

Abstract

Self-identification is the hallmark of racial/ethnic identity and it reflects how individuals perceive themselves. Racial/ethnic self-identification frames one's culture, beliefs, perceptions of self and others (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Identity development models emphasize that self-identification may change as one explores and commits to their identity. Because of role self-identification in internalizing cultural identity, this study investigated how knowing true heritage can impact one's view of self, others, community, and challenge one's belief system.

Are You Who You Think You Are?



What's Your Heritage?

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were:

- How does genetic heritage, confirmed by DNA test, impact one's self-reported ethnicity?
- How does genetic heritage impact one's perception of self, others, and community?

Method

Exploratory Study — Pre-test / Post-test & Mixed Methods

- Received IRB approval #1702361020
- Sample recruited by flyers and college classrooms visits
- Pre-test with demographics & measures (see below)
- Genetic heritage analysis via Ancestry.com
- Post-testing review of results and interviews of participants' reactions

Surveys & Measures

Demographics

Ethnicity Questionnaire (EQ, Phelps & Day, 1992)

- Pride ($\alpha = .90$), Worry (.85), Discrimination (.54), Total (.88)

Quick Discrimination Index (QDI, Ponterotto, 1995)

- Total ($\alpha = .69$), Factors: 1. Attitudes Toward Diversity (.65), 2. Affect Toward Personal contact with Racial Diversity (.70), 3. Attitudes Toward Women's Equity (.35)

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM, Phinney, 1992)

- Affirm ($\alpha = .84$) Achieve (.78), Behavior (.30)

Qualitative Analysis

- Debrief and Interview Questions
- Simple examination of common themes before and after genetic testing

Sample Demographics

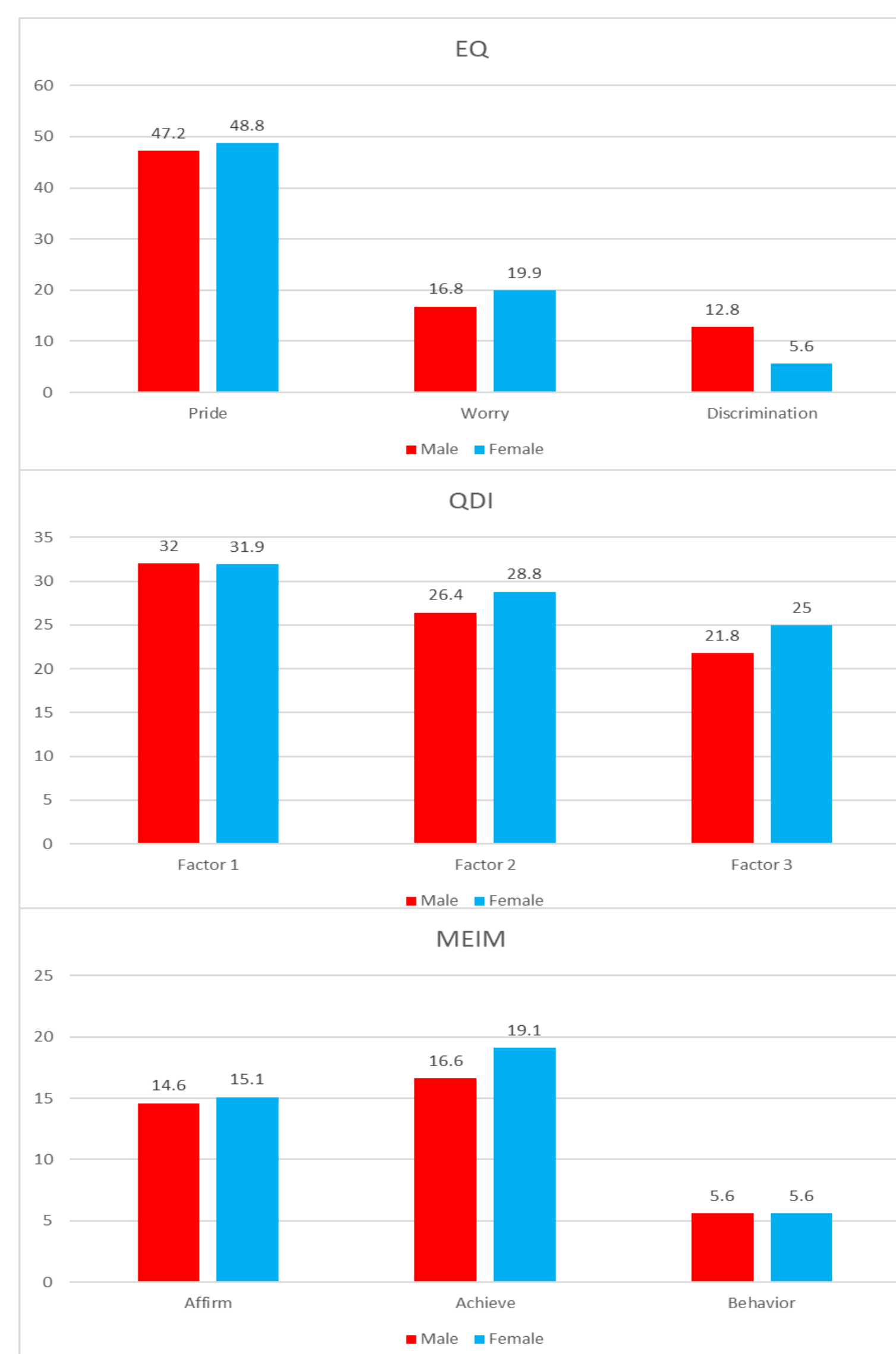
n = 18, 72% Female, Age M = 35 (S = 16) range 20 - 69 years.
Boomer (17%), Gen X (22%), Gen Y (17%), Millennial (44%)

Self-identification of ethnic heritage vs. genetic ethnic heritage: Does knowing one's genetic ethnic heritage impact perception of self, others, and community?

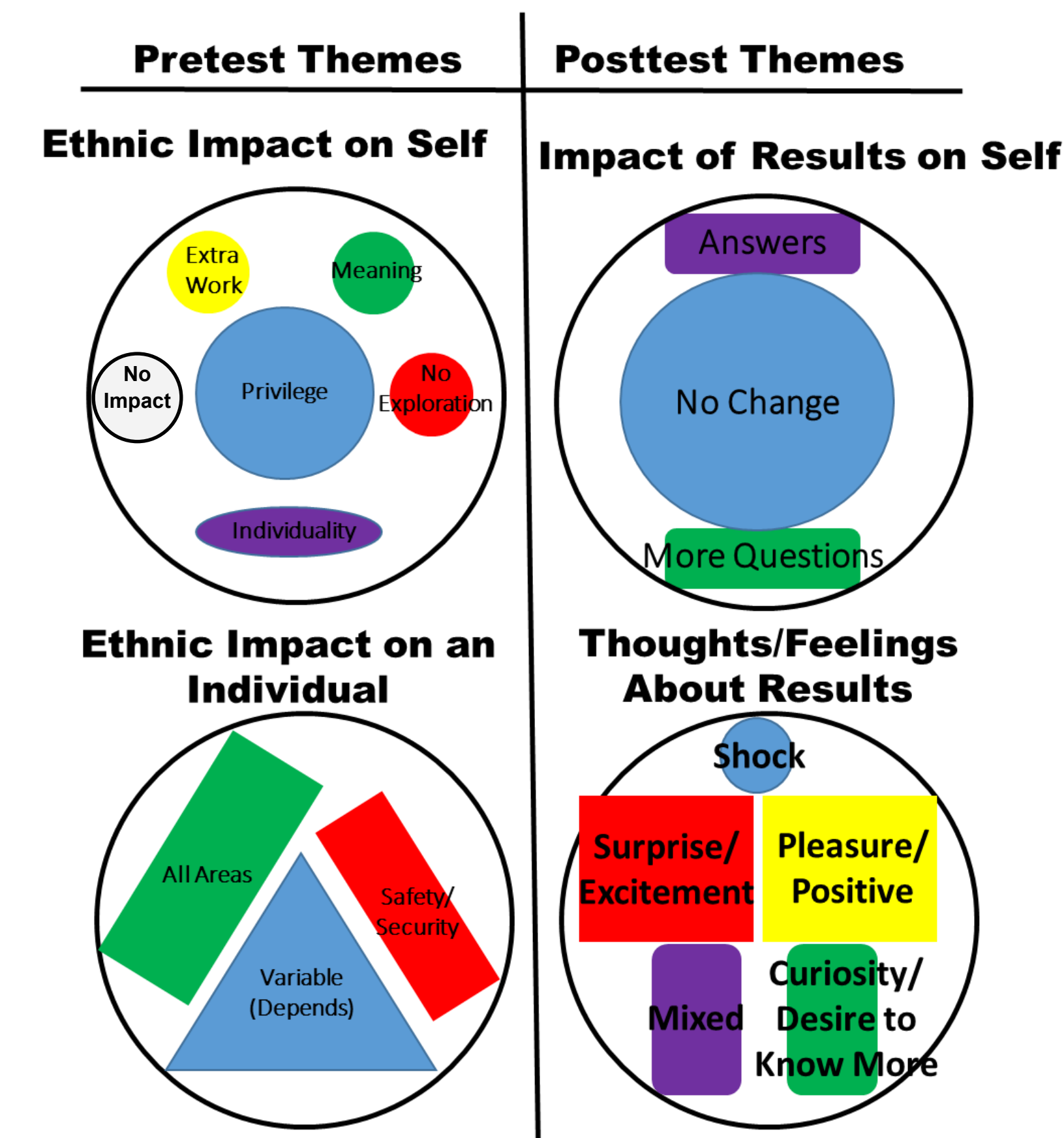
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Quantitative Results

- Signification relationship between age and QDI Factor 2 (Affect Toward Personal contact with Racial Diversity) $r = -.54, p < .05$
- Significant effect of gender on QDI Factor 3 (Attitudes Towards Women's Equity) $[F(1, 16) = 8.857, p = 0.009]$



Qualitative Results



Conclusions

Individuals tend to see ethnicity through their own experiences (perceptions) or identity development without really examining how individuals or groups in the community are impacted by their various ethnicities. Participants' perceptions of themselves were altered more than their perceptions of others and the community were. European (white) Americans seem to place less value on their culture as part of the majority than do non-European Americans.

References

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