



Parental Influences on Children's Ethnic Identity Development

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Abstract

Parental influences on children's ethnic identity among middle-income Korean-American families (N = 52), including fathers, mothers, and their children were examined. The sample was comprised of 23 boys and 29 girls (M = 7 years and 3 months) and their parents. Mothers and fathers were asked to respond independently to a parent's ethnic identity questionnaire; children were interviewed using a children's ethnic identity questionnaire. Results revealed the most important predictors of children's ethnic identity were parental teaching behaviors regarding Korean culture and history. Among the three domains in children's ethnic identity, Korean language fluency was most affected by parental ethnic identity variables. Results indicated that mothers and fathers generally share the same attitudes toward ethnic matters; thus, it was concluded that children receive a congruent ethnic message from their parents.

Keywords: Ethnic Identity, Parental Influences, Korean-American, Immigrant Families

Having a firm ethnic identity while living in a culture other than one's own is a challenging task. Relatively often the ethnicity issue is apt to be sensitively connected with a history of discrimination and prejudice within the political, social, and economic domains of a society (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987). Ethnicity is a social-psychological concept that includes a unique social and cultural heritage, group patterns of values, social customs, perceptions, behavioral roles, language usage, and rules of social interaction that group members share and pass to the next generation (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987; Sue, 1991). Ethnic identity refers to set of self-ideas of being a member of an ethnic group (Bernal, Knight, Garza, Ocampo, & Cota, 1990) and personal acquisition of the ethnic group patterns (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987).

Among a number of different theoretical perspectives on ethnic identity development, there is a group of researchers who have focused on the impact of ethnic socialization as playing a role in the enculturation process (Bernal et al., 1990; Diaz-Guerrero, 1987; Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993; Marshall, 1995). These researchers have consistently emphasized the importance of the ethnic socialization as the responsibility of parents rearing children in a pluralistic society. It is suggested that children, especially with minority status, may be hindered from being psychologically, physiologically, physically, and emotionally healthy without appropriate ethnic socialization (Marshall, 1995). The socialization practices of parents are one of the factors in the enculturation process by which children learn about their ethnic cultures (Knight et al., 1993). It is important to understand the roles of both mothers and fathers in developing children's ethnic identity. However, very little research has investigated the father's impact on children's ethnic identity. The present study was designed to explore parental influences on children's ethnic identity and to compare fathers' and mothers' ethnic identity in a Korean-American sample. Certain familial background variables also were considered in the investigation of influences on children's ethnic identity.

Recently, many research studies have addressed questions regarding ethnic identity among minority groups, including children, adolescents, and adults (Grossman, Wirt, & Davids, 1985; Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993; Lanca, Alksnis, Roese, & Gardner, 1994; Rosenthal & Cichello, 1986; Saldana, 1994; Smith, Burlew, & Lundgren, 1991; Taub & McEwen, 1992; Whaley, 1993). These studies have found consistently that it is very important to have a concept of ethnic identity, especially when the individual has minority status in the culture. Whaley (1993) concluded, after reviewing the literature, that ethnic identity was more influential than any other aspect of adjustment in the psychosocial adjustment of African-American children. For example, one study found that African-American fifth graders' self-esteem was significantly related to ethnic identity (Belgrave, Cherry, Walwyn, Letlaka-Rennert, and Phillips, 1994). They reported that children who had stronger Black identity showed higher levels of self-esteem than did children with weaker Black identity.

The process of developing and constructing identity, specifically ethnic identity, is very complex and dynamic. The majority of studies have endeavored to describe the nature of ethnic identity and the factors that impact or mediate the process of developing ethnic identity (Knight et al., 1993; Phinney & Rotheram, 1987; Whaley, 1993). A socialization model of the development of ethnic identity and children's ethnically based behaviors was developed by Knight et al. (1993). The model suggests that the families' social environment influences the socialization experiences of the children. The model includes both familial and nonfamilial influences (Knight et al., 1993). The socialization experiences influence children's ethnic identity, leading to children's ethnically based behaviors. The model also proposes that the development of cognitive abilities influences how the socialization experiences are processed (Knight et al., 1993). Their study of Mexican-American mothers and children (ages 6 to 10 years) found that mothers who had strong Mexican ethnic identity were more likely to teach their children about Mexican culture (Knight et al., 1993). Identification with Mexican ethnic background indicated comfort with the Mexican culture and reflected that the father's or mother's family had more recently migrated to America. The present study addresses the impact of familial variables, including certain family background characteristics. It is expected that children's ethnic identity will be influenced by the reported socialization practices of mother's and father's and consequent children's experiences.

Children who had mothers who identified themselves with the Mexican culture were more likely to identify themselves with the Mexican culture. However, family background variables such as family income did not affect children's ethnic identity unless there was teaching about Mexican culture. The finding indicated the underlying importance of teaching about ethnic culture to children for the development of ethnic identity.

Another predictor of children's ethnic identity is language. Kelly, Sachdev, Kottisieper, and Ingram (1993) attempted to identify the relationship between language proficiency and ethnic identity. The subjects of the study ($M = 14.2$ years) had Spanish as a first language and had been learning or using English for an average of 11 years. Kelly et al. (1993) found a negative relationship between ethnic identity and the use of English, whereas strength of ethnic identity was positively related to the use of Spanish. Thus, children who used English as a daily life language were less likely to recognize their origin of ethnicity than were children who used their first language more often than English.

The relationship between ethnic language usage and ethnic identity has also been found in other studies. For example, a study conducted by Lanca, Alksnis, Roese, and Gardner (1994) reported a strong association of language preference with ethnic identity among Portuguese immigrants and first generation Canadians of Portuguese descent. In that particular study, when participants chose either English, French, or Portuguese, those who responded in English were more likely to identify themselves with North American cultures than counterparts who completed a questionnaire either in French or in Portuguese. Additionally, Bankston (1995) found that Vietnamese language use influenced ethnic identification among Vietnamese-American secondary school students.

On the basis of previous research findings, it was expected that parents with stronger ethnic identity would be more likely to emphasize teaching about the ethnic culture than would parents who had less ethnic identity. Therefore, it was hypothesized that more teaching about the ethnic culture would lead to a stronger ethnic identity of children with the ethnic culture. It was assumed that children who had parents who were more ethnically identified also would be more ethnically identified.

The primary purpose of the present study was to investigate Korean-American paternal and maternal ethnic identity influences on their children's ethnic identity. Specifically, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. Among various parenting behaviors, what factors influence the development of children's ethnic identity?
2. Are parental background variables related to parents' and children's ethnic identity (i.e., age and gender of parent, length of residence in the U.S., education, occupation, size of family, and income)?
3. How do fathers' and mothers' compare on measures of ethnic identity?
4. Are there any differences in children's ethnic identity due to gender, age, and children's birthplace?

Method

Participants

Fifty-two Korean-American families, each one including a father, a mother, and a child, in two Midwest urban communities participated in the present study. Fathers' mean age was 38 years, ranging from 31 to 46 years, and mothers' mean age was 34, ranging from 29 to 46 years. All of the parents were born in Korea and had been living together since marriage. The average length of residence in the U.S. was 7.38 years for the fathers and 7.06 years for the mothers.

Education levels completed by fathers were as follows: 63%, graduate school or professional degree;

15%, 4-year college; 2%, 2-year college; 16%, high school; and 4%, middle school. In the mothers' sample, education levels had a distribution as follows: 14%, graduate school or professional degree; 54%, 4-year college; 4%, 2-year college; 13%, high school; and 15%, middle school.

Occupations were categorized according to Hollingshead (1975) including 9 levels. The range of occupations was from 4 (skilled manual workers) to 9 (major professionals) with the majority ($n = 32$, 62%) reporting occupations at or above level 8 (lesser professional). There were 5 full-time students. In the mothers' sample, the majority were homemakers ($n = 37$, 71%). There were 3 (6%) mothers who reported having a major professional job; 7 mothers (13%) worked in their own businesses. There also were 5 (10%) full-time students participating in the study.

There were 23 boys and 29 girls (range = 6 to 8 years; $M = 7$ years and 3 months), from intact families who participated in the study. According to mothers' reports on the birth place of target children, 35 children (67%) were born in Korea and 17 children (33%) were born in the United States. The mean size of the households was 3.89, according to the fathers' report. The range of household size was from 3 ($n = 13$, 25%) to 6 ($n = 1$, 2%). Income information was gathered in increments of \$10,000. Ten families (19%) indicated their income as more than \$50,000, and only one family (2%) recorded an income level of less than \$10,000. All other categories between \$10,000 and \$50,000 had between 7 to 10 families reporting that level of income.

Measures

Parent Ethnic Identity Questionnaire. Parents were asked to fill out the Parent Ethnic Identity Questionnaire (Knight et al., 1993). This instrument was adapted for use with a Korean sample by the investigator; the original instrument was developed for a Mexican-American sample. To measure the degree of parents' ethnic identity, three major parts of the instrument were used: language scale, about culture, and parents' ethnic identity.

The language scale included a total of 12 questions. Eight out of the 12 questions, using a Likert-type scale, measured the parents' comfort with language. For example, parents responded on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = English only, and 5 = Korean only) to the question, "What language do you use when you are angry?" In addition, four items concerned writing and reading ability in both Korean and English with yes-or-no dichotomous answers.

Three aspects of the "about culture" scale were used: talking about culture, Korean objects in the home, and food preference. The goal of asking these questions was to investigate how parents gave ideas about their original ethnic culture to children and at the same time how much they were acculturated into American culture. The "talking about culture" section consisted of 25 items that parents responded to on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The items concerned whether parents would talk to children about both Korean and American cultures (e.g., "What is the possibility that I would tell my child Korean folktales?"). The lowest possibility to talk about the topic was rated 1, and 5 identified the highest possibility to talk to children about cultural matters. The section of the questionnaire about Korean objects in the home contained 15 items, as to whether they had the objects in their home (e.g., Korean records/tapes, Korean flag). The sum of all items represented the amount of Korean cultural objects that children were exposed to in the home. Food preference items (15 items) were rated each on a 5-point frequency scale which indicated the number of times the food was prepared. Korean and American foods (e.g., hamburger and Kim-chi) were mixed throughout the 15 items. The higher score meant a higher frequency of serving ethnic food (1=never; 5=very frequently).

The parents' ethnic identity scale, regarding self-identification and ethnic preferences, examined parent's ethnic identity in terms of comfort with American and Korean cultures. Parents were asked to select one label to identify who they were, such as Korean, Korean-American, or American. Forty-eight out of 52 fathers answered with Korean, and the other 4 fathers answered with Korean-American; 50 mothers identified themselves with the Korean label, one mother answered with Korean-American, and one mother did not answer. Due to lack of variability, this item was dropped from the analyses. Seventeen items, about ethnic preferences, were responded to on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Participants were asked to respond by circling responses ranging between "1 = agree a little or not at all" and "5 = agree a lot." Each participant's scores was summed and then averaged to get a composite score that ranged from 1 (thinking of oneself's ethnic identity as American) to 5 (thinking of oneself's ethnic identity as Korean).

Children's Ethnic Identity Questionnaire. Children were interviewed using the Children's Ethnic Identity Questionnaire instrument (Knight et al., 1993). The original instrument measured seven dimensions of children's ethnic identity. To meet the objectives of the present study, three dimensions of ethnic identity were measured; use of ethnic role behaviors, ethnic preferences scale, and children's language scale. Use of ethnic role behaviors had 13 questions related to both Korean and American behaviors. Due to low reliability and scattered factor loadings, the use of ethnic role behaviors scale was eliminated from further analyses.

A series of 10 items was presented to children regarding their ethnic preferences. A pair of verbal descriptions was presented with each picture of Korean children. Each description had a Korean and a

non Korean preference. For example, children were told, “Here is a Korean boy (girl). This Korean boy (girl) likes to play mostly with Korean friends,” and “Here is another Korean boy (girl). This Korean boy (girl) likes to play with mostly American friends.” Then the interviewer asked the children the following question: “Which boy (girl) is most like you?” Children selected one boy (girl). Immediately after the selection, the interviewer asked, while indicating the selected picture, “Is the boy (girl) like you a lot or a little?” Children’s selections indicated the strength of the preference. The children’s ethnic preferences scores were computed by averaging their responses across items. Each item had a 4-point scale, ranging from a low Korean preference to a high Korean preference. Therefore, a high score was a preference for Korean culture.

Thirteen questions were asked of children to measure that comfort with language. Four out of the 13 questions, such as “Do you read Korean?” were scored based on a 3-point Likert-type range (1 = not at all; 3 = a lot). The other 9 questions, such as “Do you speak Korean to your mom?” were answered by “yes” or “no.”

Procedure

The Parent Ethnic Identity Questionnaire was translated into Korean to be sure that parents could read and understand the questions. To ensure the quality of the translation, a back-translation process was performed (Brislin, 1986). Participants were recruited from three Korean-American Christian churches and one Korean-American Catholic church. Hurh and Kim’s study (1990) found that church participation was a way of life among Korean immigrants in the U.S. regardless of length of residence, sex, age, education, and socioeconomic status.

The leaders of the churches, usually pastors, provided the addresses and the names of families to the researcher. The researcher sent a letter to each family, informing them of the purpose of study. One week after sending the letters, the researcher contacted each family by telephone to arrange an interview date and place. Visits for the interview were carried out at a time when both parents and their children were at home. Thus, most of the visits were made on weekends or in the evenings. The majority of the families were contacted through the churches; however, four families were added through a nomination process to the sample.

At the time of the child’s interview, parents independently completed research questionnaires. To ensure independent responses, fathers and mothers were requested to complete their questionnaires in different rooms. During this time, the target child’s interview was carried out by the researcher. To establish rapport, the researcher introduced herself and told the child that she was interested in children’s ideas about Korean and American cultures. All of the children’s interviews were done in English, and each child was rewarded with a small gift after the interview.

In the children’s case, if there was more than one child in the family, ages 6 to 8, one child was selected randomly to be interviewed. Of 71 families contacted by the researcher, 52 families (73%) agreed to participate in the study.

Results

Factor Analyses on the Parent’s and Children’s Ethnic Identity Questionnaires

Parent Ethnic Identity Questionnaire. This instrument consisted of three major parts: language scale, about culture, and parent’s ethnic preference. They were factor-analyzed for mothers and fathers separately using principal axis extraction and varimax rotation. All factor analyses were done separately on the fathers’ and mothers’ sample; then common items were selected from the fathers’ and mothers’ analyses that had high loadings, leading to the identification of a factor. Thus, there was one factor structure for mothers and fathers.

Table 1 presents factor loadings and reliability indices for each factor. In the language scale, two common factors were pulled out of the scale for both the mother and father data. One factor, Internal Communication, included three items; this factor dealt with language that parents use for internal thought processes. Higher scores meant fathers and mothers were more likely to use the Korean language for internal thought processes. The other factor, External Communication, also included three items. These items measured the selection of language in interacting with the external environment. Higher scores meant parents were more likely to use the Korean language for external communication.

Among 25 items from the “talking about culture” scale, factor analysis suggested the presence of 4 factors: Teaching about Korean Culture (four items), Teaching about American Culture (seven items), Teaching about Ethnic Pride (three items), and Teaching about Korean History (three items). Eight items were dropped; those items did not have strong loadings on any factor. Two factors, Preference for Korean Ethnic Food (nine items) and Preference for American Food (four items), emerged from the analysis of the food preference scale. Two items were eliminated due to lack of clear relationship with the other items. The scale measuring objects in the home was not factor analyzed due to the listing of only Korean objects across all items, and the checklist type questions.

Three factors emerged regarding the parent's ethnic preference. These were labeled Ethnocentrism, Preference for Korean Culture, and Preference for Korean Life Style. The ethnocentrism factor indicated parents' desire to maintain their Korean ethnic culture no matter where they have lived. Five items were dropped due to low factor loadings.

Children's Ethnic Identity Questionnaire. Factor analysis was performed on the ethnic preferences scale. Varimax rotation was employed on initial factors derived by principal axis extraction. Two factors, Ethnic pride and Peer preference, emerged from the analysis (Table 1). Seven items constituted a Korean ethnic pride dimension. This factor measures children's conception of Korean ethnic culture versus American culture. The other factor (two items) measured children's preference in social interaction. Factor analysis was also performed on the children's language scale on the only questions having Likert-type ranges. Thus, 4 questions out of 13 questions were factor analyzed. Questions asking about Korean language usage in daily life resulted in a factor, Fluency in Korean.

Correlational Analyses

Correlations between parents' background variables and their ethnic identity variables are presented in Table 2. Fathers' internal communication style was significantly associated with all background variables selected in the study, including age, education, occupation, length of residence, number of family members, and family income.

Father's internal communication was negatively related to age, length of residence, family member numbers, and income. Older fathers, who lived in the U.S. longer, had higher incomes, and had larger families were more likely to use English for internal thought. However, fathers who had more education ($r = .62, p < .01$) and higher occupational levels ($r = .48, p < .01$) used more Korean in internal thought processes. External communication showed basically the same pattern as internal communication.

Teaching Korean culture for fathers showed negative associations with age, length of residence, and family income. This is much the same pattern that is seen for teaching Korean history. Older fathers, those who have lived in the U.S. longer, with higher incomes were less likely to be teaching about the Korean culture and history. Additionally, higher levels of education and professional occupations of fathers were positively associated with teaching about the Korean culture ($r = .29$ and $.35$, respectively, $p < .05$). Correlational analyses revealed positive relationships among fathers' age, length of residence, and the number of Korean objects in the home. Older fathers living in the U.S. longer were more likely to report keeping Korean items in their home than did their younger counterparts, whereas fathers who had spent less time in residence in the United States reported keeping fewer items ($r = .29$ for age and $.36$ for length of residence, $p < .05$). In general, there were no significant interrelations between demographic variables and teaching American culture, teaching ethnic pride, preference for Korean and American food, and any type of ethnic preferences.

Correlations between mothers' background variables and mothers' ethnic identity variables had strong associations with communication style; other significant relationships were scattered with background variables and did not form a coherent pattern of relationships. Internal communication had generally strong correlations with background variables, except for occupation. As can be seen in Table 2, the same general pattern of relationships exists for mothers and fathers in internal and external communication style relative to background variables.

Interestingly, for mothers' internal communication, occupation was the only variable that had not shown significant correlation; however, mothers who had higher levels of occupation were more likely to use English in external communication behaviors. Also, age and education were not significantly associated with external communication. Other background variables showed scattered significant associations across all ethnic identity variables among mothers (Table 2). Specifically, education had several positive correlations with teaching Korean culture, history, and preference for Korean life style, and a negative correlation with the number of objects in the home. In addition, mothers' occupation was negatively related with mothers' preference for Korean culture ($r = -.90, p < .01$). Length of residence in the United States also was negatively correlated with teaching about Korean culture and history teaching ($r = -.50, p < .01$). However, the length of residence was positively associated with increasing number of Korean objects in the home ($r = .41, p < .05$). Family income was negatively related to mothers' Korean culture teaching ($r = -.30, p < .05$), but with more preference for Korean food ($r = .32, p < .05$).

Table 3 reports correlations between background variables and children's ethnic identity. When background variables, including age, sex, and birth place of child, were correlated with children's ethnic identity variables, one major pattern emerged. Fluency in Korean correlated with 7 of 13 familial background variables. Sex of child, birth place, fathers' and mothers' education, fathers' occupation had positive associations while mothers' and fathers' length of residence in the U.S. had negative associations with fluency in Korean. Age of child correlated negatively with ethnic pride ($r = -.46, p < .05$). There were no significant

relationships between familial background variables and ethnic preference in peer relationships.

Table 4 presents the correlations of mothers' and fathers' ethnic identity variables with children's ethnic identity variables. As shown in Table 4, there is a clear pattern of association between fathers' and mothers' variables and children's variables in the children's Korean fluency. There were 8 significant relationships for mothers and fathers. Of those 8 correlations, fathers' and mothers' teaching Korean culture, mothers' internal and external communication, and fathers' and mothers' teaching about Korean history were positively associated with the child's Korean fluency. However, fathers', as well as mothers' preferences for American food were related negatively to Korean fluency in children.

Prediction of Children's Ethnic Identity

To examine the nature of parental influences on children, four ordinary least squares multiple regression models were estimated. Model 1 predicted children's ethnic identity (i.e., ethnic pride, peer preference, and fluency in Korean language) utilizing fathers' background variables (i.e., age, length of residence in the U.S., education, occupation, size of family, and income). All of the fathers' background variables were simultaneously entered in the regression analyses on each dimension of children's ethnic identity; three separate regression analyses were carried out to predict each aspect of children's ethnic identity. In the same way, mothers' background variables were used to predict children's ethnic pride, peer preference, and fluency in Korean language (Model 2). In Model 3, fathers' ethnic identity variables, based on the 12 factors from the factor analyses, were used to predict each of the three aspects of children's ethnic identity. The 12 factors were: internal communication; external communication; teaching about Korean culture; teaching about American culture; teaching ethnic pride; teaching Korean history; objects in the home; preferences for Korean foods; preferences for American foods; ethnocentrism; preferences for Korean culture; and preferences for Korean life style. Mothers' ethnic identity variables, which were identical to fathers' ethnic identity variables, were used in Model 4.

Table 5 summarizes the regression results on children's ethnic identity variables. The table does not include variables that did not predict children's ethnic identity significantly. Fathers' teaching about Korean culture and mothers' teaching about Korean history were significant predictors of children's ethnic pride. Furthermore, fathers' teaching about American culture and preference of Korean life style also were meaningful in developing children's ethnic pride. Among fathers' ethnic identity variables, the multiple correlation, including nonsignificant predictors, was $R = .58$, with $R^2 = .34$, $F(12, 30) = 1.29$. This indicates that 34% of children's ethnic pride variance was accounted for by fathers' ethnic identity variables; while mothers' teaching about Korean history explained 33% of the variance.

In terms of peer preference, fathers' age predicted children's preference for Korean friends. This means that older fathers are more likely to have children who have a higher preference for Korean peers. However, fathers' ethnocentrism was associated with children's showing more preference for American friends. Another predictor also related to less preference for Korean friends was mothers' external communication style ($R = .60$, $R^2 = .36$, and $F(12, 30) = 1.40$). The more mothers talked with children in Korean, the less the children preferred Korean peers for social interaction.

There were several significant predictors of a child's Korean fluency. As indicated in Table 5, the predictors of more fluency in Korean by the child were fathers' teaching about Korean culture and mothers' teaching about Korean history, mothers' preference for Korean food, and mothers' ethnocentrism. However, fathers' length of residence, and fathers' and mothers' preference for American food predicted negative relations with fluency in Korean.

Comparison between Mother's and Father's Influences

Overall, there were very strong relationships among fathers' and mothers' ethnic identity variables for the same categories (r 's ranging from .35 to .75), except for one category; preference for Korean culture correlated .24 (ns). To explore differences between fathers' and mothers' impact on their children's ethnic identity, paired t-tests were performed on the parents' ethnic identity questionnaire variables. There was only one significant difference between fathers' and mothers' variables. The only significant difference existed on language selection for external communication ($t = -2.20$, $p < .05$). The negative sign on the t value means higher scores among the mothers' group. Thus, mothers were more likely than fathers to use Korean in interacting with others.

Differences in Children's Ethnic Identity by Age, Gender, and Place of Birth

To investigate how children's background variables function in developing ethnic identity, a series of t-tests using the variables of age, gender, and place of birth were carried out. Children's age was divided into two

groups; the groups were divided at more and less than 99 months. The selection of the 99 months was based on the mean age of all participating children and the percentage of distribution. At 99 months, 55% of the total subjects were included, this number was close to the mean age and median age of the children.

As summarized in Table 6, child's ethnic pride is associated with being younger and being a girl. This means that younger children and girls have higher ethnic pride than older children and boys. However, there was no difference in peer preference across all the selected variables in the final analyses. In child's fluency in Korean, girls are significantly more comfortable with the language ($t = -2.28, p < .05$), and children born in Korea showed higher fluency ($t = -2.91, p < .01$). However, age did not account for the difference in language proficiency. Girls had more ethnic pride and used the Korean language more freely than do boys.

Discussion

Indications of ethnic identity of children in the present study were ethnic pride, peer preference, and Korean language fluency. The results of this study show that, overall, parents influence development of children's ethnic identity. Parents' efforts in holding and passing their ethnic culture to the next generation through a series of teaching activities, such as teaching Korean culture and Korean history, seem to be very effective in promoting children's higher ethnic pride and more fluency in Korean language. With regard to teaching, both fathers and mothers had a significant impact on children's ethnic identity, as revealed in the correlations and regression analyses. However, the results are stronger for children's fluency in Korean language. This result is consistent with findings from a previous study of Mexican-American subjects (Knight et al., 1993), which found that family background variables had a significant impact on children's ethnic identity. However, their study showed that the effect of family background was significantly decreased when the teaching variable was controlled. Mothers who were more ethnically identified with the culture, were more likely to teach Mexican culture to their children.

A noticeable difference in the present study from Knight et al.'s study (1993) is that the ethnic objects in the home and ethnic food are not influential factors for children's ethnic identity among Korean-American families. Knight et al. (1993) reported a positive relationship between keeping more ethnic objects in the home and frequent serving of ethnic food, and children's higher ethnic identity. In the present study, Korean objects in the home did not predict any of the children's ethnic identity dimensions, such as children's ethnic pride, peer preference, and fluency in Korean language. Only mothers' Korean food preference predicted children's fluency in Korean language. Although parents' preference for ethnic food did not predict children's ethnic identity significantly, fathers' and mothers' preference for American food are negatively associated with children's fluency in Korean language. This negative association with parents' preference for American food and children's higher competence in Korean language is consistent with a finding from the Knight et al. study. In the present study, mothers' teaching about Korean culture and history, fathers' teaching about Korean and American cultures, fathers' preference for Korean lifestyle, and parents' ethnocentrism are significant predictors of children's ethnic identity.

Fathers' teaching about Korean and American culture, and mothers' Korean language selection in communication, predict children's ethnic pride. Some of the factors from parents' ethnic identity variables (i.e., fathers' ethnocentrism, mothers' external communication) are significantly negatively related to children's preferences in interaction with friends from their ethnic group. In general, this pattern of negative correlations may indicate that when parents exhibit high levels of ethnic pride, children show less desire to interact with peers of Korean ethnic identity. It could be speculated that parents are able to transmit their beliefs or attitudes toward the ethnic culture through teaching, but are unable to control children's subjective and personal preferences, at least in this Korean-American sample. It also is possible that children in the present study do not have enough friends from the same ethnic group with whom to interact in their community or schools. The insufficient number of people from the same ethnicity background in everyday life may be associated with less opportunity for children to experience and to be exposed to their ethnic culture (Quintana, 1994).

In this present study, familial background variables were not related to parents' and children's ethnic identity much except for parents' length of residence in the United States. Based on correlational analyses, it has been found that parents who achieved higher levels of education were more likely to have children who showed more fluency in Korean language. However, the children's fluency in Korean language was negatively associated with parents' living longer in the United States. The variable of father's length of residence in the United States predicted negatively children's fluency in Korean; however, mother's length of residence did not predict any domain of children's ethnic identity. Fathers' age predicted children's peer preference meaning that the older fathers were, the more their children preferred to interact with Korean peers.

In terms of paternal and maternal differences, there is only one difference between mothers and fathers on ethnic identity variables based on paired t-test analyses. Mothers are more likely to use Korean language for external communication. This finding is supported through correlational analyses in which it was

determined that mothers' and fathers' ethnic identity factors were significantly related, meaning they generally view ethnic matters alike. Thus, it may be speculated that children generally receive a congruent ethnic message from their parents.

Results indicated that children's background variables (i.e., gender, age, and birth place) were associated with their ethnic identity. Children's ethnic pride was related to gender and age. Younger children and girls have more ethnic pride than older children and boys. This may mean that younger children have not yet experienced pressures from peers and others in their social environment not to be different. Regarding fluency in the ethnic language, girls are significantly more fluent in Korean than boys, and children born in Korean are more comfortable with the language than the counterpart of children born in the U.S. However, peer preference is not associated with any of the children's background variables.

It is noteworthy in this empirical study that parental influences have more impact on children's ethnic language fluency than any other aspects of children's ethnic identity. Previous research studies indicated the strong association between ethnic language use and the self ethnic identification (Bankston, 1995; Kelly et al., 1993; Lanca et al., 1994). Even though the present study does not directly assess the association of ethnic language preference with ethnic identity, the results have shown a particularly strong role of language use in shaping children's ethnic identity. However, additional interpretation related to language on behalf of ethnic identity can be drawn.

The influence of mothers' teaching activities about Korean history especially seems to be stronger in predicting the child's ethnic language fluency than any other children's ethnic identity dimensions (i.e., ethnic pride, peer preference). The finding that fathers' language selection in communication did not influence any children's ethnic identity variables indicates that mothers have more impact on children's fluency in Korean language than do fathers. It is possible that mothers are more likely to spend more time with children than fathers; mothers who are able to spend more time with children are typically homemakers. In this sample, the majority of the Korean-American mothers were homemakers and were not employed outside the home. They are more likely to use Korean language, either as internal or external communication; this was shown by correlational analyses in the present study. The higher opportunities for children in exposure to the Korean language result in more competence in Korean language. The fact that mothers with professional occupations used Korean language in external communication less than other mothers is evidence supporting the notion.

Several limitations should be noted for the present study. This particular sample might be skewed in the direction of highly educated fathers with professional positions. The high educational and occupational levels of fathers were due to the fact that one of the two communities from which the participants were recruited was a college town. The number of total participants, 52 families including a father, a mother, and a child, is a relatively small sample size; however, there was a strong response from the limited sample of Korean-Americans available. It also needs to be pointed out that almost all of families were selected from churches. The cluster sampling may constrain the generalizations. Also, with regard to the relatively small sample size, factor analyses results particularly should be treated with caution. The instrument was adapted from another culture; therefore, it may not have been as sensitive to all aspects of the Korean culture. An effort was made to do a very careful translation in Korean and pilot testing with Korean adults revealed no particular difficulties. More work needs to be done to develop instrumentation to study Korean-American's opinions or attitudes toward the ethnic identity issue.

In sum, the present study reveals the importance of ethnic socialization as enculturation process. The results indicate that Korean-American parents emphasize teaching very intensively as one way of the ethnic socialization. It is interesting to note that, especially in the fathers' case, teaching about Korean culture and American culture is significantly positively associated with children's ethnic pride in a Korean-American sample. The positive impact of fathers' teaching about the American culture is an unexpected finding in the present study. It may be speculated that teaching about the Korean culture and the American culture present a contrast to children that helps solidify children's ethnic identity. In addition to teaching, ethnocentrism of mothers and fathers had impact on children's ethnic identity. Parents, vigorously trying to hold on to the ethnic culture through generations, are more concentrated on teaching and talking about ethnic cultural matters with children. They probably talk in the Korean language and thereby produce children's use of the Korean language. Children's fluency in the ethnic language is influenced by parents' teaching about culture and history, as well as by parents' ethnocentrism. It is natural that the effort to maintain the ethnic culture, ethnocentrism, should be associated with teaching and children's comfort in ethnic language.

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Table 1

Factor/Item	Factor Loading		Reliability	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Parents' Variables				
<u>Language scale</u>				
Factor 1. Internal Communication			0.79	0.83
- Language you think in	0.65	0.68		
- Comfort in writing Korean or English	0.70	0.82		
- Comfort in reading Korean or English	0.67	0.66		
Factor 2. External Communication			0.73	0.79
- Language you use when you are angry	0.61	0.66		
- Language you use when you talk to your child	0.92	0.84		
- Language your child uses when he/she talks	0.69	0.78		
<u>Talking about culture</u>				
Factor 1. Teaching about Korean Culture			0.88	0.83
- Tell my child old Korean folk stories	0.76	0.79		
- Sing Korean songs to my children	0.79	0.76		
- Listen Korean music with my children	0.82	0.57		
- Tell my child Korean folktales		0.69	0.69	
Factor 2. Teaching about American Culture			0.81	0.84
- Tell about well-known American minority leaders like Martin Luther King	0.60	0.77		
- Tell stories about Abraham Lincoln or George Washington	0.52	0.52		
- Explain the meaning of American holidays such as July 4th or Thanksgiving		.67	0.64	
- Listen to American music with child	0.59	0.61		
- Tell my child about the civil rights movement in the U.S.	0.67	0.75		
- Eat American traditional foods during the Thanksgiving holidays	0.51	0.43		
- Cook American foods with my child	0.52	0.42		
Factor 3. Teaching about Ethnic Pride			0.85	0.86
- Tell my child to be proud of his/her ethnicity	0.55	0.72		
- Encourage my child to speak in Korean	0.75	0.67		
- Tell my child about the importance of passing on the Korean culture	0.80	0.79		
Factor 4. Teaching about Korean History			0.84	0.8
- Tell my child Korean religious stories	0.69	0.5		
- Celebrate Korean Independence Day	0.72	0.52		
- Tell my child important and famous Korean people in history		0.96	0.79	
<u>Preferences for food</u>				
Factor 1. Preference for Korean Food			0.65	0.4
- Kim-chi	0.79	0.48		
- Buchimgae (pan-fried food)	.85	0.72		
- Chapchae	0.85	0.72		
- Kim Bap	0.75	0.52		
- Bulgoki	0.87	0.67		
- Dwenjang cchigae	0.79	0.55		
- Namool-ryue	0.72	0.54		
- Korean rice	0.8	0.61		
- Bibim Bap	0.7	0.45		
Factor 2. Preference for American Food			0.73	0.54
- Hamburgers	0.74	0.74		
- French fries	0.73	0.82		
- Pizza	0.69	0.77		
- Fried chicken	0.71	0.76		
Ethnic preferences				
Factor 1. Ethnocentrism			0.82	0.88
- A person of Korean descent who was born in the U.S. should learn Korean	0.83	0.88		
- I want my child to marry people of Korean descent	0.68	0.61		
- Koreans should be able to count on their family when they need help		0.6	0.77	
- Korean children should learn Korean history in American schools	0.61	0.83		
Factor 2. Preference for Korean Culture			0.77	0.7
- I prefer a party where most of the people are Korean	0.61	0.66		
- I like to live where neighbors are Korean	0.72	0.67		
- I enjoy hanging out with Korean friends	0.45	0.41		
- I prefer to speak Korean most of the time	0.5	0.51		

Factor/Item	Factor Loading		Reliability	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Factor 3. Preference for Korean Life Style			.79	0.82
- I am proud of my Korean heritage	0.57	0.81		
- I would rather prepare Korean meals than any other meals	0.99	0.76		
- I enjoy celebrating the holidays in the traditional Korean ways	0.43	0.58		
- I prefer to eat Kim Bap rather than hamburgers	0.49	0.69		
Children's Variables				
Factor 1. Ethnic Pride	0.73			
- Prefer Korean food for dinner	0.3			
- Like to wear Korean traditional dress	0.6			
- Like to play the Korean traditional game of Yoot	0.4			
- Like to bring Korean food to school	0.5			
- Like to speak Korean at school	0.4			
- Like grown-ups to speak Korean to him/her	0.5			
- Like parents to come to school	0.3			
Factor 2. Peer Preference		0.53		
- Which friends do you like to play with, Korean or American	0.3			
- Which friends do you like to invite to your birthday party, Korean or American	0.4			
Factor 3. Child's Fluency in Korean		0.74		
- Do you speak Korean	0.8			
- Do you understand Korean	0.8			
- Do you read Korean	0.6			

Factor Loading, Items, and Reliability among Factor Items (Parents' and Children's Variables)

Table 2

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Age	-.37*	-.34*	-.38**	0.15	0.2	-0.23	.29*	0.17	0.17	-0	0.1	-0.1
	-.31*	-0.2	-0.25	0.01	0.1	-0.16	0.22	0.17	-0	0.23	0.21	0.21
Education	.62**	0.26	.29*	0.26	0	.41**	-0.27	-0.2	0.09	-0.1	-0.23	0.2
	.46**	0.23	0.15	.32*	0.1	.39**	-.31*	0.25	0.09	0.12	-0.01	.33*
Occupation	.48**	0.12	.35*	0.29	0.1	0.35	-0.32	-0.2	-0	-0.1	-0.32	0.16
	-0.2	-.70**	0.52	0.42	0.5	0.29	-0.2	0.03	0.5	-0.2	-.90**	-0.2
Length of residence in the U.S.	-.57**	-.46**	-.47**	-0.1	0.1	-.47**	.36*	0.07	-0	-0	0.17	-0.2
	-.62**	-.57**	-.35*	-0.1	0	-.50**	.41*	0	-0.1	0.13	0.14	-0.1
Number of family member ^b	-.42**	-.34*	-0.24	-0	0	0.14	0.13	0.08	0.12	-0.1	-0.14	-0.3
	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Family income ^b	-.57**	-.46**	-.30*	0.11	0.2	-0.15	0.22	.32*	0.28	0.02	0.06	-0.2
	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Correlations between Parents' Background Variables^a and Their Ethnic Variables

Note. Father Variables $N = 52$. Mother Variables $N = 52$.

1. Internal Communication
2. External Communication
3. Teaching about Korean Culture
4. Teaching about American Culture
5. Teaching about Ethnic Pride
6. Teaching about Korean History
7. Number of Korean objects in home (table continues)
8. Preference for Korean Food
9. Preference for American Food
10. Ethnocentrism
11. Preference for Korean Culture
12. Preference for Korean Life Style.

^aData in the first row represents fathers' scores; data in the second row represents mothers' scores.

^bData for number of family member and for family income are available only for fathers.

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

Table 3

Background Variables	Ethnic pride	Ethnic preference in peer relationship	Fluency in Korean
Age	-.46**	-0.14	-0.02
Sex	.36*	0.15	.32*
Birth of place	0.21	0.09	.39**
Father's age	-0.22	0.01	-0.19
Mother's age	-0.16	-0.06	-0.1
Father's education	0.05	0.02	.41**
Mother's education	-0.06	-0.14	.37*
Father's occupation	0.14	-0.09	.36**
Mother's occupation	0.19	-0.02	0.36
Father's length of residence in the U.S.	-0.22	-0.03	-.50**
Mother's length of residence in the U.S.	-0.22	0.01	-.45**
The number of family member	0.04	0.02	-0.05
Family Income	-0.11	-0.03	-0.09

Correlations between Background Variables and Children's Ethnic Identity Variables

Note. N = 52 for fathers, mothers, and children

*p < .05. ** p < .01.

Table 4

Parents' Variables	Children's Variables		
	Ethnic pride	Peer preference	Fluency in Korean
Internal communication	0.03	-0.02	0.16
External communication	0.19	0.07	.30*
Teaching about Korean culture	0.21	0.05	0.27
Teaching about American culture	.29*	-0.08	.34*
Teaching about ethnic pride	.32*	0.03	.40**
Teaching about Korean history	0.27	0.23	.32*
Teaching about Korean life style	0.16	0.1	-0.23
Teaching about American culture	0.18	0.07	-0.15
Teaching about ethnic pride	-0.07	-0.11	0.16
Teaching about Korean history	-0.15	-0.07	0.08
Teaching about Korean life style	0.06	-0.12	.32*
Number of Korean objects in home	0.02	-0.04	.49**
Preference for Korean food	-0.25	-0.22	0.02
Preference for American food	-0.13	-0.13	-0.13
Ethnocentrism	0.09	-0.05	0.19
Preference for Korean culture	-0.01	0.12	-0.07
Preference for Korean life style	0.07	0.11	-.40**
Preference for American food	0.04	-0.13	-.33*
Preference for Korean culture	0	-.30*	-0.02
Preference for Korean life style	0.07	0.06	0.09
Preference for American food	-0.1	-0.07	-0.08
Preference for Korean culture	0.04	0.23	0.06
Preference for Korean life style	0.11	-0.16	0.04
Preference for American food	-0.08	0.09	0

Correlations between Parents' and Children's Ethnic Identity Variables

Note. N = 52 for fathers, mothers, and children.

Data in the first row represents correlations with fathers' variables; data in the second row represents those with mothers' variables.

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Table 5

Predictors	Ethnic Pride			Peer Preference			Fluency in Korean		
	β	R ²	t	β	R ²	t	β	R ²	t
<u>Fathers' Background Variables</u>					.22			.38	
Age	--	--	--	.74	--	2.35*	--	--	--
Length of Residence	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.72	--	-2.35*
<u>Fathers' Ethnic Identity Variables</u>		.34			.28				.46
Teaching about Korean Culture	.49	--	2.38*	--	--	--	.48	--	2.54**
Teaching about American Culture	.53	--	2.45*	--	--	--	--	--	--
Preferences for Korean Life Style	.41	--	2.00*	--	--	--	--	--	--
Preferences for American Foods	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.49	--	-2.52**
Ethnocentrism	--	--	--	-.49	--	-2.61**	--	--	--
<u>Mothers' Ethnic Identity Variables</u>		.33			.36				.57
External Communication	--	--	--	-.53	--	-2.32*	--	--	--
Teaching about Korean History	.49	--	2.56**	--	--	--	.80	--	3.88***
Preferences for Korean Foods	--	--	--	--	--	--	.37	--	2.43*
Preferences for American Foods	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.48	--	-2.78**
Ethnocentrism	--	--	--	--	--	--	.36	--	2.44*

Summary of Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Significantly Predicting Children's Ethnic Identity Variables

Note. N = 52 for fathers, mothers, and children.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 6

t-tests for Comparison in Children's Ethnic Identity Variables by Age, Gender, and Place of Birth

Variables	Children's Ethnic Identity Variables											
	Ethnic Pride				Peer Preference				Fluency in Korean			
	M	SD	n	t	M	SD	n	t	M	SD	n	t
Age				2.07*				.90				-.70
Less 99 months	19.88	4.71	26		4.12	2.30	26		6.69	1.16	26	
More 99 months	17.04	4.64	22		3.55	2.01	22		6.70	1.43	22	
Gender				-2.60**				-1.02				-2.28*
Boy	16.78	4.43	23		3.52	1.65	23		6.39	1.20	23	
Girl	20.25	4.69	25		4.16	2.56	25		7.20	1.26	25	
Place of Birth				-1.44				-.60				-2.91**
In the U.S.	17.28	5.23	18		3.61	2.03	18		6.16	1.10	18	
Not in the U.S.	19.34	4.50	30		4.00	2.27	30		7.20	1.24	30	

t-tests for Comparison in Children's Ethnic Identity Variables by Age, Gender, and Place of Birth

Note. Child Variables N = 52.

* p < .05. ** p < .01.