a sense of belonging, in particular, is essential to the self-esteem of children.

Those children with strong feelings of belonging and high levels of ethnic identity are often the same children cognizant of discrimination and racism. Even still, children's self-esteem remains in tact because they have more effective ways of dealing with such issues (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). It can be inferred that children in healthy relationships are well adjusted and equipped with the tools needed to handle everyday-life issues. This statement lends

to the idea that a child with high ethnic identity is likely to have high self-esteem, which leads to more favorable outcomes including, but not limited to, academic success.

Hypothesis two predicted that there would be no differences between the control and experimental groups' self-esteem posttest scores. Originally, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was utilized to interpret the data. However, it is important to note that the homogeneity of variance assumption was violated as it relates to the self-esteem dependent variable. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then used to determine the pre-existing differences. The results of the ANOVA discovered there were pre-existing differences between the groups on self-esteem at the start of the study.

Possible reasons for the differences between groups at the start of the study will now be discussed. First, the fact that the classrooms were already intact groups may be a reason the homogeneity of variance assumption was violated. Some of the classroom teachers may focus on enhancing the self-esteem of their students more than other teachers (i.e. through self-esteem building activities, incorporations in their lesson plans, reward programs, etc.). Another possible explanation for this violation might be the type of classroom teacher involved. One teacher might be very strict and disrespectful of children while another teacher is more lenient and confident in the abilities of her students. This may be a factor because the treatment of the children could manifest through the way they feel about themselves (either good or bad), therefore affecting their level of self-esteem. Third and last, the collection of students in each classroom could affect the homogeneity of variance assumption. For instance, one of the classrooms had at least ten CLUE students. CLUE students are those children who are considered gifted and excel academically. It is believed that children who are academically successful have a higher self-esteem achievement (Chappell & Overton, 2002; Cokely &

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Chapman, 2008; Phinney, 1992; Okwumabua et al., 1999; Umaña-Taylor & Updegraff, 2007).

On the other hand, another classroom had only one accelerated student, but had three to four ESL (English as a second language) students and three to four resource (a division of special education) students. This might prove to be a stark difference in the classroom's level of self-esteem. With that being said, the results of the research findings will now be discussed.

In the end, the data was analyzed using a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (repeated measures MANOVA) for hypothesis two. A repeated measures MANOVA was used because it presents several statistical tests that can further validate the results of the study. The repeated measures MANOVA indicated there was a significant difference between self-esteem pretest scores and self-esteem posttest scores after fifth grade students participated in a cultural awareness program. Even more, the results indicated a significant difference in students' self-esteem scores as determined by group. This means there is a difference between the control and experimental group that is statistically significant on the self-esteem dependent variable. The experimental group had significantly higher scores on the self-esteem posttest than the control group. This result directly supports the expectation that gaining more knowledge about cultural awareness may increase self-esteem. These findings also support previous research.

According to Connolly and Hosken (2006), students began to realize their individual worth after having participated in a cultural awareness program. Okwumabua et al. (1999) also suggested a need for culturally relevant programs that help young people develop a more positive disposition and attitude towards their own culture.

The third hypothesis predicted that there would be no differences between the control and experimental groups' ethnic identity posttest scores. There was no violation of the homogeneity

of variance assumption on the ethnic identity dependent variable, so the results of the statistical analysis will now be discussed. A repeated measures MANOVA was used to analyze the data. The data revealed a substantial increase in the mean scores presented at the time of the posttest. In addition, it was found that there is a statistically significant difference between ethnic identity pretest scores and ethnic identity posttest scores. The repeated measures MANOVA also indicated a significant difference in ethnic identity pretest scores and ethnic identity posttest scores as determined by group. These results are in line with previous literature on the subject. Whitehead et al. (2009) found that it is imperative for children to explore their ethnicity first in order to find security in that identity. Once children have explored and found meaning in their ethnicity, they can then develop a connection with their ethnic group, which brings about positive feelings for that group and other groups.

Additional Research Findings

The repeated measures MANOVA also indicated a significant interaction effect between ethnic identity and self esteem on both dependent variables. This supports the initial Pearson *r* correlation that suggests there is a positively correlated and statistically significant relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. In a research study, Phinney (1989) found that adolescents experience a period in which the need to deal with their ethnicity is apparent. However, those adolescents that had explored and understood the meaning of their ethnicity presented with higher scores on self-esteem, social and familial interactions, and sense of accomplishment. This conclusion suggests a connection to one's ethnicity is central to one's self-esteem.

Implications for School Counselors

The discussion of the research findings leads to recommendations for school counselors. Considering the American School Counselor Association and its national model, school counselors are expected to put some emphasis on recognizing and appreciating cultural diversity (American School Counselor Association, 2008). It seems important that school counselors include programs that enhance ethnic identity into their comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. However, school counselors must first realize that ethnic identity development is crucial to the emotional and academic success of children.

Umana-Taylor et al. (2009) suggested that ethnic identity is a process beginning with exploration and ending with understanding. With this in mind, it is important for school counselors to facilitate activities that elicit exploration, clarification, and examination of ethnic issues. Activities might include classroom guidance lessons or small group discussions. School counselors could develop and implement classroom guidance activities in which students explore the uniqueness of their culture and the culture of others. Exploration activities can lead to students realizing commonalities as well as appreciating differences among themselves and others. For this study the researcher developed a six week cultural awareness program. As an additional reference, topic areas and corresponding activities are listed below.

Week 1:　　*Getting To Know One Another & Setting Group Goals*

ACTIVITY: *We're All Unique (ICEBREAKER)*

Week 2:　　*All About Me & My Unique Family*

ACTIVITY: *Cultural Collage*

Week 3:　　*Personal Heroes*

ACTIVITY: *Who Inspires You?*

Week 4:   *Music*

ACTIVITY: *Music and Dance*

Week 5:   *Our School Culture*

ACTIVITY: *School Culture Sand Tray*

Week 6:   *Discrimination in Our School/City*

ACTIVITY: *Barnga*

Follow-Up: *Suggestion Box*

These activities are appropriate for upper elementary and middle school students. Also, these are the same activities used in this study. For descriptions of each activity refer to Appendix A.

It is important to note that not only should minority students participate in ethnic identity exploration, but Caucasian students should be included as well. Phinney (1989) found that Caucasian adolescents deemed their ethnicities as synonymous with American culture. This revealed a deficiency in pluralistic ethnocentrism among this group of young people. Moreover, it was discovered that this group of adolescents considered American culture to be centrally important in a society that is made up of diverse members that value their traditional culture as most significant. Therefore, school counselors should provide safe, respectful environments where students of all races and ethnicities feel comfortable expressing different opinions. All students opinions should be valued and sometimes challenged, but in a respectful manner. School counselors should also encourage Caucasian students to participate in ethnic awareness activities to explore their heritage. For example, Caucasian students could research their family's migration to the United States or family rituals. Students might explore what holidays they celebrate and how they celebrate them.

Also, school counselors should always remain mindful of the views parents have about ethnic identity exploration. It may be unimportant in some families. If this is true, school counselors should be sure to educate parents on the advantages of students exploring ethnicity. This could take place in school-wide parent meetings or it could be written in the school's weekly newsletter that is sent home to parents. Not only parents, but faculty and staff alike need to be informed of the importance of this issue. The school counselor can implement workshops that occur during faculty meetings. These workshops would convey the importance of culturally relevant programs. Sometimes faculty have poor relationships with students and parents because of cultural differences or communication barriers. If educators understand how culture plays a role in these relationships, they may be inclined to change them for the better.

School counselors have a duty to address multicultural issues by way of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs. School counselors should evaluate their programs and ensure that the students' needs are being met as it relates to culture.

Suggestions for Future Research

It seemed clear from this study that a school-based cultural awareness program made a significant difference in its intention to improve the ethnic identity and self-esteem of fifth grade early adolescents. The findings of this study show that cultural exploration increases ethnic identity, which, in turn, may increase self-esteem.

While both ethnic identity and self-esteem had mean score improvement, there was a problem with homogeneity of variance on the self-esteem dependent variable. One suggestion is to pre-screen the pretests before treatment. This will give the researcher a true reflection of the differences, if any, between the groups. Another suggestion is to utilize random selection. The groups in this study were intact classrooms and may have already been influenced in some way

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(i.e. lessons on culture, self-esteem) before the start of the program. Classroom teachers may have also been a factor in the difference in groups. An interesting piece of research might be to evaluate classroom teacher styles and their effect on students' level of self-esteem.

Future research should also consider ethnic identity development and what educators can do to enhance this development. Questions like the following might then be answered: When should ethnic identity exploration start? What age group? How should it be conveyed? In addition, what do parents and families believe about ethnic identity exploration? It may be beneficial to investigate these concepts as it may have a positive impact on students' ethnic identity achievement and overall multicultural awareness. Lastly, it is a suggestion that researchers investigate whether the increases in ethnic identity and self-esteem constant and lasting over a period of time after participation in a cultural awareness program. A follow-up classroom guidance lesson might be appropriate in order to evaluate this. Nonetheless, ethnic identity has been linked to high self-esteem and academic achievement and should be recognized as an important entity of school counseling programs.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study include the use of self-report data and convenience sampling in the form of intact groups. Self-report data is present when participants are asked about their personal beliefs, attitudes, biases, etc. through of survey of some kind. In order to lessen the threat of validity issues in this study, the surveys were anonymous and coded. Participants were also given the option to participate and were able to withdraw from the study at any time. Convenience sampling is another concern. When using intact groups it is difficult to know the history of each group. Depending upon several aspects of the group, it can be complicated to determine about what each group is knowledgeable.

Other limitations include generalizability and program development. The generalizability of the results is limited to the particular grade level assessed within the specified school. In addition, the generalizability is limited to populations in the southeastern part of the United States. The development of the program by the researcher must also be considered. Moreover, the differences between teachers could be a concern. For example, teaching styles, classroom management skills, and lesson plans involving ethnic identity and/or self-esteem should be taken into account.

Conclusion

According to this study, the cultural awareness program had a statistically significant impact on both the level of ethnic identity and the level of self-esteem in fifth grade students as indicated by the pretest and the posttest scores on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE).

Because students increased their ethnic identity and self-esteem scores, it is believed that this treatment was very effective and school counselors should be mindful of this. The impact of a school-based cultural awareness program affected the students' level of ethnic identity and self-esteem, and it is believed that this will affect their level of academic achievement. In addition, the students are now more knowledgeable about their own culture as well as the culture of their peers. The students also developed knowledge about how they view themselves. It is recommended that counseling strategies focusing on culture be created and utilized in order to enhance students' awareness and knowledge about multicultural issues and their sense of self. It is believed that students will then be in better place to learn and achieve success.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

<u>**Weekly Topics & Activities**</u>

**All materials will be supplied by the researcher and the school counselor will be appropriately debriefed on all activities.

Week 1:   *Getting To Know One Another & Setting Group Goals*

Activity: *We're All Unique (ICEBREAKER)*— Prior to the first group meeting, the school counselor will invite students to list some traits that make them unique. The school counselor will create a bingo-like card with a square for each student and write one fact from each student's list in one of the squares. Then the fun begins! Students must ask one another if they "sleep with a stuffed lizard" or another question that relates to the information in one of the squares. When students identify the person who matches the information in a square, that person writes his or her initials in the box. A time limit will be set to see who collects the most initials before time runs out. The students will learn some very interesting things about one another. This activity reveals commonalities and creates lively conversation!

Week 2:   *All About Me & My Unique Family*

Activity: *Cultural Collage*—The school counselor will tell students that they are each going to create a collage using any or all of the media that has been collected. The counselor will explain that they are to use a variety of materials to represent the uniqueness of their culture, traditions, and customs. It is important to encourage students to think of ways they might use the materials to represent a theme. The school counselor might choose a broad topic like love, birthdays, or holidays to narrow the scope of the activity. The school counselor will provide an example of a multicultural collage to stimulate students' thinking. Students will share their work and give an oral explanation of how and why they chose their subject.

Week 3:   *Personal Heroes*

Activity: *Who Inspires You?*—The school counselor will divide the participants into groups of 5 to 6 people. Then, ask the students to start by thinking on their own about three people who are their personal heroes. After about five minutes invite the participants to share their choices with their group and to say what they admire in those people. Allow sufficient time for a real exchange and questioning. Ask each group to list on a flip chart the names of the heroes, their nationality and, if appropriate, the areas in which they are viewed as heroic (e.g. sports, music, culture, politics, family, medicine, etc.). In conclusion, the school counselor will ask each group to present its flip chart to the other groups. The counselor will make connections about themes, trends or surprises in what the students reported. The school counselor wants the students to identify commonalities and appreciate differences among themselves and others.

Week 4:   *Music*

Activity: *Music and Dance*—The school counselor will ask students to bring recordings of music that their family enjoys (age appropriate, of course). The students will teach each other songs and dances from different cultures of the world. Children will begin to see that all people like to sing and dance, but every group has its own special ways of doing it. The counselor will talk with the children about how different music sounds: loud, soft, fast, or slow. Listen for the different instruments. Also, ask students if they have any instruments they could bring for the class to listen to or try.

Week 5:   *Our School Culture*

Activity: *School Culture Sand Tray*—The school counselor will explain to students what school culture is. Students will be divided into small groups of three or four students each. The counselor will be sure to group students together who have not yet worked together during this classroom guidance series. Using sand trays and miniature toys, the counselor will have the students make a scene that best depicts the culture of their school. Students will share with the class the explanation of their sand tray and describe what it was like to work together to complete it.

Week 6:   *Discrimination in Our School/City*

Activity: *Barnga*—This is really fun! In Barnga, participants experience the shock of realizing that despite many similarities, people of differing cultures perceive things differently or play by different rules. Players learn that they must understand and reconcile these differences if they want to function effectively in a cross-cultural group. The students will play a simple card game in small groups, but no talking is allowed after the first round. Each group has a set of rules at the beginning of the game (each group has a different variation of the rules). After the first round the rules are taken away. The person who wins from each group moves to the next group, but will then be playing by different rules.

Follow-Up: *Suggestion Box*—The school counselor will give the children a voice by working with them to make a suggestions box. The children and adults can post ideas in the box for raising awareness of many different things in the school. The counselor will ask the children how the box will be used and how the items inside will be brought to the attention of the school.

APPENDIX B

Copy of Consent Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians,

My name is Charley Braswell and I am a student at the University of Mississippi. I am currently working on my doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision, and as part of my program I am studying the impact of a school-based cultural awareness program on students' ethnic identity and self-esteem.

I have described the project on the next pages. Please read over the information. If you agree to allow your child to participate, please sign and return the form to Germanshire Elementary School.

In order for your child to participate the consent form must be signed and returned to the school no later than September 15, 2010.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at (901) 292-5363.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Charley A. Braswell

APPENDIX C

Title: The Impact of a School-Based Cultural Awareness Program on Students' Level of Ethnic
Identity and Self-Esteem

Investigator	Sponsor
Charley A. Braswell, M.S.	Marilyn Snow, Ph.D.
Dept of Leadership & Counselor Education	Dept of Leadership & Counselor Education
120 Guyton Hall	108 Guyton Hall
The University of Mississippi	The University of Mississippi
(662) 915-7069	(662) 915-1363

Description
We want to know if a cultural awareness program will affect children's self-esteem and their
awareness of ethnic identity. We are asking your permission for your child to participate in this
research by taking two brief surveys twice. Fifty students will participate in a school-based
program that teaches about other people and their cultures and fifty students will participate in
the school's character education program. All students will take two brief surveys before and
after these programs. The surveys will be read aloud and take about 15 minutes to complete. One
survey asks about ethnic identity. For example, your child will see items like, "I feel good about
my cultural or ethnic background." The second survey asks your child's feelings about him or
herself. For this survey, your child will see items like, "I am able to do things as well as most
people," or "I feel I do not have much to be proud of." Your child's school counselor will come
into the classroom for one hour each week for six weeks to facilitate these programs. We will
explain the research to your child and give your child the surveys only if he/she agrees to take
them.

Risks and Benefits
We do not think that there are any risks. A lot of students enjoy classroom guidance activities.
Also, we will talk with your child about our experiment, and we think he/she may learn about
how scientists do research projects.

Cost and Payments
There are no costs for helping us with this study.

Confidentiality
We will not put your child's name on any of the surveys. Your child's name will be on the
assent document. The only information that will be on your child's surveys will be male or
female, ethnicity, and age. We do not believe that your child can be identified from the surveys
by anyone other than the principal researcher.

Right to Withdraw
Your child does not have to take part in this study. If your child starts the study and you or your
child decides not to finish, all you have to do is to tell Charley A. Braswell or Dr. Marilyn Snow
in person, by letter, or by telephone at the Department of Leadership and Counselor Education,
120 Guyton Hall, The University of Mississippi, University MS 38677, or 662-915-7069.

Whether or not you choose to participate or to withdraw will not affect your child's standing with the school or with the University of Mississippi.

IRB Approval

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study fulfills the human research subject protections obligations required by state and federal law and University policies. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482.

If you have any questions, please contact Charley A. Braswell at the number listed above.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have been given a copy of this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions, and I have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS: DO <u>NOT</u> SIGN THIS FORM

IF THE IRB APPROVAL STAMP ON THE FIRST PAGE HAS EXPIRED.

_____   _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

APPENDIX D

Oral Assent Script with Record of Child's (Aged 7-13) Response

I would like to ask you to help me with a project that I am doing for one of my classes at The University of Mississippi. If you agree, you would participate in a cultural awareness program. Your school counselor will come into your classroom one hour each week for classroom guidance. The program will last six weeks.

What questions do you have about what you will do for me?

Will you do this? ❑ YES   ❑ NO

Name: _____Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or <u>ethnic groups</u> that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian American, Chinese, Filipino, American Indian, Mexican American, Caucasian or White, Italian American, and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in: In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be _____.

Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(4) Strongly agree   (3) Agree   (2) Disagree   (1) Strongly disagree

1- I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as

  its history, traditions, and customs.

2- I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members

  of my own ethnic group.

3- I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

4- I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

5- I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

6- I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.

7- I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.

8- In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked

  to other people about my ethnic group.

9- I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.

10- I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food,

music, or customs.

11- I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

12- I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

13- My ethnicity is

(1) Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others

(2) Black or African American

(3) Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and

others

(4) White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic

(5) American Indian/Native American

(6) Mixed; Parents are from two different groups

(7) Other (write in): _____

14- My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above)

15- My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above)

Phinney, J. (1992). The multigroup ethnic identity measure: A new scale for use with diverse

groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *7*(2), 156-176.

Appendix F

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Below is a list of statements dealing with general feelings about yourself. This is a four point

Likert scale: SA = Strongly agree; A = Agree; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly disagree.

1. On the whole I am satisfied with myself.

2. At times I think that I am no good at all.

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

6. I certainly feel useless at times.

7. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least the equal of others.

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton

University Press.

Vita
Charley A. Braswell, M.S., LPSC, NCC

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision   August 2011
       The University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi

Master of Science in School Counseling   December 2006
       The University of Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee

Bachelor of Arts in Classical Civilization   May 2000
       DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana

Licensure

Licensed Professional School Counselor (TN)—January 2007
National Certified Counselor—November 2010

Experience

June 2009—Present
The University of Mississippi
Instructor/Graduate Co-Instructor
- Developed and implemented masters level Counselor Education courses.
- Responsible for conducting lectures, leading small group discussions, and creating and grading assignments/examinations.

August 2010—May2011
The University of Mississippi—Desoto
Personal Counselor
- Conduct therapeutic and counseling interviews to help individuals gain insight regarding goals, personal problems, and plans of action reflecting interests, needs, and abilities.
- Maintain a detailed familiarity with the educational programs offered by the school for successfully addressing inquiries related to college, including anticipating career goals, financial assistance, and student services.
- Gather and record confidential data about individuals through case history, interviews, and observational techniques.

August 2008—May 2011
The University of Mississippi—Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Readmission Counselor
- Facilitate process groups and individual counseling for academically displaced students.
- Design strategies that elicit discussion, application, and practice of effective study skills.
- Record progress of individual students.

October 2007—May 2008
Success Educational Services, Inc.
Site Coordinator
- Provided overall supervision and guidance for after school tutoring program.
- Managed recruitment, assessment and placement of students.
- Served as a liaison between tutors, teachers, and parents.
- Collected and organized paperwork as well as purchased supplies.

September 2007—May 2008
Memphis City Schools—Kingsbury Middle School
Professional School Counselor
- Provided direct counseling services to students individually and in support groups.
- Advised students and parents concerning all aspects of educational planning.
- Conducted and reported social behavioral statistical analyses.
- Collaborated with administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders regarding program development and implementation.

August 2006—November 2008
School Age Care—Germanshire Elementary School
Site Assistant
- Developed and organized educational and creative activities with 15 or more children.
- Coordinated and supervised mentor program and field trips.
- Collaborated with site director and other site assistants regarding program goals and objectives.

August 2005—September 2007
Memphis City Schools
Substitute Teacher
- Fulfilled the responsibilities of the regular classroom teacher in his/her absence.
- Exhibited classroom management skills in order to establish an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- Provided classroom teacher with a written report of the day's accomplishments.

January 2005—December 2006
Memphis City Schools—Germanshire Elementary School, White Station Middle School,
Melrose High School
Counseling Intern
- Facilitated in-classroom guidance, individual and group counseling, and parent/teacher meetings.
- Organized career fairs and health seminars.
- Assisted students with scheduling and testing.
- Attending weekly staff meetings.

August 2004—May 2005
Germanshire Elementary School
Education Assistant
- Provided instructional and clerical support for classroom teachers.
- Provided supplemental instructional support for students.
- Supervised students in the cafeteria.
- Purchased supplies needed for various school-wide events.
- Monitored students in teacher's absence.

February 2001—June 2004
Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Memphis
Downtown Porter Boys & Girls Club
Program Director
- Developed and implemented social, athletic, and educational programs for youth ages 6-17.
- Planned board meetings and all major club events.
- Presented the Boys & Girls Club to the community.
- Supervised approximately 15 staff and volunteers each day.

September 2000—January 2001
Bolton High School
Interim Teacher
- Developed weekly lesson plans and daily agendas for approximately 100 Algebra I and 30 Algebra II students.
- Successfully evaluated each student on his or her performance.
- Collaborated with administrators and a team of teachers regarding the educational progress of students.

September 1997—May 2000
After School Enrichment Program
Assistant Director
- Assisted the program director in pre-tutoring organizational tasks.
- Directly supervised 30 or more students for after school activities.
- Collected and deposited tuition from parents.
- Anticipated and purchased supplies needed for program.
- Facilitated meetings with students and parents.

Courses Taught

June 2009—Present
University of Mississippi

- **Counseling Skills**
- **Multicultural Issues in Counseling**
- **Play Therapy**
- **Organization, Administration, and Consultation in School Counseling**

Supervision Experience

University of Mississippi K-12 Practicum and Internship
Provided weekly supervision for Masters-level counselors-in-training in their work with elementary, middle and high school students—Spring/Fall 2009

University of Mississippi Community Counseling Pre-Practicum
Provided supervision for Masters-level community counselors-in-training during their first experience with intake evaluations—Spring 2011

Research and Publications

"The Impact of a School-Based Cultural Awareness Program on Students' Level of Ethnic Identity and Self Esteem"—A quantitative dissertation, August 2011.

"A New View"—A self-help book for adults interacting with children using the therapeutic techniques of Play Therapy, In Progress.

"Influences of Parental Patterns of Relating, History of Child Abuse, and Dissociative Experiences in a Prison Population: Implications for Rehabilitation and Recidivism," In Progress.

Workshop and Conference Presentations

"Tips on Getting Adjusted to a New Culture"—The University of Mississippi, September 2009

"Adjustment to New Academic Challenges"—The University of Mississippi, September 2009

"Roommates: Friends or Best Friends?"—The University of Mississippi, September 2009

"Multicultural Issues in Group Work with Emerging Adults"—The University of Mississippi, March 2009

"African-American Women and Food Addictions"—Mississippi Counseling Association, November 2010

Memberships

- American Counseling Association (ACA)
- American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
- Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)
- Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA)

Honors

- Outstanding Doctoral Student of the Year, 2011
- Classics Honor Society, Eta Sigma Phi
- Counseling Honor Society, Chi Sigma Iota
- Education Honor Society, Kappa Delta Pi

References

Dr. Marilyn Snow, Associate Professor
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Dr. Susan Mossing, Assistant Director
Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
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