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Reading as a Resource: Exploring Reading Habits and Multicultural Awareness and Acceptance in Undergraduate Students

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Reading as a Resource: Exploring Reading Habits and Multicultural Awareness and Acceptance

in Undergraduate Students

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by

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ABSTRACT

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by

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Considerable research has been conducted examining the benefits of diversity on campus and

diversity programming for undergraduate students. However, minimal research has been focused

on connecting reading fiction as a potential resource for diversity programming. Diversity

courses, racial awareness workshops, and service learning opportunities are all supported by

research for their transformational influence on students' attitudes and perceptions towards

minority and underrepresented groups on campus. Emerging studies have established that

reading narrative fiction can enhance readers' empathic and multicultural attitudes, shift

perspectives and outlooks, and enhance moral reasoning. Benefits such as these could be

harnessed to cultivate a campus culture that is inclusive and celebrates diversity.

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to explore the relationship between self-

reported reading habits of undergraduate students and multicultural awareness and acceptance

scores, measured by the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of

Undergraduate Students. A 33-item paper survey was distributed to 389 students enrolled in

courses in the College of Business, College of Education, and College of Nursing at a public

university in East Tennessee. Three hundred eighty-three usable surveys were collected from a

sample size of 389, a 98% response rate.

Results from the 2-way ANOVA analysis on the 9 research questions indicated that respondents who read at an avid or moderate level typically had higher scores revealing more openness and appreciation for diversity. Also, the majority of respondents reported reading at least at a moderate frequency level and fiction is one of the most preferred reading genres. The findings provide further support that reading literary fiction is a credible resource for fostering empathy and increasing tolerance on this campus.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my incredible family, especially to my husband Sanders, who continually supported this dream and always found time to make me a special dessert after each chapter was completed. I love you more than words, honey bear! To my parents Char and Gary for working so hard their entire lives to give me everything I needed to succeed and more. Lastly, to my late father-in-law Brian Owens. Thank you for your endless encouragement and love, I wish you were here to celebrate with us.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As the demographic landscape of the United States continues to diversify, so do institutions of higher education and workplace environments. It is difficult to dispute the necessity for students of all ages to be able to navigate, communicate, and appreciate multicultural environments to be successful in their lives and careers. Higher education institutions in particular are in a unique position to encourage inclusion, increase diversity, and cultivate multicultural perspectives on their campuses. In American society college has long been thought of as the first door to new experiences and a free exchange of ideas for those who are privileged enough to enter. Faculty and administrators then are given an unparalleled opportunity to provide rich experiences in a multitude of ways that will prepare their students to function and succeed in a variety of professional and personal situations.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2013), in the fall semester of 2012 there were approximately 20.6 million people enrolled in institutions of higher education in America. Enrollment is expected to increase by as much as 15% in the next decade. Degree attainment since the early 2000s has been on the rise for high school diplomas and bachelor's degrees (NCES, 2015b). Along with the rise in enrollment and degree attainment comes a shift in those enrolling. The *Digest of Education Statistics: 2013* (NCES, 2013), reported that women accounted for 57% of all bachelor's degrees in the academic year 2011-2012. Also during this time black students earning bachelor's degrees increased by 59%, 104% for Hispanic students, 52% for Asian or Pacific Islander students, and 25% for American Indian students. As reported by the NCES (2013) even with the upswing in diversification of the student body, White students still earn 70% of all bachelor's degrees awarded overall.

Employment rates as reported by the United States Department of Education (NCES, 2015b) demonstrate that employment rates for young adults rises as their level of educational attainment increases. For instance, adults aged 20-24 with some college have an employment rate of 75%, compared to an employment rate of 88.1% with a bachelor's degree or higher. The same employment pattern is shown with young adults with high school diplomas (63.7%) and those with some college (75%). A positive correlation is evident between higher educational attainment and income level for young adults. In 2013 (NCES, 2015a), those with bachelor's degrees had median earnings of $48,500 compared with $37,500 for those with an associate's degree and $30,000 for those with a high school diploma. This configuration holds for men and women and across racial groups (NCES, 2015a).

Increasing the number of historically underrepresented students on campuses across the United States leads to benefits as widespread as meeting the needs of our diverse economy and as personal as enhancing appreciation and understanding of racial and cultural differences (Milem, 2003). According to Jayakumar (2008) students who experienced a positive racial climate during college exhibited the multicultural and pluralistic viewpoint required to be successful in a diverse and multicultural environment after college in the workplace. White students attending a college with a diverse population and high numbers of minority populations are provided with more experiences to interact across race, resulting in more pluralistic views. In this longitudinal study Jayakumar also noted that pluralistic viewpoints were evidenced in participants regardless of their diversity experiences before entering college.

While support for diversification of the student body continues to grow, many scholars caution that merely increasing the number of minority students on campus will provide little benefit unless the structure of an institution itself is diversified and a variety of diversity

initiatives are offered (Chang, 2002; Milem, 2001; Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Rankin & Reason, 2005). Students of color experience campus life and describe their experiences of campus quite differently than white students and more often describe the environment as hostile and racist (Rankin & Reason). Diversification of the student body is beneficial for white students and for students of color, though Chang (2002) suggested that such an effort does not provide a guarantee that students will then have an encouraging or nondiscriminatory educational environment as a result.

Providing opportunities for undergraduate students to interact across racial divides is viewed to be one of the foremost strategies to allow for students to alter preconceived notions based on race or gender and promote attitudes of inclusion as opposed to exclusion (Tienda, 2013). Additional research has shown that levels of prejudice are reduced and openness to diversity is increased for students provided with meaningful, consistent interaction with diverse groups (Berryman-Fink, 2006; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996).

As the diversification of student enrollment continues, the mission remains for leaders and higher education professionals to prepare a diverse student body for their work within a diverse nation. This preparation includes efforts to reduce prejudice and foster a deeper understanding of the self and empathy towards others. For the majority of higher education institutions, a variety of diversity training and programming is employed on campuses in addition to efforts of increasing minority enrollment. Some diversity training techniques include service-learning experiences for students (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill. 2007), diversity courses (You & Matteo, 2103), one-time required diversity education session (Ehrke, Berthold, & Steffens, 2014), racial awareness workshops (Cole & Zhou, 2013), and international education experiences (Lattanzi & Pechak, 2012).

While diversity training is becoming more commonplace, constant development of new techniques to promote an inclusive campus that encourages empathy and understanding towards others is imperative. Recent studies have shown that reading certain types of literature can increase an individual's ability to be more empathic, appreciate differences, and even possibly have a more worldly viewpoint (Kidd & Castano, 2013; Vezzali, Stahi, Giovannini, Capozza, & Trifiletti, 2015). Bal and Veltkemp (2013) found in their experimental study that personal change occurred when readers were emotionally transported in a story. When transported into a story the reader can safely explore and experience emotions leading to an increase in sympathy and empathy towards others emotions and experiences (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Kidd & Castano, 2013).

Similarly, Mar and Oatley (2008) suggested that reading fiction is more than simply a method of entertainment; it has the ability to stimulate empathic growth. In their research on literary fiction as a simulation of social experience, Mar and Oatley posited that literature has the capacity to put us in touch with cultures and emotions that under normal circumstances one may never encounter. These simulation experiences allow individuals to react and feel as if the individual were a part of that unique experience, leading to a better understanding of another's actions and feelings. It becomes plausible then that reading literary fiction could aid in reducing bias against those one perceives as dissimilar because that person is invited to empathize and discover commonalities with characters as she or he reads.

Other studies demonstrate that not only can empathic growth result from reading fiction, prosocial, or helping, behavior is another potential benefit. Spurring off of Mar and Oatley's (2008) research, Johnson (2012) hoped to discover if there was a correlation between empathy induced while reading and an increase in prosocial behavior as a result. Johnson developed a 15-

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minute story that elicited empathetic feelings as well as model helpful, prosocial behaviors. After using a mood assessment to establish a baseline, participants who reflected being transported into the story had corresponding high levels of empathy and prosocial behavior. As part of the study the researcher dropped pens and observed who would help to pick up the dropped pens as a measure of prosocial behavior. Through this study Johnson suggested that reading a story that models empathic and prosocial behavior could lead individuals to display similar actions.

In 2007 Gibson posited the benefits reading could have on students to gain empathic understanding and piloted a plan to use Harry Potter books with her practicum students. Gibson assigned chapters of a Harry Potter book and asked stimulus questions to promote empathy with the characters. By using a text with school-aged children as the main characters, school counselors in training explored situations in an experiential and nonthreatening manner. Students explored their emotions and reactions to the characters and events, allowing them to assess whether their reactions were appropriate and objectively analyzed their emotional reactions and cognitions. The events in the book also allowed students to reach emotional states they may have been avoiding in their own lives, or that were outside of their daily experiences. These findings compliment the research of Mar and Oatley (2008) suggesting that fiction can put us in touch with cultures and experiences that one may never have a chance to experience. Being able to expand students' experiences and emotions through fiction aided in the development of self-awareness and empathic understanding for future work with their clients.

Reported results on the link between reading to increase empathy and decreasing bias to out-groups are encouraging. The use of reading fiction as a teaching tool to foster those desirable traits shows further promise for campus culture and the nation. However, the benefits college students could reap from reading literary fiction could be in jeopardy according to some research

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reports. As stated in a multinational study conducted for the Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development, literacy scores for Millennials in the United States continue to

decline ("OECD Skills Outlook"). Similarly, the *Reading at Risk* report published in 2002 by the

National Endowment for the Arts revealed that less than half of adults reported reading any

literature, and the decline is most notable for young adults aged 18 to 24. This study also found

that time spent on the Internet and other portable devices correlated with a decline in reading

("National Endowment"). In the digital age of 2016 young adults may be more inclined to spend

their leisure time browsing social media in lieu of reading literary works.

Multiple studies (Gambrell, 2005; Mraz & Rasinski, 2007; Mokhtari, Reichard, &

Gardner, 2009) cite the *Reading at Risk* report (2002) presumably evidencing the decline of

reading habits of students for a variety of reasons. Technology has influenced reading habits in

recent years, though evidence of this is conflicting. Gambrell posited that technology has

actually led to an increase in reading, not a decline as is usually declared in such documents as

Reading at Risk. The way Americans seek information has changed, just as what we read has

changed. Students may not be reading as many fiction books, but they may be reading more

blogs or news articles as they surf through the web multiple times a day. While Gambrell

admitted that literacy and reading are incredibly important for academic success and self-growth,

reading may need to be redefined to assess whether it really is at risk.

In another study Mokhtari et al. (2009) conducted a time-diary survey to assess whether

or not the television and Internet interfered with reading habits. Similarly influenced by reports

such as *Reading at Risk,* the researchers wanted to see if the decline was true of their students

and if television and Internet led to the displacement of recreational reading time. Contrary to

previous studies, students in their survey stated considerably higher levels of time spent on

academic and recreational reading. Though, 85% of respondents indicated that using the Internet was more enjoyable than reading or watching television. The majority of students claimed to enjoy reading outside of school and saw the benefits; though recreational reading was often an activity they would sacrifice in order to do other activities (Mokhtari et al., 2009). Evidence of whether or not students are indeed reading less appears to be conflicting, and the reasons for the decline in reading are complex.

Statement of the Problem

Despite a growing body of research expressing the possible decline in literary reading, little research has been done to examine reading habits of college students and what concerns that may present. Since the 1960s extensive funding for reading programs and initiatives have been viewed as an imperative educational investment (Mraz & Rasinski, 2007). Such programs have been established to promote career and educational success and to encourage the skills necessary to function in complex relationships and societies. In the digital age of the 21st century more research is needed to better understand reading habit trends for young adults and any impact reading may have on cultivating multicultural awareness and acceptance.

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to explore the relationship between self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and multicultural awareness and acceptance scores, measured by the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of Undergraduate Students. The information collected from the survey comprised three subscales (diversity of contact, relativistic appreciation, comfort with differences) and grouped respondents into one of three reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader). Results from the study should shed light on whether reading literary fiction is an

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appropriate activity that could be used to foster the characteristics necessary to thrive in a diverse society.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions used in this study to explore the relationship between the reading frequency level of undergraduate students and their multicultural attitudes and awareness.

Research Question 1

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of the survey between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 2

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 3

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 4

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 5

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 6

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 7

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 8

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 9

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Significance of the Study

Although initiatives promoting recreational reading have long been instituted for students in primary schools, those same initiatives are scarce for postsecondary students. With recent

reports claiming the sharpest decline in reading is for young adults ("National Endowment"), the impact this decline may have on educational and interpersonal development for young adults becomes paramount for parents, educators, administrators, and the entire nation. Results of this study will help fill the gaps in understanding trends of reading for undergraduate students and potential factors contributing to these trends. Furthermore, the results from this study will add to the limited research on the influence reading may have on being able to recognize and appreciate differences in others. This deeper understanding would help in developing new reading initiatives for young adults including diversity education and training programs that involve reading literary fiction. Such initiatives would significantly benefit not only the individuals participating but also society as whole by cultivating young adults who are civic minded as they transition outside the doors of a higher education institution.

Limitations of the Study

For the purpose of this study subjects were limited to undergraduate students enrolled in specific colleges (College of Business, College of Education, College of Nursing) at a mid-size regional institution in Northeast Tennessee. The students enrolled in these colleges were purposively chosen due to their interaction with diverse individuals in their workplace after completion of their degree. Because of this limitation the results in this study may not be generalizable to other higher education institutions or the entire undergraduate population.

A second limitation to this study relates to the indication of reading frequency types. This study analyzed self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and subsequently grouped respondents into one of three reading frequency types: nonreader, moderate reader, and avid reader. These groups were determined based on the time and frequency questions asked on the

survey. Therefore, the reading frequency types applied are based only on the perception of the participant and may not reflect the reading frequency trends of all young adults at the institution.

Another limitation is the assumption that the Miville-Guzman Diversity Scale-Short (M-GUDS-S) used as part of this study is valid and reliable in measuring Universal-Diverse Orientation (UDO). UDO refers to a perspective of appreciation and understanding that as humans we are different and similar (Miville et al., 1999). It is assumed that exploring multicultural awareness and acceptance is appropriately measured by UDO. Lastly, it can be assumed that the survey instrument, the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of Undergraduate Students, and the statistical tests chosen to analyze the data in this study are appropriate to meet the purpose of this study.

Chapter Summary

Reading plays an integral role in interpersonal and cognitive development for students of all ages. With globalization and diversification in the digital age, it becomes vital to examine reading trends in young adults. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and multicultural awareness and acceptance. Investigating the differences and interactions in these variables provides a more accurate portrayal of reading trends for young adults and their perceptions of diversity. This study has been organized into five distinct chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction that clarifies the problem, defines the research questions, and provides the significance of the study. Chapter 2 contains a review of the related literature. Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the study and Chapter 4 reports the findings and data analysis. Lastly, Chapter 5 details the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research and study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Diversifying the student body at educational institutions is seen as an imperative to meet the needs of a global economy. Experts have established that interaction is one of the essential elements to develop inclusive and positive attitudes towards historically underrepresented groups. As institutions and workplaces become more diverse the ability to communicate with others becomes a necessity.

According to Nunning (2015) demonstrating understanding of the self and others is an essential tool that enables one to interact and behave in an ethical and inclusive manner. Institutions of higher education reach students at a critical juncture in their life where prejudice can be challenged or abolished through diversity initiatives. The challenge becomes sorting through trends in diversity programming to discover what new or existing program would generate the most significant benefit for a diverse student body.

Abundant research is available on the benefits of diversity on campus and on the variety of diversity programing and curriculum strategies currently being used on campuses. There is less available on the reading habits of young adults entering college and whether or not reading literature is a viable method to cultivate a more multicultural and inclusive attitude in students. The review of literature broadly addresses the benefits of diversity and diversity programing on campus as well as the benefits of reading and reading trends for young adults.

Background of Equal Access in Higher Education

Embracing and cultivating diversity on campus brings a distinctive set of challenges to leaders of higher education institutions. Such difficulties are particularly evidenced by the incongruous rulings being made by the United States Supreme Court regarding affirmative action

and diversity policies on campus and in admissions. The United States Supreme Court in the 1978 case *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* ruled that racial quotas violated a clause in the 14th Amendment. While quotas were not permitted in admissions, race could be a consideration along with many other factors in an effort to admit diverse students. The admission of a diverse student body was deemed as an imperative for institutions to be successful. Lawsuits continued to challenge race in the admissions process throughout the 1990s. In 2003 two cases regarding universities in Michigan were decided. *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger* argued that they were victims of reverse discrimination when they were denied acceptance. The decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger* held that the university's narrowly tailored admissions policy did not violate the Equal Protection Clause under the 14th Amendment. In 2015 a case against admissions policies at the University of Texas originating in 2008 is being reconsidered (*Fisher v. Texas*), spurring an ongoing debate about race on campus. Supreme Court decisions that simultaneously advocate and oppose diversity initiatives make institutional goals difficult to accomplish.

In response to continued opposition to diversity initiatives Brown (2002) suggested that universities need to be honest about what diverse programing and increasing diverse populations on campus truly accomplishes. Diversity must be a sought after initiative on college campuses, one that moves beyond just numbers in admissions. According to Brown:

> In this stage, a university would come to see diversity not just as a social goal but as an opportunity for institutional advancement, a condition to be prized and nurtured. Differences in personal and cultural experience would not just be tolerated but would be celebrated as a source of excellence. (p.1082)

Other scholars extend their endorsement for diversity initiatives and ensuring equal access to higher education (Boyd & Halfond, 2000; Jayakumar, 2008; Milem, 2003). Milem (2003) offered multiple positive learning outcomes for students who are able to engage and interact with diverse peers. The benefits of a diverse student body include a growth in democratic outcomes, racial understanding, cultural appreciation, openness to diversity, and meeting the needs of a global economy by creating a diverse workforce (Milem, 2003). Boyd and Halfond (2000) suggested that diversity should not be viewed as a competition but instead should be viewed as collaboration. A lack of attention to diversity on campus could lead to a dismal future that is incapable of meeting the needs of our advancing global society (Jayakumar, 2008).

Campus Climate and Culture

On college campuses a common conversation revolves around the necessity of promoting a diverse student body for individual and collective benefit. Chang (2002) emphasized that although race and diversity are often discussed in admissions practices, many administrators do not participate in a broader discourse on diversity. Racial diversity on campus enhances socialization across racial divides and increases the discussion of racial issues (Chang, 1999). Diversity on campus can additionally be linked to increased retention, enhanced social self, and increased satisfaction with the college experience (Chang, 1999). Resulting from these discoveries and continued research, Chang (2002) offered that while increasing the number of underrepresented students on campus provides certain benefits, tension on campus could increase without supplemental diversity efforts. These accompanying efforts should present students with opportunities to interact and converse with students from various backgrounds.

Correspondingly, Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, and Allen (1998) recognized that merely increasing the number of minorities on campus, though important, is not enough to create

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a positive campus racial climate. Hurtado et al. analyzed a wide array of research literature related to campus racial climate to develop a framework to enhance the understanding of campus climates. Examples of using the framework on campus would be leaders embracing transparency about any history of exclusion at the school, examining institutional policies that may be creating barriers for underrepresented students, and providing a multitude of opportunities for students to experience cross-racial interaction (Hurtado et al., 1998). Enhancing the campus climate is essential in order to make sure all students on campus gain the benefits of having a diverse learning environment (Hurtado et al., 1998).

Other studies have focused on the consequences when an institution takes steps to diversify the campus structure but then neglect efforts to enhance the campus climate (Milem, 2001; Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Rankin & Reason, 2005). Milem (2001) discovered through factor analysis of materials from several national databases that even universities with the highest number of students of color were least likely to employ collaborative learning, incorporate readings from diverse groups into their curriculum, and that the faculty at these institutions were least likely to attend racial awareness workshops. Rankin and Reason (2005) likewise confirmed that students of color perceive and experience campus life quite differently than white students. Through survey materials from undergraduate students attending a variety of institutions, students of color disclosed experiencing and witnessing greater levels of harassment on campus. Students of color more often described the campus environment as hostile and racist, whereas white students did not hold the same negative perception (Rankin & Reason).

Using a survey to address race relations on campus Pewewardy and Frey (2002) received similar responses regarding racial climate on campus. Students from underrepresented groups negatively perceived their environment and campus climate and frequently experienced

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intolerance regardless of the diversification of the student body. However, Stotzer and

Hossellman (2012) unearthed tensions stemming from the diversification of the student body

prompted an increase in tolerance, not intolerance. These findings resulted from an analysis of

campus crimes submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Colleges with higher

percentages of Black and Latino students had fewer hate crimes reported per year, providing

evidence that colleges that recruit historically disadvantaged populations actually decrease racial

tensions on campus (Stotzer & Hossellman, 2012).

Although increasing minority enrollment may promote a campus culture where

differences are seen as less of a threat, diversity awareness must infiltrate institutions at all levels

to truly enact positive change in attitudes toward diversity. Altogether these findings further

support the notion that a diverse campus, while beneficial, does not guarantee a positive or equal

educational environment for students of color (Chang, 2002). A variety of diversity initiatives on

campus are needed to supplement the diversification of the student body to guarantee that all

students are experiencing a positive campus climate (Hurtado et al., 1998).

Benefits of Diversity Interaction

One of the leading methods to enhance the campus environment and students' attitudes

has proven to be interaction and contact across racial divides (Bowman, 2010; Berryman-Fink,

2006; Jayakumar, 2008; Pascarella et al.,1996; Pascarella, Palmer, Moye, & Pierson, 2001). As

Berryman-Fink (2006) reasoned, frequent and meaningful contact with diverse groups led to

reduced levels of prejudice for undergraduate students. Additionally, Jayakumar (2008)

discovered in a longitudinal study analyzing diversity experiences before, during, and after

college that students who experienced a positive campus racial climate in college developed the

pluralistic viewpoint necessary to succeed and communicate in a multicultural environment after

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college. Attending colleges with a diverse student body promoted more interaction across race and more pluralistic views regardless of whether or not the students had any diversity experiences prior to attending college (Jayakumar, 2008). Frequent contact experiences on campus fostered to a more positive campus culture and provided fundamental skills that college students must embody to succeed on a diverse campus and in a diverse society (Jayakumar, 2008).

Several other research studies assessed the impact precollege experiences with diversity had on interaction with diverse peers during college (Park, Denson, & Bowman, 2013; Saenz, 2010). Saenz examined students' precollege interaction with diversity and discovered that students who interacted with diverse peers before college would replicate those same interactions during college. Another important finding was that the more diverse the student population on campus, the more frequently students interacted across racial lines (Saenz, 2010). Comparatively, Park et al. (2013), investigated White students with low levels of exposure to diversity before college and asserted that students attending institutions with wide representations of class and race interacted more frequently across racial and class lines, and engaged in additional diversity activities on campus. Again, students involved with diverse peers before college were more likely to interact with diverse peers during college (Park et al., 2013). Thus, for students entering college with little previous interaction with diverse groups, a diverse student body, in race and class, aids in cultivating an enhanced campus climate for students.

Attitude and Cognition Changes

As these studies indicate, students interacting with other diverse groups, such as gays and lesbians, provide additional benefits for young adults on campus. Sevecke, Rhymer, Almazan, and Jacob (2014) used contact experiences in their research among interactions with gay and

lesbian peers and levels of acceptance. Through telephone interviews undergraduate students were asked a variety of questions to effectively assess their current attitudes and experiences with gay and lesbian peers. Sevecke et al. reported interaction experiences significantly impacted positive views toward same-sex relations, and respondents expressed awareness of how knowledge of gay and lesbian issues would be imperative for their future careers. As evidenced thus far by several studies, favorable contact can enhance positive attitudes towards oppressed or minority groups such as the gay and lesbian community.

In another study Bowman and Brandenberger (2012) assessed students enrolled in service learning courses to determine if experiences with minority groups throughout the semester impacted any preconceived notions or attitudes they maintained. Participants who recounted having positive diversity experiences outside of their norm, or an unexpected experience revealed more positive belief change. Whereas having negative diversity experiences resulted in a small negative change in attitudes and beliefs for participants. Such a correlation speaks to the necessity for multiple diversity experiences that provide students with opportunities to replace negative experiences with positive ones (Bowman & Brandenberger, 2012).

Furthermore, Tienda (2013) affirmed that providing students with challenging experiences and opportunities to interact and work together across racial and gender divides generates more beliefs of inclusion instead of exclusion. Students greatly benefit from continual opportunities to interact with diverse peers particularly in cases where preconceived notions can be challenged. Bowman (2010) had parallel findings in a meta-analysis, which included nearly 80,000 students (p.12). A positive relationship was uncovered among diversity experiences of undergraduate students and their cognitive growth. Bowman reasoned that such interactions resulted in beliefs being challenged, requiring a higher level of thinking and thus, more cognitive

growth. Along those same lines, Pascarella, Palmer, Moye, and Pierson (2001) discovered a positive relationship between interacting with diverse groups and critical thinking. According to Pascarella et al. women in the study who made friends with diverse peers resulted in a positive impact on developing their critical thinking skills.

Students' openness to diversity seems to play a critical role in diversity interactions on campus. Pascarella et al. (1996) analyzed students' openness to diversity and established that daily interactions with diverse peers incited more openness to diversity than a single diversity experience. Similarly, Bowman (2014) affirmed that undergraduates with high levels of openness to diversity engaged in more diversity experiences and exhibited higher levels of student engagement and academic achievement. Bowman noted that students with low levels of openness may find the diverse campus environment challenging and have a difficult time seeking out such experiences. As these studies demonstrate, every student has a different level of openness to diversity; it remains critical to offer a wide range of diversity programs and experiences for those that may have difficulty engaging or for those with fewer chances to interact with peers.

Programs instituted on campus that encourage interaction, such as the Multi-Racial Living Unity Experience (MRULE), have been tested for their effectiveness (Muthaswamy, Levine, & Gazel, 2006). Such programs are created in an effort to lessen the racial divide frequently experienced on college campuses. In their quasi-experimental study the researchers looked to the impact diversity initiatives have on effecting positive change in participants' knowledge and attitudes in regards to race. MRULE encourages students from diverse backgrounds to come together for frequent roundtable discussions and socials to encourage peer-to-peer discussions about racial issues (Muthaswamy et al., 2006). Results indicated that those

participating in MRULE for 2 years had more favorable attitudes toward race and possessed more knowledge about racial issues. The results correspond with other research that interaction with diverse peers positively impacts students' thoughts and actions as they relate to race (Berryman-Fink, 2006; Bowman & Brandenberger, 2012; Jayakumar, 2008). As evidenced by these studies, providing students with opportunities to interact and have thoughtful discussions creates positive change in beliefs and potentially reduces prejudice.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Trends in Diversity Programming</h3>

Because every student has a unique experience, perception, and attitude toward diversity, policy makers and curriculum developers may find it difficult to create diversity programming on campus that will meet the range of students' needs (Springer, Palmer, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996). Research has provided an illustration of numerous diversity programming methods, though there is a lack of consensus on what programming is most effective. Chang (2002) discovered that diversity efforts and initiatives must wield transformative power to reconstruct students' beliefs that inhibit authentic diversity and inclusion on campus. Therefore, the challenge becomes sorting through the trends in diversity programming to discover what program, or combination of programs, would generate the most significant benefit for the diverse student body and the campus culture.

Service Learning

Investigation of service learning opportunities for college students has revealed a tremendous ability to shift students' perceptions towards diversity through the experience (Baldwin et al., 2007; Bowman, 2010; Cole & Zhou, 2014; Lattanzi & Pechak, 2012; Yoon, Martin, & Murphy, 2011). Yoon et al., using qualitative and quantitative research methods assessed cultural awareness throughout 1 semester and discovered students' perceptions were

greatly altered through participation in service learning opportunities. By the end of the semester, students expressed that they more comfortable with diverse populations, their overall knowledge of diversity was enhanced, and students were aware that their actions made a difference for others. One of the most important perceptual shifts was that students recognized that diversity meant similarities between one another, not just differences (Yoon et al., 2011).

Many educational programs are requiring service learning as part of their curriculum strategies, stemming from the awareness that graduates must be prepared to work with diverse groups in diverse settings. Baldwin et al. (2007) revealed a vital perceptual shift in a group of teacher education candidates who participated in a required service learning experience for their program. Many of the teacher candidates had minimal experience with minority students, and interacting with minorities in a diverse community settings prompted students to challenge stereotypes and preconceived notions. The teacher candidates in the study claimed that through the experience they were encouraged to rethink their teaching practices, examine their own prejudices, and question the inequities in education (Baldwin et al., 2007).

Comparatively, students enrolled in healthcare profession programs at one university participate in a variety of curriculum strategies aimed at broadening the skills and awareness needed to succeed in a technologically advanced and global society (Lattanzi & Pechak, 2012). Students participate in reflective practices and experiential learning opportunities, including service learning. The combination was declared to provide the students with a holistic experience that enabled them to apply their skills on a global scale. Whereas some programs are using a combination of diversity programs for their students, Bowman (2010) established that service learning opportunities based on interaction with diverse groups provided more benefit than other forms of curriculum strategies such as required attendance to workshops or other coursework.

According to Cole and Zhou (2014) service learning was also discovered to be the most significant catalyst for change when compared to a variety of other diversity experiences. Among the types of programming assessed, service learning provided students with the most positive increase in civic mindedness. Cole and Zhou defined civic mindedness as "individuals that have the awareness required to take action against social issues and promote a greater public good" (as cited in Ehlrich, 2000, p.114). The civic and individual benefits of service learning opportunities cannot be contested and indicate the central role administrators and leaders in higher education have in implementing effective diversity programs in order to reap such benefits.

Cultural Awareness Workshops

Another frequent diversity program offered to students is cultural or racial awareness workshops. Jayakumar (2008) and Pascarella et al. (2001) all documented that students who attended cultural awareness workshops demonstrated an increase in openness to discuss social issues and experienced more cross-racial interaction. In one longitudinal study conducted by Bowman, Brandenberger, Hill, and Lapsley (2011) attending cultural awareness workshops left a positive impact on students thirteen years after graduating. Those students who participated in workshops during college revealed higher levels of personal growth, and a greater sense of purpose in life. In adulthood, students who participated in workshops were also more likely to recognize issues of racism and engage in more volunteer opportunities (Bowman et al., 2011). Other studies have confirmed a link between an individual with a greater sense of purpose exhibiting a greater acceptance of a diverse world (Burrow, Stanley, Sumner, & Hill, 2014).

Although there is support for the use of cultural awareness workshops to shift attitudes towards diversity for undergraduate students, some students may benefit more than others. As Springer, Palmer, Terenzini, Pascarella, and Nora (1996) indicated in their study, women and

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students enrolled in liberal arts majors participated more frequently in cultural awareness workshops and correspondingly held more favorable attitudes towards diversity. Students in more conservative majors were less likely to participate in workshops and declared less favorable attitudes towards diversity. Inconsistencies in participation levels provides insight into who may benefit the most from racial awareness workshops, and iterates the importance to provide multiple types of programming to meet an array of needs.

Diversity Coursework

Universities often will require enrollment in a specific diversity course in an effort to ensure that students have a more multicultural perspective after graduation. Although most courses are not analyzed for their quality, You and Matteo (2013) found evidence for their effectiveness. A pretest and posttest of the Multicultural Experience Questionnaire (MEQ) was used to measure the effectiveness of diversity courses on undergraduate students' attitudes towards diversity. On the posttest at the end of the semester, students revealed higher MEQ scores than at the beginning of the semester. Henderson-King and Kaleta (2000) detailed similar findings in their semester-long analysis of intergroup tolerance among undergraduate students. Participants in one group of the study were enrolled in a required diversity course, while participants in another group were a random sample of students not enrolled in the course. Those students not enrolled in the diversity course maintained less tolerant views of others at the end of the semester. Students enrolled in the diversity course did not evidence a substantial increase in tolerance, though their tolerance levels did not decrease, as was the case in the other group. The researchers suggested that although participating in the diversity course did not enhance tolerance, requiring such a course might act as a safeguard against tolerance levels decreasing from other college experiences (Henderson-King & Kaleta, 2000).

Conversely, Huber-Warring, Mitchell, Alagic, and Gibson (2005) noted in their assessment of teacher education candidates that the diversity course required in their program did little to prepare students for work in their classrooms. Over a 3 year span, teacher candidates were assessed on a variety of competencies that revealed that the teachers did not know effective strategies to teach minorities and they did not have an understanding of the effect policy has on race in education. Sevecke et al. (2014) similarly stated that enrolling in coursework that incorporated gay and lesbian topics did not have a significant impact on students' positive attitudes toward gay and lesbian issues.

Furthermore, the National Survey of Student Engagement (2011) reported noteworthy findings regarding diversity coursework. Whereas 66% of social science majors responded feeling encouraged to understand other cultures and were exposed to diversity courses, only 21% of engineering majors expressed the same exposure and encouragement ("Fostering Student Engagement"). Although findings and reports are inconsistent, diversity courses may have the potential to provide benefit to students across the course of a semester. Therefore, when diversity courses are required and the importance of embracing a multicultural attitude is promoted in all major fields, the benefits of attending a semester long diversity course would undoubtedly be produced.

Diversity Training

Diversity training is an additional method of diversity programming that is frequently being used on college campuses to enhance attitudes towards diverse groups and decrease discrimination. In one study students' intergroup attitudes were improved after participating in either a 2 hour diversity training or a daylong diversity training (Ehrke et al., 2014). The students who participated in the daylong training showed significant change in attitudes 1 month after

having participated in the training. The same long-term effects were not evident with the shorter training. Diversity training for healthcare workers showed similar impact, with a significant reduction in individuals experiencing ethnic discrimination following the training (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2010). The results of this study indicated that even though diversity programming produces various benefits, many questions still remain about which program is the most effective and whether or not such initiatives should be required for students.

Benefits of Reading Fiction

While plentiful research has been conducted examining the benefits of diversity on campus and diversity programming for undergraduate students, minimal research has been focused on connecting reading fiction as a potential resource for diversity programming. Diversity courses, racial awareness workshops, and service learning opportunities are all supported by research for their transformational influence on students' attitudes and perceptions towards minority and underrepresented groups on campus (Bowman, Brandenberger, Hill, & Lapsley, 2011; Ehrke et al., 2014; Yoon et al., 2011). Emerging studies have established that reading narrative fiction can enhance readers' empathic and multicultural attitudes, shift perspectives and outlooks, and enhance moral reasoning (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Hakemulder, 2000; Litcher & Johnson, 1969; Whitney, Vozzola, & Hofman, 2005). Benefits such as these could be harnessed to cultivate a campus culture that is inclusive and celebrates diversity.

Enhancing Multicultural Attitudes

Researchers claimed the importance of diversity contact to cultivate a reduction in prejudice and stereotyping as far back as the 1960s. At such a period in American history, contact with diverse groups was minimal, which spurred investigation into the power of reading about diverse groups as a possible alternative for contact with diverse groups. Litcher and

Johnson (1969) conducted an exploratory study that examined the impact the use of multi-ethnic readers would have on second graders. The researchers used a control group of students who read from a traditional reader and an experimental group read from a multi-ethnic reader that showed people of color in the pictures and used names that represented a more diverse background. Results from the pretest suggested that children were able to recognize race and ascribe themselves with their assigned racial group. Using comparison and category tests, the students in classes using the multi-ethnic reader scored higher on an attitude scale than those students using the traditional reader (Litcher & Johnson, 1969). Although the techniques used in this study would not be endorsed today, the outcomes suggested that the use of a multi-ethnic reader helped children to have a change in attitude toward other races that was more accepting and inclusive.

Subsequent studies in the 1970s provided more validity with their use of a theoretical base and offered practical suggestions on how to change children's attitudes towards race. From their extensive review of previous research, Katz and Zalk (1978) chose four methods to use in their study with elementary aged students attending rural and urban schools in New York. Students completed an attitude inventory to assess attitudes towards race and then were randomly assigned to one of the four chosen interventions. Overall, students exposed to the interventions showed a reduction in prejudice attitudes compared to the control group at the posttest measure 2 weeks after the experimental phase. Not all of the interventions produced equal benefits, with the vicarious identification intervention providing the most significant decrease in negative racial attitudes (Katz & Zalk, 1978). In the vicarious identification group, children listened to a story and viewed slides of Black children, while the control group listened to the same story, but viewed slides of White children and then were asked how well they liked

the story (Katz & Zalk, 1978). The findings from these early studies began to provide support for the power of reading on changing attitudes towards race and counteracting prejudice for those that have minimal contact with minority groups.

More recently Vezzali, Stathi, Giovannini, Capoza, and Trifletti (2014) conducted a study in which the researchers examined if the pronounced antidiscrimination messages in *Harry Potter* books would effectively produce a reduction in attitudes of discrimination and prejudice in the reader. Outcomes suggested that those who have read *Harry Potter* exhibit less prejudice towards marginalized groups than those who did not read the books (Vezzali et al., 2014). The messages and characters in the *Harry Potter* series appeared to have been an effective tool in promoting inclusive attitudes in readers.

Development of Empathy and Social Skills

The development of empathy and other positive social skills from reading fiction is an area that has been more widely researched in the past few decades, giving more support to the use of reading as a resource. Mar, Oatley, Hirsh, dela Paz, and Peterson (2006) reasoned that reading literary fiction where social simulation is experienced, sets individuals in a rare position to experience multiple social experiences through the narratives they are reading, leading to a more enhanced level of social skills. The researchers evaluated if reading of narrative fiction correlated with enhanced social skills after controlling for the amount of nonfiction that was also read, because nonfiction does not allow for the same simulation of social experience. Using the Author Recognition Test (ART), readers of fiction were more positively correlated with measures of empathic understanding than their nonfiction-reading counterparts (Mar et al., 2006).

In an effort to address any other possible explanation of findings that linked reading narrative fiction to positive social skills such as empathy, Mar, Oatley, and Peterson (2009) conducted a follow up study to control for individual differences that may account for the relationship. The researchers controlled specific personality traits such as openness, which places individuals in a position to be more empathic. The researchers also controlled for gender and narrative engagement, which was defined as the ability to be drawn into the story. Personality traits alone could not account for the relationship between reading fictional narratives and empathy (Mar, Oatley, & Peterson, 2009).

Relatedly, Koopman (2015) and Johnson (2012) investigated the potential for personal factors to impact empathy and prosocial, or helping, behavior when reading certain types of literature. Koopman (2015), had participants either read a literary narrative, life narrative, or an expository piece on depression and grief. Respondents who read narrative stories demonstrated more empathy with the characters and indicated more prosocial behavior than those reading expository pieces. Personal experience with depression also resulted in participants exhibiting more prosocial behavior, which was measured by the willingness of the participant to donate a portion of the money they received to participate in the study to a charity (Koopman, 2015). Johnson (2012) likewise used a story designed to encourage an empathic response and model helping behaviors for the reader. After reading the story, participants exhibited prosocial, helping behavior and scored high empathy scores on a mood assessment. Although prosocial behavior was measured by observing if participants would pick up a pen that was dropped by the researcher, the findings show promise that readers may be more likely to model desirable traits after reading a compelling story.

In a similar fashion, one counselor education program tested the benefits of reading to

encourage empathic growth by employing reading of Harry Potter chapters in the students'

practicum course (Gibson, 2007). Through reading and exploring their emotions and reactions

after reading, the students were able to truly analyze characters and situations in a way that they

are unable to do in a one-on-one counseling session. As a result of reading about the characters

and events that school-aged children often experience, the counseling students were able to

objectively assess the situations in an experiential way (Gibson, 2007). Reading the chapters

enabled the students to expand their experience and develop more awareness and empathic

understanding for work with future clients (Gibson, 2007). Kidd and Castano (2013) conducted

multiple experiments that produced findings consistent with Gibson's findings in which reading

fiction was linked to an increased understanding of others. Through their experiments, Kidd and

Castano observed that the act of reading fiction, in particular, enabled the reader an opportunity

to identify and better understand the emotions and cognitions of the characters in the story,

leading to an enhanced ability to exhibit empathic concern and understanding of others (Kidd &

Castano, 2013).

Changing Perspective through Transportation

The ability to change an individual's perspective is another essential aspect to increase

empathy towards others and reduce prejudice and stereotyping. Galinksy and Moskowitz (2000)

concluded that actively instructing individuals to change their perspectives led to reduced

expression and accessibility of stereotypes. Changing perspective incites more understanding for

the target of the stereotype, which may make it more difficult to form the same stereotypic

impressions of the target group in later interactions. Numerous researchers have discovered that

being transported through reading fictional narratives promotes perspective change in the reader

(Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Green & Brock, 2000; Green, Brock, & Kaufman, 2006; Hakemulder, 2000; Nell, 1988).

Bal and Veltkamp (2013) discovered that emotional and personal change could take place for readers who were transported into a story. The researchers conducted two studies using selected texts for participants to read and then fill out surveys assessing emotional transportation and empathy. In the first study the researchers discovered that fiction reading did increase empathy levels if the individual was emotionally transported into the story. In the second study, low levels of transportation prompted low levels of empathy and participants actually disengaged from the literature when that was the case. Being able to identify with a character or the story was discovered to be the most effective way for empathy to increase after reading a tale of fiction (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013). In the same fashion, Mar et al. (2006) declared a positive correlation between empathy and the level participants claimed they could be transported into the story that was being read. Literature, through a simulation experience, has the ability to place the reader in situations and emotional occurrences that otherwise may never have been experienced in daily life (Mar & Oatley, 2008). Outcomes such as these provide further support that reading has transformative power, increases empathy towards others, and enables one to access multiple perspectives.

Similar to the findings of Bal and Veltkamp (2013), Ross (2000) interviewed 194 avid readers and determined that readers often come across information in books they were not originally seeking. The procurement of unexpected information assists the reader in developing identity and new ideas (Ross, 2000). Altogether, the readers in Ross's study suggested that the culminating experience of reading over their lifetime had led to "life changing" moments, and many could pinpoint a specific book that held transformative power. These transformative books

were repeatedly described as opening the reader up to new perspectives, helping them to see things differently, and enlarging their possibilities (Ross).

Reading and other media that offer a transportation experience has been likened to an enjoyable distraction from reality or escape to a different world (Green et al., 2006; Nell, 1988). Green, Brock, and Kaufman (2006) indicated that an individual must feel transported, or lost in the story, to find different types of media enjoyable. Because a reader is responsible for creating images of characters and events in a book, Green et al. proposed that reading is one of the most transportational media types available. The desire to experience being transported into a story is evident by the wide variety and number of movie theaters and bookstores available for one's enjoyment. Being transported is considered enjoyable because after the experience our perspective has changed, the reader may even be able to cope with new situations or new emotions more easily because of the transported experience (Green et al., 2006).

Through literary transportation we are able to escape from the stress and worries of everyday life, read about new sources of information, obtain new insight into historical events, even try out other possible ways of acting or behaving in a safe simulation environment (Green et al., 2006). Nell (1988) also determined reading for pleasure as a highly transformational and imaginative occurrence where the reader is able to experience other characters and places. Nell conducted multiple studies analyzing pleasure reading and likewise discovered the necessity for reading to be enjoyable in order for the experience to provide a rewarding and transformational outcome.

Moral Development

Storytelling and reading have long been used as a way to teach moral lessons and develop our sense of right and wrong. Hakemulder (2000) expounded upon the indisputable power of

narratives on the way we think and behave and how we refine our moral and ethical compass in multiple experiments examining the effects of literature on perceptions and moral self-concept. Hakemulder referred to literature, particularly narrative fiction as a sort of "Moral Laboratory" (p. 61). This position is similar to other researchers who refer to reading literary fiction as a simulation experience (Green et al., 2006; Mar & Oatley, 2008). Reading allows an individual a safe space to challenge new ideas and experience a wide range of emotions. Hakemulder investigated in multiple experiments how a reader processed stories and the emotional response those stories generated. Using college freshman as the sample, one experimental group read a story of oppression with characters you could empathize with, while another control group read an informative essay with no characters. The group reading the informative essay showed no change in belief, whereas the other group showed multiple belief changes in regards to women's rights in Algeria. From these results Hakemulder suggested that literature plays an important role in personal enlightenment and provides a method for refining of our moral motivations and behaviors.

Though it is evident that reading provides an opportunity to explore emotions and ethics, Whitney, Vozzola, and Hofman (2005) conducted an experiment to see whether or not adults possess an ability similar to children to acknowledge moral lessons from reading. The researchers recruited Harry Potter fans through email and school outreach, comprising a final sample that included a wide range of ages to represent different levels of moral and educational development. Participants were asked to fill out either the adult or children form of a Rating Story Content Scale to assess multiple components of morality based on individual characters. Results indicated that adults and children took different lessons from reading Harry Potter, though both could easily recognize the themes of courage and friendship. The older, adult,

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participants were more likely to identify the moral reasoning and judgment behind decisions being made by characters in the book. In further studies, first year college students were often the group able to make significant gains in moral reasoning development when they took courses related to social justice issues regardless of race, gender, or cognitive ability (Mayhew, Seifert, & Pascarella, 2012). Thus, reading may be a viable option to provide individualized lessons for moral development for young adults at various levels of moral reasoning.

Trends and Issues in Literacy for Young Adults

As inferred through scholarly studies, reading with its various benefits may be an effective resource to encourage empathy, inclusion, and tolerance in undergraduate students. Although the benefits are plentiful, limited consensus exists to determine if young adults entering college are reading for pleasure and what factors contribute to their aversion or enjoyment of reading in young adulthood. Current research provides little understanding on what young adults are reading, if they are reading, and on the definition of reading in the 21st century digital age.

Attitudes and Motivation

In the 1990s and early 2000s worsening attitudes towards reading accompany some reports of declining reading habits for young adults ("National Endowment"). This decline appears to be the case particularly once students reach high school and formal reading programs decline while mandatory reading in the classroom rises. Virgil (1994) suggested that in order to combat resistant and resentful feelings towards reading, teachers must provide students with some choice and autonomy in their reading. Textbooks are at times used to threaten or intimidate a student, which does nothing but increase resistance. Students who expressed being forced to read may develop negative beliefs about reading that can impact their attitudes and motivation for reading well into adulthood (Ortlieb, Grandstaff-Beckers, & Cheek, 2012). Offering students

choice in their reading of interesting and relevant supplemental texts, as well as provide clinics that can supply structure to promote engagement and motivation may renew the desire to read in postsecondary students (Virgil, 1994; Ortlieb et al., 2012).

Reading programs in secondary school are plentiful, such as the Book It! program that was prominent in the 1990s in which elementary students were rewarded with pizza for participation in the program. Flora and Flora (1999) followed the participants in the program years later when they entered college to assess their reading habits and motivation to read as adults. Participants reflected that being offered pizza or money as a reward when they were children did not considerably influence their current reading habits and had little impact on their motivation to read. The respondents indicated during interviews that participating in the program during childhood did iterate to them the importance of reading for their educational success, which provided them intrinsic motivation to continue reading in adulthood (Flora & Flora, 1990). Kelly and Kneipp (2013) additionally pinpointed intrinsic motivation to be a potential outcome of reading for pleasure. In their study with college students enrolled in psychology courses, those who read for pleasure outside of their coursework had correspondingly high levels of creativity. The researchers suggested that reading encouraged active learning and had the potential to ignite intrinsic motivation to learn more about their major field (Kelly & Kneipp, 2013).

Differences in attitudes and motivation towards reading are evident between men and women, as Burgess and Jones (2010) revealed in their study of college students' reading habits. Men thought of reading as boring and uninspiring, whereas women expressed reading to be enjoyable, though a lack of time and energy was their main reason for not reading more. Burak (2004) discovered that students who recognized that reading engages the imagination will view it

as worthwhile and have increased motivation to read. Burak surveyed students enrolled in nine different college courses to gain insight into the behavior and intentions of recreational reading for college students. From the 201 responses, overall feelings towards recreational reading were positive, with almost half of respondents stating they would read for pleasure at some point during the semester (Burak, 2004). Nearly all respondents agreed that reading for pleasure improved their vocabulary and knowledge and engaged their imaginations. Overall, students' attitudes towards reading predicted their intentions to read. Respondents who held negative attitudes towards reading and saw it as a waste of time, or boring, had the fewest intentions to read during the semester (Burak, 2004). As evidenced by examining attitudes toward reading for college students, reading habits and attitudes are formed early and if not improved can exacerbate the decline of reading for students into their postsecondary educational careers and beyond.

Parental and Educational Influence

Conflicting research exists on the influence teachers and parents have on students' attitudes and reading habits. In 2004 Applegate and Applegate surveyed education majors to assess level of enthusiasm for reading. The results indicated that less than half of those surveyed were enthusiastic about reading, leading the researchers to wonder what impact this lack of enthusiasm would have for the reading habits of students under their tutelage in the future.

Prompted by the initial Applegate and Applegate (2004) findings, Applegate et al. (2014) expanded their research to a variety of majors to assess levels of reading enthusiasm and what has influenced their aspirations, or lack thereof, to read. Fewer than half of respondents (46.6%) could be classified as enthusiastic readers (Applegate et al., p.192). Through analysis of the open-ended questions in their survey, some respondents remarked on the importance of reading

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for their intellectual growth and the way reading could open their minds to new perspectives. Others disclosed reading was merely an obligation in order to get thorough their coursework. Parental encouragement was also determined to be a significant factor in the attitudes of the students towards reading. Respondents were either categorized as enthusiastic or unenthusiastic readers according to their responses to the survey. Students categorized as enthusiastic chronicled receiving parental encouragement and could recall teachers in the past inspiring a love of reading and providing choice in their classroom readings. Students categorized as unenthusiastic recounted teachers as the root of their aversion to reading because of too much assigned reading, and lack of choice in what they could read. Although students in teacher education programs held slightly more positive and enthusiastic views towards reading than students in other major fields, it is evident that teachers and parents hold considerable power to encourage enthusiastic attitudes towards reading (Applegate et al., 2014).

De Naeghel and Van Keer (2013) discovered conflicting results to Applegate et al. (2014) regarding to the impact teachers had on students autonomous reading motivation. For this sample of fifth grade students home environments that were supportive of reading and participating with peers in reading activities were much more impactful than teachers' activities on reading motivation. Furthermore, Netherland (2004) proposed that the home environment is critically important to the academic success of children. Parents surveyed who provide a home environment filled with books, encourage reading, and read with their children corresponded with children surveyed that possessed the best habits and attitudes toward reading. Parents must be engaged and encouraging of reading habits in order to instill a lifelong habit and love for reading (Netherland, 2004). Parlette (2010) reported similar finding through conducting focus

groups with first-year college students. Students revealed that their home environment greatly impacted and encouraged their current reading habits.

Impact of Technology

Technology has additionally influenced reading habits in recent years, though evidence of this is conflicting. Multiple studies (Gambrell, 2005; Mraz & Rasinski, 2007; Mokhtari, et al., 2009) cite the *Reading at Risk* report (2002) presumably evidencing the decline of reading habits of students for a variety of reasons. Gambrell (2005), posited that technology has actually promoted an increase in reading, not a decline as is usually declared in such documents as *Reading at Risk*. The way we seek information has changed, just as what we read has changed. Students may not be reading as many fiction books, but they may be reading more blogs or news articles as they surf through the web multiple times a day (Gambrell, 2005). While Gambrell admitted literacy and reading is incredibly important for academic success and self growth, the time has come to perhaps redefine reading to assess whether it really is at risk.

Mokhtari, Reichard, and Gardner (2009) conducted a time-diary survey of 539 college students to evaluate whether or not television and internet interfered with reading habits. Similarly influenced by reports such as *Reading at Risk,* the researchers wanted to discern if the decline was true of their students and if television and internet lead to the displacement of recreational reading time (Mokhtari et al., 2009). Students in their survey stated considerably higher levels of time spent on academic and recreational reading than the amount of time indicated in previous studies. However, 85% of respondents indicated that using the internet was more enjoyable than reading or watching television (Mokhtari et al., 2009). The majority of students did claim to enjoy reading outside of school and see the benefits; though recreational reading is often an activity they will sacrifice in order to do other activities (Mokhtari et al.,

2009). Reading for academic purposes was overwhelmingly the least favored activity, which links back to Virgil (1994) and the opinion of using reading as a punishment in high school and beyond. Although these researchers may have discovered evidence to support that reading is in decline for certain populations, they do make a caution much as Gambrell (2005) that reading may need to be redefined to include internet-based reading. These are important perspectives to note and can inform research on reading habits to broaden definitions for what truly constitutes reading.

Gilbert and Fister (2011) had interesting findings in their results from 717 undergraduate students on their "attitudes and experiences with recreational reading" (p. 478). In contrast to the findings in Mokhtari et al. (2009), 93% of students affirmed that they enjoyed recreational reading and read a broad range of genres. The researchers in this study specifically asked students to exclude the time spent reading on social networks, which decreased the percentage of students who consider the Internet to be a source for recreational reading (Gilbert & Fister, 2011). Furthering the analysis of what truly constitutes reading for young adults, Nadelson et al. (2013) examined how undergraduate students perceive their use of traditional and non-traditional text sources. Using an online survey, the researchers asked reading habit and perception questions. Overall, respondents disclosed that texting, email, and social media sites were their most frequent source for reading, though these same sources were least likely to be perceived as reading. Reading was most often perceived as engaging in textbooks, novels, and other printed, traditional forms of media. Students in this study viewed text reading as more valuable and important than electronic versions and defined reading as those sources that are longer and more scholarly when compared to brief, digital based types. Parlette (2010) declared a similar view

towards online reading, with the majority of respondents' in their study perceiving reading through social media outlets or blogs as a social practice.

Huang, Capps, Blalock, and Garza (2014) focused their research on college student reading habits, including what factors contributed to the decline in reading such as the distraction of the internet. The main focus of their mixed methods study was to assess how the internet impacts the time college students were spending on academic reading, extracurricular reading, and internet usage, and what type of reading they select most often. For the quantitative survey portion of the study, 1,265 students participated, and 12 students participated in the qualitative portion, which involved classroom observation and interviews (Huang et al., p. 433). The majority of the students who responded to the survey indicated that reading online was their most preferred type of reading, whereas academic books not related to their major was their least preferred (Huang et al., 2014).

Discoveries from both the quantitative study and the qualitative study portrayed college students who spend more time on the internet and prefer internet based reading and research than college students in previous generations (Huang et al., 2014). In addition to the distraction of the internet, having a part-time job decreased the time students were able to dedicate to their academic and recreational reading. One significant consequence to the preference for reading on the internet was that some students admitted that the ease of access to information compromised the quality of their work. Some students admitted to only reading online summaries or finding information they could easily copy and submit (Huang et al., 2014). Students in the digital age may be at a detriment in the workforce if their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills have been hindered from such ease of access to information.

Preferred Sources for Reading

Emerging research displays interesting findings concerning how college students perceive reading and what sources they prefer to use for academic and recreational reading. Burgess and Jones (2010) found that men preferred to read newspapers while women preferred to read books or magazines. Overall, 80% of respondents indicated using web based sources for reading whereas only 24% indicated reading a book for fun more than once a week. Gallik (1999) detailed similar findings; students claimed spending less than 2 hours per week on recreational reading. Magazines and newspapers were again cited as some of the most preferred sources for reading, and students admitted that if they had more free time to read for pleasure they would do so, but academic reading did not leave much time for recreational reading.

With the push to use electronic media permeating all levels of education, Foasberg (2014) conducted a small qualitative study with college students to ascertain whether print or electronic reading sources were preferred. Foasberg concluded that generally students in her study still prefer print sources for their academic reading and electronic sources for their brief, nonacademic reading. Students in this study spent so much time reading for their courses there was little time left for pleasure reading, which was expressed through frustration in focus groups. These results indicated that there are still barriers to college students being able to spend time reading for pleasure, and that print and electronic media are still perceived as useful but for different purposes.

Chapter Summary

Increasing access to education is one of the foremost approaches to diversify institutions of higher education. Though some may oppose diversity initiatives or race-conscious admissions practices, the benefits of diversity on campus extend far beyond the individual and reaches

society as a whole. The more opportunity college and university students are given to interact and learn about themselves and others, the more equipped they may be to succeed in diverse workplaces.

Diversification of the student body cannot be the only initiative supported by leaders in higher education. Supplemental diversity programs such as service learning opportunities, required multicultural focused coursework, racial awareness workshops, and other diversity training are essential to cultivate a positive and inclusive campus climate. Research offers tremendous support of these programs for students in decreasing racial tensions on campus and promoting empathy and understanding.

Emerging investigations into the use of narrative fiction as a way to bridge cultural gaps and conflicts is receiving increasing support. Reading literature allows one to experience emotions and empathize with others in a way that may infiltrate the reader's thoughts and actions in the future. Gaining insight into whether or not young adults are reading for pleasure and their current attitudes and perceptions towards diversity could inform a new wave of diversity programming that could meet a wide range of students' needs.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and multicultural awareness and acceptance scores, as measured by the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of Undergraduate Students. This chapter describes the research questions and hypotheses, clarifies the sample and population to be studied, as well as provides detailed information on the survey instrument. In addition, this chapter describes the data collection process, data analyses, and survey procedures.

To gather information on whether reading literary fiction is an appropriate activity that could be used to foster multicultural awareness and acceptance in young adults, a nonexperimental quantitative design was selected. Quantitative research is best suited for discovery of trends or explanations of a problem or issue (Creswell, 2008). Employing nonexperimental quantitative design allows for exploration of relationships between different variables without any manipulation of the independent variables (McMillian & Schumacher, 2010).

Research Questions and Corresponding Null Hypotheses

The following research questions and null hypothesis were developed to guide this study:

Research Question 1

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of the survey between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho1$_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho1$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean score on Subscale 1(Diversity of Contact) between female and male undergraduate students.

Ho1$_3$: There is no significant difference in the mean score on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 2

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho2$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho2$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean score on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among racial groups.

Ho2$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Research Question 3

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho3$_1$: There is no significant difference among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho3$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among highest education level of parent.

Ho3$_3$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 4

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho4$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho4$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students.

Ho4$_3$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 5

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho5$_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho5$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among racial groups.

Ho5$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 6

 Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho6$_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho6$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic

Appreciation) of undergraduate students among highest education level of parent groups.

Ho6$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic

Appreciation) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader,

moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 7

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences)

between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader,

moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho7$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with

Differences) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading

frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho7$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with

Differences) between female and male undergraduate students.

Ho7$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with

Differences) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader,

moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 8

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among

racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate

reader, avid reader)?

Ho8_1: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho8_2: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among racial groups of undergraduate students.

Ho8_3: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Research Question 9

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho9_1: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho9_2: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among highest education level of parent groups.

Ho9_3: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Population and Sample

The population for this study consists of undergraduate students at a public four year university in Northeast Tennessee. The institution enrolls approximately 15,000 students and

offers a variety of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs (ETSU Fact Book, 2014). For this study, students enrolled in the College of Education, College of Business, and College of Nursing comprised the purposeful sample. Students majoring in Education, Business, and Nursing were selected due to their likely frequent interactions with diverse groups after graduation and the need to exhibit openness to such interactions. As of the Fall 2014 semester, the headcount of majors in the College of Business was 2,501 students. The headcount of majors in the College of Education and the College of Nursing (undergraduate) were 2,045 and 1,330 respectively (ETSU Fact Book). A sample of 120 students per college was the target for this study. This produced a total of 383 participants.

Instrumentation

This study was conducted using the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of Undergraduate Students. The survey instrument included four distinct sections. The first section comprised five demographic questions (gender, age, GPA, race, and degree attainment of both parents). The second section included five questions regarding reading habits and preferences (type, frequency, time spent, lifelong habits, and access). The third section was the 15-item Miville-Guzman Diversity Scale- Short (M-GUDS-S). The fourth section included questions reading the students' experience and perception of diversity on campus and in their program of study.

The second section of the instrument incorporated a variety of questions to assess the reading habits of respondents. Responses to two questions in this section resulted in grouping respondents into either nonreader, moderate reader, or avid reader categories. For instance, respondents selecting reading for pleasure zero hours per week and marking "never" when asked how often they read for pleasure were placed in the nonreader category. Respondents who

selected 3-4 hours or 5 or more hours per week reading for pleasure and marking "often" or "very often" when asked how often they read for pleasure were placed in the avid reader category. Respondents selecting the choices between those extremes were placed in the moderate reader category.

The third section, the Miville-Guzman Diversity Scale (M-GUDS), was developed to ascertain whether or not an individual is inclined to embrace diversity and seek out opportunities to be involved with diverse populations (Singley & Sedlacek, 2004). The M-GUDS measures a construct termed by the researchers as Universal-Diverse Orientation, or UDO (Miville et al., 1999). A high UDO score correlates with traits such as openness, empathy, and positive racial identity (Miville et al., 1999; Fuertes, Miville, Mohr, Sedlacek & Gretchen, 2000). UDO is defined by Miville et al. as follows:

> An attitude toward all other persons that is inclusive yet differentiating in that similarities and differences are both recognized and accepted; the shared experience of being human results in a sense of connectedness with people and is associated with a plurality or diversity of interactions with others. (p. 292)

The original M-GUDS contained 45 items and was later reduced to a short scale containing 15 items. The Miville-Guzman Diversity Scale-Short (M-GUDS-S) has been established to be as reliable as the long form in measuring UDO and has an additional advantage of quick administration (Fuertes et al., 2000). The validity and reliability of the M-GUDS has been tested multiple times. Experiments assessing construct validity, test-retest reliability, and discriminate validity produced strong evidence for the usefulness and strength of the instrument (Fuertes et al., 2000).

The M-GUDS-S includes 15 Likert-type items with a scale that ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). The M-GUDS-S has three subscales: Diversity of Contact, Relativistic Appreciation, and Comfort with Differences. The first subscale, Diversity of Contact, measures desire to seek out opportunities to participate and interact with diverse peoples in diverse activities (Fuertes et al., 2000). The second subscale, Relativistic Appreciation, measures the ability to appreciate that people have both similarities and differences between them. The third subscale, Comfort with Differences, measures the level of comfort and connection one has around those similar and different from oneself (Fuertes et al., 2000).

The final version of the instrument consisted of 33 questions. Respondents were placed into a reading frequency group (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader) based on their responses to questions in section two. The survey was calculated to take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Data Collection

To conduct this research, permission was requested and obtained through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the participating institution. The approval letter received from the IRB can be found in Appendix A. An email stating permission to distribute the Miville-Guzman Universality Diversity Scale-Short (M-GUDS-S) as part of the survey is included in Appendix B.

Prior to distribution of the survey, a random selection of professors from each of the three colleges were contacted through email. The email addresses were found through each the college's websites. Contingent on the professor's willingness to participate, a schedule was created to distribute surveys to a predetermined number of classrooms in each of the three participating colleges. A copy of the email correspondence professors received can be found in Appendix C. This chosen information and sampling strategy will aid in selection of a

representative sample for data analysis in order to best answer the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

A paper survey instrument that included 33 questions was distributed to the participating classrooms to ensure a high response rate. Before distribution of the survey to the classrooms, a short verbal introduction and explanation of the confidentiality of their identity and responses was given. Students were also notified that the survey was entirely voluntary and they could stop participation at any time. A copy of the script can be found in Appendix D. All responses were confidential and the demographic information collected did not reveal the participants in the study. Completed surveys were collected by the researcher and placed in a blank manila envelope.

Data Analysis

Data from the participating university and the three colleges included in the study were transferred from the paper surveys and compiled into an IBM-SPSS version 23.0 data file. Nine research questions and three null hypotheses per question were developed, and IBM-SPSS was used for all statistical analysis in the study.

Each of the nine research questions was analyzed using a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and were evaluated at the .05 level of significance. Use of a two-way ANOVA is an appropriate analysis method because of the two independent variables and one dependent variable in each research question. Each independent variable is divided into more than one level, creating the three scores needed for two-way ANOVA analysis (Green & Salkind, 2011). The appropriate follow up tests were conducted for statistically significant interaction effects and main effects (Green & Salkind, 2011).

Research questions 1, 4, and 7 examined differences in mean scores on subscales 1, 2, and 3 between males and females in regard to reading frequency. These questions were analyzed using a 3 X 2 ANOVA to evaluate the association between gender and reading frequency on subscale scores. Research questions 2, 5, and 8 examined differences in mean scores on subscales 1, 2, and 3 between race and reading frequency. These questions were analyzed using a 3 X 2 ANOVA to evaluate the association between race and reading frequency on subscale scores. Finally, research questions 3, 6, and 9 examined differences in mean scores on subscales 1, 2, and 3 between highest education attained by parents and reading frequency. These questions were analyzed using a 5 X 3 ANOVA to evaluate the association between educational attainment of parents and reading frequency on subscale scores.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 detailed the methodology and procedures for conducting this study. Included in this chapter was a brief introduction, research questions and null hypotheses, a description of the research design, selection of the population, description of the survey instrument, and lastly data collection and analysis procedures. Findings of the data analysis are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this quantitative research study was to explore the relationship between

self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and multicultural awareness and

acceptance scores as measured by the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits

and Diversity Orientation of Undergraduate Students. The survey included four distinct sections.

The first collected demographic information and the second collected self-reported reading habit

information. The third section of the instrument included the Miville-Guzman Universality-

Diversity Scale-Short (MGUDS-S). The MGUD-S provided three subscale scores. The first

measured a student's interest in finding opportunities to interact with a diverse population

(diversity of contact), the second measured the student's appreciation for the similarities and

differences found in people (relativistic appreciation), and the final subscale score measured the

comfort level of the student around others that they may view as similar or different from

themselves (comfort with differences) (Fuertes et al., 2000). The fourth section of the instrument

collected information on the students' experience and perception of the campus environment.

The study was designed to test the scores on the three subscales with the reading frequency

group (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader) as described by the respondent and three

demographics (gender, race, and highest education level of parents).

The target population of this study consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in the

College of Business, College of Education, and the College of Nursing at a public four year

university in Tennessee. The nonrandom sample used for this study included undergraduate

students enrolled in specific programs of study because of the likelihood of their interactions

with diverse groups following graduation. To ensure a high response rate and a representative

sample from each of the three programs, a paper survey was distributed by the researcher to students of instructors who agreed to participate in the study. Professors were contacted at random and invited to participate in the study. Fifteen classrooms were included in the study. This total consisted of four nursing classes, five education classes, and six business classes, which yielded a sample size of 389. Two students declined participation, two surveys were incomplete, and two students were ineligible due to their graduate status. These conditions resulted in 383 usable surveys for a 98% response rate.

The demographic structure of the participants included 235 females or 61.4% and 148 males or 38.6% with a mean age of 22 for the entire sample. Respondents self-reported their grade point average (GPA), and 79.4% of respondents selected the GPA range of 3.1-4.0. The GPA range of 2.1-3.0 was selected by 19.1%, and less than 2% selected 1.0-2.0 or that they were unsure of their current GPA. Of the 383 respondents, 325 or 84.9% described themselves as White and 58 or 15.1% described themselves as nonwhite or persons of color. For analysis purposes, racial categories with small frequencies were combined for more effective comparison. The full demographics for race, GPA, and gender are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

Gender, Grade Point Average, and Race Information

Variable		N	%
Gender			
Males		148	38.6
Females		235	61.4
	Total	383	
GPA Groups			
1.0 to 2.0		1	0.3
2.1 to 3.0		73	19.1
3.1 to 4.0		304	79.4
Do not know		5	1.2
	Total	383	
Race			
African American or Black		18	4.7
Arab or Middle Eastern		7	1.8
Asian or Asian American		13	3.4
Hispanic or Latino		11	2.9
Multiracial or Biracial		9	2.4
White or European American		325	84.8
	Total	383	

Results

The following research questions were analyzed to explore self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and their awareness, acceptance, and appreciation of diversity. The research questions addressed each of the three subscale scores separately (diversity of contact, relativistic appreciation, and comfort with differences). Certain demographic information was also addressed separately (gender, race, highest education level of parent). The differences and interactions between subscale scores, demographic information, and reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader) were also analyzed.

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Research Question 1

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of the survey between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho1_1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho1_2: There is no significant difference in the mean score on Subscale 1(Diversity of Contact) between female and male undergraduate students.

Ho1_3: There is no significant difference in the mean score on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between gender and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact). The means and standard deviations for the Subscale 1 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 2. The Levene's Test confirmed there was homogeneity of variances ($p = .383$).

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 1 by Gender

Reading Frequency	Gender	N	M	SD
Nonreader	Female	46	16.98	4.39
	Male	34	17.76	5.25
Moderate Reader	Female	106	19.30	4.50
	Male	79	18.72	5.23
Avid Reader	Female	83	19.76	4.77
	Male	35	19.34	4.30

The analysis indicated there was not a significant interaction between gender and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact), $F(2, 376) = .58$, $p = .558$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, $Ho1_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for gender, $F(1, 376) = .02$, $p = .896$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, $Ho1_2$ was retained. However, there was a significant main effect for reading frequency level, $F(2, 376) = 4.90$, $p = .008$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. Therefore, $Ho1_3$ was rejected. A Tukey post hoc test revealed that that there was a significant difference in the means between the nonreader and moderate reader groups and the nonreader and avid reader groups. There was no significant difference in the means between moderate and avid reading frequency groups. The nonreader group had significantly lower scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) than the moderate and avid reader groups. The 95% confidence intervals for the pairwise differences as well as the means and standard deviations for the three reading level frequency groups are reported in Table 3. Figure 1 displays Subscale 1 scores by reading frequency group for females and males.

Table 3

95% Confidence Intervals of Pairwise Differences of Mean Scores on Subscale 1

Reading Frequency	M	SD	Nonreader	Moderate Reader
Nonreader	17.32	4.76		
Moderate Reader	19.05	4.82	[.23, 3.24]*	
Avid Reader	19.64	4.62	[.69, 3.95]*	[-.74, 1.90]

*Significant at .05.
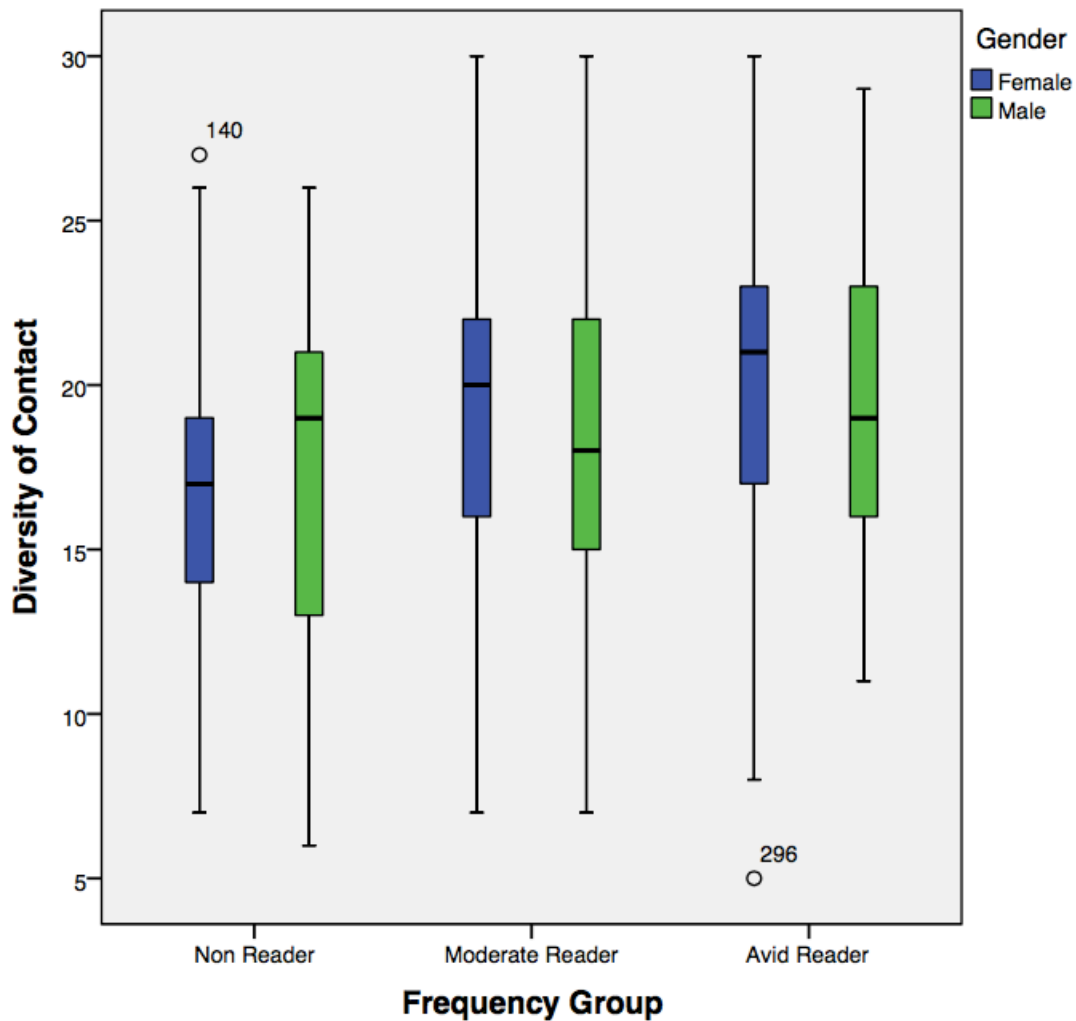
Figure 1. Boxplots of Subscale 1 scores by reading frequency group for females and males.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR * = values more than 3.0 IQR

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Research Question 2

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho2$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho2$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean score on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among racial groups.

Ho2$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between race and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact). The means and standard deviations for the Subscale 1 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 4. The Levene's Test confirmed there was homogeneity of variances ($p = .959$). Racial categories with small frequencies were grouped into one category for effective comparison.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 1 by Race

Reading Frequency	Race	N	M	SD
Nonreader	Nonwhite POC	15	20.73	4.51
	White or European American	65	16.52	4.49
Moderate Reader	Nonwhite POC	31	22.03	4.40
	White or European American	154	18.45	4.69
Avid Reader	Nonwhite POC	12	21.08	5.96
	White or European American	106	19.47	4.45

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between racial group and reading frequency level on means scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact), $F(2, 376) = 1.01$, $p = .364$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, Ho2$_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was a significant main effect for racial group, $F(1, 376) = 2.29$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .05$. Therefore, Ho2$_2$ was rejected. There was not a significant main effect for reading frequency, $F(2, 376) = 2.29$, $p = .103$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Thus, Ho2$_3$ was retained. The significant main effect for racial group provides support that there are differences between mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact). The respondents in the Nonwhite Person of Color (POC) group scored significantly higher on Subscale 1 than respondents in the White or European American group. Figure 2 displays scores from Subscale 1 by reading frequency group according to racial group.
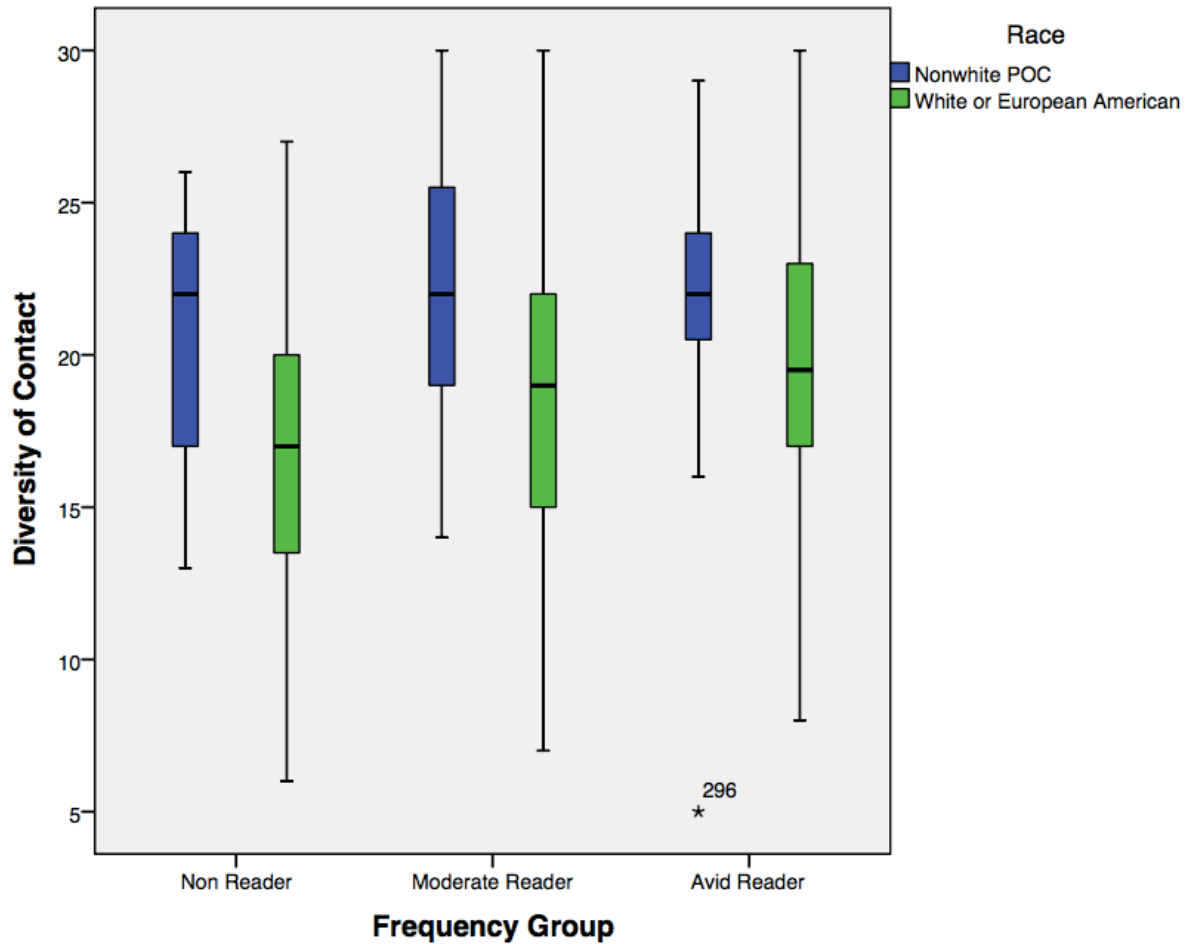
Figure 2. Boxplots of Subscale 1 scores by reading frequency group according to racial group.
Note. * = values more than 3.0 IQR

Research Question 3

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) among

highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency

(nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho3_1: There is no significant difference among highest education level of parent groups

of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid

reader).

Ho3$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among highest education level of parent.

Ho3$_3$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 4 X 3 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between the highest educational level of respondents' parents and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact). The means and standard deviations for Subscale 1 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 5 below. The Levene's Test confirmed there was homogeneity of variances ($p = .549$).

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 1 by Education Level of Parent

Reading Frequency	Highest Education Level	N	M	SD
Nonreader	High School Diploma or Less	12	17.67	5.66
	Some College	15	16.80	4.78
	Undergraduate Degree	31	17.29	4.10
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	21	17.52	5.40
Moderate Reader	High School Diploma or Less	32	19.63	4.69
	Some College	41	18.95	4.23
	Undergraduate Degree	56	19.48	5.36
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	56	18.38	4.77
Avid Reader	High School Diploma or Less	26	18.46	5.69
	Some College	35	19.40	4.15
	Undergraduate Degree	25	18.92	4.46
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	32	21.41	3.93

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between highest education level of respondents' parents and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact), $F(6, 370) = 1.43$, $p = .201$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, Ho3$_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for highest education level of parent groups, $F(3, 370) = .37$, $p = .775$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Thus, Ho3$_2$ was retained. There was a statistically significant main effect for reading frequency level, $F(2,$

370) = 5.1, p = .007, partial η^2 = .03. As a result, Ho3$_3$ was rejected. A Tukey post hoc test

revealed that that there was a significant difference in the means between the nonreader and

moderate reader groups and the nonreader and avid reader groups. There was no significant

difference in the means between moderate and avid reading frequency groups. The nonreader

group had significantly lower scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) than the moderate and

avid reader groups. See research question 1 for the 95% confidence intervals for the pairwise

differences, as well as the means and standard deviations for Subscale 1 scores. Figure 3 displays

Subscale 1 scores by reading frequency group according to highest education level of parent.
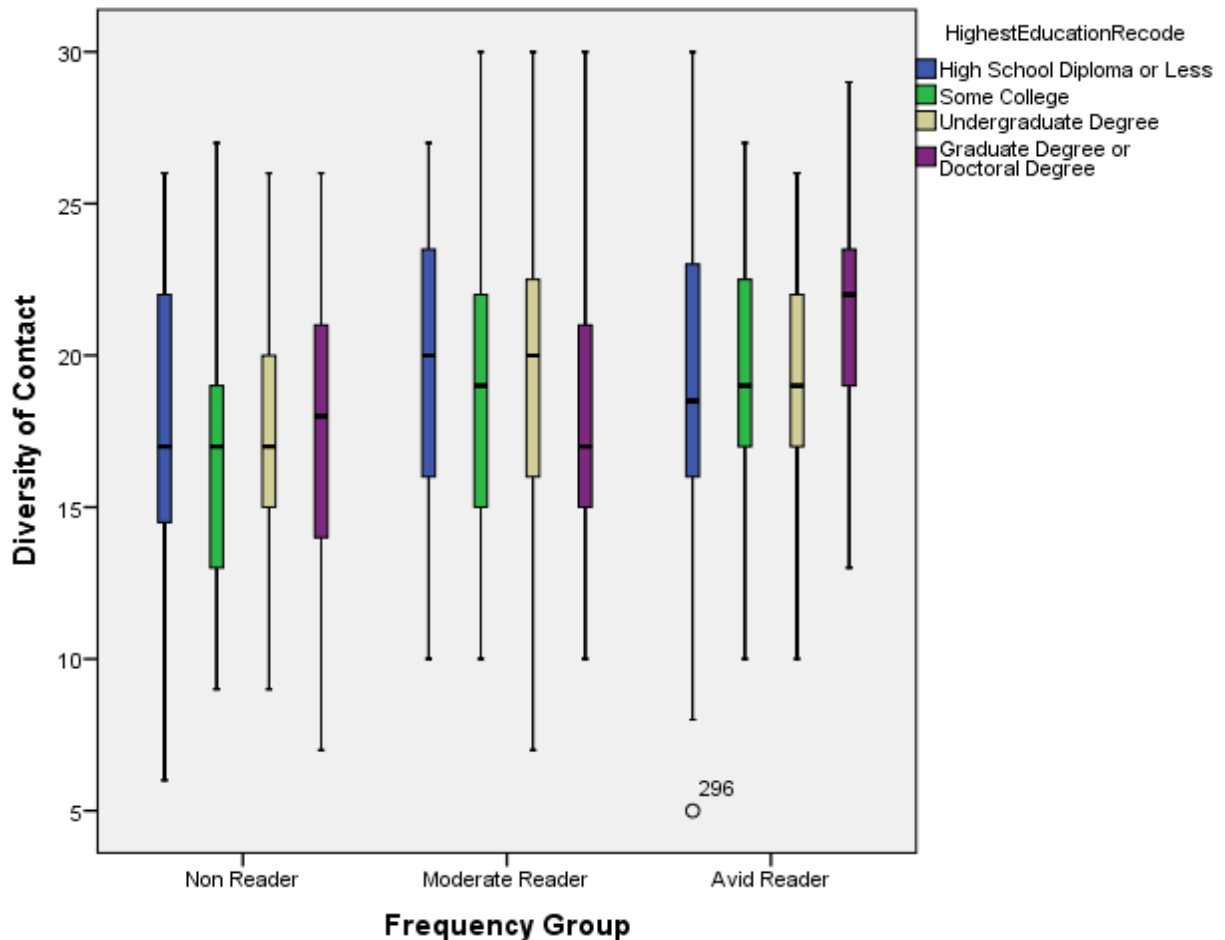
Figure 3. Boxplots of Subscale 1 scores by reading frequency group according to highest
education level of parent.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR

Research Question 4

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho4$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho4$_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between female and male undergraduate students.

Ho4$_3$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between gender and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation). The means and standard deviations for the Subscale 2 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 6. The Levene's Test confirmed there was homogeneity of variances ($p = .420$).

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 2 by Gender

Reading Frequency	Gender	N	M	SD
Nonreader	Female	46	22.70	3.31
	Male	34	22.53	4.32
Moderate Reader	Female	106	24.09	3.24
	Male	79	22.89	3.35
Avid Reader	Female	83	23.73	3.90
	Male	35	24.40	2.99

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between gender and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation), $F(2, 377)$ = 2.37, p = .095, partial η^2 = .01. Therefore, Ho4$_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for gender, $F(1, 377)$ = .36, p = .549, partial η^2 < .01. As a result, Ho4$_2$ was retained. There was a significant main effect for reading frequency level, $F(2, 377)$ = 3.77, p = .024, partial η^2 = .02. Therefore, Ho4$_3$was rejected. A Tukey post hoc test revealed that there was a significant difference in the means between the nonreader and avid reader groups. There was no significant difference in the means between the nonreader and moderate reader group or the moderate reader and avid reader group. The nonreader group had significantly lower scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) than the avid reader group. The 95% confidence intervals for the pairwise differences, as well as the means and standard deviations for the three reading level frequency groups are reported in Table 7. Figure 4 displays Subscale 2 scores by reading frequency group for females and males.

Table 7

95% Confidence Intervals of Pairwise Differences of Mean Scores on Subscale 2

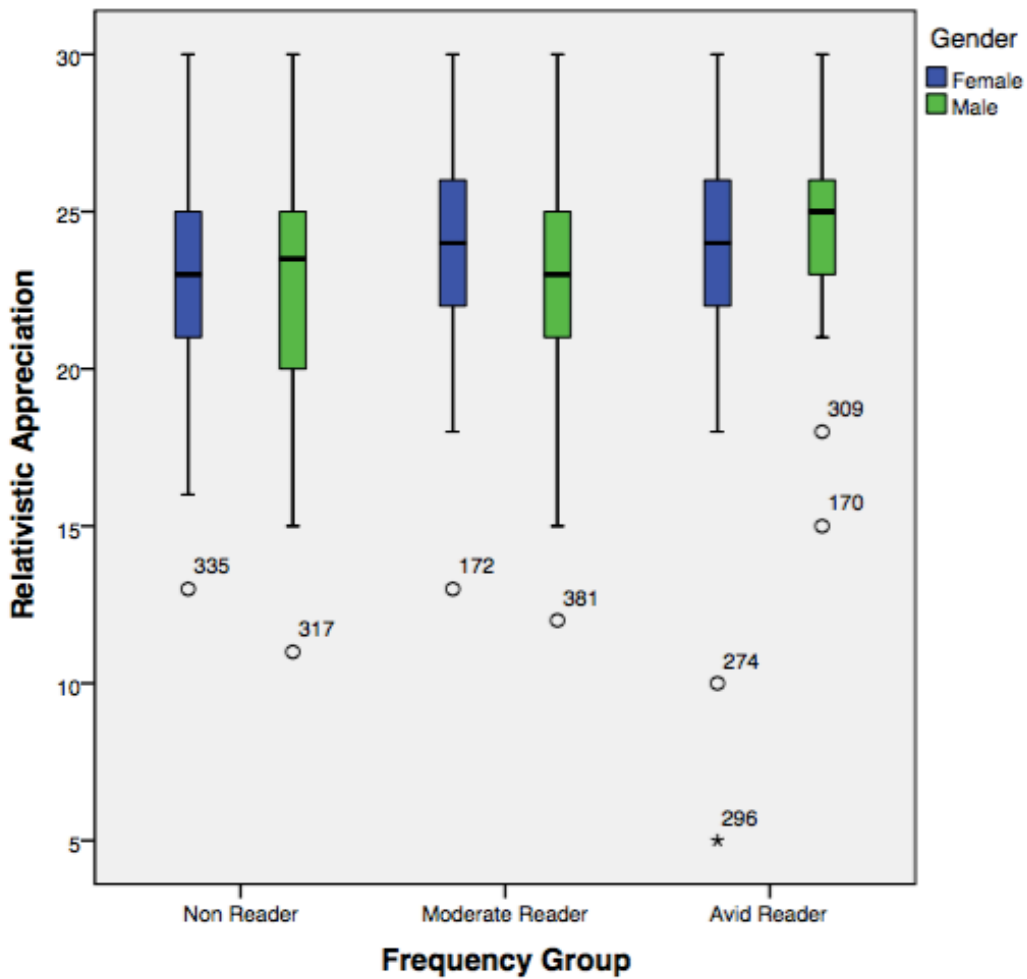| Reading Frequency	M	SD	Nonreader	Moderate Reader
Nonreader	22.62	3.75		
Moderate Reader	23.58	3.33	[-.15, 2.06]	
Avid Reader	23.93	3.65	[.11, 2.50]*	[-.62, 1.33]

*Significant at .05.

Figure 4. Boxplots of Subscale 2 scores by reading frequency group for females and males.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR * = values more than 3.0 IQR

Research Question 5

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho5$_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho5$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among racial groups.

Ho5$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between race and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation). The means and standard deviations for the Subscale 2 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 8. The Levene's Test was significant ($p = .009$) so homogeneity of variances cannot be confirmed. Because of the small sample size of Nonwhite People of Color (POC) respondents and the violation of equal variances results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 2 by Race

Reading Frequency	Race	N	M	SD
Nonreader	Nonwhite POC	15	22.40	4.49
	White or European American	65	22.68	3.59
Moderate Reader	Nonwhite POC	31	23.32	4.08
	White or European American	154	23.63	3.18
Avid Reader	Nonwhite POC	12	21.50	6.46
	White or European American	106	24.21	3.12

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between racial group and reading frequency level on means scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation), $F(2, 377) = 1.99$, $p = .139$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, Ho5$_3$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was a significant main effect for racial group, $F(1, 377) = 4.13$, p = .043, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Thus, Ho5$_2$ was rejected. There was not a significant main effect for reading frequency, $F(2, 377) = 1.33$, $p = .267$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. As a result, Ho5$_3$ was retained. The significant main effect for racial group provides support that there are differences between mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation). After further analysis of the means, the respondents in the Nonwhite People of Color (POC) group scored significantly lower on Subscale 2 than respondents in the White or European American group. Figure 5 displays Subscale 2 scores by reading frequency group according to racial group.
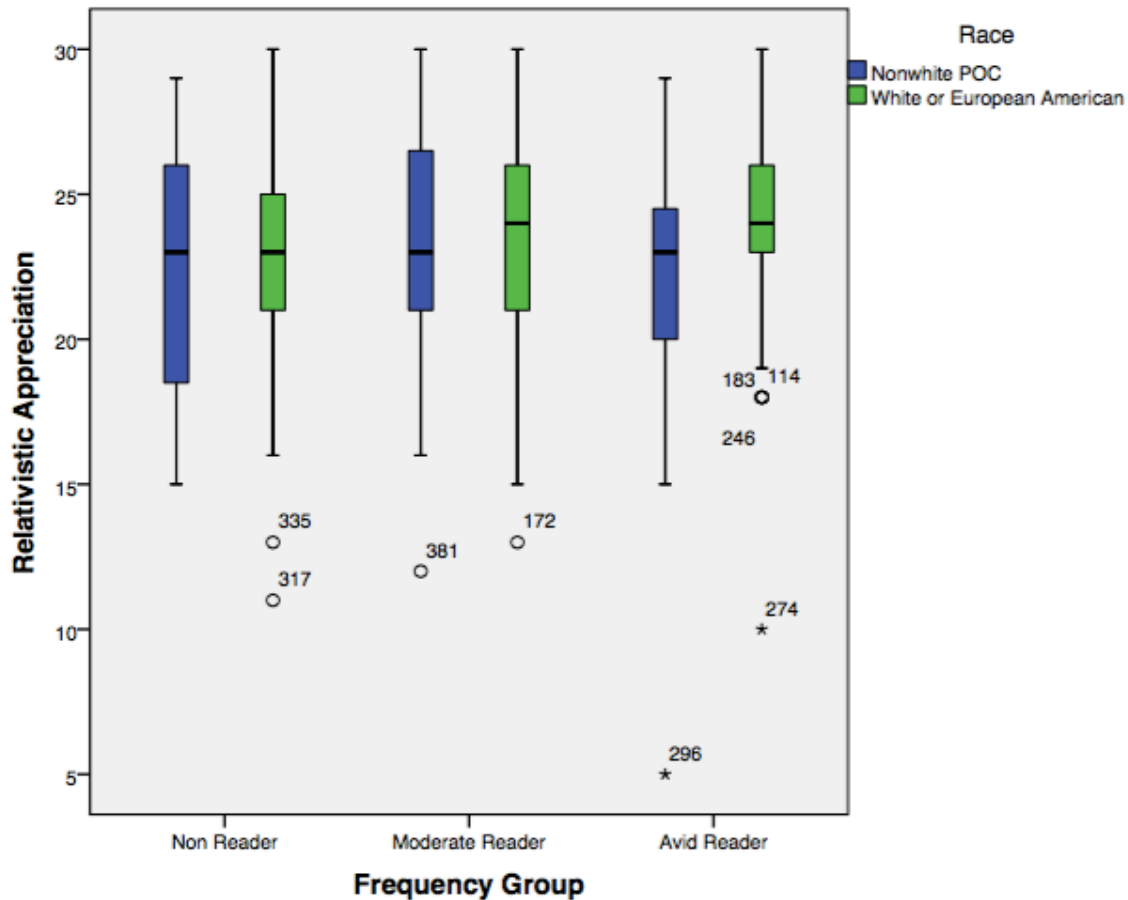
Figure 5. Boxplots of Subscale 2 scores by reading frequency group according to racial group.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR * = values more than 3.0 IQR

Research Question 6

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho6_1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho6_2: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among highest education level of parent groups.

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Ho6$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 4 X 3 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between the highest educational level of respondents' parents and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation). The means and standard deviations for Subscale 2 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 9. The Levene's Test confirmed there was homogeneity of variances ($p = .171$).

Table 9

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 2 by Education Level of Parent

Reading Frequency	Highest Education Level	N	M	SD
Nonreader	High School Diploma or Less	12	21.92	5.50
	Some College	15	23.60	3.56
	Undergraduate Degree	32	22.63	3.41
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	21	22.33	3.29
Moderate Reader	High School Diploma or Less	32	23.50	3.51
	High School Diploma	25	23.12	3.69
	Some College	41	23.24	3.67
	Undergraduate Degree	56	23.91	3.49
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	56	23.54	2.84
Avid Reader	High School Diploma or Less	26	23.04	5.00
	Some College	35	23.89	2.39
	Undergraduate Degree	25	24.12	4.02
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	32	24.56	3.20

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between highest education level of respondents' parents and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation), $F(6, 371) = .59$, $p = .737$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, Ho6$_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for highest education level of parent groups, $F(3, 371) = .67$, $p = .572$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Thus, Ho6$_2$

was retained. Likewise, there was not a significant main effect for reading frequency level, $F(2, 371) = 2.92$, $p = .055$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. As a result, Ho6$_3$ was retained. Mean scores on Subscale 2 were similar for each reading frequency group, regardless of the educational level of the respondents' parents. Figure 6 displays Subscale 2 scores by reading frequency group according to highest education level of parent.
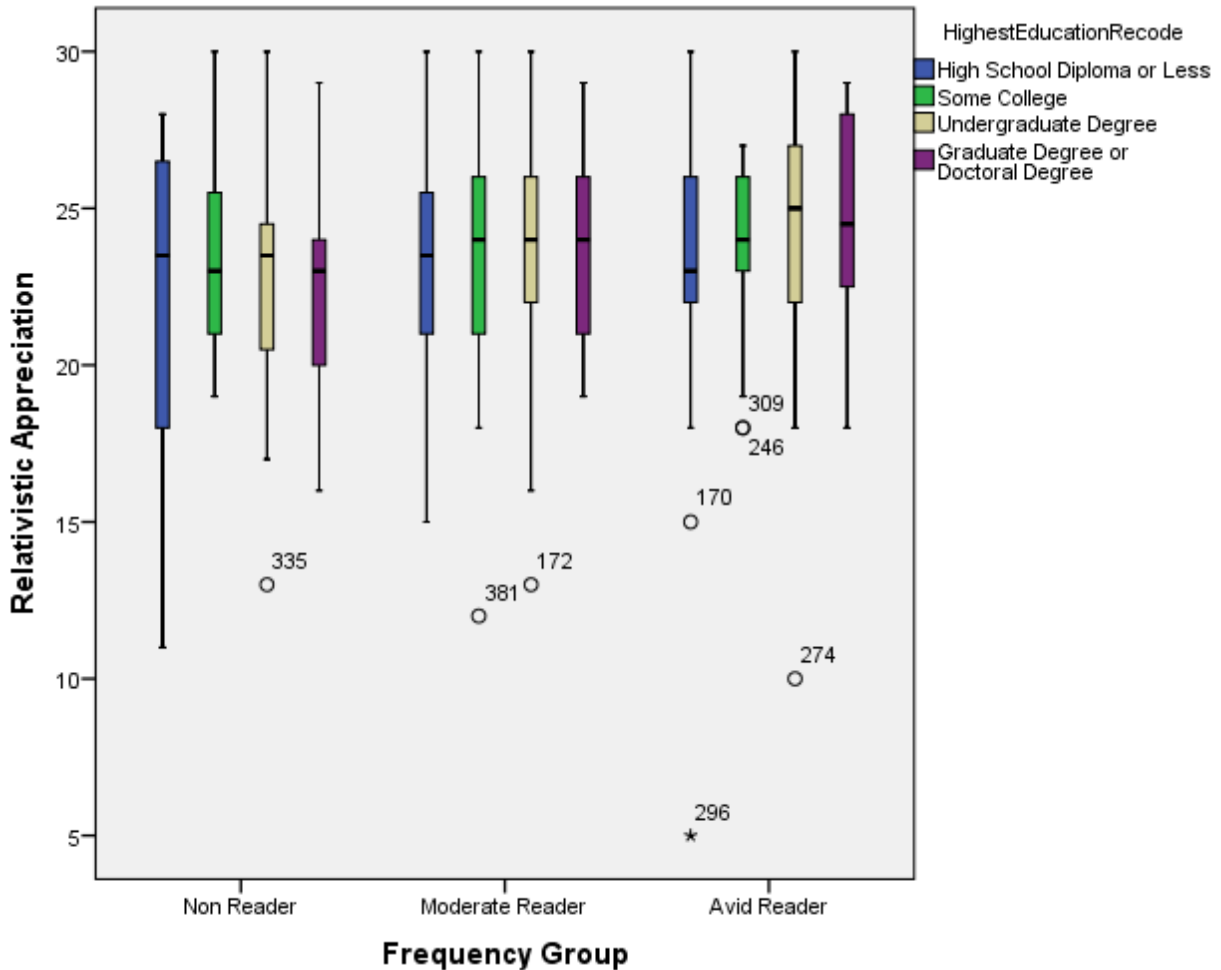

Figure 6. Boxplots of Subscale 2 scores by reading frequency group according to highest education level of parent.
Note. o and * = values greater than 1.5 IQR

Research Question 7

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

Ho7$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) between female and male undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho7$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) between female and male undergraduate students.

Ho7$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between gender and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences). The means and standard deviations for the Subscale 3 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 10. The Levene's Test confirmed there was homogeneity of variances ($p = .145$).

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 3 by Gender

Reading Frequency	Gender	N	M	SD
Nonreader	Female	46	4.11	3.31
	Male	34	5.32	4.32
Moderate Reader	Female	106	3.89	3.24
	Male	79	4.19	3.35
Avid Reader	Female	83	3.41	3.90
	Male	35	3.88	2.99

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between gender and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences), $F(2, 377)$ = 1.11, p = .331, partial η^2 = .01. Therefore, Ho7$_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for gender, $F(1, 377) = 2.88$, p = .090 partial η^2 < .01. As a result, Ho7$_2$ was retained. Correspondingly there was not a significant main effect for reading frequency level, $F(2, 377) = 2.23$, p = .109, partial η^2 = .01. Therefore, Ho7$_3$ was retained. Females and males had similar means on Subscale 3, regardless of reading frequency level. Figure 7 displays Subscale 3 scores by reading frequency group for females and males.
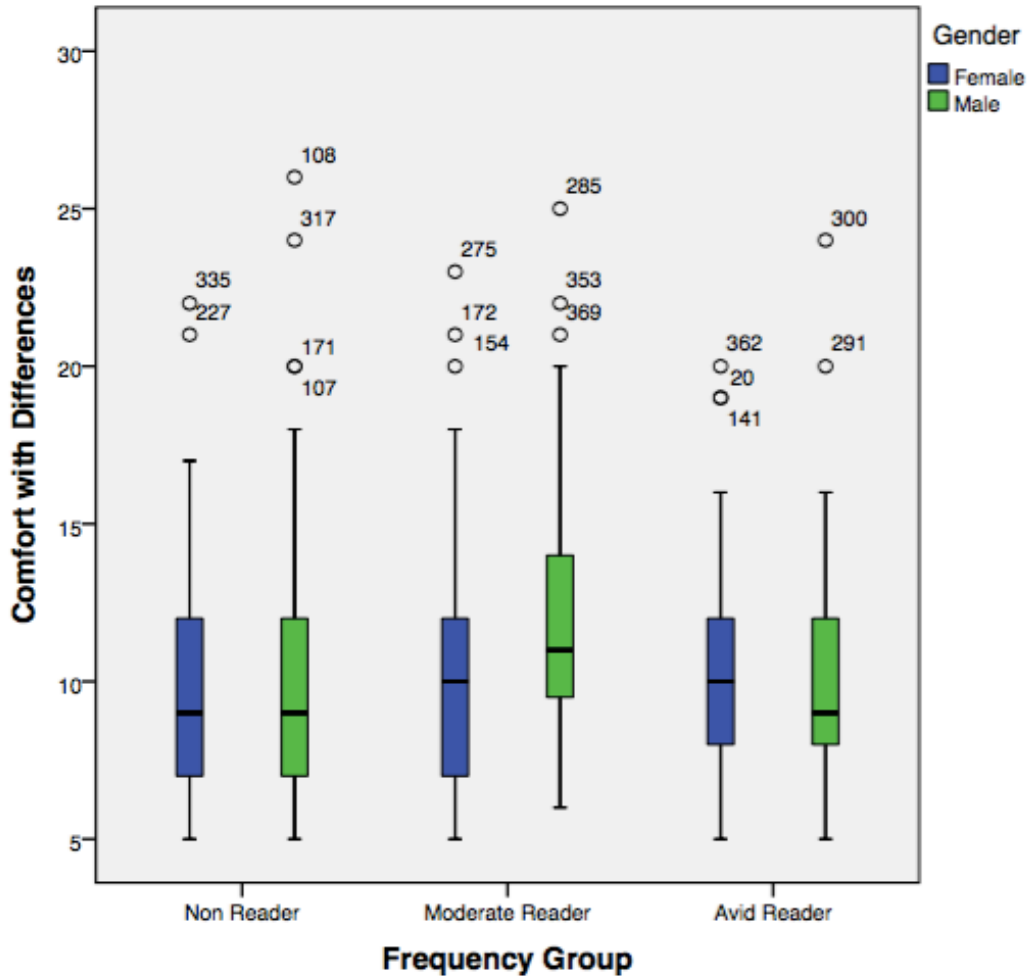
Figure 7. Boxplots of Subscale 3 scores by reading frequency group for females and males.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR * = values more than 3.0 IQR

Research Question 8

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among

racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate

reader, avid reader)?

Ho8$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with

Differences) among racial groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency

(nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

Ho8$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among racial groups of undergraduate students.

Ho8$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 3 X 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between race and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences). The means and standard deviations for the Subscale 3 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 11. The Levene's Test was significant ($p = .009$) so homogeneity of variances cannot be confirmed. Due to the small sample size of Nonwhite People of Color (POC) respondents and the violation of equal variances results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 11

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 3 by Race

Reading Frequency	Race	N	M	SD
Nonreader	Nonwhite POC	15	10.47	6.40
	White or European American	65	10.35	4.19
Moderate Reader	Nonwhite POC	31	11.61	4.77
	White or European American	154	10.94	3.95
Avid Reader	Nonwhite POC	12	11.00	5.10
	White or European American	106	10.01	3.34

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between racial group and reading frequency level on means scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences), $F(2, 377) = .14$, $p = .867$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, $Ho8_3$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for racial group, $F(1, 377) = .90$, $p = .343$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Thus, $Ho8_2$ was retained. Similarly, there was not a significant main effect for reading frequency, $F(2, 377) = 1.0$, $p = .370$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. As a result, $Ho8_3$ was retained. Nonwhite respondents scored considerably higher on Subscale 3; however, the difference was not statistically significant. Figure 8 displays the Subscale 3 scores by reading frequency group according to racial group.
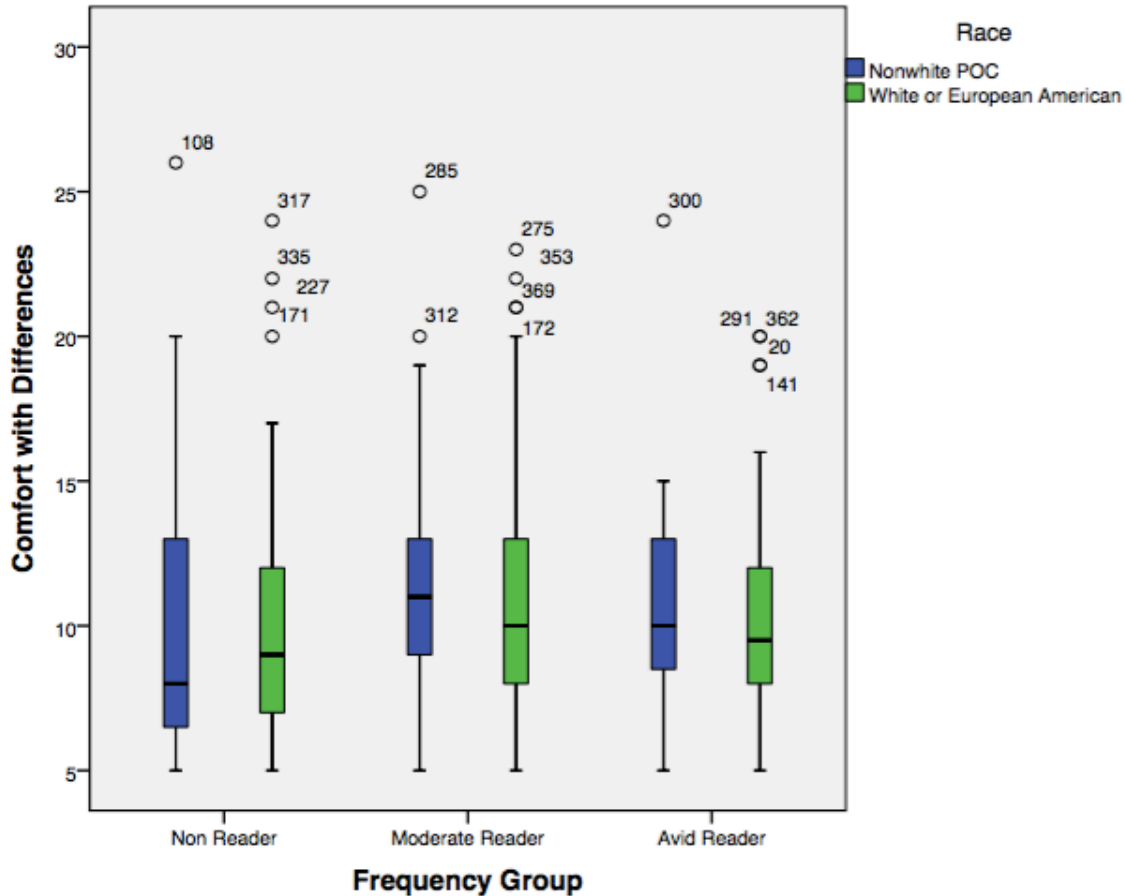
Figure 8. Boxplots of Subscale 3 scores by reading frequency group according to racial group.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR

Research Question 9

Is there a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) among

highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard to reading frequency

(nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader)?

$Ho9_1$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with

Differences) among highest education level of parent groups of undergraduate students in regard

to reading frequency (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

$Ho9_2$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with

Differences) of undergraduate students among highest education level of parent groups.

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Ho9$_3$: There is no significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) of undergraduate students among reading frequency groups (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader).

A 4 X 3 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the associations between the highest educational level of respondents' parents and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences). The means and standard deviations for Subscale 3 scores as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 13 below. The Levene's Test was significant (p = .025) so homogeneity of variances cannot be confirmed. Because of the small sample sizes of certain educational groups and the violation of equal variances results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Reading Frequency Levels for Subscale 3 by Education Level of Parent

Reading Frequency	Highest Education Level	N	M	SD
Nonreader	High School Diploma or Less	12	10.92	5.95
	Some College	15	9.67	3.37
	Undergraduate Degree	32	9.66	3.96
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	21	11.67	5.47
Moderate Reader	High School Diploma or Less	32	10.91	3.84
	Some College	41	10.68	3.18
	Undergraduate Degree	56	11.00	4.39
	Graduate Degree	56	11.45	4.55
Avid Reader	High School Diploma or Less	26	10.08	3.11
	Some College	35	9.83	3.56
	Undergraduate Degree	25	9.92	3.87
	Graduate Degree or Doctoral Degree	32	10.59	3.70

The analysis indicated there was not a statistically significant interaction between highest education level of respondents' parents and reading frequency level on mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences), $F(6, 371) = .283$, $p = .945$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, Ho9$_1$ was retained. An analysis on the main effects revealed there was not a significant main effect for highest education level of parent groups, $F(3, 371) = 1.51$, $p = .211$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Thus, Ho9$_2$ was retained. Correspondingly, there was not a significant main effect for reading frequency

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level, $F(2, 371) = 1.77$, $p = .172$, partial $\eta^2 < .01$. As a result, Ho9₃ was retained. While

considerable difference was discovered in mean scores for Subscale 3, the difference was not

statistically significant. Figure 9 displays Subscale 3 scores by reading frequency group

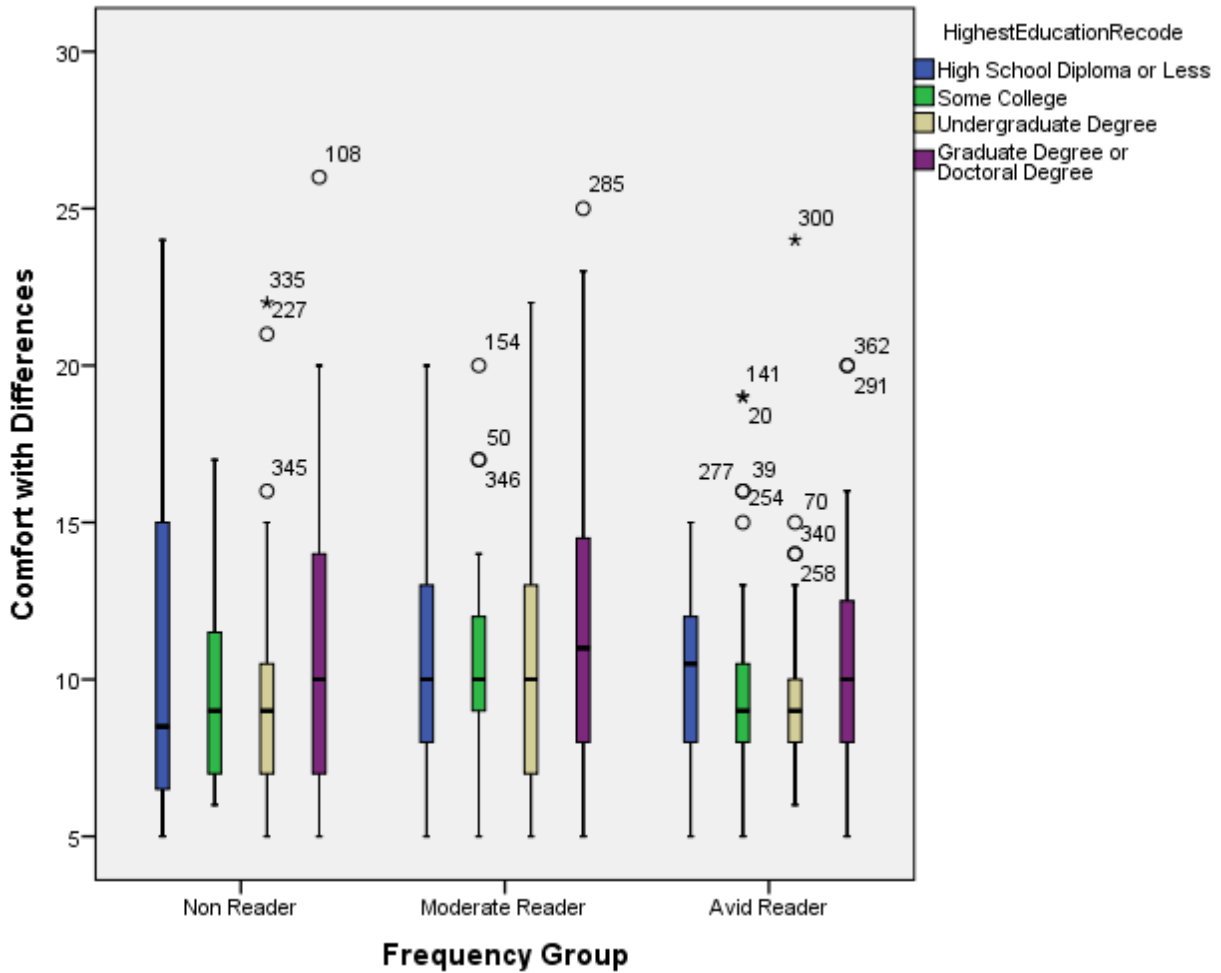according to highest education level of parent.

Figure 9. Boxplots of Subscale 3 scores by reading frequency group according to highest
education level of parent.
Note. o = values 1.5-3.0 IQR * = values more than 3.0 IQR

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between self-reported reading habits of undergraduate students and multicultural awareness and acceptance scores as measured by the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of undergraduate students. The study was designed to examine the relationship between reading frequency, certain demographic variables, and three subscale scores reflecting the comfort, appreciation, and association with diverse peers and events.

The students included in the study were enrolled in a program of study within the College of Business, College of Education, or College of Nursing. These students were chosen because of the likelihood of graduates working with diverse peers after graduation. A total of 383 students participated in the study from 15 classrooms, a 98% response rate. The study was conducted using the Survey of Self-Reported Reading Habits and Diversity Orientation of Undergraduate Students. The survey contained four distinct sections to collect demographic information, reading habit information, campus environment information, as well as one section from a pre-established survey, the Miville-Guzman Diversity Scale- Short (M-GUDS-S) to obtain subscale scores.

A paper survey consisting of 33 items was distributed to the students in the participating classrooms. The majority of the questions required students' self-reporting of information. The third section, the M-GUDS-S used a Likert-type scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Results from the survey questionnaire were used to categorize students into one of three reading frequency groups based upon designation of how many hours the student reported reading for pleasure every week (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader). Three

subscale scores were also obtained from the MGUDS-S section of the survey (Diversity of Contact, Relativistic Appreciation, Comfort with Differences).

The statistical analyses reported in this study were based on the nine research questions and 27 corresponding null hypotheses that were presented in Chapter 3. Each of the research questions was analyzed using a two-way analysis of variance to examine the differences in mean scores on the three subscales in regard to the students' reading frequency grouping and their sex, race, and the highest education level attained by their parents. The level of significance used in the statistical analysis was .05. In addition to the statistical analysis, descriptive statistics were examined regarding reading preferences and habits, as well as students' perceptions of diversity on campus and their preparedness for working in diverse groups after graduation.

Summary of the Findings

In addition to the statistical analysis of research questions, the survey results provided supplemental information on reading habits and diversity perspectives. Nearly half (48.3%) or 185 of respondents provided answers placing them in the moderate reader frequency group. One hundred eighteen (30.8%) were considered avid readers, while 80 (20.9) were considered to be nonreaders based upon their survey responses. Very few (7.6%) of the respondents reported that they read more than 5 hours per week for pleasure, while 47.6% reported that they read 1 to 2 hours per week, or a moderate amount. The zero hours category and 3 to 4 hour per week category represented the same number of selected responses, 85 per group or 22.4%. The most popular genres for respondents to read were mystery, action and adventure, science fiction and fantasy, nonfiction, and popular literary fiction. The least popular genres were horror and poetry. There was no consensus among earlier research if young adults were reading for pleasure, technology may be a possible cause for the decline of reading habits for young adults (Gambrell,

2005; Mokharti et al., 2009; "National Endowment"). The results from the present study suggested that young adults are reading at least a moderate amount per week, though additional research is still needed.

One hundred seven respondents or 27.9% reported they sometimes saw their parents reading during their childhood, 26.9% stated that they often saw their parents reading, while 21.9% reported that they rarely saw their parents reading for pleasure. Approximately 8% reported never seeing their parents read, while 15% described seeing their parents read very often. Conflicting research exists on the level of influence parents may have on their child's lifelong reading habits (Applegate et al., 2014; Netherland, 2004; Parlette, 2010). These findings revealed that the majority of respondents did witness their parents reading relatively often, and corresponds to the majority of respondents selecting a moderate or avid reading frequency.

Additional information on how students typically accessed reading materials throughout their childhood was also obtained. Almost one half of respondents in this study reported typically accessing reading materials from their school library during their secondary education years (49.5%). The public library and the bookstore were selected by 11% and 10.8% respectively. The least common ways to access reading materials were through reading programs (.8%), gifts from others (3.8%), and through electronic reading devices (.8%). These findings do not support previous research that found students rely more on technology to access reading materials instead of more traditional means (Burgess & Jones, 2010; Huang et al., 2014; *Reading at Risk*, 2002).

Respondents were asked if their current program of study required participation in any diversity focused programming or community service. Over 18% reported they did not know if there was a requirement in their program, 44.6% reported there was not and 36.8% reported yes

there was such a requirement in their program. Findings were more consistent when participants were asked if they were being prepared to communicate and succeed in a diverse workplace. Overwhelmingly 304 or 79.4% of respondents reported that they did feel prepared.

Responses were mixed to the final question on the survey, which asked if students believed there to be inequalities on campus based on race and gender. Nearly half (46.7%) stated that there were inequalities on campus, while 30.5% claimed that they did not think such inequalities existed. A smaller portion, 22.7%, reported that they did not know if these inequalities existed. These inconsistent responses shed light on previous research emphasizing the need for university administrators to endorse diversity initiatives to combat racial tensions on campus and enhance understanding and awareness of inequalities (Chang, 1999; Jayakumar, 2008; Pewewardy & Frey, 2002; Rankin & Reason, 2005).

Subscale 1

Research questions 1, 2, and 3 examined the differences in mean scores on Subscale 1 (Diversity of Contact) between gender, race, and highest educational level of parents and the students' reading frequency level (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader). Results from research question 1 by means of a 3 X 2 ANOVA indicated that there was a significant main effect for reading frequency level in regards to the mean scores on Subscale 1, $F(2, 376) = 4.90$, $p = .008$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. There was not a significant interaction effect or a significant main effect for gender. Further investigation through a Tukey post hoc test revealed that there was a significant difference in the means between the nonreader and moderate reader groups, and the nonreader and avid reader groups. The nonreader group had significantly lower subscale scores (17.32) than the moderate (19.05) and avid reader groups (19.64). Scores on this subscale revealed how likely students were to seek out opportunities to interact with people from different

countries or with different racial backgrounds. The avid and moderate reader groups showed higher levels of openness to a diversity of experience than respondents in the nonreader group. This finding was consistent with earlier studies that found less prejudice, higher levels of understanding and more openness to new experiences to be correlated with reading fiction (Hakemulder, 2000; Mar et al., 2006;Ross, 2000; Vezzali et al., 2014).

Research question 2, through a 3 X 2 ANOVA analysis, revealed there was a significant main effect for racial group and the mean scores on Subscale 1, $F(1, 376) = 2.29$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .05$. There was not a significant interaction effect or a significant main effect for reading frequency. Subscale 1 scores were significantly higher for respondents in the Nonwhite Person of Color (POC) group than respondents in the White or European racial group. Nonwhite POC students may feel more comfortable seeking out opportunities with students from different racial backgrounds than White students. These results support findings by Park et al. (2013) that when White students are not exposed to racial diversity before college they are less likely to seek out opportunities to interact with diverse groups during college.

Results from a 4 X 3 ANOVA on research question 3 indicated there was a significant difference in mean scores on Subscale 1 regarding reading frequency level, $F(2, 370) = 5.1$, $p = .007$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. There was not a significant interaction or a significant main effect for highest education level of parent groups. A Tukey post hoc test revealed that the nonreader group had significantly lower scores on Subscale 1 than the moderate and avid reader groups.

Subscale 2

Research questions 4, 5, and 6 examined the differences in mean scores on Subscale 2 (Relativistic Appreciation) between gender, race, and highest educational level of parents and the students' reading frequency level (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader). Previous research by

Hakemulder (2000) found a relationship between reading literature and the impact that has on personal enlightenment and openness for the reader. Research question 4 was analyzed by a 3 X 2 ANOVA and revealed there was a significant main effect for reading frequency level, F(2, 377) = 3.77, p = .024, partial η^2 = .02. The analysis did not reveal a significant interaction effect or a significant main effect for gender. Further investigation through a Tukey post hoc test revealed that the nonreader group had statistically significantly lower scores (22.62) on Subscale 2 than the avid reader group (23.93). Scores on Subscale 2 indicate how appreciative students are of the similarities and differences they have with others. Students in the avid reader group may show slightly more appreciation for similarities and differences than those in the nonreader group.

Results from research question 5, through a 3 X 2 ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for racial group, F(1, 377) = 4.13, p = .043, partial $\eta2$ = .01. There was not a significant interaction effect or significant main effect for reading frequency group. Through examination of the means, the respondents in the Nonwhite Person of Color (POC) group scored significantly lower on Subscale 2 than respondents in the White or European American racial group. Students in the Nonwhite POC group may not be as appreciative or feel the benefit of differences in others as a result of their experiences. Earlier research by Rankin and Reason (2005) and Pewewardy and Frey (2002) found that students of color experience campus life differently than their white peers. Nonwhite students of color are exposed to greater levels of harassment and intolerance more frequently than white students.

Research question 6 evaluated the highest educational level of respondents' parents, reading frequency level, and mean scores on Subscale 2. The 4 X 3 ANOVA did not reveal a

significant interaction effect or a significant main effect for reading frequency or highest education level of parent groups.

Subscale 3

Research questions 7, 8, and 9 examined the differences in mean scores on Subscale 3 (Comfort with Differences) between gender, race, and highest educational level of parents and the students' reading frequency level (nonreader, moderate reader, avid reader). There were no significant interactions or significant main effects for any of the three research questions. Subscale 3 measured how comfortable and connected students are to those that may differ from them according to race or culture. Research by Chang (2002) indicated that tensions and discomfort for minority students on campus could increase if the number of minority students on campus increases without supplemental diversity programs and conversations about race. Results from this group of research questions may reveal that all students are feeling more comfortable on campus than previously discovered. Further research is necessary to examine comfort with differences more thoroughly.

<div align="center">**Conclusion**</div>

Of the nine research questions included in this study, five had a significant main effect. None of the research questions resulted in a significant interaction effect. Results indicated that for two of the three subscales, respondents who read at a moderate or avid frequency had higher scores revealing more openness and appreciation towards diversity on campus. Additionally, the minority respondents reported being more open to interacting with their majority peers. That same conclusion was not evident in terms of minority students feeling appreciation or benefit from those interactions.

Overall, the findings indicate that undergraduate students are reading a variety of genres at least at a moderate frequency level. The data did not reveal consistent responses to questions regarding multicultural focused coursework in a student's programs of study. Inconsistent responses were also discovered in students' perceptions of racial and gender inequalities on campus.

These findings support the researcher's declaration that reading literary fiction is indeed a credible resource for diversity programming to foster empathy and enhance tolerance on college campuses. The ability to appreciate diverse environments and diverse populations is essential for students to be successful in their life and careers. The imperative remains for university administrators to recruit a diverse student body and to establish an open an honest dialogue regarding the benefits of diversity and diversity initiatives on campus (Brown, 2002).

Recommendations for Practice

The following recommendations for practice could improve the appreciation and empathy undergraduate students have towards their diverse peers:

1. Efforts to recruit historically underrepresented students should continue to be a primary goal for higher education institutions. The low percentage of people of color in this study (15.1%) provides indisputable support for such a recommendation. The benefits of having a racially and culturally diverse student body are plentiful, and such benefits cannot be obtained without the opportunity to interact with diverse peers on campus.

2. College and university administrators may want to emphasize conversations of racial inequality on campus, and provide safe spaces for these conversations. Students who have an awareness of racial inequities on campus can work more effectively to enact social change for themselves and for others. Providing more opportunities for interaction

across-race would also allow all students to see the benefit of having a diverse student body by learning from one another.

3. Advisors and program coordinators should make the requirements of a student's program of study comprehensible and unambiguous. The majority of participants in this study claimed there was not a requirement or was unsure if their program of study required any diversity coursework or community service. These findings provide evidence of the uncertainty students have with the requirements of their degree.

4. Nearly 80% of the undergraduate students who participated in this study reported reading for pleasure at a moderate or avid frequency level. Literary fiction was one of the most frequently cited genres preferred by respondents, which is strongly supported by research as an effective method to increase empathy and acceptance towards others. With such a favorable attitude towards reading for pleasure and a preference for reading fiction, reading should be considered a viable diversity initiative for undergraduate students. This is particularly the case for students enrolled at institutions that are not racially diverse and therefore cannot provide many opportunities to interact across race in order to increase understanding and acceptance. Required reading could easily be incorporated into core classes to reach across all disciplines.

5. Campus libraries should provide more literary fiction in their offerings and can partner with local public libraries to enhance students' access to materials. Respondents in this study overwhelmingly acquired their reading materials through their school library in their secondary years. Providing such access through post-secondary will increase the likelihood that undergraduate students will read and will help control the costs of any required reading as a diversity initiative.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations should be considered as opportunities for future research:

1. Replicating this study to include multiple colleges and universities across the state of Tennessee could be beneficial, especially those that have a more diverse student body.

2. The sample of this study was limited to students enrolled in only the College of Business, College of Education, and College of Nursing. Future studies could include a larger scope and more disciplines to compare attitudes and reading habits across different fields of study.

3. A longitudinal version of this study would be valuable to see changes in attitudes and reading habits across the years while earning a bachelor's degree.

4. Incorporating qualitative components to this study could provide further insight into the attitudes and perceptions students have towards their diverse peers. Adding qualitative data would allow for more additional knowledge on the viability of reading literary fiction as a diversity initiative.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Exempt Approval Letter

IRB APPROVAL – Initial Exempt

February 24, 2016

 Megan Owens

RE: Reading as a Resource: Exploring Reading Habits and Multicultural Awareness and Acceptance
in Undergraduate Students
IRB#: c0216.16e
ORSPA#: ,

On **February 21, 2016**, an exempt approval was granted in accordance with 45 CFR 46. 101(b)(2). It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Policies. No continuing review is required. The exempt approval will be reported to the convened board on the next agenda.

- new protocol submission xForm, PI CV, Literature, informed consent script, email to professors, survey with informed consent attached

Projects involving Mountain States Health Alliance must also be approved by MSHA following IRB approval prior to initiating the study.

Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others must be reported to the IRB (and VA R&D if applicable) within 10 working days.

Proposed changes in approved research cannot be initiated without IRB review and approval. The only exception to this rule is that a change can be made prior to IRB approval when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the research subjects [21 CFR 56.108 (a)(4)]. In such a case, the IRB must be promptly informed of the change following its implementation (within 10 working days) on Form 109 (www.etsu.edu/irb). The IRB will review the change to determine that it is consistent with ensuring the subject's continued welfare.

Sincerely,
Stacey Williams, Chair
ETSU Campus IRB

Cc: James Lampley, Ph.D.

Accredited since December 2005

APPENDIX B

Permission to Distribute MGUDS-S

Begin forwarded message:
From: "Miville, Marie" <miville@exchange.tc.columbia.edu>
Subject: Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale
Date: July 9, 2015 at 1:52:08 PM EDT
To: zmec20@goldmail.etsu.edu

Thank you for your interest in the M-GUDS! I've attached a copy of both the Long and Short Forms of the scale as well as a list of reverse scored items for the long form and a scoring key for the short form.

You may use the M-GUDS (Long and Short Forms) for clinical/educational and research purposes. I request a copy of the data once your project is completed. As well, I would appreciate hearing feedback from you if you use the scale in clinical/consulting settings. Please note that the M-GUDS is a copyrighted scale and may not be modified or revised without my written permission. Also, you may not forward this email or the M-GUDS to another party without my written permission. Finally you may not publish the M-GUDS in any other format, such as a paper or dissertation.

Again, thank you for your interest in the scale. If there are any further questions regarding the M-GUDS, please do not hesitate to contact me (212-678-3343 or mlm2106@tc.columbia.edu).

--
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APPENDIX C

Email Invitation Requesting Participation

Good morning, _____ !

My name is Megan Owens, I am a doctoral fellow in the Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis department. I'm contacting you to ask for your assistance in accomplishing the challenging task of data collection! My dissertation is entitled *Reading as a Resource: Exploring Reading Habits and Multicultural Awareness and Acceptance in Undergraduate Students*. My study will be examining relationships and differences between reading habits and multicultural perspectives. The sample I am focusing on for my research are students enrolled in the College of Business, College of Education, and College of Nursing due to the likelihood of these students working with diverse populations after graduation.

In an effort to have a high response rate, I hope to visit classrooms to distribute my survey on paper. I realize time in the classroom is a premium, especially with the snow days we've had recently. Please consider allowing me to visit one or two of your larger classes to distribute my survey, I estimate the process will take no longer than 10-15 minutes.

Thank you for the consideration, I look forward to hearing back. I will follow up in the next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Megan Owens

APPENDIX D

Introduction Script to Survey Participants

Dear Student,

Thank you for allowing me in your classroom today to invite you to participate in my doctoral research on reading habits and multicultural outlooks of undergraduate students. My dissertation is entitled Reading as a Resource: Exploring Reading Habits and Multicultural Awareness and Acceptance in Undergraduate Students.

To participate in this study, you must be at least 18 years of age, or older. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and your submission will remain anonymous. No individual information will be collected. You are not required to participate, there is no penalty for not participating, and your grade will not be impacted by your decision to participate. You may stop your participation at any point. The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

Your participation will add valuable data to my study. Your completion of the survey will be considered your consent for participation. You may contact me, my dissertation chair, or the ETSU IRB office with any questions regarding the survey or your rights as a participant. Please return all surveys back to me, even if they are blank.

Thank you again for your participation,

Megan Owens

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Owens, M., & Lampley, J. (2015, Spring). Website Study: What Information are Prospective Graduate Students Seeking? *Journal of Academic Administration in Higher Education.*

Presentations: Owens, M., & Lampley, J. (2016, May). *Reading as a Resource: Exploring Reading Habits and Multicultural Attitudes and Awareness of Undergraduate Students.* International Conference on learning and Administration in Higher Education, Nashville, TN.

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Owens, M. & Lampley, J. (2014, November). *Content for a Department Web Site in a Higher Education Setting*. Mid-South Educational Research Association, Knoxville, TN.

Honors and Awards: Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award, East Tennessee State University, 2015
Best Paper Award, International Conference on Learning and Administration in Higher Education, 2015
Outstanding Presentation Excellence Award, International Conference on Learning and Administration in Higher Education, 2015
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