

Same-Ethnic, Interethnic, and Interracial Friendships Among Asian Early Adolescents

Xiaochen Chen

Renmin University of China, Beijing

Sandra Graham

University of California, Los Angeles

This study examined the psychological functions of three friendship types (i.e., same ethnic, interethnic, and interracial) in a sample of 785 sixth-grade Asian students ($M_{\text{age}} = 11.5$ years). Participants listed their friends in sixth grade and whether each nominated friend was the same or a different ethnic group. They also reported on their ethnic identity, intergroup relations, and perceived school safety. Results showed that same-ethnic friendships were related to stronger ethnic identity and interracial friendships were uniquely related to school safety. Interethnic friendships (an Asian friend from a different country of origin) when perceived as *same ethnic* functioned similarly to same-ethnic friendships, whereas interethnic friendships perceived as from a different ethnic group, like interracial friendships, were associated with better intergroup relations. Implications for studying friendships in ethnically diverse samples are discussed.

Friendships are critical for healthy development of children and adolescents (Hartup & Stevens, 1999). As most adolescents' friendships are formed in school and with the growing ethnic diversity of U.S. public schools (Fry, 2007), friendship researchers have begun to distinguish between same- and cross-race friendships and to examine the functions of different friendship types (e.g., Graham, Munikma, & Juvonen, 2014; Kawabata & Crick, 2008). However, most of this research, which increasingly includes Latino and Asian samples with recent immigrant histories, does not make a distinction between *same-ethnic* and *interethnic* friendships within a racial category. For example, does it make a difference if a Chinese student befriends one Asian peer from China (same race and ethnicity) and another from Korea (same race but different ethnicity)? Most cross-race friendship research would consider both of these as same-race friends when, in fact, the two Asian friends from different countries might be perceived differently. In the current research, we made a distinction between friendships of Asian students from the same country and friendships of Asian students from different countries. We then examined the prevalence and correlations with psychological outcomes of these two friendship types compared to interracial

friendships. We focused on Asian students in the United States because they are the fastest growing immigrant group with high ethnic heterogeneity (Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim, & Hasan, 2012), and because Asian adolescents are understudied in the friendship literature.

Racial and Ethnic Boundaries in Adolescents' Friendships

Historically, most research on same- and cross-race friendships focused on Black and White students living in the United States across multiple generations (e.g., Hallinan & Smith, 1985; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987). With dramatic increases in immigration in the last generation and accompanying growth in school racial and ethnic diversity (Fry, 2007), researchers have begun to examine same-race and cross-race friendships among Asian and Latino youth as well as among Blacks and Whites (e.g., Graham et al., 2014; Hamm, Brown, & Heck, 2005; Quillian & Campbell, 2003). This broadened focus on immigrants poses challenges if researchers only consider the pan-ethnic racial label (e.g., Asian, Latino) in categorizing Asian and Latino students' same-race versus interracial friendships. For these groups, same-race friends come from multiple ethnic groups. Although there are many ways to distinguish ethnic groups within a particular racial category, we use nativity (i.e., country of origin) as an indicator of ethnicity, which is consis-

This research was supported by grants from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (5R01HD059882) and the National Science Foundation to Sandra Graham.

Requests for reprints should be sent to Xiaochen Chen, Department of Psychology, Renmin University of China, Beijing 100872, China. E-mail: xiaochenchen@ruc.edu.cn

© 2017 The Authors

Journal of Research on Adolescence © 2017 Society for Research on Adolescence
DOI: 10.1111/jora.12309

tent with definitions of ethnicity as a social category that reflects a group's shared history, nationality, geography, and language (Blank, Dabady, & Citro, 2004). If ethnicity is distinguished from race, studies on same-race friendship preferences should therefore take into consideration similarity in both race and specific ethnicity as defined by country of origin. Adopting this distinction in research using Add Health data, Kao and Joyner (2004, 2006) created three friendship types for Asian and Latino students: *same ethnic* (same race and ethnicity); *interethnic* (same race but different ethnicity); and *interracial* (different race and ethnicity). The authors found that students had a strong preference for same-ethnic peers over different-ethnic (same race) and different-race peers in friendship choices. In addition, only the absence of same-ethnic peers was related to choosing more interracial friends. These findings suggested that same-ethnic and interethnic friendships, although both situated under the pan-ethnic racial umbrella, may be psychologically distinct.

To test this hypothesis with Asian students, in this study we used Kao and Joyner's (2004, 2006) typology of friendships. Based on self-reported race and ethnicity (i.e., country of origin), we divided friendships into three categories: same ethnic, interethnic, and interracial. In addition, we extended Kao and Joyner's research by asking about students' subjective perceptions of whether their friends were of the same ethnicity. Including both objective and subjective measures of "sameness" could help clarify whether the distinction between friendship types based on race and ethnicity was meaningful. We hypothesized that students would perceive their same-ethnic Asian friends as the same ethnicity and interracial friends as a different ethnicity. However, it was unclear whether interethnic friends (Asian but a different country of origin) would be perceived as same ethnic or not.

Functions of Different Friendship Types

To better understand interethnic friendships, we further examined how they mapped onto some of the known correlates of same and interracial friendships. The unique benefits of same-ethnic friendships for ethnic minority youth center around issues of validation. Studies with Latino and African American adolescents showed that friendships with same-ethnic peers were associated with stronger sense of ethnic identity (e.g., Graham et al., 2014; Syed & Juan, 2012). Perhaps the shared experiences of being an ethnic minority in U.S. society,

such as similar encounters with discrimination, that are discussed among same-ethnic friends can heighten adolescents' sense of who they are and their identification with their ethnic group (Phinney, Romero, Nava, & Huang, 2001; Yip, Douglass, & Shelton, 2013).

Interracial friendships appear to be more uniquely related to improving intergroup relations and reducing feelings of vulnerability. The contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) suggests that contact between members of different groups can promote positive attitudes and reduce bias. As an intimate form of contact, friendships have been linked to improved intergroup attitudes (Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011). Another psychological benefit of cross-race friendships involves reducing feelings of vulnerability in ethnic minority youth. Latino and Black adolescents who had more interracial friends reported more social-emotional safety at school (Graham et al., 2014). Intimate friendships with out-group members can reduce intergroup anxiety, which then helps students feel more comfortable interacting with peers from different ethnic groups (see review in Turner & Cameron, 2016).

To our knowledge, no previous study has systematically examined the psychological correlates of interethnic friendships separately from same-ethnic and interracial friendships. We suspect that this type of friendship may function like either same-ethnic or interracial friendships depending on the outcome variables and students' subjective perceptions of whether the friend is same ethnicity or not. When perceived as "same ethnic," friendships with interethnic peers could serve to bolster one's ethnic identity as same-ethnic friends do; when perceived as "different," interethnic friendships could function more like interracial friendships in encouraging positive intergroup relations and reducing perceived vulnerability.

The Current Study

This study extended interracial friendship research in two ways. First, building upon Kao and Joyner's (2004, 2006) work, we included both objective (i.e., self-reported ethnicity) and subjective measures (i.e., perceived "same ethnicity") of Asian students' nominated friends and directly examined whether the commonly used pan-ethnic racial label in friendship research adequately captured the complexity of same and cross-race friendships. Second, we explored unique and overlapping functions of same-ethnic, interethnic, and interracial friendships.

We hypothesized that same-ethnic friendships would be related to stronger ethnic identity, whereas interracial friendships would be related to better interracial attitudes and feeling safer (less vulnerable) at school. We also hypothesized that the function of interethnic friendships would depend on students' subjective perception of the friendship. When perceived as "same ethnic," interethnic friendships would function like same-ethnic friendships; when perceived as "different," they would function more like interracial friendships. We focused on a sixth-grade Asian sample because Asian students have been largely neglected in the friendship literature (Chen & Graham, 2015), and because during early adolescence and the transition to middle school friendships take on added significance (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011).

METHOD

Participants

The data come from an ongoing longitudinal study of the social and academic outcomes of students attending 26 middle schools in California that varied in ethnic composition. Eleven schools had one dominant ethnic group (e.g., Asian) and several smaller minority groups, with the particular ethnic majority group varying from school to school; nine schools had two majority ethnic groups about the same size (e.g., Asian White, Asian Latino), and six schools had several equally represented groups with no numerical majority group. This sampling strategy resulted in an ethnically diverse sample with all of the pan-ethnic groups well represented. Recruitment rates ranged from 69% to 94% ($M = 81\%$), and participation rates ranged from 74% to 94% ($M = 83\%$) across the participating schools.

As part of the research protocol, students were asked to select the group with which they most identified from the following 13 options: American Indian, Black/African American, Black/other country of origin, Latino/other country of origin, Mexican/Mexican American, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Filipino), East Asian (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese), South-East Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Laotian), South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani), White/Caucasian, Multiethnic/Biracial, and Other. We did not use the term *race* with our participants. Rather, we combined some options to capture the major racial groups: Black/African American and Black/other country of origin were combined and labeled as Black; Mexican/Mexican American and Latino/

other country of origin were combined and labeled as Latino; and East Asian, South-East Asian, and South Asian represented the Asian racial group (i.e., any student who selected one of the three options that included the label *Asian*).

For Asian participants, their specific ethnicity (i.e., country of origin) was then determined by their self-reported birthplace (for first-generation Asian students, $n = 228$) or the birthplace of their foreign-born parent(s) (for second-generation Asians, $n = 557$). Because it is difficult to determine the specific ethnicity of third-generation students, and because the number of third-generation students was small ($n = 70$), we limited our analyses to first- and second-generation Asians ($n = 785$). The sample included 16 Asian ethnicities; the largest ethnic groups were Vietnamese (31.4%), Chinese (22.0%), Korean (21.4%), and Asian Indian (6.4%). These are among the largest Asian ethnic groups in the United States (Hoeffel et al., 2012).

Of the 26 middle schools, two primarily Black Latino schools with no Asian students at sixth grade were excluded, and multiracial respondents ($N = 855$) were excluded from analysis because of the difficulty in distinguishing interracial friendships for multiracial Asian students. The final analytic sample included 4,906 sixth graders from 24 middle schools (51% girls, $M_{\text{age}} = 11.5$ years, $SD = 0.5$). The ethnic breakdown of the sample was 35.7% Latino, 23.1% White, 17.4% Asian, 11.3% Black, and 12.5% other races.

Procedure

Students with both written parental consent and student assent completed confidential surveys during the spring semester of sixth grade in a nonacademic class. Students were instructed to answer survey questions on their own as a trained research assistant read the survey items aloud. A second research assistant circulated around the classroom to help individual students as needed. Students were given an honorarium of \$5 for completing the questionnaire.

Measures

Generational status. Students' generational status was determined by a question in which students indicated whether they and their parents were born in the United States. First-generation students were those born outside the United States. Second-generation students were born in the United States and at least one of their parents was

foreign-born. Third generation represented students and both parents born in the United States. For reasons indicated above, we limited our analyses to first- and second-generation Asians ($n = 785$).

Parent education. As a proxy for student socioeconomic status, the parent or guardian with whom the student lived was asked to complete a questionnaire about their highest level of education. The response options ranged from 1 to 6 (1 = *elementary/junior high school*, 2 = *some high school*, 3 = *high school diploma or GED*, 4 = *some college*, 5 = *4-year college degree*, 6 = *graduate degree*). Mean parent educational level of the Asian sample was 4.36 ($SD = 1.53$).

Friendships. Students were asked to list the names of their good friends in sixth grade. They could list as many names as they wanted. Based on self-reported identification of Asian students and their nominated friends, we divided friendships into three categories: (1) same ethnic (same race and ethnicity); (2) interethnic (same race but different ethnicity); and (3) interracial (different race and ethnicity). For example, a friendship between two Chinese students would fall into the first category. A friendship between a Chinese and a Vietnamese student would fall into the second category, and a friendship between a Chinese and a White peer would fall into the third category. For each nominated friend, students indicated their subjective judgment of whether the friend was from their same-ethnic group, by responding *yes* or *no*.

Ethnic identity. Ethnic identity was assessed by a 6-item scale adapted from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measures (MEIM; Phinney, 1992). An sample item is, "I am proud that I am a member of my ethnic group." The 5-point options ranged from 1 (*definitely no*) to 5 (*definitely yes*) ($\alpha = .78$).

Other-group orientation. A 6-item subscale of MEIM (Phinney, 1992) was used to assess other-group orientation. An sample item is, "I like meeting and getting to know people from other ethnic groups." Ratings ranged from 1 (*definitely no*) to 5 (*definitely yes*), with higher scores indicating a greater willingness to interact with other ethnic groups ($\alpha = .82$).

Perceived ethnic climate. Six items adapted from the School Interracial Climate Scale (Green, Adams, & Turner, 1988) were used to measure

perceived interracial climate. Three items assessed interracial climate of schools generally (e.g., "teachers like students of different-ethnic groups to get along"), and three items assessed peer racial climate (e.g., "students are able to make friends with kids from different-ethnic groups"). Ratings ranged from 1 (*no way*) to 5 (*for sure yes*), with higher scores denoting more positive interracial climate ($\alpha = .70$).

School safety. A 6-item subscale of the Effective School Battery (Gottfredson, 1984) was used to measure perceived school safety. A sample item is, "How often are you afraid that someone will hurt or bother you at school?" Students rated each item on a 5-point scale anchored at 1 (*always*) to 5 (*never*). Items were reverse-coded such that higher scores indicated greater sense of safety ($\alpha = .81$).

RESULTS

Friend Nomination Patterns and Perceived "Same Ethnicity"

Asian students made a total of 2,126 friend nominations, of which 91% were of the same gender. We therefore limit our analysis to same-sex friends. Among these nominated friends, 44% were same ethnic ($n = 840$), 15% were interethnic ($n = 294$), and 41% were interracial ($n = 792$). When Asian students nominated a same-ethnic friend (based on friend's self-reported country of origin), 96% of the time they also perceived their friend as same ethnic, and when students had an interracial friend, they almost always (97%) perceived their friend as different ethnicity. When participants nominated interethnic Asian friends (different country of origin), these friends were considered as same ethnic only half (51%) of the time (see Figure 1).

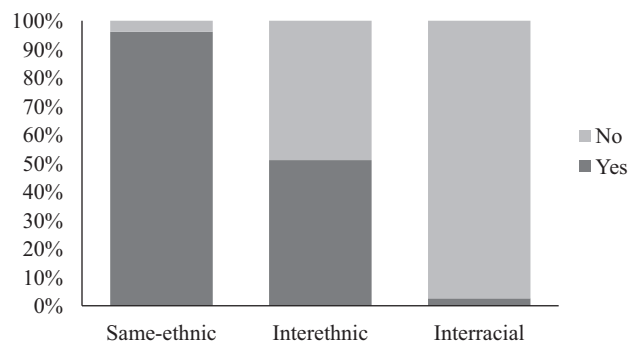


FIGURE 1 Proportion of perceived same ethnicity of nominated friends by friendship type.

We further explored what might predict students' subjective perception of their interethnic friends. To do that, we recategorized Asian students into three groups based on the geographical region of their nativity: East (e.g., Chinese, Korean), South-East (e.g., Vietnamese, Laotian), and South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani). There was a significant relationship between subjective perception and geographical region ($\chi^2(1) = 20.67$, $p < .001$): Interethnic friends from the same geographical region (e.g., a Chinese participant nominated a Korean friend) were more likely to be considered as "same ethnic" than those who were from a different part of Asia (e.g., a Chinese participant nominated an Indian friend).

Different Types of Friendships and Psychological Correlates

Table 1 shows the bivariate correlations between the main study variables. Because the number of friendships was skewed, we logarithmically transformed these variables to better approximate a normal distribution. Next, multilevel regression models were used to further explore the psychological correlates of same-ethnic, interethnic, and interracial friendships. Multilevel analyses take into account the possibility that the error terms for individuals within the same school may be correlated (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). As shown in the equations below, at the student level (Level 1), each psychological outcome was regressed on the demographic variables of gender (0 = *male*), generational status (0 = *first generation*), and parent education level as well as numbers of each friendship type. Because preliminary analyses showed little variation in the slope of the friendship effect across schools, for these analyses only the intercept varied

randomly at Level 2. Separate analyses were carried out for each of the outcome variables (i.e., ethnic identity, out-group orientation, perceived school ethnic climate, and school safety).

Level 1 : Psychological outcome_{ij} =

$$\begin{aligned} &\beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{Gender})_{ij} + \beta_{2j}(\text{Generation})_{ij} \\ &+ \beta_{3j}(\text{Parent Ed})_{ij} + \beta_{4j}(\text{Same-eth friends})_{ij} \\ &+ \beta_{5j}(\text{Intereth friends_S})_{ij} \\ &+ \beta_{6j}(\text{Intereth friends_D})_{ij} + \\ &\beta_{7j}(\text{Interracial friends})_{ij} + e_{ij} \end{aligned}$$

Level 2 : $\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$,

$$\beta_{pj} = \gamma_{p0}, \text{ for } p > 0.$$

The results of the multilevel analyses are displayed in Table 2. Same-ethnic friendships were related to a stronger ethnic identity ($B = .22$, $SE = .09$, $p < .05$). Interethnic friendships perceived as *same ethnic* showed a similar function as same-ethnic friendships in bolstering ethnic identity ($B = .14$, $SE = .06$, $p < .05$), whereas interethnic friendships perceived as different were unrelated to ethnic identity ($B = .09$, $SE = .07$, $p > .05$). In contrast, interethnic friendships perceived as different were more similar to interracial friendships in predicting out-group orientation ($B = .17$, $SE = .07$; $B = .41$, $SE = .15$, for interethnic and interracial friendships, respectively, $ps < .05$), and better perceived school ethnic climate ($B = .16$, $SE = .07$; $B = .34$, $SE = .09$, for interethnic and interracial friendships, respectively, $ps < .05$). Finally, interracial friendships were uniquely related to a greater sense of school safety ($B = .40$, $SE = .12$, $p < .01$).

TABLE 1
Correlations Between Main Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Same-eth friends (log)							
2. Interethnic friends_S (log)	-.11**						
3. Interethnic friends_D (log)	-.13**	-.01					
4. Interracial friends (log)	-.15**	.04	-.06				
5. Ethnic identity	.10*	.08*	.03	-.05			
6. Other-group orientation	-.08*	.03	.08*	.17**	.35**		
7. Ethnic climate	-.07	.01	.08*	.16**	.18**	.46**	
8. Safety	-.06	.01	.04	.14**	.09*	.21**	.41**

Note. Interethnic friends_S=interethnic friends perceived as same ethnic; Interethnic friends_D=interethnic friends perceived as different ethnic.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

TABLE 2
Multilevel Model Estimates Explaining Psychological Outcomes of Different Friendship Types

	<i>Ethnic identity</i>	<i>Other-group orientation</i>	<i>Ethnic climate</i>	<i>Safety</i>
Intercept	3.82 (.03)***	3.78 (.04)***	4.23 (.05)***	4.09 (.06)***
Gender	−0.03 (.05)	0.14 (.04)**	0.10 (.03)**	0.10 (.05)†
Generation	0.05 (.08)	0.04 (.07)	0.15 (.07)*	0.04 (.05)
Parent Ed.	0.01 (.02)	0.03 (.01)*	−0.01 (.01)	0.06 (.02)**
Same-ethnic friends (log)	0.22 (.09)*	−0.15 (.14)	−0.01 (.14)	−0.01 (.18)
Interethnic friends_S (log)	0.14 (.06)*	0.03 (.10)	−0.00 (.06)	0.00 (.08)
Interethnic friends_D (log)	0.09 (.07)	0.17 (.07)*	0.16 (.07)*	0.11 (.11)
Interracial friends (log)	−0.04 (.12)	0.41 (.15)**	0.34 (.09)***	0.40 (.12)**
Variance component	0.003	0.011	0.018	0.038

Note. Interethnic friends_S=interethnic friends perceived as same ethnic; Inter-ethnic friends_D=interethnic friends perceived as different ethnic.

† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

DISCUSSION

The current study contributes to the interracial friendship literature in several ways. First, when it comes to determining same-ethnic and cross-ethnic friendships, our findings demonstrated that the commonly used pan-ethnic Asian label in social science research may not capture the perceptions of Asian adolescents. Ours is one of few studies that make a distinction between same-ethnic (same race and ethnicity) and interethnic (same race but different ethnicity) friendships, with ethnicity determined by Asian country of origin. In addition, we directly assessed Asian students' subjective perceptions of whether their interethnic friends were their same ethnicity. Only half of the time was an interethnic friend considered as "same ethnic." Consistent with the robust out-group homogeneity effect documented in social psychology (Taylor, 1981), observers (researchers) may be inclined to view different Asian ethnicities as one homogeneous group. However, in-group members are more sensitive to within-group heterogeneity when characterizing Asian friends as same ethnicity or not.

Why were some interethnic friends perceived as same ethnic by the nominator, but others were not? The only significant predictor found in the current study was geographical region. Perhaps friends from different geographical regions are distinctive in physical traits and cultural values and therefore less likely to be perceived as the same ethnicity. For example, South Asians are phenotypically different from East and South-East Asians and South Asian countries are not Confucian-based societies as are most other countries in Asia (Kibria, 1996). South Asians in the United States have also

reported feeling different from other Asians (Shankar & Srikanth, 1998). We acknowledge that our interpretation is speculative as we did not have information about students' physical traits or cultural values. Additional research with more comprehensive measures is needed to further our understanding of Asian students' subjective perceptions of interethnic friends. Examining other explanatory variables, such as friendship quality or stability of the friendship, is also a useful topic for future research. It may be that higher quality or more stable interethnic friendships are perceived as same ethnic even after taking into account differences among interethnic friends in physical traits or culture. Longitudinal research is required to test this friendship quality and stability hypothesis.

Another question remaining to be explored is the extent to which the findings can be generalized to Latinos—the largest immigrant group in the United States, also with high ethnic heterogeneity. On the one hand, like Asians in our research, differences in country of origin may weaken the pan-ethnic sentiment of Latino immigrants from different geographical regions. Much has been written about the diverse and unique immigrant histories as well as the social, political, and economic statuses of Latino immigrants with different national origins (see Portes, 1990). On the other hand, greater language homogeneity may lead to stronger sense of pan-ethnicity among Latinos compared to Asians who speak distinct languages even within a country. In addition, phenotypic differences are more prominent among Latino ethnics. There is evidence that Black or White racial identification is associated with the friendship choices of Latino students (Quillian & Campbell, 2003). It is therefore plausible that Latino students'

perceptions of interethnic friends are more related to skin color. Studies including multiple racial and ethnic groups that take a comparative approach can be a promising avenue for future research.

Regarding the functions of friendships, the current study replicated and extended previous research by unraveling the overlapping and distinctive correlates of different friendship types. Consistent with previous research (Chen & Graham, 2015; Graham et al., 2014), Asian students' same-ethnic friendships were related to stronger ethnic identity, whereas interracial friendships were related to improved intergroup relations and feeling safer at school.

The function of interethnic friendships covaried with students' subjective perceptions of the friends as same or different ethnic. When perceived as "same ethnic," interethnic friendships functioned similarly to same-ethnic friendships in bolstering ethnic identity. It is plausible that if students consider their friends as same ethnic, they would be more likely to talk with the friends about ethnic-related issues, such as discrimination experiences, or cultural differences between school and home, thus making their ethnic identity more salient (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009; Syed & Juan, 2012). In contrast, when perceived as "different," interethnic friendships functioned like interracial friendships in improving other-group orientation and perceived school ethnic climate. With a growing focus on the role of interracial friendships in promoting better intergroup attitudes (Davies et al., 2011), researchers need a more nuanced definition of interracial friendship that takes into account the perspective of the nominator.

Although we believe the current study makes significant contributions to the friendship literature, we acknowledge its limitations. First, due to sample size constraints, the number of interethnic friends was relatively small compared to other types of friendships. At some participating schools, Asian students were primarily from one ethnic group (e.g., Korean), which limited the opportunity to form interethnic friendships. Thus, we could not explore possible group differences in perceptions of friendship types among various Asian ethnicities. For example, it might be that some Asian ethnic groups are more likely to consider their interethnic friends as same ethnic than are other Asian groups. Second, Asian students in the current study were primarily second-generation children of immigrants. It could be that ethnic boundaries based on country of origin dissipate across successive generations of residence in the United States. Future

research examining Asians' perceptions of the similarity of interethnic friends should take a multigeneration approach. Third, although we accounted for school effects in this multilevel framework, specific characteristics of schools such as their ethnic diversity or academic standing could influence the psychosocial outcomes examined here. Fourth, the current study was conducted in California, which has the largest Asian population in the United States (Hoeffel et al., 2012). It is possible that students are more likely to practice pan-ethnicity in choosing friends when their racial group is a small minority in the local setting. Future research with a nationally representative sample is needed to determine the generalizability of the current findings. Finally, the current study focused on a sixth-grade sample. We chose that age group because of the growing importance of race and ethnicity in early adolescence (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). However, the identity development literature suggests that, with increased social-cognitive maturity and more exposure to different groups of people, racial and ethnic identities become stronger from early to late adolescence (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Future research with a longitudinal design is needed to examine whether subjective distinctions between same and interethnic friendships become more salient as young adolescents get older.

Despite these limitations, we believe that the current study has important conceptual and methodological implications for studying friendships in ethnically diverse samples. Findings on disparate psychological correlates of different friendship types underscore the importance of making a distinction between same- versus interethnic friendships when studying friendships of new immigrant groups with high ethnic heterogeneity. In addition, our results showed that perceived "sameness" of friends' ethnicity did not always mirror the categorization deduced from objective self-reports of ethnicity. Thus, it is important to include both objective and subjective measures in research focusing on comparisons of in-group and out-group friendships. Finally, these findings highlight the value of distinguishing *race* from *ethnicity*, two social categories that often are used interchangeably or in tandem (e.g., race/ethnicity) in much developmental research.

From a policy perspective, the findings reported here offer more nuance to discourse about the benefits of ethnically diverse schools (Orfield, 2014). By increasing exposure, ethnically diverse schools are an important context for the formation of cross-ethnic friendships. As different

types of friendships promote healthy psychosocial development in distinctive ways, it is important for schools to simultaneously nurture both in-group and out-group friendships and be sensitive to the meaning of in-groups and out-groups for students who share the same racial classification. Ethnically diverse schools could be ideal contexts for the formation of friendships within and across racial and ethnic boundaries by providing opportunities (e.g., cooperative learning, collaborative extracurricular activities) for students from various backgrounds to interact in ways that facilitate friendships.

REFERENCES

- Allport, G. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Blank, R., Dabady, M., & Citro, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Measuring racial discrimination*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Brechwald, W. A., & Prinstein, M. J. (2011). Beyond homophily: A decade of advances in understanding peer influence processes. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21, 166–179. doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00721.x
- Chen, X., & Graham, S. (2015). Cross-ethnic friendships and intergroup attitudes among Asian American adolescents. *Child Development*, 26, 749–764. doi:10.1111/cdev.12339
- Davies, K., Tropp, L. R., Aron, A., Pettigrew, T. F., & Wright, S. C. (2011). Cross-group friendships and intergroup attitudes: A meta-analytic review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15, 332–351. doi:10.1177/1088868311411103
- Fry, R. (2007). *The changing racial and ethnic composition of US public schools*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Gottfredson, D. C. (1984). *Effective school battery*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Graham, S., Munniksma, A., & Juvonen, J. (2014). Psychosocial benefits of cross-ethnic friendships in urban middle schools. *Child Development*, 85, 469–483. doi:10.1111/cdev.12159
- Green, C. W., Adams, A. M., & Turner, C. W. (1988). Development and validation of the School Interracial Climate Scale. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 16, 241–259. doi:10.1007/BF00912525
- Hallinan, M., & Smith, S. (1985). The effects of classroom racial composition on students' interracial friendliness. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 48, 3–16. doi:10.2307/3033777
- Hallinan, M., & Teixeira, R. (1987). Opportunities and constraints: Black–White differences in the formation of interracial friendships. *Child Development*, 58, 1358–1372. doi:10.2307/1130627
- Hamm, J., Brown, B., & Heck, D. (2005). Bridging the ethnic divide: Students and school characteristics in African American, Asian-descent, Latino, and White adolescents' cross-ethnic friend nominations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 15, 21–46. doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2005.00085.x
- Hartup, W. W., & Stevens, N. (1999). Friendships and adaptation across the life span. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 8, 76–79. doi:10.1111/1467-8721.00018
- Hoeffel, E. M., Rastogi, S., Kim, M. O., & Hasan, S. (2012). *The Asian population: 2010*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau.
- Kao, G., & Joyner, K. (2004). Do race and ethnicity matter among friends? *Sociological Quarterly*, 45, 557–573. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2004.tb02303.x
- Kao, G., & Joyner, K. (2006). Do Hispanic and Asian adolescents practice panethnicity in friendship choices? *Social Science Quarterly*, 87, 972–992. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6237.2006.00411.x
- Kawabata, Y., & Crick, N. R. (2008). The role of cross-racial/ethnic friendships in social adjustment. *Developmental Psychology*, 44, 1177–1183. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.44.4.1177
- Kiang, L., & Fuligni, A. J. (2009). Ethnic identity in context: Variations in ethnic exploration and belonging within parent, same-ethnic peer, and different-ethnic peer relationships. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 38, 732–743. doi:10.1007/s10964-008-9278-7
- Kibria, N. (1996). Not Asian, Black or White? Reflections on South Asian American racial identity. *Amerasia Journal*, 22, 77–87. doi:10.17953/amer.22.2.m36385l655m22432
- Orfield, G. (2014). Tenth annual Brown lecture in education research: A new civil rights agenda for American education. *Educational Researcher*, 43, 273–292. doi:10.3102/0013189X14547874
- Phinney, J. S. (1992). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure: A new scale for use with diverse groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 7, 156–176. doi:10.1177/074355489272003
- Phinney, J. S., Romero, I., Nava, M., & Huang, D. (2001). The role of language, parents, and peers in ethnic identity among adolescents in immigrant families. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 30, 135–153. doi:10.1023/A:1010389607319
- Portes, A. (1990). From south of the border: Hispanic minorities in the United States. In V. Yans-McLaughlin (Ed.), *Immigration reconsidered: History, sociology, and politics* (pp. 160–184). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Quillian, L., & Campbell, M. (2003). Beyond Black and White: The present and future of multiracial friendship segregation. *American Sociological Review*, 68, 540–566. doi:10.2307/1519738
- Raudenbush, S. W., & Bryk, A. S. (2002). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis methods*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Shankar, L. D., & Srikanth, R. (1998). *A part, yet apart: South Asians in Asian America*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

- Syed, M., & Juan, M. (2012). Birds of an ethnic feather? Ethnic identity homophily among college-age friends. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35, 1505–1514. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2011.10.012
- Taylor, S. E. (1981). A categorization approach to stereotyping. In D. Hamilton (Ed.), *Cognitive processes in stereotyping and intergroup behavior* (pp. 88–114). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Turner, R. N., & Cameron, L. (2016). Confidence in contact: A new perspective on promoting cross-group friendship among children and adolescents. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 10, 212–246. doi:10.1111/sipr.12023
- Umaña-Taylor, A. J., Quintana, S. M., Lee, R. M., Cross, W. E., Rivas-Drake, D., Schwartz, S. J., Syed, M., Yip, T., & Seaton, E. (2014). Ethnic and racial identity during adolescence and into young adulthood: An integrated conceptualization. *Child Development*, 85, 21–39. doi:10.1111/cdev.12196
- Yip, T., Douglass, S., & Shelton, J. N. (2013). Daily intra-group contact in diverse settings: Implications for Asian adolescents' ethnic identity. *Child Development*, 84, 1425–1441. doi:10.1111/cdev.12038