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Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): Components and Psychosocial Antecedents

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ABSTRACT The present study examines the underresearched topic of bicultural identity; specifically, we: (1) unpack the construct of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII), or the degree to which a bicultural individual perceives his/her two cultural identities as “compatible” versus “oppositional,” and (2) identify the personality (Big Five) and acculturation (acculturation stress, acculturation attitudes, bicultural competence) predictors of BII. Differences in BII, acculturation stress, and bicultural competence were measured with new instruments developed for the purposes of the study. Using a sample of Chinese American biculturals, we found that variations in BII do not define a uniform phenomenon, as commonly implied in the literature, but instead encompass two separate independent constructs: perceptions of *distance* (vs. overlap) and perceptions of *conflict* (vs. harmony) between one’s two cultural identities or orientations. Results also indicated that cultural conflict and cultural distance have distinct personality, acculturation, and sociodemographic antecedents.

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Being bicultural makes me feel special and confused. Special because it adds to my identity: I enjoy my Indian culture, I feel that it is rich in tradition, morality, and beauty; Confused because I have been in many situations where I feel being both cultures isn't an option. My cultures have very different views on things like dating and marriage. I feel like you have to choose one or the other.

—19-year-old second-generation Indian American

Biculturalism seems to me to be a dichotomy and a paradox; you are both cultures and at the same time, you are neither.

—19-year-old first-generation Chinese American

In today's increasingly diverse and mobile world, growing numbers of individuals have internalized more than one culture and can be described as bicultural or multicultural. In fact, one out of every four individuals residing in the United States has lived in another country before moving to the United States and presumably has internalized more than one culture (U.S. Census, 2002). These impressive statistics do not include U.S.-born ethnic and cultural minorities (e.g., descendants of immigrants) for whom identification and involvement with their ethnic cultures in addition to mainstream culture is also the norm (Phinney, 1996).

The prevalence and importance of multiculturalism or biculturalism has been recently acknowledged by some psychologists (e.g., Hermans & Kempen, 1998; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), but the phenomenon has rarely been investigated empirically.¹ However, the study of multicultural identities has exciting implications

1. We examined the psychological literature on biculturalism (or related topics such as multiculturalism) from 1954 to the present. This review yielded 55 publications, of which only 28 were actual studies (vs. theoretical pieces such as book chapters and technical reports). Out of these 28, only 20 were empirical studies (the other 8 were case studies or ethnographies). Eight of these 20 studies were published in social-personality or general audience journals (e.g., *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*), with the majority of the work appearing in clinical, community, or educational journals. Given the size of the identity literature (> 1,000 papers), these low numbers indicate a huge knowledge gap in the understanding of bicultural identity formation and maintenance, and cultural identity in general.

for the field of psychology, and for social and personality psychology in particular, as the issue of how individuals develop a sense of community around national, cultural, ethnic, and racial group membership becomes particularly meaningful in situations of cultural clashing, mixing, and integration (Baumeister, 1986; Phinney, 1999). Furthermore, the social and individual relevance of bicultural identity negotiation provides personality researchers with another window to study individual variations in self-concept dynamics. In fact, as eloquently stated by Phinney (1999), “increasing numbers of people find that the conflicts are not between different groups but between different cultural values, attitudes, and expectations *within themselves*” (p. 27; italics added).

The process of negotiating multiple cultural identities is complex and multifaceted. A careful review of the (mostly qualitative) work on this topic in the acculturation literature (e.g., Padilla, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997) and in ethnic and cultural studies (e.g., Durczak, 1997; O’Hearn, 1998) reveals that bicultural individuals often talk about their dual cultural heritage in complicated ways and in both positive and negative terms. As the opening quotations in this article illustrate, biculturalism can be associated with feelings of pride, uniqueness, and a rich sense of community and history, while also bringing to mind identity confusion, dual expectations, and value clashes (Haritatos & Benet-Martínez, 2003). Further, biculturals often report dealing with the implications of multiple racial stereotypes and pressures from different communities for loyalties and behaviors (LaFromboise et al., 1993). An important issue, then, is how individuals who have internalized more than one culture negotiate their different, and often opposing, cultural orientations, as well as the role external and internal factors play in this process.

The aim of this article is to examine individual differences in the construction and integration of dual cultural identities and to understand how these differences relate to particular personality dispositions, contextual pressures, and acculturation and demographic variables. Given the lack of empirical literature on this topic, this article represents an important first attempt at understanding the sociopsychological processes involved in biculturalism.

Biculturalism: Integrating Two Cultural Orientations

According to a widely accepted framework proposed by Berry (1990), acculturating immigrants and ethnic minorities has to deal with two central issues: (1) the extent to which they are motivated or allowed to retain identification with the culture of origin, now the nonmajority culture (what we'll refer to in this article as the ethnic culture); and (2) the extent to which they are motivated or allowed to identify with the mainstream, dominant culture. According to Berry (1990), the negotiation of these two central issues results in four distinct acculturation positions: assimilation (identification mostly with the dominant culture), integration (high identification with both cultures), separation (identification largely with the ethnic culture), or marginalization (low identification with both). For example, "integrated" immigrant and U.S.-born ethnic minorities living in the United States would identify with both the ethnic culture (e.g., Asian, Latin, etc.) and the mainstream American culture—which, in the United States, continues to be largely defined in terms of the Northern European cultural tradition and the primacy of the English language (Sullivan & Schatz, 1999).

Berry's taxonomy supports the argument that "acculturation is not a linear process, with individuals ranging from unacculturated to assimilated, but rather a multidimensional process that includes one's orientation to both one's ethnic culture and the larger society" (Phinney, 1996, p. 922). There is now robust evidence supporting the psychometric validity of this bidirectional model of acculturation and its advantages over unidimensional models in predicting a wide array of outcomes (Flannery, 1998; Ryder, Allen, & Paulhus, 2000; Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000). Further evidence for the idea that individuals can simultaneously hold two or more cultural orientations is provided by recent sociocognitive experimental work showing that biculturals move between their two cultural orientations by engaging in *cultural frame switching* (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martínez, 2000), or shifting between different culturally based interpretative lenses in response to cultural cues.

While the above literature has been instrumental in advancing the notion of bicultural identity, there are also important gaps in these conceptions. First, Berry's concept of integration (identification with both cultures) fails to describe *how* people go about integrating and maintaining the dual cultures and does little to pinpoint individual or sociocultural antecedents that would explain why a given indi-

vidual experiences biculturalism as “a dichotomy and paradox” and/or something that makes him or her feel both “special and confused” (see earlier quotations).

In conclusion, most traditional acculturation studies have operationalized biculturalism largely as a uniform construct, overlooking individual variations in the way bicultural identity is negotiated and organized (see qualitative studies by Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997, and Vivero & Jenkins, 1999, for exceptions). Specifically, the customary assessment of biculturalism in terms of a single score (or set of scores) on traditional acculturation scales seems insufficient for capturing fundamental individual differences in the experiences and meanings associated with bicultural identity. For example, even among acculturating individuals who identify with both mainstream and ethnic cultures, variations in socio-cultural (e.g., generational status, cultural makeup of the community), sociocognitive (e.g., personality, attitudes) and socioemotional factors (stress due to discrimination or in-group pressures) leave room for significant individual differences in the process of bicultural identity formation and the meanings associated with this experience.

Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): An Individual Difference Approach

Based on this gap in biculturalism research, one important goal of this paper is empirically to explore and organize individual variations in the experience of biculturalism. In this regard, Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris (2002) recently proposed the theoretical construct of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) as a framework for investigating individual differences in bicultural identity organization, focusing on biculturals' subjective perceptions of how much their dual cultural identities intersect or overlap. BII, which was drawn from an extensive review of the empirical and qualitative acculturation and biculturalism literature, captures the degree to which “biculturals perceive their mainstream and ethnic cultural identities as compatible and integrated vs. oppositional and difficult to integrate” (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002, p. 9). Individuals high on BII tend to see themselves as part of a “hyphenated culture” (or even part of a combined, “third,” emerging culture) and find it easy to integrate both cultures in their everyday lives. These high BII biculturals are described as having developed compatible bicultural identities (Padilla, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Rotheram-Borus, 1993), meaning that they do

not perceive the two cultures to be mutually exclusive, oppositional, or conflicting. Biculturals low on BII, on the other hand, report difficulty in incorporating both cultures into a cohesive sense of identity (Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Vivero & Jenkins, 1999). Although low BII biculturals also identify with both cultures, they are particularly sensitive to specific tensions between the two cultural orientations and see this incompatibility as a source of internal conflict. Moreover, low BIIs often feel as if they should just choose one culture (e.g., they often report that it is easier to take on either culture or none, but not both at the same time).²

BII and Cultural Frame-Switching

In their first study of BII, Benet-Martínez and her colleagues (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002) demonstrated the psychological relevance of this individual difference variable by showing that variations in BII moderate the process of cultural frame switching. Specifically, Chinese American biculturals high on BII (those who perceive their cultural identities as compatible) exhibited culturally congruent behavior when presented with external cues associated with one of their cultural backgrounds (e.g., made external attributions to an ambiguous social event after being primed with Chinese icons and made internal attributions to the same event after seeing American icons). On the other hand, Chinese American biculturals low on BII (those who perceive their cultural identities to be in opposition), behaved in non-culturally congruent ways when exposed to these same cues. Namely, low BIIs exhibited Chinese-congruent behaviors (i.e., external attributions) in response to American cues and American-congruent behaviors (internal attributions) in response to Chinese cues. In summary, low BIIs exhibited a type of “behavioral reactance” that the sociocognitive literature describes as a contrast or reverse priming

2. Although no construct in the existing literature captures all the nuances of BII, a few acculturation and ethnic minority theorists have discussed particular acculturation experiences and outcomes that seem to relate (if only partially) to the identity integration vs. opposition continuum defined by BII. Examples of these constructs are: “fusion” (Chuang, 1999), “blendedness” (Padilla, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997), “cultural hybridity” (Oyserman, Sakamoto, & Lauffer, 1998), “bicultural competence” (LaFromboise & Rowe, 1983) vs. “cultural homelessness” (Vivero & Jenkins, 1999), “alternating” biculturalism (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997), and “oppositional identities” (Cross, 1995; Ogbu, 1993).

effect (Stapel & Winkielman, 1998). As discussed in Benet-Martínez et al. (2002), the prime inconsistent behavior of low BIIs is supported by popular media and literature's depictions of cultural clash (e.g., Chavez, 1994; O'Hearn, 1998; Mehta, 1996; Roth, 1969) where inner cultural conflict is often described as leading to behavioral and/or affective "reactance" against the cultural expectations embedded in particular situations. For instance, in Roth's novel, the conflicted bicultural protagonist finds himself feeling and acting particularly Jewish when traveling to the Midwest and feeling and acting conspicuously American when visiting Israel. In short, Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study provided evidence that variations in BII play an important role in biculturals' behavioral and cognitive functioning.

Furthering BII: Conceptual and Methodological Gaps

Although Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study is the first effort at empirically identifying individual differences in BII and modeling the impact of BII on biculturals' sociocognitive processes, further research is needed to develop a more formal measure of BII, explore its possible components, and identify BII's personality and contextual antecedents. Specifically, in Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study, variations in BII were measured with a preliminary, short measure (Bicultural Identity Integration Scale –Preliminary; BIIS-P). This instrument assessed perceived opposition between Chinese and American cultural identities in a multistatement vignette that was rated as a single item (see Benet-Martínez et al., 2002, for more specific information about this measure) and read as follows:

I am a bicultural who keeps American and Chinese cultures separate and feels conflicted about these two cultures. I am mostly just a Chinese who lives in America (vs. a Chinese American), and I feel as someone who is caught between two cultures.³

3. As explained in Benet-Martínez et al. (2002), this vignette measuring opposition between Chinese and American cultures was tested in conjunction with another vignette capturing compatibility between the cultures. Ratings on these two vignettes were highly (negatively) correlated, indicating that the two vignettes were largely interchangeable. However, scores on the vignette measuring opposition were normally distributed, while scores on the vignette measuring compatibility were skewed to the right (perhaps because of the higher social desirability of the statements tapping compatibility). Thus, the vignette measuring opposition was used to measure BII in Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study.

This single-item measure of BII, although useful in identifying some of the possible variables that define BII's nomological network (e.g., see Table 3 in the Benet-Martínez et al., 2002, study), provides only a limited and perhaps unreliable assessment of the various psychological processes that may underlie BII. Specifically, note that the above operationalization of BII seems to mix perceptions of distance or compartmentalization between one's two cultural identities (e.g., keeps American and Chinese cultures separate . . . mostly just a Chinese who lives in America) and conflict or clash between one's two cultural identities (e.g., feels conflicted about these two cultures . . . caught between two cultures). There are some reasons to believe that these two kinds of perceptions (which are not explicitly differentiated in the acculturation literature) may capture empirically different components of bicultural identity dynamics. Cultural identity distance or compartmentalization (vs. hyphenation or blending) seems related to existing theoretical notions of cultural identity alternation versus fusion (LaFromboise et al., 1993; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). In contrast, the experience of cultural conflict (i.e., feeling caught or trapped between one's two cultural orientations) has not been explicitly acknowledged in the acculturation literature, even though this component may be similar to identity confusion (Baumister, 1986) or role conflict (Goode, 1960). The extent to which cultural conflict and cultural distance represent two different facets of a larger construct (BII) or largely independent elements of bicultural identity dynamics is an empirical question that deserves attention.

Furthermore, based on evidence that certain dispositional characteristics can affect the meaning and impact of cultural processes (e.g., Chiu, Morris, Hong, & Menon, 2000), differences in BII may also be linked to particular personality characteristics relevant to the acculturation process. While much research has linked the Big Five personality traits (John, 1990) to a variety of important psychosocial outcomes, surprisingly little work has examined the relationship between these dispositions and the acculturation process (but see Ryder et al., 2000). However, several important links may exist. For example, it is likely that a compatible and nonconflicting integrated bicultural identity is facilitated by the cognitive and affective traits of openness (i.e., tolerance of and interest in new values and lifestyles) and emotional stability (i.e., resilience, flexibility). Given the social dynamics of learning from and interacting with different cultural

groups, interpersonal traits such as extraversion (i.e., sociability and expressiveness) and agreeableness (i.e., empathy and warmth) are likely to also play a role in bicultural dynamics, although their possible impact on BII is less clear.

In addition, in Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study, high and low BIIs were consistently similar in their endorsement of Berry's integrative acculturation strategy (Berry, 1990) and in basic demographic variables such as years spent in the United States and age of migration; however, the study also found that, compared with high BIIs, low BIIs tended to be less proficient in English and less identified with American culture. This pattern underscores competence in the host, majority culture as a key component of BII, although further research is necessary to clarify and replicate this finding.

Finally, it is likely that variations in BII are related to particular identity-relevant contextual stressors (Berry, 1990; Thoits, 1991), although this issue has not yet been explored. Specifically, difficulties in integrating one's two cultures into a cohesive bicultural identity may be driven by acculturation stressors such as cultural or ethnic prejudice and stereotyping (Crocker & Major, 1989), feelings of cultural isolation (Berry, 1990), or strained intercultural relations (Tzeng & Jackson, 1994).

Study Goals

In sum, much of the previous work on biculturalism has focused on unitary definitions of biculturalism and has been primarily descriptive in nature. Furthermore, the few existing studies on individual differences in bicultural identity (e.g., Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; Devich-Navarro & Phinney, 1997) are limited in that significant variables are often not included (e.g., personality traits, acculturation stressors) or in that variations in BII are imperfectly measured or simply inferred. This article attempts to address these gaps by "unpacking" the individual difference variable of BII, which captures both subjective organization and phenomenology of dual cultural identities, and delineating an initial network of psychosocial antecedents relevant to the personality, acculturation, and sociodemographic domains. The present study, like previous biculturalism studies by Benet-Martínez and her colleagues (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; Hong et al., 2000), focuses on the bicultural experience of first-generation Chinese American biculturals.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Our participants were 133 first-generation Chinese American individuals (58 males, 75 females, mean age = 24.5, $SD = 7.3$) residing in a large college town in the Upper Midwest of the United States. This sample included undergraduate students and older members of the university community such as graduate students, visiting scholars, and their spouses. Following procedures similar to those used by Benet-Martínez and her colleagues in previous studies (e.g., Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; Hong et al., 2000), participants were selected for the study if they fulfilled all the following criteria: (a) were born in a Chinese country (People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, or Singapore), (b) had lived in a Chinese country for at least 5 years, (c) had lived in the United States for at least 5 years, and (d) considered themselves bicultural. We should note that the somewhat small size of our sample reflects the difficulty of finding ethnically diverse samples of participants in the Midwest who not only described themselves as "bicultural" but also fulfilled all of our other demographic criteria.

Procedure and Instruments

Participants were recruited through campus and city fliers and paid \$12 for their participation. Participants were invited into the lab where they individually completed an anonymous questionnaire. This questionnaire, which was administered in English, included basic demographic questions (i.e., sex, age, country of birth, years lived in the United States and in a Chinese country) and the following measures:

Acculturation Measures:

English and Chinese language proficiency and usage. We created two 7-item scales that independently assessed self-reported English and Chinese language levels on the following domains: (a) language ability (e.g., "Rate your Chinese speaking ability"), 1 item; (b) past and present language usage (e.g., "How much do you use/have you used English to speak with your parents?"), 4 items; and (c) media exposure (e.g., "How often do you read Chinese newspapers?"), 2 items. The two language ability items were answered on 6-point scales ranging from 1 (*very little ability*) to 6 (*very high ability*); the rest of the items were answered on 6-point scales ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 6 (*very often*). Factor analyses yielded two separate English and Chinese language factors; accordingly, English and Chinese language composite scores were created by aggregating the items

on each factor. The alpha reliabilities for the English and Chinese language proficiency and use scales were .82 and .85, respectively.

Chinese and U.S. cultural identification. Participants rated the strength of their identification with Chinese and American cultures with two separate items that asked, "How much do you identify with U.S. (Chinese) culture?" Responses were measured on a 6-point scale and ranged from 1 (*very weakly identified*) to 6 (*highly identified*).

Bicultural competence (LaFromboise et al., 1993). We wondered if variations in BII would be related to different degrees of "bicultural competence" (LaFromboise et al., 1993), where high competence is defined as being strongly and equally involved with, and comfortable in, both American and Chinese cultures in terms of both identification and behavioral skills. Low bicultural competence, on the other hand, would signify either being relatively more involved with one of the two cultures (American or Chinese) or having similarly moderate-low levels of involvement with both cultures. We created a dichotomous (high vs. low) bicultural competency score by first computing two separate American and Chinese cultural orientation subscores, each representing a composite of cultural (American or Chinese) identification and (English or Chinese) language scores. Individuals for whom both the American and Chinese cultural orientations fell at or above each of these two variables' median splits were categorized as high on bicultural competence ($N = 77$), and the rest were categorized as low on bicultural competence ($N = 55$).⁴

Acculturation attitudes (Berry, Kim, Power, & Bujaki, 1989). Berry et al.'s 20-item questionnaire is the most widely used measure of acculturation strategies. It comprises four scales measuring individuals' attitudes (but not behaviors) towards the four acculturation strategies proposed in Berry's model: assimilation, integration (or biculturalism), separation, and marginalization. Items were adapted to assess attitudes specifically towards American and ethnic (e.g., Chinese) cultures. Endorsement of

4. Note that our conceptualization of low bicultural competence does not differentiate between (1) individuals with strong competence in one culture (American or Chinese) only, and (2) individuals with medium-weak competence in both cultures. We believe this conceptualization is justified. Recall that we are not measuring the broader construct of "cultural competence" (i.e., being able to adequately function in "some" culture or cultures, which could perhaps be measured as a continuum); rather, we are interested in differentiating between individuals who display significant and comparable levels of involvement with their two cultures from those who do not.

each strategy is measured across five domains: marriage (e.g., “I would rather marry a Chinese than an American” [separation]), cultural traditions (e.g., “I feel that Chinese should adapt to American cultural traditions and not maintain their own” [assimilation]), language (e.g., “It’s important to me to be fluent in both Chinese and English” [integration]), social activities (e.g., “I prefer social activities that involve neither Americans nor Chinese” [marginalization]), and friends (e.g., “I prefer to have both Chinese and American friends” [integration]). Each item is rated using a scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

In the present study, the alpha reliabilities for the assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization scales were .63, .55, .55, and .53, respectively. These relatively low levels of reliability are somewhat problematic and suggest that scores on the four acculturation strategies should be interpreted with caution (see Flannery, 1998, and Rudmin, 1996, for a review of some of the conceptual and methodological problems attributed to Berry’s instrument). Interscale correlations for this measure and all the other measures in this study are reported in Appendix A.

Bicultural Identity Measures

Bicultural Identity Integration Scale – Version 1 (BIIS-1; Benet-Martínez, 2003a). This new, multi-item measure of BII was developed to incorporate the notion of cultural conflict (i.e., feeling torn between one’s two cultural identities vs. feeling that they are compatible), and cultural distance (i.e., perceiving one’s two cultural identities as separate and dissociated vs. hyphenated or fused) as possible components of BII (see Benet-Martínez, 2003a, for detailed information about the development and refinement of this instrument). The eight items comprising the two scales, which are shown in Table 2, expand on the preliminary BII measure (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002) while incorporating the experiential, phenomenological aspects of negotiating dual identities described in past qualitative literature (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Vivero & Jenkins, 1999). Because all the items developed for this measure have a common theme (biculturals’ own perceptions of how their Chinese and American cultural identities are organized and how they intersect with each other), we suspect that the cultural conflict and distance items will define different but interrelated factors. Instructions for this measure are similar to those used in Benet-Martínez et al. (2002). Respondents rate their agreement with each item on a scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

When a factor analysis with Varimax rotation was performed on the current sample’s responses to the BIIS-1, the two hypothesized factors representing cultural distance and cultural conflict emerged (see Table 2).

Table 1
 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between BII Components
 (Cultural Conflict and Distance) and Other Variables

| | M | SD | Scale Range | Conflict | Distance |
|---|------|-----|-------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Demographics/Acculturation</i> | | | | | |
| Age | 24.5 | 7.3 | — | -.04 | .18* |
| Sex ¹ | — | — | — | .14 | -.13 |
| Years lived in U.S. | 10.8 | 4.4 | — | .13 | -.29*** |
| Years lived in Chinese culture ² | 14.0 | 7.8 | — | -.09 | .36*** |
| English proficiency/use | 4.3 | .9 | 1-6 | -.02 | -.55*** |
| Chinese proficiency/use | 4.1 | 1 | 1-6 | .13 | .32*** |
| U.S. identification | 3.7 | 1.3 | 1-6 | -.08 | -.52*** |
| Chinese identification | 4.6 | 1.2 | 1-6 | .02 | .11 |
| Bicultural competence | — | — | — | .14 | -.39*** |
| <i>Acculturation Attitudes</i> | | | | | |
| Assimilation | 2.2 | .7 | 1-5 | .04 | -.16 |
| Separation | 2.2 | .6 | 1-5 | .09 | .37*** |
| Integration | 4.0 | .5 | 1-5 | .06 | -.10 |
| Marginalization | 1.5 | .5 | 1-5 | .00 | .17 |
| <i>Bicultural Identity Integration</i> | | | | | |
| BIIS-P | 3.2 | 1.2 | 1-5 | -.35** | -.48** |
| Cultural Conflict | 2.6 | .8 | 1-5 | — | -.07 |
| Cultural Distance | 2.5 | .8 | 1-5 | -.07 | — |
| <i>Acculturative Stress</i> | | | | | |
| Work | 3.5 | .9 | 1-5 | .19 | .09 |
| Linguistic | 2.1 | 1.1 | 1-5 | .21 | .30*** |
| Intercultural Relations | 2.6 | 1 | 1-5 | .31** | .03 |
| Discrimination | 3.1 | 1 | 1-5 | .24* | .02 |
| Cultural Isolation | 2.4 | .8 | 1-5 | .28* | .29* |
| <i>Personality</i> | | | | | |
| Extraversion | 3.6 | .8 | 1-5 | .09 | -.22 |
| Agreeableness | 3.7 | .6 | 1-5 | .13 | -.22 |
| Conscientiousness | 3.6 | .7 | 1-5 | .04 | -.05 |
| Neuroticism | 3.0 | .7 | 1-5 | .34** | .02 |
| Openness | 3.7 | .7 | 1-5 | .01 | -.34** |

Note. Participants were 133 first-generation, Chinese American biculturals.

¹Coded as 1 (male) and 2 (female).

²For most participants, this variable also represented age of migration to the United States. BIIS-P = Bicultural Identity Integration Scale (preliminary measure).

Table 2
Factorial Structure of the Bicultural Identity Integration Scale (BIIS-1)

| | Cultural | |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| | Distance | Conflict |
| I am simply a Chinese who lives in North America | .72 | – .03 |
| I keep Chinese and American cultures separate | .58 | – .13 |
| I feel Chinese American | – .73 | – .04 |
| I feel part of a combined culture | – .79 | – .03 |
| I am conflicted between the American and Chinese ways of doing things | .04 | .66 |
| I feel like someone moving between two cultures | .18 | .64 |
| I feel caught between the Chinese and American cultures | .00 | .76 |
| I don't feel trapped between the Chinese and American cultures | .09 | – .78 |

Note. $N = 133$ first-generation, Chinese American biculturals.

The alphas for the conflict and distance scales were .74 and .69, respectively. Surprisingly, and contrary to our expectations, the correlation between scores on these two scales was close to zero (.02).⁵ These results indicate that a bicultural individual can perceive his or her ethnic and mainstream cultural orientations to be relatively dissociated (e.g., “I keep Chinese and American cultures separate”) while not feeling that they conflict with each other (e.g., “I don't feel trapped between the Chinese and American cultures”). Similarly, a bicultural can see herself or himself as having a combined identity (e.g., “I feel Chinese American”) while simultaneously perceiving the two cultural orientations as being in conflict with each other (e.g., “I feel caught between the two cultures”). The independence of cultural distance and conflict found here may suggest a modification of the original conceptualization of the BII construct. This important issue will be addressed more fully later in the article. It should be noted, however, that, for the purposes of simplicity and consistency, throughout the article we will sometimes use the terms *low* and *high* BII

5. Results from a factor analysis of the BIIS-1 items using an oblique rotation yielded a two-factor structure virtually similar to the one reported in Table 2. In the oblique solution, the correlation between the cultural conflict and distance dimensions was .025.

(instead of cultural distance and conflict) when discussing the more global and abstract concept of dual cultural identity integration.

Bicultural Identity Integration Scale–Preliminary (BIIS-P; Benet-Martínez, et al., 2002). This vignette BII measure, used in Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study, was also included in the present study for comparative purposes. BII-P ratings were reversed so that high scores would reflect high levels of BII.

Acculturation Stress

Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory (RASI; Benet-Martínez, 2003b). According to the acculturation and ethnic minority literature (e.g., Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994; Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado, 1987; Saldaña, 1994), stress associated with the acculturation process is a multifaceted experience related to interpersonal, intellectual/professional, and structural pressures. The RASI was developed because none of the few existing acculturation stress measures systematically and evenly covered all the domains identified (see Benet-Martínez, 2003b, for detailed information about RASI's development and refinement). The RASI includes 15 items tapping culture-related challenges in the following five life domains: *language skills* (e.g., being misunderstood because of one's accent), *work* (e.g., having to work harder than nonimmigrant/minority peers), *intercultural relations* (e.g., having disagreements with others for behaving in ways that are "too American" or "too ethnic"), *discrimination* (e.g., being mistreated because of one's ethnicity), and *cultural/ethnic makeup of the community* (e.g., living in an environment that is not culturally diverse). Each item is answered using a scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

A factor analysis with Varimax rotation of the current sample's responses on this measure yielded five factors representing each of the five hypothesized domains (see Table 3). Alphas for the Language, Discrimination, Intercultural Relations, Cultural Isolation, and Work scales were .84, .80, .75, .68, and .68, respectively.⁶ The average interscale correlation for this measure was .23 (range: .04–.52; see Appendix A), indicating that

6. Note that the item "When I am in a place or room where I am the only person of my ethnic/cultural group, I often feel different or isolated" (Cultural Isolation factor) has sizable cross-loadings on the Language and Discrimination factors; this suggests that the "solo" experience may be often be associated with self-consciousness regarding one's English skills and/or the experience of racial/cultural social rejection (Pollak & Niemann, 1998).

our proposed acculturation stress domains are, for the most part, inter-related components of a broader construct (acculturation stress).

Personality

Big Five Inventory (BFI; Benet-Martínez & John, 1998). This measure uses 44 short phrases to assess the most prototypical traits associated with each of the Big Five basic personality dimensions (John, 1990): Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness. Respondents rated each of the 44 short phrases on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*). The reliability and convergent/discriminant validity of this measure has been established in both European American and ethnic minority samples, including Asian Americans (Benet-Martínez & John, 1998; Gross & John, 1998). In the present study, alpha reliabilities for the Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness scales were .78, .73, .82, .84, and .80, respectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

The first two columns in Table 1 show the means and standard deviations for all our study variables. For the purposes of clarity, variables are organized in five domains: Demographic/Acculturation, Acculturation Attitudes, Bicultural Identity Integration, Acculturation Stress, and Personality. With regard to the demographic/acculturation variables, note that our sample is overall highly bicultural: participants have been significantly exposed to both American and Chinese cultures (i.e., participants had lived an average of 10.8 and 14 years in each of these cultures, respectively), report comparable levels of use and fluency in both English and Chinese languages, and identify with both cultures (although Chinese identification is higher). With regard to Berry's acculturation attitudes and the BII measures, note that our sample clearly supports an integration (i.e., biculturalism) strategy and has scores on cultural conflict and distance (as well as on BII-P) that are centered around the middle of the scale. Note also that the sample reports the highest levels of acculturation stress in the work and discrimination domains and the least in the linguistic domain. Lastly, the sample reports levels on the Big

Table 3
Factorial Structure of the Riverside Acculturation Stress Inventory (RASI)

| | Language | Discrimin. | Relations | Isolation | Work |
|--|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------|
| <i>Language Skills</i> | | | | | |
| It's hard for me to perform well at work because of my English skills. | .85 | -.03 | .09 | .07 | .22 |
| I often feel misunderstood or limited in daily situations because of my English skills. | .84 | .16 | .05 | .07 | .20 |
| It bothers me that I have an accent. | .81 | -.08 | .11 | .02 | .08 |
| <i>Discrimination/Prejudice</i> | | | | | |
| I feel discriminated against by mainstream Americans because of my cultural/ethnic background. | .00 | .87 | .20 | .04 | .11 |
| I have been treated rudely or unfairly because of my cultural/ethnic background. | -.03 | .81 | .19 | .00 | .18 |
| I feel that people very often interpret my behavior based on their stereotypes of what people of my cultural/ethnic background are like. | .02 | .67 | .00 | .11 | .12 |
| <i>Intercultural Relations</i> | | | | | |
| I have had disagreements with people of my own cultural/ethnic group (e.g., friends or family) for liking American ways of doing things. | -.11 | .09 | .81 | -.09 | .07 |
| I feel that my particular cultural/ethnic practices have caused conflict in my relationships. | .13 | .09 | .73 | .23 | -.03 |
| I have had disagreements with Americans for having or preferring the costumes of my own ethnic/cultural group. | .24 | .10 | .69 | .04 | -.05 |

Table 3 (cont.)

| | Language | Discrimin. | Relations | Isolation | Work |
|--|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| <i>Cultural Isolation</i> | | | | | |
| I feel that there are not enough people of my own ethnic/cultural group in my living environment. | -.05 | .00 | .07 | .86 | .13 |
| I feel that the environment where I live is not multicultural enough; it doesn't have enough cultural richness. | .18 | .20 | .08 | .75 | .12 |
| When I am in a place or room where I am the only person of my ethnic/cultural group, I often feel different or isolated. | .35 | .50 | -.12 | .36 | -.22 |
| <i>Work Challenges</i> | | | | | |
| Because of my particular ethnic/cultural status, I have to work harder than most Americans. | .10 | .00 | -.01 | .27 | .75 |
| I feel the pressure that what "I" do is representative of my ethnic/cultural group's abilities. | .17 | .23 | -.03 | -.12 | .65 |
| In looking for a job, I sometimes feel that my cultural/ethnic status is a limitation. | .33 | .22 | .04 | .22 | .54 |

Note. $N = 133$ first-generation, Chinese American biculturals.

Five personality scales that are comparable to these reported with other Asian samples (e.g., Benet-Martínez & Karakitapoglu, 2003; Ryder et al., 2000).

Correlational Analyses

Table 1 also presents the correlations between cultural conflict and cultural distance and all the other variables in our study (see Appendix A for the complete correlation matrix). A detailed discussion of all the significant correlations in each domain (25 in total) is beyond the scope of this article and would add unnecessary redundancy since most of these associations are captured by the path analyses we report later. However, a few patterns are worth noting. First, not surprisingly, BIIS-P correlates with both our newly developed cultural conflict and distance scales. A quick inspection of the right two columns reveals numerous significant associations for cultural distance in all five domains. Cultural conflict has fewer associations across domains (and very few with demographics/acclulturation variables). Before turning to the path analyses, in the next section, we discuss in detail the correlations in the demographic/acclulturation domain, which, for the most part, are not included in the path analyses to avoid models of excessive complexity.

Note that there are no gender effects and virtually no age effects for either conflict or distance. However, both years lived in the United States and in a Chinese culture are inversely related to cultural distance. This pattern suggests that the older an individual is when coming to the United States (or the less exposed to American culture he or she is), the more cultural distance the individual perceives between his or her cultural identities. Note also that cultural distance is negatively associated with both English proficiency/use and American identification, but is independent from Chinese identification. This suggests that, at least for first-generation biculturals, competence in mainstream American culture may play a major role in the development of a “hyphenated” bicultural identity. Finally, bicultural competence scores are unrelated to cultural conflict but are highly (negatively) associated with cultural distance, suggesting that individuals who report having overlapping or hyphenated cultural identities are more likely to participate in both cultures effectively.

In summary, the above pattern of correlations suggests that: (1) the associations between the pilot BIIS-P scale and demographic/acculturation variables reported in Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) study were probably driven by the (confounded) cultural distance component of the BII vignette; (2) perceptions of cultural distance are closely related to traditional acculturation variables (i.e., years lived in each culture, language proficiency, and identification with mainstream culture); and (3) cultural conflict seems largely independent from these acculturation factors. In all, these results suggest that cultural distance, but not cultural conflict, is related to objective, learning- and performance-based aspects of the acculturation experience (e.g., amount of cultural exposure, language proficiency).

In order to map an initial network of antecedents for cultural conflict and distance, we next ran a series of path analyses, using structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques. These analyses allowed us to ascertain the unique contribution of our acculturation, personality, and sociodemographic variables in predicting BII, as well as the specific causal links within and between these different types of antecedents.

Path Analyses

Using AMOS 4.0 structural equation modeling software, we developed an initial model where cultural conflict and distance were each predicted by what we considered psychological *proximal* factors (i.e., different types of acculturation stress, bicultural competence, acculturation strategies), as well as more *distal* or *stable* psychological variables (personality dispositions). Specifically, recall that we had suggested earlier that perceived contextual acculturation stressors (as measured by our new RASI scales) would negatively impact BII, by increasing the feeling that one's two cultures cannot both be embraced. Further, we hypothesized that traditional acculturation variables (e.g., Berry's separation strategy, bicultural competence) would also influence BII, particularly the cultural distance component. Also, earlier, we introduced the idea that variations in BII would be predicted by certain personality traits, particularly those dispositions related to cognitive flexibility (i.e., openness), emotional resilience (i.e., low neuroticism), and social skills (i.e., extraversion). Finally, because personality traits function as antecedents to many types of behavioral outcomes, we also specified some paths between

the Big Five and the more proximate predictors (e.g., low extraversion would predict feelings of cultural isolation, and low agreeableness would heighten feelings of discrimination and strain in intercultural relations). After defining the specific paths included in our initial model, these theory-driven general hypotheses were somewhat expanded and streamlined with the correlational information provided by Table 1 (e.g., a path between linguistic stress and cultural conflict was added).⁷

Next, we proceeded to run a series of path analyses that started with our initial model; this model was modified three times based on the information provided by the modification indices (e.g., a path from openness to bicultural competence was added, the path from agreeableness to discrimination was dropped, and the work-related acculturation stress variable was dropped from the model). Models were evaluated using the χ^2 /df ratio, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA). In this and all successive models, the Big Five and all the residuals of the endogenous variables (i.e., acculturation stressors, acculturation orientation, cultural conflict and distance), were allowed to correlate with each other. Final estimates for these correlations are available from the authors.

The final model is depicted in Figure 1. This figure includes all the paths that had coefficients significant at a *p* value of .05 or lower. Note that direct effects on our outcome variables (cultural conflict and distance) are represented by thick lines, while indirect effects are represented by thin lines. Numbers in parenthesis represent path coefficients obtained when the Big Five were not introduced in the model (so that the predictive value of the proximal variables could also be assessed without controlling for the more stable personality characteristics). The resulting fit indices for this model were: χ^2 /df = 1.5, CFI = .99, GFI = .939, RMSEA = .065, RMR = .045, indicating a satisfactory fit to the data.

7. To conserve degrees of freedom and still account for measurement error, we used composite scales as observed variables and used each scale's reliability estimate to fix the error terms of the scale variables. Liang, Lawrence, Bennett, and Whitelaw (1990) recommend this method in working with smaller sample sizes while not compromising measurement specificity.

An inspection of Figure 1 reveals that cultural conflict is predicted mostly by acculturation stress in the linguistic and intercultural relations domains and moderately by discrimination. This suggests that cultural conflict is largely rooted in acculturation-related interpersonal causes, specifically, the feeling that one is socially rejected, mistreated, and pressured because of one's cultural/ethnic memberships. Cultural distance, on the other hand, is predicted largely by feelings of cultural isolation and, like cultural conflict, by linguistic challenges. Notice that acculturation stress in the work domain is not included in Figure 1; this is because, when all five types of acculturation stress were included in the model, stress in the work domain no longer predicted BII. Several traditional acculturation variables also emerge as important predictors in our model. Specifically, bicultural competence (negatively) predicts cultural distance, as does Berry's separation strategy, which has both a direct effect on cultural distance, as well as an indirect effect through bicultural competence.

Finally, as anticipated, several personality variables, most notably neuroticism and openness, emerge as important precursors of BII and other variables in the model. Openness seems particularly important: individuals who are rigid and closed to new experiences are more likely to compartmentalize cultural identities, feel stressed about their linguistic abilities, support a separation acculturation strategy, and be less biculturally competent (all factors that, in turn, are important predictors of cultural distance and/or conflict). Like low openness, the results for neuroticism indicate that this disposition also puts individuals at risk for negative acculturation experiences. Specifically, neurotic individuals who tend to feel vulnerable and anxious are more likely to perceive conflict between their cultural identities and also experience stress in the linguistic and intercultural relations domains (which, in turn, predict conflict and/or distance).

Interestingly, two other personality dispositions, namely, the interpersonal traits of agreeableness and extraversion, also play a role in the acculturation processes depicted in Figure 1. Agreeable individuals, perhaps because of their easygoing nature, are less likely to report conflict in their intercultural relationships. Extraverted individuals, on the other hand, perhaps because of the interpersonal resources and gains associated with being sociable and outgoing, are less likely to feel strained by a living environment that is not very

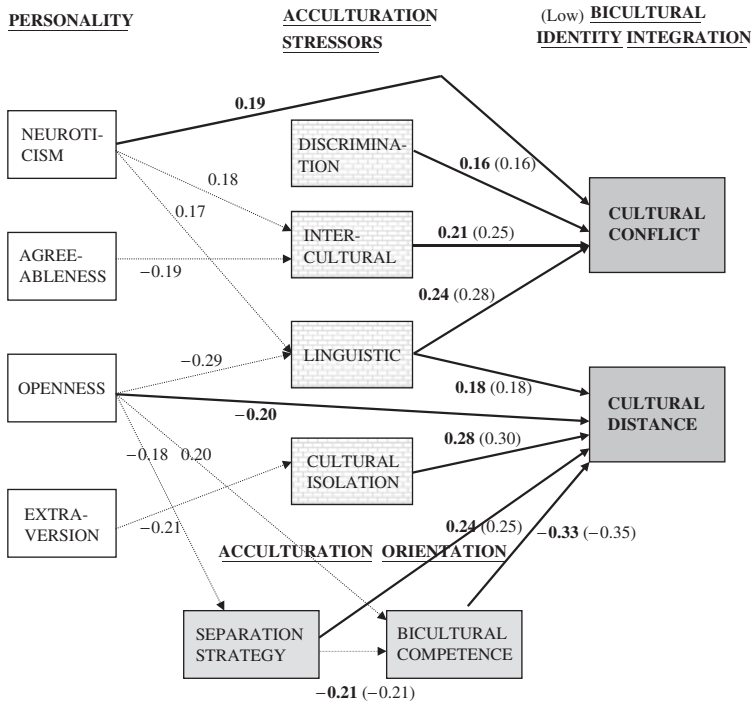


Figure 1

N = 133 first-generation, Chinese American biculturals; Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): Components (cultural distance and conflict) and antecedents (personality dispositions, acculturation orientation, and acculturation stressors).

multicultural. Lastly, note that conscientiousness does not predict any of processes depicted in Figure 1.⁸

8. An examination of Appendix A reveals several significant associations between the Big Five traits and demographic/acculturation variables such as years lived in the United States and a Chinese country, and the language and cultural identification variables (see McCrae, Yik, Trapnell, Bond, & Paulhus, 1998; and Ryder et al., 2000; for similar results). Although a detailed empirical examination and discussion of these patterns is beyond the scope of the present study, we wish to note that these associations are interesting and highlight the significant role played by dispositional factors in the acculturation process (see McCrae et al., 1998, and Ryder et al., 2000, for interesting discussions of this topic). The pattern of inter-correlations among the demographic/acculturation variables is also interesting and highlights the mutual constitution of many of these factors in delineating

In conclusion, results from the path and correlational analyses elucidate a meaningful yet complex picture of BII: First, the degree of distance versus blendedness and degree of conflict versus harmony perceived between one's cultural identities, which initially were understood as components or dimensions of the larger construct of BII, in fact, seem to be independent constructs. Cultural distance is predicted by being dispositionally low on openness, having low levels of bicultural competence, supporting a separation acculturation strategy, and experiencing linguistic acculturation stress and cultural isolation. Cultural conflict, on the other hand, is predicted by having a neurotic disposition, experiencing linguistic acculturation stress, and facing the interpersonal acculturation challenges of discrimination and strained intercultural relations. Overall, these patterns of relationships suggest that variations in BII, far from being purely subjective identity representations, are psychologically meaningful experiences linked to specific dispositional factors and perceived contextual pressures.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present study unpacks the construct of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) and delineates an initial network of personality, sociodemographic, and acculturation precursors. A key finding in this study is that variations in BII do not define a unitary identity construct, as initially suggested in earlier work (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). Instead, BII seems to involve two independent psychological constructs, *cultural conflict* and *cultural distance*, each representing unique and separate aspects of the dynamic intersection between mainstream and ethnic cultural identities in bicultural individuals. More specifically, the psychometric independence of cultural conflict and distance suggests that they are formative (i.e., causal) rather than reflective (i.e., effect) indicators of BII (Bollen & Lennox, 1991). That is, rather than a latent construct with two resulting dimensions (cultural distance and conflict), BII should perhaps be understood as emerging or resulting from (rather than leading to) variations in cultural distance and conflict. Thus, behaviors, attitudes, and feelings described by cultural researchers under the rubric of low BII

acculturation trajectories (e.g., strong association between linguistic and cultural identification variables), as is also found in other studies (Ryder et al., 2000).

(e.g., “Biculturalism is a difficult dichotomy”; “You are neither culture”) may in fact be largely capturing the phenomenology of the more basic experience of cultural conflict and/or cultural distance. Furthermore, perhaps BII should be conceptualized as a process more than a construct, and cultural distance and conflict may be two important components in this process. Still, until future studies examine BII in larger bicultural samples and with different cultural groups, the independence of cultural conflict and distance (and our proposed reconceptualization of BII) should be interpreted with caution and not be seen as conclusive.

Lastly, we found that cultural distance and conflict are associated with different sets of dispositional and acculturation antecedents, which explains the very different phenomenological experiences of biculturalism in the existing literature. The implications of these findings are discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

BII: Cultural Conflict

Our results indicate that the perception that mainstream and ethnic cultures clash with one another seems to be capturing uniquely affective (vs. cognitive or neutral) aspects of the bicultural experience. This conclusion is supported by cultural conflict’s pattern of antecedents (e.g., neuroticism) and its independence from traditional demographic, attitudinal, and performance-related acculturation variables such as amount of cultural exposure, acculturation attitudes, and linguistic variables. In this way, cultural conflict may be informative regarding affective elements of the bicultural experience that have been overlooked in traditional acculturation research.

Our findings also indicate that certain acculturation stressors (discrimination and strain in the linguistic and intercultural relations domains) are predictive of cultural conflict. Perhaps these strains, particularly discrimination and intercultural relations stress, create a strong discrepancy between explicit and implicit attitudes toward each culture. If individuals consciously identify with and value both mainstream Anglo/American and ethnic cultures, but also experience prejudice and rejection from members of one or both of these groups, feelings of anger and distress may create an internal discrepancy that may be subjectively experienced as cultural conflict

(Van Hook & Higgins, 1988). In addition, it is possible that for some biculturals (particularly those high on neuroticism), switching cognitive and behavioral frames in response to different cultural cues (Hong et al., 2000) is accompanied by feelings of confusion regarding one's ability to maintain consistent, recognizable self-identities.

In conclusion, perceptions of cultural conflict appear to be a product of both neuroticism (e.g., vulnerability, rumination, and emotional rigidity) and perceived contextual pressures, mainly stress in the linguistic, intercultural relations, and discrimination domains. We propose that these factors may challenge biculturals' feelings of efficacy in maintaining consistent and harmonious self-images and group affiliations, thus leading to the perception that one "has to choose one culture or the other" (see earlier quotation).

BII: Cultural Distance

In contrast to cultural conflict, our results show that the perception that one's two cultures are nonoverlapping, dissociated, and distant from one another is related to more learning- and performance-related aspects of the acculturation experience, including the amount of exposure to each culture, acculturation attitudes (separation and/or integration), English and ethnic language proficiency and use, and identification with mainstream culture (but not with ethnic culture). In this sense, perceptions of cultural distance are more similar to, yet not interchangeable with, traditional acculturation concepts regarding attitudes and behavior.

Cultural distance may be related to recently proposed identity constructs such as alternation (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997), identity compartmentalization (Roccas & Brewer, 2002), and optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991). Specifically, some biculturals may choose to keep their ethnic and mainstream identities separate in an effort to affirm both their intragroup (ethnic) similarity and intergroup (American) differentiation. For example, in our study, biculturals high on cultural distance may be keeping ethnic (e.g., Chinese) and American cultures separate to affirm their strong ties to their Chinese culture while also differentiating themselves from the mainstream American cultural group. Note that this idea is consistent with our findings that cultural distance is somewhat positively associated with the endorsement of a separation acculturation strategy and negatively correlated with American cultural identification.

An alternative interpretation of cultural distance is that this construct captures biculturals' assessment of the overall degree of difference/similarity between the salient features of the ethnic and mainstream cultures (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). That is, cultural distance may be related to seeing one's two cultures as being very different from each other. To the extent that perceptions of difference may be accentuated in the early stages of mainstream culture acquisition (e.g., experience of cultural shock), one could speculate that, as biculturals' exposure to the mainstream culture increases, perceptions of cultural distance would decrease. The negative correlation found in our study between cultural distance and years of exposure to U.S. culture seems to support this argument.

Regardless of whether cultural distance is driven by perceptual or motivational forces, our studies also show that this construct is heightened by dispositional factors (low openness), performance variables (low bicultural competence), and acculturation-related contextual factors (living in a culturally isolated environment and having linguistic difficulties). Perhaps low openness makes acculturating individuals perceive ethnic and mainstream cultures more rigidly, both in terms of their "essential" defining characteristics and the boundaries between them (Yzerbyt, Corneille, & Estrada, 2001); it may also make them less permeable to new cultural values and life styles. Such attitudes may lead to the belief that one's two cultural identities cannot "come together" and must remain separate.

With regard to the impact of cultural isolation and linguistic stress on cultural distance, one possible interpretation is that these experiences function as chronic and explicit reminders of biculturals' unique status as cultural minorities. For example, the perception that one has a noticeable accent and/or that one's cultural background is uncommon in the local environment may increase the cognitive salience of biculturals' own distinct cultural characteristics (historical, ethnic, and linguistic), which, in turn, may accentuate perceptions of cultural difference.

In conclusion, cultural distance appears to be driven by dispositional factors, such as (low) openness, and perceived contextual pressures, such as stress in the linguistic domain and the experience of cultural isolation. We propose that all of these factors may challenge biculturals' feelings of efficacy in creating a combined, synergistic cultural identity, thus leading to the perception that "biculturalism is a dichotomy" (see earlier quotation).

Limitations and Future Work

This article represents an initial, exploratory step towards understanding bicultural identity and, as such, our results need to be replicated and our designs refined and expanded in future studies. For instance, because we relied entirely on a single ethnic group—Chinese American, first-generation immigrants—future studies should examine how generalizable our findings are to non-Chinese ethnic groups, who are likely to have different cultural norms, migration histories, and patterns of race relations in the United States. Secondly, we examined only first generation biculturals; thus, future work is needed to see whether BII is relevant to nonimmigrant biculturals, that is, individuals for whom the internalization of two cultures did not involve a physical relocation to the United States. Third, our sample size was somewhat small for the testing of complex models, and, given the exploratory nature of this study, our findings and conclusions should be validated in future studies with larger numbers of participants. Fourth, although our study identified some negative antecedents of low BII (e.g., discrimination, cultural isolation) that are likely to impact biculturals' overall adjustment, additional work is needed to examine empirically how acculturation stressors and cultural conflict and distance separately and jointly influence overall psychological well-being (e.g., levels of anxious and depressed mood). A new study by Benet-Martínez, Haritatos, and Santana (2004) addresses these three types of limitations by examining BII and its adjustment outcomes in bicultural samples varying in ethnicity and generation status.

A fifth limitation concerns the abstract, context-free, and normative assessment of cultural distance and conflict in our studies. Future work should explore the behavioral domains associated with biculturals' feelings of conflict (e.g., clashes in work values, marriage practices, gender roles, etc.), as well as the types of contexts associated with biculturals' feelings of compartmentalization (e.g., home vs. work, relatives vs. friends, etc.). In addition, given the ongoing controversy over the benefits and costs of identity complexity (Rafaeli-Mor & Steinberg, 2002), future research should examine BII in relation to other well-known structural models of self-concept and identity structure, such as those proposed by Linville (1987), Showers (1992), and Donahue, Robins, Roberts, and John (1993).

Finally, it is important to note that the processes proposed in Figure 1, like most psychological processes, occur over time and probably include bidirectional effects (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The correlational and cross-sectional nature of our data limits our ability to be conclusive about the direction of effects in our model. However, our theoretical framing of these results in terms of personality and contextual antecedents of cultural conflict and distance is consistent with existing personality and acculturation literature (Ryder et al., 2000; Saldaña, 1994). In addition, it is possible that the direction of effects involved in negotiating bicultural identities may actually change over an individual's life course. For instance, it may be that, over time, particularly once individuals' bicultural identities and personalities becomes more stable in middle and late adulthood, variations in cultural conflict and distance may come to impact individuals' choice of acculturation orientation and their experience of acculturation stress, instead of the other way around. The changing nature of the immigration experience provides an ideal context for longitudinal studies that could examine how variations in identity (cultural distance and conflict), acculturation (acculturation strategies and acculturation stress), and personality impact these same variables at different times through life (see Church, 1982; and Gardiner, Mutter, & Kosmitzki, 1998, for discussions of bidirectional effects and longitudinal designs in culture change studies). Such studies would also allow for an examination of BII among samples of biculturals older than those in the current study. Thus, further studies are clearly needed to expand and clarify the exact nature of the BII process; however, the present study makes an important first contribution by proposing and evaluating one possible model that closely fits and helps explain the experiences of identity negotiation among biculturals.

Concluding Remarks

Cultural and cross-cultural psychology seem to be moving away from an initial focus on cultural differences and dynamics *between* groups toward an interest in how cultures are negotiated and played out *within* the individual (Phinney, 1999). This shift calls for complex studies that acknowledge the interplay between personality, cultural, and sociocognitive variables. The present study takes such an approach in trying to understand individual variations in bicultural

identity integration (BII). In doing so, we identified two distinct and little understood bicultural identity constructs: attitudes regarding the conceptual organization of dual cultures (i.e., cultural distance) and feelings associated with the emotional process of navigating one's position within and between each culture (cultural conflict), each with largely different personality and sociocultural antecedents. We hope the present work brings awareness to the issue that "biculturalism is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon; there is not just one way of being bicultural." (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; p. 19).

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Acculturative Stress

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|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|------|------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------|------|-----------------|------------|------------|
| 15. Work | -.22 | .43 -.40 | .42 -.30 | .17 | -.08 | -.14 | .11 | .20 | -.19 | .17 | .15 | .02 | — | |
| 16. Linguistic | -.37 | .58 -.60 | .43 -.47 | .02 | -.38 | .23 | .23 | .36 -.08 | .22 | .06 | .06 | .52 | — | |
| 17. Intercultural Relations | .06 | -.06 | .04 | .03 | .03 | -.20 | .26 | .31 | .06 | .09 | -.13 | .05 | .01 | |
| 18. Discrimination | .23 -.24 | .13 | -.03 | .06 | -.06 | .20 | .19 | .23 | .01 | -.09 | .02 | .00 | -.13 | |
| 19. Cultural Isolation | .18 | .12 -.18 | .18 -.16 | .06 | .09 | .24 | .20 | .29 -.24 | .19 | .08 | .12 | .32 | .16 | |
| <i>Personality</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20. Extraversion | -.08 | -.10 | .22 -.15 | .23 | .04 | .11 | -.01 | -.07 | -.25 | .17 | -.09 | .07 | -.29 | |
| 21. Agreeableness | -.10 | .33 -.13 | .20 | -.07 | .20 | -.03 | -.13 | -.12 | -.05 | -.15 | .11 | .11 | -.13 | |
| 22. Conscientiousness | -.01 | .30 -.01 | .07 | -.10 | .16 | .03 | -.07 | -.07 | -.04 | -.04 | -.04 | .18 -.26 | .10 | |
| 23. Neuroticism | -.01 | .05 | -.13 | .04 | .00 | -.11 | .09 | .28 | .29 | .02 | .13 | -.15 | -.03 | |
| 24. Openness | .26 -.13 | .46 -.23 | .23 -.05 | .20 | -.04 | -.05 | -.34 | .16 | -.16 | .07 | -.05 | -.10 | .34 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | .08 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .03 |
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Note. $N = 133$ first-generation, Chinese American biculturals. Correlations significant at $p < .01$ are in bold; correlations significant at $p < .05$ are underlined.

