The Application of Racial Identity Development in Academic-Based Service Learning

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This preliminary study describes the transformation of students' racial attitudes and multicultural skills. A grounded theory approach was conducted to identify common themes from reflections of 19 students enrolled in a semester-long diversity service-learning course. The results indicate that students reformulate attitudes about racism and institutional discrimination through their own racial identity development from the beginning to the end of the semester. In addition, pre-test and post-test surveys were used to refine and expand the major themes about student attitudes and skills. The survey results indicate that students develop a greater interest in working with culturally diverse service recipients; acquire a deeper understanding of economic and educational conditions that impact the community; and gain multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills by the end of the term. The combination of data from the quantitative and qualitative measures indicates that academic-based service learning (ABSL) is a useful pedagogy for teaching students multicultural skills.

Over the past decade, institutions of higher education (IHE) have incorporated academic-based service learning (ABSL) courses in liberal arts curricula as a way to help students learn the course concepts; understand the conditions that lead to racial, economic, and social disparities; and become productive citizens in a global society, but only when these are explicit course objectives and outcomes (Jordan, 2007; Quaye & Harper, 2007). Academic-based service learning is a pedagogical approach in which students connect the course content to the service context through reflection and discussion (Eyler & Giles, 1999). ABSL is often viewed as a viable means to teach undergraduate students about the complexities of race, culture, and class (Sperling, 2007).

Investigations on ABSL have noted improvements in students' diversity attitudes that result from service experiences with recipients (Brody & Wright, 2004; Hess, Lanig, & Vaughan, 2007). Scholars suggest that ABSL provides students with an opportunity for informal interracial contact with recipients who differ from them in race and class at placement sites located in culturally diverse communities, and these interactions allow them to rethink assumptions and reformulate attitudes about diverse recipients (Brody & Wright, 2004; Quaye & Harper, 2007). In contrast, others propose that students retain their stereotypical attitudes and beliefs after engaging in interracial interactions with recipients who reinforce their prejudicial attitudes or participating in service experiences that do not negate their cognitive biases (Bell, Horn, & Roxas, 2007; Dunlap, Scoggin, Green, & Davi, 2007). Failure to find ABSL effects on students' diversity attitudes may reflect a limitation in the course content (Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Illustre, 2002). ABSL courses that do not include

race, class, or culture content will not challenge students to think about how race and class influence their interactions with recipients; therefore, service experiences may reinforce the "power dynamic" between White students and diverse recipients (Moely et al., 2002, p. 24). ABSL may be a useful pedagogy to teach students multicultural skills, i.e., awareness, attitudes, knowledge, skills, but only if the race, class, and culture concepts are an integral part of the course and students are required to think critically about the connection among power, privilege, and oppression in both the class and service context (Baldwin et al., 2007; Sperling, 2007). The purpose of this preliminary study is to determine if students improve their multicultural skills after participation in a diversity course that utilizes service learning as the primary pedagogical strategy, and to explain the possible change of skills through the racial identity development paradigm.

Racial Identity Development Models

Cross (1991) developed a five-stage model that describes the psychological process associated with Black racial identity development. Each stage is characterized by racial identity attitudes toward Black/White reference groups, self-concept issues, and cognitive-affective processes. Helms (1990) reformulated Cross's model to suggest each stage be considered a cognitive template that individuals use to organize racial information. Helms (1990) proposed White racial identity development occurs through six stages in which individuals move from a colorblind view of race to a less racist perspective. The six stages are contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, immersion-emersion, and autonomy. In the contact stage, the person is oblivious to racial issues

and adopts a colorblind view. Service learners have a naïve view of race and are resistant to think of themselves in racial terms, e.g., *I was taught not to see race and to treat everyone in the manner that I expect to be treated*. In the disintegration stage, the person becomes aware of the social implications of race on a personal level. Service-learners begin to think of themselves in racial terms and recognize White or socioeconomic privilege, e.g., *The teacher refuses to let Black children go to the bathroom, but she allows White children go to the bathroom*. In the reintegration stage, the person understands, but is resistant to accept, Whites are responsible for racism. Service-learners are resistant to acknowledge that White or socioeconomic privilege contributes to racism, e.g*., After comparing my elementary school to the service placement, I realized that the resources my school had was a result from race and class privilege*. In the pseudo-independence stage, the person understands the unfair advantages of growing up White and the disadvantages of growing up Black in the United States. Service learners adopt liberal views in which they perceive programs such as affirmative action or special education as ways to improve racial or educational disparities, e.g., *I plan on continuing to tutor the children after this course because I feel inspired to make a difference in this school*. In the immersion-emersion stage, the person searches for a personal meaning of racism and the ways in which one benefits. Service learners acquire a deeper understanding of racism, e.g., *I thought I was open-minded until this course. This course made me aware of my 'isms' and taught me how to change them*. In the autonomy stage, the person develops a positive, less-racist self-concept. Service learners develop a positive racial identity in which they embrace their Whiteness, recognize the connection between privilege and oppression, and engage in activities to combat racism, e.g., *I plan on teaching in this district. I now feel that I am competent to work in a diverse classroom and understand how my race influences interactions with the children after taking this course.*

The scholarship on racial identity development theory has led to advances in counseling and education (Ponterotto & Mallinckrodt, 2007). In fact, racial identity development is considered an integral component of multicultural training in graduate counseling and undergraduate psychology programs (Ottavi, Pope-Davis, & Dings, 1994; Mio Barker, & Tumambing, 2009). The White racial identity development theory (Helms, 1990) is one of the most widely used models in the field of racial and ethnic identity, and despite scientific advances in theory and measurement related to this paradigm, additional research is necessary to clarify conceptualizations of the developmental aspects of racial-ethnic identity

constructs (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007; Quintana, 2007; Worrell, Cross, & Vandiver, 2001). Mercer and Cunningham (2003) challenge the conceptualization of the White racial identity model because of inconsistent findings on racial identity development and cultural competence. For instance, some researchers suggest that only advanced stages of racial identity development – i.e., disintegration, reintegration, and autonomy – are associated with multicultural awareness and knowledge (Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003; Middleton, Stadler, Simpson, Guo, Brown, Crow, Schuck, Alemu, & Lazarte, 2005), while other scholars propose that all stages of racial identity development are related to increased cultural competence (Helms & Carter, 1991; Ottavi, Pope-Davis, & Dings, 1994). It is plausible that the White students develop multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills without taking personal responsibility for the way in which White privilege contributes to racism, i.e., reintegration stage (Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003; Middleton et al., 2005); therefore, qualitative inquiries that focus on the processes associated with racial identity development are crucial to understanding how students interpret racial information in their relationships with others who differ in race and ethnicity from them when immersed in diverse settings. Racial identity development models may explain the changes in students' attitudes and skills before, during, and after service, thus contributing to new information about ABSL. This study was guided by three questions:

1. What and how do students learn through participation in ABSL? What do they learn about diversity?
2. How are the racial identity development models applicable to student development and learning?
3. Do students change their attitudes and skills by the end of term as indicated by increases in awareness of racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and racism?

Methods

Participants

College students from a private teaching university in a northern metropolitan area who were enrolled in a multicultural psychology service-learning course completed a survey about their course and service experiences as a course assignment. Data were gathered from 19 students at the beginning and end of the course during the fall semester of the 2007-2008 academic year, with a retention rate of 100% and an item-response rate of 84%. Most students identified themselves as White (74%) and female (73%). The

remaining group of students identified themselves as Black (26%) and male (27%); therefore, the majority of participants in this study were White females. The mean age of students was 20 years (SD = 1.34), and the mean GPA reported by students was in the

"B-" range. Fifty-two percent of students were psychology majors, while the remaining group of students (48%) included business, English, and nursing majors. Students worked as tutors (41%), mentors (34%), and aides/assistants (25%) at either a local public school (48%) or a community program (52%).

Course Content

The multicultural psychology course is a three-credit course intended to prepare students to work with children, adolescents, and adults in diverse settings. This class requires students to participate in 10 hours of service learning at either a public school or a community program beyond in-class time (50 minutes, 3 times per week, 15 weeks). The first class begins with a discussion of student concerns related to this class, guidelines for this course, and a general lecture on multiculturalism. The next two classes consist of an orientation on service-learning activities, e.g., mentoring, tutoring, by guest speakers representing the placement sites. Students are matched with a placement site by the end of the third class and spend approximately one-hour per week after each class period engaging in tutoring or mentoring activities as a way to fulfill the service-learning requirement. Students tutor or mentor children who differ in race, class, and culture in a school or program located in an urban public school district that consistently ranks low on standardized assessment performance indicators (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2002). In addition, students are required to answer structured reflection questions prior to participating in service, after each day of service, and following the completion of service. The structured reflection questions require students to analyze their thoughts and feelings about service experiences, connect the service context to the class content, and evaluate how their cognitions did or did not change throughout the semester (Simons, 2008). The rest of the course is devoted to lecture, reflective and experiential activities, and discussion. Lectures and discussions correspond to assigned readings. Students are required to read *The Psychology of Prejudice* by Nelson (2006), *White Privilege* by Rothenberg (2008), and *Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* by Tatum (1997). Experiential activities (for example, crossing-the-line, and backward-forward), talking circles (as lead discussant or participatory group member), and video-clips (for example, *People Like Us* or *Blue Eyed*) are used to stimulate reflection and discussion. Students are also required to complete three additional assignments: a multicultural observation paper, a movie critique of a diversity film, and an intercultural interview paper. The multicultural observation is an immersion experience. Students attend an activity associated with a culture or ethnic group that is distinctively different from them. For example, some students attend a church service other than their own, dine at a restaurant that serves ethnic food, or go to a part of the community or city to which they have never been. They then write a short description about what they did, how it felt while they were doing it, and what they learned. The multicultural critique assignment requires students to watch a diversity film (for example, *Crash* or *Mississippi Burning*), apply diversity theories to explain the main theme of the movie, and describe what they did or did not learn in terms of racial identity development and multicultural competence (for example, awareness, knowledge, & skills). The intercultural interview paper requires students to develop an interview on any topic related to multicultural psychology (for instance, classism, ageism, racism), interview two individuals who differ in one cultural characteristic (for example, age, race, religion, sexuality, nationality, education, gender, or socioeconomic status), and compare and contrast their responses. Students integrate theory and research to explain the main findings from the interviews. The course ends with a reflective discussion on how student concerns about taking this class had changed throughout the semester.

Measures

A total of six measures with 129 questions were embedded in the pre-test and a total of seven measures with 136 questions were included in the post-test. It was more parsimonious to include multiple measures with a significant number of items rather than one or two questionnaires with a few items in the survey in order to conduct a comprehensive assessment on the 10 course outcomes. The primary course objectives were to foster students' multicultural – e.g., race & diversity – awareness, attitudes, knowledge, and skills. The CASQ, CoBRAS, and Pro-Black and Anti-Black measures were used to measure attitude change, and the MAKSS and QDI were used to measure skill development. The secondary course objectives were to enhance students' racial/ethnic identity development through participation in an ABSL course. The racial identity attitude scales and the open-ended reflection questions were used to examine student identity development and to evaluate their views of service learning.

A Demographic Questionnaire, developed by the researchers, was used to gather information on gender, race, age, GPA, and area of study. *The Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ)*, developed by Moely,

Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, and McFarland (2002), assessed civic attitudes and skills. The CASQ, an 84-item self-report questionnaire, yields scores on six scales: 1. Civic Action (respondents evaluate their intentions to become involved in the future in some community service); 2. Interpersonal and Problem-Solving Skills (respondents evaluate their ability to listen, work cooperatively, communicate, make friends, take the role of the other, think logically and analytically, and solve problems); 3. Political Awareness (respondents evaluate their awareness of local and national events and political issues); 4. Leadership Skills (respondents evaluate their ability to lead); 5. Social Justice Attitudes (respondents rate their agreement with items expressing attitudes concerning the causes of poverty and misfortune and how social problems can be solved); and 6. Diversity Attitudes (respondents describe their attitudes toward diversity and their interest in relating to culturally different people). The CASQ is one of the most commonly cited measures in the service-learning literature, although it has a moderate range of consistency. Internal consistencies for each scale reported by Moely et al. (2002) ranged from .69 to .88, and test-retest reliabilities for each scale ranged from .56 to .81. The diversity and social justice subscales were used in this study.

The Color-Blind Racial Attitude Scale (CoBRAS), developed by Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne (2000), assessed contemporary racial attitudes. The CoBRAS, a 20-item self-report measure, yields scores on three scales: 1. Unawareness of Racial Privilege (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of White racial privilege); 2. Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of racial issues associated with social policies, affirmative action, and discrimination against White people); and 3. Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of blatant racial problems in the United States). Item scores are added together to produce three subscale scores. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .86 to .88 (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000).

The Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS), developed by D'Andrea, Daniels, and Heck (1991) assessed multicultural competence. The MAKSS, a 60-item self-report measure, yields scores on three scales: 1. Awareness (respondents examine their multicultural awareness); 2. Knowledge (respondents assess their multicultural knowledge); and 3. Skills (respondents evaluate their multicultural counseling skills). Item scores are added together to produce three subscales. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .75 to .96. The awareness and knowledge subscales were used in this study.

The Pro-Black and Anti-Black Scale, developed by Katz and Hass (1988), measured positive and negative components of people's contemporary racial attitudes. The Pro-/Anti-Black scale, a 20-item self-report measure, yields scores on two subscales: 1. The Anti-Black scale (respondents indicate higher prejudicial attitudes towards Blacks); and 2. The Pro-Black scale (respondents indicate less prejudicial attitudes toward Blacks). Items are added together to produce two separate subscale scores. Intercorrelations ranged from .16 to .52 (Katz & Hass, 1988), and Cronbach's coefficient alpha ranged from .75 to .84 (Plant & Devine, 1998).

Reflection Items, designed by the researchers, were used to inquire about advantages and disadvantages of ABSL. The seven open-ended questions were: 1. Describe what you gained from service-learning; 2. Explain how service learning helped you understand the course content; 3. Explain how service learning helped you make career decisions; 4. Describe how your beliefs, attitudes, views, and feelings changed throughout the semester; 5. Describe how this service-learning experience was similar to and different from your other service-learning experiences; 6. Describe how diversity was addressed in this course compared to other courses; and 7. Describe the value of ABSL.

The White Racial Identity Attitude Scale, Revised (WRIAS) and the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS), developed by Helms and Carter (1991), measured race-related developmental schemas. The WRIAS, a 60-item self-report measure, yields six scores on six subscales: 1. Contact (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of their own racial-group membership); 2. Disintegration (respondents evaluate their ambivalent awareness of the implication of race for members of other racial groups); 3. Reintegration (respondents appraise their active and passive endorsement of White superiority and Black inferiority); 4. Pseudeo-Independence (respondents evaluate the degree of their intellectualized acceptance of one's Whiteness and quasi-recognition of the sociopolitical implications of racial differences); 5. Immersion-Emersion (respondents assess their proactive and self-initiated development of their positive White identity); and 6. Autonomy (respondents appraise their positive White identity orientation). Items are added together to produce six subscale scores. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .53 to .82 (Helms & Carter, 1991).

The BRIAS, a 60-item self-report measure, yields scores on four subscales:

Conformity (respondents evaluate their denial or lack of awareness of the personal relevance of societal racial dynamics);

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Racial Identity Altitudes

Variable	M	SD	Schema Profile
White Racial Identity Attitude Scale			
Contact	30.50	3.96	High
Disintegration	23.16	3.51	Low
Reintegration	19.08	4.03	Very Low
Pseudo-Independence	33.83	4.66	High
Immersion/Emersion	32.16	2.79	High
Autonomy	36.16	2.79	High
Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale			
Conformity	34.16	2.21	High
Dissonance	31.50	3.39	High
Immersion/Resistance	38.50	3.78	High
Internalization	28.16	4.20	Low

Note. Higher scores indicate stronger levels of racial identity

Dissonance (respondents assess their degree of confusion or disorientation when racial dynamics are in consciousness or awareness);

Immersion (respondents appraise their physical and psychological withdrawal from their racial/ethnic groups);

Emersion (respondents assess the degree of joy and contentment in their own groups); and 5.

Internalization (respondents evaluate their positive own-group racial identification with capacity to appreciate the positive aspects of Whites). Items are added together to produce five subscale scores. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .41 to .74 (Helms & Carter, 1991. The racial identity attitude scales were used as reliability checks for student journals.

The Quick Discrimination Index (QDI), developed Ponterotto, Potere, and Johansen (2002), measured intercultural sensitivity skills. The QDI, a 30-item self-report measure, yields four scale scores: 1. Total Scale Score (respondents evaluate their overall sensitivity, awareness, and receptivity to cultural diversity and gender equality); 2. Cognitive (respondents assess their attitudes toward racial diversity); 3. Affective (respondents appraise their attitudes toward more personal contact or closeness with racial diversity); and 4. Women Equity (respondents evaluate their attitudes toward women's equity). Item scores are added together to produce a total scale score and three subscale scores. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .65 to .88. The total scale was used in this study.

Design and Procedure

A grounded theory design with qualitative and quantitative measures was used to explain student attitude formation and skill development through racial identity development in an ABSL course over the semester (Creswell, 2005). Qualitative and quantitative data are collected at the same time, and the qualitative findings are merged with the quantitative results to understand the transformation of student attitudes and skills. The quantitative results are used to refine, explain, and extend the qualitative findings.

All students completed an informed consent form and answered structured reflection questions prior to participating in service, after each day of service, and following the completion of service. The structured reflection questions required students to analyze their thoughts and feelings about service experiences, connect the service context to the class content, and evaluate how their cognitions did or did not change throughout the semester (Simons, 2008). Students also completed a survey measuring multicultural attitudes and skills, placed it in a coded, confidential envelope and gave it directly to the researcher. Surveys took about 45 minutes to complete. Students were required to complete the survey again post-service, i.e., after completing 10 hours of service. In addition, students participated in a discussion on racial-cultural identity development during a class period in the middle of the semester. White students completed the WRIAS, and Black students completed the BRIAS. Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for students' racial identity attitude profiles. Each questionnaire took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Results

Qualitative Analyses

Two sources of information, i.e., student journals, reflection responses, underwent an item-level analysis through which thematic patterns were identified and coded using grounded theory techniques (Creswell, 2005). Data from 19 student journals and reflections

Table 2
Major Themes and Learning Processes

Timeframe	Major Themes	%	Learning Process	%
Pre-service	Resistance to discuss Race in Class	100	Emotional	94
	Racial Awareness	88		
	Preconceived Thoughts	65		
During-Service	Diversity Knowledge	94	Social (Interpersonal & Intrapersonal)	92
	Self-Knowledge	94		
	New Racial/Diversity Attitudes	88		
	Ambivalent Racial Attitudes associated with Oppression and Privilege	88		
	Racial Differences	88		
	Racial Similarities	88		
	Tolerance	50		
	Diversity Awareness	82		
	Comprehension of and Appreciation for the Service Context	82		
	Racial Privilege	77		
	Community Connections	76		
Post-service	Discuss Racial Issues	100	Cognitive	64
	Multicultural Knowledge	94		
	Multicultural Awareness	88		
	Multicultural Attitudes/Change in Racial Precognitions	88		
	Multicultural Skills	82		
	Prejudice Reduction	76		

were compared and analyzed using open, selective, and axial coding procedures to construct a conceptual framework. Open coding consisted of categorizing and naming the data according to the theoretical concepts of service learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999) and multicultural competence (Howard-Hamilton, 2000), while selective coding consisted of analyzing the data according to cognitive, emotional, and social learning (Gardner, 1999; Salovey, Brackett, & Mayer, 2004). Student reflections were coded as emotional learning when they reflected an expression of feeling, and they were coded as cognitive learning when they reflected a thought or judgment. Student reflections were coded as social learning, e.g., intrapersonal, interpersonal, when they indicated discriminate feelings for guiding behavior or understanding the behavior of others (Gardner, 1999; Salovey, et al., 2004). Coders counted the number of responses for each learning process and major theme and divided them by the number of student journals and reflections to obtain the percentages for each category. Major themes and learning processes were further compared using the constant comparative method to group themes across time over the semester. Table 2 outlines the major themes and learning processes grouped into pre-service, during-service, and post-service patterns. Axial coding consisted of systematically analyzing the data using topical codes based on racial identity development (RID) models (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990). Coders counted the number of responses for each RID category and divided them by the number of student journals to obtain the

percentage for each category. Students' racial identity attitude profiles served as a reliability check for topical codes derived from RID models. RID categories were further compared using the constant comparative method, so that data was grouped into pre-service, during-service, and post-service patterns as shown in Table 3. Diversity attitudes and multicultural skills were identified as learning outcomes, while social and emotional learning were detected as the learning processes that describe what and how students learn through their own racial identity development in an ABSL course from pre-service to post-service as shown Table 4.

Quantitative Analyses

A paired t-test was conducted on Anti-/Pro-Black, CASQ, CoBRAS, MAKSS, and QDI scores to measure differences in students' multicultural attitudes and skills. Students improved their interest in working with diverse recipients (t = -3.53, p<.01), understanding of social justice issues (t = -3.60, p<.01), and multicultural awareness (t = -3.17, p<.01) and knowledge (t = -4.26, p<.001) by the end of the semester as shown in Table 5.

Discussion

Diversity is a buzzword that often is associated with mission statements, learning objectives, and strategic plans of higher education institutions in the United States. Educators often debate about which

Table 3
Racial Identity Development

Timeframe	%	Stages	Typical Expressions/Perceptions
Pre Service	65	Contact	I do not see color, I only see people; All kids are the same; I am afraid to discuss racism, sexism, and classism in class because they are controversial topics and I do not want to offend anyone; I am concerned about working in the City since I was told not to venture very far off campus; I was the only White person in the classroom and learned what it is like to be a minority.
During-Service	88	Disintegration	I felt sick to my stomach because I realized that I was overextending myself to the White children at the placement; I never thought about my race and its implications until this class; I think race is something that most White people do not think about; The teacher refuses to let Black children go to the bathroom but she lets the White children go to the bathroom.
	82	Reintegration	I did not comprehend oppression until I saw it firsthand at the placement; I gained a better understanding about how the school system operates and attribute the lack of enforcement of policies and the limited supplies to racial and socioeconomic privileges; The way this school operates and its lack of textbooks and outdated computers would never have been tolerated in my White, middle-class, suburban school; Besides our skin color I cannot delude myself by thinking we have anything else in common.
	82	Psuedo-Independence	I was offended when children asked me if I was White because of the way I spoke and dressed; My initial impression was to get this assignment over as soon as possible; I learned that the children's perceptions are a result from racial, economic, and educational inequities in this community; I no longer feel a disconnection with the people from Chester; I feel a connection to the students and plan to continue to work with them after this course; I feel inspired to make a difference in this school.
	88	Immersion/Emersion	The best way to learn about diversity is to experience it; Most of us in this class have never experienced racial or educational oppression because of the privileges associated with our White, middle-class backgrounds; The service experiences not only made me aware of our 'isms' but it humanized the diversity content; I was brought up to be colorblind, but I have learned that if I remain colorblind I am contributing to the ignorance that promotes racism; I am no longer afraid to acknowledge racial differences; Service-learning helped me understand my own ethnic identity.
Post Service	80	Autonomy	I was afraid to 'cross the bridge' to go from the University into the City because of the stereotypes I heard from parents and peers; I learned that by not speaking up when someone is stereotyping is just as bad as the person speaking; I am no longer afraid to confront people who stereotype; I am not longer afraid to cross the bridge; I am ashamed to admit how ignorant I was at the beginning of this course - my stereotypes were reduced after becoming aware of them; I learned that you do not need to be from a diverse community to understand it; I feel more competent to teach in a culturally-diverse classroom.

pedagogical method is most effective for infusing diversity content into the liberal arts curriculum. The current study contributes to new information about ABSL courses that include race, culture, and class content, specifically on how this teaching method assists students in the acquisition of multicultural skills through their own racial identity development.

The first goal of this study was to detect what and how students learn from participation in an ABSL course. Student reflections illustrate their acquisition of their multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills through their own racial identity development (RID) from pre-service to post-service, which is congruent with racial identity development models (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990). Helms (1990) describes the contact stage of racial identity development as an individual's colorblind view of race. In pre-service, almost all students were resistant to talk about race in class, had preconceived notions about working in a culturally diverse community, and described their early visits at the

placement as a culture shock or eye-opening experience. Most students engaged in emotional learning to describe racial awareness associated with their reluctance to participate in racial discussions in class and their preconceptions about working with service recipients in the community; their resistance and preconceptions represent the contact stage of RID. Two student comments convey emotional learning associated with resistance of the contact stage of RID:

Not only was I afraid to discuss racism, sexism, and classism in class because they are controversial topics and I did not want to offend anyone, but I was also concerned about working in the City since I was told not to venture very far off campus. After I participated in service and was the only White person in the classroom, I realized that my fears were associated with my stereotypes and if I did not engage in class discussions about them then my attitudes would interfere with my work with the children.

Table 4
Racial Identity Development, Major Themes, and Learning Processes

Timeframe	Stages	Themes	Learning Processes
Pre-service	Contact	Resistance to discuss Race in Class	Emotional
		Preconceived Thoughts	
		Racial Awareness	
During-Service	Disintegration	Diversity Awareness	Social
		Diversity Knowledge	
		Racial Privilege	
	Reintegration	Racial Similarities	
		Racial Differences	
		Ambivalent Attitudes about Privilege and Oppression	
	Psuedo-Independence	Community Connections	
		New Racial/Diversity Attitudes	
	Immersion/ Emersion	Self-Knowledge	
		Comprehension of and Appreciation for the Service Context	
		Tolerance	
Post-service	Autonomy	Discuss Racial Issues	Emotional
		Multicultural Attitudes/Change in Racial Precognitions	Cognitive
		Multicultural Awareness	
		Knowledge	
		Skills	
		Prejudice Reduction	

Table 5
Pre-test and Post-test Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Racial Attitudes and Multicultural Skills

Measure	Pre-test		Post-test			
	M	SD	M	SD	df	t
CASQ						
Social justice	27.66	3.43	30.60	2.84	14	-3.60**
Diversity	17.46	2.77	19.80	2.17	14	-3.53**
CoBRAS						
Unawareness of racial privilege	24.92	4.35	25.50	5.66	14	-.36
Unawareness of institutional discrimination	25.93	5.52	21.43	5.52	16	3.77**
Unawareness of blatant racial issues	15.25	4.49	11.37	3.72	16	3.41**
Anti/Pro-Black Attitudes						
Anti-Black	-.66	6.38	-1.91	6.76	12	.63
Pro-Black	5.00	8.64	10.91	6.60	12	-3.49**
QDI	94.09	21.84	107.63	15.12	11	-3.49**
MKASS						
Awareness	14.25	2.23	16.37	1.58	16	-3.17**
Knowledge	23.15	3.36	28.68	3.38	16	-4.26***

Note. ***p<.001, **<.01.

I'm not sure what I am getting into with this class, it could either be fun or a nightmare. I have never worked with diverse children and I am afraid they will reject me, because of my race, class, and gender.

Helms (1990) proposes that contact between Blacks and Whites influences Whites' racial identity development. Students engaged in interpersonal and intrapersonal, i.e., social, learning to describe how they moved through the disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, and immersion/emersion stages during service. Helms (1990) suggests that interracial contact forces Whites to think about themselves in racial terms and to recognize the social implications of their race in the disintegration stage. Most students indicated that their interactions with recipients contributed to their diversity awareness and knowledge. More than half of them reported how applying the diversity content to the service context made them aware of their racial privilege; their awareness of diversity and racial privilege represents the disintegration stage of RID. Two student reflections illustrate racial and economic privilege:

After reading the 'White Privilege' assignment in the Rothenberg text and reflecting on my service experiences, I felt sick to my stomach because I realized that I was overextending myself to the White children at the placement. I have learned that my behavior is a result from my racial privilege. I never thought about my race and its implications until this class. I think this is something that most White people do not think about.

When I look in the mirror, I do not see the color of my skin. This service experience was an eye-opener because it forced me to think about what it means to be a Black, upper-middle class male. Making these privileges visible is the first step in understanding and changing how privilege contributes to inequities.

Helms (1990) postulates that continual contact between Whites and Blacks causes Whites to experience cognitive dissonance. Whites experience ambivalence about racial privilege as perpetuating racism in the reintegration stage. Most students gained a deeper understanding of racial privilege. In fact, most students made comparisons of the similarities to, and differences from, their educational experiences to those of recipients to describe how they learned about the connection between privilege and oppression. Students exhibited ambivalent positive and negative racial attitudes in their descriptions of privilege and oppression, and these differences may have been exacerbated by the degree of contact they had with service recipients (Boyle-Baise, 2002); their ambivalent attitudes about the connection between privilege and oppression represent the reintegration stage of RID. Two student comments illustrate the connection between privilege and oppression:

Although I learned about racial and social injustices in class, I did not comprehend it until I saw it firsthand at the placement. I gained a better understanding about how the school system operates and attribute the lack of enforcement of policies and the limited supplies to racial and socioeconomic privileges. The way this school operates and its lack of textbooks and outdated computers would never have been tolerated in my White, middle-class, suburban school.

As a White student, I can add to McIntosh's list of privileges that I can walk into the school and will not get questioned by the security guard."

Helms (1990) suggests that the quality of interpersonal interactions between Whites and Blacks provides Whites with opportunities to resolve their cognitive dissonance felt by their recognition of the unfair advantages of growing up White in the United States. Whites adopt liberal attitudes about programs to improve racial disparities as a way to resolve their cognitive dissonance in the pseudo-independence stage. More than half of the students describe forming relationships with recipients and/or making connections to the community, and most students reported developing new attitudes about both recipients and the city through their participation in ABSL; their community connections and formation of new attitudes represent the pseudo-independence stage of RID. Two student comments convey community connection and the development of new attitudes:

I forged relationships with the children with whom I was paired to work at the placement even though I was offended as a Black female when they asked me if I was White because of the way I spoke and dressed. My initial impression was to get this assignment over as soon as possible. However, through my relationships with them, I learned that their perceptions of me were a result from racial, economic, and educational inequities in this community. I plan to continue to work with the children beyond the course because I know I can make a difference in their lives.

The tutoring program is a great way to connect the University to the community. However, I wonder if a White school would accept Black tutors the same way this Black school accepts White tutors.

Helms (1990) suggests that the context of interpersonal interactions between Whites and Blacks allows Whites to develop tolerance through their deeper understanding of racism and ways in which they benefit in the immersion-emersion stage. Most students described how their relationships with recipients at the placement provided them with an opportunity to acquire knowledge about their own culture/ethnic/racial identity development, understand the service and/or community context, and develop tolerance toward cultural differences; their tolerance represents the immersion-emersion stage of RID. Two student comments illustrate tolerance:

The best way to learn about diversity is to experience it. I never experienced racial or educational oppression because of the privileges associated with my White, middle-class background. The service experience not only made me aware of my 'isms' but it humanized the diversity content. For example, I was raised to be colorblind, but I learned that if I remain colorblind then I am contributing to the ignorance that promotes racism.

After we watched the Blue-Eyed film in class, I wrote down my questions for my intercultural interview paper on interracial relationships. My mother noticed my questions and told me that it was inappropriate to ask such questions. I informed her that if I did not ask these questions then I was perpetuating the cycle of oppression by maintaining a colorblind view.

Helms (1990) proposes that both the context and the quality of continual interpersonal interactions between Whites and Blacks contribute to Whites' development of a positive, less-racist identity in which they engage in activities that promote equality in the autonomy stage. In post-service, most students described how their fears about discussing racial issues in class, and their preconceived notions about working in a diverse environment had diminished. Most students also made notations about the acquisition of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills, and more than half of them provided examples illustrating prejudice reduction attitudes. Students engaged in emotional learning to describe how their fears or concerns had diminished, and they engaged in cognitive learning to explain the acquisition of their multicultural skills and formation of prejudice reduction attitudes; their multicultural skills and prejudice reduction attitudes represent the autonomy stage of RID. Two student notations convey multicultural skills and prejudice reduction attitudes:

I was afraid to 'cross the bridge' to go from the University into the City because of the stereotypes I heard from parents and peers. I learned that by not speaking up when someone is stereotyping is just as bad as the person speaking. I am no longer afraid to confront people who stereotype, nor am I afraid to cross the bridge.

The fear I had about discussing race in class has vanished. The course not only empowered me to have a voice, but it also taught me to unlearn the racism and other 'isms' I was taught and endured.

Student reflections illustrate changes in their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes associated with racial identity development. Although we acknowledge that there is probably social desirability and good subject effects associated with student reflections, their responses are congruent with previous research that found racial identity attitudes are related to higher levels of multicultural competence (Ottavi, Pope-Davis, & Dings, 1994). Exposure to diversity content that is tailored to the racial and ethnic context of the course and field may influence the way in which students interpret racial information in their interpersonal interactions with others who differ from them, thus contributing to the development of their racial identity and appreciation for culturally competent practices.

The second goal was to measure differences in students' multicultural attitudes and skills. Students made improvements in their social justice, diversity, and pro-Black attitudes; increased their awareness of institutional discrimination and racism; and acquired multicultural awareness and knowledge and intercultural sensitivity skills from the beginning to the end of the semester. These findings indicate that students were less prejudiced and more aware of both racism and institutional discrimination after participation in ABSL. Students also developed a greater interest in working with culturally-diverse service recipients and a deeper understanding of recipients' misfortunes, and they acquired multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills by the end of the term, which is consistent with previous studies that found students acquire cultural competence through experiential- and community-based work (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991; Gushue & Constantine, 2007).

The final goal was to describe the similarities in racial identity development between the qualitative and quantitative data. Students developed multicultural skills associated with racial identity development congruent with RID paradigms (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990). High scores on the contact, pseudo-independence, immersion/emersion, and autonomy subscales of the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale

(WRIAS) suggest that White students transform their colorblind views to a less racist perspective in which they embrace their Whiteness, recognize the connection between privilege and oppression, and engage in activities that promote justice and fairness, all of which are congruent with the cognitive, affective, and behavior descriptions of student interactions with recipients in their journal reflections. Low scores on the disintegration and reintegration subscales of the WRIAS are also consistent with student descriptions of White privilege in their journal reflections and previous research on RID (Mercer & Cunningham, 2003; Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003). Moreover, high scores on the conformity, dissonance, and immersion/resistance subscales of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale (BRIAS) indicate that Black students lack and acquire an awareness of societal racial dynamics, as well as that they psychologically withdraw from, and find contentment in, their own racial group. Low scores on the internalization subscale of the BRIAS suggests that students exhibit resistance to their own-group racial identification or internalization of the Black culture, consistent with the lack of observed student notations about involvement in Black organizations on campus in their journal reflections and previous research on non-White graduate students (Vinson & Neimeyer, 2003). Taken together, these findings suggest that both Black and White students transform their racial identity by acquiring an awareness of their race and a deeper understanding of racism, congruent with contemporary research (Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007; Worrell, Cross, Vandiver, 2001) and which is incongruent with historical research on RID theory (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1991). In addition, Black and White students echoed similar sentiments in their illustrations of multicultural awareness, attitudes, knowledge, and skills which are consistent with their survey reports. Students increased their awareness of racism and institutional discrimination; made improvements in their attitudes about working with culturally-diverse recipients and understanding of the racial and economic disparities in the community; and gain multicultural awareness, knowledge, and intercultural skills through participation in ABSL. The consistency of qualitative and quantitative data indicates that students acquire multicultural skills through their own racial identity development in an ABSL course from pre-service to post-service.

Overall, the findings from this study support the use of ABSL for teaching students multicultural skills. Student attitude formation and skill development are difficult and complex processes to transform; however, they do change their racial precognitions and acquire multicultural skills, but only after they are required to directly connect the course content to the service context (Bell et al., 2007). Exposure to diversity in the course content and the service context are keys to improving student development and learning.

Although our findings contribute to the research on ABSL, we accept the reality that our limited sample size renders it questionable at best to generalize these and other findings of this study beyond the sample surveyed. The student population in this study was demographically homogenous. Student participants were predominantly White and female, came from middle-class backgrounds, and usually were the first generation to attend a four-year college. There probably are internal validity limitations associated with service activities with recipients at our placement sites. Students worked with African American and Latino children who score below the basic level of proficiency on state assessment indicators in an elementary public school or a community-based organization located in an urban, low-income neighborhood (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2002). The uniqueness of the service experiences makes replication difficult. In addition, the use of multiple data sources does not prevent participant bias in written materials. There is also the potential for testing and social desirability effects to be associated with participant responses that were collected with self-report surveys, journals, and reflections at different points in time.

A multi-method qualitative and quantitative approach with larger samples of male and female students is needed to generalize and expand on the findings from the present study. Additional work should aim to identify key components of ABSL that assist students in their development of racial identity and cultural competence. Comparisons of course activities and assignments in different ABSL courses are needed to understand the influence from the course content on student development. More work is also necessary to understand the influence from the service context on student attitude formation and skill development. Studies that compare service programs are needed to identify if the type of service activity, location of service projects, and amount of service participation make a difference on student development and learning. Additional efforts that include both quantitative and qualitative data will be crucial if research related to racial identity development in ABSL is to demonstrate maturity.

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