

WHITELY, MICHAEL J., Ph.D., May 2005

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
AND SPECIAL SERVICES

THE IMPACT OF A MULTIMEDIA LEARNING CONFERENCE ON STUDENTS'
PERCEPTIONS OF CROSS-COMMUNITY INITIATIVES, FUTURE ORIENTATION
REGARDING PEACE, AND SOCIAL DISTANCE BETWEEN GROUPS (304 pp.)

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The primary objective in designing a large-scale multimedia learning conference in Northern Ireland was to increase optimism levels of the students in attendance through Instructional Technology presentations. However, research has reported that large-scale events organized to engender "first time" contact between Protestant and Catholics tend to be largely superficial with little or no interaction between participants. The Instructional Multimedia Presentations And Cooperative Technology (IMPACT) conference was created, in part, to challenge these findings through the monitoring of cognition, future orientation, and social distance of the attending students.

A total of 522 fifth-grade students participated in the study from the Northeastern Board of Education in Northern Ireland. The study utilized the Solomon four-research design. Schools participating in this research were selected through a stratified random sampling procedure and included 12 Catholic and 12 Protestant schools. The study found significant effects of the IMPACT conference on participants in the areas of cross-community cognition and future orientation. No significant effect was found in the factor of social distance. An interaction effect between religious affiliation and participation in the conference was also reported on the factor of future orientation.