Lifespan Model and Ethnic-Racial Identity Development: Literature Review

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Abstract
The racial-ethnic identity plays a vital role in being able to identify an individual's self-identity. The ethnic-racial identity develops in stages according to our developmental stages. A study on specific play choices of dolls revealed that infants had developed their ERI from a very young age. Besides, during early childhood, parents play an important role in the development of ERI by intuitively conveying their native ethnocentric cultural norms, beliefs, and traditions of their children for the inherent value. Moving forward to the middle childhood stage, children develop from a literal understanding of ethnicity/race to a more complicated understanding in which they think about their labels more, have more complex knowledge and preferences, participate in more activities, and grasp the consequences of behaviors for ERI. Adolescents become conscious of their social group membership as a result of dynamic interactions with their increasing developmental environment, according to Erikson. Lastly, transitioning from adolescence to adulthood can bring enhanced contextual shifts and identity-relevant events.
Keywords: Ethnic-Racial Identity (ERI), Lifespan Stages, Self-Identity, Development, Multi-Ethnicity

Introduction

Ethnic Racial Identity (ERI) Definition

Racial identity and ethnic identity are terms that refer to how individuals define themselves concerning race and/or ethnicity (NeblettJr et al., 2016). According to Arroyo and Zigler (1995), racial identity is the personal desire for positive relations with the larger society (NeblettJr et al., 2016). Adding on, according to Umana-Taylor et al (2014), Ethnic Racial Identity (ERI) incorporates the process and content of defining a person's sense of self concerning ethnic heritage and racial background, which also includes the labels that are used to define oneself based on ethnicity/race: awareness, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge they have about their ethnic-racial background (Williams et al., 2020).

ERI in Lifespan Perspective

The very first realization of one's ethnicity had drawn attention in the field of ethnic-racial identity from the lifespan perspective. Do infants have the ability to differentiate themselves from others based on phenotypes or language? To what extent are children able to understand the differences regarding social culture, the practice of different ethnics or even the issues of discrimination or bias that are existing in their daily life? Much research has been conducted on adolescents and emerging adults. According to Erikson's theory, adolescents are in search of their identity. It is a crucial period for adolescents to develop mental wellbeing that will subsequently give an impact on their later life. As Carl Jung said, it is a privilege to become who we truly are throughout our lifetime. ERI of ourselves continues to influence and have impacts one's concepts of self. It is an ongoing, dynamic, and changing process that anyone would experience throughout our lifetime. This paper adopted The Lifespan Model of Ethic Racial Development (Williams et al., 2020).
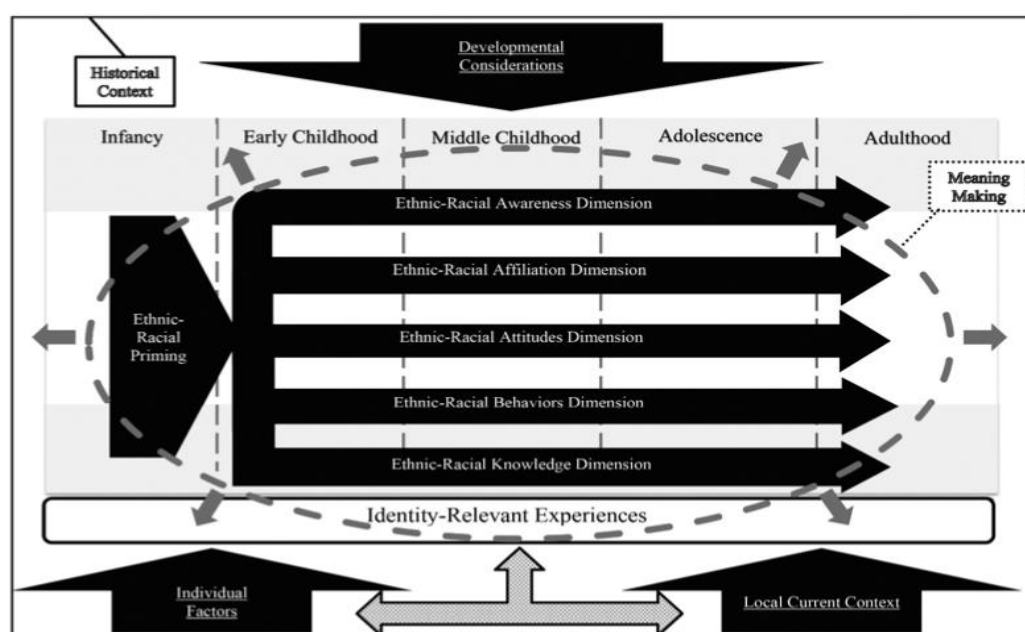

Figure 1. The lifespan model of ethnic-racial identity (Adapted from Williams et al., 2020)

ERI Models and Framework

The Lifespan Model of Ethnic Racial Development

The ERI lifespan model is derived from the cultural-ecological framework, which emphasizes the individual, contextual, and developmental factors that affect identity-relevant experiences and meaning-making linked with ERI development elements across the lifespan stages, which are known as influencers. According to the paradigm, ethnic-racial awareness priming initiates the formations of ERI in infancy, which correspondingly highlights the five dimensions that are said to appear explicitly and implicitly. The five dimensions are ethnic-racial awareness, ethnic-racial affiliation, ethnic-racial attitudes, ethnic-racial behaviors, and ethnic-racial knowledge. All these dimensions are capable of incorporating existing components that were explored in a distinctive developmental stage that can interpret the relationship over time. During this stage, it also highlights the area of missing information, ad provides a basis upon which future studies can be conducted. This model emphasizes the plethora of contextual elements that induce ERI-related meaning-making experiences.

Furthermore, each of the ERI dimensions represents a separate factor that is distinctive. The first dimension is ethnic-racial awareness, which focuses on people's perceptions by showing that ethnic-racial groups are socially prominent categories, and also the perception of viewing the groups in the society. The second dimension is ethnical affiliations, which investigates the sense of an individual's belongingness towards one or more ethnic-racial groups. The third dimension is ethnical attitudes, which analyzes an individual's ethnic-racial group(s) and their membership. The fourth dimension is ethnic-racial behaviors, which highlights the behavioral enactments of an individual in the context of cultural values, styles, language use customs, and procedures of establishing a sense of belonging towards an ethnic-racial group. The fifth dimension is the ethnic-racial knowledge that emphasizes the awareness of the behaviors, values, customs, and values that are unique to one's ethnic-racial group. Moreover, the components of the ERI functions as a complex interplay of environment, individual and developmental factors across the developmental stages. The evolution of ERI components does not always happen in a straight line, and the model takes into account probable cyclical changes in components over time due to the interaction of influencers. The dimensions and components of ERI function as the identity-relevant experiences, which allows individuals to assess and evaluate their ERI. Based on the model, an individual's unique developmental capabilities such as perceptual and cognitive or filtering or interpreting identity-relevant experiences forms the ERI meaning. As individuals progress across the developmental stages, the developmental capacities allow them to apply a comprehensive process in creating the eaning of their identity-relevant experiences. Even though cognitive abilities might limit the meaning-making process, the mod suggests that individuals may revisit identity-relevant experiences and dimensions developed during earlier developmental stages as their developmental capacities advance. This enables individuals to participate in more complicated kinds of meaning-making, and the ERI components can also be adjusted accordingly. Moreover, an individual's identity-relevant experiences and meaning that is dependent on the local current situation can be produced by the complex interplay of ecological factors.

This paradigm emphasizes local context knowledge experiences in the context s of the family, neighborhood, and schooling, allowing these contextual realities to be distinguished from the broader historical framework in which individuals and local present contexts are

rooted. Furthermore, according to the concept, the historical context represents the actuality that pervaded the mode. Individual factors, the local present context, identity-relevant experiences, meaning construction, and developmental concerns change the ERI dimensions across developmental phases, which in turn shapes the historical context over time. Besides, the arrows emanating from the meaning-making sphere in the model, represent the notion that ERI development is considered a bidirectional process. This implies that not only do various factors influence the ERI, but ERI mutually influences those factors over time. In short, this model is a foundation in understanding the ERI explicitly addresses the emergence and evolving forms of ERI development that are often missed with period-specific approaches.

The A-B-C Framework of Lifespan Ethnic Racial Identity Development
The affective-behavioral-cognitive (ABC) framework is an adopted tripartite that captures the complexities, nuances, and contextual influences that interact within an individual's ERI experience across the lifespan. This framework was developed through the literature of Lifespan Model by Williams et al., which can be used as an intervention. This framework highlights ERI as a relational or a critical lens through which individuals understand themselves and relate to others. This tripartite model is comprehensive and multi-direction, which signifies the fullness of the ERI developmental experiences across all three domains of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Besides, the meaning-making experience is surrounded by A-B-Cs in a continual and dynamic process that allows an individual to make sense of, find meaning in, and ultimately integrate their affective, behavioral, and cognitive experiences to form a coherent understanding of their identity. Based on this framework, the developmental contexts and capacities that serve as accelerators and enablers drive the meaning-making activity and ERI development. The accelerators are contextualized as the characteristics that attach social meaning to ethnicity and race while the enablers are known as the individual developmental capacities that define the way one gains experiences and understands the affective, behavioral, and cognitive elements of one ERI. In short, this framework aims to unravel the affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses that are triggered by accelerators for intervention that would advocate the meaning-making necessary for positive ERI development.
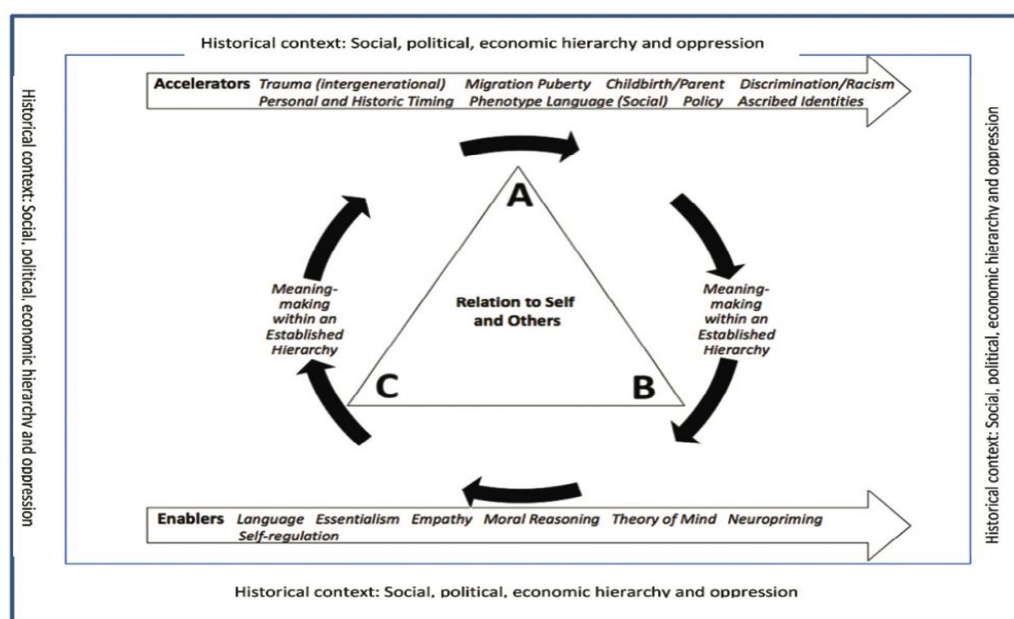
Figure 2: A-B-C applied framework of ethnic-racial identity development (Adopted from Marks et al., 2020)
Reciprocal Process of Ethnic-Racial Identity (ERI)
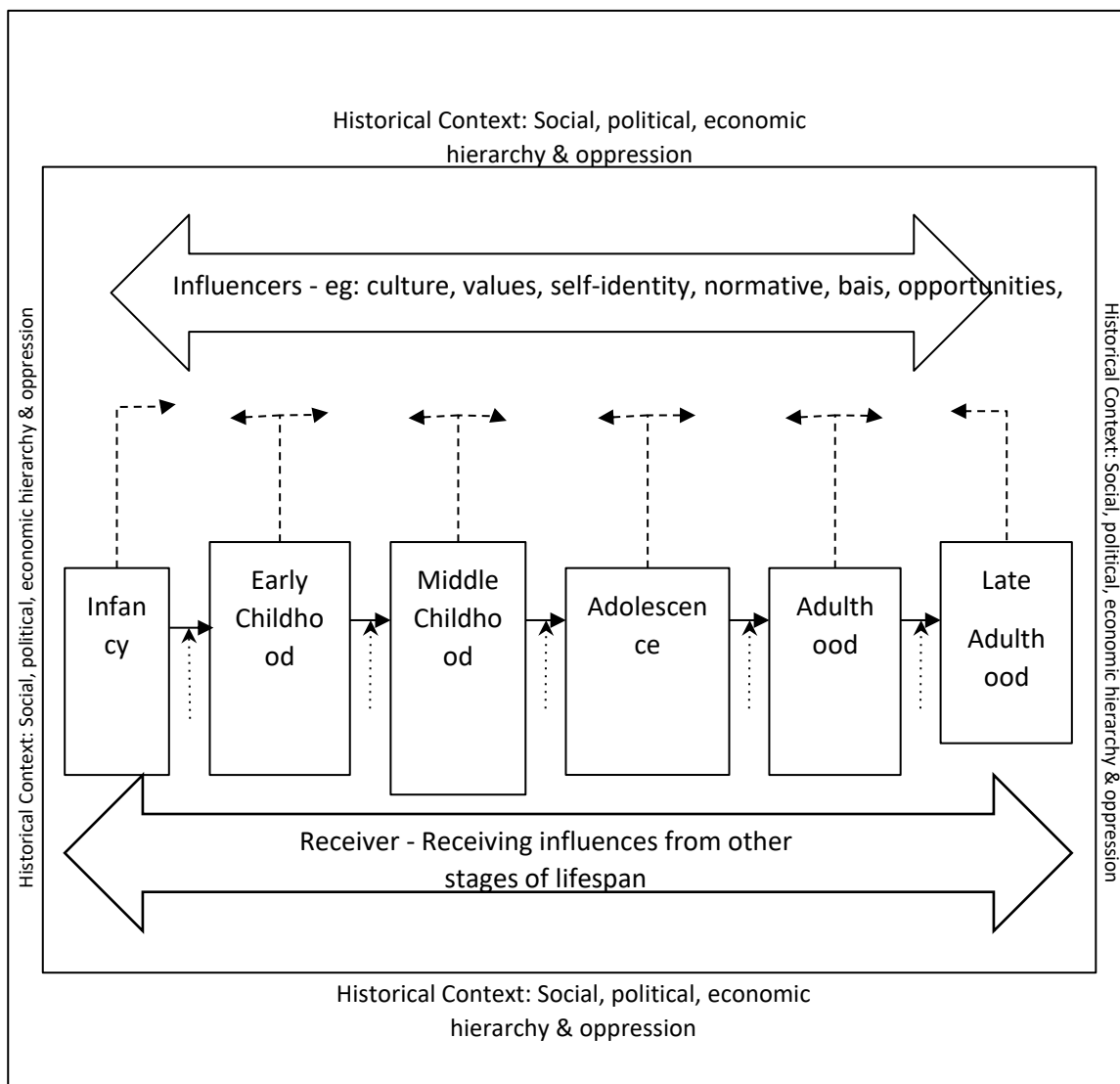
The Lifespan Stages of ERI

Figure 3: Reciprocal Process of ERI, adopted from The A-B-C Framework of Lifespan Ethnic Racial Identity Development (Rogers et al., 2020)

The focus of the literature according to the stages of Lifespan
The definition of ethnic groups can vary across the countries and cultures, even the terms "race", "origins" or "tribe" have different connotations too. The United Nation of Statistics Division (UNSD) mentioned that "ethnic groups are identified are ethnic nationality (in other words country or area of origin as distinct from citizenship or country of legal nationality), race, color, language, religion, customs of dress or eating, tribe or various combinations of these characteristics" ("Ethnicity: A Review of Data Collection and Dissemination", 2003). To

have a better understanding of an ethnic group, it is important to gain an insight into their social context, sociohistorical background, and the uniqueness of their practice and culture. The "contextualized" approach considers how norms and expectations vary depending on certain roles and contexts (e.g., ethnicity/race; see Dunlop, 2015) (Wilkinson & Dunlop, 2020). The insight will in turn inform the ERI of a certain group and a person. Understanding factors that promote ERI is critical, as stronger ERI often enhances psychological functioning (Wilkinson & Dunlop, 2020). This can be seen from a study (Wilkinson & Dunlop, 2020) showing Asian and Latinx youth's ethnic exploration and belonging are related to their self-esteem and the level of depression - higher self-esteem linked with lower depression and public regard linked with lower depression and somatic symptoms.

ERI studies were grounded on the work in studying Black people "in a racist society predicated on anti-blackness and white supremacy" (Rogers et al., 2020). According to Roger et al (1971; 1991); Parham and Helms (1981); Thomas (1970) were the seminal scholars who started the study back in the early 1970s. Then Seller et al (1997, 1998) presented a theory and framework for measurement, named The Multidimensional Model of Black Identity, that was based on the "conceptualization, scope, and impact of racial identity scholarship" (Rogers et al., 2020) in the current era. Jean Phinney and his works including the Multi-Ethnic Identity Model had set the tone of ERI as a developmental process. According to Cunningham and Hodge (2020), scholars has shown interest in the study of the relation of psychology and ERI processes among ethnic-racial minority youth and their families (Cokley & Vandiver, 2012; Cross, 1991; Quintana et al., 2006; Sellers et al., 1998; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990; Verkuyten, 2016; Umanna-Taylor et al., 2013, as cited in Cunningham and Hodge, 2020). Cunningham and Hodge found that from 1934-1976, there were only   "47   publications that included the terms "ethnic identity" or "racial identity" in the Abstract" in the PsycINFO database within 42 years. The same keywords found in the subsequent 42 years (1977-2018) had inclined to 3691 publications. This exponential rate of growth yields a robust literature on ERI—its conceptualization, development, and implications (Cokley, 2007; Cross et al., 2017; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014, as cited in Cunningham and Hodge, 2020).

Some literature reviews reveal that there are still rooms in this field of study that need more attention from scholars. While the lifespan model of ethnic-racial identity mentioned earlier provides useful perspectives to the development, it also raises questions of across and within-group differences that are difficult to empirically examine within contextual experiences (Cunningham & Hodge, 2020; Perveen et al., 2020). According to Rogers et al. (2020, as cited in Cunningham and Hodge, 2020), it is crucial "to prioritize research questions that move across the multiple identities of individuals, consider the multiple levels of the ecosystem, and address the dynamic nature of relationships and their role in ERI development". ERI has vast influences on people's psychosocial development. A study examining the body dissatisfaction of people from collectivistic and individualistic cultures showed that people from collectivistic cultures seem to have more body dissatisfaction than people from individualistic cultures (Cakici et al., 2021). Marks et al (2020, as cited in Cunningham and Hodge, 2020), mentioned that the lifespan model of ethnic-racial identity can apply in promoting well-being and it "may serve as a guide in developing and applying psychosocial tools and interventions to enhance positive ERI".

Cunningham and Hodge (2020) suggested that it is important to have in-depth ERI issues within and across the groups for all populations that "engage a diversity of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods". Case studies including longitudinal studies are needed to examine the development from a lifespan perspective. There is a need to use a diversity of measurements, including self-reports, observations, and neuroimaging methodologies to gain a holistic view of ERI development through h scientific approach. In the following discussion, we will be looking into the literature that has contributed insights into people's ERI development from infancy to adulthood.

Ethnic-Racial Identity Development in Infancy

According to John Bowlby's attachment theories, infants from 2 to 7 months old have shown attachment that focuses on one figure, usually the primary caregiver, as the baby gradually learns to distinguish familiar from unfamiliar people (Santrock, 2021). Researchers and scholars are more aware of the underestimation of an infant's ERI development in past studies. Research conducted by Njoroge et al (2009) involving infants from 6 - 36 months showed the result of the specific play choices of dolls. These infants were accompanied by a Black researcher. Many of the infants in the study repeatedly picked their preferred doll phenotype regardless of other phenotype options or distance from their preferred doll (Njoroge et al., 2009). Infants with developed language skills can tell they have similar skin color with the dolls and could tell the darker-skinned dolls and the researcher looks likely. The results were consistent when a 36-month child (who is adopted and had a different ethnicity from the adopted parents) picked a doll that looks like her, which shows that infants had developed their ERI from a very young age. Njoroge et al (2009) also argue that different cultures' beliefs would lead a family to have different interpretations and evaluations of some common words like attractive, spoiled, or healthy. It is important to examine the infants' context of the social situation. Failure in understanding "the beginnings of their conceptualization of "racial" identity may lead to missed opportunities for understanding the developing child" (Njoroge et al., 2009).

Ethnic-Racial Identity Development in Early Childhood

Early childhood developmental considerations encompass shifts in children's cognitive capacity that allow them to think more specifically, albeit concretely, about ethnicity/race, building on ethnic-racial priming in infancy. Early childhood is a stage of cognitive development that is defined by children's ability to think symbolically or to represent items with words and pictures (Piaget, 1970, as cited in, Williams et al., 2020). ERI also focuses on children's explicit, verbalized understandings of ethnicity/race and how they integrate their early conceptions and attitudes about ethnicity/race (Williams et al., 2020).

Besides, child development within racially subordinating contexts has been linked with inhibited beliefs, efficacy, aspiration, and self-esteem (Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Spencer, 1999; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Wang & Degol, 2016, as cited in, Huguley et al., 2019). Based on Huguley et al. findings, parents of color intuitively conveys their native ethnocentric cultural norms, beliefs, and traditions of their children for the inherent value (Huguley et al., 2019). Additionally, in accordance with the lifetime model, the effect of parents' socialization signals on ERI changes depending on the unique characteristics of gender and skin tone of the children. Based on Huguley et al., parental ethnic-racial socialization practices and ethnic-racial indemnity outcomes are associated with positive development among children

(Huguley et al., 2019). According to Hughes's et al., and Lesane-Brown, parental ethnic-racial socialization is the way that parents communicate information, beliefs, and values about ethnicity and race to their children (Huguley et al., 2019). Socializing can be described under the terminologies of racial socialization and ethnic socialization. Racial socialization is known as the mechanism used by parents to foster children's sense of racial self-esteem and belonging and also to understand the racial barriers. Ethnic socialization refers to the way parents instill a sense of cultural retention and identity achievement in their children. Parental ethnic-racial socialization encompasses four general practices, which are pride and heritage socialization, bias socialization, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism. Pride and heritage socialization is the collection of parenting approaches, which promotes cultural pride and knowledge via teaching children about their indigenous cultural customs, history, heritage, and belonging (Hughes et., 2006; Stevenson, 1994, as cited in, Huguley et al., 2019). It was found that pride and heritage socialization is the most prominent practice in predicting ethnic identity, which fosters strong and positive ethnic-racial identities among children. Moreover, bias socialization incorporates cultural signals that have been developed in reaction to a broader racially subordinating ecological framework, and that appropriately teach children to anticipate, analyze, and/or cope with discriminatory occurrences. Findings from Huguley et al show that biased socialization is positively linked to ethnic-racial identity, specifically during adolescence, where youths consider group identity and meaning and are more likely to have previously encountered ethnic-racial experiences. Besides, egalitarianism is known as the parental emphasis of mainstream cultural values or affective norms, including the cultural assimilation to the mainstream at the expense of one's home culture expression. This also includes the emphasization of the success ideals and behaviors, lessens the prominence of race in a society that fosters the mainstream cultural norms such as using standard English at all times, dominant dress trends), and/or skipping racial conversations completely. According to Huguley et al egalitarianism and parents of colors who endorse values-based egalitarian principles as part of their ethnic-racial socialization repertoire are positively associated with ethnic-racial identity. This could also be encouraging a more value-driven ethnic-racial identity ideology rather than one based on affect-related assimilation views.

Furthermore, ERI development in early childhood is said to inform their ER in later developmental periods that are consequential for adjustments (Umana-Taylor et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2020, as cited in Williams et al., 2021). As discussed above, the ERI dimensions manifest as specific components in each developmental period. Scholars have also highlighted that during early childhood, components that capture ERI attitudes are a positive attitude, negative attitudes, and centrality (Williams et al., 2021). Children as young as five use ethnicity-race as a way to organize their social environments, even though the social identity theory specifically did not focus on ethnic race (Bennet & Sani, 2003, as cited in, Williams et al., 2021). In addition, ERI centrality also plays a role in an individuals' overall sell-concept. Scholars have highlighted that centrality begins to form during childhood, and this also emphasizes the importance of sex and race in particularly relevant categories that shape development during the period of childhood. It was found that using social categories (boy/girl, son, daughter, friend, and five-year-old), social identities (sex, ethnicity-race, age), and preferences (pets, sports, computers) indicated significant variability in children's ERI centrality. According to Williams et al., ERI centrality is associated with self-labeling which is possible during the development period, ethnicity and race may become central to the majority of children after they self-label. Furthermore, the knowledge that individuals

develop about their social group membership plays a vital role in development. According to Bernal et al., individual comprehension of certain values, behaviors, and customs are a part of their ethnic-racial group, which is also a significant aspect of children's ERI. In short, as conceived in the lifespan model of ERI by Williams et al., childhood is an important period for ERI development and also for positive adjustments in following developmental stages.

Ethnic-Racial Identity Development in Middle Childhood

Middle childhood developmental considerations include children migrating to the more logical, systematic thinking of the concrete operational stage (Piaget, 1970; as cited in, Williams et al., 2020). According to Quintana (1998), children progress from a literal understanding of ethnicity/race to a more complicated understanding where they think more about their labels, have more complex knowledge and preferences, engage in more activities, and comprehend the implications of behaviors for ERI (Williams et al., 2020). In a study examining the influences of grandparents on their grandchildren in the ERI development, a mixed racial participant recalled his childhood memory when he was around seven or eight years old. He was fascinated by a family reunion where he met his godparents from both sides and his extended families. He felt "really connected" even though he couldn't even remember their names (Jackson et al., 2020). The experiences he had with his family contributed to his ERI development to be able to self-label and enhance feelings of belongings with his ethnic group. Another participant, Rose (Black/Hispanic/White/Indian) in the same study reflected her experience as a child to witness both her ethnic minority grandparents from different ethnicities in a family reunion that "ephemeral connection to an ethnically diverse familial network that symbolically represented Rose's multiracial (Jackson et al., 2020).

Ethnic-Racial Identity Development in Adolescence

Adolescents reach the formal stage of cognitive development, which involves incorporating abstract thinking, logical reasoning, and hypothetical thinking, which is also said to improve their knowledge of ethnicity/race (Piaget, 1970, as cited in, Williams et al., 2020). Individuals become aware of their membership in diverse social groups during adolescence, according to Erikson, as a result of dynamic interactions with the ever-expanding developmental environment (Cheon et al., 2020). Individuals can create social identities as a result of their endorsement of group participation (Cheon et al., 2020). It was said that each individual has a distinct configuration of social identity characteristics that have evolved across numerous situations. Adolescent growth can be captured more effectively by the unique combinations or intersections of these various identity dimensions than by focusing simply on a single component of social identity. Cheon et al. focused on the exploration and commitment processes of ERI development, where exploration refers to the effort of thinking about and searching for the meanings of one's ethnic/racial group, and commitment refers to an individual's choices in life and their level of connection to their ethnic/racial group. It was discovered that a high level of ERI investigation and commitment leads to both favorable and negative developmental effects. Furthermore, ERI commitment is a risk factor for psychological stress, whereas ERI exploration is a risk factor. Aside from ERI, American national identification is a critical component of social identity for young people in the United States. It was also shown that having a strong American identification may benefit teenage growth (Cheon et al., 2020). Individuals from ethnic/racial minorities pass through ERI stages in which they reject their ethnic/racial minority identity and embrace mainstream "American" culture (conformity stage). Then there's a clash between their sense of Americanness and

ethnic/racial belonging (dissonance stage). To examine their minority identity, they dismiss popularized "American" culture (the resistance and immersion stage), and individuals begin researching different cultures as a result of their rigidity in adhering to ethnic/racial culture, while yet experiencing conflicts and learning to selectively trust the dominant society (introspection stage) (Cheon et al., 2020). They may eventually develop a balanced identity, with major involvement in ethnic/racial minority groups as well as membership in mainstream "American" organizations.

Furthermore, ethnic/racial minority teenagers in the United States come to comprehend who they are in the contexts of their ethnic/racial groupings and American culture as part of their social identity formation. In reaction to these developmental events, they begin to form their subjective sense of social standing. Cheon et al. discovered three distinct profiles: "weakly identified," "high ERI light AI," and "moderate ERI and AI." Cheon et al. illustrated the need of considering various combinations of multiple social identity characteristics while studying the development of ethnic/racial minority adolescents. Within the same ethnic/racial group, different degrees and configurations of ERI, American identity, and SSS can be detected, as can similar levels and configurations of these social identity dimensions across ethnic/racial groupings. When the disparities between the three profiles were examined, it was discovered that prior discrimination experiences, as well as subsequent mental health and academic outcomes, varied significantly. After 6 months, teenagers in the "weakly identified" group reported the most prior discriminatory experiences and despair, as expected by the stages of racial/cultural identity formation. They could have been suffering from cognitive dissonance, in which they felt conflicted and guilty about their ethnic/racial or American group affiliation. They may have become more sensitive to incidences of discrimination and felt confused about their identity as they became conscious of their minority position and questioned dominant society. As a result of the lack of clarity, depression-related emotions may have intensified. Furthermore, adolescents with lower ERI and AI levels were subjected to the most prejudice and despair, resulting in a lack of allegiance to their ethnic/racial group membership. Following that, the "moderate ERI and AI" group demonstrated the least level of school engagement, which may explain why their school engagement scores were lower than the "high ERI moderate AI" group, which may be at the optimal stage of integrative awareness. Furthermore, the "high ERI and moderate AI" group reported low levels of discrimination experience and despair, as well as a high level of school involvement, while strongly identifying with their ethnic/racial identity group while modestly associating with the larger American community. Adolescents with low ERI and moderate levels of American identity, or adolescents with moderate levels of both ERI and American identity, may be more vulnerable than adolescents with high ERI and moderate levels of American identity.

Furthermore, according to Erikson, the characteristic developmental job of adolescence is building a sense of self or identity, and the essential social identities affecting individual identity are gender and race/ethnicity (Howard et al., 2013; Leaper, 2015; Phinney, 1992 as cited in, Hoofman and Shaheed, 2020). Adolescent well-being can be assessed by centrality (the degree to which a specific social identity is important to an individual) and respect (affect toward the in-group social group) Hoofman and Shaheed, 2020; Rogers et al., 2015; Wilson & Leaper, 2016; Krishnan et al., 2022; Abadi et al., 2022). According to Hoofman and Shaheed's study on the importance of ethnic-racial and gender identities, girls would report that

ethnicity is more important because maternal caregivers provided more racial and ethnic socialization, whereas boys would report higher gender centrality than ethnic-racial centrality. Furthermore, while gender is an important facet of identity for all persons, race and ethnicity are especially crucial in the identification of members of ethnic minority groups. Turner & Brown, 2007, as quoted in Hoofman & Shaheed, 2020; Seeller et al., 1998). According to Hoofman and Shaheed's results, Cherokee (ethnic) identity was extremely important to and treasured by early adolescents. Furthermore, gender and grade-level differences in adolescent accounts of ethnic-racial and gender identity demonstrated a reduction in ethnic-racial public regard across the three years of middle school, with boys reporting higher gender centrality and gender private regard than girls. Gender identification was more significantly connected with well-being than ethnic-racial identity in this sample of Cherokee adolescents, for both girls and boys. Furthermore, there was no difference in ethnic-racial centrality or ethnic-racial positive regard between girls and boys. Furthermore, teenagers have high ethnic-racial centrality and positive regard, indicating the value and admiration they have for their ancestry; adolescents' public esteem report was also above the scale midpoint. Furthermore, throughout the three years of middle school, ethnic-racial centrality increases with age while public respect decreases, as evidenced by eighth-graders expressing lower levels of public regard than younger youth. From sixth to eighth grade, mean public respect dropped nearly a full point, indicating that older adolescents believed ethnicity and race were less favorably considered by members of other ethnic-racial minority groups. Furthermore, ethnic-racial and gender identities were found to be related to teenage well-being (Hoofman & Shaheed, 2020). This could be because gender is a synthetic psychosocial variable with a relatively rudimentary and widespread nature that strongly links between dimensions of gender identity. In short, both identities are important for girls and boys, albeit to varying degrees, and positive perceptions of both identities contribute to an overall positive sense of self and well-being, which has the potential to act as a protective buffer in the face of stressors, particularly culturally-based stressors and prejudice (Hoofman & Shaheed, 2020).

Furthermore, throughout the adolescent years, identity construction is a critical developmental activity, and ethnic-racial identity is a particularly important identity area for youth growing up in the United States. Although people continue to construct their identities throughout their lives, the identity work that adolescents engage in during adolescence provides an important foundation that can have long-term psychological consequences (Syed and Azmitia 2009; Umana-Taylor et al. 2015, as cited in Umana-Taylor et al., 2017). The findings of the Identity Project's initial efficacy test (Umaa-Taylor et al., 2017) demonstrated that a program that provides youth with strategies, tools, and opportunities to discover and assess the relevance of their ethnic-racial identity will result in youth engaging in more ethnic-racial identity exploration and, as a result, developing their ethnic-racial identity (i.e., ethnic-racial identity resolution). Furthermore, Erikson underlined the need of completing the Identity vs. Role Confusion stage for optimal psychosocial functioning since it allows people to have meaningful interpersonal connections and a positive self-concept, among other things (Erikson, 1993, as cited in, Umaa-Taylor et al. 2017). Participating in the ethnic-racial identity process can provide youth with psychosocial benefits by assisting them in developing a more mature understanding of their ethnic-racial background and promoting a sense of self-assurance and clarity about their background, which can aid youth in making sense of ethnic-racial based threats (e.g., discrimination) they may face directly or indirectly. These programs

are intended to help teenagers develop a more holistic sense of their global identity, as well as a better awareness of the significance of their ethnic-racial origin in their overall sense of self (Umaa- Taylor and Douglass, 2016, as cited in, Umana-Taylor et al., 2017).

Ethnic-Racial Identity Development in Adulthood

Adulthood is characterized by entering into new roles and environments. The transition from adolescence to adulthood can bring increased contextual changes and identity-relevant experiences, such as exposure to more diverse peers, experience with discrimination, and opportunities to become involved in diverse extracurricular activities (Williams et al., 2020). Additionally, scholars have identified contextual influencers and identity-relevant experiences that may promote adult identity status change, such as age-graded events, history-graded events, significant life events, and changes in the family life cycle (Kroger & Green, 1996; as cited in, Williams et al., 2020). Granhemat and Abdullah's (2017) study of Malaysian Chinese university students found that they have moderately strong ethnic identity, of which 20.4% of them have a strong ethnic identity and another 20.4% have a weak ethnic identity. Comparing with Malay and Indian students in Nordin et al.'s survey (as cited in, Ting & Ting, 2020) showed that both Chinese and Indian students "prefer the multiple identity models that are akin to a plural society" while Malay students "are in favor of other cultures assimilating to the Malay culture" (Ting & Ting, 2020). The historical background, national cultures, and political context are the main factors contributing to the ERI development of the emerging adult in Malaysia.

ERI development is a reciprocal process and interrelated with social background, context, sociohistorical background. Each person's process is unique as psychological heredity and interaction within him/herself and interaction within a context or environment, the dynamic is different. Rogers et al (2020) notably questioned the adult beyond the college years, as there is still not much evidence showing how ERI continues to develop across the lifespan. What is the process of ERI development as an aging adult continues their journey in life, where the challenges, changes, ups and downs in life are expected to increase while aging? How is the ERI development in the grandparenting years? Based on the findings by Ganaprakasam et al (2017), parents' ethnic socialization practice is a significant factor in predicting the ethnic identity development among secondary school Indian students. Ethnic identity in turn plays a significant factor in predicting the level of self-efficacy of the students. Should we assume that parents, who are the product of their heredity, past and present experiences and contexts, of how their ERI development had formed and still an ongoing reciprocal process, continue to influence their children's ERI development through implicit and explicit attitudes? Apart from the influences of the parents on their children, what is the factors and process of ERI development of the parents when involving other social roles (partners, employees, son/daughter, etc.) and the parents' themselves of being an adult, especially in Malaysia setting is something we can continue to explore the field of study in depth.

What has one experienced while aging and shaped his/her ERI? Acknowledge that ERI is not solely developed based on one's cognitive competency, the wisdom of old age people are the collective experiences from the past and interrelated with their spiritual and mental well-being. ERI has a strong relation to psychological development. Do old age people, for

instance, grandparents perceive ethnic values, practices, belongingness, pride, etc. differently compared to all the other lifespan stages? How is their ERI influencing their next generations? Qualitative research conducted by Jackson et al (2020) revealed that one of the participants - Jane (American Indian/Mexican) has a grandmother who viewed "Native persons as better than or more worthy than other racial/ethnic groups" and "talks bad about every other race if it's not Native" (Jackson et al., 2020). That makes it challenging (2020) for Jane to adapt to her ERI and be a part of her community. Another research by Ang & Lee (2020) exposed that one of the participants had learned about Chinese and Indian cultures and heritage from both paternal and maternal grandparents from different ethnic groups make him feel proud of his multiracial identity. From these researches, we could see that sometimes grandparents, especially when they are from an ethnic minority group, play an important role in "exposing their grandchildren to important cultural traditions, practices, and language associated with their grandparents' ethnic minority group" (Jackson et al., 2020).

Application of ERI Developmental Concepts in Malaysia Setting and Suggestions

Last December 2021, Malaysia High Court had dismissed the suit of vernacular schools against the Malaysia Constitution. That again raised the concerns in the whole society as the journey to defend ethnics' rights as well as the rights of being Malaysian has been a long fight among the major and minor ethnics. Malaysia is a multiracial country. People are living together in harmony. Often Malaysians embrace the differences and uniqueness of different ethnicities and their culture and beliefs. Unfortunately, under the cover, some issues are yet to be solved. The socio-historical background includes the Bumiputera policy that outlines special privileges of Malay and Orang Asli (indigenous) communities, for instance, housing, jobs, and education. The introduction of a New Economic Policy that prioritizes Malays is one of the policies implemented to benefit the Bumiputera. Malaysia practices parliamentary democracy. Meanwhile, they racialize the parliament by giving supremacy to Malays, where only Malays can be the prime minister.

The historical background can also trace back to the British colonial era. "Divide and rule" policies that divide different ethnicities into different economic sectors leave their footprints in the society in various aspects. Nonetheless, the 13 May incident in 1969, Operation Lalang 1987, Reformation of government in 2019 continuously has its impact on different generations of Malaysian, especially when linked with different remarkable events, that derivating different perceptions depending on the events of one had gone through, increase the complexities of ERI development in each generation in Malaysia. How did the policies and issues have their impacts on people's ERI in different stages of their lifespan? Reddy & Selvanathan argues that "Non-Malays are driven to identify themselves with their racial groups to differentiate themselves from the 'default' identity" (Reddy & Selvanathan, 2020). According to Crouch (2001), as cited in *Ethnic Identity and Other-Group Orientation of Ethnic Chinese in Malaysia* by Ting & Ting (2020), "emphasis on the Malay culture as the basis of the national culture made "many non- Malays feel that they were no more than second-class citizens". Even though the survey has shown that Malay, Chinese and Indian in West Malaysia had shown appreciation and acceptance of each other cultural and ethnicity, it also reveals that they "have difficulty with cultural adaptation and ethnic compromising, which require priority to be given to national identity over ethnic identity" (Awang et al., 2019, as cited in, Ting & Ting, 2020).

The studies had given us a peek into the ERI development of Malaysians. However, the studies of ERI development and the development with lifespan perspective are still relatively new. It is an urge to expand the field of study to gain an insight into dynamic and complex situations and processes. Adapting the idea of *intersectionality* from Rogers et al (2020), we understand that ERI development is the result of the intersectionality of various factors including the components of ERI, including the ethnic socialization, biological and psychological developmental factors that contribute to one's socialization and experiences, age, cognitive-developmental development, etc. It is suggested to study the components of ERI with different ethnicities, the interrelations and interactions within different ethnicities, and the developmental factors that contribute to one's socialization and experiences, age, cognitive development, etc. that will serve as the foundation of the study of the field. Secondly, the target populations should be focused on all the ethnicities in Malaysia, not only the minorities, but the majority as well, eg: Malays, Chinese, Indian, Indigenous people in different social contexts, cultural and religious, and socioeconomic status. According to Phinney (1996), ethnic identification is "subjective and reflects a developmental process". ERI definitions could vary in our social context. The uniqueness that distinguishes Malaysians from other countries, such as: Are we all mixed to a certain degree? Is the current literature able to fully apply to Malaysia's social context? The current literature mainly focuses on racism and discrimination of minorities but in the Malaysian context, what are the real challenges in terms of discrimination or bias that occur and have impacts on the populations?

From another perspective, looking back into history, Malays, Chinese, Indians are immigrants from the countries around but have been rooted in Malaysia. Malaysians are now practicing a localized culture, which mainly can be seen in the local food (named Malaysian cuisine), language (inter usage of different language and cultures), Malaysian lifestyles, to name a few that have changed vastly and can be easily differentiated from our ancestors' practices. Malaysians are bilingual competence, often can be seen as multilingual competence because of influences and explorations of languages including Malay, English, Mandarin, Tamil, Cantonese, Hokien, and many other dialects that are being used in daily lives, and media influences that can be easily accessed to different languages, including foreign languages, such as Bollywood Hindi movies, Jpop of Japanese anime and movies, Kpop of Korean entertainments shows or even Spanish drama, that acquires languages easily accessible among Malaysians. There is a phenomenon where some of the Chinese, Indians, and Indigenous despite not knowing or have minimum knowledge of their mother tongue while mastering other languages like Bahasa, English, or dialects. How these complexities have effects on the Malaysians' ERI development is worth exploring in depth to construct the ERI development model in the Malaysian context.

Conclusion

ERI development of lifespan perspectives has broadened our perspectives in understanding every one of us in the social context. The studies have informed us that the development does not only occur in certain periods but it develops throughout our lifetime. How the awareness and information about ERI development could contribute to personal wellbeing, family, groups, and society togetherness and belongingness, and into the themes of social stability and social justice are attracting more attention to expanding in the field of study. This current paper is the reviews of current literature from the year 2017 - 2021 and provides suggestions to apply the existing study's information into Malaysia context with the

hope to improve the integration among the ethnics in Malaysia and to promote social justice in our social context, where we truly embrace the uniqueness and diversities of each other.

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