

The Impact of Race/Ethnicity and Cultural Diversity in Inclusion in Independent High Schools

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Abstract

Racism is a large problem in the United States, being especially highlighted in the last couple of years. Given the large history of independent schools as a leader in education with many white students coming from power and wealth, it was important to observe the impact that race/ethnicity has on inclusion in these independent schools. It was hypothesized that race/ethnicity plays a big role in students not feeling included at independent schools and the lack of exposure to cultural diversity is at the forefront of this lack of inclusion. Using a survey distributed to a group of students from independent schools, participants answered questions regarding how included they feel, how important their race/ethnicity is to their school experience, the impact of a school on cultural diversity, and understanding, acceptance, and respect of their race/ethnicity by other students. It was found that non-white students felt less included than White students and that race/ethnicity played a larger role in their school experience. Understanding of the races/ethnicities of non-white students by other students was perceived to be lower compared with that of White students. Acceptance of races/ethnicities was high across all races/ethnicities, while respect by other students of the races/ethnicities of non-white students to that of White students was lower. It was concluded that race/ethnicity does play a role in inclusion and that a lack of cultural diversity does play somewhat of a role in this cause.

Keywords: Inclusion, Cultural Diversity, Independent Schools, Race/Ethnicity, Survey

1. Introduction

1.1 Independent Schools

Independent schools are schools that are overseen by a board of governors or trustees and are given no government funding similar to private schools (Dolin, 2020). The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) claims to be an organization of more than 2,000 independent schools in the United States and abroad (National Association of Independent Schools, n.d.).

There is a larger disparity of multicultural diversity in independent and private schools compared with public schools. Public schools have 45.8% (Duffin, 2023) of white students compared with 66% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022) of white students in private schools. Tuition for private schools is high for many, around \$16,040 at an average private high school (Hanson, 2023), leaving predominantly white people to attend as they are the ones that can afford it. This is seen as the average white household income is \$71,664, compared with the average Black household income being \$43,862 and the average Hispanic household income being \$55,658 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2020).

In the 1998-1999 school year, students of color represented 17.8% of the students of NAIS schools and there were only 9% of teachers of color (Brosnan, 2001). A 2019 survey indicates students of color are 31.6% of NAIS schools'

total students (National Association of Independent Schools, 2019). More students of color have been admitted, but representation is still an issue. Educating students on different cultures creates discussions of ethnic backgrounds, causing more acceptance and countering division in schools (Baltes et al., 2015).

1.2 Race/Ethnicity and Culture

Raising awareness about different cultures recently gained popularity to increase cultural diversity or the recognition and respect of different cultures through awareness (Mandi, 2022). Curriculum largely influences cultural diversity. A 2019 survey by the National Association of Independent Schools listed that only 5% of diversity practitioners believe that diversity and inclusivity are included to a very great degree in curriculum development, while only 6% believe that diversity and inclusivity are included to a very great degree in classroom discussions (*2019 NAIS Diversity Practitioner Survey Excerpt: Diversity Implementation at Independent Schools*, 2019).

The social environment of a school can severely affect a student's experience. Social boundaries make communities within students. This can make some feel less included, especially through how others view them (Ogbu, 1992). The constant exposure of American culture can create a setting where "American norms" predominate social experiences (Carter, 2006), causing minority students to hide their true identities based on their cultural norms (Ogbu, 1992; Carter, 2006), affecting academic performance.

This idea of norms has also been seen in other countries such as Australia where people of color like Aboriginal students can be at an educational disadvantage because of norms that make "whiteness" the standard (Lean and Dunn, 2015). This can often impose racism onto school norms (Lean and Dunn, 2015). Derogatory name-calling is one of the forms that has continued and perpetuated this cycle of oppression of minorities (Lean and Dunn, 2015; Kohli et al., 2017; Aveling, 2007). This is prevalent in independent schools, where students of color make up less than one-third of the student population (National Association of Independent Schools, 2019).

Racism is prevalent in schools (Kohli et al., 2017) through an invisible "symbolic power." In independent schools, where wealthy parents and alumni have strong influences (French, 2017), this can lead to a setting that can make many feel like outsiders. Independent schools pose a unique situation to understand the interactions that occur in a changing social world, making it important to analyze the differences in perceptions between minority and White students.

Given all these factors, it can be interpreted that racial tensions still exist in independent schools, which can create a setting that makes minorities feel excluded. Many students and diversity practitioners may know about this, but it can be difficult to know where independent schools in the United States stand in this regard. This study provides students and diversity practitioners with information to assess the extent to which race/ethnicity impacts inclusion in independent high schools at the present moment and the extent to which the lack of cultural diversity is leading to the impact. With many schools taking steps to celebrate different races/ethnicities, this study would allow independent schools to see the extent to which those measures are having an impact on inclusion and if students believe they are doing enough. Therefore, investigating the impact of race/ethnicity on inclusion and the role of the lack of exposure to cultural diversity in this can provide diversity practitioners and students with an ability to reflect on their current work and guide them on whether their work has been effective so far and what they should focus on in the future.

In this study, the relationship between race/ethnicity and the inclusion of students in the social atmosphere is analyzed. The objective of the study is to use a statistical analysis to evaluate the extent to which students feel included at their school, how big of a role race/ethnicity plays in their experience at school, the extent to which other students understand, accept, and respect a student's race/ethnicity, how well independent schools educate students about different cultures, and how well students can communicate about their cultures. By measuring the extent to which each of these measures occurs, the aim of evaluating the extent to which race/ethnicity impacts inclusion can be accomplished.

It is anticipated that non-white students will feel less included than white students, while white students will feel that race/ethnicity plays less of a role in their experience at school than non-white students as a result of the idea of "American norms" dominating experiences (Carter, 2006), causing race/ethnicity to play a big role in inclusion. Furthermore, it would be anticipated for other students' understanding of race/ethnicity to be higher than acceptance and respect and acceptance to be lower than respect, as understanding comes before acceptance (Mandi, 2022). Lastly,

given that racism is still prevalent (Kohli et al., 2017), it is anticipated that schools can do more to educate students on different cultures and that students are not effectively communicating their cultural ideas to others. It is hypothesized that race/ethnicity still plays a big role in students not feeling included at independent schools and that the lack of exposure to cultural diversity is at the forefront of this lack of inclusion.

2. Materials and Methods

The survey was created with the intent of observing the impact of race/ethnicity on the inclusion of different students at independent schools and what role cultural diversity could play. As a result, the questions were designed to first get the baseline for how included students feel. From there, it was important to ask how much race/ethnicity affects a student's experience to see if race/ethnicity is perceived to be a variable in the everyday experience of a student. To evaluate the level of exposure to cultural diversity, a question asking the school's involvement in educating students about different cultures was asked. Asking how well other students understand, accept, and respect a student's race/ethnicity acts as a benchmark for evaluating the social atmosphere regarding race and ethnicity in independent schools. Lastly, students were asked how well students shared their cultural ideas to assess the openness and social environment regarding the dialogue of culture in independent schools across the nation. The survey aims to get a broad view of the relationship between inclusion and race/ethnicity in independent schools and then take a deeper view into specific items.

The survey was conducted at a student diversity leadership event that brought student representatives from independent schools. In many schools, students have to go through a strenuous application process to be able to represent their independent school, where competition for being selected is very stiff. As a result, this event brings together students who share a concern for diversity. All of the participants were student representatives from the different independent schools.

This event brings students of different backgrounds from all across the nation. It has a social atmosphere of being accepting towards all groups of students, regardless of their demographic information/background. At the beginning of the event, this guideline of acceptance and respect of individuals was highlighted through the ground rules. As students were then broken off into smaller groups for discussions, these rules were reemphasized, creating a social atmosphere of overall respect and no tolerance for disrespect.

A convenience sample of students was used to gather data. This sample of students was simply asked if they wanted to participate in a survey on Google Forms. The survey did not ask the students for their names, keeping their identities anonymous. This way, students could feel safer answering the questions truthfully (Cleave, 2021). Before releasing the survey, the survey's questions were reviewed to make sure they were ethical and did not possess any capacity for causing harm. To make sure the survey was ethical, another teacher not related to the survey was asked about one of the questions to make sure the wording was appropriate. This survey was distributed in multiple different ways. The majority of students were asked to fill out the survey during lunch and dinner breaks, while others were asked to fill it out during breaks walking from one location in the building of the conference to the next. Some students were also asked to fill the survey out through text messages and social media distribution.

107 students participated in this survey. All of the students participating in the survey were high school students, of which 28% were Asian (including south-Asia) and Pacific Islander, 23.4% were Hispanic and Latinx, 18.7% were White, 17.8% were Black/African American, and 10.3% were Biracial/Multiracial. The rest of the students identified under the other section. 53.3% of students who participated in the survey identified as female, while 33.6% identified as male. 9.3% identified as Nonbinary/Gender Non-conforming. 0.9% of students identified as Transgender. Similarly, the rest of the students identified under the other section. These distributions are shown in Figure 1.

After collecting the data, the analysis of the data was conducted on Google Sheets. The information on the Google Form was first transferred over to a Google Sheet. Each question was initially split from the rest and the overall mean, median, mode, and standard deviation were calculated through in-built functions on Google Sheets. Next, the data was categorized into different groups based on race/ethnicity, and the mean and standard deviation were calculated for that group. Through these calculations, the means were compared across different groups of race/ethnicity.

3. Results

As race/ethnicity can play a role in the social environment at schools in determining norms (Ogbu, 1992; Carter, 2006), it was important to ask the participants how included they felt in their school community, showing how they adapt to societal norms and their impact on minorities. For the first question, “On a scale from 1-10, how included do you feel in your school community?” a score of 1 indicated that the student did not feel included at all and 10 meant that the student felt extremely included. The mean score of all students was 6.86 with a standard deviation of 2.03 while the mode and median score was 7. The overall distribution was

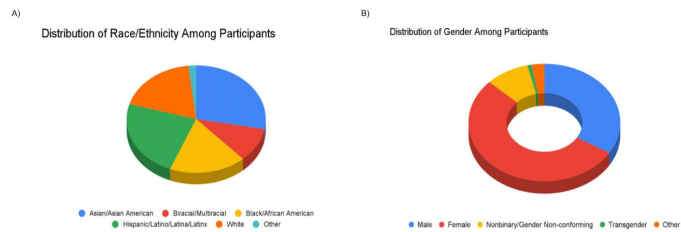


Figure 1. This figure shows the distributions of the race and gender of the 107 students who participated in the survey.

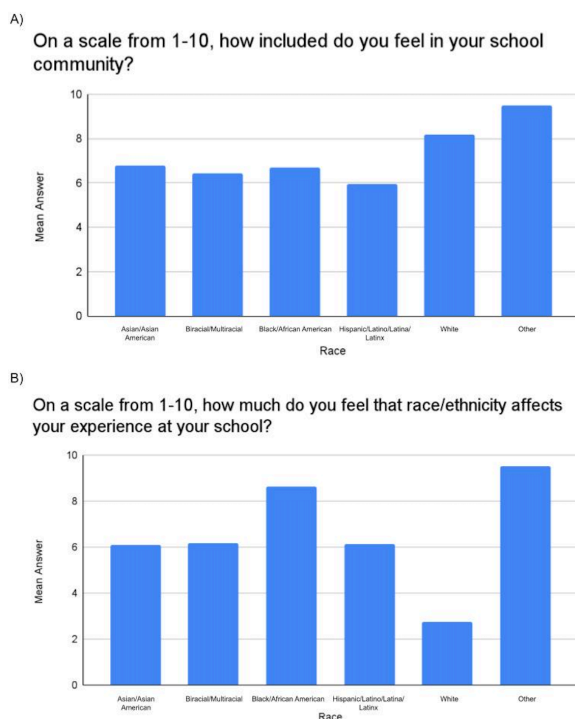


Figure 2. This figure shows distributions of mean answers for the first two questions, where Part A gives the distributions of mean answers to the question, “On a scale from 1-10, how included do you feel in your school community?” and Part B gives the distributions of mean answers to the question, “On a scale from 1-10, how much do you feel that race/ethnicity affects your experience at your school?”

“On a scale from 1-10, how included do you feel in your school community?” a score of 1 indicated that it does not have a big effect on that student’s experience and 10 meant that it has a big effect on that student’s experience. The mean score of all students was 6 with a standard deviation of 2.82. The median score of all students was 7 while the mode was 8. The overall distribution was slightly left-skewed. For non-white students, the mean score was 6.75 with a standard deviation of 2.36. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 6.10 with a standard deviation of 2.02, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 6.18 with a standard deviation of 2.40. Black/African American students had a mean score of 8.63 with a standard deviation of 1.42, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 6.12 with a standard deviation of 2.57. White students had a mean score of 2.75 with a standard deviation of 2.29. Black/African American

somewhat left-skewed. For non-white students, the mean score was 6.55 with a standard deviation of 1.92. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 6.8 with a standard deviation of 1.71, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 6.45 with a standard deviation of 2.02. Black/African American students had a mean score of 6.68 with a standard deviation of 2.08, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 5.96 with a standard deviation of 1.88. White students had a mean score of 8.2 with a standard deviation of 1.96. Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean way lower than other students, especially White students. Overall, the results show all students feel at least somewhat included.

Understanding how much race/ethnicity affects a participant’s experience in school can validate the ideas of the previous question. If the previous question has an average that is below 5.5, and race/ethnicity affects a student’s experience to a good extent or an average that is above 5.5, this would support that societal norms have an important effect on students. This can be true in the other way where societal norms do not have a large impact if students feel included and race/ethnicity does not affect their experience.

For the second question, “On a scale from 1-10, how much do you feel that race/ethnicity affects your

students had a mean way higher than other students, especially White students. The mean of all students shows that race affects their experience to a large extent.

The third question on how well the student’s school educates students about different cultures asks about the role of schools in raising cultural awareness. While the NAIS lists that diversity and inclusivity are thought of to a very great percent in only 4% of activities (*2019 NAIS Diversity Practitioner Survey Excerpt: Diversity Implementation at Independent Schools, 2019*), these activities can help change social norms. Schools play a huge role in promoting a positive atmosphere regarding cultural diversity (*Understanding a different culture, n.d.*; Mandi, 2022).

The question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you feel your school educates students about different cultures?” was used. A score of 1 indicated that the school was unable to provide any form of meaningful education about different cultures and 10 meant that it does a great job providing meaningful education about different cultures. The mean score of all students was 5.46 with a standard deviation of 2.19. The median score of all students was 5 while the mode was 7. The overall distribution was slightly normal. For non-white students, it was observed that the mean score was almost the same at 5.45 with a standard deviation of 2.25. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 5.77 with a standard deviation of 2.03, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 4.73 with a standard deviation of 2.37. Black/African American students had a mean score of 5.95 with a standard deviation of 2.41, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 4.92 with a standard deviation of 2.23. White students had a mean score of 5.50 with a standard deviation of 1.96. There is a large amount of agreement among all students as the largest difference in mean between any group was 1.03.

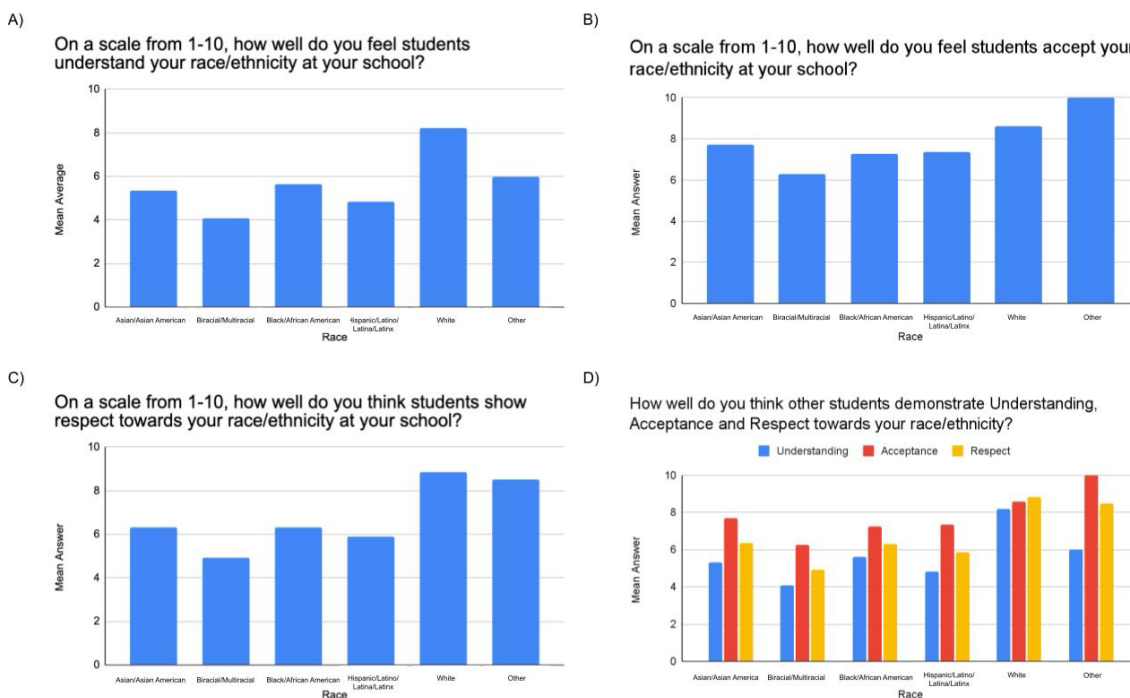


Figure 3. This figure shows distributions of mean answers for the fourth, fifth, and sixth questions. Part A gives the distributions of mean answers to the question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you feel students understand your race/ethnicity at your school?” Part B gives the distributions of mean answers to the question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you feel students accept your race/ethnicity at your school?” Part C gives the distribution of mean answers to the question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you think students show respect towards your race/ethnicity at your school?” Part D combines the graphs of Parts A, B, and C to show the relationships among the three questions and their responses.

The next three questions demonstrate how well students understand, accept, and respect race/ethnicity. They are benchmarks for evaluating the social atmosphere regarding race and ethnicity in independent schools. Understanding a culture can allow a person to be better educated on why people of a culture follow their traditions, helping eliminate stereotypes. Understanding comes before acceptance of cultures (Mandi, 2022). Acceptance leads to respect for cultures.

After analyzing the ideas of students and their relationships with their school and themselves at school, it was important to analyze what students thought about their relationships with their peers because they can lead to setting norms, through acts such as derogatory name-calling (Lean and Dunn, 2015; Kohli et al., 2017). The question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you feel students understand your race/ethnicity at your school?” was asked first. A score of 1 meant that other students did not understand the participant’s race/ethnicity while 10 meant that other students understood the participant’s race/ethnicity.

The mean score of all students was 5.69 with a standard deviation of 2.63 while the median and mode score was 5. The overall distribution was approximately normal. For non-white students, the mean score was 5.11 with a standard deviation of 2.15. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 5.33 with a standard deviation of 2.12, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 4.09 with a standard deviation of 1.22. Black/African American students had a mean score of 5.63 with a standard deviation of 2.56, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 4.82 with a standard deviation of 2.15. White students had a mean score of 8.20 with a standard deviation of 3.05. There is a large difference between the mean of White students and the mean of each other minority group. For example, Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students’ mean was 3.36 less than that of White students. This shows that minority students feel that other students do not understand their race as much in comparison to White students.

After understanding, acceptance is the next step. The question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you feel students accept your race/ethnicity at your school?” was asked. A score of 1 meant that students did not accept the participant’s race/ethnicity while a score of 10 meant that students accepted the participant’s race/ethnicity. The mean score of all students was 7.61 with a standard deviation of 2.35. The median was 8 while the mode was 10. The overall distribution was somewhat left-skewed. For non-white students, the mean score was 7.38 with a standard deviation of 2.08. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 7.70 with a standard deviation of 1.84, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 6.27 with a standard deviation of 1.62. Black/African American students had a mean score of 7.26 with a standard deviation of 2.40, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 7.36 with a standard deviation of 2.18. White students had a mean score of 8.60 with a standard deviation of 3.17. Across all races, students feel that their race is quite accepted in schools. There is some disconnect compared to the previous question.

Respect would be the biggest determinant of the study given its importance in schools. The question, “On a scale from 1-10, how well do you think students show respect towards your race/ethnicity at your school?” was asked. A score of 1 meant students are not respectful of the participant’s race/ethnicity while a score of 10 meant that students are respectful of the participant’s race/ethnicity. The mean score of all students was 6.59 with a standard deviation of 2.67. The median was 7 while the mode was 10. The overall distribution was somewhat left-skewed. For non-white students, the mean score was 6.07 with a standard deviation of 2.42. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 6.33 with a standard deviation of 2.12, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 4.91 with a standard deviation of 1.51. Black/African American students had a mean score of 6.32 with a standard deviation of 2.96, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 5.88 with a standard deviation of 2.57. White students had a mean score of 8.85 with a standard deviation of 2.58. There was a large gap between the respect White students feel their race receives compared to the respect students of other races feel their race receives.

It was important to see how students shared their cultural ideas to assess the social environment. The question “On a scale of 1-10, how well do you think students are able to communicate their cultural ideas at school?” was asked. A score of 1 meant that students have difficulty expressing their cultural ideas. while a score of 10 meant that students can express their cultural ideas easily. The mean score of all students was 5.41 with a standard deviation of 2.34. The median was 5 while the mode was 6. The overall distribution was slightly normal. For non-white students, the mean score was 5.36 with a standard deviation of 2.40. Asian/Asian American students had a mean score of 5.60 with a standard deviation of 2.34, while Biracial/Multiracial students had a mean score of 4.09 with a standard deviation of 1.22. Black/African American students had a mean score of 5.58 with a standard deviation of 2.95, while Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx students had a mean score of 5.20 with a standard deviation of 2.27. White students had a mean score of 5.65 with a standard deviation of 2.08. The results of each group are similar.

4. Discussion

The hypothesis was partially supported by the results. This can be explained by splitting the survey into three main parts. The first part of the survey was designed to evaluate whether race/ethnicity still plays a big role in students feeling included at independent schools. Race/ethnicity does act as an indicator for inclusion. In response to the first question, the mean average of non-white students was a little bit lower, which goes to support the idea that as the gap is not that wide, race/ethnicity does not have such a big role. Looking at the mean scores of each race, the mean for White students was 8.2, while the mean for every other racial group differed by at least 1. Question 1 alone gives mixed conclusions as there is a support that race can be observed as a factor in inclusion based on the difference between white students and non-white students, but this difference is not large.

The second question asked how much race/ethnicity affects the participant's experience at school. The response was higher for non-white students, having a mean of 6.75, in comparison to the mean of 2.75 for white students. Race/ethnicity does affect a participant's experience at school for minorities, showing how societal norms in school are prevalent by promoting "whiteness" and American standards (Ogbu, 1992; Carter, 2006; Lean and Dunn, 2015). If this was not the case, then race/ethnicity would not play such a big role. The biggest factor in supporting this idea is that White students had a mean of 2.75, or that it does not play such a big role in a student's experience. The survey's results support the reasoning of race/ethnicity playing a role in division between students in schools through the idea of "American norms" being imposed in schools (Ogbu, 1992; Carter, 2006; Lean and Dunn, 2015), preventing inclusion. Combining the two questions' results, there is support for race/ethnicity playing a role in inclusion, but not a big one as question 1 shows many still feel included.

The second part of the survey on the student social atmosphere was designed to evaluate whether the lack of cultural diversity would play a role in race-related tensions in the atmosphere. For how well students felt other students understood their race/ethnicity, the mean for non-white students was 5.11, an average but not good understanding. White students had a mean of 8.20, showing a large gap. This can be traced to societal norms being mainly "American norms," as they make "whiteness" the standard (Lean and Dunn, 2015). The low levels of understanding for non-white students in comparison to that of white students are exacerbated when observing these differences between racial groups, showing a lack of exposure to cultural diversity given understanding plays a key role in accepting and respecting cultures, pillars of cultural diversity (Mandi, 2022).

However, given that understanding comes before acceptance (Mandi, 2022), it was observed that acceptance was higher than understanding across almost all races/ethnicities. This undermines the claim observed from the "understanding component" alone, as acceptance is high with a mean of 7.61, with mean scores of each race/ethnicity quite close to each other, when understanding is low. The key indicator in the racial cause of a lack of inclusion is respect. The mean of respect felt by non-white students was 6.07 while the mean of respect felt by White students was 8.85, a large difference. While the mean of non-white students is about 1 point above a median score of an equal distribution of 5.5, the mean of White students is about 1 point away from a perfect score of 10. Connecting this to the understanding portion and the reasoning that understanding leads to respect (*Understanding a different culture, n.d.*; Mandi, 2022) would give the clear connection that there is a lack of both, leading to a lack of cultural diversity. As the mean of acceptance is high and the mean of respect is low, a good amount of acceptance is not necessarily translating to a high level of respect, showing a need for more understanding so that respect can increase, given the connection between the two (*Understanding a different culture, n.d.*; Mandi, 2022).

The hypothesis is partially supported as the results support race playing a role in inclusion but in a limited proportion. The results show a lack of understanding and respect, except that acceptance is high, making the support partial. Connecting the two parts of the hypothesis, or that of cultural diversity to inclusion, less respect for non-white students and the results' support for the idea that social norms of "whiteness" show division.

The third part of the survey assessed the school's involvement in the student social atmosphere and cultural diversity, analyzing how well students feel the school educates them on different cultures shows the connection to the understanding component of cultural diversity. In response to the question, the mean of all students was 5.46, with the White students having the median of all the mean scores, demonstrating all scores were similar. Schools still need to improve their education on different cultures as students gave it a rating that was subpar, close to the median score of

an equal distribution of 5.5. This supports the idea that there is low understanding as a subpar cultural education from school would result in this. In regards to the social atmosphere, the mean score of the question on how well students can communicate their cultural ideas was 5.41, showing a need for more support for cultural expression. There is a need for improvements in school-driven education to increase cultural understanding. It was concluded that race/ethnicity has a role in the lack of inclusion in schools and that cultural diversity does play a role in the lack of inclusion from a lack of respect from a lack of understanding. This race-driven cause of a lack of respect requires more research to determine it as a big cause of the lack of inclusion in schools.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to evaluate the extent to which race/ethnicity impacts inclusion and if the lack of exposure to cultural diversity plays a role in this. The study focused on using a survey that was distributed to students at a student diversity leadership event bringing together student representatives from independent schools across the United States. The survey given was made up of three main parts: race/ethnicity and inclusion, the role of cultural diversity, and the sharing of cultural ideas in schools. From the first part, a question on how included the student feels and a question on how much race/ethnicity impacts their experience at school were asked from 1 to 10. For the first question, the overall mean was 6.86 and the mean for White students was 8.2, meaning that White students felt more included than the rest of the students. This indicates that there is somewhat of an impact of race/ethnicity on inclusion, but as the mean for each of the other races/ethnicities was not that much lower, its impact is not huge. The second question asking how much race/ethnicity affects the participant's experience at school had a higher for non-white students, having a mean of 6.75, in comparison to the mean of 3.9 for white students. This not only helps indicate how societal norms in school are prevalent by promoting "whiteness" and American standards (Ogbu, 1992; Carter, 2006; Lean and Dunn, 2015). This can have broad implications on a student's academic performance by causing minority students to hide their true identities based on their cultural norms (Ogbu, 1992; Carter, 2006). Overall, it creates divisions within the social atmosphere in schools, which impacts a student's experience, often in a negative manner.

To discuss the role that cultural diversity plays in this, three questions regarding the understanding, acceptance, and respect other students have about a student's race/ethnicity were asked. For how well students felt other students understood their race/ethnicity, the mean for non-white students was 5.11, an average but not good understanding. White students had a mean of 8.20, showing a huge gap. However, acceptance is high across the board as the overall mean was 7.61. Yet, the mean respect felt by non-white students was 6.07, while the mean respect felt by white students was 8.85. This goes to show a discrepancy between acceptance and understanding, but a similarity between the results of understanding and respect. From this, it can be implied that there is a need for larger understanding of different cultures, which could help increase respect. Therefore, the lack of cultural diversity does play a role, but because acceptance was high, more research needs to be done on the connection between the three.

In terms of school involvement, students said that schools educate students about different cultures at a near average 5.45 out of 10, where students can communicate their cultural ideas at 5.41. These represent about average ratings, which show that schools must do more to educate and expose students to different cultures. The lack of understanding of different cultures as well as the lack of respect of non-white students compared to white students is brought out in the study and should be used as an impetus to continue exposing students to different cultures in order to increase understanding and therefore respect. This study should be used by diversity practitioners and students to help them in their programming of making independent schools more inclusive to non-white students by increasing exposure to cultural diversity, even if it played somewhat of a role.

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