



## Investigating Our Practices Annual Conference, UBC

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Sukhy Dhillon

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*Casteism/Racism: Historical Perspectives on Casteism Among Indo-Canadian Communities*

There are a variety of theories and justifications for Casteism (Social Stratification of a Society, a form of Racism that exists in the Indian community). It does not matter where Indians have travelled and established roots; they have brought the notion of Casteism with them and practice it religiously. Students in our schools are being caught in the middle of learning to be “racism free in a multicultural society.” They continue to practice this at school and often isolate many students who are from the “Lower Caste.” BC schools are not immune to this, and stories abound. This poster will take a look at this historical/present-day issue and will provide pre-service teachers with some ideas on how to deal with it as they join the teaching profession in Canadian schools.

Leanna Closson, Shelley Hymel, Terry Waterhouse

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*Is Ethnic Exclusivity Among Secondary Students' Friendships a Concern for Educators?*

Studies conducted in the United States have indicated that secondary students tend to have more ethnically exclusive friendships than cross-ethnic friendships. However, this research has shown that ethnic exclusivity in friendships is associated with negative outcomes for minority students including racial discrimination and lower academic orientation. Comparatively little is known about ethnic exclusivity and diversity in friendships among Canadian youth.

This study examined several academic, emotional, and behavioural correlates of ethnically exclusive friendships and ethnically diverse friendships among secondary students in British Columbia's Lower Mainland. Self-report questionnaires were used to assess students' perceptions of academic success and liking by peers, educational aspirations, self-esteem, sense of belonging, social responsibility involvement, alcohol and drug use, violence, bullying, victimization, and racial discrimination. Results revealed that Asian students reported a significantly greater proportion of ethnic exclusivity in their friendships, whereas students from other ethnic backgrounds reported a significantly greater proportion of ethnic diversity in their friendships. Both ethnic exclusivity and diversity in friendships were associated with positive and negative outcomes, depending on the students' own ethnic background. Most students reported fewer positive and more negative outcomes associated with ethnic exclusivity than with ethnic diversity in their friendships. For Asian students, the findings revealed that those with ethnically exclusive friendships were less likely to experience problems with peers or engage in risky behaviours; however, they reported lower perceptions of academic success, sense of belonging, and social responsibility involvement than those with ethnically diverse friendships. The implications of the research findings for educators will be discussed.

Mary Hill

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*Learning From Our Student Teachers: Natalie's Story*

As a result of an amalgamation of teacher education institutions in Auckland, NZ, in 2005, the teacher education programmes were restructured. Lexie Grudnoff (Director of Teacher Education) and I worked with the Dean (Graeme Aitken) and a mathematics teacher educator and researcher (Fiona Ell) to investigate the effects of these new programs. One of these studies involved interviewing four graduates six months into their first teaching position. This poster describes the effects the mathematics courses, and other influences, had on one student teacher's learning to become an effective teacher.

Natalie's exit results in an earlier quantitative study (Ell, Aitken et al. 2008) showed gains in content knowledge, as well as noticing recognizing and responding to the children's responses as an expert teacher. Natalie's story shows the importance of investigating the effects of our own practices and how certification of teachers through gaining academic qualifications can make a difference for children in low income communities. In light of the worldwide interest about whether certifying teachers leads to improved student outcomes, especially for minority students and those in low income communities, detailed studies of student's perspectives such as this one are important components of evaluation studies.