



WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT ETHNIC STUDIES

Chapter 3 from *Transformative Ethnic Studies in Schools: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research*

Christine E. Sleeter
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An established body of research affirms what educators have long known intuitively: interdisciplinary ethnic studies, or the study of the social, political, economic and historical perspectives of our nation's diverse racial and ethnic groups, help foster cross-cultural understanding among both students of color and white students and aids students in valuing their own cultural identity while appreciating the differences around them.

These studies also confirm that students who participate in ethnic studies are more academically engaged, develop a stronger sense of self-efficacy and personal empowerment, perform better academically and graduate at higher rates.

Research tells us that well-designed and well-taught ethnic studies curricula that teach directly about racism produce higher levels of critical thinking and have a positive impact on 'democracy outcomes,' particularly when they include cross-group interaction and especially on White students.

Several state and local affiliates are already engaged in laying the curricular, legislative and policy foundation to integrate research-based ethnic studies into K-12 schools and higher education. Increasingly, we are seeing campaigns organized by educators and community partners to require schools to offer ethnic studies courses.

NEA has adopted a number of resolutions, written extensively on the topic about efforts by local and state affiliates, and published toolkits, model school district policies and other resources for educators and communities.

This report represents the latest step in the association's longstanding advocacy of programs, staffing, supports and curriculum that reflect, respect and honor the diversity, contributions, history and cultural identities of all our students, particularly those who are under-represented in educational texts, curricula and educational programs.

We hope this report generates new pathways and ideas about ethnic studies and their relationship to student success, personal growth and a deeper understanding of our nation's diverse groups and cultures.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca S. Pringle".

Rebecca S. Pringle
President, National Education Association

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What the Research Says About Ethnic Studies

Chicano, Nahuatl, Cubano, that's all me. I didn't grow with my biological father, who's Cuban. I grew up with my mom more than anything, single mother.... My mom, Mexican from Jalisco, ancestrally Nahuatl roots.... My own experience and so many of my peers around me is like, "Yeah we have to reconnect, because if not it's just erased." Within us, at least. That's part of why I connect to ethnic studies so much, because it's literally doing that within education.

—R. Tolteka Cuauhtin, December 23, 2018

Tolteka Cuauhtin, an ethnic studies teacher in Los Angeles, speaks to the need for an education that is rehumanizing, one that enables reclaiming identity and ancestral knowledge. His own elementary and secondary education did not provide these things; he sought them out, eventually by becoming an ethnic studies teacher. Cuauhtin's words point toward a potentially powerful positive impact of ethnic studies on students.

Conversely, we sometimes hear that students should learn the common curriculum that includes everyone before they focus on ethnic studies. This claim perceives the common curriculum as widely inclusive and as building cross-group understanding; some who make this claim perceive ethnic studies as divisive. For example, former Arizona state superintendent John Huppenthal vigorously opposed ethnic studies on the basis that, in his view, "framing historical events in racial terms 'to create a sense of solidarity' promotes groupthink and victimhood. It has a very toxic effect, and we think it's just not tolerable in an educational setting" (cited in Cesar, 2011).

What kind of impact on students does the research actually substantiate? This question was put to Christine by the National Education Association in 2010. Her research review addressing that question resulted in the publication *The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies* (Sleeter, 2011). In this chapter, we update and expand on that review.

For this research review, we sought published studies and reviews of research that systematically document the impact of ethnic studies (including Afrocentric education, Mexican American studies, and so forth) on U.S. students, pre-K through higher education. We analyzed everything we could find, regardless of whether results supported ethnic studies or not. (As you will see, very few studies did not find a positive impact on students.) For this chapter, we did not seek studies of ethnic studies teachers' development, or case studies of ethnic studies teaching and learning processes that did not also report outcome data. Rather, we focused on studies reporting data of the impact of ethnic studies on students.

This chapter is organized into two main sections that emerged from the nature of the research. The first section examines the academic and personal impact of ethnic studies on students of color. The second examines the impact of ethnic studies on the racial attitudes and racial understandings of diverse student groups that include White students.

ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL IMPACT ON STUDENTS OF COLOR

Ideally, the ethnic studies projects that have been researched would exemplify all seven hallmarks of ethnic studies discussed in Chapter 1. In practice, that is not the case. Ethnic studies is a developing field, an unfinished project. Some curriculum projects in this review exemplified all or most of the hallmarks, most often the creation of curriculum from perspectives of specific marginalized and/or colonized groups. After that, there is wide variation.

Researching the impact of ethnic studies on students poses a challenge in that the purposes of ethnic studies—eliminating racism, decolonizing students’ minds, sustaining minoritized cultures—are expansive. How does one operationalize them for research? So researchers have landed on more measurable outcomes—achievement on tests (standardized or otherwise), retention rates, graduation rates, and scales for academic self-concept, academic engagement, and ethnic identity.

We organized this section of the chapter into four parts that differ on the basis of which hallmarks of ethnic studies the projects emphasized and which student outcomes (academic achievement or personal outcomes) the studies assessed. We begin with identity and sense of self, since other student outcomes, especially achievement, flow from students’ understanding of themselves as capable and centered in who they are.

Ethnic Studies and Student Identity/Sense of Self

Students’ sense of identity, particularly their ability to claim their ethnic identity and link it with an academic identity, is crucial. If students have been taught implicitly that people like themselves are incapable and unimportant, doing well in school has little meaning. Conversely, we know from research in social psychology that having a strong sense of ethnic identity and high racial awareness is linked with young people’s mental health and achievement. Feeling secure in who one is and whom one is connected to provides the basis for doing other things.

For example, Chavous and colleagues (2003) found that Black high school students most likely to graduate and go on to college expressed high awareness of race and racism, and high regard for being Black, while those least likely to stay in school expressed low awareness of race and racism, and low personal regard for being Black. Altschul, Oyserman, and Bybee (2008) found that Latinx 8th-graders (ranging from recent to second- and third-generation immigrants) earning higher grades tended to have bicultural identities, while those earning lower grades identified either little or exclusively with their cultural origin. These kinds of findings by social psychologists underlie several projects designed to strengthen students’ ethnic identity.

Several studies have focused mainly on the impact of ethnic studies on student ethnic identity and sense of self, foregrounding the importance of curriculum for reclaiming identity. Eight studies of six curriculum projects that range from small after-school programs to the whole-school curriculum are summarized in Table 3.1.

Lewis, Sullivan, and Bybee (2006) and Lewis et al. (2012) reported experimental studies of a 1-semester African American emancipatory class for urban middle school students. Project EXCEL, which met 3 times per week, taught African and African American history and culture, and African rituals and practices. It was designed to build communalism, student leadership and activism, and school–community partnerships. It included considerable attention to racism, oppression, discrimination, White privilege, Black empowerment, and self-reliance. In

each study, the sample consisted of about 60 students, half in Project EXCEL and half in a life studies class. In Lewis, Sullivan, and Bybee’s (2006) study, youth in the experimental curriculum scored higher than those in the control group on communal orientation, school connectedness, motivation to achieve, and overall social change involvement. But in the Lewis et al. (2012) study, there was a decrease in experimental students’ ethnic identity, which was this second study’s main outcome. The authors suggest that there may have been too much emphasis on racism and oppression, leading students to distance themselves psychologically from membership in a victimized group.

Table 3.1. Ethnic Studies Curriculum and Student Identity/Sense of Self

Author(s), date	Ethnic studies curriculum perspective	Research design	Level	Outcomes
Lewis, Sullivan, & Bybee, 2006	Project EXCEL, an African-centered, 1 -semester class	Pre–post control group	8th grade	Communalism, achievement motivation
Lewis et al., 2012	Project EXCEL, an African-centered, 1 -semester class	Pre-post control group	8th grade	Ethnic identity
Thomas et al., 2008	African American after-school program	Pre–post no control group	High school	Ethnic identity, sense of empowerment
Belgrave et ah, 2000	Afrocentric extracurricular program	Pre–post control group	Ages 10-12	Ethnic identity, self-concept
Wiggan & Watson-Vandiver, 2017	Multicultural and African-centered school	Case study	High school	Academic achievement, critical thinking, identity
Halagao, 2004,2010	<i>Pinoy Teach:</i> Filipino studies class	Interviews	Higher education	Critical thinking, identity, empowerment
Vasquez, 2005	Chicano literature course	Interviews	Higher education	Ethnic identity

Two additional similar studies produced positive results. Thomas, Davidson, and McAdoo (2008) studied the impact of a school-based program for African American high school girls. The goals and nature of this 10-week program were similar to those of Project EXCEL: to nurture Black identity and a collectivist orientation, and to develop racism awareness and liberatory action. The program taught African American history and contemporary culture, weaving in African cultural values, Freire’s critical consciousness, and holistic learning. For the study, a control group of matched students not participating in the program was constructed. On various measures of ethnic identity, racism awareness, and liberatory action, participants scored higher than nonparticipants. Belgrave, Chase-Vaughn, Gray, Addison, and Cherry (2000) studied the impact of a 4-month-long extracurricular program for middle school girls. Weekly meetings featured various activities such as a Rites of Separation Ceremony, an overnight

retreat, and arts activities. These were all taught through an Afrocentric approach that included cultural practices and relationship-building. Using various measures of racial identity and self-concept, the authors found a positive impact on students in the experimental group as compared with the control group.

Wiggin and Watson-Vandiver (2017) conducted a case study of a high-performing school that served African American students and featured a curriculum centered on critical multiculturalism, anti-racism, and African-centered perspectives. Similar to Ginwright's (2000) study, this was a qualitative case study of a school attempting to link the curriculum with student outcomes. Data sources included interviews with teachers and students and observations in school. Results of the interviews confirmed that students valued the African-centered curriculum that linked them with their ancestors and instilled cultural empowerment in them. The authors concluded that this kind of education produced "organic intellectuals" (p. 16) who were able to critically examine the world around them as well as achieve academically.

Halagao (2004, 2010) examined the impact of *Pinoy Teach* on Filipino American college students. *Pinoy Teach* is a curriculum she co-developed that focuses on Philippine and Filipino American history and culture, using a problem-posing pedagogy that encourages students to think critically through multiple perspectives on history. It offers a different perspective about history than students learned before, and some of it is uncomfortable; the program helps students grapple with and think their way through diverse and conflicting perspectives, then consider what to do with their new knowledge. As part of the learning process, the college students mentor and teach what they are learning to younger students. Through a series of interviews, Halagao (2004) examined the curriculum's impact on six Filipino American college students at the end of the course. She found that since none of them had learned about their own ethnic history in school, they described *Pinoy Teach* as "filling in the blanks." Students also described collisions between their prior knowledge of Philippine history, learned mainly from their parents, and that in the curriculum, which critiqued Spanish, then U.S. colonization. The students expressed interest in learning about their own history in relationship to that of other groups. They moved from seeing other Filipinos through learned stereotypes to building a shared sense of community, and they developed a sense of confidence and empowerment to stand up to oppression and to work for their own communities. Several years later, Halagao (2010) reported a follow-up survey of 35 students who had participated in the program about 10 years earlier; 30 were Filipino American and five were Furo-American. Students reported that what remained with them was a "deeper love and appreciation of ethnic history, culture, identity, and community" (p. 505). The curriculum, through its process of decolonization, had helped them to develop a sense of empowerment and self-efficacy that persisted, as well as a life commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. They also developed ongoing activism in their work as teachers, in other professions, and/or through civic engagement where they lived.

Vasquez's (2005) case study of the responses of 18 college students to a Chicano literature course closely parallels Halagao's finding. All of the literary selections were authored by Chicana/os and dealt with topics such as immigration, migrant labor, poverty, and Catholicism. Eleven of the 18 students were Latinx. The Latinx students all said that they identified with the texts and that the texts filled in blanks in their understandings of their families' biographies. They reported developing a sense of community based on recognition of similar experiences and hardships. Realizing that there is an abundance of Chicano literature prompted feelings of ethnic and personal affirmation, confidence, empowerment, and finally occupying the place of "insider" in an academic institution. For one student, recognition that there is a strong Latin American culture strengthened his identification as American. The non-Latinxs found shared human issues in the texts to identify with; they had to wrestle with recognition of differences

while also seeing cross-group human similarities, and because they lacked the authority of shared experiences with the authors and characters, they could not direct where discussions went.

In sum, all but one of the studies in this section found a positive link between ethnic studies programs that feature a curriculum designed and taught from the perspective of a historically marginalized group, and students' ethnic identity development and sense of empowerment. Criticality was a central feature of all of the curricula, and descriptions of all of the projects featured culturally mediated, or culturally responsive, pedagogy as central.

Ethnic Studies Curriculum and Student Achievement

Research investigating the academic impact of ethnic studies curriculum builds on earlier case studies showing increased engagement of children and youth when people of their own racial ethnic group are in the curriculum. For example, Copenhaver (2001) worked with and recorded African American elementary schoolchildren as they read and discussed *Malcolm X: A Fire*. She found that the children brought considerably more knowledge of the life of Malcolm X than their teachers (including her) were aware they had, and in groups composed of only African Americans they drew readily on their shared knowledge of African American media, civil rights leaders, and everyday racial issues to follow the plot, make connections, and interpret the story. In other words, the students became "smarter" in the classroom. Case studies such as these capture what teachers notice about student intellectual engagement when teaching ethnic studies.

But there are tensions between ethnic studies and academic achievement as measured by standardized tests, mirroring larger tensions that revolve around who has the power to define what schooling is for. While ethnic studies should challenge students academically, standardized tests arise from a paradigm that rank-orders students based on their mastery of a traditional curriculum, then blames students of color for their lower average performance. Tests also ignore outcomes that students' communities may value, such as cultural identity and respectful engagement with the community (McCarty & Lee, 2014). Beaulieu (2006), for example, points out that education for Native students should "serve the interests of specific tribal communities. That interest is first defined in terms of maintaining social and cultural continuity with the past while adapting to change" (p. 53). However, as Cabrera, Milam, Jaquette, and Marx (2014) argue, because standardized tests are part of the reality students must confront, and act as gatekeepers to further opportunities, test results are useful, even if they are not (nor should they be) the only way of assessing impact on students.

Fourteen studies investigated the academic impact of 11 ethnic studies programs or classes. Table 3.2 lists these studies in relationship to the curriculum project studied, the grade level of students, the research study design, and the nature of outcomes for which data were gathered. As Table 3.2 shows, most of these curriculum projects were intentionally designed through knowledge frameworks of peoples who have been marginalized by racism and/or colonization. All of them sought to engage students intellectually by connecting them with knowledge that originates from peoples with whom they are connected. We organized our discussion of these studies in relationship to the cultural group being served.

Dee and Penner (2017) evaluated the impact of San Francisco Unified School District's 9th-grade ethnic studies program, which serves a racially and ethnically diverse population (see Chapter 4 for a description of the program and curriculum). The curriculum is organized around six concepts that unpack the working of institutional racism. The program was piloted in five high schools, then 4 years later extended to all 19 high schools in the district. Using a regression discontinuity design, Dee and Penner (2017) evaluated the program's impact on five cohorts of 9th-grade students

in three pilot high schools, using data on student GPA, attendance, and credits earned toward graduation. After controlling for several variables (such as students' entering GPA and measures of teacher effectiveness), their "results indicate that assignment to this course increased ninth-grade student attendance by 21 percentage points, GPA by 1.4 grade points, and credits earned by 23" (p.217).

Table 3.2. Ethnic Studies Curriculum and Student Achievement

Author(s), date	Ethnic studies curriculum perspective	Level	Research design	Outcomes
Dee & Penner, 2017	San Francisco Unified School District's 9th-grade course focusing on critical consciousness, self-love, and action	9th grade	Quasi-experimental	Grade point average (GPA), attendance, credits toward graduation
Cabrera et al., 2014	Tucson's Mexican American Studies program developed through Chicano and Indigenous epistemologies	High school	Quasi-experimental	Standardized skill tests, graduation rates
Cammarota & Romero, 2009	Tucson's Mexican American Studies Social Justice Education Project focusing on Chicano intellectual knowledge	High school	Pre-post no control group, interviews	Test scores, graduation rates, sense of empowerment
Kisker et al., 2012	Math in a Cultural Context, developed in collaboration with Yup'ik elders	2nd grade	Pre-post control group	Math achievement
Lipka et al., 2005	Math in a Cultural Context, developed in collaboration with Yup'ik elders	6th grade	Pre-post control group	Math achievement
McCarty & Lee, 2014	<i>Native American Community Academy, developed with community collaboration</i>	Middle, high school	Qualitative; pre-post no control group	Basic skills achievement

Table 3.2. Ethnic Studies Curriculum and Student Achievement (continued)

McCarty, 1993	Rough Rock English-Navajo Language Arts program	Elementary	Qualitative	Reading scores
Matthews & Smith, 1994	Culturally relevant science content consisting of biographies of American Indian scientists	4-8th grades	Pre-post control group	Science achievement, attitudes toward science and Native Americans
Green-Gibson & Collett, 2014	African American cultural infusion	3rd-6th grades	Causal-comparative	School Adequate Yearly Progress rating
Duncan, 2012	Afrocentric U.S. history course	8th grade	Quasi-experimental	Academic achievement, student self-efficacy
Rickford, 2001	Culturally relevant texts	Middle school	Post-interviews, no control group	Comprehension, higher-order thinking
Tyson, 2002	Multicultural literature in social studies, using Banks's transformative and social action curriculum levels	Middle school	Interviews, classroom observation	Use of text, knowledge of social issues
Ginwright, 2000,2004	Afrocentric culture infused through curriculum and school as a whole	High school	Qualitative case study	Academic achievement, academic participation

The impact of Mexican American Studies (MAS) in Tucson has been studied both by program participants (Cammarota & Romero, 2009) and by external researchers (Cabrera et al., 2014). Cabrera and colleagues compared graduation rates and achievement scores (using AIMS—the state’s achievement tests) of 11th- and 12th-grade students who did, and did not, enroll in MAS courses, constructing a matched comparison group. They found that although students in MAS courses entered, on the average, with lower 9th- and 10th-grade GPA and achievement test scores than control students, by 12th grade they attained “significantly higher AIMS passing and graduation rates than their non-MAS peers” (p. 1106). Because this finding seems counterintuitive, they tested it with a variety of statistical modeling and sampling strategies, all of which reached the same conclusion: MAS improved the achievement of mainly Mexican American students significantly more than the traditional curriculum, and the more courses students took, the stronger the impact on their achievement.

Several studies have examined the academic impact of different programs that aim to decolonize Indigenous education. Math in a Cultural Context (MCC) grew from collaboration between Alaska Yup'ik Native elders, teachers, and math educators to develop an elementary-level curriculum supplement for 2nd through 7th grades that connects Yup'ik culture and knowledge with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics standards (www.uaf.edu/mcc/). The curriculum includes 10 modules. Its pedagogy supports traditional ways of communicating and learning, such as collaborative learning and cognitive apprenticeship. Lipka and colleagues (2005) compared 160 6th-grade Yup'ik students' math achievement after using the module "Building a Fish Rack: Investigations into Proof, Properties, Perimeter, and Area" with 98 similar students in classrooms that did not use MCC. They found that students in classrooms using the MCC curriculum made more progress toward the state mathematics standards than comparison students.

Kisker and colleagues (2012) conducted an experimental study in which 50 schools that enrolled large proportions of Native students were randomly assigned to either experimental or control conditions. The authors tested the impact of two modules on 2nd-graders' mathematics achievement. Since the schools had not used the curriculum previously, teachers in the experimental schools were trained to use it, and researchers video-recorded them. In the absence of a state achievement math test for 2nd grade, the researchers constructed pre- and posttests to closely resemble the math tests for later grades. They found the impact of the MCC curriculum "positive, statistically significant, and moderate to large in terms of effect sizes" (p. 100), with a positive impact on both Alaska Native and mixed-ethnic student groups. They also found that in the following semester students retained what they had learned.

McCarty and Lee (2014) report a case study of the Native American Community Academy (NACA) that serves middle and high school students in Albuquerque. About 95% of the students identify as Native American, representing about 60 Native nations. The school, founded in 2006, collaborates with Native communities to construct the program's curriculum and pedagogy. NACA teaches three Native languages (Navajo, Lakota, and Tiwa), along with protocols for using them. The curriculum, following a model of culturally sustaining education, integrates Native perspectives through English reading and writing, social studies, math, and science; teachers create respectful family-type relationships with students in the classroom (see Chapter 4). The overall vision of the school is decolonization by strengthening students' cultural identities and cultural knowledge, and by grounding them as Indian within Native community contexts. McCarty and Lee (2014) report that student achievement, even using dominant-society standards, has improved: Test scores of 8th-graders in 2011-2012 increased over the previous year by 21% in math, 20% in reading, and 9% in writing. Because of the school's ongoing success in closing achievement gaps between Native and non-Native students, there is now a network of NACA-inspired schools that draw on its model.

Earlier, McCarty (1993) had worked with and studied the Rough Rock English-Navajo Language Arts Program designed to develop illiteracy skills of K-6 students, the majority of whom spoke Navajo as their primary language. Because a written Navajo literacy curriculum did not exist, the teachers developed one that was in Navajo and relevant to the lives of the children, such as the thematic unit *Wind*, "an ever-present force at Rough Rock" (McCarty, 1993, p. 184). McCarty reports that after 4 years in the program, the students' achievement on locally developed measures of comprehending spoken English increased from 51% to 91%, and their scores on standardized reading tests rose steadily after the second year. Those who participated in the program for 3-5 years made the greatest gains.

Matthews and Smith (1994) used experimental research (pretest-posttest control group design) to study the impact of Native American science materials on Native students' attitudes toward science, attitudes toward Native people, and understanding of science concepts. The study investigated 4th-through 8th-graders in nine schools. The 10-week intervention included science content as well as biographies of 12 Native Americans using science in their daily lives (such as a silversmith or a water quality technician). The control group experienced just the science content. The experimental group made greater gains in achievement than the control group and developed more positive attitudes toward science and toward Native Americans.

Several studies have examined the academic impact of some version of African American curriculum on Black students. Green-Gibson and Collett (2014) utilized a causal-comparative research design to compare the achievement of students in grades 3-6 in two predominantly African American schools in Chicago, using 2009 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports as the main measure of achievement. The researchers used school documents to determine how culture was infused throughout the schools. One school used an African-centered approach to curriculum in all classrooms and infused African culture throughout the school; the other did not. The researchers found "a significant lower performance in third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students' AYP results in the school that does not infuse African culture ...,as compared to students who attend the school that infuses African culture" (p. 35).

In a brief article, Duncan (2012) reported a quasi-experimental study of the impact of an Afrocentric¹ U.S. history curriculum on the self-efficacy, connection to the curriculum, and academic achievement of 217 8th-grade students, most of whom were African American, using New York State social studies test data. She found a significant positive impact in all three areas.

Two qualitative case studies investigated the impact of culturally relevant literature on African American middle school students. In Rickford's (2001) study of 25 low-achieving students, culturally relevant texts (African American folktales and contemporary narratives) were coupled with emphasis on higher-order thinking. She found that the texts engaged the students, who could identify with themes such as struggle, perseverance, and family tensions, as well as with features in the texts such as African American vernacular. In assessing their comprehension, she found that the students excelled on the higher-order questions, but missed many lower-order questions. She concluded that familiarity with situations and people in stories increased students' motivation, and that even though they missed many lower-order questions, students were able to analyze and interpret the stories well. Framed through Banks's (1999) transformation and social action levels of curriculum, Tyson's (2002) case study examined the use, in a social studies class, of adolescent novels about social issues. Of the five novels, three were African American, one was multiethnic, and one was set in Japan; all featured characters addressing social issues such as working with neighbors to transform a vacant lot into a community garden. Tyson documented students' developing understanding of the complexities of social action, as well as their ability to use text to derive meaning; most of the students demonstrated growth in both areas over the semester.

In contrast to the rest of the research reviewed in this section, one study did not find a positive impact. Ginwright (2000, 2004) documented an initiative to transform a low-achieving urban high school that served mainly Black youth from low-income families. To formulate a plan, school district leaders consulted with several prominent African American scholars whose

¹ Some authors used the spelling Africentric while others used the spelling Afrocentric. We have used the spelling that the authors used.

work focused on Afrocentric curriculum and pedagogy, who subsequently persuaded the district leaders to base reform in “African precepts, axioms, philosophy” (2004, p. 80) and to structure the curriculum around themes in African knowledge. Over the 5 years of the reform, academic indicators (enrollment, GPA, dropout rate, suspension rate, numbers of graduates, and higher education enrollment numbers) did not improve and in some areas worsened. Ginwright argued that the reform plan pitted two conceptions of Blackness against each other: that of middle-class Black reformers who connected African and African American knowledge systems with origins in Egypt, and low-income urban Black youth whose central concerns revolved around needs such as housing, employment, and health care, and whose identity was formed through urban youth cultural forms (such as hip-hop) and local experiences with racism and poverty. Ginwright argues that cultural identity is important, but that we need to attend to intersections between race, culture, and class. Because the Afrocentric reform plan ignored students’ class-based needs and identity forms, students rejected it. Ginwright’s study calls into question the pervasive tendency to conceptualize culture in terms of racial origins, without considering the everyday culture young people experience in environments shaped by the intersection between race and class.

In sum, 12 of the 14 studies in this section found a positive impact on students’ academic learning, as well as other student outcomes some studies attended to. While all 11 projects emphasized ethnic studies curriculum content designed and taught through perspectives of peoples marginalized by race and/or colonialism, most also were taught well. For example, the San Francisco Unified School District ethnic studies program includes teacher professional development as an important feature. As Beckham and Concordia (2019) explain, “We remain committed to the belief that anyone who honestly engages in developing themselves as a teacher of ethnic studies can become skilled at it” (p. 325) and that students will benefit as a result. In other words, ethnic studies curriculum matters greatly; pedagogy matters as well.

Ethnic Studies Curriculum Infused into Asset-Based Pedagogies

Thirteen studies investigated the academic impact of six projects that infused ethnic studies curriculum into asset-based pedagogies, connecting the hallmark of curriculum as counternarrative with that of culturally responsive pedagogy and cultural mediation. Table 3.3 lists these studies. López (2018) defines asset-based pedagogies as providing “a bridge that connects the dominant school culture to students’ home and heritage culture, thus promoting academic achievement for historically marginalized students” (p.9). Similarly, Lee (1995) posits that knowledge of language use “for the African American adolescent is often tacit,” constituting a learning asset. But, “because the knowledge is tacit and has been applied only to community oral interactions, its applicability to other related problems of interpretation is limited” (p. 612). By infusing knowledge that is culturally familiar or culturally relevant to students, teachers who take a sociocultural approach to teaching and learning connect students’ knowledge, including tacit knowledge, with new and unfamiliar academic knowledge.

Table 3.3. Ethnic Studies Curriculum Infused into Asset-Based Pedagogies

Author(s), date	Program or focus of study	Level	Research design	Outcomes
López, 2016,2017, 2018; Sharif Matthews & López, 2018	Asset-based pedagogy: academic expectations, critical awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural content integration, beliefs about/use of Spanish language in instruction	Grades 3-5	Correlation	Reading achievement, math achievement, ethnic identity, achievement identity
Lee, 1995, 2001,2006, 2007	Cultural Modeling	High school	Pre-post control group	Literary analysis skills
Krater et al., 1994; Krater & Zeni, 1995	African American literature infused	Middle, high school	Pre-post no control group	Writing skills (various tests used over time)
Adjapong & Emdin, 2015	Hip-hop in science classroom	Middle school	Various qualitative	Understanding, enjoyment of science
Stone & Stewart, 2016	Critical Hip Hop Rhetoric Pedagogy	Higher education	Qualitative	Successful course completion
Hall& Martin, 2013	Critical Hip-Hop pedagogy	Higher education	Qualitative	Engagement, retention

While most research reviewed in this chapter assesses the impact of a particular program or set of practices, a body of work by López (2016, 2017, 2018; Sharif Matthews & López, 2018) seeks teaching practices that matter most to Latinx student achievement. Her studies use multiple regression analysis, path analysis, and/or hierarchical linear modeling to identify teacher-related factors that contribute to the achievement of Latinx students in elementary schools. The teacher-related factors include academic expectations, critical awareness (knowledge of historical and sociocultural oppression and how schools perpetuate racial power imbalances), cultural knowledge (knowledge of students’ household funds of knowledge), cultural content integration (ability to integrate culturally relevant content into the curriculum), and beliefs about/use of Spanish language in instruction. Together, these dimensions constitute asset-based pedagogy.

López’s research has involved Latinx students in grades 3-5. In a study of 568 Latinx students and their teachers, she found that “students with teachers who have high levels of both expectancy and critical awareness perform approximately ½ SD higher in student reading achievement over the course of one academic year” (2017, p. 13). In an earlier study of 244

Latinx students and their teachers, she found that “teachers’ reported CRT [culturally responsive teaching] behaviors in terms of language and cultural knowledge (formative assessment) were both significantly and positively related to students’ reading outcomes. For teachers reporting the highest level of each of the aforementioned dimensions, students’ reading scores were associated with approximately 1 SD higher reading outcomes” (2016, pp. 27-28). In a study of 368 students and their teachers, Sharif Matthews and López (2018) found that teacher expectations alone were not enough; rather, student achievement in math was mediated by teachers’ honoring of students’ heritage language and integrating cultural content into the curriculum. In other words, the teachers who used asset-based pedagogy most consistently produced students with the highest average reading achievement.

Cultural Modeling (Lee, 1995, 2001, 2006, 2007) connects the language-reasoning skills of African American English speakers with the English curriculum. Lee (2006) explains that African American life affords young people a wealth of cultural scripts and contexts that can be used in the classroom to develop literary analysis strategies that students can then apply to unfamiliar texts. Speakers of African American English routinely interpret symbolism in rap and hip-hop, but do not necessarily apply it to the analysis of literature in school. Pedagogy that enables students to use their cultural frames of reference engages them immediately in much higher levels of cognition than is usually the case in a traditional classroom. Cultural Modeling moves from analysis of specific language data sets that students are familiar with and that draw on elements of Black cultural life, such as Black media or the Black church, to more general strategies of literary analysis and application to canonical literary works. Lee’s research assessed the impact of Cultural Modeling, using tests in which students write an analysis of a short story they have not seen before. For example, in a quasi-experimental study in two low-achieving African American urban high schools, four English classes were taught using Cultural Modeling and two were taught traditionally. The experimental students’ gain from pretest to posttest was more than twice that of the control group students (Lee, 1995). Lee’s qualitative research documents that when Cultural Modeling is used, students gradually learn to direct discussions interpreting and analyzing texts (Lee, 2001, 2006), although traditional English achievement tests often do not capture this learning process (Lee, 2007).

In the Webster Groves Writing Project (Krater, Zeni, & Cason, 1994), 14 middle and high school English teachers worked to improve writing achievement of their African American students; the project was then extended to all students (Black and White) performing below grade level. The project developed several principles based on what was working. One important principle was use of various literary works by African American authors. Over time the teachers realized that they needed to “acknowledge [students’] culture—not just by incorporating their cultural heroes into the curriculum, but by weaving the threads of their culture into the tapestry of our classroom” (Krater & Zeni, 1995, p. 35). Acknowledging students’ culture meant recognizing teachers’ own implicit biases. A significant bias was toward students’ dialect, a problem only when teachers focused on correcting grammar rather than on helping students communicate ideas. As students’ ability to communicate ideas developed, they became more intentional about their own use of grammar. Over the years of the project’s existence, participating students made greater gains in writing than nonparticipating students on the local writing assessment, then later on the state writing test (Gay, 2018).

Three studies examined the use of Hip-Hop pedagogy: one in science (Adjapong & Emdin, 2015) and two in historically Black university (HBU) English classes (Hall & Martin, 2013; Stone & Stewart, 2016). Adjapong and Emdin define Hip-Hop pedagogy “as a way of authentically and practically incorporating the creative elements of Hip-Hop into teaching, and

inviting students to have a connection with the content while meeting them on their cultural turf by teaching to, and through their realities and experiences” (p. 67). Adjapong and Emdin investigated use of co-teaching and call-response (two elements of Hip-Hop pedagogy) in 6th-grade science in an urban school. Using qualitative research methods, the authors found that Hip-Hop pedagogy engaged the students. Call-response memorization deepened their science content knowledge, as did co-teaching what they were learning to their peers. Stone and Stewart (2016) studied Critical Hip-Hop Rhetoric Pedagogy in a writing course designed to increase the academic success of first-generation, 1st-year students in an HBU. Among students who attended class regularly, the authors found a decrease in the number failing to complete the course, particularly its required assessments. Hall and Martin (2013) used interviews with students to explore the impact of three courses taught by an HBU English professor. They found that the use of Hip-Hop pedagogy increased student engagement and willingness to participate; it also helped them connect with historical material being taught.

In sum, all of these studies found a positive relationship between the achievement (or achievement-oriented behaviors) of minoritized students, and teachers connecting academics with students’ home and community culture through a combination of curriculum content students could relate to and culturally mediated/culturally responsive pedagogy. Conceptually, we do not see a huge difference between the approaches to curriculum and pedagogy in this set of studies compared with the previous set, except in the emphasis given to content versus culturally mediated pedagogy. What is significant is that all studies but one (Ginwright, 2000, 2004) demonstrated a positive impact on the academic learning of minoritized students.

Culturally Responsive Teaching, Cultural Mediation, and Student Achievement

Much of the pedagogy used in ethnic studies embodies learning principles articulated by sociocultural theory. A major contribution of sociocultural approaches, the concept of cultural mediation, describes ways in which cultural tools and artifacts “mediate” learning. Within this framework meaningful learning is optimal when teaching strategies make use of and enrich the sociocultural context in which learning takes place. With an emphasis on learning as contextual social practice and a clear conceptualization of the formative role that cultural tools and resources play in learning (Cole, 1998; Rogoff, 2003), sociocultural theory points to the richness and complexity of cultural mediation that draws upon such aspects as discourse patterns, interactional routines, text structures, language-rich interactions, meta-communication, modeling, and so on. Culturally responsive teaching, therefore, is not a formulaic pedagogy defined by and limited to specific scaffolds. While culturally responsive teaching leverages the cultural resources that students bring to classroom settings—and thus conceptualizes students’ cultural backgrounds as assets rather than deficits—sociocultural theory emphasizes the context-specific and nuanced ways in which cultural tools and resources are transformed into purposeful learning. Here we review six studies of three projects, summarized in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. Culturally Responsive Teaching, Cultural Mediation, and Student Achievement

Author(s), date	Program or approach	Level	Research design	Outcomes
Au & Carroll, 1997	Kamehameha Elementary Education Program: literacy adapted to Hawaiian participation structures	Elementary	Classroom observation, writing portfolio audit	Writing skill achievement
Tharp & Callimore, 1988	Kamehameha Elementary Education Program	Elementary	Posttest–control group	Reading achievement
Hilberg, Tharp, & DeGeest, 2000	Eive Standards for Effective Pedagogy	8th grade	Pretest-posttest control group	Math achievement
Doherty et al., 2003	Eive Standards for Effective Pedagogy	Elementary	Correlation	Reading achievement
Doherty et Hilberg, 2007	Eive Standards for Effective Pedagogy	Elementary	Nonequivalent pretest–posttest control group	Reading achievement
Bailey & Boykin, 2001	Academic task variation (verve)	Grades 3-4	Correlation	Academic task performance, motivation

The Kamehameha Elementary Education Program (KEEP), designed to improve literacy achievement of Native Hawaiian students, grew from research on communication and participation structures in Native Hawaiian families and community settings (Au, 1980). Elementary teachers were trained to organize literacy instruction in ways that capitalized on Native Hawaiian culture and interaction patterns, such as using “talk story.” Over time, the project added additional features, like student ownership over literacy and a constructivist approach to teaching. Much of the research on the program’s impact appears in unpublished technical reports, but there are some published studies. Au and Carroll (1997) reported a study of the program’s impact on writing in classrooms of 26 experienced and skilled teachers. After the first year, using program-developed writing assessment, they found that students moved from 60% below grade level and 40% at grade level, to 32% below and 68% above grade level. Tharp and Gallimore (1988) compared the reading achievement in KEEP classrooms with achievement in traditional classrooms. They found huge and consistent achievement differences. For example, while the average reading achievement of 1st-graders was above the 50th percentile in KEEP classrooms, it hovered around the 37th percentile in traditional classrooms. Students in KEEP classrooms were also more academically engaged, and their teachers gave them far more positive academic feedback and less negative behavioral feedback than students in traditional classrooms.

The Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy, built on the KEEP model, grew from research on sociocultural pedagogical practices that improve student academic achievement in elementary classrooms serving culturally and linguistically diverse students. The standards include: (1) facilitating learning through “joint productive activity,” or conversations with students about their work; (2) developing language and literacy across the curriculum; (3) connecting new information with what students already know from home and community contexts; (4) promoting complex thinking; and (5) teaching through dialogue. Research studies (many of which are in technical reports rather than journal articles) find improved student achievement when teachers use these standards.

In a small experimental study involving two classes of 8th-grade Native American students, Hilberg, Tharp, and DeGeest (2000) found that the experimental group, taught by a teacher using collaborative pedagogy to create meaningful products in an environment of content-rich dialogue, enjoyed mathematics more and achieved at a higher level than students taught through traditional pedagogy, although the achievement results were not statistically significant. Doherty, Hilberg, Pinal, and Tharp (2003) studied the relationship between 15 elementary teachers’ use of the standards and reading achievement gains (measured on the Stanford Achievement Test) of mainly low-socioeconomic Latinx students, many of whom were designated English language learners. They found that the more teachers used the five standards, the greater the gains. Further, “students of teachers who had transformed both their pedagogy and classroom organization had significantly greater overall achievement gains in comprehension, reading, spelling, and vocabulary than students of teachers who had not similarly transformed their teaching” (p. 18). Similarly, in a carefully designed non-equivalent pretest-posttest control group study involving two elementary schools (one experimental, the other control), Doherty and Hilberg (2007) found that as teachers’ use of the five standards increased, the reading achievement of their predominantly low-income Latinx students increased, although gains were small. Students in classrooms in which teachers used the five standards along with supportive classroom organization made the greatest achievement gains; gains were most pronounced for low-English-proficient students.

Following a different chain of inquiry, Bailey and Boykin (2001), in an effort to identify classroom practices that appeal to African American students, studied the relationship between academic task variation and student academic learning. Academic task variation refers to the variety of stimulation children are afforded in instructional activities. The authors wanted to address the boredom African American children often experience in school compared with the stimulation (“verve,” in Boykin’s terminology) they are used to in their homes and communities. Using an experimental research design in which children participated in a task of either low or high variability, they found that the children’s academic performance was much higher when they were taught in a manner using high task variability.

In sum, all six of these studies find that conceptualizing teaching as cultural mediation, shaping teaching processes around students’ cultural learning processes, engages students and leads to higher achievement. While the three projects did not take up the matter of whose culture shapes the curriculum itself, we included these studies because they highlight ways in which cultural artifacts, such as discourse patterns, collaborative and joint meaning-making, and task variation, mediate rich learning experiences that draw from a sociocultural environment that stretches from school to home and community settings. Including studies that emphasize sociocultural contexts in a review of the impact of ethnic studies broadens our understanding of how cultural resources function as purposeful and effective tools for learning, pointing to cultural mediation and learning processes that often can be overlooked.

ETHNIC STUDIES FOR DIVERSE GROUPS THAT INCLUDE WHITE STUDENTS

What does it mean to include White students in ethnic studies, and what do White students gain? Some fear that ethnic studies foments racial antagonism. While White students are not the center of ethnic studies curricula, it is important to consider how White students experience such curricula. Here, we review research on the impact of ethnic studies designed for diverse groups that include White students. Most of that research has investigated its impact on students' racial attitudes and knowledge about race. We organized this section by general age level of students, since that follows how the research usually is framed.

Early Childhood Level

At the early childhood level (age 8 and younger), Aboud and colleagues' research review is very helpful (Aboud, Tredoux, Tropp, Brown, Niens, Noor, & Una Global Evaluation Group, 2012). The authors reviewed 32 experimental studies located in various countries (such as Ireland, South Africa, and the United States); 14 reported the impact of cross-group contact, and 18, the impact of instruction. Studies of cross-group contact tended to use peer relations as the main outcome, while studies of instruction tended to look at changes in attitudes. Overall, the authors found that 60% of the effects were positive, only 10% were negative, and the rest showed no statistically significant change. Sixty-seven percent of the outcomes for majority-group children were positive; most of the outcomes for minority-group children were not statistically significant one way or the other. Studies found instruction about racial diversity to have a more positive impact than direct contact with children who differed from themselves, although both generally produced a positive impact. The authors identified three types of instructional interventions: stories in which children identify with a character of their own racial or ethnic group who has friends from another group, stories exclusively about members of a different racial or ethnic group, and anti-bias instruction that focuses on how one might respond to prejudice and exclusion. Least effective were stories or lessons that featured another racial or ethnic group.

Studies by Aboud and Fenwick (1999) and by Bigler and colleagues (Bigler, 1999; Bigler, Brown, & Markell, 2001; Hughes, Bigler, & Levy, 2007) elaborate on the nature of instruction that has an impact on attitudes, especially among White children. This research supports the research noted above regarding most and least impactful interventions. Simply infusing representation of racially and ethnically diverse people into the curriculum has only a marginal impact on students' attitudes. Bigler (1999) explained that since racial attitudes are acquired actively rather than passively, curricula that simply depict or label groups or group members (for example, pointing out a person's race, ethnicity, or gender) may draw students' attention to group markers and differences, inviting stereotyping without engaging students in questioning their own thinking. What is more effective is to focus explicitly on stereotyping and bias, present strong counter-stereotypic models, and engage students in thinking about multiple features of individuals (such as race and occupation), within-group differences, and cross-group similarities.

For example, Hughes Bigler, and Levy (2007) documented the impact on African American and White elementary children of a few short lessons that included information about Black and White historical figures and (in the treatment condition) about racism. They found that lessons teaching about racism, and about successful challenges to it, improved racial attitudes among White children, allowing them to see how racism affects everybody and offering them a vision for addressing it. The authors posited that children's value for fairness accounts for much of the positive impact. Lessons about racism had less impact on the African American children (probably because they duplicated what they already knew), but the information about historical figures improved their regard for African Americans.

Using a pretest-posttest design, Aboud and Fenwick (1999) investigated two curricular inventions designed to help elementary children talk about race. They found that talk that reduces prejudice, especially among high-prejudiced children: directs attention toward individual qualities rather than group membership only; offers positive information about a group; and directly addresses a listener's concerns. Such talk is more effective than general talk about race that does none of these.

What this research on young children reveals is that positive racial attitudes can be developed best by directly confronting children's actual questions and assumptions about race, racism, and differences they see among people. It is also helpful to draw young children's attention to the complexity of individuals, as well as to examples of people like themselves who challenge racial discrimination. Interracial contact is not unhelpful, but by itself may not improve attitudes. The kind of teaching that impacts students' racial attitudes at the early childhood level is what provides a basis for ethnic studies at the elementary and secondary levels.

Elementary and Secondary Levels

At the elementary and secondary levels, there is surprisingly little research. Okoye-Johnson's (2011) review is useful, although the reviewed studies were not as strong methodologically as those reviewed by Aboud and colleagues (2012). Okoye-Johnson conducted a statistical meta-analysis of 30 studies that compared the impact of a traditional curriculum, versus a multicultural curriculum or extracurricular intervention, on racial attitudes of pre-K-12 students. The 21 studies of the impact of a multicultural curriculum that was part of the regular instructional program reported an effect size of 0.645, meaning that exposure to it "brought about more positive changes in students' racial attitudes than did exposure to traditional instruction" (p. 1263). Studies of the impact of extracurricular cross-cultural interventions (outside the regular instructional program) reported a much smaller positive effect size (0.08), suggesting that multicultural curriculum that is part of the school's regular programming has a considerably more powerful positive impact on students' racial attitudes than extracurricular cultural programming or no direct attention to multiculturalism, race, or ethnicity.

Two additional studies investigated the impact of curriculum on student attitudes at the high school level. Klepper (2014) studied the impact of his own social studies course about Islam and Muslims on the attitudes of 64 female students in a Catholic high school. He designed the course to provide historic and cultural background and to engage students in writing projects that asked them to think critically about their own assumptions about issues such as jihad and Muslim women. He found that by the end of the semester, students' thinking was more nuanced and for the most part their attitudes were more positive.

San Pedro (2018a) described how a White high school student changed during a semester-long course in Native American literature. He points out that by centering Indigenous perspectives and decentering the Whiteness that traditional schooling reinforces and renders invisible to White students, the course radically disrupted the White student's point of view. Initially she felt as though she needed to defend her race, which she turned to social media to do. But through the teacher's gentle affirmation of all the students' questions and sense-making, gentle prodding of students' thinking, and use of Humanizing Through Storying (San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017), the White student came to reconceptualize her identity and knowledge in a way that took "into consideration the lives, knowledges, and perspectives of others" (San Pedro, 2018 a, p. 1224).

Higher Education

Much of the extensive higher education research examines development of democracy outcomes among students. Gurin, Dey, Gurin, and Hurtado (2003) defined these as including “commitment to promoting racial understanding, perspective taking, sense of commonality in values with students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, agreement that diversity and democracy can be congenial, involvement in political affairs and community service during college as well as commitment to civic affairs after college” (p. 25). Research examines the impact of various diversity experiences, with a focus on course-taking and interracial interaction. For the most part, the courses in these studies are required diversity courses, lists of which include ethnic studies, women’s studies, and general diversity courses.

The overwhelming and most consistent finding is that in most studies such courses have a positive impact on students (Denson, 2009; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Lopez, 2004; Martin, 2010). Engberg’s (2004) review of 73 studies of the impact of a diversity course, a diversity workshop, a peer-facilitated invention, or a service intervention found that 52 of the studies reported positive gains, 14 reported mixed gains, and only seven reported no change. Although most studies had methodological weaknesses (such as use of convenience samples and limitations stemming from wording of some of the survey questions), there was still a consistent pattern of finding a positive impact of diversity coursework on reducing students’ biases. The impact of such courses is considerably stronger when they include cross-group interaction (Antonio, Chang, Hakuta, Kenny, Levin, & Milem, 2004; Bowman, 2010a; Chang, 2002; Denson, 2009; Gurin et al., 2002; Lopez, 2004), or, as Nagda, Kim, and Truelove (2004) put it, “enlightenment and encounter.” Because of the importance of cross-group interaction, some research focuses specifically on its nature. Gurin and Nagda (2006)

found that participation in structured intergroup dialogues fosters active thinking about causes of social behavior and knowledge of institutional and other structural features of society that produce and maintain group-based inequalities, . . . increases perception of both commonalities and differences between and within groups and helps students to normalize conflict and build skills to work with conflicts, . . . [and] enhances interest in political issues and develops a sense of citizenship through college and community activities, (p. 22).

Required diversity courses generally have a greater positive impact on White students’ racial attitudes than on those of students of color (Bowman, 2010b; Denson, 2009; Engberg, 2004; Lopez, 2004), probably because exposure to a systematic analysis of power is newer to White students than to students of color, and because while most students of color have engaged in cross-racial interaction previously, a large proportion of White students have not.

A growing body of research examines the impact of ethnic studies, Critical Whiteness studies, or other diversity courses on White students. Several studies use the Psychosocial Costs of Racism to Whites Scale (Spanierman & Heppner, 2004), which examines three kinds of impact: (1) White empathic reactions toward racism, (2) White guilt, and (3) White fear of others. For example, Paone, Malott, and Barr (2015) found that a Whiteness studies course produced significant positive changes among 121 White students, although there were some nuances such as increased levels of White guilt and no overall changes in levels of empathy. In a survey study of 270 White students, Todd, Spanierman, and Poteat (2011) found that empathy, guilt, and fear changed differently through coursework and were moderated by color-blind attitudes students brought. While guilt tended to rise with exposure to information about racism, guilt often prompted White students to engage in more learning; the authors noted that too little

guidance is available for helping White students deal with guilt. Students who brought a high level of racial awareness didn't experience a rise in racial fear, while those who ascribed to color-blindness initially did so. Neville, Poteat, Lewis, and Spanierman (2014), in a 4-year longitudinal study of 845 White undergraduate students, found that participation in university diversity experiences, such as courses and having close friendships with Black peers, reduced the likelihood of their saying they were "color-blind," and that the more diversity courses White students took, the greater their racial awareness. Overall, the research finds that diversity courses help White students, but not in linear or uniform ways.

For many students—particularly White students—the first diversity course is emotionally challenging (Hogan & Mallott, 2005). In a large survey study of students in 19 colleges and universities, Bowman (2010b) examined the impact of taking one or more diversity courses on students' well-being and comfort with and appreciation of differences. He found that many students who took a single diversity course experienced a reduced sense of well-being due to having to grapple with issues they had not been exposed to before. However, students who took more than one diversity course experienced significant gains, with gains being greatest for White male students from economically privileged backgrounds (who had the farthest to go).

CONCLUSION

We have framed ethnic studies as an anti-racist, decolonial project that seeks to rehumanize education for students of color, center subjugated knowledge narratives and ancestral knowledge, and build solidarity across racial and ethnic differences for the purpose of working toward social justice. This vision goes beyond the nuts and bolts that are visible in most ethnic studies projects, but it is a vision that is consistent with most of them. The research on the impact of ethnic studies on students, while limited in terms of research outcomes and (in many cases) the ethnic studies hallmarks of the projects themselves, lends strong support to the positive value of ethnic studies for all students—students of color as well as White students.

As noted throughout this chapter, almost all projects that were researched gave serious attention to offering curriculum that is grounded in perspectives of specific racially marginalized groups. While some undoubtedly did this better and in more depth than others, attending to the perspective of curricular knowledge is what makes curriculum an ethnic studies curriculum. Attention to culturally responsive pedagogy and cultural mediation was also a common feature of project descriptions. Some projects, such as KEEP (Au & Carroll, 1997), focused on doing this well, and some, such as the Mexican American Studies Social Justice Education Project (Cammarota & Romero, 2009), developed their own frameworks for what such pedagogy looks like. We suspect that the consistently positive impact of ethnic studies projects results from an interaction between what is being taught and how students are being engaged as learners.

The other five hallmarks received less direct and consistent attention in the program descriptions. Attention to criticality, while visible to some extent in most project descriptions, varied. For example, while Halagao (2004) explained that the critical perspective in Pinoy Teach was difficult initially for some students, Math in a Cultural Context (Lipka et al., 2005), which connects math with Yup'ik everyday culture, did not appear to employ criticality. Does every ethnic studies project need to do so? Probably not, although teachers of ethnic studies should consider whether this makes sense in any given project.

Helping students reclaim cultural identities was central to some projects, such as Project

EXCEL (Lewis et al., 2006) and Pinoy Teach (Halagao, 2004). Ethnic identity and achievement identity were conceptually linked in several projects such as López's (2017) studies of Latinx student achievement and the Mexican American Studies Social Justice Education Project (Cammarota & Romero, 2009). But reclaiming cultural or ethnic identities was not directly mentioned in several other projects.

Much less visible in the descriptions was attention to intersectionality and multiplicity, students as intellectuals, and community engagement. Consideration of students' social class backgrounds and student gender identity occasionally surfaced, such as in Ginwright's (2000) critique of an Afrocentric school reform; we suspect this area merits more attention. Ethnic studies arose in part to make education more responsive to historically marginalized communities; while several project descriptions briefly mentioned community engagement, the only one we know that included direct community engagement was Tucson's Mexican American Studies Social Justice Education Project (Cammarota & Romero, 2009). Finally, while a central part of rehumanizing education for students of color is to treat them as intellectuals, few project descriptions specifically addressed this as a core feature.

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