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Self-concept and parental values: Influences on the ethnic identity development of biracial children

Oka, Julie Mari, M.A.

San Jose State University, 1994

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SELF-CONCEPT AND PARENTAL VALUES: INFLUENCES ON THE

ETHNIC IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF BIRACIAL CHILDREN

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Psychology

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts
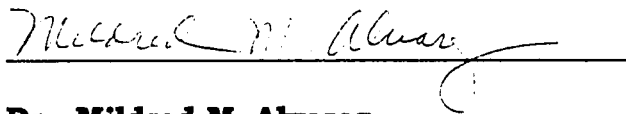

by

Julie Mari Oka

August, 1994
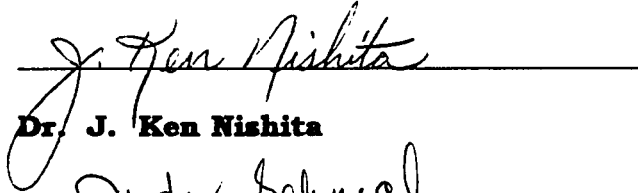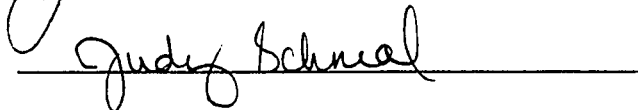
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In this thesis self-concept was measured across three ethnic groups

(Japanese-American, Caucasian, and Japanese-American/Caucasian

biracial). Forty-eight children divided by ethnicity and gender completed

a self-concept measure and a perspective-taking measure. The

perspective-taking measure was dropped from the study due to a ceiling

effect. The self-concept measure yielded three scores for each child

which included an overall self-concept score as well as scores for

behavioral and physical self-concept.

Biracial boys and Caucasian girls scored highest when compared to

other groups on overall self-concept. Furthermore, biracial boys scored

highest on physical self-concept. Biracial girls scored lowest on both

subscales. Girls scored significantly higher than boys on behavioral self-

concept.

Parents completed a parental questionnaire designed to assess the

extent to which parents would like their children to exhibit values and

behaviors considered to be traditionally Japanese-American. Although

not significant, mothers of biracial children tended to report more of a

preference for their children to display traditional Japanese-American

values.

Self-Concept and Parental Values: Influences on the Ethnic Identity

Development of Biracial Children

Julie Mari Oka

San Jose State University

Running head: BIRACIAL CHILDREN

Abstract

Forty-eight children from three ethnic groups (Japanese-American, Caucasian, and Japanese-American/Caucasian biracial) completed the Martinek-Zaichowsky Self-Concept Scale (MZSCS) and a perspective-taking measure (PTM). The PTM was dropped from the study due to a ceiling effect. The MZSCS yielded three scores for each child which included an overall self-concept score as well as scores for behavioral and physical self-concept. Biracial boys and Caucasian girls scored highest, compared to other groups, on overall self-concept. Furthermore, biracial boys scored highest on physical self-concept. Biracial girls scored lowest on both subscales. For the behavioral subscale, girls scored significantly higher than boys. Parents completed a parental questionnaire (PQ). The PQ was designed to assess the extent to which parents would like their children to exhibit values and behaviors considered to be traditionally Japanese-American. While it was not significant, mothers of biracial children tended to be more likely to report a preference for their children to display traditional Japanese-American values than other mothers and fathers.

Self-Concept and Parental Values: Influences on the Ethnic Identity

Development of Biracial Children

Models of Ethnic Identity Development

In his book Youth and Identity, Erikson (1968) relates ego identity

and self-esteem to racial identity. He states that ambiguous messages

about one's race may place a person at risk for developing what he

referred to as a "negative identity." Phinney (1991) defines individuals

with a strong or positive ethnic identity as those who identify with

members of their group and who:

> evaluate their group positively, prefer or are comfortable with
> their group membership, are interested in, knowledgeable about,
> and committed to the group, and are involved in ethnic
> practices (p. 194).

Several models of minority ethnic identity development have been

proposed. Among the most significant are models developed by Phinney

(1989) and Morten and Atkinson (1983). However, some theorists believe

these models are limited when applied to biracial individuals (Poston,

1990).

Phinney's model (1989) is applicable only to adolescents. In the

model, ethnic identity is thought to occur in three stages. In the first stage there is little interest or concern with one's ethnicity. The individual then moves into a period of exploration. At this second stage, adolescents begin to learn more about their ethnicity and what it means to them as individuals. When they gain knowledge about their racial heritage, commitment to it follows. In this final stage, Phinney (1989) suggests that ethnic identity has been achieved. This model can not be applied to biracial children since it does not address the possibility of developing a multiracial identity. The model also fails to recognize the ethnic identity issues of younger children (Phinney, 1991).

The Minority Identity Development (MID) model proposed by Atkinson, Morten and Sue (1979, cited in Morten & Atkinson, 1983) identifies three stages of identity development. In the "Conformity" stage, individuals prefer the cultural values and behaviors of the dominant group in society over the minority group to which they belong. The "Resistance and Immersion" stage is characterized by the resistance of the dominant group's values in favor of the values of the minority group. Individuals in the "Synergetic Articulation and Awareness" stage select and endorse values from both the minority and dominant groups.

Poston (1990) finds the MID model limited when applied to biracial

individuals for several reasons. The MID implies that individuals may

first reject the minority group to which they belong and then the

dominant group. The biracial individual is a member of both groups.

The individual would then be rejecting one parent at each stage (Root,

1990). Poston (1990) states that during the "Resistance and Immersion"

stage in the MID, individuals must be accepted to some degree by the

minority culture. In actuality, according to Root (1990), biracial

individuals may not be fully accepted by either the minority or the

dominant group.

There is a limited amount of literature on biracial individuals,

focusing mainly on the difficulties associated with having a mixed

heritage. Stonequist (1937) labels those with dual heritages as

"marginal," meaning that they are associated with two cultures yet do not

completely belong to either one. From an early age, these individuals

develop a sense of "otherness" because of their ambiguous physical

appearance which may be seen as exotic (Root, 1990). According to

some, "marginal" status can impair the development of a "cohesive, well-

integrated self-concept" (Gibbs, 1987) and may even lead to the

development of neurotic behavior (McRoy & Freeman, 1986).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that marginality is imposed by

society, not biology (Gibbs, 1987; Root, 1990; Stonequist, 1937).

Poston (1990) rejects the idea of marginality and proposes a

developmental model of identity for biracial people. In the first stage,

"Personal Identity," children are aware of race, yet their sense of self is

somewhat independent of their ethnicity. The second stage "Choice of

Group Categorization" is characterized by conflict over having to choose

an identity based on group affiliation. Individuals either choose a

multicultural identity, which Poston (1990) considers atypical for

someone at this stage, or they choose one ethnic group over another.

Among the suggested factors which may influence a person's decision to

affiliate with one ethnic group over another are: (a) social status of

parents' ethnic backgrounds, (b) parental influence, (c) parental and

familial acceptance, and (d) socially valued physical appearance.

In the "Enmeshment/Denial" stage, individuals feel guilty for having

chosen an ethnic identity which was not fully representative of their

background. According to Poston, they must learn to appreciate both

parental heritages to move on to the "Appreciation" stage. At this point,

biracial people begin to learn about both cultures and come to appreciate their dual identity. They may, however, continue to identify primarily with one group.

According to Poston (1990), a positive outcome to biracial identity ultimately results in such persons experiencing "wholeness and integration." They recognize and value both cultures. Moreover, Wardle (1987) suggests that these individuals will have the "survival skills to function in many cultural environments."

Although most studies involving biracial persons and their development have focused on people with black/white ethnic backgrounds (Gibbs, 1987; Lyles, Yancey, Grace & Carter, 1985; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Stonequist, 1937), Morishima (1980, cited in Root, 1990) proposes that ethnic identity development is particularly difficult for Asian/Caucasian children. Morishima argues that Asian/Caucasian biracial children may face oppression from the Asian group which identifies the child by the ethnicity of the non-Asian parent. The group may view the child as the product of "racial pollution" (Root, 1990). Kendis (1989) cites that some Japanese-Americans dislike interracial marriages, fearing that at some point there will no longer be a "pure"

Japanese-American race. Similarly, Caucasians may not identify the

children as Caucasian since Asian-Americans are often seen as Asian

first (Wardle, 1987).

If such mixed messages are internalized, this type of social

interaction can negatively affect the development of both a positive self-

concept (Gibbs, 1987; Lyles et al., 1985; Pang, Mizokawa, Morishima &

Olstad, 1985; Root, 1990) and a cohesive ethnic identity (Gibbs, 1987).

Children may begin to view themselves in terms of how others view or

react to them (Pang et al., 1985; Root, 1990). Root (1990) states that, to

a large extent, the way a biracial child will identify with either racial

group is influenced by how other people react to members of the group.

Children's social-cognitive skills and parental values

Perspective-taking and self-concept are two aspects of social-cognitive

processing which are particularly relevant to the development of an

individual's ethnic identity. Children's understanding of how others feel

about them is related to the degree to which they can take the

perspective of others. This ability to "put oneself in another's position"

(Shantz, 1983) is called perspective-taking or role-taking. Shantz (1983)

writes that perspective-taking is an important task in one's social-

cognitive development. In addition, Selman (1970) calls perspective-taking a "prototypical social-cognitive skill." This skill influences a child's social interactions (Kurdek & Rodgon, 1975) which in turn, affects the development of self-concept (Pang et al., 1985). When children begin to understand the perspective of others, they begin to gain inferences from those with which they interact in their social environment (Pang et al., 1985). These inferences tell children who they are and become integrated into the self-concept. For minority group children, messages received from the majority culture may be inconsistent with their self-knowledge. The result may be "identity confusion" (Erikson, 1968) which can be a particular problem for biracial children.

Pang et al. (1985) administered a modified version of the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale (PHSCS) to Japanese-American and Caucasian nine to twelve year-old children. The measure contained a physical self-concept scale which included items dealing with physical appearance and attributes, such as "I am strong" and "I have a pleasant face" (Piers, 1969). It was modified to include items which addressed aspects of physical appearance salient to Japanese-American children, such as "I have a nice nose" (Pang et al., 1985). Significant statistical differences

between the Japanese-American and Caucasian groups were found on

physical self-concept.

Specifically, Japanese-American children were found to have a lower

physical self-concept than the Caucasian children. This was explained

in terms of dissatisfaction with the physical appearance of Japanese-

Americans. Typical Japanese-American attributes (short stature, flat

nose) may be viewed as negative in comparison to the "ideal" tall, blond

model United States culture and society values (Pang et al., 1985).

Although not statistically significant, Japanese-Americans tended to

score higher than Caucasians on the behavioral subscale. Behavioral

self-concept was characterized by such items as "I am obedient at home"

and "I can be trusted" (Piers, 1969). A possible explanation for this trend

is that the scale included aspects of behavior that Japanese-Americans

traditionally value, such as compliance and obedience. These types of

values may be passed down from parents to their children. Because of

this influence by their parents, Japanese-American children may

incorporate values of compliance and obedience into their self-concept.

In addition to perspective-taking ability and self-concept, parental

influence and style is thought to affect the development of a biracial

child's ethnic identity (Poston, 1990). Parental influence is consistently cited as a crucial component in how a child views his or her ethnic identity (Gibbs, 1987; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Root, 1990; Wardle, 1987). According to Wardle (1987), parents of biracial children deal with their children's ethnicity in one of three ways: (a) parents may deem color irrelevant and say that their child is human above all else, (b) parents may teach their child to adopt the minority culture so that he or she can learn minority "survival skills," or (c) parents may teach their child to have an interracial identity and attempt to integrate the values and beliefs of the two cultures.

In the present study, possible differences across three ethnic groups (Japanese-American (JA), Caucasian (C) and Japanese-American/Caucasian biracial (BR)) in terms of perspective-taking ability, self-concept and parental influence were investigated. Based on the findings in the Pang et al. (1985) study, it was expected that JA children would have a lower physical self-concept than C and BR children, but JA children would have a higher behavioral self-concept than both groups. BR children were expected to have a higher physical self-concept than JA children because they often have a combination of C and JA features

which may be seen by others as attractive or exotic (Root, 1990). BR children were expected to have a lower behavioral self-concept than JA children because parents of BR individuals may not be stressing values and behaviors which are considered to be traditionally JA.

One behavior seen as valued in JA culture is conformity (Kendis, 1987). Fugita and O'Brien (1991) suggested that to be considered a "good Japanese" is to "fit in and not make trouble." Kitano (1973) also suggested that JAs are very reluctant to behave in ways which may be viewed by others as deviant. This may make it necessary for JAs to have the ability to take another's perspective. Although no apparent research has been conducted examining the effect of ethnicity on perspective-taking, it was expected that JAs would have higher perspective-taking scores than Cs and BRs because of their ability to take another's perspective.

To assess the extent to which parents are teaching their children values such as conformity and compliance, a parental questionnaire was used in this study. The questionnaire was designed to determine the degree to which parents want their children to behave in a manner consistent with values considered traditional in JA culture. It includes

such items as "A good child is an obedient child," and "I make sure that my child refers to adults as Mr, Mrs, or Miss." It was expected that JA parents would have the highest score on the parental questionnaire.

In sum, the following hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. JAs will have higher behavioral self-concept scores than both the C and the BR children.

2. JAs will have lower physical self-concept scores than both the C and the BR children.

3. JAs will be high perspective-takers and BR and C children will be low perspective-takers.

4. JAs will have the highest scores on the parental questionnaire.

Method

Subjects

Forty-eight children ranging in age from seven to eight years of age

participated. All of the children were from middle-class intact families.

Fifteen JA, seventeen BR and sixteen C, approximately equally divided by

gender, were included in the study. The BR group and the JA group

were selected primarily on the basis of referrals from families who attend

or have attended Lotus Preschool, a school whose students are primarily

JA. Some children were contacted through various organizations which

included primarily JA children. All of the BR children were of JA/C

heritage. The majority of the children in the C group were also chosen

on the basis of referrals. Two of the C children were recruited through a

local elementary school. For each child, both parents also participated in

the study.

Measures and Procedure

The self-concept and perspective-taking measures were administered

to each child, individually, in the child's home. Mothers and fathers

independently completed the self-report parental questionnaire to assess

parental child-rearing techniques.

The Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale (MZSCS) (1977) was used to measure self-concept. Based on the Piers-Harris (1969) scale, the MZSCS consists of a series of 75 pairs of pictures which show bipolar representations (happy-sad) of 25 different items. Three sets of picture-pairs represent each item. The items are categorized into five factors: (a) satisfaction and happiness, (b) home and family relationships, (c) ability in games, sports and recreation, (d) behavioral, personal and social characteristics in school, and (e) personality traits and social tendencies. The scale is scored only for the number of positive responses. For each item, one point is given for choosing the picture depicting a child in the positive role. No points are given for selecting the picture depicting the negative role. The highest score that an individual can receive is 25 points.

For purposes of this investigation, the measure was divided into two subscales of behavioral (BEHSC) and physical self-concept (PHYSC). To achieve this separation of BEHSC and PHYSC, certain factors were combined conceptually based on similarity of items. The combined factors are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Factors Combined to Form the Behavioral Self-Concept Subscale

Item Description   Factor Loading

Factor 2 - Home and Family Relationships and Circumstances

I can do things without being told	.69
I am a sharing person	.57
I am seldom sick	.54
I can be trusted to do chores properly	.51
I behave well at home	.34
I am not a clumsy person	.33
I behave well in school	.31

Factor 4 - Behavioral, Personal and Social Characteristics in School

My classmates like to play with me	.79
I never do mean things to others	.63
I behave well in school	.60
I can be trusted to do chores properly	.47
The teacher seldom gets angry with me	.36

Factor 5 - Personality Traits and Emotional Tendencies

I am a clean person	.77
I seldom worry about my school work	.63
The teacher seldom gets angry with me	.59
I am a tidy person	.57
I do sensible things	.56
I never do mean things to others	.33
I am a patient person	.07

Table 2

<u>Factors Combined to Form the Physical Self-Concept Subscale</u>

<u>Item Description</u>   <u>Factor Loading</u>

Factor 1 - Satisfaction and Happiness

Item	Loading
I have many friends	.79
I like the way I look	.69
I am not a clumsy person	.40
I behave well in school	.36
I am a sharing person	.31
I do well in my school work	.17

Factor 3 - Ability in Games, Recreation and Sports

Item	Loading
I am a tall person	.76
I have little trouble with puzzles	.68
I am unafraid of animals	.60
I am unafraid of the water	.57
I am a good reader	.46
I am not a clumsy person	.43
I am good in sports (basketball)	.36

Because three of the items overlapped ("I am not a clumsy person," "I behave well in school," "I am a sharing person"), they were included in both the BEHSC and the PHYSC scales.

The children each received a booklet containing the 75 pairs of pictures. They were told that, for each pair of pictures, they were to mark with an "X" the picture that most resembles them. They were to mark the "X" in a circle which is under each picture. They were asked to look at the child with the dotted clothes when deciding which picture to choose. The researcher completed a sample item (Appendix A) with each child to insure that the child understood the instructions. The children were told that they could ask the researcher for help in explaining any of the situations depicted. The children then completed the booklet independently. The researcher remained in the room, but sat apart from the child and engaged in a separate activity (such as reading). The researcher did not watch the child as he or she completed the task in an effort to prevent the child from feeling pressured to answer in a particular way. When the child was finished, he or she handed the booklet to the researcher.

The child was then asked to complete the perspective-taking task.

The perspective-taking measure (PTM) is based on a measure

constructed by Ambron and Irwin (1974, cited in Brandt, 1978) in which

the notion of privileged information is used. Tasks involving the use of

privileged information are thought to be more accurate indicators of

perspective-taking ability than measures which require the child to make

only stereotypical judgments (Chandler & Greenspan, 1973). For

example, a task in which a child is shown a picture of another child

receiving a present and is asked how or she thinks that child feels may

not necessarily require the child to place herself in another's position.

Chandler and Greenspan (1972) have argued that the child involved in

such a task would make a judgment based on a stereotypical response to

the situation (e.g., a child receiving a present feels happy, Urberg &

Docherty, 1976).

The PTM consists of four stories which were verbally presented by the

researcher to the child. Each story contains a character who appears at

the beginning of the story and reappears at the end. A series of events

occur in the story of which the character is not aware. The subject is

asked three questions at the end of the story which require that he or

she take the perspective of the character. To do this, the child must not

report information presented in the story while the character was absent. An example of a story, cited in Brandt (1976), is provided in Appendix B.

In this study, there was an addition to the original version of the PTM. To assist the children in comprehending the chain of events which occur in the stories, pictures were created which served as visual aids. For example, in the story in Appendix B, the researcher would show the child a picture of a boy, a dog, a can of paint, a door and a picture of a man. Each picture was presented when the object or person appeared in the story. As each story was presented, the researcher could repeat any portion of the story if the child requested her to do so.

At the end of each story, the researcher asked three questions, in a standard order, according to the procedure used by Brandt (1976). The first question asks the child to predict the response of the chosen character (e.g., "What will he think?"). The second question gives the child two alternatives to choose from: one egocentric and one nonegocentric (e.g., "Will he think that Donald put the paint on the door or will he think that Laddie put the paint on the door?"). The third question asks the child whether or not the chosen character knew the privileged information (e.g., "Did Donald's father know that Laddie put

paint on the door?"). The presentation of the stories as well as the children's responses were audio taped for later scoring.

The PTM was scored according to the use or discounting of the privileged information in the children's responses. For each question, a score of "0" (zero) was given if the child included the privileged information, a score of "1" (one) was given if the child discounted the privileged information.

While the children were completing the two measures, the parents were asked to individually complete a written parental questionnaire (PQ). If one parent could not be present at the time of the visit, a copy of the PQ was left to be completed and mailed back to the researcher. The PQ was designed to determine the extent to which parents desire their children to exhibit behaviors and values considered traditionally JA. The 25 questions on the PQ were organized into five categories: (a) conformity/group orientation, (b) respect for authority, (c) desire for achievement, (d) manners/politeness/obedience, and (e) dependence. Although constructed by the researcher, the PQ includes questions from the Ethnic Identity Questionnaire (questions 1, 10, 16, and 19 from Matsumoto, Meredith & Masuda, 1970) and from a modified version of

the Bronfenbrenner Parent Behavior Questionnaire (questions 5, 8, and 20 from Nishite, 1975).

Parents were asked to evaluate each question in terms of a Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (6). The total score for an individual was the sum of the 25 items. Question numbers 2, 3, 6, 7, 13, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 24 were recoded to maintain the direction of agreement/disagreement. In addition to providing a score for each parent, the mothers' and fathers' scores were averaged to obtain one parental score for each child. A copy of the PQ is provided in Appendix C.

Results

After testing a small sample (8) of subjects, the PTM was dropped from the study when a ceiling effect was found. Each child tested was able to discount the privileged information and therefore answered each question of the PTM correctly. Hypothesis three which stated that JAs would be high perspective-takers compared to BR and C children who would be low perspective-takers could not be tested.

Although it was not expected, there was a significant difference between the three ethnic groups as a function of children's gender.

A 2 (sex) X 3 (ethnicity) ANOVA revealed a significant ethnicity by sex interaction $F_{(2, 47)}$ = 4.80, $p<.05$ for overall self-concept. Specifically, BR boys and C girls obtained the highest overall self-concept scores while BR girls and C boys obtained the lowest scores. For BEHSC, there was a significant main effect for sex, $F_{(1, 47)}$ = 4.17, $p<.05$, with girls scoring higher than boys. Hypothesis one which stated that the JA group would have a higher BEHSC score than the BR and the C group was not supported since there was no significant difference on BEHSC due to ethnicity. The child's gender played a clearer role in BEHSC as measured by this scale than did the child's ethnicity.

A 2(sex) X 3(ethnicity) ANOVA revealed a significant ethnicity by sex interaction for PHYSC, $F_{(2, 47)}$ = 3.52, $p<.05$. BR boys scored highest while BR girls scored lowest. Hypothesis two which stated that JA children would have lower PHYSC scores than the BR and C children was not supported. Means and standard deviations for significant ANOVAs are presented in Table 3.

Although no significant differences were found between the ethnic groups on the PQ, mothers of BR children tended to score higher on the PQ than fathers of BR children and mothers and fathers of children from

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Significant Ethnicity X Sex ANOVA

| | Ethnic group | | | | | |
| | JA (N=15) | | BR (N=17) | | C (N=16) | |
	boys (n=7)	girls (n=8)	boys (n=9)	girls (n=8)	boys (n=8)	girls (n=8)
Overall self-concept						
ethnicity x sex interaction						
M	20.57	21.75	22.56	20.00	19.75	23.00
SD	1.62	1.98	2.35	3.46	4.17	1.69
Physical self-concept						
ethnicity x sex interaction						
M	10.71	10.63	12.11	10.13	10.38	11.25
SD	1.11	1.41	1.05	2.17	2.00	1.39

| | Gender | |
	Boys (n=24)	Girls (n=24)
Behavioral self-concept		
main effect for sex		
M	12.75	13.83
SD	2.09	1.58

the other two ethnic groups.

Discussion

The finding that girls scored higher than boys on BEHSC should not be surprising. The BEHSC scale included some school-related items which boys may see as primarily feminine activities (Grusec & Lytton, 1988). In addition, the BEHSC scale included items dealing with aggressive-type actions. Aggressive behaviors are usually more commonly exhibited by boys of this age than by girls. Additionally, boys tend to be more physically active and engage in more risk-taking activities. Accordingly, boys are more inclined to get into trouble and be punished, and boys tend to be punished more often and more severely than girls (Grusec & Lytton, 1988). This may explain not only the boys' low BEHSC score, but the C boys' low overall SC score as well.

Fifty percent of the C mothers (equally divided by the sex of the child) identified themselves as full-time homemakers who did not work outside of the home. Since they are around their mothers more often, C boys may have more occasion to be punished. They may be attending more to behavioral aspects of self-concept when completing the measure.

The C girls may also be attending to behavioral aspects of self-

concept. Girls tend to be more socially oriented and focus more on interpersonal relationships than boys (Grusec & Lytton, 1988). Since many of their mothers stay at home, C girls may have more of an opportunity to be rewarded for good, prosocial behavior. They may incorporate this into their self-concept and therefore achieve high scores in overall self-concept. In contrast to the number of mothers who identified themselves as homemakers in the C sample, only seventeen percent of mothers of biracial children and thirteen percent of mothers of JA children were identified as homemakers.

The finding that BR boys scored highest when compared to the other groups on overall self-concept and PHYSC, and that BR girls scored lowest when compared to the other groups on PHYSC may also be influenced by the children's interaction with their mothers. Perhaps this finding can be viewed in terms of how mothers of BR children see their role in the socialization of their child's ethnicity. Kendis (1989) wrote that a person's "ethnic style," the attitudes, values and behaviors of a particular ethnic group, is learned through the process of socialization. For example, if JA children are not in close contact with other JAs, Kendis (1989) suggests, they will not develop the JA ethnic style.

Furthermore, Kitano (1973) states that the values and norms of the JA

culture are continued through socialization and child-rearing. In

support of this idea, Stephan & Stephan (1989) theorized that the ethnic

identity of BR children is influenced by how much they identify with one

or both parents. If they identify more with one parent he or she is

expected to also identify with that parent's ethnic group. Mothers of BR

children may feel that because of their children's mixed heritage, the JA

ethnic style will not be adopted. This may have been of particular

importance for the mothers in this study. Twelve (six for boys and six for

girls) of the seventeen mothers of biracial children were JA. These

mothers may feel a greater need to stress to their children JA values and

attitudes to insure that they are learned. This idea may be supported by

the finding that, although not statistically significant, mothers of BR

children tended to score higher on the PQ than fathers of BR children

and mothers and fathers of C and JA children. As mentioned earlier, the

PQ was designed to assess the extent to which parents desire their

children to exhibit traditional JA behaviors and values.

Support for this notion may lie in the relatively low overall (and

especially physical) self-concept scores of BR girls when compared to the

other groups of children. Mothers of BR children may find it of

particular importance to ingrain JA attitudes in their daughters because

of the belief that someday the daughters will become mothers who will

have the responsibility of passing on the values and attitudes of their

culture. Two traditional JA characteristics which might explain the low

PHYSC scores for BR girls are group orientation and conformity. One

characteristic of group orientation is the comparison of an individual's

behavior to the behavior of others within his or her group. Perhaps when

taking the self-concept measure, the BR girls may have evaluated

themselves in terms of the skills and behaviors of others. The PHYSC

scale included items assessing how competent the individual felt in

sports and other activities involving skill.

If the mothers of BR children were successful in ingraining JA

attitudes and values in their children, we would expect the BR girls to

have a high overall self-concept (because of their high score on BEHSC).

However, their high BEHSC score may have been outweighed by their low

PHYSC score, thus resulting in a relatively low overall self-concept score.

Instead of explaining the BR boys' scores in terms of the emphasis on

JA culture, their high overall and PHYSC scores can possibly be

explained by the incorporation of the BR boys' two cultures into their

self-concept. BR boys might identify with their C heritage by taking on

characteristics such as greater independence and aggressiveness, which

may be reflected in their high PHYSC scores. Adopting JA values of

obedience and respect for authority would enable BR boys to achieve a

relatively high BEHSC. When the two are added together, the result may

be a high overall self-concept.

The finding that BR boys scored higher than BR girls on measures of

overall self-concept and PHYSC is consistent with the results of two

other studies. Dien and Vinacke (1964) found that BR boys who had C

fathers and JA mothers had a lower ideal-self score than BR girls. This

meant that there was a smaller discrepancy between how the BR boys

saw themselves and how they wanted to see themselves. In another

study BR boys scored higher than BR girls on an index of social

desirability (a measure of favorable self-regard, Johnson & Nagoshi,

1986).

Although it was found that ethnicity influenced the self-concepts of

BR children, the present study must be viewed in terms of some

limitations. The recruitment of the subjects could not be considered

random since it was primarily through a network of personal contacts.

BR subjects who were contacted through JA organizations may have

been biased toward the JA culture because of their involvement in the

groups. It should be noted, however, that the majority of subjects in

each ethnic group were recruited in the same manner (through personal

contacts). A future study might try to balance the ethnic makeup of the

parents of BR children. This would involve controlling for the number of

C fathers, JA fathers, C mothers and JA mothers by the gender of the

children. Because of the difficulty in recruiting BR children who were

only of a JA/C heritage, this balance was not controlled for in this study.

When asking for subjects, an age range of seven to eight years of age

was listed as a qualification. It was thought that there would not be a

significant developmental difference between the two ages. When used in

two ANOVAs (one including sex, the other including ethnicity) a main

effect for age was found in overall self-concept and in PHYSC. This was

not considered to be a confound for several reasons. First, a true

difference in age is difficult to determine. Some seven-year-olds may

have been ready to turn eight, and some eight-year-olds may have just

turned eight at the time they were tested, thus attributing any

"differences" due to age would be highly questionable. Secondly, there were more seven-year-olds (34) in comparison to eight-year-olds (14) in the study. Differences between the two age groups may have been exaggerated by the unequal number in each group.

It should also be noted that the PHYSC and the BEHSC subscales were significantly correlated. The reason for this could lie in the three items which were included in both subscales.

If the PQ is used in a future study, additional items should be added to increase its reliability. In addition to administering the PQ future researchers may find it meaningful to interview the parents of BR children. Parents could then be asked directly about how they want their children to ethnically define themselves and how parents encourage that process.

With the scarce literature on BR children, there are many other issues that can be addressed to both the parents and to the children. Additional information that can be provided regarding BR children's development of an ethnic identity can be valuable to both educators and parents in enhancing the social and personal adjustment of BR children.

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Appendix A
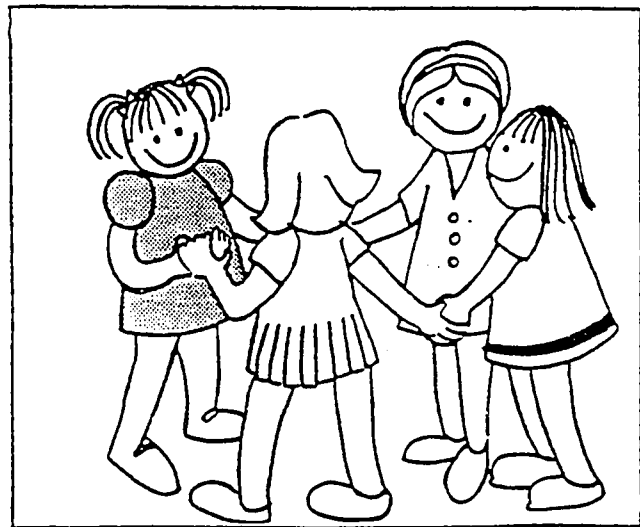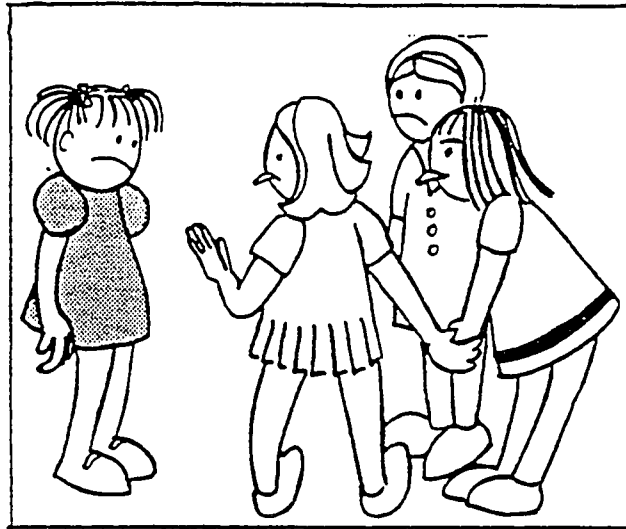
Appendix B

Donald was fingerpainting at the kitchen table. On his way outside,

Donald's father said, "Be careful with the fingerpaint and don't take it

out of the kitchen." While Donald was washing his hands at the kitchen

sink, his dog Laddie jumped on the table and got some fingerpaint on his

tail. Laddie went into the living room and brushed his tail up against the

door, getting bright red paint on it. Then Laddie went down into the

basement to chew on his bone. Donald's father soon came back inside

and saw the paint on the living room door. Who did Donald's father

think got the fingerpaint on the living room door?

Appendix C

<u>Parental Questionnaire</u>
Please indicate your level of agreement in the following areas by circling the appropriate number.

1	2	3	4	5	6
strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree

1. I do not like my child to ask too many questions   1   2   3   4   5   6
in school since it interferes with the progress of the group.

2. I do not punish my child when he/she "talks back" to me   1   2   3   4   5   6

3. Instead of excelling in school, I would find it perfectly acceptable   1   2   3   4   5   6
for my child to do well in other areas such as sports or music.

4. When dealing with others (including family and   1   2   3   4   5   6
other children), I make sure that my child always
says "please" and "thank you".

5. I insist that my child get good grades.   1   2   3   4   5   6

6. Parents should teach their children how to be   1   2   3   4   5   6
independent from an early age.

7. I want my child to be his/her own person regardless   1   2   3   4   5   6
of how others may view him/her.

8. I insist that my child make a special effort in   1   2   3   4   5   6
everything he/she does.

9. I must approve of my child's friends before I will   1   2   3   4   5   6
allow him/her to play with them.

10. A good child is an obedient child.   1   2   3   4   5   6

11. I would be disappointed if my child did not do well in school.   1   2   3   4   5   6

12. I make sure that my child refers to adults as   1   2   3   4   5   6
"Mr.", "Mrs.", or "Miss".

13. If my child does not agree with something   1   2   3   4   5   6
someone else says, I expect my child to voice
his/her own opinion.

Parental Questionnaire (cont)

1	2	3	4	5	6
strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree

14. When at other people's homes, it is rude for children to   1   2   3   4   5   6
ask for things (such as food) before being offered.

15. I do not like my child to make decisions   1   2   3   4   5   6
without asking my advice first.

16. It is natural for children to "wise-off" at   1   2   3   4   5   6
teachers or other people in authority.

17. I want my child to ask me for help rather   1   2   3   4   5   6
than tackle a problem on his/her own.

18. I want my child to make decisions based on   1   2   3   4   5   6
his/her needs first, and above those of any group
(e.g., religious or ethnic).

19. It is okay for children to question the decisions   1   2   3   4   5   6
of their parents once in a while.

20. I want my child to do better than other   1   2   3   4   5   6
children in school.

21. Bad manners are acceptable in children since   1   2   3   4   5   6
"kids will be kids".

22. In a group situation, I would like my child   1   2   3   4   5   6
to be the leader.

23. The only clubs or organizations I want my child to be   1   2   3   4   5   6
 involved with are the ones in which I can also participate.

24. It is perfectly acceptable for children to call   1   2   3   4   5   6
adults by their first names.

25. When a child has been impolite, he/she should   1   2   3   4   5   6
feel ashamed.

Your age: Occupation: I am the   mother   father   (circle one)

Ethnicity: Highest degree or diploma earned: