

## PARENTS' ETHNIC SOCIALIZATION PRACTICE ON ETHNIC IDENTITY AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG INDIAN STUDENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ULU KLANG ZONE

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### ABSTRACT

*This study has investigated the practice of ethnic socialization on ethnic identity and self-efficacy among Secondary School Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. The study also examines the demographic variable, namely parents' socioeconomic status on self-efficacy. Quantitative approaches of survey design were used for this study. A number of ninety-two students from form three, form four, and form five of six secondary schools in Ulu Klang Zone were chosen using convenience sampling methods as studied subjects. The modified version of Multi-group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), The Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM) and Self-efficacy for Self-regulated Learning Measure were used in this study. The study showed that parents' ethnic socialization practices were a strong predictor of ethnic identity development and self-efficacy of Indian students in the secondary school. The result also showed that ethnic identity and parents' socioeconomic status was the strongest predictor of self-efficacy of secondary school Indian students. As a conclusion, ethnic socialization has a profound effect on ethnic identity and self-efficacy which undeniably shed light on the role of parenthood was most crucial and filled with astonishing capability in bringing forth the idea of unity in reality.*

**Keywords:** *parent's ethnic socialization, ethnic identity, socioeconomic status, self-efficacy*

### INTRODUCTION

Ethnic polarization among Malaysian students is an unavoidable occurrence (Chin, 2013; Ting, 2012). In Malaysia, Chin (2013) and Nor (2007) also concluded that ethnic polarization deeply affected among Malaysian students. Intergroup interaction often generates anxiety and threatening for people whom concentrate on their group difference and social relation (Babbit & Sommers, 2011). Shamsul (2012) stated that promoting social cohesion in a multiethnic country such as Malaysia absolutely vital. Several empirical studies have found that the Malaysian government initiated various efforts in order to strengthen the unity in a diverse society (Mansor, 2012; Saad, 2011). The disintegration of interaction threatens the notion of unity. Despite the many similarities like occurrence, parents' ethnic socialization practice plays very powerful force for improving intergroup attitudes.

The practice of ethnic socialization towards their children assists them to appreciate the existence of a pluralistic society. Ethnic socialization

includes communicating information such as ethnic pride, awareness of discrimination, intergroup trust and mistrust, custom and tradition, equality across groups and appreciation towards diversity communicated to their children (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, Spicer & Coll, 2006). According to the scholars, parents' communications among their children concerning their ethnicity is a very important element in multi-ethnic families (Chua, Jasmine Adela Mutang, Nur Faharna Adillah Aftar, Shazia Iqbal, Lailawati Madlan, & Rosnah Ismail, 2013).

Researchers have adopted the term ethnic socialization in many existing studies in the field of psychosocial development of minority (Khris-Ann K. Small, 2016). The notion of ethnic socialization develops a major area of research which has been contributed towards the improvement and well-being of minority youth (Scott, Taylor, & Palmer, 2013).

According to Tran and Lee (2010), more studies have been done in order to understand the practice

of ethnic socialization across the life span. Hoxha (2010) found that ethnic socialization practice has a positive impact on the process of ethnic identity development among adolescent. The studies also have shown that practice of ethnic-socialization leverage the development of positive ethnic identity (Chua et al., 2013; Kiang, Kip, Gonzales-Backen, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006).

The development of ethnic identity has spread widely among every individual in a multiethnic society. In Malaysia, such identification prevails by identify themselves as Malay, Chinese, Indian, Iban, Kadazan, orang asli and many other ethnics and sub-ethnics (Gomes & Rahman, 2009). There are several models which explained the concept of Ethnic identity. According to Breton, Isajiw, Kalbach, & Reitz (1990) the development of ethnic identity categorized into internal and external domain. Internal domain explained that an individual will identify himself along with his particular ethnicity based on the various sources such as media depiction, circle of friends and language. On the other hand, external domain explained that an individual will identify himself along with his particular ethnicity through self-image, social belongings and loyalty to his ethnic group.

According to Jean Phinney's theoretical model of ethnic identity (1990), emergence of evidence in identity development enhances the essential value gained by an individual from his meaningful belongings towards his particular ethnic group. Surprisingly, these meaningful belongings help the individual to leverage psychological well-being such as self-esteem. Ethnic socialization and ethnic identity development are the critical elements during adolescence and these developments are vibrant, multifaceted, and multi-directional. Thus, understanding the interplay of ethnic socialization and ethnic identity development among adolescent is very essential. Individual from minority background has higher potentiality in experiencing major environmental and social stressors such as prejudice and discrimination. Thus, achieving a strong positive ethnic identity demonstrated is a crucial element to them (Reinhard, 2010). Ethnic socialization and ethnic identity may also explain on how Malaysian Indian overcomes with ethnic discrimination in various sectors. In Malaysia, positive discrimination or affirmative action is most prevalent issues mainly in education context which concerning preference on Bumiputera in

general and Malay in particular (Hwok-Aun Lee & Muhammad Abdul Khalid, 2015).

Based on study conducted by DeFreitas (2012), an African American first year college students and the relationship between self-efficacy, outcome assumption, and academic achievement shows that the African American students who have negative outcome expectations have higher grades, and higher self-efficacy compared with the African American students whose outcome expectations are positive. Negative outcome expectations are adaptive for African Americans due to preparation for bias that is transmitted to African American youths from parents (DeFreitas, 2012). He also mentioned the plausibility of encouragement and preparation for stereotyping and bias conveyed through racial socialization messages (i.e., preparation for bias and cultural socialization) towards develop as a buffer; this preparation may prove useful in encouraging motivation and self-efficacy, and fighting against stereotypical ideas throughout the lifetime.

Self-efficacy Bandura (1994) defines self-efficacy as —people belief about their capabilities to produce designated level of performance that exercises influence over events that affect their lives (p.71). The theory of self-efficacy (1994) is built on the premise that individual has the capability of attuning themselves positively when encounter with any given task. This process of attuning is influenced by various factors such as social context, and previous experience (Martin & Pear, 2011).

In recent times, there is a great work of literature on the mechanisms of ethnic socialization globally and found important insight concerning its effect on developing ethnic identity and self-efficacy. Regrettably, many of these studies were conducted in abroad and there is a very limited literature to explore and understand in native perspective. Therefore, this work determined to investigate the effect of parents' ethnic socialization practices on ethnic identity and self-efficacy among secondary school Indian students in the Ulu Klang Zone. This study also examines the effect of parent's socioeconomic status on self-efficacy.

Therefore, this study aimed to fulfill the following objectives:

- i. To identify the effect of parents' ethnic socialization practice on ethnic identity among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- ii. To identify the effect of parents' ethnic socialization practice on Self-Efficacy among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- iii. To identify the effect of ethnic identity on Self-efficacy among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- iv. To identify the effect of parents' socioeconomic status on self-efficacy among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- v. To identify the effect of parents' socioeconomic status on ethnic identity among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.

Based on these, five hypotheses were formulated:

- i. Parents' ethnic socialization practice is significant predictors of developing Ethnic identity among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- ii. Parents' ethnic socialization practice is significant predictor of self-efficacy among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- iii. Ethnic Identity is significant predictor of self-efficacy among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- iv. Parents' socioeconomic status is significantly influence self-efficacy among among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.
- v. Parents' socioeconomic status is significant predictor of ethnic identity among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.

## METHOD

### Participants

This research has been designed using the quantitative approach of survey design. This study involves upper level secondary students from form 3, 4 and 5 in Ulu Klang Zone. There are a total number of six secondary schools in Ulu Klang Zone. The total number of Indian students enrollment in the secondary schools is 117.

The participants' age engaged in this study was composed of 15 to 17. The justification of the particular sample was based on the review proposed in the theory of psychosocial development introduced by Erikson (1956). According to Erikson (1956), the process of identity formation among adolescent (age between 12 to 18) is a very critical phase. A sampling approach used for this study was a convenience approach. This sampling method is considered nonprobability in nature. The participant who was close to hand and easily available selected for this research in this approach.

This study was administered amongst 92 Indian students who were recruited using convenience sampling. The sample of this study has determined based on the sample size determination table initiated by Krejcie and Morgan's (1970).

The number of respondents aged 15 is 18 which equivalents to 19.6% while the number of respondents aged 16 is 42 which equivalents to 43.5% and respondents who aged 17 is 34 which equivalents to 37.0%.

### Measures

Initially, the participants have to fill up their demographic characteristic such as gender, age, parents' monthly income in Demographic section, namely, Section A. Section B containing The Familial Ethnic Socialization Measure (FESM). This section measures parents' ethnic socialization practice (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001). This questionnaire consists of 12 items. Section C used the modified version of Multi-group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) (Phinney, 1992) which has 18 items to measure the identification of their ethnic group. Section D, comprised self-efficacy for self-regulated learning scale introduced by Bandura (1989) which has 11 items to measure student's perceived ability to utilize a diverse type of self-regulated learning strategies in an academic setting.

### Procedures and Data Analysis

Prior to administration of the instruments, the researchers first visited and explained to the school principal about the purpose of this investigation and establish a good relationship with the management of the school. Researchers have discussed with the school to fix the dates for

administering the questionnaire to avoid respondents were involved with other activities in the school. The questionnaire administered to the respondents within 2 to 3 days. The researchers brought together respondents in each school and asked to complete the given questionnaire. This method is known as group-administered questionnaire in Social Science Research (Bhattacharjee, 2012). SPSS version 21.0 was utilized to test the hypotheses of the study. Two levels of analysis were conducted, namely descriptive and linear regression analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the background of the respondents in terms of gender,

age and level of socioeconomic while linear regression analysis used to evaluate proposed research hypothesis.

## RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the above, this current study outcome has presented as follows and discussed in detail about the role of parents' ethnic socialization practice on ethnic identity and self-efficacy among Indian students of secondary school in Ulu Klang Zone.

**Table 1** Linear Regression Summary of the Parents' Ethnic Socialization Practice and Ethnic Identity.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value
Ethnic Identity	Parents' Ethnic Socialization	-0.339*	-3.418
	R <sup>2</sup>	.115	
	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	.105	
	Sig. F	.11.682*	

Note: Significant levels: \*p < 0.05

The finding of linear regression indicated that there is a significant relationship between the parents' ethnic socialization and ethnic identity among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. Table 1.0 shows that there is a

significant relationship between parents' ethnic socialization ( $\beta = -.339$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and the ethnic identity among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone with p value 0.01 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

**Table 2** Linear Regression Summary of the Parents' Ethnic Socialization Practice and Self-efficacy.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value
Self-Efficacy	Parents' Ethnic Socialization	0.308*	0.307
	R <sup>2</sup>	.095	
	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	.085	
	Sig. F	.9.424*	

Note: Significant levels: \*p < 0.05

The finding of linear regression indicated that parents' ethnic socialization practice is a significant predictor of self-efficacy among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. Table 2.0 shows that the parents' ethnic

socialization ( $\beta = .308$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) has a significant relationship with the self-efficacy among the secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

**Table 3** Linear Regression Summary of Ethnic Identity and Self-efficacy

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value
Self-Efficacy	Ethnic Identity	-0.607*	-7.254
	R <sup>2</sup>	.369	
	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	.362	
	Sig. F	.52.627*	

Note: Significant levels: \*p < 0.05

The finding of linear regression indicated that the ethnic identity is a significant predictor of self-efficacy among secondary school Indian student in Ulu Klang Zone. Table 3.0 shows that there are significant relationship between the ethnic

identity ( $\beta = -.0607$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and self-efficacy among secondary school Indians students in the Ulu Klang Zone. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

**Table 4** Linear Regression Summary of Parents' Socioeconomic Status and Self-efficacy

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value
Self-Efficacy	Parents' Socioeconomic Status	-0.221*	2.153
	R <sup>2</sup>	.049	
	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	.038	
	Sig. F	.4.636*	

The finding of linear regression indicated that the parents' socioeconomic status is a significant predictor of self-efficacy among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. Table 4.0 shows that there are significant relationship

between parents' socioeconomic status ( $\beta = -0.221$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and self-efficacy among secondary school Indians students in Ulu Klang Zone. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

**Table 5** Linear Regression Summary of Parents' Socioeconomic Status and Ethnic Identity

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Std. Coefficient Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-value
Ethnic Identity	Parents' Socioeconomic Status	-0.627	-0.622
	R <sup>2</sup>	.004	
	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>	-.007	
	Sig. F	.387	

The finding of linear regression indicated that parents' socioeconomic status has no significant predictor of ethnic identity among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. Table 5.0 shows that there is no significant relationship

between parents' socioeconomic status ( $\beta = -0.627$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and ethnic identity among secondary school Indians students in the Ulu Klang Zone. Based on this statistic finding, the alternative hypothesis was rejected.

## DISCUSSION

The finding of this study indicated that parents' ethnic socialization practice significant predictor towards the development of ethnic identity among secondary school Indian students. This study revealed the importance of ethnic socialization practice which has greater impact towards the positive development of identity and found to be consistent with the previous research finding (Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). The research conducted by Hoxha (2010) shows identical result with the current research finding. This study offered an insight concerning the relevance of parents' ethnic socialization practice especially among minority community. The relationship revealed in current study is aligned with the previous findings stated by Parker (2016) and Cicely & Brantley (2014). The finding of this study is identical with other studies because of shared similar social stratification. Imparting the value of being a member of a particular ethnic group in a positive way triggered the potentiality of an individual to aware his capabilities. This emerging one's positive capabilities assumption has a profound effect on his attainment in the academic domain.

The result also revealed that ethnic identity is a significant predictor for self-efficacy among secondary school Indian students. Ethnic identity enhanced the possibility to realize one's capability and would influence his daily activities. Mastering and achieving a firm ethnic identity is a complex process in adolescent time and it dominates all other identity. For instance, the study by J.L.Cook & Cook (2014) showed that strong positive feeling concerning own ethnic group seems to be very important for good mental health, and also has been discovered to reduce the effect of low socioeconomic status on academic attainment (Ong, Phinney, & Dennis, 2006).

The finding suggested that parents' socioeconomic status contributed significantly and positively towards self-efficacy among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. This finding consistent with the previous study that conducted by Perry & McConney (2010). Mahyuddin, Elias, Loh, Muhamad, Noordin, & Chong (2006) conducted a study to compare the students' career self-efficacy expectations of gender and socioeconomic

status. Familial economic factor would stimulate the larger social environment of an individual development and generate not only resentment but also triggered to miles down individual capability of understanding their strength.

Unexpectedly, data showed that parents' socioeconomic status does not contributed significantly towards ethnic identity among secondary school Indian students in Ulu Klang Zone. This unexpected finding enlightening the nature of developing ethnic identity is not merely depends on parents' socioeconomic factor. Bronfenbrenner (1989) in his ecological theory proposed that environmental factor becomes key predictor towards individual development in every domain. Although result showed that parents' socioeconomic status does not contributed significantly towards the development of ethnic identity, several other factor such as interaction with parents', siblings, and peers might have exert greater influence than socioeconomic factor (Umana-Taylor & Guimond, 2010).

The finding of this study supported the theoretical framework indicated by the researchers. According to Umana-Taylor & Guimond (2010) theoretical ground, the practice of ethnic socialization has exerted influence on the development of ethnic identity. Besides that, finding of this study concerning the effect of ethnic identity and self-efficacy also showed expected result and supported theoretical framework of this study by indicated significant contribution among Indian students. According to Erikson (1956), the development of healthy identity plays major role in contributing positive outcome in individual psychosocial development. The finding also supported firmly by the theoretical notion of Bandura (1994). However, the model of theoretical framework developed initially by researchers not identical with the finding of the effect of parents' socioeconomic status on ethnic identity. Result indicated that parents' socioeconomic status not contributed towards the development of students' ethnic identity.

The finding of this study would serve as an important theoretical implication and contributed to extension towards theoretical literature concerning ethnic socialization, ethnic identity, and self-efficacy. There are a

number of limitations for this study. Firstly, the current study focused on only 92 respondents of secondary school students. Thus, the findings may not be representative of the Malaysian Indian adult population and unable to be generalized to the whole Indian adults. Secondly, the current study used a quantitative approach to obtain and analyze data that has been received. The researchers hope that further studies should be conducted by using qualitative approach to gather data and derive deeper insight concerning the practice of ethnic socialization among minority parents. Finally, the current study limited by its design, and it is suggested that in future study researcher aim towards various other dependent variable namely self-esteem, overcoming stress, learning problem and perceived discrimination which might probably effect positively from the practice of ethnic socialization.

### CONCLUSION

The study aimed to create huge awareness among Indian parents in Malaysia. Parents play very essential role in their children's life. Parents' readiness to transmit and instill information concerning their particular ethnic and preparing their children to overcome effectively the emerging occurrence of discrimination, prejudice and stereotype is pivotal in the developmental process of their children identity development in multicultural society. Furthermore, the school counselor plays very critical role in impart the practice of ethnic socialization among minority students. Moreover, these methods can be utilize to enhance attentiveness among parents regarding the essence of conversations that center on facilitating children to feel good about themselves and their group.

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