EXAMINING ETHNIC IDENTITY AND FRIENDSHIP QUALITY AMONG
HIGH SCHOOL AGED SAME-SEX INTERRACIAL FRIENDSHIP DYADS

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INTRODUCTION

Friendship is an integral component of adolescent development and has been described as a relationship characterized by “mutual affection” (e.g., Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 1998). Adolescent friendships function as a source of companionship, stimulation, physical support, ego support, social comparison, and intimacy and affection (Gottman & Parker, 1987). During adolescence, individuals spend more time with friends and less time with their parents (Larson, Richards, Moneta, Hombeck, & Duckett, 1996), and the function of intimacy (e.g. feelings of closeness, trust, and self-disclosure) becomes significantly more important (Bendt, 1982; Sullivan, 1953). Also, friends become more than simply play partners; they serve as support sources and confidants. The literature is abundant with studies on adolescent friendships. A review of the literature revealed over 800 studies that examined adolescent friendship and a variety of topics including: well-being (Dubois & Hirsch, 1993; Hansell, 1985; Raja, McGee, & Stanton, 1992), social competence (Jenkins, Goodness, & Buhrmester, 2002; Rubin, Dwyer, Booth-LaForce, Kim, Burgess, & Rose-Krasnor, 2004), parent child attachment (Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996; Weimer, Kerns, & Oldenburg, 2004) and gender differences (Hussong, 2000; McNelles & Connoly, 1999; Schneider, Woodburn, del Pilar Soteras del Toro, & Udvari, 2005; Youniss & Haynie, 1992). Despite all the attention paid to friendships in adolescence, limited information is available about interracial friendships in this age group. This lack of research may be due in large part to the fact that adolescents tend to choose friends who are similar to them in many ways (Berndt,
1982; Clark & Ayers, 1992; Urberg, Degirmencioglu, & Tolson, 1998), including race and gender (Rose, 2002). Additionally, the opportunity to interact with members of different races than one’s own may be limited (Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987; Hallinan & Williams, 1989). The next section will review what is known and what remains unknown regarding interracial friendships.

**Interracial Friendship**

Research suggests that interracial friendships are less common in adolescence compared to childhood (Kao & Joyner, 2004; Hallinan & Williams, 1989). One reason for this difference may be that transition from elementary school to middle and high school makes it more difficult to maintain friendships (DuBois & Hirsch, 1993). For the purposes of the current study, interracial friendship is defined as a friendship between two adolescents who differ in ethnic and/or racial background. Aboud, Mendelson & Purdy (2003) found that, in general, among elementary school children, interracial friendships were “less stable and intimate” than friendships between members of the same race. Kao and Joyner (2004) also found that interracial friends had fewer “shared activities” (an indication of intimacy) than friends of the same race. Despite the lower levels of stability that intimacy research has suggested among interracial friendships, research has also illustrated that high quality interracial friendships are associated with several benefits. For instance, high quality interracial friendships were characterized by less racial prejudice as well as helping behaviors, “emotional security” (Aboud et al., 2003 p. 171), and positive emotions. Additional studies have demonstrated interracial friendship’s relationship to increased multicultural sensitivity and decreased prejudice.
In this type of relationship, individual characteristics can be appreciated rather than focusing on stereotypical images of a particular race or ethnicity (Lease & Blake, 2005). Additionally, friendship often results in a greater similarity between friends’ attitudes and behaviors (Epstein, 1989). Thus, it would be reasonable to conclude that interracial friendship offers an opportunity for negative prejudices and anti-multicultural viewpoints to be positively altered.

Little is known about interracial friendships among high school students. Some attention has been paid to romantic relationships (e.g., Joyner & Kao, 2005; Wang, Kao, & Joyner, 2006), but the majority of studies regarding interracial friendship have focused on elementary aged children or college students. Accordingly, one purpose of the current study is to add to the knowledge base regarding interracial friendships among high school aged adolescents. Three methods for assessing interracial friendship during childhood and adolescence have dominated this area of research (Smith, 2002). The first method has been to ask the question, “Do you have any friends of a different race than your own?” A second method has been to have participants develop a list of their friends and answer questions regarding the characteristics of each friend—including race. This approach assists researchers in identifying whether the participant is a member of an interracial friendship. The third method, largely used with school systems, has focused on friend nomination. Each participant is asked to nominate (usually up to three) fellow students in their school who they consider to be a friend. Researchers then cross reference participants’ nominations and demographic data regarding racial group
membership to identify interracial friendships. With the friend nomination technique, researchers may include measures of friendship quality in the battery of assessments given, enabling researchers to determine each dyad member’s perception of the friendship. The techniques just mentioned are efficient in identifying adolescents who are members of an interracial friendship; however, except with the friend nomination technique, they provide little insight regarding the participant’s perception of the quality of the friendship. The current study attempts to move past the technique of identifying whether or not high school aged adolescents have an interracial friendship and examine each member’s perception of the friendship. Accordingly, in the current study, same gender interracial friendship dyads were recruited, and both members of the friendship dyad were surveyed in order to gain additional insight into interracial friendships as well as the quality of these relationships.

*Ethnic Identity and Ethnic Identity Status*

Identity development is an important variable to examine within the context of interracial friendship. Referencing Phinney’s (1996, p. 919) conceptualization of the ethnic identity, ethnicity is “used to refer to broad groupings of Americans on the basis of both race and culture of origin.” Based on Marica’s (1980) theory of adolescent identity development, Phinney theorized that a three-stage process takes place during the formation of Ethnic Identity. In the first stage, the individual has an *Unexamined* Ethnic Identity, characterized by not fully exploring what their ethnicity means to them. Two sub-stages extend from the unexamined ethnic identity stage: Diffusion and Foreclosure. An individual demonstrating *Diffusion* has not contemplated their ethnicity at length or is
unconcerned with exploring this aspect of his or her identity. An individual in *Foreclosure* has drawn conclusions about their ethnic identity, but these conclusions are based on the views of other people rather than their own. The second stage of ethnic identity Phinney described is Ethnic Identity Search (also known as Ethnic Identity Exploration) where the individual becomes actively involved in trying to “understand” his or her own ethnicity and its significance to their own identity. Finally, Phinney’s third stage, Achieved Ethnic Identity, is characterized by the individual having a “clear, confident sense of their own identity” (1992, p. 503).

As a means to examine the ethnic identity development of adolescents, Phinney developed the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (1992). The purpose of this measure was to examine the ethnic identity of adolescents who belong to a variety of ethnic groups. This measure has been used for a variety of ethnic groups within the United States and abroad (e.g., Lee, Falbo, Doh, & Park, 2001; Worrel, Conyers, Mpofu, & Vandiver, 2006; ).

Empirical research with adolescents indicates a statistically significant increase in ethnic identity development from early to late adolescence (Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Phinney, 1989; Phinney & Chavira, 1992). Additionally, it is important to note that several theorists examining ethnic identity development propose that ethnic identity development is a “process” that continues throughout the lifespan (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990; Parham, 1989; Phinney, 1989, 1993).

Ultimately, Phinney’s model of ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1989) proposed that individuals from various ethnic backgrounds can grow to appreciate their
own heritage as well as the heritage of individuals of racial and ethnic backgrounds
different from their own. To this end, the MEIM also assesses inter-group attitudes with
the Other Group Orientation Scale. Inter-group attitudes involve how one feels about
interacting with members of groups different than one’s own. Theorists propose that
individuals with more stable ethnic identities will hold more positive attitudes toward
members of different ethnic groups (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990). Consequently, holding
positive attitudes toward different ethnic group members might influence voluntary
interaction with these individuals. Interracial friendship is evidence of an individual’s
willingness to interact with individuals from different ethnic backgrounds than their own.
Thus, it is warranted to explore the other group orientation of individuals involved in an
interracial friendship to examine whether their involvement in this interracial relationship
is context specific or whether they are generally inclined to interacting with people from
a variety of other ethnic groups.

Scholars have explored the role ethnic identity may play in influencing friendship
choice (Hamm, 2000); however, research has not explored how ethnic identity relates to
the quality of the interracial friendship. For this reason, another purpose of the current
study is to examine the relationship between the ethnic identity of adolescents who are
members of an interracial friendship and each dyad member’s perception of the quality of
their friendship.

Friendship Quality

Bukowski, Hoza, and Boivin (1994) identified five dimensions that characterize the
quality of a friendship: closeness, companionship, conflict, helping, and security. The
extent to which a friendship dyad reports high levels of closeness, companionship, helping, and security, and displays minimal levels of conflict, represents the quality of the friendship. High friendship quality has been associated with several benefits such as improved self-esteem, utilizing positive coping skills, and better adjustment (Hartup & Stevens, 1999). Research on gender differences in friendship quality has found that during early adolescence, girls are generally higher on intimacy; however, additional research suggests that by late adolescence, boys report similar levels of intimacy as their female counterparts (Azmitia, Kamprath, & Linnet, 1998). Since interracial friendship is potentially a unique friendship context, the current study aims to examine whether gender differences in friendship quality will continue to appear among adolescents. For instance, one theorist suggested that interracial friendships among girls are inherently different than interracial friendships among boys (Scott, 2004). Specifically, Scott (2004) theorized that when an interracial friendship occurs between girls where one friend is European American and the other is African American, the African American girl generally takes a submissive role in the friendship. In other words, the friendship is not an egalitarian relationship. Research also suggests that the dynamics in one interracial friendship (e.g., African American—European American dyad) are not necessarily the same in other interracial friendships (e.g., Asian American—European American). For instance, Kao and Joyner (2004) found that in all inter-racial and inter-ethnic combinations of friendships, adolescent friendship dyads shared the fewest activities (a measure of intimacy) when one of the members of the interracial friendship was African
American. Undoubtedly, further examination of differences in friendship quality among different combinations of interracial friendship dyads is necessary.

*Interracial Friendships: Relationships between Ethnic Identity & Friendship*

As mentioned, examining the relationship between ethnic identity and friendship quality within the context of interracial friendship has not received considerable attention in the literature. Ideally, an interracial friendship should provide a safe environment in which members of different ethnic and or racial groups can not only provide and receive support characteristic of same race friendships, but also offer a comfortable environment in which one can be open about one’s culture or ethnic identity. Self-disclosure, a feature of intimacy, is an important component that distinguishes adolescent friendship from earlier peer relationships. In interracial friendship, self-disclosure regarding sharing one’s culture or discussing racial issues may be more difficult to navigate compared to discussing these kinds of topics in same race friendships. Thus, one intriguing question regarding interracial friendship is whether interracial friendship pairs generally feel comfortable discussing these issues. Additionally, being a member of an interracial friendship may present a context in which an individual who has never critically thought about issues concerning race or ethnicity may suddenly be compelled to reflect on these concerns.

As Beverly Tatum illustrated in her book, *Can We Talk about Race?: and Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegretation* (2007), adolescence is a developmental period in which “new experiences may bring new awareness of the meaning of one’s racial group membership” and “when you least expect it, the issue of race can emerge,
even in the context of friendship” (pp. 87-88). It is reasonable to assert that if two members of an interracial friendship dyad differ in ethnic identity development, this could influence the quality of their friendship. For example, Friend A might have a more advanced ethnic identity than Friend B. As a result of Friend A’s advanced status, Friend A is eager to share their culture and learn about their friend’s culture as well; however, if Friend B’s ethnic identity status is less developed, Friend B might be hesitant to discuss or participate in Friend A’s or their own culture. Tatum (2007) cites an excerpt from Emily Bernard’s (2005) book on friendship. An African American man described that as an adolescent, he was good friends with several Jewish boys. Race was never discussed among these friends. Tatum observed that, "An important aspect of who Trey was remained hidden from his friends, seemingly because he didn’t know how to talk to them about it” and “Not being able to talk about the significance of race...leads to disconnection” (p. 95). This example illustrates how ethnic identity can potentially influence friendship quality within the context of an interracial friendship; Friend A cannot readily discuss his culture with Friend B.

To further illustrate how ethnic identity influences one’s interactions with someone who is a member of a different ethnic or racial group than one’s own, one might consider Helm’s 1994 chapter on “Racial Identity in the School Environment.” She described racial interaction theory and potential exchanges that can take place between teachers and students based on their racial identity development status. Helms described three types of relationships: regressive, parallel, and progressive. Regressive interaction is characterized by the teacher or school official being less developmentally advanced
than the student in regards to racial identity. As a result, the educator is uncomfortable addressing racial issues while the student is comfortable discussing these concerns. Consequently, discord can result between the educator and student “characterized by varying degrees of disharmony, conflict, tension ...” (p. 33). Parallel interaction is characterized by the educator and student being at the same or comparable stages of racial identity development if they are from different racial groups. In this type of relationship, both parties have common beliefs regarding racial issues. Though this may seem optimal, in lower statuses such as Phinney’s unexamined identity, neither member of the student teacher dyad can assist the other with advancing in racial identity development. Finally, a progressive interaction is most advantageous to the students and the educator. A progressive relationship is characterized by the educator being at a higher racial identity status than the student. In this type of relationship, the educator would ideally have the ability to identify racial identity development concerns in his/her students and model more acceptable attitudes and beliefs that promote positive interracial interaction.

Granted, friendship among peers displays a different power relationship than that between student and teacher. Researchers in peer friendship assume that the nature of friendship is more egalitarian, where one friend does not assert more power over the other (Russell, Pettit, & Mize, 1998). However, Helms’ example is applicable to how potential conflict may arise within the context of interracial friendship. One friend’s inability to understand cultural or racial issues from the other friend’s perspective could potentially result in conflict within interracial friendships.
Present Study

The current study takes an exploratory approach to examining ethnic identity and friendship quality within the context of interracial friendships. Specifically, the present research aims to examine the following research questions:

• How does ethnic identity relate to friendship quality within the context of interracial friendships?

• Are there differences in friendship quality depending on the racial composition (e.g., African American-European American vs. European American-Asian American) of the interracial friendship dyad?

• How do female interracial friendship dyads differ from male interracial friendship dyads?

• Are older adolescents more advanced in their ethnic identity status than younger adolescents?

• What is the other group orientation of individuals in an interracial friendship?

The current study examined friendship quality among same gender interracial friendship dyads enrolled in ninth through twelfth grade. Specifically, six hypotheses addressing the research questions were proposed:

Hypotheses 1: Dyads with members who have the same (e.g., both Achieved) ethnic identity status will have higher reported friendship quality compared to dyads with members who have different (e.g., one Achieved; one Diffuse) ethnic identity statuses.

Hypotheses 2: Dyads with members who both report being able to share their culture with their friend will have higher reported friendship quality.
**Hypotheses 3:** Dyads will differ in perceptions of friendship quality based on the racial composition of the dyad.

**Hypotheses 4:** Gender differences on reported levels of friendship quality will emerge.

**Hypotheses 5:** Dyads with members who are in the 11th and 12th grade (e.g. older adolescent dyads) will report higher ethnic identity than dyads with members in the 9th and 10th grade (e.g., younger adolescent dyads).

**Hypotheses 6:** Members of dyads in the current study will be high on other group orientation.
METHODS

Sample

Participants were adolescents attending high school in the Midwestern United States. A total of 57 adolescents were surveyed; however, only 56 were included in the current study’s analyses as it was a requirement to have complete data from both members of the friendship dyad. Accordingly, a total of 28 interracial friendship dyads were included in the dyadic level analyses. Thirty of the 56 participants were female. Ages ranged from 14-18 with a mean age of 15.8 (SD=1.0). The distribution of adolescents in each grade was as follows: 9th grade (n=12), 10th grade (n= 16), 11th grade (n=14), and 12th grade (n= 14). Participant individual racial group representation was as follows: European American (n=26), African American (n=17), Bi racial (n=9), Latino/a (n=3), Asian American (n=1). Friendship dyads consisted of the following racial pairs: African American/European American (n=15 pairs), African American/Hispanic(n=2 pairs), Biracial/European American (n= 7 pairs), European American/Hispanic(n=1 pair), European/European American (n= 1 pair), Asian American/European American (n = 1 pair), and Biracial/Biracial (n = 1 pair). To be eligible to participate, adolescents were required to be a member of a same gender, interracial friendship dyad, and both members of the dyad were required to participate in the study. The majority of participants (66%) in the current study had been in an interracial friendship for more than 1 year. The shortest friendship length was four months.
Procedure

Students listened to a 10 minute recruitment presentation during a class period or during an after-school co-curricular activity meeting. A copy of the presentation script can be found in Appendix A. During the recruitment presentation, students were informed of the purpose of the study, eligibility requirements for participation, and provided with parental consent forms (see Appendix B). Upon returning the signed parental consent forms, appointment times to complete the survey were scheduled during study halls or after school. Students gave their written consent prior to completing the survey (see Appendix C). On average, surveys took about 45 minutes to complete. Once the surveys were completed, participants were given a $10 gift card as compensation.

Ethnic Identity Status

Ethnic Identity was assessed using Phinney’s Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (1992). An ethnic identity status was calculated for each participant using the ethnic identity exploration and ethnic identity commitment subscales of the MEIM. Using a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree), participants were asked the extent to which they agreed with each item. Sample items included: “I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership” (exploration) and “I feel strong attachment towards my own ethnic group” (commitment). A complete version of the MEIM is found in Appendix D. Higher ratings indicated a more developed ethnic identity. Participants who scored above the absolute mean of 2.5 were considered to be high on exploration and commitment, and participants who scored below the absolute mean were considered to be low on exploration and commitment (see Phinney,
Jacoby, & Silva, 2007). No participants scored at the exact mean. Accordingly, all 56 participants were included in the analyses. Individuals high on exploration and commitment were classified as Achieved. Individuals low on exploration and commitment were classified as Diffuse. Individuals low on exploration but high on commitment were classified as Foreclosed. Finally, individuals high on exploration but low on commitment were classified as Moratorium. Reliability tests were run for the current sample. For the exploration subscale, Cronbach’s alpha equaled .64; for commitment, Cronbach’s alpha equaled .87. All reliability statistics represent those calculated in the current sample. To test scale validity, Principle Axis factor analysis was conducted. Results indicated a two factor solution, which reflected analyses conducted by Phinney (1992). Cohen’s Kappa statistic (1960) was calculated in order to assess the extent to which dyads’ respective ethnic identities were the same (i.e., both Achieved) or different, (i.e. one Achieved, one Foreclosed). Cohen’s Kappa uses the following formula to determine agreement:

\[
Kappa = \frac{(Observed \ Agreement - \ Chance \ Agreement)}{(1- \ Chance \ Agreement)}.
\]

Cohen’s Kappa indicated 53% agreement among friendship dyads on ethnic identity status. Please see Appendix E for Cohen’s Kappa calculation in the current sample.

Absolute difference scores were also calculated for each dyad to assess the degree of difference in ethnic identity for each pair (e.g. Achieved = 4, Moratorium = 3, Foreclosed = 2, and Diffuse = 1). For instance, if one member of the dyad had an ethnic identity status of Achieved, while the other member had a status of Foreclosed, the difference score of “2” was assigned to the dyad. Higher scores represented a greater
difference between the dyad members’ ethnic identities. A score of zero signified no difference between ethnic identities (i.e., both Achieved, both Foreclosed, etc.).

*Other Group Orientation*

Six items included in Phinney’s MEIM (1992) scale assess an individual’s attitudes toward interacting with people from different ethnic groups than their own. This subscale is known as the *Other Group Orientation* (OGO) scale. A sample item is, “I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.” Once again, participants rated their agreement on a four point Likert-type scale. Cronbach’s alpha for these items equaled .82 in the current sample. A mean score of the six items was used to calculate other group orientation. (Please see Appendix D for a complete version of the OGO.)

*Friendship Quality*

Bukowski, Hoza, and Boivin’s (1994) 23-item *Friendship Qualities Scale* was used to assess the conflict (4 items, $\alpha = .69$), closeness (5 items, $\alpha = .87$), companionship (4 items, $\alpha = .76$), receiving help (5 items, $\alpha = .80$), and security (5 items, $\alpha = .61$) dimensions of friendship quality. Sample items are: “My friend and I argue a lot” (conflict); “If my friend had to move away, I would miss him/her” (closeness); “My friend and I spend all our free time together” (companionship); “My friend helps me when I am having trouble with something” (receiving help); and “If there is something bothering me, I can tell my friend about it” (security). Responses were rated using a 5-point scale (1= not true to 5= really true) indicating how true each statement is for the interracial friendship. The conflict dimension items were reverse coded so that a total
mean score for overall friendship quality could be calculated. Higher overall scores indicated higher friendship quality. Please see appendix F for a full version of the Friendship Qualities Scale. Additionally, a mean score for each dyad was calculated for each dimension of friendship quality. Higher mean scores on all dimensions indicated higher levels of the dimension of friendship quality. For the conflict dimension, higher levels indicated more conflict, while lower levels indicated less conflict.

Sharing Culture with Friend

The open ended question, “Do you feel comfortable sharing your cultural/racial heritage with your friend? If yes, how do you share?” was used to assess the extent to which each adolescent shared their cultural heritage with their friend. The percent of the sample who answered “yes” to this question was calculated. Descriptions of how the participants shared their culture (i.e., talking, taking friend to a cultural event) with their friend were also examined. First, axial coding was used to determine the methods adolescents used to share their culture (e.g., talking, taking friend to event). Open coding was then used subsequently to code additional comments that did not reflect the predetermined categories.

Overview of Analyses

Analyses were conducted at the individual and dyadic level. For dyadic level analyses, a mean score for each dyad was developed for the variables of interest. For example, at the individual level, a total score for each dimension of friendship quality was calculated for each participant and analyzed individually; however, at the dyadic
level, a pair of friends’ respective scores were averaged to calculate a score for the dyad (e.g., \([\text{Friend A score} + \text{Friend B Score}] / 2 = \text{Dyad Score}\)).

Preliminary analyses were conducted at the individual level. First, descriptive statistics at the individual level were conducted to examine reported levels of friendship quality and ethnic identity in the current sample. Correlations among all dimensions of friendship quality (e.g., security, closeness, receiving help, companionship, and conflict) and ethnic identity were examined as well. Ethnic identity was examined as a continuous variable and status variable (e.g., Diffuse, Foreclosed, Moratorium, or Achieved).

Primary analyses first examined whether differences in ethnic identity based on race emerged at the individual level using a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). Responses at the individual level to the question, “Do you feel comfortable sharing your cultural/racial heritage with your friend? If yes, how do you share?” were analyzed by calculating the percentage of participants who answered “yes” and “no” to the question. Further examination of this question for those respondents who answered, “yes,” was conducted as well. For instance, how many adolescents in the sample reported that they take their friend to a cultural event was calculated using content analysis.

The next several research questions were examined at the dyadic level. Specifically, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the question of whether dyads with members who had the same (e.g., both Achieved) ethnic identity status would have similar perceptions of their friendship quality compared to dyads with members who had different (e.g., one Achieved; one Diffuse) ethnic identity statuses. A second one way
ANOVA was conducted to examine whether dyads with members who both reported being comfortable sharing their culture with their friend would report higher friendship quality dimensions compared to dyad members where both friends did not endorse feeling comfortable sharing their culture with their friend. A MANOVA was conducted to investigate whether reported dimensions of friendship quality differed based on the race of the members of the dyad. Next, gender differences were examined using a MANOVA to assess whether female dyads reported differential levels of friendship quality dimensions compared to male dyads. Then, a one way ANOVA at both the dyadic and individual level was conducted to assess differences in ethnic identity based on age. The final analysis, a chi-square test, was conducted at the individual level to examine the other group orientation of participants in the current sample.
RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

First, individual level descriptive analyses (N=56) were conducted to examine the general friendship quality reported by the sample. In general, perceptions of friendship quality were moderate in the current sample (M = 3.5, SD = .49) and this finding was consistent with previous research (e.g., Bukowski, et al., 1994; Weimer, Kerns, & Oldenburg, 2004). Pearson bivariate correlations between the five dimensions of friendship quality revealed positive statistically significant correlations (r > .31) between companionship and closeness, security and closeness, and receiving help and closeness (for correlations, see Tables 1 & 2). Positive statistically significant correlations between these dimensions have been found in previous research (Bukowski et al., 1994).

Table 1. Ethnic Identity and Friendship Quality Correlations and Standard Deviations at the Individual Level (N=56)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean (Standard Deviation)</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Closeness</th>
<th>Companionship</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Receiving Help</th>
<th>Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>3.4 (.33)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closeness</td>
<td>4.0 (.83)</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companionship</td>
<td>3.2 (.88)</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>1.9 (.81)</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.32*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Help</td>
<td>4.4 (.60)</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3.5 (.65)</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
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*p<.05, **p<.01
Table 2. Ethnic Identity and Friendship Quality Correlations and Standard Deviations at the Dyadic Level (N=28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean (Standard Deviation)</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Closeness</th>
<th>Companionship</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Receiving Help</th>
<th>Security</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>3.3 (.31)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closeness</td>
<td>4.0 (.72)</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companionship</td>
<td>3.1 (.79)</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>1.9 (.71)</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Help</td>
<td>4.4 (.53)</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3.6 (.82)</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, **p<.01

The average ethnic identity of adolescents in the current study was high (M = 3.4, SD = .33). Using ethnic identity as a continuous variable, a statistically significant positive correlation was found between ethnic identity and the receiving help dimension of friendship quality (r = .36, p<.01) at the individual level. The ethnic identity status (i.e. Achieved, Moratorium, Foreclosed, or Diffuse) for each participant was calculated as well, following the method used by Phinney and colleagues (2007). Table 3 provides a description of the distribution of participant ethnic identity statuses. Forty-one of the 56 participants were categorized at an Achieved ethnic identity status. It is important to note that no dyads where both friends were categorized as Moratorium existed in the sample. This reflects theoretical work which suggested that individuals at this stage would most likely be resistant to interact with individuals from ethnic backgrounds other than their own (Helms, 1990).
Table 3. Distribution of ethnic identity statuses (N=56).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statuses</th>
<th>Percent of Sample at Each Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>4 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosed</td>
<td>10 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>1 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>41 (73%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in the methods section, the representation of European American and African American participants was disproportionate compared to other groups in the sample, for example, European American (n=26), African American (n=17), Bi racial (n=9), Latino/a (n=3), Asian American (n=1). Due to the under representation of ethnic groups in the sample, three groups were created to investigate differences in ethnic identity: African American, European American, and all other races. Results from a one way analysis of variance indicated no statistically significant differences in ethnic identity development when a continuous variable of ethnic identity was used, $F= 1.30, p = .28$ (partial $\eta^2 = .05$) nor when an ethnic identity status, $F= 1.33, p = .27$ (partial $\eta^2 = .05$) was assigned to each participant.

When answering the survey question, “Do you feel comfortable sharing your culture with your friend? If yes, how do you share,” the majority of adolescents indicated that they do feel comfortable (82%, n=46). Of the 46 adolescents who indicated feeling comfortable sharing their culture with their friend, they endorsed that, most often, they
share their culture through conversations with their friend (65%). Others indicated they
take their friend to cultural events (15%). Figure 1 provides a complete summary of
participant responses.

Figure 1: Participants’ comfort and ways in which they share their culture with their
friend.

Yes
1) “I share with my friends through communication such as talking or an e-mail. If
an issue comes up in school involving my culture, then I will share my
knowledge.”
2) “Yes, I talk to all my friends about my heritage and am open and listen to them.”
3) “Yes, I do, merely by talking and sharing information in order to inform him and
others.”
4) “Entirely, anytime, anyone, anywhere.”
5) “I’m about to take him to D.C. to visit my brother. I invite him to parties on the
East side.”
6) “Yes I do feel comfortable sharing my cultural/racial heritage with my friend. I
introduce him to my music and food. Also the Puerto Rican girls.”
7) “I feel very comfortable about sharing my heritage with all of my friends through
talking, attending events, food, movies, etc.”
8) “Yes, I do we usually just talk.”
9) “I do feel comfortable talking with my friend. At times he does not understand
certain practices that I am acquainted with.”
10) “Yes I do feel comfortable doing so; we usually talk about our heritage and
backgrounds and discuss our views.”
11) “I feel comfortable because we can talk about anything even if my heritage is
involved. He don’t down talk me or anything.”
12) “Yes, I do not see any boundaries between interaction among different races. As
my faith has taught me, all men are created equal.”
13) “Yes, in talking about it together, attending certain events with their families that
are important to their race.”
14) “Yes I feel very comfortable. I talk to my friend about my experience as a
different ethnic group.”
15) “Yes; having them listen to rap music or having them eat “soul food.”
16) “Yes, I talk to them about it.”
17) “Yes, talking about it.”
18) “Yes because I think it gives her an opportunity to see how other people live and
that there is more than one way to react to things.”
19) “Yes, we both go to each others’ family events. We eat each others’ food, etc.”
20) “Yes, it’s fun sharing each others’ different foods.”
21) “I love sharing culture back and forth with my friends. I learn a lot about places and people I couldn’t learn anywhere else. We share by telling jokes.”
22) “Yes. I share by talking and having discussions with my friend.”
23) “Yes. I tell a lot of people about my religion and tell them a lot of Black poems.”
24) “Yes I feel comfortable sharing my culture and racial heritage with my friend. I do this by talking to her about anything; we also hang out.”
25) “Yes, music, dances.”
26) “Yes I feel comfortable sharing my cultural heritage and I share it by having regular conversations about it with friends of the same race and different.”
27) “Yes I feel comfortable, but we don’t really share each others’ culture, etc.”
28) “I’m proud to be who I am. My Caucasian friends ask me a lot of things like about my hair and music about certain holidays and foods and I let them know. I’ve had a few friends over for Kwanzaa and I’ve braided their hair and just share my experiences.”
29) “Yes. I love being all the nationalities that I am. I love that my Grandpa speaks Hungarian and shares so many personality characteristics as I do. I want my friends to know and experience the kind of love I have for my background.”
30) “Yes, we talk openly about our beliefs and our race on the phone, at school, and when we hang out. We talk about comfortable and uncomfortable things we deal with as our race.”
31) “Yes, we talk a lot.”
32) “I feel extremely comfortable about sharing my culture/racial heritage with my girl, and I do so by including her and taking her to stepshows, family gatherings, and etc. (where a lot of ‘my people’ are.)”
33) “Even though she already knows a lot about it, yes I do. I share with her by taking her to family gatherings and just hanging out with her.”
34) “Yes, by talking.”
35) “Yes, I talk to them.”
36) “Yes, because she is new to America, she asks me about our customs a lot and I get to share a lot with her.”
37) “Yes! I just talk about my background. I have also burned some CD’s with Norwegian music. I also show pictures.”
38) “Yes, by talking to them about it.”
39) “Yes, neither of us are racist so we are free to have conversations without any prejudice or bias. We have only known each other for a short time so we haven’t attended any events together.”
40) “Ya. If there’s something my friend wants to know about where I come from originally and I can answer it I wouldn’t have a problem with telling her.”
41) “Yes; we talk a lot and culture and ethnicity is not an issue.”
42) “Yes, in English class usually, we have share time. But also just on occasion sitting and talking.”
43) “Yes, by showing one another the perspective on your heritage.”
44) “Yes I do. How my culture typically comes up is after a seminar in class about different cultures or when I talk about what I had for dinner.”
45) “Yes, we talk. You don’t really seem to notice the racial difference, unless the concept is brought up.”
46) “Yes, although I don’t know much about my heritage/culture, but if I did I would feel comfortable with sharing it.”

**No/Not Completely Yes/Not Able to Categorize**

1) “No.”
2) “No.”
3) “No.”
4) “No. It usually comes out the way I act.”
5) “Not really just because I don’t know how she would react.”
6) “Kind of, I am proud of my ancestry, but my friend and I don’t talk about it much.”
7) “My friend and I are in so many clubs together.”
8) “Sometimes I do…it really depends on what happened or where I went. Because sometime I don’t think she understands how we act/interact with others than how she would with her culture or race. But I bet she could relate to me all the time.”
9) “Well we don’t really talk about it that much. Sometimes we’ll talk about how our other friends of our own race feel about our friendship, but we really don’t care what others think.”
10) “If I am sharing something, I will go back and forth with the person I’m sharing with.”

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**Ethnic Identity Status and Perceived Friendship Quality**

The question of whether dyads with members who had the same (e.g., both *Achieved*) ethnic identity would have similar perceptions of their friendship quality compared to dyads with members who had different (e.g., one *Achieved*; one *Diffuse*) ethnic identities was assessed at the dyadic level (*n* = 28). A multivariate analysis of variance revealed no significant differences between perceptions of friendship quality dimensions between the two groups, *F* = 1.59, *p* = .20 (partial *η² = .27*)—those dyads with the same ethnic identity statuses compared to dyads with different ethnic identity statuses. All ANOVAS were non-significant (Security, *F* = 1.68, *p* = .207 (partial *η² =
It was the intent of the current study to conduct a one way analysis of variance to examine whether dyads with members who both reported being comfortable with sharing their culture with their friend would report higher friendship quality dimensions compared to dyad members where both friends did not endorse feeling comfortable sharing their culture with their friend. Unfortunately, comparison groups were disproportionate for those dyads in which both members reported feeling comfortable sharing their culture (n = 23) compared to those dyads where both friends did not endorse feeling comfortable sharing their culture (n = 5). Accordingly, inferential comparisons were unable to be made between the two groups; however, descriptively, for those dyads who reported being comfortable with sharing their culture with their friend, means and standard deviations for the respective friendship quality dimensions were as follows:

Security, $M = 3.79$, $SD = .78$; Closeness, $M = 4.18$, $SD = .52$; Help, $M = 4.56$, $SD = .35$; Companionship, $M = 3.19$, $SD = .81$; Conflict, $M = 1.80$, $SD = .66$. For those dyads where both friends did not endorse feeling comfortable sharing their culture, means and standard deviations for the respective friendship quality dimensions were as follows:

Security, $M = 2.94$, $SD = .71$; Closeness, $M = 3.34$, $SD = 1.13$; Help, $M = 3.92$, $SD = .89$; Companionship, $M = 2.94$, $SD = .71$; Conflict, $M = 2.15$, $SD = .93$. Therefore, for those dyads where both friends reported sharing their culture, all positive dimensions of friendship quality (e.g., security, closeness, help, and companionship) evidenced higher
means and the negative dimension (e.g., conflict) had a lower mean compared to those dyads where both friends did not report sharing their culture.

To investigate whether reported dimensions of friendship quality differed based on the race of the members of the dyad, two multivariate analyses of variances were conducted. Unfortunately, the diversity of the sample did not permit comparisons on all races. The first MANOVA conducted compared all dyads that had an African American member to dyads that did not have an African American member on the five dimensions of friendship quality. The MANOVA was not significant according to Pillia’s criterion, $F(5, 22) = 2.22, p = .08$ (partial $\eta^2 = .34$). A second MANOVA conducted compared African American-European American dyads to all other dyad combinations. The MANOVA was not significant according to Pillia’s criterion, $F(5, 22) = 1.75, p = .16$ (partial $\eta^2 = .29$). No univariate ANOVAs indicated statistically significant differences at the univariate level when a significance level of $p<.01$ was used (Bonferroni adjustment for experiment-wise error employed).

**Gender.** To assess whether female dyads would report differential levels of friendship quality dimensions compared to male dyads, another MANOVA was conducted. The MANOVA was significant according to Pillia’s criterion, $F(5, 22) = 4.41, p < .01$ (partial $\eta^2 = .50$). Subsequent univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were calculated to further examine group differences (for means and standard deviations, see Table 5). Accordingly, the significance level was set to $p< .01$. Male and female dyads significantly differed on reported closeness, with female dyads reporting higher levels of closeness than male dyads, $F = 16.83, p < .001$ (partial $\eta^2 = .39$). Females also reported
receiving more help compared to male dyads; however, differences failed to reach statistical significance, $F = 6.24, p = .019$ (partial $\eta^2 = .19$).

Table 4. *Mean Differences Based on Gender and Friendship Quality Dimensions at the Dyadic Level (N=28)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Male Dyads (n = 13)</th>
<th>Female Dyads (n =15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>3.5(1.2)</td>
<td>3.7(.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closeness**</td>
<td>3.6(.79)</td>
<td>4.4(.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>4.2(.62)</td>
<td>4.7(.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>1.9(.86)</td>
<td>1.8(.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companionship</td>
<td>2.8(.60)</td>
<td>3.4(.85)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01

*Age.* To investigate whether dyads whose members were enrolled in 11th and 12th grade were further advanced in their ethnic identity development compared to 9th and 10th grade adolescents, a mean score of ethnic identity was calculated for each dyad. Two groups were created—“younger” adolescents (e.g., 9th and 10th graders) and “older” adolescents (e.g., 11th and 12th graders). Only 22 dyads were included in this analysis. The remaining six dyads were pairs in which one friend was in the “younger” adolescent group while the other friend was in the “older” adolescent group. Results indicated that older dyads reported higher ethnic identities compared to younger dyads, $F= 3.29, p = .08$ (partial $\eta^2 = .14$); however, differences failed to reach statistical significance (for means and standard deviations, see Table 6). Analyses were also conducted at the individual level, comparing participants enrolled in 11th or 12th grade (e.g., older participants) to adolescents enrolled in 9th or 10th grade (e.g., younger participants). A one way analysis
of variance was statistically significant (for means and standard deviations, see Table 6) with “older” adolescents having higher ethnic identity means when ethnic identity was conceptualized as a continuous variable and higher ethnic identity statuses compared to younger adolescents, \( F = 5.04, p < .05 \), (partial \( \eta^2 = .14 \)).

Table 5. *Mean Differences based on Age and Ethnic Identity Development at the Dyadic Level (N=22) and Individual Level (N=56)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Younger Adol. (9th &amp; 10th Graders)</th>
<th>Older Adol. (11th &amp; 12th Graders)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity (Continuous)</td>
<td>3.1(.39)</td>
<td>3.4(.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity (Continuous)*</td>
<td>3.1(.49)</td>
<td>3.4(.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity Status**</td>
<td>3.0(1.17)</td>
<td>3.7(.69)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*\( p < .05 \), \**\( p < .01 \)

As predicted, at the individual level, participants in the current study were indeed high on other group orientation (\( M = 3.6, \ SD = .52 \)). As mentioned, OGO was rated on 4-point Likert-type scale, with higher rating indicating more positive attitudes toward interacting with ethnic groups other than one’s own. To further investigate this finding, a chi-square test was conducted assuming an equal probability of participants selecting 1, 2, 3, or 4 ratings on the OGO scale. Results were statistically significant \( \chi^2 = 42.57, p < .001 \), suggesting participants in the current sample selected rating 3 and 4 above chance compared to lower ratings of 1 or 2 on the OGO scale (see Table 7 for expected and observed frequencies).
Table 6. Expected and Observed Frequencies on Other Group Orientation (N=56)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observed***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p< .001
DISCUSSION

The average ethnic identity of the participants was high (M= 3.3 on a 4 point scale; 73% of participants at an achieved ethnic identity status), and results indicated no statistically significant differences in ethnic identity development neither when a continuous variable of ethnic identity was used nor when an ethnic identity status was assigned to each participant. Research continues to remain mixed in this area. In one study, differences on race were found when ethnic identity was assessed as a continuous variable (Phinney, 1992); however, in a recent study where racial differences in ethnic identity status were examined, no differences were found (Phinney, Jacoby, & Silva, 2007). Accordingly, differences in ethnic identity based on race and other demographic variables must continue to be examined. Alternatively, one explanation for the lack of statistically significant differences in ethnic identity in the current sample could be that this sample is unique in that all participants were members of enduring interracial friendships. Thus, this sample, by nature, might be less heterogeneous than previous samples.

The majority of adolescents indicated that they felt comfortable sharing their culture with their friend and the most common manner in which they shared their culture was by talking with their friend. The second most common behavior was taking their friend to a cultural event. It is encouraging to find that the majority of participants reported feeling comfortable sharing their culture with their friend. Research suggests that an important component of adolescent friendships is the opportunity to talk
to one’s friends and share one’s perspectives (Sullivan, 1953). These results also seem to confirm that interracial friendships potentially provide an added area of differing perspectives that friends can discuss—their culture. Future research must investigate more thoroughly how comfortably friends share their culture with one another. Two methods, self-report (e.g., current study) and observation, could be used. For instance, a task could be created requiring dyads to discuss a topic relevant to sharing their culture. Researchers could then evaluate whether friends comfortably share within this context. Another method could be to have participants provide more detailed accounts of a time when they shared their culture with their friend (e.g., recall a conversation they had or a cultural event they attended together). Finally, not only could dyad members be questioned as to whether they feel comfortable sharing their culture, researchers could also inquire whether their friend shares as well. Though Friend A may report they feel comfortable sharing their culture with Friend B; Friend B may report that Friend A never shares their culture. Thus, this method would offer a more complete assessment of both dyad members’ perspectives.

No significant differences at the univariate level among dimensions of friendship quality were found when dyads that had the same ethnic identity status were compared to dyads that had different ethnic identity statuses. One limitation that might explain this finding is that about 73 percent of the sample was at an Achieved ethnic identity status, and the sample was small. Also, effect sizes were small and power was low (all <.31). Having the opportunity to collect data on a larger variety of interracial friendship dyads
may provide better insight on the proposed relationship between ethnic identity and friendship quality.

Due to disproportionate comparison groups, analyses to investigate whether statistically significant differences on perceptions of friendship quality among dyads where both friends reported being comfortable with sharing their culture compared to dyads where at least one friend or both reported not being comfortable with sharing, were unable to be conducted; however, as mentioned, for those dyads where both friends reported sharing their culture, they reported higher positive dimensions of friendship quality (e.g., security, closeness, help, and companionship) and lower conflict compared to those dyads where both friends did not report sharing their culture. Again, the limitation of a small sample size influenced data analysis. Subsequent research with more variability within the sample may reveal significant differences between these groups.

Previous research suggests less intimacy among dyads with an African American member (Joyner & Kao, 2004); the current study did not find this difference. Though statistical power was considerable (power < .69) for this comparison, the sample was relatively small. This research area is relatively new. Accordingly, several variables must be considered as covariates that could account for the variability in intimacy among interracial friendship dyads. Additional research is needed to further investigate the potential differential relationship dynamics in racially diverse combinations of interracial friendship dyads. This type of research could have implications for ways in which adults and educators could intervene to promote positive interactions among adolescents of
different ethnic and racial backgrounds. These types of interventions could potentially assist adolescents with establishing and maintaining their interracial friendships.

As hypothesized, gender differences on friendship quality dimensions were found. Female dyads reported statistically significantly more closeness compared to male dyads. This finding counters Scott’s (2004) theory where she suggested that female interracial friendship dyads are most likely to have lower quality friendships compared to male interracial friendship dyads. Subsequent research is needed to further investigate the constructs the current study examined.

Analyses at the individual level were statistically significant and analyses of means at the dyadic level were in the hypothesized direction, offering partial support for the previous finding that older adolescents tend to be more developmentally advanced in their ethnic identity development (Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Phinney, 1989; Phinney and Tarver, 1988) compared to their younger counterparts. This finding is promising in the current sample in that despite the fact that there was not much variability in the ethnic identity of the participants, an age discrepancy still emerged. Older adolescents were more likely than younger to be at an achieved ethnic identity status and to report a higher mean when ethnic identity was entered as a continuous variable. Thus, the current sample provides additional support for the theory that ethnic identity generally advances with age. Undoubtedly, a larger sample might reveal statistically significant differences at the dyadic level. Power estimates suggested 216 total dyads would be needed.

As predicted, at the individual level, participants in the current study were high on other group orientation. Previous research also suggests that the sample in the current
study is unique in its other group orientation in that other samples have scored lower on
the other group orientation assessment (e.g., Phinney, 1992) than the current sample. For
instance, Phinney surveyed 417 high school students and found a mean other group
orientation of 3.15. In the same study, among 136 college students, mean other group
orientation was 3.25. In the current sample, the mean was 3.6. It is warranted to theorize
that a relationship exists between being a member of an interracial friendship and one’s
orientation toward ethnic groups other than one’s own. A bidirectional influence is
plausible. For instance, it could be that individuals who enter into interracial friendships
tend to have a higher other group orientation; however, being a member of an interracial
friendship may also influence an individual’s other group orientation. Accordingly,
future longitudinal research is needed to examine the causal relationship between being a
member of an interracial friendship and multicultural sensitivity. Empirical findings
suggest that many positive factors are related to interracial friendship; however, some
researchers caution against misinterpreting the causal relationship between being a
member of an interracial friendship and increased multicultural sensitivity (University of
California, Berkey, Institute of Development, 2003). For instance, it could be that
adolescents who enter into interracial friendships are generally more proficient in their
social skills and multiculturally sensitive; however, being a member of an interracial
friendship can also facilitate the development of social competence and multicultural
sensitivity for future interracial interactions. Also, though the current study examined
other group orientation, a more detailed examination of intergroup attitudes must be
investigated in future research. For instance, research conducted by Shelton, Richeson,
and Salvatore (2005) suggested that when individuals, specifically ethnic minorities, engage in interracial interactions and expect others with whom they are interacting to be “prejudiced,” this may negatively affect the interaction. Although, in the current sample, quantitative data did not reveal negative qualities associated with interracial interaction (e.g., friendship dimensions), qualitative data collected in concert with the current study seem to echo these ideas. Specifically, participants were asked, “What are the disadvantages of being a member of an interracial friendship?” One participant responded, “Sometime down the road in an interracial relationship, you will end up in a situation of misunderstanding just because you are a different race than your friend.” Several other participants endorsed the idea of increased potential conflict as a disadvantage of interracial friendships based on racial issues as well. For another qualitative question already mentioned, “Do you feel comfortable sharing your culture with your friend?” one participant responded “yes” and added, “Sometimes we’ll talk about how our other friends of our own race feel about our friendship, but we really don’t care what others think.” This response suggests that the potential disadvantages of interracial friendship are not only potential increased conflict as a result of racial and or ethnic differences between members, but also how dyads navigate their relationship within the context of the broader peer community. Research suggests that interracial friendships seem to be established and better maintained in a climate in which others (e.g., parents, peers, teachers, and administrators in a school setting) endorse their approval and encourage these types of relationships. Accordingly, perhaps questions specific to the obstacles interracial friendship dyads potentially face could be constructed.
For instance, “Have any of your same race friends indicated they disapprove of your interracial friendship?” or “Do teachers and administrators at your school encourage students of different races or ethnicities to be friends?” or “Have your parents indicated they disapprove of your interracial friendship?”

Statistical power was a limitation for some of the analyses conducted in the current study. Small sample size has already been suggested as an explanation for this concern. However, it is important to note that future research must employ a variety of methods to increase statistical power. As mentioned, multiple methods must be used to assess each construct (e.g., self-report; friendship tasks coded by raters). More rigorous reliability and validity studies of the assessment measures must be conducted as well. Finally, increasing the diversity of the sample is essential. Specifically, more representation from different racial groups is needed; the majority of adolescents in the current study were European American or African American. In the current sample, the majority of adolescents were at an achieved ethnic identity status. Accordingly, having representation from individuals categorized in all ethnic identity statuses would be ideal.

The current study was exploratory in nature; however findings suggest that future research is imperative to understand the potentially unique dynamics of interracial friendships. One direction to take is to conduct a more in depth examination of whether race is generally a topic that is discussed in typical interracial friendships. The qualitative results of the current study suggest it is. Also, previous research conducted (e.g, Wuff, 1995) suggests this as well. Wuff concluded that British adolescent girls who
were members of interracial friendship dyads were cognizant of racial and ethnic issues and openly addressed those issues within the context of their friendship.

In conclusion, one of the most important aims of the current study was to contribute additional knowledge to adolescent interracial friendship research. The findings in the current study suggest that the exploration of the relationship between ethnic identity development and friendship quality within the context of interracial friendship has just begun. Several existing research questions remain unanswered, while several others must be generated.
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ethnic identity measure scores in a sample of adolescents from Zimbabwe.


IRF Group Presentation

- Good afternoon! My name is Jessica Demmings, and I am a graduate student at Kent State University.
- Before I begin, I’d like to tell you a short story:

  How do two people from different backgrounds become friends? Once there was a little girl. During second grade, a new student joined her class in the middle of the year. The teacher told the class, “This is Ai Mei, she’s just moved here from China.” Ai Mei’s mother came to school with her for the first couple of weeks since both she and Ai Mei were learning the English language.

  On a chance meeting during recess, Ai Mei and the little girl began talking and found out they lived in the same neighborhood. From that point on, they joined clubs together, visited each other’s homes and remained friends from middle school, to high school, and into adulthood.

  One of the best parts about their friendship was that they got to share their culture with one another. Ai Mei taught the little girl about the Chinese New Year and Buddhism, while the little girl taught Ai Mei about Kwanzaa and gospel music.

  Ai Mei was one of the many interracial friendships the little girl had as a child and still maintains today. She also has Indian, White, Polish, and Indonesian friends. That little girl is actually me.

  Perhaps this is the reason why as a Child Developmental Psychology graduate student, I am interested in high school aged adolescents and their experiences as being a member of an interracial friendship.
- Specifically, I’m looking for high school students who have
  - a good friend (someone you spend time with in or out of school; or someone you feel close to) who is of a different race or ethnicity than yourself
  - your friend must be in high school
  - your friend must be the same gender as you (i.e. a pair of two girls, or two boys)

If you’d like to share your experiences with me, here’s what I’d like you to do:
- First, I’d like you to complete a survey
  - the survey will consist of mostly multiple choice questions and will ask you about your thoughts and feelings about friendship, your identity, and your high school environment
  - Both teens in a pair of friends must complete the survey
- Next, once you’ve completed the survey, each friend will receive a $10 Wal Mart gift card as an appreciation for giving some of your time to complete the survey
  - the survey takes about 30-45 minutes to complete (so, you’re getting $10 for less than an hour worth of work)

I’m hoping you would like to participate. However, if you under 18 years of age, you MUST have a parent or guardian’s consent to be able to complete the survey.

Ultimately, I’m looking to survey 40 pairs of friends. Once I’ve surveyed everyone, I will write a report about what I’ve learned and provide this to your school.

- If you’re willing to participate in filling out my survey, I have parental consent forms here (1 for you and 1 for your friend)
-Also, attached to the consent form is an AVAILABILITY sheet. On the availability sheet, please fill out your name, your friend’s name, and the times you are able to meet. Meeting times during the school day should be during your lunch, study hall, or student center.

-It would be best if friends could come together to complete the survey or at least complete it on the same day.

-Please bring back your signed consent form and availability sheet as soon as possible and turn them into Jessica Demmings’ mailbox in the activities office. Once I see your availability, I will contact you to confirm the time you’ll complete the survey.

-Also, I want you to know that everything you write on the survey is confidential; and what this means is that I will not share your individual answers with your friend, parents, teachers, or anyone else except my advisor at Kent State and our survey team. If your name is James Jackson, I will substitute a number for your name. So others will only know that participant #101 said …. Rather than knowing that James Jackson actually said it. Also, when I write up the report about what I’ve found, I’ll only report for example “High school students in interracial friendships report .....”

- I’d like to thank your teacher/advisors for giving me an opportunity to speak to you today.

-And also, I’d like to thank you for listening.

Thanks again.

Who would like the forms?
Appendix B
Parental Consent Form
Interracial Friendship (IRF) Study

Dear Parent:

As a graduate student in the Psychology Department at Kent State University, I am interested in studying the experiences of students whose "good" friend is of a different race or ethnicity than them, and I need your assistance. Specifically, I would like permission for your teenager to fill out a written survey. The survey will include mostly questions regarding your child’s thoughts and feelings about friendship, ethnic and racial identity, and your child’s impressions of his/her school environment. Filling out the survey will take approximately 45 minutes of your teen’s time. Assisting me is entirely up to you and no one will hold it against you if you decide not to allow your teen-ager to participate. If you do decide to allow your teen to participate, you may withdraw that permission at any time.

Your teen’s survey answers are confidential. To protect this confidentiality, you as well as your teen’s teachers, counselors, and other school personnel will not be permitted access to your teen’s individual survey response.

Once your teen has returned the signed parental consent form and availability sheet, he/she will be contacted to complete the survey on Thursday, November 8th between the hours of 2:35pm -8pm or Friday, November 9th, during their student center or study hall.

I will continue working with Kent Theodore Roosevelt High School to provide general feedback regarding the results of the survey and to encourage continuing conversation in this area.

If you want to know more about this research project, please call me at (330) 554-7012 or e-mail jdemming@kent.edu. My advisor, Dr. Angela Neal-Barnett, can be reached at (330) 672-2266 or aneal@kent.edu. Be sure to put "IRF Study" in the subject line. If you have any questions about the Kent State University rules for research, please call Dr. John L. West, Vice President and Dean, Division of Research and Graduate Studies, telephone (330) 672-2851. You will get a copy of this consent form.

Sincerely,

Jessica L. Demmings
Graduate Research Assistant

I agree to allow my child to take part in this project. I know what my child, ____________________________, will have to do and that he/she can stop at any time.

Please Print Child’s Name

Date: ___________ Parent’s Signature: _________________________________

Print Parent’s Name: ________________________________
Appendix C
Student Consent Form

Interracial Friendship (IRF) Study

Dear High School Student:

We are interested in studying the experiences of students whose “good” friend is of a different race than them. We need your assistance. Specifically, we would like you to fill out a survey for us. The survey will include questions on your thoughts and feelings about friendship, ethnic and racial identity, and your views of your school environment. Assisting us is entirely up to you and no one will hold it against you if you do not decide to do it. If you do decide to participate you may stop at anytime. Should you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire about your experiences as a member of an interracial friendship. Filling out the survey will take approximately 45 minutes of your time. Your responses will remain confidential, which means we will NOT share your answers with your teachers, parents, counselors, or friends. Your name will not be used in any publication, professional presentation, etc. You may experience minor discomfort from some of the questions concerning your experiences. If you do, please talk to Mrs. Demmings, and she will help you alleviate the discomfort.

By signing this consent agreement, you agree to take part in the Interracial Friendship (IRF) Study by completing a questionnaire about your experiences as a member of an interracial friendship. Jessica Demmings, the primary investigator, is a Kent State graduate student.

If you want to know more about this research project, please call me at (330) 554-7012 or e-mail jdemming@kent.edu. My advisor, Dr. Angela Neal-Barnett, can be reached at (330) 672-2266 or aneal@kent.edu. Be sure to put “IRF Study” in the subject line. If you have any questions about the Kent State University rules for research, please call Dr. John L. West, Vice President and Dean, Division of Research and Graduate Studies, telephone (330) 672-2851. You will get a copy of this consent form.

Sincerely,

Jessica L. Demmings
Graduate Research Assistant

I agree to take part in this project. I know what I will have to do and that I can stop at any time.

Signed: ____________________________ Date ____________________________

Print Name ____________________________
In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican-American, Hispanic, Black, Asian-American, American Indian, Anglo-American, and White. Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes two groups, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it and how much their behavior is affected by it. 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 given below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own 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 like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own.
5. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
6. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
7. I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn’t try to mix together.
8. I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life.
9. I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own.
10. I really have not spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my ethnic group.
11. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
12. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.
13. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
14. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.
15. I don’t try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups.
16. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

17. I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups.
18. I feel strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
19. I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own.
20. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.
21. My Ethnicity is:

(1) Asian, Asian American

(2) Black or African American

(3) Hispanic or Latino

(4) White, Caucasian, European, not Hispanic

(5) American Indian

(6) Mixed; parents are from two groups

(7) Other (write in): ______________________________

22. My father’s ethnicity is (use numbers above) _________________________

23. My mother’s ethnicity is (use numbers above) ________________________

*Ethnic identity exploration (Items: 1,2, 5, 13, & 16); Ethnic identity Commitment (Items: 3, 6, 11, 12, 14, 18, & 20); Other group orientation (Items: 4, 7, 9, 15, 17, & 19)
Appendix E
Calculating Kappa for Ethnic Identity Statuses

<table>
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<th>Friend A: Perception of Friendship Quality</th>
<th>Diffuse</th>
<th>Foreclosed</th>
<th>Moratorium</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total Percent</th>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>18%</td>
<td>04%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Friend B: Perception of Friendship Quality

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<th></th>
<th>Diffuse</th>
<th>Foreclosed</th>
<th>Moratorium</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculating Kappa for Ethnic Identity Statuses

Observed Agreement = 0 + 1 + 0 + 14 = 15/28 = 0.535

Chance agreement = (.07 * .18 * .75 ) + (.07 * .18 * .04 * .71) = .00945 + .00035 = .0098

Kappa = (Observed agreement – Chance agreement)/ (1-Chance agreement) = (.535 - .0098)/ (1-.0098) = .5252 / .9902 = .530 (53% agreement)
Appendix F
Friendship Qualities Scale (Bukowski, Hoza, & Boivin, 1994)

Please think about ______________________________, while answering the questions
Write Best/Good Friend’s Name on Line
below. Tell us how true or false each statement is. Please circle the number that represents your answer.

1 2 3 4 5
Not True Really True

1. My friend and I spend all our free time together.
2. My friend thinks of fun things for us to do together.
3. My friend and I go to each other’s houses after school and on weekends.
4. Sometimes my friend and I just sit around and talk about things like school, sports, and things we like.
5. I can get into fights with my friend.
6. My friend can bug me or annoy me even though I ask him/her not to.
7. My friend and I can argue a lot.
8. My friend and I disagree about many things.
9. If I forgot my lunch or needed a little money, my friend would loan it to me.
10. My friend helps me when I am having trouble with something.
11. My friend would help me if I needed it.
12. If other kids were bothering me, my friend would help me.
13. My friend would stick up for me if another kid was causing me trouble.
14. If I have a problem at school or at home, I can talk to my friend about it.
15. If there is something bothering me, I can tell my friend about it even if it is something I cannot tell to other people.
16. If I said I was sorry after I had a fight with my friend, he/she would still stay mad at me.
17. If my friend or I do something that bothers either one of us, we can make up easily.
18. If my friend and I have a fight or argument, we can say “I’m sorry” and everything will be alright.
19. If my friend had to move away, I would miss her/him.
20. I feel happy when I am with my friend.
21. I think about my friend even when my friend is not around.
22. When I do a good job at something, my friend is happy for me.
23. Sometimes my friend does things for me, or makes me feel special.

*Companionship (Items:1-4); Conflict (Items: 5-8); Help (Items: 9-13); Security (Items: 14-18); Closeness (Items:19-23)