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Multiracial in a Monoracial World: Identity Integration Among Multiracial College Students
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Abstract

Students with multiracial identity are an emergent population in higher education settings. This research explores how identity integration impacts the way multiracial students navigate monoracial campuses academically and socially. The study found that students with more integrated racial identities experienced more positive outcomes in college. To support this population, student affairs professionals can work to move students toward integration.

Research Questions

1. What are the academic and social experiences of multiracial students at the University of Dayton?

2. What is the impact of multiracial identity integration on sense of belonging, resiliency, and self-image?

Methodology

This qualitative study consisted of semi-structured interviews with eight undergraduate students who identified as multiracial. In addition, an adaptation of the 8-item Multiracial Identity Integration Scale (MII) was administered to assess the degree to which participants viewed their multiple racial identities as integrated (Cheng & Lee, 2009).

Findings

![BELONGING](image1)

Low MII
Perceive multiple races as disparate and in conflict

“I don’t have a good group of African American friends at all...I have a solid group of White friends I belong with.”
– Brittany

High MII
Perceive multiple races as a blend and harmonious

“I always feel like I’m on the outskirts of a group. White people always see me as Black and Black people always see me as White.”
– Faith

![RESILIENCY](image2)

“I just kept walking. Not going to start any problems because everyone just tells me to let it go.”
– Peter

“I just kept walking. Not going to start any problems because everyone just tells me to let it go.”
– Peter

![SELF-IMAGE](image3)

“There are a lot of difficulties [being mixed race]...You can see the difficulties or ignore them. I’ve done a mixture of both.”
– Louis

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Some students experience forms of racial discrimination and prejudice
- In general, students who have developed a more integrated identity experience more positive self-image
- Students want to share their stories and experiences but do not know who to go to or if anyone will listen

Provide students with healthy coping strategies

When advising, create bridges for students to develop from low to high racial integration

Reach out and inquire about their experiences; create platforms to share (i.e. caucus groups or forums)

Selected Reference