

ABSTRACT

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Effect Of Cooperative Learning (Student Teams-Achievement Divisions) On
African American And Caucasian Students' Interracial Friendships
(Major Professor: Kathryn I. Matthew)

The purpose of this study was to gauge the impact of cooperative learning teams on interracial friendships. The participants were 256 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in English classes (20% African American and 80% Caucasian) at a rural middle school in Louisiana. After delivery of instruction, the experimental group studied worksheets in teams, received rewards based upon the team's performance, and received individual grades based upon individual exam scores. The control group studied worksheets individually and received individual grades. This eight week study utilized the sociometric question, "Who are your friends in this class?" as the pretest and posttest instrument. The data were analyzed using dependent and independent samples *t*-tests. Cooperative learning did increase close cross-race friendships, although not significantly. However, results indicated that cooperative learning significantly ($p = .001$) increased the number of strong cross-race friendships. It was also determined that there was no significant difference in the impact of cooperative learning on African American and Caucasian students' interracial friendships.