

THESIS

EVALUATION OF THE FAIR PROGRAM: TEACHING DIVERSITY AWARENESS  
AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TO AT-RISK YOUTH

Submitted by

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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY LINDSEY MICHELLE WEILER ENTITLED EVALUATION OF THE FAIR PROGRAM: TEACHING DIVERSITY AWARENESS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TO AT-RISK YOUTH BE ACCEPTED AS FUFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE.

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

### EVALUATION OF THE FAIR PROGRAM: TEACHING DIVERSITY AWARENESS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE TO AT-RISK YOUTH

The increasing ethnic, cultural, language, and class diversity in the United States calls for a proactive approach in helping young people develop into socially competent adults. FAIR: Fairness for All Individuals through Respect is an experiential multicultural education program that addresses fairness in social interactions. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of FAIR for at-risk youth aged 11 to 19 in five treatment facilities in Northern Colorado. Outcome measures included youths' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy. Results revealed that scores on those measures for the youth who participated in FAIR remained fairly stable, whereas scores for the knowledge, empathic feelings and expression, and empathic awareness subscales for the control group decreased. For the care subscale, results revealed a decrease for participants in both the experimental and control group. The current study highlighted the need for diversity education programs for youth in residential and day treatment, as well as the need for continued research with this population. Results and implications for research and practice are discussed.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

As the U.S. becomes more diverse, questions and possibilities about educating youth for effective citizenship arise. The increasing ethnic, cultural, language, class, and religious diversity calls for a proactive approach in helping young individuals develop into healthy, socially competent adults. For example, in the 2008 U.S. census report, nearly three quarters of the population was non-Hispanic white and researchers project that by 2050, non-Hispanic whites will account for about half of the U.S. population. Similarly, researchers project that the population of Hispanics will increase from 13% of the population in 2008 to 30% in 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). In addition, religious diversity is expanding in the U.S. Although the proportion of the population that identify as Christian has declined from 86% in 1990 to 77% in 2000, a variety of other spiritual and religious identities have increased (Kosmin, Mayer, & Keysar, 2001). Diversity, in its many forms, offers the potential to enrich teaching-learning experiences, enhance personal and social interactions, and enrich the schools and the community through an offering of multiple perspectives (Manning, 1996).

These shifts in demographic composition may heighten young adolescents' fears and dilemmas compared to those of previous generations because many of today's youth are exposed to and frequently come in contact with people from diverse backgrounds (Hollingsworth, Didelot & Smith, 2003). Familial influences, cultural values, and the media are likely to contribute to many of the fears and ideas students may develop about

individuals different than his or her self. As such, many students are likely to have stereotypes, misconceptions, and negative attitudes toward racial, ethnic, and social-class groups other than their own (Stephan & Stephan, 2004). If racism and discrimination of peers continues, diverse youth experiencing this may exhibit a variety of behaviors that could maintain their susceptibility to adopting maladaptive behaviors (Franklin, Boyd-Franklin, & Kelly, 2006). Some of these behaviors include frustration, increased awareness of perceived insults, chronic indignation, pervasive discontent and disgruntlement, anger, immobilization or increasing inability to get things done, questioning one's worthiness, confusion, feeling trapped, conflicted racial identity, internalized rage, depression, substance abuse, and loss of hope (Franklin et al., 2006). Because of this, it is critical for teachers, counselors, and other professionals to address these issues with at-risk youth, so they may become more aware of privilege and oppression in today's society. In addition, it is essential to begin incorporating diversity related issues (i.e. sex, ethnicity, race, disability, gender, and religious affiliation) into everyday classroom lessons and assignments.

The work of Ingram, Patchin, Huebner, McCluskey, and Bynum (2007) highlight a need for interventions that encourage prosocial relationships among youth through a variety of ways, including perspective taking activities and encouragement of self-reflection. Developing prosocial behavior styles may enhance the quality of peer relationships among teens by increasing frequency of empathic responses and positive interactions (Ingram et al., 2007). When young people develop effective skills for handling their differences and similarities with others through problem solving

and empathizing, they are likely to create meaningful and healthy relationships (Kune-Karrer & Foy, 2003; Lamanna & Riedmann, 2003).

Unfortunately, many school and community curricula do not incorporate the type of multicultural education necessary for character growth, with few programs fully integrating social justice and diversity-related issues into the curricula. Doing so is important because social justice and diversity-related issues are often the source of many problems that young people face in society, such as bullying and difficulties in ethnic identity development (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; Zimmerman, Aberle, & Krafchick, 2005).

Thus, the goal of the present study was to expand the literature of effective diversity programming for adolescents, particularly for youth in residential care. More specifically, the present study examined the effectiveness a social-justice based diversity education curriculum for these youth. To evaluate its effectiveness with youth in residential care and day treatment, participants' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy were assessed.

The target population for the current study was at-risk youth in day treatment centers and residential care. Youth in residential care are characterized by severe emotional distress and behavioral difficulties that have resulted in a placement to a more restrictive, highly supervised environment (Peacock & Daniels, 2006). Court judges and people in society often see youth in residential care as "bad kids" because their behavior may include fighting, stealing, truancy, and other behavior problems. While in residential care, delinquent youth receive a variety of forms of treatment including psychotherapy (individual, group and family therapy), milieu, recreational, and drug and alcohol

treatment. Programming at residential treatment centers also includes social skills training, emotion regulation training, and general behavioral processing groups. However, very few residential treatment centers include training in multiculturalism as part of their rehabilitation process. A focus on diversity training would be beneficial because youth can develop an awareness of inequalities in their own societal group and other groups to gain understanding. Youth may also benefit from the development of positive attitudes toward peers that are different than them in order to form positive relationships (Remer, 2008). Lastly, an ability to empathize with members of different groups is likely to result from a focus on diversity training, which, in turn, allows individuals to interact in a prosocial, appropriate manner (Wang, 2003).

#### *Benefits of Diversity/Multicultural Education*

Social-justice based diversity education is likely to increase an individual's awareness of the existence of privilege and oppression for various societal groups, and motivate individual's to work for social change to decrease societal oppression (Remer, 2008). Social-justice based diversity education programs are a potential avenue for providing awareness of diversity, improving multicultural attitudes, and increasing ethnocultural empathy in adolescents. These programs enhance one's understanding and appreciation of differences through recognizing inequalities in relationships (Goodman, 2001). Specifically, social-justice programs focus on raising awareness of societal oppression and privilege. Oppression involves the intentional marginalization of one group by another for the purpose of gaining and sustaining advantage. Privilege involves unconsciously or willingly accepting advantages afforded to one on the sole basis of being a member of the dominant group. It also involves perceiving that one's advantage

stems from individual effort as opposed to unearned benefits. The definition extends to a conscious awareness when they demand or expect certain benefits based on their association with the dominant group. Awareness of privilege and the oppression of others are crucial for social competence and interaction because awareness can lead to understanding, which may foster delinquent youths' knowledge of empathic responses (Remer, 2008).

Existing programs on diversity with youth in treatment centers tend to focus on celebrating differences. For example, some centers might choose to celebrate individual differences by holding parties honoring Black History Month. However, several researchers have called for a shift from celebration of differences to an integration of multicultural perspectives (Banks, 2006; Neito, 2004; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004). These researchers recommend that more than tolerance is needed to adapt to the growing societal changes. Interactions with diverse groups are likely to become more frequent and tolerance may not be enough for effective citizenship (Wang et al., 2003). Integrating multiple perspectives and teaching acceptance are two ways in which children can adapt to the changes and build upon tolerance. Teaching acceptance to youth is essential because if youth are taught that groups of people are less valuable than others, they may incorporate this idea into their own perspectives (Pang, 2004). If the development of such perceptions is addressed early, adolescents can be taught to think critically about prejudice and injustice. Social-justice based diversity education continues the long awaited shift in literature from celebration to integration by promoting critical thinking, self-reflection, role playing, and perspective taking activities.

### *Importance of Diversity in Adolescence*

During adolescence, individuals begin to think hypothetically and critically of what they read, see or hear (Weinstock, 1999). Youth in residential are at an appropriate stage to provide developmentally responsive experiences that promote cultural identities, cultivate close relationships and social networks, and develop perceptions of and commitment to justice and fairness (Manning, 2000). During this time, youth begin to develop their perceptions and values through a process of attitude formation (Isaacs & Bearison, 1986). Attitude formation is the process by which an individual develops attitudes based on experience. Interventions that aim to begin a transformational learning process through awareness and raising social justice issues into one's consciousness are essential for today's youth.

The social justice education literature places facilitators (i.e. teachers, counselors, residential staff members) in an opportunistic role to help youth recognize, resist, and replace social oppression (Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2003; Pang, 2004). Unfortunately, most of the research on the effectiveness of diversity education courses and multicultural education exists for the purpose of college courses, pre-service teacher trainings, and counselor trainings. Few programs, however, have been evaluated with youth in day treatment and residential care.

An example of current research on diversity program effectiveness is a meta-analysis on 74 studies from 1970 to 2008 (Kulik and Roberson, 2008). They found that diversity education programs with adult learners were likely to increase diversity awareness, improve diversity attitudes, and improve diversity skills across both academic and organizational settings. Diversity attitudes received the most attention and the studies

that included multiple assessment points found that improvements in attitude were sustained over a three to six month period (De Meuse, Hotager, & O'Neill; Thomas & Cohn, 2006). The studies that were reviewed included programs that ranged from one-day workshops to semester courses and with small groups to large groups. Extrapolating this research to younger adolescents would suggest that the same positive outcomes would be found in youth. Furthermore, a focus on the effectiveness of diversity interventions (e.g. antiracist, anticlassist, and cultural awareness training) with children and adolescents is especially needed (Holley & VanVleet, 2006). However, because this study focused on adults, it remains unclear whether the same patterns of associations exist among young adolescents, particularly those in residential care.

Although the extant research on effectiveness of diversity programs has focused on adult learners, only one known study has evaluated the effectiveness of a multicultural program in children. Specifically, Turner and Brown (2008) conducted a program evaluation on a school-based curriculum designed to improve elementary children's attitudes toward refugees. They found that participating in the four-week program led to positive attitudes toward refugees in the short term, but not in the long term. In addition, no change in empathy was found. Turner and Brown (2008) attempted to fill some of the gaps in previous literature by assessing long-term change; however, the changes did not appear sustainable. When viewed together with research conducted with adults, it is clear that positive results are likely, but a combination of positive effects and no change in the program evaluations make it difficult to conclude efficacy with adolescents. This is likely the case for young adolescents in day treatment centers and residential care for which such program evaluations are relatively nonexistent.

As such, the goal of this study was to examine the effectiveness of FAIR: Fairness for All Individuals through Respect (FAIR), an intervention program designed to increase diversity awareness, multicultural attitudes, and empathy, with youth in residential care. FAIR was chosen for evaluation in this study with youth in residential care because of its focus on diversity issues including privilege and oppression of gender, race, and class groups. FAIR fosters positive multicultural attitudes of participants and increases empathy for others. Further, FAIR is entirely experiential and the activities of FAIR are facilitated with important lessons emerging from the experiences of the group members. The activities included interactive components and perspective taking elements, as well as activities to enhance teamwork. FAIR has been successfully implemented with students from preschool through university-level classes, and in mainstream and special needs classrooms. The curriculum has a capacity to be adapted for the specific age and population of the participants. To evaluate its effectiveness with youth in residential care, awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy will be assessed.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there is little research on diversity training with adolescents, relevant research was reviewed to better understand the gaps in the current literature and the potential for social-justice based diversity education. First, several theories and models are described to form the foundation for the current study. Transformative learning theory, social identity development theory, and a model of cross-cultural awareness serve as a lens for social-justice based diversity education programs. Each of these concepts is described below as they relate to the current study. Following the theoretical frameworks and relevant empirical literature, the hypotheses of the current study are discussed.

#### *Theoretical Frameworks*

##### *Transformative Learning Theory*

Transformative learning is the process of affecting change in a frame of reference (Cranton, 1994, 2000; Mezirow, 1991, 1995, 1996;). A frame of reference encompasses cognitive and emotional components and is composed of habits of mind and points of view such as stereotypes and negative diversity attitudes (Mezirow, 1997). Habits of mind are broad, abstract, and habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and acting, whereas points of view are more accessible to awareness and feedback from others. Individuals are capable of trying out another's point of view in an effort to gain understanding (Mezirow, 1997). Transformative learning theory provides a foundation for the

development of many social-justice based diversity education programs and outlines the process by which participants elaborate points of view, transform points of view, establish new points of view, and transform ethnocentric habits of mind by becoming aware and critically reflective of generalized bias in the way individuals view groups other than their own (Mezirow, 1997). Diversity education programs allow learners to critically reflect on their current points of view to potentially elaborate on them, transform them, or dismiss them.

According to Mezirow (1997), transformations in frames of reference take place through critical reflection, including self-reflection, which can lead to significant personal transformation. Transformative learning occurs when an individual is forced to encounter an event or situation that is inconsistent with his or her perspective. Taking the role of another individual in a perspective-taking task is one way in which an individual experiences inconsistency with his or her perspective. The shift in perspective can be relatively gradual, over a period of days to years, or sudden, occurring instantaneously (Mezirow, 2000). Often a shift in perspective involves a planned activity, event, or program to increase dissonance, such as a role-play activity in which a member of a privileged group is asked to take the role of an individual from an oppressed group or a focus group on classism in school with members of all social classes present (Mezirow, 2000).

In transformative learning, learning takes place through discovery and the use of metaphors (Mezirow, 1997). For example, using a metaphor to convey an idea of rigid gender stereotypes can be helpful in remembering oppression of women. The central idea is to have learners actively engage with the concepts presented in the context of their own

lives. In fostering self-direction, for example, the emphasis is on creating a safe environment in which learners become skilled at learning from each other and at helping each other learn in problem-solving groups (Mezirow, 1997). Finally, facilitators (i.e. teachers and counselors) encourage learners to accept order, justice, and civility, to promote respect and responsibility for others, to welcome diversity, and to foster peer collaboration with equal opportunity by providing a safe place for discovery and reflection on one's point of view (Mezirow, 1997).

Transformative learning theory is an adult education theory that has been applied to adolescents as well. Developmental cognitive processes, such as abstract thinking and perspective taking, in adolescence lay the groundwork for transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997). Lavoie (1994) directly applied the theory to adolescents and argued that the structural change brought out by transformative learning is likely to create an opportunity for making changes and taking action. The choice to construct a new perspective or to synthesize old and new perspectives encourages autonomous thinking within the adolescent. Relatedly, Larson (2005) argued that when it comes to youth, transformative learning is not about altering the circumstance or environments that they are in, but more about helping them change the way they think about what is happening to and around them. The combination of content, fun, and action makes for safe and creative learning environments.

From a transformational learning perspective, diversity education programs that are focused on awareness, understanding and acceptance of individuals from different backgrounds are likely to be the most effective way to transform points of view in participants of diversity education programs (Sue & Sue, 1999). Diversity courses can

heighten awareness of social injustices confronting minorities and promote a more open attitude toward them. For example, Keim, Warring, & Rau (2001) found that undergraduate students gained knowledge of diversity topics (i.e. hardships experienced by individuals of a minority race) after completing a 15-week multicultural course. Other researchers have found that similar knowledge gains could be maintained in adults from 3-12 months after training (Braithwaite & Majumdar, 2006; Hill & Augoustinos, 2001). However, further research is needed to account for mechanisms that sustain change (i.e. metaphors and development of new points of view). Transformative learning appears to be an optimistic option because of its focus on changing individual's points of view and frames of reference. The change is intended to move past celebration and tolerance to a long-lasting acceptance and understanding

#### *Social Identity Development Model*

Along with transformative learning theory, the social identity development model relates to diversity education because it utilizes awareness of privilege and oppression as an underlying construct to identity development. Transformative learning theory provides a foundation for diversity education programs and social identity development provides a foundation for participants of these programs. The theory applies to all groups and includes a goal of working to reduce societal oppression after awareness of privilege and oppression is established. Worell and Remer's (2003) social identity model is built upon the broad definition of diversity described above. The model was constructed to apply to all social identities – both privileged and oppressed groups. Social identities reflect how individuals perceive their social locations (positions of privilege or oppression) and are influenced by whether individuals are aware of their status. Worell and Remer (2003)

conceptualized that awareness of these groups is an underlying construct in identity development models. Four levels of social identity development were created to illustrate one's movement from non-awareness to activism. The four levels include: pre-awareness and awareness of privilege and oppression, recognition of diversity and social justice issues in society, immersion, and integration and activism.

The social identity model begins with level one: pre-awareness and awareness of privilege and oppression (Worell & Remer, 2003). This stage involves a progression from pre-awareness of social justice issues (e.g. racism, sexism, and classism) to raising these issues into one's consciousness. At this level, individuals become aware of their own group status. For example, a teenage girl may begin to understand that she is privileged because she is White, but she may also experience oppression because she is female. Level two of the model includes an encounter with diversity and social justice issues. Once awareness has been raised, individuals begin to recognize these issues in society. Level two is about building upon an individual's awareness to recognize the injustice of privilege and oppression. Individuals aware of their privileged status may begin to feel guilty or ashamed of their group identity. Individuals aware of their oppressed status begin to understand that oppression is due to group status, not individual characteristics. They may begin to feel anger about injustice (Worell & Remer, 2003). The third level of the social identity model, immersion, represents rejection of the oppressing dominant culture. For individuals of a privileged group, they begin to understand the feelings of those in the oppressed group. Some individuals will begin establishing collaborative relations with individuals of the oppressed group (Worell & Remer, 2003). For individuals of an oppressed group, this level is about self-appreciation,

group identity, and exclusion of members of a privileged group. Lastly, the integration and activism stage emerges as the individual begins to appreciate the positive qualities of both the oppressed and privileged groups and commits him/herself to working to reduce societal oppression (Worell & Remer, 2003). Individuals in both groups are willing to share personal and public resources. Individuals move comfortably between both worlds and work to decrease societal oppression by rejecting and confronting negative stereotypes (Worell & Remer, 2003)

### *Cross-Cultural Awareness Continuum*

The Cross-Cultural Awareness Continuum builds upon the above two theories by adding to awareness of privilege and oppression and illustrating developmental levels that an individual passes through to become culturally sensitive. The model applies to individuals in the context of diversity education and includes six levels of awareness – self, one’s own culture, social injustices (racism, sexism, and classism), individual differences, other cultures, and diversity (Locke, 1988). Specifically, Locke (1988) utilized the Cross-Cultural Awareness Continuum to illustrate the areas of cultural awareness through which an individual must pass in order to become culturally sensitive. Although Locke (1988) focused on describing the process by which teachers become culturally sensitive, the model can also be applied to adolescents. The continuum is best understood as a lifelong process and can be utilized to describe the process that any individual may go through.

The levels of the cross-cultural awareness continuum are developmental in nature, with each level building on the previous. The first level is self-awareness. Self-awareness is necessary before one can begin understanding others. During this stage,

individuals begin to explore components of their own identity, racial and cultural background, and group status. The second level is an awareness of one's own culture. This is related to self-awareness but takes it one step further. Individuals in this level explore their values, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs in terms of their cultural origin. Awareness of racism, sexism, and poverty is the third level of cross-cultural awareness. These topics are all aspects of a culture that are understood both from the perspective of one's own experience with these issues and also how one views others in relation to them (Locke, 1988). Even when racism, sexism, and classism are denied as part of one's own personal beliefs, it's important that individuals recognize that these attitudes exist and are part of the larger culture. Often, they exist in terms of privilege and oppression. Diversity education programs strive to point out the inequalities of groups (e.g. males and females, rich and poor) to promote awareness. The fourth level involves awareness of individual differences. In an effort to minimize overgeneralization about a specific culture, this level is about seeing people as individuals. Diversity education programs teach participants to respect others for who they are and to treat others fairly. Once inequalities are made aware, individuals can naturally strive towards fairness of all individuals in the face of differences in race, ethnicity, gender, and class.

After the four previous levels, awareness of other cultures is explored. Empirically determined criteria such as power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 1980) can be used to begin understanding how cultures may vary. A heightened awareness of privilege and oppression is possible at this level. For example, one may be able to recognize the marginalization of a group in comparison to his/her own privilege because they have

already explored their advantage in society due to status (i.e. White males). The final level of awareness is awareness of diversity. When all the levels come together, the individual is capable of recognizing and understanding diversity.

### *Adolescents' Diversity Awareness, Attitudes, and Skills*

After discussing the theoretical underpinnings of the current study, it is important to also discuss supporting empirical evidence. Currently, the majority of program evaluations completed on diversity education programs have been done in organizational settings (i.e. work and professional training) and academic settings (i.e. pre-service teachers and social work students). Diversity education programs exist for children and youth; however, in the extant literature, only a few program evaluations have been conducted.

Awareness of diversity is a crucial first step in gaining positive attitudes. When an individual becomes aware of societal injustices, attitudes toward members of other groups than one's own are likely to improve. Finally, diversity skills may develop following the establishment of diversity awareness and positive attitudes. For this reason, studies that focus on awareness of diversity are discussed first, followed by diversity attitudes, and lastly, diversity skills.

### *Diversity Awareness*

Diversity awareness and diversity knowledge are related concepts often defined as learning about experiences, custom, and cultures of different groups. Social justice based education programs also focus on the awareness of societal privilege and oppression and one's position in society. Toward this end, Kulik and Roberson (2008) found that 26 out of 74 studies in their meta-analysis included diversity awareness as an

outcome. All but four studies found positive effects of increased diversity awareness following participation in a diversity education program.

Relatedly, Murphy, Park, and Lonsdale (2006) found that graduate students were likely to exhibit improved awareness of diversity as measured by a self-report questionnaire after completing a 16-week course on diversity issues and therapy. In another study with graduate students, Neville, Heppner, Louie, Thompson, Brookes and Baker (1996) found that the awareness of diversity demonstrated by counseling students was likely to increase after the completion of a 15-week optional multicultural course. In addition, a one-year follow up was completed and changes in awareness appeared to be maintained one year after the course. Lastly, Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, and Terenzini (1996) completed a study with 2, 416 undergraduate students and measured their awareness and openness to diversity after one year of college. Students were asked to report if they had completed a racial or cultural awareness workshop in their first year of college. Pascarella et al. (1996) found that students who had completed a diversity awareness workshop were more likely to have greater awareness and openness to diversity than students who did not. Thus, it appears as though diversity awareness programs are effective in raising participants' awareness of diversity.

### *Diversity Attitudes*

Diversity attitudes are defined as global attitudes toward diversity and diversityvalue, as well as specific attitudes toward different groups. Although awareness is likely to precede the development of attitudes, diversity attitudes have received the most attention in terms of outcomes for diversity programs. Kulik and Roberson (2008)

found that 51 out of 74 studies in their meta-analysis included diversity attitudes as an outcome during program evaluations. Studies in academic settings demonstrated that students are likely to gain more awareness and more positive attitudes toward diversity (i.e. willingness to participate in multicultural programs, fair attributions toward members of other groups, and more positive statements regarding minority groups compared to a control group) after completing a diversity course. (Kulik & Roberson, 2008).

In another study, Probst (2003) conducted a program evaluation on a 17-week general education course on cultural diversity with undergraduate students. Results from a pre-test post-test design revealed that participants' gender role attitudes were likely to become more egalitarian and their attitudes toward disabled, gay and lesbian, and racial minorities became more positive compared to the control group. In addition, intercultural tolerance increased in participants of the course (Probst, 2003). Furthermore, Hogan and Malott (2005) found that completing a college level course in race and gender issues was likely to diminish prejudice toward African Americans as measured by self-report surveys. Relatedly, Chang (2002) compared students who were near completion of a multicultural course requirement with students who were just beginning one. His results suggested that students who were nearly finished with the course had significantly lower prejudice scores than those who were just starting out. Although there is evidence to believe that gender and race courses can lead to positive interactions with African Americans after an adult's college experience, additional research related to this finding is needed for adolescents to investigate the efficacy of these programs with youth (Chang, 2002).

Beyond the relevant research with college students, one program evaluation study was conducted with elementary students. Turner and Brown (2008) conducted a program evaluation of the Friendship Project, a school-based multicultural curriculum designed to improve elementary children's attitudes toward refugees. It was found that the participating in the program was likely to foster positive attitudes, such as willingness to learn about refugee classmates, toward refugees in the short term, but not the long term. In addition, no change in empathy was found; that is, scores on a self-report did not change significantly over time. Turner and Brown (2008) attempted to fill some of the gaps in previous literature by assessing long-term change; however, the changes in attitude toward refugees did not appear to be sustainable through the program. Several limitations were noted in an attempt to account for the lack of sustainable changes, including inconsistency in implementing the program because no specific instructions were given on the implementation of the curriculum. It is important that future studies take this limitation into consideration when completing program evaluations for diversity education with youth.

### *Diversity Skills*

Diversity skills, defined as interpersonal skills necessary to work effectively with individuals from other groups, was utilized as an outcome in 30 of the 74 studies reviews by Kulik and Roberson (2008). Positive effects (i.e. increase in helpful actions toward members of an oppressed group, increase in empathic responses toward individuals different than one's self) were consistently reported in academic settings. Unfortunately, diversity skills have received little attention despite the goal of many diversity education

programs: to prepare learners to work effectively in a diverse world (Kulik & Roberson, 2008).

A major skill in relating with individuals from diverse backgrounds is an ability to take their perspective. Researchers agree that to assume the character of another person, even for a brief time, is likely to be a powerful learning experience. Skills in perspective taking are potential avenues for targeting diversity skills. Simply put, in order for individuals to experience empathy for members of groups other than their own, they must begin by taking on their perspective in life. Perspective-taking may yield positive interpersonal benefits that might lead to a reduction of prejudice and an increase of intergroup interactions (e.g. Batson et al., 1997; Batson, Lishner, Cook, & Sawyer, 2005; Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). According to Galinsky and Moskowitz (2000), perspective taking abilities were found to be a useful strategy for decreasing not only the expression of stereotypes, but the accessibility of them as well. If individuals can learn to take the perspective of another person, they are less likely to even think of stereotypes. Moreover, individuals are less likely to express stereotypic thoughts and actions after successfully taking the perspective of another (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). Similarly, in an experimental setting, Vescio, Sechrist, and Paolucci (2003) found that in a sample of undergraduate students, perspective taking could promote more favorable racial attitudes through assuming the other person's thoughts, feelings, and experiences to understand the perspective. After listening to an interview segment in which an African American male described some difficulties he had faced as a result of his racial group members, empathy and outcome variables were assessed (i.e. stereotype endorsement,

intergroup attitudes). Thus, the individual is likely to see the situation as one's own, which may lead him or her to viewing the situation more realistically.

The use of perspective-taking devices, especially around issues of diversity, is helpful in communicating awareness and acceptance (Rios, Trent, & Castaneda, 2003). It allows youth to engage in activities that draw on their insider knowledge and lived experiences. Participants are moved to consider their position, privilege (or lack of), and experience both perspectives (Rios et al., 2003). A goal of using perspective-taking techniques is to move students toward empathetic perspectives and action-oriented social justice points of view. Allowing students to share stories about injustices they or people within their families or communities have suffered is one effective technique. It is also helpful for students to role-play, discuss historical and current events, and utilize guided imagery (Krogh, 1985).

Training in social perspective taking may be particularly beneficial for delinquent adolescents who are characterized by pleasure seeking behavior in which they are prepared to hurt others in order to achieve goals (Clarizio, 1987). In particular, conduct-disordered and delinquent adolescents show deficits in perspective taking ability that can be improved through appropriate role-play training across a wide range of ages (Chandler, 1973; Ianotti, 1978; Lee & Prentice, 1988; MacQuiddy, Maise, & Hamilton, 1987).

A 1990 study by Chalmers and Townsend demonstrated the potential for change in perspective taking ability. Specifically, socially maladjusted adolescent girls in a role-play training program were likely to exhibit enhanced performance on a measure of social perspective taking. Positive effects were also found for performance on tests of

interpersonal problem analysis, empathy, and the acceptance of individual differences. The results suggest that socially maladjusted girls who have histories of delinquency involving aggressive, disruptive, and antisocial behavior can increase their understanding of others in interpersonal situations through training in social perspective taking (Chalmers & Townsend, 1990). One key component of social-justice based diversity education involves perspective taking. Therefore it is a potential opportunity to teach these skills. Youth in residential care have already started down a slippery slope, interrupting this process and providing avenues for growth is especially crucial. Perspective taking opens the door for empathic responses and understanding. Empathy is likely to be an important diversity skill stemming from perspective taking abilities and the research outlined thus far.

*Ethnocultural Empathy.* Through perspective taking abilities, empathy is an important diversity skill in motivating participants to work for social change regarding social injustices (Goodman, 2001). If individuals are aware of social injustice, they can begin to develop empathy for the pain experienced by those of the oppressed group (Remer, 2008). Empathy can be seen as a construct that incorporates an appreciation for the perspectives and feelings of another, a sense of violations of justice and care, and an ability to distinguish between right and wrong (Berreth & Berman, 1997). Youth in residential care work on social skills and learn how to function in society. As such, empathy is a relevant component and outcome of social justice based diversity education.

Ethnocultural empathy, empathy directed toward people from racial and ethnic cultural groups who are different from one's own ethnocultural group, appears to be a promising way to promote the mutual understanding between various racial and ethnic

groups, on both cognitive and affective levels (Batson, Lishner, & Cook, 1997). Wang et al. (2003) draws upon Ridley and Lingle's (1996) model of cultural empathy and discusses three constructs of ethnocultural empathy: intellectual empathy, empathic emotions and their interrelations. Intellectual empathy is the ability to understand a racially or ethnically different person's thinking and feeling. Empathic emotions give attention to the feelings of a person from another ethnocultural group from the point of view of that person's racial or ethnic culture. Communicative empathy utilizes the above two concepts in order to express the ethnocultural empathy thoughts and feelings toward members of other groups (Wang et al., 2003).

Ethnocultural empathy is a relatively novel and important way of measuring diversity skills taught in diversity education programs. The benefits of ethnocultural empathy appear to be relevant to social interactions because of the increasingly diverse society. Although there is little research on programs that measure ethnocultural empathy, the extant research on general empathy supports the notion of the need and benefits of ethnocultural empathy. For example, evidence suggests that empathic students are likely to be less fearful, more trusting, more willing to self-disclose, and more open to the notion of tolerance than students who are not empathic (Hollingsworth et al., 2003). Consequently, these factors might allow individuals to increase their knowledge of others in order to interact comfortably with them (McKee & Schor, 1994). In addition, research suggests that there is a positive relation between empathy and prosocial behavior, with lower levels of empathy generally associated with greater antisocial attitudes and higher levels of aggression in adolescents (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Hoffman, 2000).

Examining empathy in adolescents is also important because of the deficits in empathic responding have been implicated in the development of antisocial behavior such as bullying and aggression (Hanish, Eisenberg, Fabes, Spinrad, Ryan, & Schmidt, 2004; Sams & Truscott, 2004). Since empathy, specifically ethnocultural empathy, is a key component of social-justice diversity based education, it is imperative that these types of courses are being offered to youth in residential care. In another study, Bush, Mullis, and Mullis (2000) found a difference between offender and non-offender youth in affective empathy measured through self-report and observation of empathic emotional expression. Offender youth presented lower levels of affective empathy and a lack of competence in feeling the emotions of others. Similarly, Kaplan and Arbuthnot (1985) found that delinquent adolescents were likely to score lower than non-delinquent adolescents on cognitive aspects of empathy, such as perspective-taking tasks. Extrapolating this research to youth in residential care would suggest that these youth are likely to benefit from interventions that assist them in practicing perspective taking abilities and affective empathy.

#### *Purpose of the Current Study*

Given the findings and gaps in prior research, there are several implications for shaping current diversity education programs and their evaluation. First, diversity awareness, diversity attitudes, and diversity skills are important outcomes of diversity education because of their implications in positive social interactions. Next, varied techniques produce positive results in adult learners. However, additional research is needed to understand the mechanisms that produce these results with adolescents. In addition, there are a limited number of programs evaluating long-term results, and

therefore, it is unknown if initial changes remain stable. Turner and Brown's (2008) study also implicated the importance of consistent implementation of program curriculum when evaluating its effectiveness. Finally, little research has been conducted on existing diversity programs with children and adolescents and to date, no known published research on these programs has been done with youth in residential and day treatment. Thus, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of FAIR as a social-justice based diversity education curriculum for youth in residential and day treatment. To evaluate the effectiveness, awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy were assessed.

*FAIR: Fairness for All Individuals through Respect*

FAIR was the intervention chosen for the current study because of its focus on societal privilege and oppression, positive multicultural attitudes, and prosocial behavior. It was also chosen because of its success in the school system and its adaptability for all ages. FAIR is social-justice based diversity curriculum created by Drs. Toni Zimmerman, Jen Aberle, and Jen Krafchick in 2002. The FAIR curriculum presents ideas of how sexism, racism, and classism are perpetuated through subtle and overt messages from many source and the consequences of their existence in today's society (Zimmerman et al., 2005). FAIR draws upon the concept of privileged and oppressed groups in an effort to raise participants' awareness of these groups.

*Goals and objectives of FAIR.* One goal of FAIR is to bring diversity, in its many forms, into the consciousness of participants. As outlined above, awareness is a crucial first step in becoming an effective multicultural citizen. Another indirect goal of

the FAIR program is to provide a safe, fun environment for perspective taking and empathic abilities to emerge.

In addition, FAIR offers a component to encourage longevity in the changes it may produce in participants by incorporating metaphors that can be called upon by teachers, counselors, staff members, classmates, peers, and friends. These metaphors can be profoundly transformative. Each of the five activities centers on metaphors, which participants can use as an organizing idea to help make sense of their experiences. Afterwards, there is a shortcut to that experienced understanding that contributes to further understanding and reflection (Zimmerman et al., 2005).

As people engage with the FAIR curriculum, children report that they “look at magazine differently in the grocery store – now thinking about body image and gender injustice,” “I notice my own shark inside and what makes it go away or come out – discussing empathic and respectful behavior,” and “I recognize my own prejudices about race and try to have a second thought that is less narrow” (Zimmerman et al., 2005, p. 4). The success of FAIR at an individual level is promising. The current study aims to review its success with a sample of youth in residential and day treatment.

### *Study Hypotheses*

*Hypothesis one.* Awareness of privilege and oppression for participants in the FAIR group will increase after participating in the intervention, as compared to the control group. The first hypothesis is supported by the results from Remer (2008) in which students who attended an undergraduate diversity course were likely to be more aware of privilege and oppression in society after completing the course compared to students in the control group. This hypothesis is also supported by the work of Robinson

and Bradley (1997) in which students' scores on a posttest assessment of diversity knowledge and awareness for participants in a diversity course increased in comparison to their pretest scores.

*Hypothesis two.* Multicultural attitudes will improve for participants in the FAIR group after participating in the intervention, as compared to the control group. This hypothesis is supported by the work of many researchers described in the meta-analysis by Kulik and Roberson (2008) in which academic programs that focused on diversity issues were likely to improve participants' attitudes in nearly all of the studies reviewed from 1970 to 2008.

*Hypothesis three.* Ethnocultural empathy will increase for participants in the FAIR group after participating in the intervention, as compared to the control group. The third hypothesis is supported by the work from Wang et al. (2003) in which ethnocultural empathy is described as an important construct and outcome of diversity education programs. Furthermore, Remer (2008) posited that when individuals are more aware of social injustice, they begin to develop empathy for the pain experienced by those of oppressed groups.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHOD

#### *Participants*

Participants were 75 adolescent youth in day treatment centers and residential treatment facilities located in Northern Colorado. The residential treatment and day treatment centers and their residents were recruited by the authors from a list of youth treatment facilities in Northern Colorado. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: adolescents aged 11-19 and living in a long-term, unlocked residential treatment facility that offers services to males and females or participating in day treatment programs within the residential treatment facility. Individuals in both programs were similar in age and mental health issues, including substance abuse and mood disorders. In addition, individuals in the sample exhibited similar delinquent backgrounds that included acting out behaviors, involvement in the criminal justice system and/or department of human services, and admission to mental health treatment. Individuals in both programs received services including grade-appropriate schooling, individual and/or family therapy, and programming to teach social skills and emotion regulation. However, the individuals in the day treatment programs did not reside in the facility.

Participants from two day treatment centers served as the control group ( $n = 12$ ), whereas the participants from two residential facilities and three day treatment centers served as the experimental group ( $n = 63$ ) as they were recipients of the FAIR

intervention. The experimental group was composed of 29 males and 23 females. Their ages ranged from 11 to 19 years old. The majority of the participants were European American. The remainders were non European American. Similarly, the control group was composed of 9 males and 2 females. Their ages ranged from 14 to 18 years old. The majority of the participants were European American. The remainders were non European American

To investigate whether the participants in the control group and experimental group differed on demographic characteristics of gender and ethnicity, a chi-square test was conducted. The chi-square test revealed that the groups do not differ on gender or ethnicity (see Table 3.1). To investigate whether the participants in the control group and experimental group differ on demographic characteristic of age, a *t*-test was performed. The results for the *t*-test indicated that the groups did not differ on age (see Table 3.1). As such, participants in the experimental group did not differ from the participants in the control group on demographic characteristics of age, gender, and ethnicity.

Table 3.1

*Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Control and Experimental Group*

	Control Group	Experimental Group	Chi-square/T-test value
Age (years)	16 (1.44)	16 (1.70)	.867 p > .05
Gender			1.48 p > .05
Male	82%	63%	
Female	18%	37%	
Ethnicity			1.25 p >.05
European American	58%	42%	

Non-European American	42%	58%
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*Note.* Standard deviations are presented in parentheses.

*Procedure*

A quasi-experimental design was utilized. After explaining the purpose and procedures of the study to the facilities, parents were approached to obtain informed consent. In addition, the youth who agreed to participate signed a consent form. All youth asked to participate in the study voluntarily agreed. FAIR was facilitated at the experimental sites (two residential and three day treatment centers) separately over the course of one day (approximately 5 hours). The sites were chosen for the experimental and control groups based on their scheduling availability. Participants in the control group (two day treatment centers) were wait-listed and offered FAIR at a later date. Prior to administering FAIR, pre-assessments of participants' level of awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy were administered and collected from participants in the experimental groups. Similarly, participants in the control group were given the same pre-assessments at approximately the same time. After taking the pre-assessments, the participants in the experimental group were invited to participate in FAIR, while the participants in the control group continued with their normal, daily routine.

After the pre-assessments were given to the experimental group, the day continued with FAIR activities, breaks, and a post-assessment as outlined below. Highly trained individuals administered FAIR to the participants to ensure fidelity of administration. FAIR consisted of five activities. The youth participated in activities one

and two and then took a break for lunch. After the break, the study continued with the remaining activities. Each activity is described below.

*Activity one: Images in our minds.* Activity one focused on stereotypes that are often held based on race, gender, and class. The facilitator used short stories about people with different roles and responsibilities to encourage the participants to react to immediate images that come to mind. The group discovered that race, gender, and class are common characteristics to organize individuals in. The goal of this activity is to expand participants' immediate images and challenge their stereotypes (Zimmerman et al., 2005).

*Activity two: Prize sorting.* Activity two focused on awareness of gender roles and stereotypes associated with those roles. The group was presented with several toys including stereotypic male and female toys. They were asked to sort the toys and place them in two different boxes, one blue and one pink. Next the toys were poured into a common, yellow box to encourage the participants to follow their passion and not be limited by socialization (Zimmerman et al., 2005).

*Activity three: In the box/out of the box images.* Activity three focused on free expression and individual flexibility. The metaphor, "in the box," is for rigid messages that limit one's free expression. "Out of the box" represents messages including gender, ethnicity, abilities, age and economic class expectations. Participants sorted through magazines and pictures to identify which pictures fit "in the box" and "out of the box" for females and males. A discussion was facilitated to encourage awareness of rigidity in society and consequently, oppression and privilege of certain groups. For example, white

men are often portrayed as rich and men of color as working class (Zimmerman et al., 2005).

*Activity four: Build a house.* Activity four focused on promoting an awareness of socioeconomic class and the perspective of individuals with fewer resources. Race, ethnicity, and gender factors were also incorporated in the discussion. Students were divided into groups and given differing amounts and kinds of materials to build a model house. Through a perspective-taking task, students placed themselves in a role that may be different from their current financial situation. They were asked to talk about the process of building the house in order to dispel class-based stereotypes and explore feelings that others may have depending on the group they are in. Through this activity, participants reflected on how society places an expectation on all people to have the same outcome in life, regardless of the resources with which they begin (Zimmerman et al., 2005).

*Activity five: Marine life story.* Activity five focused on becoming aware of each individual's potential to act like a shark, carp, crab, and dolphin. Through the metaphor of these four animals and a narrative explaining how each animal behaves, participants were taught that all of these animals reside in them. They were asked to write or draw about a time when they acted like a shark, carp, crab, and dolphin. Following the sharing of their stories, participants make a commitment to working toward fairness, justice, and equality in their everyday lives, similar to the prosocial behaviors of the dolphin (Zimmerman et al., 2005).

Following the completion of the FAIR curriculum, all participants in the experimental and control group were given post-assessments by trained facilitators.

Approximately one month later, the control group was offered FAIR in the same manner as the experimental group who received it. For participation in the study, participants' names were entered in a drawing for a \$10 mall gift card.

### *Measures*

Several self-report measures were used to gauge adolescents' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy. Each of these measures was administered prior to the implementation of FAIR and at the conclusion of the curriculum. Additionally, each of these measures was administered to the control group at approximately the same time as the experimental group. A detailed description of each measure is provided below.

*Awareness of privilege and oppression.* Youths' awareness of privilege and oppression was assessed through the Awareness of Privilege and Oppression Scale (APOS; Montross, 2003). The awareness of privilege and oppression scale measures the awareness of privilege and oppression continuum underlying Worell and Remer's (2003) social identity development model described earlier. The APOS consists of 50 items on a four point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (4). For the purpose of this study, three subscales were utilized: Racism, Classism, and Sexism. The Racism subscale consisted of 15 items that measure participants' awareness of societal oppression and privilege related to race and ethnicity. Higher values indicated greater awareness of privilege and oppression regarding race. Sample items included: "people of color and Whites have to worry equally about their credibility when addressing a group" and "most history books don't accurately show how people of color helped American become the country it is" (alpha = .66). The Classism subscale included 9 items that

measures one's awareness of class-related privilege and oppression. Sample items included: "homeless people don't deserve to get money from hard-working folks" and "having money can lead to instant respect in business settings." Finally, the Sexism subscale contained 6 items that measured the participants' awareness of privilege and oppression in relation to sex and gender. Sample items included: "the focus of men's bodies is just as strong as it is on women's bodies in this society" and "men are judged just as harshly about their attractiveness as women." However, neither the Classism nor the Sexism subscales were deemed reliable for use with the study sample ( $\alpha < .65$ ). Thus, only the Racism subscale was used for hypothesis testing. Responses on this subscale were averaged to create a composite score of Racism for each participant.

*Multicultural attitudes.* Youths' multicultural attitudes were assessed through the Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (MASQUE; Munroe & Pearson, 2006). The scale was developed based on three areas of transformative learning: Know, Care, and Act. It gauges individuals' knowledge of diversity issues, attitudes toward diversity, and actions taken regarding diversity. Individuals complete the 18-item measure based on their individual self-report. Three subscales comprise this measure: Know, Care, and Act. A six-point Likert scale is used for responses ranging from *strongly agree* (1) to *strongly disagree* (6). The Know subscale consisted of 7 items that measure participants' knowledge of diversity issues ( $\alpha = .75$ ). Sample items included: "I realize that racism exists" and "I understand religious beliefs differ." The Care subscale included 6 items that measured participants' attitudes toward diversity ( $\alpha = .71$ ). Sample items included: "I am sensitive toward people of every financial strain" and "I am emotionally concerned about racial inequalities." Lastly, the Act subscale

consisted of 5 items that measured participants' actions taking regarding diversity. Sample items included: "I actively challenge gender inequities" and "I do not act to stop racism." Because the responses for the Act subscale was not internally consistent with the study sample ( $\alpha < .65$ ), it was not included in hypothesis testing.

*Ethnocultural empathy.* Youths' ethnocultural empathy was assessed through the Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE) developed by Wang et al. (2003). The scale measures participants' attitudes toward people of ethnic and racial groups different from their own. The SEE consists of 31 total items on a six-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree that it describes me* (0) to *strongly agree that it describes me* (5). Four subscales comprised this measure: Empathic Feeling and Expression, Empathic Perspective Taking, Awareness of Cultural Differences, and Empathic Awareness.

The Empathic Feeling and Expression (EFE) subscale included 15 items that measure one's concern about communication of discriminatory attitudes or beliefs as well as emotional responses to emotions and experiences of people from racial or ethnic groups different from one's own ( $\alpha = .82$ ). Sample items included: "I express my concern about discrimination to people from other racial or ethnic groups" and "I don't care if people make racist statements against other racial or ethnic groups."

The Awareness of Cultural Differences (AC) subscale included 5 items and centered on the understanding, acceptance, and valuing of cultural traditions of individuals different from one's own culture ( $\alpha = .70$ ). Sample items included: "I feel annoyed when people do not speak standard English" and "I do not understand why people want to keep their indigenous racial or ethnic traditions instead of trying to fit into the mainstream."

The Empathic Awareness (EA) subscale consisted of 4 items that measures the individuals' awareness of experiences of people from racial or ethnic groups different from one's own (alpha = .84). Sample items included: "I am aware of how society differentially treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own" and "I recognize that the media often portrays people based on racial or ethnic stereotypes."

Finally, the Empathic Perspective Taking (EP) subscale included 7 items that measure one's effort to understand the experiences and emotions of individuals from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Sample items included: "I know what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people" and "I can relate to the frustration that some people feel about having fewer opportunities due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds." The EP subscale was not appropriately reliable and was not used in hypothesis testing.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the effectiveness of FAIR as a social-justice based diversity education curriculum for youth in residential and day treatment facilities. To evaluate the FAIR program, adolescents' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy were measured. It was hypothesized that adolescents in the experimental group would exhibit gains in each of these variables after completing the FAIR program, as compared to those in the control group. The results section is organized as follows. Prior to hypothesis testing, preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the distribution of the study variables, identify influential outlying cases, and potential covariates, such as adolescents' age, gender, and ethnicity. Next, the hypotheses were tested using multivariate analysis of variance with repeated measures (MANOVA) and analysis of variance with repeated measures (ANOVA) to examine changes from pre-test to post-test and whether group membership (experimental vs. control) was associated with mean level changes in adolescents' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy. The means and standard deviations at pre-test and post-test are provided for both the control and experimental groups.

### *Preliminary Analysis*

Skewness values were examined to determine the normality of the variables. All study variables were reasonably well distributed (skewness values ranged from -1.13 to 0.21). Skewness values less than 2 and greater than -2 indicate a relatively normal distribution (Bachman, 2004). Moreover, the study variables values fell within the expected (see Table 4.1). Cook's (1977) distance scores indicated no multivariate outliers and no covariates were identified. Lastly, in order to identify covariates, bivariate correlations were examined to assess the relationship between the outcome variables (awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy) and other variables that may have confounded the results (i.e., gender, length of time spent at the facility, and age). None of the potential covariates were correlated with the outcomes of interest, thus they were not included as covariates in the tests of the hypotheses,  $r_s$  ( $df = 73$ ) ranged from -.22 to .23,  $p > .05$ .

Table 4.1

*Awareness of Privilege and Oppression Subscales, Multicultural Attitude Subscales, and Ethnocultural Empathy Subscales: Descriptive Statistics (n = 63)*

Subscales	Minimum - Maximum	$\alpha$
Racism <sup>a</sup>	1 – 4	.66
Classism <sup>a</sup>	1 – 4	
Sexism <sup>a</sup>	1 – 4	
Know <sup>b</sup>	1 – 6	.75
Care <sup>b</sup>	1 – 6	.71
Act <sup>b</sup>	1 – 6	
EFE <sup>c</sup>	0 – 5	.82

EP <sup>c</sup>	0 – 5	
AC <sup>c</sup>	0 – 5	.70
EA <sup>c</sup>	0 – 5	.84

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*Note.* EFE = Empathic Feeling and Expression; EP = Empathic Perspective Taking; AC = Acceptance of Cultural Differences; EA = Empathic Awareness

<sup>a</sup>Subscale of Awareness of Privilege and Oppression measure (Montross, 2003)

<sup>b</sup>Subscale of Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (Munroe, 2006)

<sup>c</sup>Subscale of Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (Wang, 2003)

#### *Experimental and Control Group Equivalency*

To assess whether the experimental and control group participants were equivalent on the pre-test variables, a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted. Specifically, group membership (treatment vs. control) served as the between subjects factor, whereas adolescents' levels of awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy served as the outcome of interest. The assumption for equal variances was met. Results indicated no significant difference between experimental and control groups for the Racism subscale of the APOS (see Table 4.2). Relatedly, the results indicated no significant difference between the experimental and control groups for the Know and Care subscales on the MASQUE. Finally, there was no significant difference on the EFE, AC, and EA subscales on the SEE. Thus, the experimental and control groups were equivalent at the time of pre-test.

Table 4.2

*Analysis of Variance of Pre-test Scores for Experimental and Control Groups on the Racism, Know, Care, EFE, AC, and EA subscales*

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Subscale	Experimental Group ( <u>n = 59</u> )	Control Group ( <u>n = 11</u> )
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	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	df	F	p
APOS: Racism	2.40	.35	2.45	.33	1	.148	.702
MASQUE: Know	4.95	.91	4.96	.98	1	.001	.972
Care	3.73	1.12	3.86	1.04	1	.144	.706
SEE: EFE	3.93	.83	3.78	.92	1	.295	.589
AC	4.19	1.18	3.98	1.25	1	.309	.580
EA	3.94	1.25	4.11	1.08	1	.188	.666

*Note.* APOS = Awareness of Privilege and Oppression Scale (Montross, 2003); MASQUE = Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (Munroe, 2006); SEE = Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (Wang, 2003); EFE = Empathic Feeling and Expression; AC = Awareness of Cultural Differences; EA = Empathic Awareness

#### *Awareness of Privilege and Oppression*

To test whether participation in the FAIR curriculum increased adolescents' awareness of privilege and oppression on the racism subscale, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted (hypothesis 1). Group membership (treatment vs. control) served as the between subjects factor, time (pre and post) served as the within subject factor, and adolescents' levels of awareness of privilege and oppression regarding racism served as the outcome of interest. Results revealed that there was no significant main effect of time,  $F(1, 57) = .963, p > .05$ , or group,  $F(1, 57) = .001, p > .05$ . In addition, results revealed no significant time x group interaction effect,  $F(1, 57) = .029, p > .05$ . Thus, with respect to adolescents' awareness of privilege and oppression regarding race, these findings revealed no significant difference in scores from pre-test to post-test, no significant

difference between the experimental and the control group and no differences between the groups as a function of having participated in FAIR (i.e. the experimental group).

### *Multicultural Attitudes*

To investigate the effect of FAIR on multicultural attitudes, a repeated measures ANOVA was used due to the fact that the two subscales were not correlated. Specifically, two separate ANOVAs were conducted to investigate if participation in the FAIR curriculum increased participant's levels of multicultural attitudes in relation to knowledge of diversity and sensitivity to multicultural issues in society (hypothesis 2). In each test, group membership (treatment vs. control) served as the between subjects factor, time served as the within subject factor, and multicultural attitudes on the Know subscale and the Care subscale were the outcomes of interest.

First, results indicated a significant main effect of time between the individuals' scores from pre-test to post-test on the Know subscale,  $F(1, 58) = 8.258, p < .05$ , but a non-significant main effect for group,  $F(1, 58) = 1.135, p > .05$ . The results also revealed a significant time x group interaction,  $F(1, 58) = 5.341, p < .05$ . Substantively, with respect to individual's knowledge of diversity, these findings revealed a significant difference in scores from pre-test to post-test and no difference between the experimental and control group. However, differences between the groups as a function of having participated in FAIR were found. Post-hoc comparisons revealed that participant's knowledge of diversity for the experimental group remained fairly stable, whereas participant's knowledge of diversity for the control group decreased.

Next, results indicated a significant main effect of time between the individuals' scores from pre-test to post-test on the Care subscale,  $F(1, 57) = 5.459, p < .05$ . Overall,

the scores decreased from pre-test to post-test. Neither a significant group effect,  $F(1, 57) = .045, p > .05$ , nor a significant time x group interaction,  $F(1, 58) = 3.126, p > .05$ , emerged from the current study. Substantively, with respect to adolescents' sensitivity to diversity, these findings revealed a difference in scores from pre-test to post-test, no significant difference between the experimental and the control group and no differences between the groups as a function of having participated in FAIR (i.e., the experimental group).

### *Ethnocultural Empathy*

To test whether participation in the FAIR curriculum increased adolescents' levels of ethnocultural empathy compared to the control group, several analyses of variance tests were conducted (hypothesis 3). Specifically, a MANOVA was conducted for two of the three subscales, EFE and EA, to assess changes in the levels of empathic feeling and expression and empathic awareness. A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted for the third subscale, ACD, because it was not correlated with the other two subscales. A repeated measures ANOVA was used to assess changes in the levels of acceptance of cultural differences for participants of the experimental and control group. In each test, group membership (treatment vs., control) served as the between subjects factor, time as the within subject factor, and ethnocultural empathy on three subscales served as the outcome variables.

First, results of the repeated measures ANOVA for the ACD subscale revealed no main effect of time,  $F(1, 53) = 3.771, p > .05$ , or group,  $F(1, 53) = .067, p > .05$ . Similarly, there was no significant time x group interaction on the ACD subscale,  $F(1, 53) = .010, p > .05$ . Therefore, with respect to adolescents' acceptance of cultural

differences, these findings revealed no significant difference in scores from pre-test to post-test, no difference between the experimental and the control group and no differences between the groups as a function of having participated in FAIR (i.e., the experimental group).

Next, the results from MANOVA revealed no main effect of group for the EFE and EA subscales,  $F(1, 52) = .238, p > .05$ . In contrast, the results revealed a main effect for time,  $F(1, 52) = 3.122, p < .05$ . Lastly, a significant time x group interaction was found,  $F(1, 52) = 3.115, p < .05$ . Substantively, with respect to individual's empathic feeling and expression and empathic awareness, these findings revealed a significant difference in scores from pre-test to post-test and no difference between the experimental and control group. However, differences between the groups as a function of having participated in FAIR were found. Whereas participant's scores on empathic feeling and expression and empathic awareness remained stable for the experimental group, the scores of individuals who did not receive FAIR decreased from pre-test to post-test.

Table 4.3

*Means and Standard Deviations of the Awareness of Privilege and Oppression subscale, Multicultural Attitude Subscales, and Ethnocultural Empathy Subscale*

	Control		Experimental	
	pre	post	pre	post
<b>APOS Subscale</b>				
Racism	2.44 (.33)	2.48 (.26)	2.40 (.33)	2.48 (.36)
<b>MASQUE Subscales</b>				
Know	4.96 (.98)	3.79 (1.62)	4.95 (.91)	4.91 (1.23)
Care	3.86 (1.04)	3.27 (.86)	3.73 (1.12)	3.63 (1.15)

SEE Subscales				
EFE	3.78 (.92)	3.58 (.56)	3.93 (.83)	3.90 (.75)
AC	3.98 (1.21)	3.93 (.76)	4.19 (1.18)	3.78 (1.18)
EA	4.11 (1.08)	3.13 (1.31)	3.94 (1.25)	4.23 (1.02)

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*Note.* Standard deviations are presented in parentheses. APOS = Awareness of Privilege and Oppression Scale (Montross, 2003); MASQUE = Munroe Multicultural Attitude Scale Questionnaire (Munroe, 2006); SEE = Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (Wang, 2003); EFE = Empathic Feeling and Expression; AC = Awareness of Cultural Differences; EA = Empathic Awareness

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the effectiveness of FAIR as a social-justice based diversity education curriculum for youth in residential and day treatment. To evaluate its effectiveness, participants' awareness of privilege and oppression was assessed. Second, this study examined participants' multicultural attitudes. Lastly, the study examined participants' ethnocultural empathy. Based on current research findings, this study hypothesized that (1) participants' awareness of privilege and oppression would increase, (2) participants' multicultural attitudes would improve, and (3) participants' ethnocultural empathy would increase after participation in the FAIR curriculum.

To further examine the results of the current study, each hypothesis will be discussed individually. In addition to a brief summary of the findings, the results of each hypothesis will be assessed in accordance with current research on the topic of social justice-based diversity education programs. Additionally, when exploring the raw data values, no obvious changes were observed. Thus, it is imperative to discuss the potential reasons for why the expected effects were not found in the current study.

### *Awareness of Privilege and Oppression*

Results from the current study justice based diversity education curricula with youth in residential and day treatment revealed that individuals who participated in the FAIR curriculum and those who were wait-listed did not differ on their scores for the Racism subscale of the APOS. Therefore, it is likely that FAIR did not increase at-risk youths' awareness of privilege and oppression with respect to race. Although this hypothesis was supported by some research (e.g., Kulik & Roberson, 2008; Murphy, Park, & Lonsdale, 2006), there may be several explanations for why the hypothesis was not supported with the current study sample.

First, the research that supported the increase of awareness of privilege and oppression following the completion of a diversity curriculum was conducted with college-age students (Remer, 2008; Robinson & Bradley, 1997), not adolescents. Because the literature is not clear about the effects of diversity education with youth, perhaps teaching awareness of racism during adolescence is not effective in the way FAIR facilitates it. Specifically, many of the studies supporting the hypothesis that awareness will increase focused on semester-long courses (e.g. Remer, 2008; Robinson & Bradley, 1997). The current study facilitated the curriculum in a one-day workshop. Becoming aware of privilege and oppression in relation to race may require a more prolonged facilitation of the information.

Along with the length of the curriculum, the findings from the current study indicate the need for FAIR to be adapted for this population. In a 2004 study from Zimmerman et al., FAIR was examined qualitatively with elementary-age students who reported "I recognize my own prejudices about race and try to have a second thought that

is less narrow.” Although FAIR was effective with that age group during a one-day facilitation, it may need to be adapted to work with at-risk adolescents. Research on youth in residential and day treatment centers has characterized the population with severe emotional distress and behavioral difficulties (Peacock & Daniels, 2006). Therefore, it may be necessary to increase the duration of the curriculum to several weeks or multiple workshops to be more effective with a population already experiencing emotional distress and behavioral difficulties.

### *Multicultural Attitudes*

The hypothesis that participation in FAIR would increase multicultural attitudes was examined by two concepts: participants’ knowledge of diversity and participants’ sensitivity to multicultural issues in society. First, results indicated that participant’s knowledge of diversity for the experimental group remained fairly stable, while participant’s knowledge of diversity for the control group decreased. Although research supports the hypothesis that participation in multicultural education programs will increase knowledge of diversity, it may be plausible to conclude that FAIR maintained one’s knowledge, whereas the absence of FAIR resulted in decreased knowledge of diversity. It is encouraging that FAIR did not result in decreases to knowledge, but a more effective approach could include more real life activities. Although FAIR is experiential in nature and involves education of diversity issues related to class, gender, and race, planned interactions between individuals from diverse backgrounds could foster an increase in knowledge of participants. Otis and Loeffler (2005), for example, found that a weeklong program for high school students utilized experiential, cognitive, and behavioral components and found increases in knowledge of diversity, empathy for

others, self-esteem, and a commitment to social change. Because FAIR does not include real-life interactions with people of diverse background, it is reasonable that adolescents' knowledge did not increase.

Additionally, scores for participants' sensitivity to multicultural issues in society decreased from pre-test to post-test regardless of group membership. The activities of FAIR were focused on increasing one's awareness and raising the issues into one's conscious. Therefore, it may be necessary to continue the curriculum for a longer amount of time to see a positive change in one's sensitivity and concern for diversity issues. Another explanation for why sensitivity to multicultural issues did not increase is that, in the current study, the curriculum was facilitated by outside staff. The participants had limited time to develop a relationship with the staff. According to Leichtman (2006), youth in residential care benefit from consistency and quality relationships with staff. Training the current staff to deliver the intervention may be a more effective way to deliver the curriculum.

### *Ethnocultural Empathy*

Hypothesis testing was conducted to assess changes in participants' ethnocultural empathy by looking at their levels of acceptance of cultural differences, empathic feeling and expression, and empathic awareness following the completion of the FAIR curriculum. First, results indicated that there was no change in participant's acceptance of cultural differences. The age of participants and the duration of the curriculum, as indicated above, may serve as a barrier for positive change in terms of acceptance of cultural differences. It is clear that for attitudes to change and for individuals to move

beyond awareness, an increase in intensity and duration of the curriculum may need to happen.

Next, results revealed that participant's scores on empathic feeling and expression and empathic awareness remained stable for the experimental group, and the scores of individuals who did not receive FAIR decreased from pre-test to post-test. Similar to hypothesis two, it is good that FAIR did not result in a decrease of empathic feeling and expression or empathic awareness. However, it may be that youth in residential and day treatment benefit from a curriculum that is longer and incorporates interactions with diverse populations.

Overall, these findings suggest that the one-day workshop on diversity it is not sufficient in making positive, sustainable changes. Thus, a semester-long course or more real-life curricula may be necessary for change to occur. Implications for future research and programs are indicated below.

#### Implications

Upon completion of the current study and analysis of results, it is evident that there is a continued need for diversity programs in residential and day treatment centers. Diversity courses can heighten awareness of social injustices confronting minorities and promote a more open attitude toward them (Kulik & Roberson, 2008). If knowledge and awareness are present, then there is a foundation for individuals to build upon (Remer, 2008). Logically, knowledge and awareness may lead to improved attitudes, which could lead to action. Treatment staff, administration, and families need to place more focus raising awareness of important diversity issues such as racism, classism, and sexism.

Along with programs focused on increasing awareness and knowledge, it is imperative that multicultural, social justice education programs are offered for a sufficient amount of time. In the current study, the participants were given approximately 5 hours of education. It may be more beneficial for programs to last at least one semester or even longer. For example, Prost (2003) found that students' gender role attitudes became more egalitarian and attitudes toward disabled, gay and lesbian, and racial minorities became more positive compared to the control group following a 17-week general education course focused on cultural diversity. A committed effort by individuals, teachers, staff members, and communities to social justice-based education for at-risk youth is needed.

Lastly, the study revealed methodological lessons learned and implications for future research. The assessments contained too many items. Many of the participants stated that the assessments were too long and took too much time. This could have affected the results of the study because participants were impatient and frustrated with the length of the assessments. For future research with this population, it is worth noting the importance of convenient and less time-intensive assessments. It is also important that the measures are developmentally appropriate for adolescents. Although the measures used in this study were reliable in previous studies, four of the ten subscales in the current study were unreliable. In addition, they were originally designed for adults. Because of the lack of appropriate measures, it is imperative to create better assessments to gauge at-risk youths' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy.

## Evaluation of the Study Design

The present study had several strengths. First, completing a diversity education program evaluation with youth in residential and day treatment centers is a novel idea. Not only is the population rarely researched, but diversity education programs are also typically studied in greater frequency with college students and professionals. Second, all of the facilitators were well trained and completed a training on the facilitation of FAIR. Third, the sample was representative of the population in regard to age, gender, and ethnicity. Fourth, a strength of the present study was the collaboration of the university and community in research. In addition, the facilities were left with resources to continue the program in the future. Lastly, another strength of this study was the use of self-report assessments. Although self-reports have limitations, such as they rely on participants' motivation and internal honesty, the goal of this study was to gauge the individuals' perspectives and measure change. Therefore, the use of self-report was appropriate for measuring youths' awareness, attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy.

As with any study, the current study also had several noteworthy limitations. First, the post-test was given immediately after the facilitation of FAIR, limiting the time between the pre and post test and potentially affecting the participants' patience in responding. This is considered a limitation because the participants voiced that the assessments were too long, as mentioned earlier. Participant answers were therefore dependent on the willingness and honesty of the individual to consider and answer each item. In addition, administering a post-test following a pre-test could provoke carryover effects and participants may have answered in the same way, at both time intervals, to make the test more convenient. Second, the post-test only measured their immediate

knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy. It is unclear if the effects changed after one week, one month, or a year. Because FAIR is designed to raise issues of diversity into one's consciousness, some of the effects may not occur until they are exposed to a situation that triggers their awareness. In future research, it would be helpful to consider random assignment in a post-test only design or complete follow-up assessments. For example, researchers could assess awareness of diversity, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy at three-month intervals to investigate the effects of FAIR that may not appear until the individual is faced with an issue of diversity. Due to the small sample size and the design of the study, results are most applicable to residents in these three facilities. Lastly, the sample was comprised of 75 participants, but the number of participants in the treatment group far outnumbered that of the control group. The lack of data in the control group may have impacted the researcher's ability to compare the control and experimental groups analytically. Thus, the results should be interpreted with caution.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

The results, limitations, and strengths of this study prompt several recommendations for future research. An important place to start is with the lack of appropriate measures designed to meet the developmental needs of adolescents, specifically, for diversity education. The FAIR curriculum is designed to be adaptable for all ages. It might be beneficial for future research on diversity education to create an appropriate measure. One way to complete this task would be to conduct a focus group and ask adolescents how they define awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy. Then, using their definitions, coupled with the

literature, a more adolescent-friendly measure can be created. In addition, it would be helpful to test the measure with the population it is targeting, and then make revisions, as needed.

Moreover, it is crucial to conduct more research on diversity education programs for adolescents and to conduct more research on youth in residential and day treatment programs. This is important to gain understanding of the population the program is targeting to create a more effective program. In addition, because the youth are receiving education, therapy, and programming (as described previously) at the treatment centers, it is important to have evidence-based curriculum and programs that have been deemed effective in the research. There is much more to be understood about the characteristics of this population and what would be beneficial for them regarding diversity and social justice education. To do this, it may be necessary to explore the phenomenon through focus groups, individual interviews, and observation. Because of the nature of diversity education, it would be important to include self-report and teacher/counselor/staff observation of ethnocultural empathy and/or behavior toward others.

### Conclusion

This study contributed to the research literature in this area by evaluating the effectiveness of a social-justice based diversity education program with youth in residential and day treatment. Specifically, the study evaluated FAIR: Fairness for All Individuals through Respect through participants' awareness of privilege and oppression, multicultural attitudes, and ethnocultural empathy. The results revealed that FAIR is not likely to facilitate gains in awareness of diversity, multicultural attitudes, or ethnocultural empathy.

This study highlighted the need for continued research with adolescents in residential and day treatment. In addition, it sufficiently emphasized the lack of developmentally appropriate measures for diversity education programs. Lastly, the findings revealed the importance of programs that are longer and programs that include real-life experiences. As the U.S. becomes more diverse in ethnic, cultural, language, class, and religious arenas, further research assessing the effectiveness of social-justice based diversity education programs is likely to benefit youth in residential and day treatment.

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