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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Eun-Kyung Sweet entitled "The relationship of selected ecological factors to biracial adolescent's ethnic identity and self-esteem." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Child and Family Studies

Delores E. Smith, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance·

Connie Steele

Ryn M Rose

Accepted for the Council

Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

# The Relationship of Selected Ecological Factors to Biracial Adolescents' Ethnic Identity and Self-Esteem

**A Thesis**

**Presented for the**

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**Eun-Kyung Sweet**

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## ABSTRACT

The premise of this study is based on Erikson's theory of identity development. According to Erikson (1963), the process of identity development is characterized by a series of developmental crises that is affected by environmental forces such as personal and family experiences.

Therefore, the present study explored the relationship between selected ecological factors and Korean/Caucasian biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem. The selected ecological factors are parental encouragement about ethnic label choice for their children, families' observation of and participation in Korean and American tradition, biracial adolescents' ability to speak both Korean and English, living in a racially diverse community, and church attendance on a regular basis.

Participants were 36 Korean/Caucasian biracial adolescents who resided in a southern community of the United States. The self-questionnaire consisted of questions about the selected ecological factors, the participants' ethnic identity, and self-esteem.

The results of the study showed that the majority of the respondents (94.4%) identified themselves as a Korean/Caucasian biracial individual and had a positive image of themselves. Regarding the relationship between the ecological factors and biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem, uniformity occurred in participants' responses so that correlation analysis was not relevant. This may be explained by the following factors. First, there was very little variation in the responses. In such a case, it is difficult to test the correlation statistically because statistical tests require variation.

Second, the sample size of the study is small. Even when variations in the participants' answers were found, some of the variations were not strong enough to be tested due to the small number of responses.

However, it is believed that the present study inspires a possible opportunity to explore the deeper level of research in this field by recognizing the limitation.

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# Chapter I

## INTRODUCTION

The multicultural society of the United States has generated considerable social, cultural, and demographic changes. Such changes include an increase in interracial marriages and biracial children. Since the early 1960s there has been a steady increase in the number of interracial marriages and relationships, probably due to a combination of several significant social forces--including the civil rights movement, the counter-culture movement, and the women's movement--that resulted in more liberal social attitudes toward race relations, sexual mores, and the status of women (Gibbs, 1987). Statistics derived from the 1990 census suggest that between 1960 and 1990, the number of interracial married couples rose from 150,000 to more than 1.1 million in the United States, with estimates of the number of children born from these interracial marriages ranging from 500,000 to 5,000,000. It should be noted, however that even these broad estimates may not reflect the actual number of biracial children in the United States because of underreporting (Winn & Priest, 1993); the census and federal forms and school records do not classify children of mixed parentage as a separate category and some biracial children identify with a single racial or ethnic group (Brandell, 1988)

Regardless of the precise numbers of biracial children in the United States, many professionals claim that a disproportionate percentage of biracial children require professional mental health services (Gibbs, 1987). Empirical studies have found that biracial youth often experience difficulties with gender confusion, self-hatred, alcohol and other drug abuse, suicide, delinquency, alienation, and denial of self, as well as racial

self-identity (Benson, 1981; Herring, 1995). These adjustment problems may be due to the fact that the socialization and developmental processes of biracial children are more complicated than those of non-biracial children. Biracial children must integrate identifications with parents from two racial/ethnic backgrounds within the context of a predominantly white culture, deal with a society that views their normal family life as pathological because it is interracial, and simultaneously negotiate their status in the peer group (Gibbs, 1987).

On the other hand, McRoy and Freeman (1986) found that biracial youth have normal developmental challenges and that identity conflicts do not dominate their problems. Biracial youth, like all other minority youth brought up in a nurturing and empathic parental environment, can be expected to acquire stability and cohesiveness of the self, and those attributes (e.g., self-confidence, capacity for empathy, self-approval, self-resiliency) intimately associated with a healthy self-structure (Brandell, 1988).

However, research to date has several limitations. For example, previous studies in this field have focused almost exclusively on Black/White mixed children's ethnic identity; only a few studies have focused on Anglo-American/Asian intermarriages and their children. According to the 1990 census, Anglo-Americans with Asians or Asian-Americans make up the largest proportion of intermarriage statistics (Johnson, 1992); Black/White marriages constitute 22%, White/other race 74%, and Black/other race 4% of all interracial marriages. Since the previous research focused mainly on Black/White mixed children, it may not be applicable to Asian/White mixed children, because of

cultural differences and discrimination against Blacks in the United States. Further, most research has investigated referred biracial youth at risk who have behavioral and substance abuse problems; in other words, previous research used a "problem" population rather than a "normal" group. In addition, these studies are mostly case studies that lack representativeness; they seldom yield precise descriptive statements about large populations. Therefore, the results of previous research may not be applicable to other color-mixed groups who follow normal developmental stages.

The purpose of the present study is to explore the identity development of biracial adolescents whose parents are Korean and Caucasian in a community setting--in other words, a "normal group." This study will examine the relationship between ethnic identity of these biracial adolescents and the following ecological factors:

(a) parents' encouragement about ethnic label choice for their children

(b) families' observation of and participation in Korean and American tradition

(c) biracial adolescents' ability to speak both parents' first language

(d) church attendance on a regular basis

(e) living in a racially diverse community (the place of residence).

# Chapter II

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Historical and Social View on Interracial Marriage and Biracial Children

The notion of race and categorization based on race is an ambiguous concept, since it is based on the notion of objectively absolute gene pools (Spickard, 1992). Currently up to seventy percent of African-Americans are multiracial, as are virtually all Latinos and Filipinos and the majority of American Indians and Native Hawaiians (Simson & Yinger, 1985). A significant proportion of persons who identify themselves as white also have multicultural origins (Root, 1992). Despite the fact that there is no such thing as a pure race, even in the most homogeneous-appearing groups, racial categorization does exist in the United States (U.S.), and is seen as a strategy to preserve the purity of the White race, along with its social, economic, political power and domination in the country (Pinderhughes, 1995). These very clear racial boundaries are seriously threatened by the presence of biracial persons (Spickard, 1992).

To maintain these boundaries, and thus to control the threat posed by racial mixing and the presence of biracial persons, rigid, irrational policies, attitudes, and practices have been employed. One such practice is the doctrine of hypodescent, which holds that individuals whose lineage is both White and non-White are to be categorized within the non-White group (Pinderhughes, 1995). For example, a child with one Native American parent is considered by the U.S. government to be Native American (Wardle, 1991). Legal distinctions that identify the biracial child with the race of his or her minority

parent still exist; biracial identity is ignored because the White community would not accept these children as White (Wardle, 1991).

However, it should be noted that the irrationality in the exercise of this doctrine of hypodescent is also manifest in the fact that it is more rigidly applied to White/non-White mixtures than to mixtures of different non-White groups. The intermixing of persons of color with other persons of color--such as American Indians, Latinos and Blacks--does not conventionally threaten the border between White and non-White (Root, 1992).

Another fear associated with racial mixing is thought to be related to the social status of minorities. Africans, who are ancestors of Blacks in the United States were brought to the United States as slaves. Other minorities such as Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic, Hawaiian, and Native American were treated as third class. Therefore, interracial relationships were unacceptable and interracial children have been viewed as products of negative and abnormal relationships. Lawson (1992) has quoted Linda Brent, who wrote in 1861 about interracial relationships and biracial offspring at that time: "Women of ten marry a man knowing that he is the father of many...slaves. They do not trouble themselves about it. They regard such children as property, as marketable...." (p.9).

Interracial marriage was still illegal in 30 states just after World War II and in 16 states until the Supreme Court struck down antimiscegenation (against race mixing) laws (Richard Perry Loving v. Virginia, 1967). The Supreme Court decision concerning interracial marriage (1967) was made through the appeal of Richard Perry Loving. Richard and Mildred Loving were charged with the crime of being married in 1958; he was White and she was Black.

Since the school desegregation decision, the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, and the Supreme Court decision outlawing antimiscegenation laws, attitudes toward parents and their biracial children have slowly changed (Baptiste, 1985). The public's acceptance of these families is shifting; more people are taking a neutral stance toward them, and more communities--both White and Black--are becoming more receptive toward interracial families (Baptiste, 1985). Also parents are becoming more assertive about the dual heritage of their children: "The parents are serving as strong role models and are believing the cultural heritage they bring as being an integral part of their child's self-esteem" (Baptiste, 1985). Biracial children are increasingly accepted and supported by the extended family as well (Wardle, 1989).

Baptiste (1985) found that parents of interracial children reflect the idea that one parent must give up his or her genetic and cultural influence on the children: such parents believe they have a right and moral duty to challenge society's narrow definition of the racial identity of their children, and they see this struggle as similar to the historical challenge of societal acceptance of slavery, women's inferior status, and discrimination against minorities. These parents and many extended family members believe that an inclusive definition of identity will help their children develop a stronger, more cosmopolitan, and richer sense of self-worth.

**B. Theoretical Framework**

Erikson (1963), perhaps the most well-known scholar in the field of identity development, contended that identity development is a life-long process, beginning at

birth and ending at the time of death. The process of identity development is characterized by a series of developmental crises that is affected by environmental forces such as personal and family experiences. Erikson (1963) postulated eight stages in the development of self:

(a) trust versus mistrust

(b) autonomy versus shame and doubt

(c) initiative versus guilt

(d) industry versus inferiority

(e) identity versus role diffusion

(f) intimacy versus isolation

(g) generativity versus stagnation

(h) ego integrity versus despair.

During each stage there is a specific task to be accomplished, and the satisfactory completion of that task is necessary before the next stage can be attempted. Since the focus of this research is the child, this chapter review is focused on childhood and adolescence prior to adulthood.

Stage 1: Trust vs. Mistrust

The identity process begins at birth when the infant develops a trust for its parents, or those who take care of its basic needs. Therefore, the major developmental crisis at this stage (infancy: birth to eighteen months) is between becoming a trusting or a mistrusting person The development of trust includes becoming trustful of others and developing a feeling of one's own trustworthiness (Muuss, 1988). When infants are fed and cared for

regularly, they experience life in a predictable and secure world; thus the infant develops trust toward others. In addition, well cared for infants feel loved and have secure feelings about themselves. The trusting infant has developed the first requisite for later developing confidence, optimism, and finally a feeling of security (Muuss, 1988). Later in the life cycle, the capacity to experience faith is a result of positive experiences during this early stage. However, lack of trust in infancy may contribute to identity confusion in adolescence.

Implication. At this stage, it seems that there is no difference between the biracial and monoracial infant in terms of identity development. However, the fact that troubled biracial teens are often from dysfunctional families indicates that those biracial teens may not have developed trust during infancy.

Stage 2: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt

This stage falls approximately between the ages of eighteen months and three years. During this stage the child begins to experience an autonomy of free choice. Acquiring language skills with developing more advanced motor ability makes it possible for a child to be autonomous. The child may express stubborn refusal, temper tantrums, and the "yes-no" syndrome to show his/her autonomy. Damon (1983) speculated that toddlers love to say "no!" to parental suggestions because this is a way of differentiating themselves from the parent. Rejecting the parents' directives may be an early form of autonomy.

More advanced mobility such as walking or running is significant in the development of the infants' self-awareness because it represents separation from parents. In addition,

mobility broadens the child's horizons and makes it possible to have more control over his/her environment. An important task is the mastery of self-control.

Damon and Hart (1982) cited evidence that two-year-olds show pride and shame, as indicated (respectively) by strutting and by embarrassed blushing. If a child is scolded for behavior resulting from his/her sense of autonomy, the child is capable of feelings of shame and embarrassment.

The positive attributes that can be gained during this stage are pride, control, self-assurance, autonomy, self-certainty, and the will to be oneself. The negative attributes are shame, self-doubt, dependency, self-consciousness, and meek compliance. The identity crisis of adolescence revives and grows out of an unresolved autonomy issue (Muuss, 1988).

Implication. Autonomy is one of the essential ingredients for the development of identity. If a child is not encouraged to practice his/her autonomy, the child may become a dependent person who has feelings of self-doubt and shame. Likewise, biracial children at this stage need support and encouragement for constructive practice of autonomy in order to develop a healthy sense of identity.

Stage 3: Initiative vs. Guilt

The child from about three and one-half to six years of age normally shows a great deal of exuberance, a feeling of power, curiosity, a high level of activity, and surplus energy (Muuss, 1988). The child takes things apart to see what is inside, not because of destructive tendencies but out of curiosity In addition, children explore individual differences, including skin color, hair texture, and eye shape (Derman-Sparks, 1989), and

this exploration does involve curiosity about the sex organs. However, if this curiosity is interpreted as destructiveness, the child is made to feel guilty, and as a result initiative may wane (Muuss, 1988).

This is the stage when language develops rapidly. A child expresses his/her emerging intellectual initiative by endless questions of "what" and "why." These questions are basically learning tools since new words, concepts, and ideas are acquired in this fashion.

Implication. For all children in a multiracial society, preschool and early elementary years signal the first significant experience in noticing racial differences. Even though children explore individual differences, including skin color, hair texture and eye shape, minority children do not fully understand how these features make them a member of the minority group (Wardle, 1992). Biracial children at this stage also do not comprehend adequately their racial identity; their identity is primarily based on feelings of self-worth that they develop and learn in the family (Poston, 1990).

Educators and parents of biracial children have recognized that it is about this stage that children begin to pick up society's norms and biases (Derman-Sparks, 1989). As noted earlier, children observe their environment, show curiosity about it, ask lots of questions "why" and "what," and mimic what they learn from the environment. Thus, children may exhibit prejudicial behavior toward others. Therefore, accurate information about racial differences, societal diversity, and labels for a biracial children is needed by children at this stage (Daren, 1991). In addition, children must be encouraged to ask

questions, experiment with social interactions, develop concepts and labels, and be exposed to a variety of other children and families.

Stage 4: Industry vs. Inferiority

This stages falls between the ages of six and eleven. The task at this stage is the development of a sense of industry versus the emergence of feelings of inferiority. In all known cultural groups, children receive some kind of formal training during this period; therefore, this period is described as the apprenticeship of life. Children learn and master the more basic skills needed in society. An important aspect of industry is the "positive identification with those who know things and know how to do things" (Erikson, 1963). If the sense of industry is established successfully, the child will need and want accomplishments and strive for completion of tasks and for recognition for work well done (Muuss, 1988). If the child fails in the task to acquire a feeling of success and a desire for recognition for work well done, there will be a lack of industriousness and a feeling of uselessness Such children may not develop the feeling of enjoyment and pride for good work.

The sense of identity is developed dramatically at this stage. Children become able to grasp the idea of self in psychological terms (Baumeister, 1986). At this time some concept of an inner self develops. There is some evidence about the acquisition of the inner self in Rosenberg's (1979) work. Rosenberg (1979) questioned a large sample of children, ranging in age between eight and eleven years, about their beliefs regarding the self. He was surprised at the extent to which children apparently believe their parents know them better than they (the children) know themselves. Specifically, children

indicated that in the event of some disagreement between themselves and a parent about some trait of the child, the parent would probably be right. Most striking was what happened when Rosenberg asked his most extreme question, "Who knows best what kind of person you really are, deep down inside?" (p. 247). Even here, over half the children eight to eleven said the mother or father knew better than themselves. The implication is that children learn about their inner selves from the parents. However, children have not yet mastered the concept of an inner self, with its hidden contents that supposedly cause certain behaviors to occur. They have not learned how to talk about their feelings and actions in terms of the inner self, so they defer to the adults' superior knowledge while they learn.

Implication. Logically extended, it can be assumed that the parents' opinions and/or attitudes about being biracial can have a great impact on biracial children's self-concept because children at this stage still depend on their parents in many ways.

On the other hand, school life plays an important role in biracial children's lives from this period. Sense of industry which Erikson (1963) described as the developmental task at this stage would be established through academic performance. Therefore, it can be postulated that biracial children who are successful academically may have a high chance to develop a positive identity later on. In addition to academic performance, relationships with peers and teachers become an important part of biracial children's identity development. Johnson (1992) assumed that biracial children tend to be more successful at school because of their unique and attractive physical appearance, presumably allowing them to get more attention from teachers. However, there is some research that describes

biracial youth as having academic and behavioral problems. There are also contradictory findings about biracial children's peer relationships. Sebring (1985) discovered that biracial children are more popular and tend to have more freedom to access children of other races than monoracial children, but it is also reported that biracial children, especially with Black/White parents, are rejected by members of both races (Lyles, Yancey, Grace, & Carter, 1985) and do not have a strong peer social network (Gordon, 1964).

Kich (1992) declared that biracial children struggle for acceptance from others at this stage. In reaching out of the parental and extended family orbit, children become more aware of how others see them and their families. Biracial children are still confused and do not understand clearly about themselves. They want to gain acceptance and a sense of belonging and security. The struggle for acceptance often occurs in the context of school or community settings. For all children, having friends is the utmost social achievement and an indication of social competence. Children can assimilate and adapt to their environment, master their aggressive impulses, and learn to be better role takers and more socially effective (Hartup,1978). Therefore, parental guidance for school life and social activity, cooperation between family and community are important guidelines for biracial children's healthy identity development at this stage.

Stage 5: Identity vs. Identity Confusion

Identity development comes to a peak during adolescence. Erikson (1950) referred to this stage as the period in which the individual must establish a sense of personal identity

and avoid the dangers of role diffusion and identity confusion. Identity achievement implies that the individuals assess their strengths and weaknesses and determine how they want to deal with them. They must answer for themselves: where they came from, who they are, and what they want to become.

Identity development is a combination of several processes including physical, cognitive, and social. From approximately the age of nine onward, children face some massive changes that consequently lead to changes in or threats to their self-concept (Hattie, 1992). Pubescence, according to Erikson, is characterized by the rapidity of body growth, genital maturity, and sexual awareness. Because these changes are qualitatively quite different from those experienced during childhood, adolescents might experience fear or stress during this time. At this stage, there is also a sharp increase in the development of brain cells, particularly in the frontal lobes, that lead to the development of more planning, intentional and abstract behavior (Luria, 1973). Adolescents are not only confronted with an internal "physiological revolution" that interferes with the establishment of a reliable body image but also with a "psychological crisis" that revolves around the issue of identity formation (Muuss, 1988). Thus, adolescents start searching for a personal ideology or a philosophy of life that will provide a frame of reference for evaluating events. Such a perspective aids in making choices and guides behavior. At this point, religion and morality can be an effective contextual paradigm for identity because they provide firm, presumably trustworthy answers to life's problems and decisions (Baumeister, 1986). Therefore, it can be assumed that church attendance on a regular basis may be related to adolescents' identity development.

Adolescence is an especially crucial period in the development of peer relations. At this age adolescents are spending growing amounts of time with friends (as compared to time with adults), their friendships are becoming deeper and more intimate, and they are increasingly turning to friends for companionship and support (Berndt & Perry, 1986). Related to peer relations, falling in love is a common occurrence at this age. Erikson (1963) viewed falling in love as an attempt to project and test one's own diffused and still undifferentiated ego through the eyes of the beloved person. However, a loving relationship at this stage is not a means of satisfying sexual needs as it will be at a later age. The various love affairs through which adolescents pass contribute to the development of an identity; the feedback received in the love relationship aids the individuals in defining and revising their own self-definition and encourages them to clarify and to reflect on their own self-concept and their own definition of their ego (Muuss,1988).

Of great concern for many adolescents is the issue of developing a vocational identity. The problem--widely identified through empirical investigations--is that adolescents at this stage hold highly glamorized, idealized, and sometimes unrealistic conceptions of the vocational roles they dream about (Muuss, 1988). On the other hand, there is a report that biracial adolescents who recognized racial prejudice and barriers to upward mobility expressed anti-achievement values, failed their courses at school deliberately, and engaged in other self-defeating behaviors (Gibbs, 1987)

All of the facts described above, lead to what Erikson (1950) called the crisis of identity, which adolescents solve by making choices regarding their future in a number of

life domains. The central task of adolescence is to form a stable identity, that he described as "a sense of personal sameness and historical continuity" (Erikson, 1963, p. 153). A positive outcome of the identity crisis depends on the adolescent's willingness to accept his/her own past and establish continuity with previous experiences (Muuss, 1988). For the adolescent to develop a healthy identity, a series of developmental explorations must be undertaken. Therefore, the young person must face the crisis of negotiating a search for personal identity, establishing autonomy from parents, making a choice of a sexual preference, and committing to a career (Erikson, 1959). Identity is not readily given to the individual by society, nor does it appear as a maturational phenomenon

when the time has come (Muuss, 1988). Identity must be acquired through sustained individual effort.

Implication. Clearly adolescence is a critical time for a healthy biracial identity development. Biracial individuals must continue to define who they are, how they feel about themselves, how society views them, which values and beliefs they should follow, what type of spouse they need to choose, and what career they should pursue. Biracial adolescents, in additional to the normal identity crisis, have the added stress of figuring out their ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is an important component of the self-concept that derives from his or her knowledge of membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Phinney, 1992).

Several studies have revealed that biracial adolescents believe that society forced or pushed them to make a specific racial choice in order to participate in or belong to a peer, family, and/or social group (Hall, 1980; Poussaint, 1984). Hall (1980) noted that biracial adolescents have two possible choices. One is to choose a multicultural existence, emphasizing the racial heritage of both parents; the other is to choose one parent's culture or racial heritage as dominant over the other. However, choosing just one dominant ethnic identity can result in feelings of guilt and disloyalty to the other parent. Most experts in this field recommend that biracial adolescents integrate their diverse ethnic heritage (Poussaint, 1984).

Arce (1981) pointed out that "for minority group members, identification with others who share their origins and traditions is critical in developing both a positive personal identity and feelings of self-esteem and efficacy, rather than self-blame and powerlessness" (p.182). Both theory and previous research suggest a relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. Phinney (1992) who researched the ethnic identity of diverse groups found correlations between ethnic identity and self-esteem; especially, for the minorities, ethnic identity showed a positive, statistically significant correlation with self-esteem among high school students ($r = .31$, $p < .001$). These findings suggest that ethnic identity may play a particularly important role in the self-concept of minority youth.

### C. Socioemotional Adjustment of Biracial Youth

Considerable attention has been focused on providing counseling services to ethnic minority youth; however, most biracial youth have received very little attention. Wardle

(1987) observed that little research interest has been shown in this population, and Poussaint (1984) suggested that the problem is compounded by the resistance of many interracial families to being studied.

Evidence from studies of biracial adolescents in community settings has shown that this group faces a particularly difficult task in developing positive identities because a biracial and bicultural background inevitably results in a confused racial or ethnic identity, low self-esteem, divided family loyalties, and psychological or behavioral problems (Gordon, 1964; Lardner, 1977). For example, Benson's (1981) ethnographic study of mixed-race families in London found that nearly all of the White/Black biracial children and adolescents (N=27, ages 3-16) rejected their Black identity verbally, behaviorally, or through social identification with White peers. The reason these biracial children denied their Black identity is due to discrimination against Black people in England. In folk philosophy, those of mixed race could not be fully accepted by Whites because they had "colored blood," but would resent being classified with Blacks because of their "White blood" (Benson, 1981).

Other studies of mixed children and adolescents in clinical settings provide a similar perspective. In Teicher's (1968) study of clinic-referred biracial children, he noted problems of identification with the minority parent, sexual-identity conflicts, and problems of adjustment to a predominantly white environment. His observations are supported by a more recent study by Gibbs (1987) who did a case study of 12 biracial adolescents and their parents in a treatment center in the San Francisco Bay area. According to Gibbs (1987) the biracial adolescents in treatment were in conflict about

their dual racial and sociocultural heritage, their social marginality, their sexuality and choice of sexual partners, their autonomy and dependency on their parents, and their educational and career aspiration.

Gibbs explained that racial identity is the core conflict for biracial adolescents. She contended that the basic question in this area is "Who am I?," but in most cases, the adolescents failed to integrate fully both racial heritages into a cohesive sense of racial identity. Many of these adolescents in the study expressed ambivalent feelings toward the racial backgrounds of both parents. The more frequent tendency was to overidentify with the parent who is perceived as the most similar in terms of physical features, particularly skin color. This overidentification may take the form of adopting attitudes, behavior, and styles of dress associated with the parent who is perceived as the most similar. Often, either choice causes conflict within the family system.

The conflict of social marginality becomes especially clear as biracial children enter adolescence and begin to participate in social activities. Biracial children who may have had a closely knit peer group and satisfying social relationships in elementary school often experience social problems upon entering junior high or high school. Typically, girls seem to experience more anxiety about social acceptance (Gibbs, 1987). In Gibbs' study, biracial teen-age girls reported that they were often excluded from the high-status social cliques and from sororities. Gibbs speculated that as these girls enter high school, their fears of social rejection increase as they realize that the White boys who are often perceived as the most attractive and desirable are not usually interested in dating them because of the powerful proscriptions against interracial dating in most communities.

Thus, the earlier security of childhood social life is progressively threatened until, by mid-adolescence, the children realize the need to redefine their social status and renegotiate their social relationships (Gibbs, 1987).

Therefore, biracial adolescents, because of their fear of social rejection, may resort to social withdrawal as "loners" or may over-conform to group norms (Overmier, 1990). Further, Overmier maintained that in their attempt to be accepted by a group, biracial adolescents are especially vulnerable to peer pressure in the areas of drugs and delinquent behavior. Overmier warned that it would be important to examine the current social network of these adolescents and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships to determine whether or not the adolescent is playing an unhealthy role or being a scapegoat in order to be accepted by a group.

Another area that appears to be problematic for biracial adolescents is gender identity. Gibbs (1987) noted that the general identity confusion of biracial adolescents seems to extend to ambiguities about gender identity and sexual orientation. Gibbs who interviewed 12 biracial adolescents found that females in her study exhibited very masculine mannerisms in speech, dress, and behavior long beyond the normal "tomboy" stage. Similarly, the males in the study exhibited quite effeminate qualities and engaged in activities such as shopping with their mothers and gossiping with female friends.

Sexual orientation is an issue that is possibly a result of the child's failure to make appropriate sex-role identifications during the Oedipal phase of development (Gibbs, 1987). Gibbs' finding is supported by others who contend that sexual orientation seemed to be more conflictual in cases where the adolescent felt very negative toward the parent

of the same sex who was also the minority parent: for example, boys with Black fathers and girls with Black mothers (Teicher, 1968).

Choice of sexual partners is a highly charged issue for these teens. As a consequence of their social marginality, many biracial adolescents perceive their dating options to be limited to other minority adolescents (Gibbs, 1987). Biracial females tend to experience greater anxiety in this area, because they feel unable to take the initiative in this area while the boys perceive that they have a wider selection of girls from a variety of racial backgrounds.

Another common conflict biracial adolescents face is autonomy. These teenagers seem particularly vulnerable to external assaults on their self-esteem, so their parents often have a tendency to be overprotective and to try to shelter their teenagers from the pain and prejudice they anticipate for them. The teenagers respond either by becoming overly dependent on their parents and using home as a haven of refuge and security against the mixed signals of society, or by rebelling against parental protection and seeking premature freedom from all parental control (Gibbs, 1987).

The conflict of aspirations stems from ambivalence about achievement and upward mobility. The majority of biracial adolescents is well aware of racial prejudices and barriers to mobility. Therefore, they shape their current academic behavior and future aspirations accordingly. For those teens who identify with the White middle-class culture, educational achievement may be consistent with their peers, including an emphasis on academic competition and aspirations for a college education. However, the more typical pattern is non-achievement, negative attitudes toward school, and unclear or

unrealistic career aspiration in the clinical setting. In several cases, teens who have very poor records in school announce plans to attend highly competitive colleges and do not seem to see the connection between their current behavior and future options. In still other cases, mostly male, they express cynicism about college education and the possibility of ever obtaining a high status job in the future, even if their fathers have such positions (Gibbs, 1987).

These conflicts are expressed in various ways in school and community settings. In school settings, the primary problems include academic underachievement or failure, behavior problems in class, truancy, substance abuse, peer conflicts, withdrawn and depressed behavior, and social isolation. Problems in community settings include delinquency, sexual inappropriateness and promiscuity, and self-destructive behaviors, including suicidal attempts.

However, other empirical studies of biracial youth indicate that many are well-adjusted and do not conform to the stereotype of troubled youths (Johnson & Nagoshi, 1986). Johnson (1992) found that offspring of cross-group marriages in Hawaii showed no signs of psychological disturbances and were not alienated or considered marginal persons; they performed significantly better than offspring of within-group marriages on tests of cognitive ability and were not more at risk for problem drinking.

Further, limited research suggests that biracial college students are more independent and assertive than the average students (Poussaint, 1984). Poussaint who studied adult children of interracial families in Boston, observed that they seemed to be a "rather successful group in this society." Most of his subjects consisted of undergraduates

attending Harvard, which is considered one of the most competitive schools in the United States. He also insisted that there is reason to suspect that it is an advantage, and not a disadvantage, to come from an interracial background. For example, a number of his respondents observed that having two parents from different racial groups made them more tolerant and less judgmental of others.

Winn and Priest (1993) studied the ethnic identity formation and self-image of 37 biracial children from 15 families. They discovered that a significant number of respondents, 32% (n=11), expressed a desire to establish family rituals and celebrations that recognized the uniqueness of their family. Specifically, the children aspired to learn about the cultures of both parents. The authors also reported that nine of the 11 adolescents of African-American/White parents indicated that they felt they had positive racial self-concepts and associated with friends of various ethnic groups.

As it is discussed above, there are contradictory findings in studies examining identity of self-esteem of biracial persons. It can be said that the difference between problematic biracial adolescents and normal biracial group may be based on the ecological factors that are relevant to the development of identity in these adolescents. Johnson and Nagoshi (1986) suggested that biracial children who grow up in a nurturing family and in a community where biculturalism is met with acceptance, will experience no greater problems than monocultural children.

**D. Ecological Factors**

Biracial identity is a dynamic, changing phenomenon shaped not only by parents' racial identity and their attitudes about it, but by the child's interaction with a variety of

persons in the systems with which he or she must interact, including peers, extended family, and his or her community (Kich, 1992). Through these interactions, experiences of recognition, acceptance, and the sense of belonging occur that can facilitate healthy biracial self-acceptance.

McRoy and Zurcher (1983) identified six environmental factors that facilitate the development of positive ethnic identity in biracial children: (a) parents' acknowledgement and discussion of their racial heritage with their children, (b) parents' flexibility in promoting the development of a positive ethnic identity, (c) opportunities for children's relationships with racially diverse peers by living in a racially integrated neighborhood and attending ethnically diverse schools, (d) frequency of social interactions in racially integrated social organizations and institutions, (e) formulation of positive nonstereotypic attitudes toward others, and (f) family's identification of itself as an interracial unit.

Hall (1980), who studied the ethnic identity of Black-Japanese in the Los Angeles area, found several factors that were important in making choices concerning ethnic identity. The most salient factors were status, social support, and personal attributes. Status factors are the group status of the parents' ethnic background, demographics of home neighborhood (i.e., the ethnicity of neighbors and parental peers), and ethnicity and influence of peer group. Social support factors include parental style and influence, parental and familial acceptance, and acceptance and participation in cultures of various groups. The personal factor category includes physical appearance, age, knowledge of

languages other than English (if any), minority parents' cultural knowledge, political involvement, and individual differences.

From the above, it is clear that the research literature generally accepts the following factors as key components in the identity development of biracial individuals: (a) self-esteem, (b) family interactions, (c) family social and economic factors, (d) psychological development and state of maturity (age of individual), and (e) geographic location of the individual (Parks, 1994). Although these factors are key components for any individual's identity development, it is speculated that these five factors may be more crucial in the identity development of biracial adolescents due to the uniqueness of the interracial families from the distinct dual racial and cultural home environment. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between these selected ecological factors and the ethnic identity and self-esteem of Korean/Caucasian biracial adolescents. The selected ecological factors for this research were parents' encouragement about ethnicity choice, the place of residence, church attendance, families' and biracial individuals' knowledge and participation in both parents' cultures including language.

Parents' Encouragement about Ethnicity

Parents play a crucial role in the lives of biracial children by providing their children with the structures and the words that help them make sense of their experiences as they strive to develop their identity. Providing open communication about race and an interracial label validates and fosters the child's rudimentary interracial self-concept (Jacobs, 1977). Through support, communication, and comfortableness in discussing feelings and racial/cultural facts and experiences, parents of biracial children plant an

early seed for subsequent identity resolutions (Kich, 1992). The valued communication about racial and ethnic experiences by parents can provide an understanding of the social devaluation of difference as well. In valuing each of the child's racial and ethnic heritages, parents structure emotional safety and confidence through a positive interracial label and through modeling an ability to discuss racial and ethnic differences openly. For many biracial people, although actual discussion may be limited, the family's openness to cultural and interracial differences (foods, languages, extended family, multiethnic friends, and so on) conveys a similar message of acceptance and positive valuation of being biracial (Kich, 1992).

In their work with biracial adolescents in special treatment, Gibbs and Moskowitz-Sweet (1991) observed that the attainment of a positive and cohesive sense of identity was affected considerably by the parents' resolution of their own differences and their acceptance of each other. It is important to emphasize that the parents of biracial people were most likely under immense strain, struggling to deal with the personal and social aspects of their interracial marriage, usually without community acceptance. In wanting differences to wash away, the parents attempted to convert their own uniqueness into the American ideals and stereotypes of success and happiness. Inadvertently, some parents also tried protectively to push away their children's uniqueness and the struggles that would come from it. Gibbs and Moskowitz-Sweet (1991) contended that teenagers who are very confused about their racial/ethnic identity may have received ambivalent messages from close family members. Without parental structuring, biracial adolescents' experiences of dissonance are intensified.

Wilson (1987), who conducted a study of 51 Black/White mixed race children in England during the late 1970s, also found similar results. She said that the children with the most positive and secure identities had mothers who were open and secure about their own racial identity (whether Black or White), who encouraged their children to think of themselves as Black and mixed race and represented racism realistically to their children as a force that would affect them personally. On the other hand, children who were more prone to identity conflict tended to have mothers who were in conflict about their own identity, who saw the children as "colored" or "almost White" and underplayed racism as a factor in the children's lives.

Extended families such as grandparents, uncles, and aunts can function as encouragers if parents are not available. Through providing support, comfort, and an opportunity to process feelings and experiences, and through an emphasis on cultural practices from both groups, a foundation is laid for subsequent identity resolution (Kich, 1992).

Diversity of Neighborhood

The biracial child's struggle for acceptance often occurs in the context of school or community settings. In reaching out of the parental and extended family orbit, children become more aware of how others see them and their families. Biracial adolescents are affected by the racial attitudes and sociocultural milieu of the community in which they live (Gibbs & Moskowitz-Sweet, 1991). If the environment supports a child's dual identity, encourages autonomy, acknowledges individuality, and celebrates differences,

the biracial individual would have stable ethnic identity and positive self-esteem. This may be the reason professionals advocate interracial neighborhoods, schools, and churches for these families (Gibbs, 1987; Baptiste, 1985).

Wilson (1987) suggested that the demographic location of the biracial child played an important part in the child's self-identity. Children who lived in racially and culturally diverse environments seemed to develop a more positive and secure self-identity than those children who lived in a segregated environment (one race predominates). Children living in multiracial environments encountered other mixed-race children and adults and, therefore, were unlikely to develop negative stereotypes about other races of people. The mixed-race children had a built-in support group of other mixed-race individuals. On the other hand, mixed-race children living in predominantly White, Black, or other race areas had only their parents for support.

Church Attendance

Jeong and Schumm (1990) studied family satisfaction in Korean/American marriages and found that church attendance plays an important role for Korean/American interracial families. The investigators indicated that church attendance was positively associated with Korean/American mixed-family satisfaction. The results of the research may be related to the following factors: (a) almost all Korean churches in U.S. have activities such as English services for American spouses who marry Koreans, and for younger generations who are more comfortable with speaking English; (b) these churches also provide Korean cultural activities such as history, language, costume, and food; (c) they

provide for individuals with counseling for personal and family problems, job training, and information for new immigrants.

From the foregoing, it can be assumed that if biracial adolescents attend a Korean church on a regular basis, they will have a better chance to develop healthy identities and positive self-esteem because of the following factors: (a) the biracial adolescents may understand the Korean mother's culture and accept it as part of themselves; (b) they will be able to develop relationships with other biracial friends and their families who can understand being biracial so that the biracial individuals can feel the sense of belonging and acceptance; (c) they will be encouraged to be proud of their bicultural heritage in a diverse society. In addition, considering the fact that religion and morality can be an effective contextual paradigm for identity because they provide firm, presumably trustworthy answers to life's problems and decision (Baumeister, 1986), regular church attendance must affect biracial adolescent's self-esteem as well as identity.

Miller and Miller (1990) who examined the socialization of African-American and Black/White biracial adolescents suggested that biracial adolescents must be able to cope with their minority status in the community. To deal with the minority status matter, they must do these things:

(a) learn how to handle racism without feeling "personally stigmatized, which facilitates a "protected sense of personal worth and a unified identity" enabling active coping with "the racially defined incidents that the child inevitably confronts" (Miller & Miller, 1990, p. 172);

(b) belong to organizations such as churches and social clubs that support identity development and offer alternative role models to mainstream culture, and belong to other organizations that promote personal empowerment through activities that aim to alter racism;

(c) learn to "successfully negotiate mainstream" systems while also "having the pride and skills necessary to attempt to fight structural racism" (Miller & Miller, 1990, p.172). It is critical that biracial children be able to function in the mainstream while at the same time not colluding in the perpetuation of racism;

(d) "being able to view the status of people of color as a function of systems that support and maintain discrimination as opposed to viewing these as flaws and failures of minority people" (Wilson, 1987).

Cultural Knowledge, Participation and Language

Sotomayor (1977) emphasized that personality and identity are largely the product of numerous and complex influences derived from culture: the sense of belonging . . . becomes blurred if one's language, cultural knowledge and ethnic experiences are not reflected and supported . . . (p. 196). This statement shows the importance of knowledge and participation in cultural activities to identity development.

The notion that language serves a fundamental function in the creation of identity is not new. Dilthey (1976) believed identity to be an essentially linguistic product. He maintained that knowledge of oneself comes from meaningful experiences which, spread across time, strengthen the sense of identity by providing it with continuity and stability. Because these meaningful experiences occur within the context of social relationships,

and these relationships are conducted via language, it follows that "language is an important ingredient of identity development" (Baumeister, 1986, p.176).

Further, Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) contended that knowledge of oneself and knowledge of one's world are determined by language: "a child's conscience becomes awakened and broadened as s/he progresses in language learning, which little by little ushers him/her as an individual into society." More than a mere method of communication, then, language is a fundamental symbol of one's identification with and belonging to a particular ethnic or social group (Edwards, 1985; Mendelberg, 1984).

One of the differences between the Black/White mixed family and the Korean/Anglo-American is language. Previous research using Black/White mixed-family samples did not need to consider language as a factor because both parents had a common language, English. However, in the case of Korean/Caucasian mixed families, language has an important part because such families may have communication difficulties that could cause problems in family life. Thus, the ability to speak and comprehend Korean can be an indication of bicultural identity for Korean/Anglo-American biracial adolescents. Therefore, it can be assumed that biracial Korean children who speak the Korean language would tend to have a more positive biracial identity than the one who speaks only English.

**E. Development of Hypotheses**

Establishing a secure identity is a very difficult task, but identity development in biracial individuals has been considered more difficult because of the physical differences and society's prejudice toward minority groups. Even though biracial groups may have

more difficulty in developing a positive identity, little research interest has been shown with this population. Moreover, previous investigation in the field has focused almost exclusively on Black/White mixed youths' ethnic identity. According to the recent census, intermarriages of Anglo-Americans with Asians or Asian-Americans make up the largest proportion of those statistics (Johnson, 1992). Thus, the results from Black/White mixed adolescents may not be applicable for Asian/White adolescents due to cultural differences and discrimination against Blacks in the U.S. Further, much of the research depends on the case-study methodology of which results are hard to be generalized to other populations because case studies generally use small samples and non-random populations. In addition, these studies have used clinical samples; in other words, problem populations have been used for the research of biracial identity development rather than normal groups of biracial adolescents. Troubled teens in treatment centers may have different views and attitudes from adolescents in normal communities. Thus, the results from clinical samples may not be applicable in explaining the identity development of normal biracial adolescents. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to explore the identity development of biracial adolescents whose parents are Korean and Anglo-American through a quantitative study in a community setting.

Specific objectives were:

1. To determine if there is a relationship between biracial adolescents' ethnic identity choice and parents' encouragement about ethnic label choice.
2. To explore if living in a racially diverse community affects biracial adolescents' ethnic identity.

3. To examine if families' observation of and participation in Korean and American cultural events is related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity.
4. To explore if attending a racially diverse church on a regular basis has an influence on biracial adolescents' ethnic identity.
5. To explore if attending a racially diverse church on a regular basis has an influence on biracial adolescents' self-esteem.
6. To determine if Korean/English bilingualism is related to Korean/Caucasian mixed adolescents' ethnic identity.

The hypotheses of this study were:

1. Parents' encouragement about ethnic label choice is related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity choice.
2. Diversity of neighborhood is related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity.
3. Families' observation of cultural events is related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity.
4. Church attendance is related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity.
5. Church attendance is related to biracial adolescents' self-esteem.
6. Bilingualism is related to adolescents' biracial ethnic identity.

## Chapter III

## METHODOLOGY

### A. Sample and Study Site

The sample for this study was drawn from biracial adolescent residents in a southern community of the United States. Participation was completely voluntary with criteria for inclusion being parents' race, parental consent, and the age of the participants. No other special classes applied.

Participants were 36 adolescents of Korean mothers and Caucasian fathers. Of the thirty-six adolescents, seventeen (47.2%) were male and nineteen (52.8%) were female. The ages of the participants ranged between 13 to 19 years with a mean of 16.1 years and a standard deviation of 1.69.

Although the population of the particular county is only 100,498 (US census, 1990), it is a multi-cultural area due to the fact that it is the site of a large US Army base. Diversity in the general population exists in the area and the ratio of interracial couples is high. However, it is impossible to acquire the official rate of interracial couples in the area because the US census does not categorize race difference between couples by county (US census reports only nation-wide, interracial couple ratio). The presence of interracial couples in public in the target county is noticeable.

### B. Sampling Procedure

Participants were recruited through local churches and through referral of the churches' members (snowballing techniques). First, the three Korean churches in the area having more than 50 Korean membership were selected to locate the sample.

The principal investigator visited each target church on three Sundays and gave information about the research to the congregation after the services. A letter explaining the study and the consent form seeking parental permission (Appendix A) were given out to parents who expressed an interest in the study. The letter and the parental consent form were also given to Korean/Caucasian mixed biracial adolescents whose parents were not present at the meetings when the principal investigator gave the presentation about the research.

Adolescents under 18 years old who returned signed parental consent forms to the church office received a questionnaire packet. When the potential participants returned the signed form, they selected their own instrument packets from a stack of packets. Adolescents over 18 years old who wanted to participate in the study selected their own instrument at the church offices after the principal investigator's presentations. In each instrument packet, there was a letter to the potential participants (Appendix B) explaining the research and informing them that their participation was voluntary. Potential participants were asked to return the completed questionnaire to the designated place at the church office rather than to a person; this procedure insured anonymity and confidentiality.

Those who heard about the study through friends and/or neighbors and expressed an interest in the study by calling the church offices were given letters and parental consent forms if adolescents were under 18 years old. After the referred adolescents returned the signed parental consent forms, the procedure to acquire the questionnaires and to return

the completed ones for these referred participants was the same as for the potential participants from the churches.

**C. Measurement**

The data were collected using a questionnaire developed from the following self-administered instruments (Appendix C):

(a) Hall Ethnic Identity Questionnaire (HEIQ: Hall, 1980)

(b) Multiethnic Identity Measure (MEIM: Phinney, 1992)

(c) Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES: Rosenberg, 1965)

The Hall Ethnic Identity Questionnaire developed by Catherine Hall (1980) was designed to measure Black/Japanese mixed people's ethnic identity choice. Although the Hall's questionnaire was for Black/Japanese mixed adults, the questionnaire was the only standardized measurement designed specifically for the biracial individual at the time the principal investigator was looking for the proper instrument for the study. The questions about "Black" and "Japanese" on the Hall's questionnaire were replaced with "American" and "Korean" respectively for the current study.

This instrument consists of a self-administered section (40 questions) and an interviewer-administered section (56 questions). The self-administered section contains established measures of self-esteem (Dien & Vinacke, 1964) with some adaption for the Black-Japanese sample population. The items in the self-administered section are set on a 6-point Likert-type scale on which respondents indicate the degree of agreement with each statement of the measurement (1= strongly agree, 6=strongly disagree).

The interviewer-administered section was Hall's own design. This section explored the respondents' ethnic identity choice; investigated the factors believed to influence ethnic identity--demographics, cultural knowledge and language, political involvement, ethnic composition of neighborhoods and friends, physical resemblance. Among those factors, the following sections of the measurement were adapted and revised for the present research: ethnic identity choice, demographics, ethnic composition of neighborhoods and friends, and cultural knowledge and language. The overall reliability of this instrument was the Cronbach's alpha .92 (Hall, 1980).

The Multigroup Measure of Ethnic Identity (MEIM, Phinney, 1992) consists of fourteen items assessing three aspects of ethnic identity: positive ethnic attitudes and sense of belonging (5 items); ethnic identity achievement, including both exploration and resolution of identity issues (7 items); and ethnic behaviors or practices (2 items). Items are set on a 4-point Likert type scale on which participants indicate their degree of agreement with each statement of the measurement. The four-response choice ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Scores are derived by reversing negatively worded items, summing across items, and obtaining the mean; scores range from 1 (low ethnic identity) to 4 (indicating high ethnic identity). In addition to the Likert format, there are three open-ended response items requesting information on ethnic self-identification: one's own ethnicity and parents' ethnicity. These three items are not scored but are used as background information. Overall reliabilities of the 14-item Ethnic Identity Scale were reported by the author to be .81 for the high school sample and .90 for the college sample (Phinney, 1992).

The RSES (Rosenberg, 1965) is a 10–item measure designed to assess adolescents' feelings of self-worth and values held about the self. The RSES is widely used to provide a unidimensional measure of self-esteem. One of its greatest strengths is the amount of research that has been conducted with a wide range of groups using this scale over the years (Corcoran & Fischer, 1994). The measure is set on a 4-point Likert type scale with respondents indicating the degree to which they agree with the statements. The scale is anchored by (1) strongly agree and (4) strongly disagree. A total score is attained after reverse scoring of the negatively worded items. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem. The RSES has a Guttman scale coefficient of reproducibility of .92, indicating excellent internal consistency. Two studies of two-week, test-retest reliability showed correlations of .85 and .88, indicating excellent stability (Rosenberg, 1979). The instrument has been used extensively in research and has demonstrated the concurrent, known-group, predictive, and constructs validity of the RSES (Corcoran & Fischer, 1994). The RSES correlates significantly with other self-esteem measures such as the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. Similarly, the RSES correlates in predicted directions with measures of depression, anxiety, and peer-group reputation, demonstrating good construct validity by correlating with measures with which it should theoretically correlate and not correlating with those with which it should not.

Demographic information of the participants for this study was obtained from responses relating to gender, age, living arrangement.

## D. Data Analysis

Since this study was designed to examine the relationship between variables, the correlation coefficient was used for analyzing the data. There are a number of means for statistically analyzing correlation. The most commonly used technique is the Pearson's correlation coefficient (r). However, it was found that the Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) is not appropriate for this study because the restrictions on the Pearson r are: variables should be distributed normally, variables should be at least an interval or ratio level. One of the dependent variables of this study, ethnic identity score, was found to be normally distributed, but another dependent variable, self-esteem's score was not. In addition, the independent variables of the study are only nominal or ordinal level. Therefore, Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (R) was used for analyzing the data for the study. Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (R) is used when the data do not meet the other assumptions for parametric tests (Abouserie, 1992).

For statistical analysis, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. SPSS is a set of programs for computers that enables the researcher to do many types of statistical analysis. SPSS is the most widely used program dedicated especially to statistical analysis for the social, educational, and psychological fields.

Descriptive statistics such as distributions, measures of central tendency and dispersions were utilized to describe the sample.

# Chapter IV

# RESULTS

## A. Description of the Sample Group

Demographic Information of the Sample Group

Frequency distribution was calculated on demographic variables. Of the thirty-six adolescents who participated in the study, seventeen (47.2%) were male and nineteen (52.8%) were female.

Twenty-seven respondents (75%) lived with both mother and father, one (2.8%) with only mother, two (5.6%) with only father, and five (13.9%) with stepfather and mother.

Thirty-four (94.4%) respondents identified themselves as Korean-American; they acknowledged dual heritage. One respondent (2.8%) identified himself as Korean. One did not answer this question. No one identified him/herself as American. Probably the reason for that is the doctrine of hypodescent still existed in the society, which holds that individuals whose lineage is both White and non-White are to be categorized within the non-White group (Pinderhughes, 1995). Table 1 on page 41 presents the demographic information of the study.

Additional Information of the Sample Group

Three other questions about ethnicity choice with social life were asked to better understand the biracial group.

The overwhelming majority of the respondents (97.2%) indicated that they felt no pressure from any person or group to choose a specific ethnic identity.

Table 1

Demographic Variables

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 17 | 47.2 |
| Female | 19 | 52.8 |
| Living Arrangement | | |
| Mother and Father | 27 | 75.0 |
| Father only | 2 | 5.6 |
| Mother only | 1 | 2.8 |
| Stepfather and mother | 5 | 13.9 |
| Other | 1 | 2.8 |
| Ethnic Label | | |
| Korean-American | 34 | 94.4 |
| Korean | 1 | 2.8 |

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not being racially mixed affected their social and dating life. Twenty-seven (75.0%) respondents indicated that being racially mixed did not affect their social and dating life, but nine ( 25.0%) reported that it indeed affected their social and dating life.

Respondents were asked, "If you were to be born again, what would you want to be born?" Twenty-five (69.4%) adolescents indicated that they would prefer "American/Korean Mixed," seven (19.4%) would prefer to be "Korean," and one (2.8%) indicated a preference to be "American White." One indicated "other" but did not specify what he would prefer to be. Two (5.6%) participants did not answer this question.

## B. Dependent Variables

The dependent variables of the study were ethnic identity and self-esteem. To measure the ethnic identity of Korean/Caucasian mixed adolescents, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992) was used. The mean of the ethnic identity score of the group was 2.12 with a standard deviation of .40. The result of the score showed that this group had the slightly strong ethnic identity.

To measure the self-esteem of the group, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used. Unlike the score of ethnic identity of the group, the self-esteem score was skewed negatively which means that this group did have high self-esteem. The mean score was 17.4 with a standard deviation of 6.55.

## C. Research Questions

*Q 1. Is parental encouragement related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity choice?*

The first research question asked if parental (fathers and mothers were measured separately) encouragement to choose a certain ethnic label were related to Korean/Caucasian biracial adolescents' ethnic identity. Twenty-five participants (69 4%) reported that their fathers encouraged them to use both Korean and American ethnic labels. Twenty-three (63.9%) participants answered that their mothers encouraged them to use both Korean and Caucasian ethnic labels. Thirty-four (94.1%) participants identified themselves as a Korean/Caucasian mixed person. The Spearman Rank Correlation was calculated to examine the relationship between parental encouragement and ethnic label choice. The uniformity of fathers' encouragement and biracial adolescents' ethnic label choice rendered the correlation analysis inappropriate;

69.4% of fathers encouraged the use of both Korean and Caucasian ethnic labels and 94.1% of adolescents identified themselves as Korean/Caucasian persons. Likewise, 63.9% of mothers' encouraged the use of both Korean and Caucasian ethnic labels and 94.1% of adolescents labeled themselves Korean/Caucasian. However, the fathers' encouragement and the mothers' encouragement correlated at the .01 level ($R = .513$, $p < .01$) which means that both fathers' and mothers' encouragement to label a certain ethnic identity were in the same direction. In other words, if a father encourages his children to label American identity, a mother also more likely encourages the children to label American identity. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation between Parental Encouragement and Ethnic Label Choice

| | Fathers' | Mothers' | Ethnic label |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fathers' Encouragement | - | .513** | .012 |
| Mothers' Encouragement | .513** | - | .011 |
| Ethnic label | .012 | .011 | - |

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

*Q 2. Is cultural knowledge and practice related to the biracial adolescents' ethnic identity?*

Questions asking about Korean and American culture were given to the participants. The variable was dummy coded (Yes=1, No=0). Over 95% of the participants answered "Yes" to each question about American culture. The questions regard if the participants

think that they have knowledge about American culture, if their families celebrate and practice American cultural events, and if they want their children to learn American cultures when they had children. However, answering patterns toward equivalent questions about Korean culture were somewhat diverse. To the question, "Do you have any knowledge of Korean culture and customs?", thirty-three (91.7%) participants answered "Yes." Thirty (83.3%) participants answered "Yes" to the question, " Does your family practice any Korean customs?" However, only twenty-eight (77.8%) participants answered "Yes" to the question, "Do you enjoy Korean customs?" It seems that the study group favored American culture over Korean culture. However, thirty-six (100%) participants expressed the desire to have children learn both the Korean and the American cultures. Adolescents' responses to these questions were highly uniform, demonstrating that cultural knowledge and practice and ethnic identity were synonymous for most of this homogeneous group. Correlation analysis was, therefore, inappropriate for this hypothesis.

*Q 3. Is language related to the biracial adolescents' ethnic identity?*

To measure the relationship between language and ethnic identity, the following questions were asked of the participants: " What is your first language (the language you feel the most comfortable with)?" "What is the primary language spoken in your home?" "Have you attended Korean language school?" Twenty-eight (77.8%) participants indicated that English is their first language, while eight (22.2%) reported that both English and Korean are their first languages. In regard to the primary language spoken at home, twenty (55.6%) subjects reported that English is the primary language in their

home, sixteen (44.4%) answered both English and Korean are the primary languages spoken in their homes. More than half of the participants ( 66.7%) reported that they have attended Korean language school. Although no significant relationship between language and ethnic identity was found, a correlation was found between the primary language spoken at home and the mothers' encouragement about ethnic label at the 05 level (2-tailed). In addition, a significant relationship between the primary language at home and the family practice of Korean customs was found. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3

Correlation between Primary Language and Mothers' Encouragement and Family Practice of Korean Customs.

| | Primary Language Spoken at Home |
|---|---|
| Mothers' Encouragement | .361* |
| Family Practice of Korean Customs | .400* |

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

*Q 4 Is residence related to the biracial adolescents' ethnic identity?*

Thirty (83.3%) subjects reported that they have lived in a racially diverse community. The decision of racial diversity at the places where the participants lived was based on the participants' perception. The definition of racial diversity was explained on the questionnaire: if the place participants lived (and live) consisted of at

least three different races and Caucasians did not occupy more than 70 percent of the population, then the place is racially diverse.

The reason that the majority of the participants expressed they had lived and live in a racially diverse community may be that the most of them have parents who served in the US military. The correlation between residence and ethnic identity was calculated, but no significance was found. However, a strong relationship was found between residence and the desire of participants to teach their children Korean language when or if they have children in the future (Spearman Rank Correlation = .559, $p < .01$).

*Q 5. Is church attendance related to the biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem?*

Since religion may play a very important role in an individual's life when the person struggles with various matters, this research question was intended to explore the relationship between church attendance and self-esteem. Because the majority of the participants for the current study were recruited through Korean/American churches, it was assumed that church attendance might relate to Korean/American biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem. The following questions were asked of the participants: "How often do you attend religious services?" "How active are you in your church?" "How important is religion to you personally?"

Thirty-one (86.1%) reported that they go to church at least once per week. Twenty-five (70.0%) stated that they are fairly or very active in their church. Thirty-three (90.7%) participants answered that religion is fairly or very important to them.

As discussed earlier, the uniformity of the respondents' answers rendered the correlation analysis inappropriate.

# Chapter V

## DISCUSSION

This study explored the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem of Korean/Caucasian mixed biracial adolescents and selected ecological factors such as parental encouragement about ethnic label, families' observation and practice of cultural events, language, residence in a racially diverse community, and church attendance on a regular basis. The present study showed that the majority of biracial adolescents in this setting perceived many of these factors as similar--perhaps synonymous. The following factors are offered in explanation.

First, the sample group is exceedingly homogeneous. A plausible reason that a significant relationship was not found between parental encouragement and ethnic label choice of Korean/American biracial adolescents may be due to the fact that the choices made by the individuals in the study group were almost identical. In other words, there was very little variation in their responses. In such a case, it is difficult to test the correlation statistically because statistical tests require variation.

Second, the sample size of the study is small. Even when variations in the participants' answers were found, some of the variations were not strong enough to be tested due to the small number of responses.

Third, the sample group was recruited from a rural and military area. In other words, if the participants had been recruited from a metropolitan area where potential participants have a better chance to experience more diverse people, cultures, and values, the results of the study might have been different. The study conducted by Hall (1980) in

the Los Angeles area showed a significant relationship between ethnic identity choice and cultural factors.

Fourth, the Hall Ethnic Identity Questionnaire, the measurement used to assess the independent variables--parental encouragement about ethnic label choices, languages, families' practice of both cultures, and living in a racially diverse community--may not be the appropriate instrument for the group that participated in this study. The Hall Ethnic Identity Questionnaire was designed for Black/Japanese biracial mixed adults to uncover the ethnic identity choices made by these individuals, the factors affecting their choices, and the life experiences/attitudes of these mixed individuals. Although the questions were adapted and revised appropriately for this study by replacing the terms "Black" and "Japanese" with "American" and "Korean," respectively, and by removing irrelevant sections such as political involvement and dating life, there must be some facts that cannot be adapted properly in terms of age, culture, and residence. In other words, participants of the study were adolescents living in a rural area who have a Korean mother and a Caucasian father, but the participants of Hall's study were adults living in a metropolitan area who have a Japanese and an African-American ancestry. However, it should be noted that the Hall Ethnic Identity Questionnaire was the only measurement designed specifically for the biracial individual the principal investigator could find.

Despite the foregoing difficulties, the uniformity of parents' and adolescents' responses indicated the likelihood that the parental encouragement about ethnic label choices, use of languages in the home, the families' practice of both cultures, and church attendance provided bases for conformity of their ethnic label as Korean/Caucasian.

One of the significant findings from the current study was the relationship between the fathers' encouragement and the mothers' encouragement about the choice of ethnic identity (Spearman Rank Correlation = .513, p< .01). This finding indicated that this group of fathers and mothers of Korean/Caucasian biracial mixed adolescents give similar opinions to their children in regard to the choice of ethnic identity.

Another significant finding of this study was the relationship between mothers' encouragement about the choice of ethnic identity and primary language spoken at home (Spearman Rank Correlation = .361, p < .05). Twenty-three (63.9%) participants reported that their mother encouraged them to use both the Korean and American ethnic label, and sixteen (44.4%) answered that both English and Korean are the primary languages spoken in their home. This result may be interpreted that perhaps the participants' mothers who are Koreans may communicate with their children in Korean to remind them that they also have a Korean heritage.

A relationship was found between the family practice of Korean customs and the primary language spoken at home (Spearman Rank Correlation = .400, p < .05). Eighty three percent of the subjects reported that their family practiced Korean customs. This result may also be explained by the fact that the families of Korean/Caucasian biracial mixed adolescents celebrate and observe Korean customs to enforce their Korean heritage.

The forth significant finding of this study was the relationship between the residence in a racially diverse community and the desire of the participants to teach their children the Korean language when or if they have children in the future (Spearman Rank

Correlation = .559, $p < .01$). Thirty (83.3%) participants stated that they have lived and/or are currently living in a racially diverse community and thirty-four (94.4%) reported that if or when they had children, they would like their children to learn Korean. This result suggested that living in a racially diverse community may provide the opportunity for participants of the group to understand the relationship between the ethnic background of a person and his/her language.

Finally, the study also found a relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem in this study group ($r = .544$, $p < .01$). This result is consistent with earlier findings. For example, Phinney(1992) found the correlations between ethnic identity and self-esteem (using the Rosenberg, 1986, scale): for the minorities (Hispanic, Black, Asian) ethnic identity showed a positive, statistically significant correlation with self-esteem among high school students ($r = .31$, $p < .001$) and college students ($r = .25$, $p < .01$); among the White college students, ethnic identity was unrelated to self-esteem ($r = .05$); however, for the 12 White high school students, who were a small minority in their school setting, there was a statistically significant correlation between ethnic identity and self-esteem ($r = .67$, $p < .05$).

The positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem may be explained by the fact that ethnic identity is an aspect of a person's social identity and is a part of an individual's self-concept. Therefore, someone who has a clear concept about him/herself may have a strong ethnic identity which gives confidence in oneself that helps oneself to feel good about him/herself. These findings suggested that ethnic identity may play a particularly important role in the self-concept of minority youth, Korean/Caucasian

biracial mixed adolescents, in this case. These findings also confirmed Phinney's (1992) research results.

## Chapter VI

## IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

One of the significant findings from the study was the relationship between the fathers' encouragement and the mothers' encouragement about the choice of ethnic labels to use for their biracial children. Although such a result was not expected, it inspires a possible opportunity to explore the deeper level of family interaction. For example, the future study could examine whether or not the marital satisfaction of a Korean/American interracial couple is related to their children's self-esteem or whether or not the different parenting style due to the different cultural background between members of the interracial couple affects their children's choice of ethnic identity.

Because of the limitation of time and financial resources, nonprobability sampling was utilized for the study that lacks representation of the target population. In addition, the sample was drawn from a limited rural and military area. Therefore, it is recommended for future studies that the sample be drawn from a metropolitan area, which makes it possible to obtain a heterogeneous sample group. Furthermore, comparison between the group from a rural area and that from a metropolitan area might provide comprehensive information about this particular population and give a better picture for understanding them. Comparisons among/between different ethnic biracial groups might also be valuable. For instance, a Korean/Caucasian group could be compared to a Korean/African-American group or a Korean/Hispanic group. These comparisons might provide information regarding whether or not the different cultural background is related to the biracial adolescents' ethnic choice.

Standardized reliable measurements developed specifically for biracial groups are needed. As discussed earlier, even the Hall Ethnic Identity Measurement used for the study is not a published standardized instrument. However, that was the only resource available that was created specifically for biracial groups.

The process of establishing identity is complicated. The process can be especially difficult for biracial adolescents because of the traditional designated racial category. This study attempted to determine if Korean/Caucasian biracial adolescents have strong ethnic identity and self-esteem, what ethnic label they choose, and whether or not selected ecological factors are related to the ethnic label choice made by the biracial group.

The results showed that the biracial participants in this study have somewhat strong bi-ethnic identity and strong self-esteem. The study's results demonstrated high uniformity of responses from the participants regarding cultural aspects and their biracial ethnic identity. The majority of participants reported that their parents encouraged them to celebrate their dual heritages. In addition, the majority of the participants stated during the casual and personal conversations with the principal investigator that they are very proud of who they are in terms of being biracial and bicultural.

As discussed in Chapter I, the biracial group is one of the fastest growing population groups in the United States. However, the biracial individuals are still forced to choose only one group category to identify themselves. This dynamic may cause biracial individuals to feel confused and even shamed. Biracial groups cannot be ignored nor

denied. Facing a new millennium, a new order is required in which every individual can have an accurate and self-defined sense of identity.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

# LETTER TO PARENTS AND PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Parents or guardians of Korean/Caucasian biracial adolescents
FROM: Dr. Delores E. Smith and Eun-Kyung Sweet
SUBJECT: Volunteers for Adolescent Research Project
DATE:

We from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, are working on a research project on adolescent development. The project is concerned with the relationship between factors involving home environment and social interaction, and biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem. Specifically, the purpose of the project is to examine the feelings, attitudes, and behaviors of biracial adolescents who have a Korean mother and a Caucasian father during this challenging stage of development. The results may help educators and other professionals who work with biracial adolescents to better understand the feelings, attitudes, behaviors, and special needs of biracial adolescents.

The investigators have taken steps to ensure that the students who participate will not be specifically identified; responses will not be traced back to participants or their families. Further, participating adolescents have the right to refuse to respond to any item. Each adolescent volunteering for the study will be asked to complete a questionnaire relating to the variables under consideration. At no time are participants asked to reveal their identity.

The questionnaire will take about one hour to complete Participants will return their completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes to a designated location instead of to a person. The returned questionnaires will be kept in a sealed package and in locked cabinets and will be accessible to Eun-Kyung Sweet and Dr. Smith only. With these protective measures in place, we do not anticipate any harm to your child relating to his or her participation in this study.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. However, we believe that you as a parent have the right to decide whether your child participates. If you are willing to have your child participate in this study, please sign the form provided and have him or her return the signed form to International Pentecostal Holiness Church office. If your child returns this form giving your permission, he or she will receive a packet. However, if your child decides not to participate in this study regardless of your permission, he/she does not need to complete the questionnaire and return it. If he/she returns the completed questionnaire, it will be considered as an agreement to participate in this study.

Your permission for your child to participate is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions concerning this project please feel free to contact Dr. Delores E. Smith or Ms. Eun-Kyung Sweet at (423) 974-5316 or 974-5599 in Knoxville. Or, Ms. Eun-Kyung Sweet may be contacted at (931) 647-2592 while in Clarksville.

Sincerely,

Eun-Kyung Sweet, B.A.
Graduate Student

Delores E. Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

**College of Human Ecology**
Department of Child and Family Studies
1215 West cumberland Avenue, Room 241
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-1900
(423) 975-5316
Fax (423) 974-2617

## Consent Form for Adolescent Research Project

Child's/Ward's name: _____

I, _____, agree to let my child/ward take part in the Adolescent Research Project that Dr. Delores Smith and Ms. Eun-Kyung Sweet are conducting.

I understand that the purpose of the research is to discover how factors involving home environment and social interaction are related to biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem.

I understand that my child/ward has a choice about taking part in the study and may refuse to participate even if I agree. I also understand there will be no penalty if I do not give permission or if my child/ward chooses not to participate in the study.

I have been told that my child/ward will complete a questionnaire at church, home, or wherever he/she wants. I understand that the activity will take about one hour.

I understand that my child's/ward's answers are private and that no one except him or her and the researchers will know what he or she wrote.

I understand that the questionnaire will be returned without a name or any identifying coding and that the information will not be traced to my child/ward.

I understand that my child/ward will be one of approximately thirty adolescents who take part in this study if he/she decides to participate in this study.

I understand that my child's/ward's participation in this study could help professionals who work with biracial children and adolescents better understand their social and emotional development.

I understand that although completing the questionnaire might lead to questions by the adolescents about ethnic identity, we do not expect that participation in the project will result in any serious stress or other harm to the adolescents.

I understand that, if at any time I have questions, I may write to Dr. Smith or Eun-Kyung Sweet at the above address or call them at (423) 974-5316 or 974-5599 in Knoxville, or, Ms. Eun-Kyung Sweet at (931) 647-2592 while in Clarksville.

Parents' Name (please print)

Parents' Signature

Date

# APPENDIX B

# LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

**College of Human Ecology**
Department of Child and Family Studies
1215 West cumberland Avenue, Room 241
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-1900
(423) 975-5316
Fax (423) 974-2617

Dear Potential Participant:

We are conducting research on biracial adolescents' ethnic identity and self-esteem. This research may help educators and others who work with adolescents to better understand the feelings, attitudes, behaviors, and special needs of young people like you. You may freely choose to take part or not to take part in this study. **However, if you are under age eighteen and/or under the guardianship of an adult, you must get permission from your parent or guardian before you can take part.**

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take about one hour of your time; some adolescents take considerably less time, while others take longer. The items on the questionnaire relate to your feelings about yourself and your family. If you complete and return a questionnaire, it will be assumed that we have your informed consent.

If you agree to participate in the study, we ask that you answer each question as truthfully and as seriously as you can. However, you may skip item(s) you do not wish to answer. Do **NOT** put your name or any identifying marks on your questionnaire. After you complete the questionnaire, place it in the envelope, seal the envelope, and put it in the box in front of the office at International Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Thank you for your cooperation. We greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in this study.

**If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please feel free to call Dr. Delores Smith or Ms. Eun-Kyung Sweet at (423) 974-5316 or 974-5599 in Knoxville, or Ms. Eun-Kyung Sweet at (931) 647-2592 while in Clarksville.**

Sincerely,

Eun-Kyung Sweet, B.A.
Graduate Student

Delores Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

# APPENDIX C

# SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

2. Age: _____

**Directions (#1-10).** For each of the following items, please put a check beside or circle the **one** that most applies to you.

1. With whom do you presently live?
   ___ mother only
   ___ father only
   ___ both mother and father
   ___ stepmother and father
   ___ stepfather and mother
   ___ relatives
   ___ other --- specify: _____

2. What ethnic label does your father encourage you to use?
   (If you live with your mother only, or if you live with someone else, skip this question).
   (1) American (2) Korean
   (3) both American and Korean (4) other --- specify: _____

3. What ethnic label does your mother encourage you to use?
   (If you live with your father only, or if you live with someone else, skip this question).
   (1) American (2) Korean
   (3) both American and Korean (4) other --- specify: _____

4 If you were to be born again, what would you want to be born?
   (1) American white (2) Korean
   (3) American/Korean mixed (4) other --- specify: _____

5. How often does your family gather with other racially mixed families?
   (1) always (2) frequently (3) occasionally (4) rarely (5) never

6 What is the primary language spoken in your home?
   ___ English
   ___ Korean
   ___ both English and Korean
   ___ other – specify: _____

7. What is your first language (the language you feel the most comfortable with)?
   ___ English
   ___ Korean
   ___ both English and Korean
   ___ other – specify: _____
8. Is the church you attend most often predominately:
   ___ Anglo-American
   ___ Korean
   ___ Both Korean and American
   ___ other – specify: _____

9. How often do you attend religious services?
   ___ never
   ___ once a month or less
   ___ twice a month
   ___ once a week
   ___ two or more times per week

10. How active are you in your church?
   ___ not active
   ___ somewhat active
   ___ fairly active
   ___ very active

11. How important is religion to you personally?
   ___ not at all important
   ___ somewhat important
   ___ fairly important
   ___ very important

**Direction:** Name the places where you have lived during the past two years, describe the type of community and how racially diverse the place is?

| **Place** | **Type of Community (e.g., city, farm, military, industrial, suburban)** | **Is the place racially diverse? (Yes/No)*** |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

* Answer Yes if you think the place has more than three different races and no one race represents more than 60% of the population. If not, answer No.

**Directions (#1-23):** 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 Asian-American, Anglo-American, Mexican-American, Hispanic, African-American, Black, White, and American Indian 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.

4 = Strongly agree
3 = Somewhat agree
2 = Somewhat disagree
1 = Strongly disagree

___ 1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic groups, such as their 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 a 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.

Write in the number that gives the best answer to each question

21. My ethnicity is _____
    (1) Anglo-American (American white or Caucasian)
    (2) Korean-American
    (3) Korean
    (4) other --- specify: _____

22. My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above) _____
23. My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above) _____

**Directions(#1-10):** After carefully reading each of the following statements, please record the appropriate answer for each item, depending on whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

1 = Strongly agree
2 = Agree
3 = Disagree
4 = Strongly disagree

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

**Directions(#1-14):** After reading the following statements, please check YES or NO for each item.

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Have you attended Korean language school? | ___ | ___ |
| 2. If or when you have children, would you like them to learn Korea | ___ | ___ |
| 3. Do you have any knowledge of Korean culture and customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 4. Does your family practice any Korean customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 5. Do you practice any Korean customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 6. Do you enjoy practicing Korean customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 7. Do you want your children to learn about Korean culture? | ___ | ___ |
| 8. Do you attend American public school currently? | ___ | ___ |
| 9. If or when you have children, would you like them to learn English? | ___ | ___ |
| 10. Do you have any knowledge of American culture and customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 11. Does your family practice any American customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 12. Do you practice any American customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 13. Do you enjoy practicing American customs? | ___ | ___ |
| 14. Do you want your children to learn about American culture? | ___ | ___ |

**Directions(#1-6):** After carefully reading each question, please circle the appropriate answer for each item. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions.

1. Does your father have friends who are married to someone of a different race?
   (1) Yes (2) No

2. Does your mother have friends who are married to someone of a different race?
   (1) Yes (2) No

3. Was/is there any pressure put on you from any person or group to choose a specific ethnic identity?
   (1) Yes (2) No

4. Has being racially mixed affected your social and dating life?
   (1) Yes (2) No

5. What factors, do you think, influenced your identity decision?

6. If you could name <u>one</u> support person (or group of people) who have helped you the most in your ethnic identity decision, who would it be?
   Relationship to you_____

# VITA

Eun-Kyung Sweet was born in Seoul, Korea on August 28, 1967. She attended Yonsei University, where she received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Literature in 1991. After she graduated, she worked at Korea Caption, Ltd. as an English study materials programmer.

In 1993, she came to the Untied States to attend the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In 1995, she was married to Bradley Sweet. She received her Master of Science Degree in Child and Family Studies from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2000. During this time, she also worked at Child and Family Services and Emory Valley Center as a case manager.