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U.S. Ethnic Groups in the *Journal of Family Psychology*: A Content Analysis

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U.S. Ethnic Groups in the *Journal of Family Psychology*:

A Content Analysis

Jessica Croft Gilliland

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

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ABSTRACT

U.S. Ethnic Groups in the *Journal of Family Psychology*: A Content Analysis

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Articles published in the *Journal of Family Psychology* over a 23-year period (1990-2012) were analyzed for their attention to ethnic groups in the United States. Articles were analyzed in terms of their ethnic population of interest, topic of study, funding sources, sample characteristics, and use of measures. Findings indicated that the journal has showed an increased focus on and sensitivity to issues relevant to ethnic groups in the U.S. However, there are several gaps in research for some groups, especially for Native American populations. Recommendations are offered to family science researchers, psychologists and other mental health professionals and educators.

Keywords: ethnic groups, Journal of Family Psychology, content analysis

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To Randy, for being willing to sacrifice so I could spread my wings.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	2
Method	6
Results.....	7
Discussion.....	13
Breakdown of Ethnically-Focused Articles	14
Change Across Time in Percentage of Articles Focused on Ethnic Groups.....	15
Top Topics Studied for each Ethnic Group.....	15
Top Topics Receiving Funding.....	16
Most Involved and Least Involved Funding Agencies.....	17
Geographical Groupings of Ethnically Focused Samples.....	17
Urban/Rural Setting of the Sample (By Ethnic Group)	18
Measure of Ethnic Identity.....	19
Measure of Acculturation.....	19
Measures Found Previously to be Reliable and Valid for Specific Ethnic Groups	20
Implications.....	20
References.....	23
Appendix.....	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 <i>Frequency of Article Type by Ethnic Group</i>	29
Table 2 <i>Most Frequently Studied Topics by Ethnic Group</i>	31
Table 3 <i>Top Funded Subjects by Ethnic Group, Frequency (Percentage)</i>	32
Table 4 <i>Geographic Areas of Study by Ethnic Group</i>	33
Table 5 <i>Urban/Rural Setting by Ethnic Group</i>	34

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 *Minority and Majority Focused Articles by Year*..... 30

U.S. Ethnic Groups in the Journal of Family Psychology: A Content Analysis

Introduction

The need for continued research focused on ethnically-diverse groups has been presented and discussed by authors from multiple mental health and social science disciplines (e.g., Bean & Crane, 1996; Hall, 2001; López, 2002). In 1990, the ethnic breakdown of the U.S. was as follows: Anglo 80.3%, African American 12.1%, American Indian and Alaska Native 0.8%, Asian 2.8%, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander 0.1%, and “other” races 3.9%, and Hispanic or Latino 9.0% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Population estimates from 2015 indicate a population percentage increase for all ethnic minority groups, according to the following breakdown: Anglo 77.1%, African American 13.1%, American Indian and Alaska Native 1.2%, Asian 4.8%, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander 0.2%, and Hispanic or Latino 17.6% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

As ethnic groups become an increasingly large percentage of the U. S. population, there is a need to better understand and serve ethnically-diverse individuals, couples, and families in order to: (a) develop greater cultural competence in diagnosis (Bell, Williamson, & Chien, 2008); (b) train future clinicians (Bean, Crane, & Lewis, 2002); and (c) apply appropriate mental health treatments across multicultural populations (Mak, Law, Alvidrez & Pérez-Stable, 2007). Unfortunately, past analyses of the ethnically-focused literature indicate a paucity of research relevant to these populations (Bean & Crane, 1996; Mak et al, 2007; Nagayama Hall & Maramba, 2001).

There is a pressing need to resolve underrepresentation of ethnic groups in the available research literature. However, as observed in multiple content analysis articles over the years (e.g., Nilsson, et al., 2007), authors and journal editors have struggled both in including ethnic

groups in research and in employing sound reporting practices when describing ethnic samples (Case & Smith, 2000, Levesque, 2007; Mak et al., 2007). This content analysis is designed to give a status report on the amount of research focused on ethnic groups in the *Journal of Family Psychology* over a 23-year span (1990-2012). This journal was selected as the focus of this study because of its premiere status among family-focused research publications, based on a five-year impact factor of 2.84 over the past five years. Additionally, the *Journal of Family Psychology* serves as a bridging outlet for empirical and theoretical work, linking the fields of psychology and family science with its focus on a systemically based epistemology (Kaslow, 2010).

Literature Review

Since the 1993 policy announcement from the National Institutes of Health (NIH, Public Health Service Act sec. 492B, 42 U.S.C. sec.289a-2) requiring the inclusion of ethnic minorities and women in federally-funded clinical research (Hohmann & Parron, 1996), several literature reviews (i.e., Iwamasa & Smith, 1996; Nagayama Hall & Maramba, 2001) and content analyses (i.e., Baker, Bowen, Butler, & Shavers, 2013; Charmaraman, Woo, Quach, & Erkut, 2014; Iwamasa, Socorro & Koonce, 2002) have focused on the topic of ethnic diversity across the social science disciplines. Content analyses provide a means of observing the status of research in a given field and can be instrumental in (a) documenting changes and any progress made overtime, and (b) providing direction for future research funding and study. Several content analyses of the ethnically-focused literature have brought important findings to the surface; however, many essential questions regarding the status of multicultural research remain unanswered.

Bean and Crane (1996) performed one of the earliest content analyses of articles in the major marriage and family therapy journals (*American Journal of Family Therapy*,

Contemporary Family Therapy, Families in Society, Family Process, Family Therapy, and Journal of Marital and Family Therapy). They found that overall, less than five percent of articles published in these journals from 1984 to 1993 focused on ethnic minority groups. They issued a call to researchers to increase the amount of research focused on ethnic minority populations and their concerns.

In a content analysis of studies in the *Journal of Counseling & Development* spanning the years 1990-2001, Arredondo et al. (2005) found an increase in multicultural-focused articles through the 1990s, with a particularly significant increase between 1997 and 2001. Additionally, they found that, of the articles with a multicultural focus, there were more theoretical articles (57%) than quantitative and qualitative empirical studies combined (47%). The Arredondo et al. findings indicate that while the counseling field has paid more attention to multicultural topics since 1990, there was still an undersupply of high quality empirical research focused on ethnic groups and topics of importance to U.S. ethnic groups.

In their content analysis of the *Journal of Counseling Psychology (JCP)*, Buboltz, Deemer, and Hoffman (2010) found that multiculturalism/diversity was the most frequently studied subject category in JCP from 1999-2009. However, their findings indicated that many studies (over 10%) still failed to report the ethnic breakdown of their samples. This is especially problematic because inadequate reporting of ethnicity and other sample characteristics creates a barrier to understanding and generalizing findings (Blancher, Buboltz, & Soper, 2010). While this analysis identified that JCP is increasing its focus on multiculturalism and diversity, Buboltz and colleagues did not identify which specific ethnic groups were of primary interest in the diversity-focused articles they analyzed.

Other analyses of ethnically-focused research have revealed even greater needs for improving the way ethnic groups are studied in mental health and the social sciences. Mak et al. (2007) conducted a content analysis of NIMH-funded clinical trials published in five top journals in general psychiatry, child psychiatry, geriatric psychiatry, and clinical psychology from 1995 to 2004. Their analysis of NIMH-funded clinical trials revealed that Anglo samples continued to dominate the literature. They found that fewer than 50% of the clinical trials published a detailed ethnic breakdown of their samples, as about 25% of studies provided partial or incomplete ethnic breakdowns and no race and/or ethnicity information was reported in the remaining 25%. Additionally, their results revealed that all racial/ethnic groups except for Anglos and African Americans were underrepresented in the literature. While Mak et al. provide important information about the disappointingly insufficient reporting practices of many federally funded clinical trials, their study did not identify which topics were most often examined in the NIMH-funded studies they reviewed. While it is vitally important to understand how well ethnic groups are represented in empirical research, it is also important to understand whether or not researchers are receiving funding to investigate topics specifically relevant to a particular ethnic groups (e.g., immigration, acculturation, racism, etc.). Funding can also be essential to researchers' ability to effectively recruit participants from minority groups, a process that often requires additional resources and personnel to be effective (Rodríguez, Rodríguez, & Davis, 2006).

These and other ethnicity-focused content analyses have documented a mixed set of findings, indicating that while there have been important improvements, there is still significant room for growth in reporting demographic information and appropriately researching ethnically-diverse populations. Past content analyses and literature reviews have revealed important

improvements in ethnically-focused research (see Baker, Bowen, Butler, & Shavers, 2013 and Nagayama Hall & Maramba, 2001). However, there is still significant room for improvement in the methodologies employed when conducting research on culturally diverse groups.

The *Journal of Family Psychology* was selected for review and analysis because of its prominence (one of the highest rated journals among family psychology/family science journals), its focus on family-based research, and the fact that its contents have not been previously examined. Additionally, the journal's long publication history (28 years, beginning in 1987) allows for an examination of publication trends and level of research attention to ethnic groups across time. While there are other well-respected journals in the social sciences whose purpose is to publish articles relevant to specific ethnic groups (i.e., *Journal of Black Psychology* and *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science*), this article is designed to provide a status report on the topic for a more generalizable family psychology/science journal targeting a broader professional audience of various specializations. The following questions were used to organize and report the findings of this content analysis:

1. How many diversity-focused articles are there for each ethnic group (empirical and conceptual)?
2. Is there a change (across the timespan) in the percent of articles focused on ethnic groups and individual ethnic groups?
3. What are the top topics studied for each ethnic group?
4. What are the top topics receiving funding for each ethnic group?
5. What were the top funding agencies and least involved funding agencies contributing to research for each ethnic group?

6. What were the geographical groupings (by region and state) for each ethnic group? What was the number of studies where no location was specified for each ethnic group?
7. What was the urban/rural Setting of the sample (by ethnic group)? Were any national datasets used?
8. Out of total ethnic focused articles, how many contained a measure of ethnic identity?
9. Of the articles with possible immigrant sample/sub-sample, how many contained a measure of acculturation?
10. How many articles included mention of their use of measures that have been found previously to be reliable and valid with the ethnic group-of-focus?

Method

Articles analyzed in this study were coded first by two undergraduate raters, working independently. Coders compared responses and calculated inter-rater reliability. Overall inter-rater reliability for all articles coded in the analysis was 92.4%. Senior-level coders resolved any coding discrepancies. A PsycInfo database search for articles in the *Journal of Family Psychology* from 1990 to 2012 produced 1,393 results. Articles were coded only if they represented a conceptual or empirical work; therefore, book reviews, commentary and feedback pieces, and editor's notes and introductions (n= 98) were excluded from the analysis. To maintain the focus on ethnic diversity within the U. S., articles examining international populations were not reviewed. After applying exclusion criteria, a total of 1,013 articles were included in the final analysis.

The main topics of each article were determined by an analysis of the subject categories indexed by the PsycInfo database. Up to five relevant subject categories were included for each article. In instances where the PsycInfo classifications were inaccurate or inadequate, corrections

were made and articles were re-assigned to the PsycInfo subject classification determined to be most accurately descriptive of the article content.

Articles were classified into two distinct categories: (a) focused – the ethnic/cultural group was examined as a principal part of the study’s design or conceptual discussion, and the title, keywords, or abstract indicated an emphasis on ethnicity or a specific ethnic group; (b) not involved - ethnic groups were not a primary part of the research population and/or were not part of any conceptual discussion. In reporting and discussing the findings of this study, members of the European American majority culture are referred to as Anglos when discussed as a group, and references to other ethnic groups utilize the common categories of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos and Native Americans. These categorizations were used by Bean, Crane, and Lewis (2002) in a study of other family science journals that did not include the *Journal of Family Psychology*. The category “multiple ethnic groups” refers to studies in which participants from three or more distinct ethnic groups were included. “Other/multiracial” includes studies on multiracial individuals and/or studies including Pacific Islanders, those of Middle Eastern descent, and other ethnic categories. Finally, when references are made to all non-Anglo ethnic groups collectively, the terms “ethnic minorities” or “ethnic groups” are used to describe their demographic position (less than 50% of the U.S. population) rather than to communicate that these groups are somehow less important or valuable.

Results

1. How many diversity-focused articles are there for each ethnic group (empirical and conceptual)?

A total of 1,013 articles from the *Journal of Family Psychology* were included in the analysis. The majority of articles were categorized as “not ethnically focused” (905, 89.3%),

because no mention of ethnicity, diversity or any specific ethnic group was found in the title, abstract or keywords of these articles. The remaining articles (10.7%, $n = 108$) were defined as “focused,” with some articles focused on an empirical analysis of a particular ethnic group (e.g., Mandara, Varner, & Richman, 2010) or multiple ethnic groups (e.g., Cote & Bornstein, 2009).

African Americans were the focus for 57 articles (53% of total 108 focused articles), with Hispanics being featured in 41 additional articles (38%). Additionally, 11 (10%) articles were focused on multiple ethnic groups in the same sample, 11 articles (10%) on Asian Americans, and two (1.8%) articles focused on “other” ethnic groups or on multiracial subjects. There were no studies in this journal focusing on Native Americans during this 23-year timespan.

As presented in Table 1, 93 of the 108 (86%) focused articles were found to be quantitative in nature while 734 of the 905 “not focused” articles (those that used a primarily European American sample) were quantitative (81%). There was also a notable difference between the number of conceptual/theoretical articles for Anglos (116) and all other ethnic groups combined (1).

2. Is there a change (across the timespan) in the percent of articles focused on ethnic groups?

Overall, there appears to be an increase in the number of ethnically focused articles published from 1990 to 2012 (see Figure 1). The most significant one-year increase in ethnically focused articles occurred from 1999 to 2000, with an increase from 5 articles to 14 articles. The almost 300% increase in article numbers is largely attributable to the fact that a special issue of the journal was published in 2000 focusing on cultural variations in families (Parke, 2000). It is worth mentioning, that the number of focused articles dropped the following year (2001) and remained relatively low before beginning a steady increase in 2007.

Multinomial logistic regression was used to address the question of whether there was a statistically significant change, across the 23-year timespan, in the number of published articles for ethnic minorities. Due to limited number of articles focused on the ethnic groups (particularly, the Asian American and “multiple” categories), all ethnic minority focused articles were combined. Using Anglos as the reference group, the regression findings indicated that the increase in minority-focused articles was negligible and non-significant ($\beta = .016$, $df (1)$, $p = .459$). As noted above, while there were more minority focused articles published over the last portion of the timespan studied, this increase did not reach a statistically significant level.

3. What are the top ten topics for each ethnic group?

Themes related to parenting, parent-child relations, and family relations were common across all ethnic groups (see Table 2). Studies on the topic of family relations covered a wide range of subjects, including family conflict (Gehring, Wentzel, Feldman, & Munson, 1990); parent and child health outcomes related to HIV (Miles, Burchinal, Holditch-Davis, Wasilewski, & Christian, 1997; Wyatt, Forge, & Guthrie, 1998) and the relationship between family interactions and substance use (Doherty & Allen, 1994; East & Khoo, 2005). Articles on parent-child relationships often focused on parental adjustment and well-being and child outcomes (e.g., Kim, Chen, Li, Huang, & Moon, 2009; Wheeler, Updegraff, & Crouter, 2011). In addition, while immigration/acculturation was one of the most frequently studied topics for Asian Americans, it did not emerge in the top five themes in studies on Hispanics/Latinos.

4. What are the top 10 topics receiving funding for each ethnic group?

There were similar themes identified among the type of research topics that had received funding during this 23-year span (see Table 3). Notably, the most frequently funded topic for Anglos (i.e., Couple and Marital Relationships) was not funded for any other ethnic group. The

most frequently funded topic for both African Americans and Latinos was Family Relations (12 studies, 16% of studies receiving funding for African Americans; 9 studies, 15% of studies receiving funding for Latinos). Examples of funded studies included in this category include studies of familism and adolescent sibling relations (Updegraff, McHale, Whiteman, Thayer, & Delgado, 2005) and family relationships and suicidality (Demi, Bakeman, Sowell, Moneyham & Seals, 1998; Kaslow, Thompson, Brooks, & Twomey, 2000). For Asian Americans, the most frequently studies topic was Immigration and Acculturation (3 studies, 21% of studies receiving funding). There were too few studies focused on multiple ethnic groups and “other”/multiracial groups (6 and 1 study respectively) to identify a clear pattern in which topics received the most funding.

5. What are the top funding agencies and least involved funding agencies (among the federal funding agencies and any other top funding agencies)?

Of the 108 “focused” studies on ethnic groups, 19 (18%) did not receive any funding, 50 (46%) received only federal funding, 0 received state funding, 3 (2.8%) received funding from private agencies, 4 (3.7%) from universities, 30 (28%) from a combination of federal and other sources, and 2 (1.8%) from other combinations of funding agencies. For Anglos, 255 (28%) studies did not receive any funding, 380 (42%) received only federal funding, 3 (.3%) received state funding, 20 (3.2%) received funding from private agencies, 52 (5.7%) received funding from universities, 169 (18%) from a combination of federal and other sources, 15 (1.6%) from other combinations of funding agencies, and 1 (0.1%) from an “other” funding source.

Of the studies on Anglos, 286 (44% of the 650 total Anglo-focused articles receiving funding) were funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), 138 (21%) by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), 58 (8.9%) by the National

Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), and 49 (7.5%) by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). An additional 365 (56%) articles were funded by other agencies.

Of the studies focused on ethnically diverse samples, 24 (27% of the 89 ethnically-focused studies receiving funding) were funded by NIMH, 24 (27%) by NICHD, 13 by NIDA, 10 (11%) by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and 9 (10%) by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). Finally, an additional 55 (62%) ethnically-focused articles were funded by “other” agencies.

The agencies contributing the least funding to research on Anglos were the Department of Health and Human Services (9 studies, 1.4% of ethnically-focused studies receiving funding), the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (3 studies, 0.4%), and the National Institute on Aging (3 studies, 0.4%). The same three agencies were the lowest contributors to research on ethnically diverse samples (with each agency funding one ethnically focused study each [0.1%]). One possible explanation for the lower rates of funding from these agencies is that they could be contributing to articles published in journals with a more specific focus on their populations of interest (e.g., *Child Development* and *Journal of Aging and Health*). Additionally, the Department of Health and Human Services encompasses several of the more specific funding agencies listed above (including NIH and CDC), and thus may have been listed as a funding agency less frequently than its operating sub-divisions.

6. What were the geographical groupings (by region and state) for each ethnic group?

The most frequently studied region for African Americans was the South Atlantic region, with studies on subjects in Georgia, Louisiana, and Florida (9 studies, 16% of studies on African Americans). For Latinos, the Pacific region was the most frequently studied, with the most studies originating from California (5, 13%). For Asian Americans, the Pacific region was the most

frequently studied (5, 45%), also with the most studies originating from California.

Unfortunately, 20% of articles coded did not report the geographic location of their research sample (182 total articles). Reported in more detail (by ethnic group), this included 20% of articles for Anglos, 25% for African Americans, 28% for Hispanics/Latinos, 9% for Asian Americans, and 9% for studies analyzing multiple ethnic groups. See Table 4 for additional details.

7. Urban/Rural Setting of the sample?

There were 80 studies (for Anglo- and ethnically-focused articles combined) that used national data sets, presumably collecting data from individuals and/or families in mixed urban/rural/suburban settings. Of this total, only nine articles were focused on specific ethnic groups. In further examination of these nine national dataset-driven studies, no one data set (e.g. NICHD Study of Early Child Care, Fragile Families and Child Well Being Study) was used more than once.

Errors in the data collection resulted in missing data on sample setting for 96 articles for Anglos and 20 articles for all other ethnic groups combined. The most frequently reported setting for Anglos and other ethnic groups that reported the urban rural setting of their sample used urban/metropolitan samples (126 [39%] and 51 [70%] studies respectively). The least frequently studied setting for both minority groups (collectively) and Anglos was rural settings (2 and 24 studies respectively).

8. Out of the total ethnic focused articles, how many contained a measure of ethnic identity?

From among all the ethnically-focused quantitative articles, 22.9% (24 articles) contained a measure of ethnic identity. Six (12%) of the empirical articles focused on African Americans contained a measure of ethnic identity. Of the empirical studies dealing with Hispanics/Latinos,

seven studies (18%) contained a measure of ethnic identity. For Asian Americans, seven studies (64%) contained a measure of ethnic identity. Studies on participants from multiple ethnic groups were fairly evenly split, with five studies (45%) containing a measure of ethnic identity. Of the two empirical studies on “other” or multiracial groups, one included a measure of ethnic identity, and one did not.

9. Out of total of articles with possible immigrant sample/sub-sample, how many contained a measure of acculturation?

Of the 63 studies of Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, multi-ethnic group and multiracial samples, 29 (46%) contained a measure of acculturation. Twenty-one of these studies were published in the last seven years of the timespan studied (2006-2012), indicating increased attention to the value of studying or at least controlling for the sample’s acculturation level.

10. How many articles included mention of their use of measures that have been found previously to be reliable and valid with the ethnic group-of-focus?

Of the collective 424 measures used in the ethnically-focused articles, 78 (18%) had been previously found to be reliable for the ethnic group to which they were administered. Fifty-six (13%) had been previously found to be valid for the ethnic group for which they were used.

Discussion

Overall, the analysis of articles in the *Journal of Family Psychology* reveals an increased focus on minority populations in the U.S. The quality and quantity of ethnically-focused researched has improved over the 23-year span, and particularly in the last decade. In light of the improvements already being made, the importance of continuing to enhance research focused on ethnic group remains. Several areas for further growth emerge from the analysis of previously published research.

Breakdown of Ethnically-Focused Articles

The most significant finding in this analysis was the total lack of research focused specifically on Native Americans. The lack of studies on Native populations puts this group at further risk for being the “invisible minority,” a term used to capture the Native American population’s small size and relative geographic isolation. Native American populations are consistently overlooked and underserved by government agencies (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2003). Overlooking and underserving this population in family science research poses a risk of perpetuating an already dire situation for Native Americans. While tensions between scientific and cultural interests present unique challenges for researchers approaching Native American (and other) groups (Norton & Manson, 1996; Stiffman, Freedenthal, Brown, Ostmann & Hibbeler, 2005; Weaver, 1997) in many disciplines, the importance of attempting to appropriately bridge cultural divides remains. This is particularly noteworthy as an oversight for this journal because there is a clear recommendation in the existing literature for the value in studying systemic factors (i.e., family relationship and other kinship networks) as they relate to population-specific stressors and presenting problems (Fitzgerald & Farrell, 2012; Garrett, et al., 2014; Norton & Manson, 1996).

As a point of clarification, studies were found that included Native American subjects as a small portion of their research sample; however, their inclusion does not truly make up for a lack of focused, empirical studies specifically addressing the strengths and challenges of Native populations.

Additionally, there is room for improvement on the number of qualitative and mixed methods studies for all ethnic groups, as these types of studies were found in very limited numbers for ethnic populations (n=14) and even among the larger Anglo majority (n=55). Using

qualitative and mixed method research design in addition to quantitative research can provide a more comprehensive view of the experience of U.S. ethnic groups. Focus groups, grounded theory research, and interview data may provide important insights of personal experience that can illuminate issues that may become relevant in clinical work, and that may provide directions for future research (Karasz & Singelis, 2009).

Change Across Time in Percentage of Articles Focused on Ethnic Groups

Despite the significant gaps in research on Native Americans, it is encouraging to note that there has been an overall increase in the number of ethnically-focused articles over the 22-year span. About 85% (91 articles) of the ethnically-focused articles identified in this analysis were published after the year 2000, indicating that there has been at least some response to NIH's 1993 mandate to increase the inclusion of minority groups. However, similar to a previous review (Mak, Law, Alvidrez, & Perez-Stable, 2007), most minority groups are still severely underrepresented in the research.

Top Topics Studied for each Ethnic Group

One noteworthy gap in the research is the lack of studies on immigration, acculturation, and diversity issues among African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. In particular, findings indicate that, in a 23-year span, there were only three studies that included subjects related to immigration and acculturation for Latinos. While there were other studies that made mention of these topics, the lack of articles focused specifically on issues of diversity and acculturation indicates a need for further prioritization of immigrant-specific research.

Another gap in the research that was identified here was in the lack of research on couple relations and family structure for non-Anglo populations (553 studies were found dealing with this topic for Anglos and only 22 studies dealt with these topics among ethnic minorities). While

the overall underrepresentation of ethnic groups in the research has negative implications for how researchers and practitioners understand U.S. families, the particular lack of focus on couple relationships and family structure perpetuates the field's bias of viewing families through the lens of Anglo experience. Regrettably, this set of findings only serves to confirm the observation made over a decade ago (Bean, Crane, & Lewis, 2002), that the majority of what the family science field knows about families is based on majority-culture families.

The possible explanations for the lack of attention to marital and couple relations among ethnic families are not very pleasant to consider. These include: (a) a deliberate bias against the couple relationship in these ethnic communities due to researchers' personal prejudice, (b) unintentional oversight because of a lack of research/clinical experience with the population, (c) the groups' past negative experiences with government and educational institutions that have left them mistrusting of research involvement, and/or (d) more severe gaps, than even in terms of Anglos, in relationships between researchers and practitioners and between academia and the families that researchers are supposed to be serving. Overall, the field shows an increased sensitivity to issues of diversity in research. Thus, many of the current gaps between researchers and diverse cultures may simply be residue from patterns of prejudice or convenience-based discrimination present in research from earlier generations.

Top Topics Receiving Funding

While the percentage of studies focusing on ethnic groups overall is still relatively low, the percentages of studies receiving federal funding were quite similar between Anglos (46%) and minority groups (42%). In 2002, Bean, Crane and Lewis found that 58.8% of ethnically focused articles in their analysis of family science journals had received federal funding. This

analysis of the *Journal of Family Psychology* demonstrates that federal support for minority-focused research has remained relatively steady.

As Bean, Crane, & Lewis highlighted over a decade ago (2002), research funding still seems to be more heavily directed toward studies on African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos. There were only six studies funded for Asian Americans, and only one study funded for “Other”/multiracial subjects. As the number of ethnic minorities in the United States continues to increase, the diversity among these groups will also continue to increase. Funding, particularly federal funding, should be distributed to all minority groups. While the number of ethnically focused studies receiving funding has increased over the last decade, there is still room for improvement in broadening research support beyond African American and Latino populations.

Most Involved and Least Involved Funding Agencies

While it is difficult to determine the level of funding support for ethnic minority research in dollar amounts, it is possible to calculate the number of studies that were funded. In this regard, it is encouraging to note that over 40% of funded ethnically focused articles received support from either NIMH, NIDA, or NICHD. The attention and monetary support paid to minority groups by these organizations reflects a greater prioritization of minorities on the federal level.

Geographical Groupings of Ethnically Focused Samples

While the majority of studies (those focusing on Anglos and those that were ethnically focused), reported at least some geographic information about their subjects, there was still a portion of the studies (37% for Anglos and 21% for ethnic groups) that reported no geographical information. The lack of detail regarding research sample locations certainly factors into the ongoing gap in the family science field’s understanding of the heterogeneity of experience in

U.S. ethnic groups. Reporting the geographical information of the sample is a simple inclusion that could improve the field's understanding of within- and between-group differences for both Anglo populations and ethnically diverse populations.

It is also important to note the limited nature of research sampling for ethnic minorities in terms of U. S. geography. For example, studies on Asian Americans were imbalanced in terms of geographic location, with nearly half of studies drawn from a single state (California). While California is the state with the largest number of Asian Americans, there are large pockets of Asian Americans residing in New York, Texas, and other regions of the United States (Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim, & Shahid, 2012). Similar geographic narrowing was found for African Americans in terms of a grouping in the South Atlantic region, and with Hispanics/Latinos in their predominant California locations. Researching geographically diverse populations of minority groups is an important step in capturing the diversity of the experiences of minority groups in the U.S. in terms of SES, culture, and other contextual factors that may differ based on geographic region.

Urban/Rural Setting of the Sample (By Ethnic Group)

Of the 80 national studies found in this analysis, only 9 (18%) were focused on ethnically diverse populations. Because of the heterogeneous nature of ethnic groups in different areas of the United States, regional and state-based studies are important. However, national studies are also essential to providing a broader, more comprehensive view of the experience of ethnic groups across the United States. Furthermore, national studies allow for the comparison of sub-groups; for example, the comparison of Hispanics/Latinos in the Pacific/West Coast with their counterparts on the East Coast. Comparative studies of geographical sub-groupings are one important area in which more future studies should be conducted. The small percentage of

ethnically-diverse national studies in this analysis indicates a need for increased prioritization of ethnic groups in research generated from national data sets.

Another gap identified was the lack of studies on rural populations, for both Anglos and other ethnic groups. Most empirical studies in the analysis were focused on urban/metropolitan areas for all years in the time span. The lack of rurally based family studies indicates another area for further investigation.

Measure of Ethnic Identity

The literature has consistently shown that ethnic identity is a predictor of well-being and adjustment for minority groups (Gonzalez-Backen, Bámaca-Colbert, & Allen, 2016; Gummadam, Pittman, & Ioffe, 2016). As such, ethnic identity is an important construct that should be measured in the majority of studies focused on minority populations. The increase in the use of measures of ethnic identity in recent years is encouraging evidence that researchers are becoming more aware of the influence of ethnic identity on members of minority groups in the U.S.

Measure of Acculturation

Findings in this area also revealed a significant improvement in the use of measures of acculturation over the last six years of the articles included in the analysis. Acculturation styles have been linked with mental health outcomes, identity formation, and adjustment for immigrant populations (Chartonas & Bose, 2015; Kim, Chen, Li, Huang, & Moon, 2009). The inclusion of measures of acculturation is another way that researchers can take steps toward cultural sensitivity and cultural competence in understanding minority populations (Bean, Crane, & Lewis, 2002).

Measures Found Previously to be Reliable and Valid for Specific Ethnic Groups

While improvements in the use of measures of ethnic identity and acculturation have been made in the past decade, there is still a disheartening lack of cultural sensitivity in the overall use of measures with minority groups. Less than 20% of all measures used with minority populations in the *Journal of Family Psychology* were reported as having been found to be reliable and valid for the ethnic groups to which they were administered. As discussed by Stiffman, et al. (2005), while the “ideal” of research might dictate that measures be standardized for all populations, the “real” of research with ethnic groups dictates that steps must be taken to ensure that measures are culturally relevant for the subjects to which they are administered. Such steps include verifying the reliability and validity of the instruments with the given population, in addition to appropriate translation methods. Improvement in the field’s attention to cultural competency in utilizing measures with ethnic groups is an essential element of improving the overall approach to researching diverse populations.

Implications

In summary, there has been continued growth and improvement in the amount and quality of diversity-focused research in the *Journal of Family Psychology*, but there is still room to grow. While there will always be room for improvement, several important areas for growth merit specific attention.

First, the distribution of funding to underrepresented, under-researched, and underserved populations can be facilitated by policymakers. By specifically directing funding toward minority groups like Asian Americans and Native Americans, who are funded at lower rates than both Anglos and other minority groups, policymakers can effectively shine a light on both strengths and weaknesses of these groups that may otherwise be overlooked without the aid of

funding. Increased funding can also facilitate culturally appropriate methods of recruiting subjects, the translation and administration of culturally relevant measures, and the identification of future research directions.

Second, clinicians can create opportunities for growth in diversity-focused research by opening up their practices to researchers. Clinicians who work closely with under-researched groups such as Asian Americans and Native Americans can facilitate bridge-building between researchers and members of minority groups. Therapists can go one step further and go beyond providing quality services to their ethnically diverse clients by offering opportunities to expand research relevant to these populations.

Third, educators can create opportunities for productive, sincere, non-biased interactions between learners and ethnic groups. Increasing awareness of diversity-related issues is an important element of encouraging future generations of researchers and clinicians to work toward culturally sensitive mindsets and professional practices. Enhancing educational opportunities beyond textbook readings and into face-to-face contact and “real life” experiences can enrich cross-cultural learning.

Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, researchers can respond to the call to produce more research on ethnic groups. Journals such as the *Journal of Family Psychology* are showing an increase in the number of articles focused on ethnically diverse research. However, continued growth in the field’s attentiveness to topics related to these groups will only occur if researchers take it upon themselves to prioritize research on ethnic minorities. If journals are to disseminate more diversity-focused research to the field, then there must be an increase in the number of diversity-focused studies being conducted and submitted for publication.

The growth of ethnically focused research over the last two decades is promising. However, in order for the field to properly meet the unique needs of ethnic minority groups, increased commitment from policymakers, psychologists and other mental health professionals, researchers, and educators will be necessary in the face of continuous change and growth in the U.S. population. The field as a whole has recognized that it is no longer enough to include minority groups as peripheral participants in research. Ethnic groups must continue to be the focus of increasingly rigorous and culturally sound research.

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Appendix

Table 1								
<i>Frequency of Article Type by Ethnic Group: n (%)</i>								
<u>Article Type</u>	<u>Anglo</u>	<u>AA^a</u>	<u>H/L^a</u>	<u>As.A^a</u>	<u>NA^a</u>	<u>Multiple groups</u>	<u>Other & Multiracial</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Conceptual/Theoretical	116 (13)	0 (0)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	117
Quantitative	734 (81)	53 (92)	33 (81)	10 (90)	0 (0)	10 (90)	1 (50)	841
Qualitative	20 (2)	2 (4)	1 (2)	1 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (50)	25
Mixed Method	35 (4)	2 (4)	6 (15)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (10)	0 (0)	48
Total	905	57	41	11	0	11	2	1027
^a AA=African American, H/L=Hispanic/Latino(a), As.A=Asian American, NA=Native American <i>Note:</i> Articles that were focused on both African Americans and Hispanics/Latino(a)s were double-counted for both ethnic group categories								

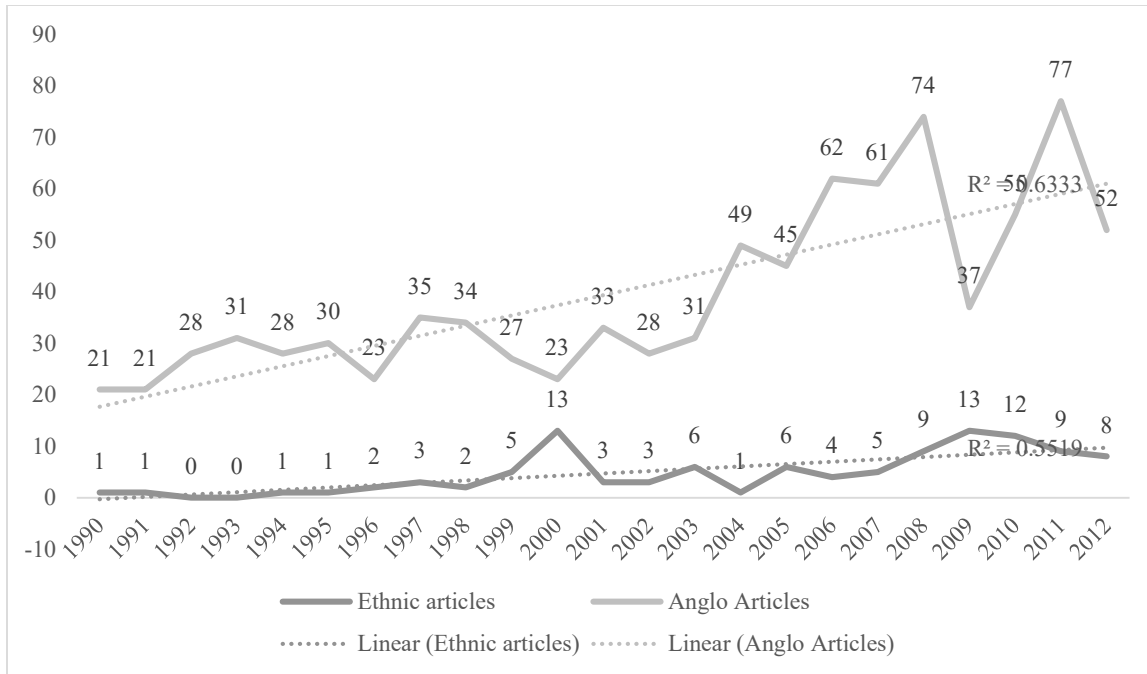


Figure 1. Minority and Majority Focused Articles by Year

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Anglo</u>	<u>AA^a</u>	<u>H/L^a</u>	<u>As.A^a</u>	<u>Multiple Groups</u>	<u>Other & Multiracial</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Couple and Marital Relationships	462 (27)	6 (6)	3 (4)	2 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	473
Family Relations	215 (13)	29 (28)	16 (22)	1 (4)	3 (11)	0 (0)	264
Parent Child Relations	218 (13)	14 (14)	17 (23)	6 (21)	4 (15)	2 (40)	261
Parents and Parenting	173 (10)	18 (18)	15 (20)	4 (14)	5 (19)	0 (0)	215
Methods and Psychometrics	162 (9)	2 (2)	3 (.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	167
Child and Adolescent Development	131 (8)	7 (7)	5 (.5)	2 (7)	3 (11)	0 (0)	148
Wellbeing and Adjustment	125 (7)	8 (8)	5 (.5)	2 (7)	3 (11)	0 (0)	143
Conflict	130 (8)	3 (3)	2 (.2)	2 (7)	2 (7)	0 (0)	139
Family Structure & Divorce	91 (5)	10 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (4)	0 (0)	102
Diversity and Culture Topics	7 (.4)	5 (5)	3 (.02)	2 (7)	3 (11)	1 (20)	21
Immigration and Acculturation	2 (.4)	0 (0)	3 (.02)	5 (18)	3 (11)	2 (40)	13
Academic Achievement	7	1 (1)	2 (.01)	2 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12
Totals ^b	1723	103	74	28	27	5	1960

^aAA=African American. H/L=Hispanic/Latino(a), As.A=Asian American
^bTotals reflect only the most frequently mentioned topics across ethnic groups, not of all topics mentioned.

Table 3						
<i>Top Funded Subjects by Ethnic Group, Frequency (Percentage)</i>						
<u>Subject</u>	<u>Anglo</u>	<u>AA</u>	<u>H/L</u>	<u>As.A</u>	<u>Multiple Groups</u>	<u>Totals for subject</u>
Couple and Marital Relationships	101 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	101
Child & Adolescent Development	79 (8)	4 (5)	4 (7)	2 (14)	2 (25)	91
Family Relations	67 (6)	12 (16)	9 (15)	0 (0)	0 (0)	88
Wellbeing and Adjustment	61 (6)	6 (8)	3 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	70
Conflict	44 (4)	2 (3)	2 (3)	1 (7)	1 (13)	50
Parents and Parenting	32 (3)	4 (5)	2 (3)	2 (14)	2 (25)	42
Family Structure and Divorce	21 (2)	3 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	24
Drug Usage	6 (.6)	3 (4)	3 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12
Parent Child Relations	41 (4)	4 (5)	6 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	51
Child Behavior Problems	29 (3)	2 (3)	4 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	35
Immigration and Acculturation	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (3)	3 (21)	1 (13)	6
Psychopathology	4 (.4)	1 (1)	2 (3)	2 (14)	0 (0)	9
Academic Achievement	3 (.3)	1 (1)	1 (2)	2 (14)	0 (0)	7
Attachment Behavior	27 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (13)	28
Diversity and Culture	3 (.3)	1 (1)	2 (3)	2 (14)	0 (0)	8
Totals (funded topics)	984	73	60	14	8	1139

Note. Studies on “other” and multiracial subjects were not included above because only one study was funded (topic: Immigration and Acculturation)

Table 4							
<i>Geographic Areas of Study by Ethnic Group: n (%)</i>							
	<u>Anglo</u>	<u>AA^a</u>	<u>H/L^a</u>	<u>As.A^a</u>	<u>Multiple Groups</u>	<u>Other & Multiracial</u>	<u>Totals</u>
National	80 (10)	3 (5)	3 (8)	2 (18)	2 (18)	0 (0)	90
East Coast	3 (0.4)	2 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (9)	0 (0)	6
West	10 (1)	1 (2)	3 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14
South	33 (4)	4 (7)	2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	39
Midwest	56 (7)	5 (9)	3 (8)	0 (0)	2 (18)	0 (0)	66
Northeast	14 (2)	2 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (9)	0 (0)	17
Pacific	67 (9)	3 (5)	5 (13)	5 (46)	2 (18)	1 (50)	82
Mountain	22 (3)	2 (4)	3 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	27
West South Central	16 (2)	4 (7)	3 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	23
East South Central	6 (1)	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6
South Atlantic	39 (5)	9 (16)	1 (3)	1 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	50
West North Central	26 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (9)	0 (0)	27
East North Central	45 (6)	4 (7)	3 (8)	1 (9)	1 (9)	1 (50)	54
Middle Atlantic	33 (4)	3 (5)	2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	38
New England	8 (1)	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10
No Information	156 (20)	14 (25)	11 (28)	1 (9)	1 (9)	0 (0)	182
Totals	787	57	39	11	11	2	907

^aAA=African American, H/L=Hispanic/Latino(a), As.A=Asian American

Note. Only empirical studies were included

<u>Setting</u>	<u>Anglos</u>	<u>AA^a</u>	<u>H/L^a</u>	<u>As.Aa^a</u>	<u>Multiple Groups</u>	<u>Other & Multiracial</u>
No information	365 (53)	5 (11)	7 (23)	2 (33)	2 (29)	0
Urban or metropolitan	126 (18)	24 (55)	19 (63)	3 (50)	4 (57)	1 (100)
Assumed mixed setting	95 (14)	5 (11)	1 (3)	1 (17)	1 (14)	0 (0)
Mixed setting	68 (10)	7 (16)	3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Rural	24 (3)	2 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Suburban	12 (2)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)

^aAA=African American, H/L=Hispanic/Latino(a), As.A=Asian American