Bicultural Identity Conflict in Second-Generation Asian Canadians

MIRELLA L. STROINK
Lakehead University

RICHARD N. LALONDE
York University

ABSTRACT. Researchers have shown that bicultural individuals, including 2nd-generation immigrants, face a potential conflict between 2 cultural identities. The present authors extended this primarily qualitative research on the bicultural experience by adopting the social identity perspective (H. Tajfel & J. C. Turner, 1986). They developed and tested an empirically testable model of the role of cultural construals, in-group prototypicality, and identity in bicultural conflict in 2 studies with 2nd-generation Asian Canadians. In both studies, the authors expected and found that participants' construals of their 2 cultures as different predicted lower levels of simultaneous identification with both cultures. Furthermore, the authors found this relation was mediated by participants' feelings of prototypicality as members of both groups. Although the perception of cultural difference did not predict well-being as consistently and directly as the authors expected, levels of simultaneous identification did show these relations. The authors discuss results in the context of social identity theory (H. Tajfel & J. C. Turner) as a framework for understanding bicultural conflict.

Keywords: acculturation, bicultural conflict, immigration, social identity

WITH APPROXIMATELY 200,000 IMMIGRANTS arriving yearly in Canada and another million receiving permanent residency in the United States, immigration is important to policy and society in both countries. Immigrants today and throughout history bring with them a diverse and rich set of cultural norms, values, and practices. Nestled within the larger North American landscape, these unique cultural ways and their interactions with North American culture form

the primary socialization environment for the children of these immigrants, the second generation. In the present research, we explored the potential for conflict between heritage and North American identities among second-generation Asian immigrants to Canada.

Keeping the heritage culture present within the immigrant family is facilitated in Canada by an official policy of multiculturalism (Government of Canada, Ministry of Heritage, 2004). This policy formalizes an assumption that identifying with a heritage culture and adopting its values and practices should present no barrier to full identity as a Canadian and full membership in the Canadian community. This formal policy does not necessarily manifest in the interactions that immigrants have in Canadian society, however, because immigrants continue to encounter discrimination in Canada (e.g., Dion, 2001). Nevertheless, such policies do have implications for the acculturative experiences of immigrants, helping to shape host culture acculturative attitudes, for example (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997).

Second-generation Canadians are often enculturated within two cultural frameworks simultaneously. These children encounter Western values and ideals through peers, teachers, and media, for example, and the values and ideals of the heritage culture through parents and other members of the immigrant community. These two sets of cultural values and ideals have the potential to be different, perhaps even contradictory (e.g., Sung, 1985). Therefore, the cultural niche that is created by the immigrant family and supported by Canadian policy can be experienced by the developing children of these families as being in opposition to the larger Canadian culture. Members of the second generation and other bicultural individuals may thus experience some degree of personal conflict as they attempt to identify with both groups and reconcile their unique norms and values. The purpose of the present research was to examine this conflict in second-generation Asian Canadians, identifying potential outcomes and underlying processes.

Bicultural Conflict

The potential for conflict between two cultural identities has been noted within the psychological and sociological literatures. The majority of these studies has been qualitative in method and has described a broad range of conflicts associated with simultaneous membership in two distinct cultural groups. For example, in a descriptive study on the experiences of Chinese immigrant children in the United States, Sung (1985) found that children who experienced Chinese culture at home and American culture at school experienced conflicts in several domains. These children reported feeling forced to choose between what was taught at home and what was commonly accepted by American society. The most commonly cited domains of conflict included the display of appropriate levels of aggression, sexual openness, and centrality of sports and education.

Several researchers have found bicultural conflict among Native American children who are raised within both traditional and mainstream cultures (e.g., Garrett, 1996; Little Soldier, 1985; Sanders, 1987). Likewise, researchers have described these children as feeling pressure to compromise their cultural values and behaviors to successfully meet the expectations of the wider social context. Researchers have hypothesized that the stress associated with reconciling the differences between these two cultures aggravates the existing challenges of identity formation in adolescence. Garrett (1996) cited this added stress as a possible factor in the decline in academic functioning and motivation observed among many Native American high school students.

Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) used qualitative and quantitative methods to study the bicultural identifications of a sample of African American adolescents and a sample of Mexican American adolescents. The researchers found evidence of a conflict between the ethnic and mainstream cultural identities of both groups, although the nature and strength of this conflict depended on how the adolescent balanced the two identities. Those who integrated the two cultures and saw them as being similar reported the least amount of conflict, except where it concerned pressure from ethnic peers to behave more in accordance with ethnic norms. Those who identified strongly with their ethnic culture while abiding by mainstream norms in certain contexts (i.e., at school) reported greater conflict, feeling that they had to subvert important parts of themselves to approach expectations that they could never fully meet. Those who identified exclusively with their ethnic culture did not experience bicultural conflict per se, but they felt the greatest amount of personal discrimination and exclusion from the mainstream culture.

Together, these studies demonstrated the potential for conflict between the values, behaviors, and expectations of heritage and mainstream cultures. For these individuals to conform fully to one culture, they would have to distance themselves from the other culture. However, it is important to note that being bicultural need not always result in conflict. Even recognizing differences in the values and behaviors of the two cultures need not produce psychological conflict if the individual is able to move flexibly between them (e.g., Haritatos & Benet-Martínez, 2002). Furthermore, being bicultural may also be associated with certain benefits, such as enhanced feelings of efficacy and competence (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), a more complex identity (Hurtado, Gurin, & Peng, 1994), and flexibility to operate in a global economy (Hermans & Kempen, 1998).

On Being Bicultural: Patterns and Competence

The majority of the existing literature on the processes and effects of intercultural merging has been couched within the acculturation framework of cross-cultural psychology and anthropology. On the level of the individual, the term

psychological acculturation refers to the changes an individual experiences through intercultural contact, such as changes in behavior, identity, values, and attitudes. These changes may also involve some amount of stress and psychological conflict (Berry, 1995). Bidimensional models of acculturation assume that identification with the heritage culture is independent of identification with the mainstream culture. Therefore, according to this perspective, immigrants and their offspring are able to increase their identification with the new culture without necessarily losing their heritage cultural identity (Berry, 1980, 1995; LaFromboise et al., 1993; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000).

Researchers have proposed two different patterns of biculturalism, or different ways of integrating two cultures. LaFromboise et al. (1993) identified the alternating bicultural pattern of biculturalism. In this pattern, bicultural individuals are seen to move between their two cultural groups, which do not overlap. In other words, the two cultures continue to be distinguished from each other and to be defined differently while the individual switches back and forth, adopting the identity and behaviors of each culture according to context. In the blended bicultural pattern proposed by Birman (1994), the individual adopts a new identity as a combination of both cultures, thereby bringing together two cultures that are still seen to be different, though possibly overlapping. Evidence for both patterns has been found in bicultural individuals of various backgrounds (e.g., Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002; Cheng, Lee, & Benet-Martínez, 2006; Haritatos & Benet-Martínez, 2002; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997).

The bicultural competence model (LaFromboise et al., 1993) proposed several factors important in maintaining psychological adjustment while negotiating two cultural identities. This model began with the assertion that the bicultural experience need not be one of distress, and the model suggested that the foundation of bicultural competence is a well-developed and integrated sense of both personal and cultural identity. These researchers argued that personal identity involves a degree of individuation from the influence of the social organization, as well as a sense of self-awareness and personal integration. Phinney (1990) said that cultural identity involves a sense of oneself in relation to the culture of origin and that it develops over a number of stages. From this strong sense of personal and cultural identity, LaFromboise et al. presented six factors that they deemed necessary for the development of bicultural competence: (a) knowledge of cultural beliefs and values, (b) positive attitude toward both groups, (c) belief that one is able to function effectively within both cultures, (d) ability to communicate within both cultures, (e) ability to behave appropriately within both cultures, and (f) secure social network within each culture.

So far, the research presented indicates that at least some bicultural individuals experience conflict and confusion as they attempt to reconcile the values and norms of their two cultures. It also indicates that one key determinant of whether this experience is one of conflict or competence involves the development of strong personal and cultural identities. The social identity perspective, including

self-categorization theory (Turner, 1987, 1999) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), may therefore be particularly helpful in framing explorations of bicultural conflict.

Social Identity Perspective

According to this perspective, an individual's social identity contains those groups with which he or she self-identifies and the self-descriptions that derive from membership in those groups (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). In other words, a social identity reflects an internalization of a social group into the self. Social identity theorists suggest that social identities form out of an active process of social perception that is driven by the motive for perceptual simplicity. Therefore, the distinctness of social categories becomes exaggerated, and because the self is affiliated with some of these categories, there is a further tendency to see these categories in the best possible light (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

This perspective is a dynamic, context-dependent view of the self. Turner (1987, 1999) has argued that at any particular time, one's perceived similarity with a social group, the meaning of that group, its defining characteristics, and its comparative relations with other groups all depend on the currently salient intergroup context. Therefore, the very nature of an individual's identity as a member of a social group depends on aspects of the social context. Self-categories appear to be stable despite this context dependence because key features of the contexts themselves tend to remain stable (see also Abrams, 1999; Oakes, Turner, & Haslam, 1991).

Salient social categories then affect human behavior through a process known as *self-stereotyping*, in which group members enhance the similarities between themselves and salient in-groups and the differences between themselves and salient out-groups. Self-stereotyping leads individual group members to perceive and define themselves more in terms of the salient in-group's defining features than in terms of their own unique characteristics (Turner, 1987, 1999; Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Further, when an in-group is salient, group members are evaluated both by themselves and by other in-group members in terms of their similarity to an abstract and situationally specific group prototype, rather than in terms of their valued personal qualities. Therefore, when in-groups are salient, members tend to take on the characteristics that they associate with the group in their own behavior, and they like themselves and other in-group members according to how closely they embody the current in-group prototype (Hogg, 2003; Hogg, Hardie, & Reynolds, 1995; Turner, 1987).

The implications of social identity for intergroup behavior and well-being are elaborated by social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to this theory, a basic motive to see the in-group as positive and distinct relative to other salient groups fuels a continual process of intergroup social comparison. This process is believed to underlie the in-group favoritism that predictably followed

in-group identification (Tajfel, 1982; Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994) and formed the basis for the prediction that intergroup discrimination would be associated with self-esteem. Although this latter self-esteem hypothesis has received mixed empirical support (Hogg, 2003), research using implicit measures has indicated that those with defensive high self-esteem (high, explicit self-esteem with low, implicit self-esteem) are more likely to engage in in-group bias than are those with secure, high self-esteem (Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003) and that engaging in intergroup discrimination boosts implicit self-esteem following manipulated identity threat (Smurda, Wittig, & Gokalp, 2006). In addition, recent work in this area suggests that people identify with groups, in part, to reduce uncertainty (Hogg, 2000). For example, Mullin and Hogg (1999) found that identification with groups in minimal group laboratory studies is lower under conditions of reduced uncertainty. Therefore, identifying with a group that is perceived to be positive and distinct in the particular intergroup context can enhance feelings of certainty and boost aspects of self-esteem (see also Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge, & Scabini, 2006).

Social identities that pertain to cultural groups may be of particular importance. For example, Taylor and Louis (2004) argued that a cultural identity represents one's internalization of the culture's worldview or framework and that it includes one's interpretation of the values, norms, and goals that are normative in that culture. These internalized cultural frameworks will implicitly or explicitly shape much of the individual's behavior. Therefore, a cultural identity brings with it the same implications as any social identity, but it has the added role of informing one's culturally derived framework. Bicultural individuals are in the unique position of potentially holding two such cultural social identities and navigating two potentially different cultural frameworks.

For bicultural individuals, this contextually driven process of identification may be complicated by simultaneous membership in two different cultural or national in-groups. For example, in intergroup contexts where both identities are salient, the subjective meaning attributed to one identity may be altered by its comparative relation with the other identity. Furthermore, the basic motive for perceptual simplicity may lead one to exaggerate the differences between the two identities, possibly affecting one's capacity to blend or alternate between them. Last, to the extent that individuals evaluate the self on the basis of its similarity to a salient in-group prototype, bicultural individuals may find it challenging to approximate the prototype for one in-group when it is defined in contrast with the other in-group prototype.

Present Studies

Previous studies on the experiences of second-generation biculturals have shown a potential for conflict that includes a sense of being forced to choose between two valued parts of the self (e.g., Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997).

Others have argued that a well-developed cultural and personal identity plays a significant role in affecting bicultural competence and staving off such conflict (LaFromboise et al., 1993). Adopting a social identity framework, researchers can gain a number of insights into this bicultural conflict.

Given that groups can become internalized as social identities and intergroup social comparisons are used to make these groups appear positive and distinct relative to others, bicultural individuals have the potential to perceive themselves in a no-win situation for social identification. If both groups are salient in the intergroup context and defined in contrast with one another, their traits and characteristics may come to appear incompatible. In that case, to fully belong to and feel prototypical of one in-group, a person must by definition be less prototypical of the other in-group. An individual who is low in prototypicality may be considered less socially attractive as an in-group member, both by the self and by other members of the in-group (Turner, 1987, 1999). This sense of being on the periphery of the in-group could result in lower levels of identification with one or both in-groups, which could, in turn, result in lower levels of well-being. Specifically, by being unable to fully identify with one or both in-groups, the individual may experience lower self-esteem, higher uncertainty, and lower overall life satisfaction. This possibility that bicultural conflict results from a particular construal of the relation between the two identities has been supported in other research within the dynamic constructivist perspective (e.g., Benet-Martínez et al., 2002).

In the present two studies, we tested this proposed model of bicultural identity conflict with second-generation bicultural Asian Canadian participants. We expected that the degree to which the two cultures were seen to differ would predict reduced identification with both groups and that this relation would be mediated by how prototypical and likable participants saw themselves as in-group members. In addition, we expected that the degree of perceived difference in the two cultures would predict lower levels of well-being and that this relation would be mediated by participants' levels of identification with both cultures. We defined well-being as consisting of low uncertainty, high self-esteem, and high life satisfaction in this research.

STUDY 1

Method

Participants

Participants were 124 East Asian Canadian undergraduate students (22 men, 102 women; age range = 17–24 years, *M* age = 19.7 years, *SD* age = 1.54 years). In all, 58 participants were born in Canada. For those 66 participants who were born outside of Canada, the mean duration of residence in Canada was 12 years

(*SD* = 4.31 years; *M* age of arrival in Canada = 7.56 years, *SD* = 3.66 years). The majority of the sample (97 participants) was of Chinese descent, whereas 12 self-identified as Korean, 6 self-identified as Vietnamese, 2 self-identified as Japanese, 4 self-identified as Canadian, and 3 self-identified with another culture. The majority of participants were citizens of Canada (*n* = 121), and 3 were permanent residents.

Materials and Procedure

Participants completed the study in a lab equipped with private workstations and computers running MediaLab, Version 2002 (Jarvis, 2001). After the participants gave informed consent and completed demographic items, the study proceeded in the order that follows.

Cultural construals. Participants' construal of each culture was measured using a list of 28 traits and values. We selected 10 traits and 4 values because of their association with each culture and ability to distinguish Asian and Western respondents (for values, see Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999; Schwartz, 1994; for traits, see Lalonde, 1985). Acceptable reliabilities indicated that these traits and values did cluster around the predicted culture: For the Canadian traits and values, Cronbach's α = .86, and for the Asian traits and values, α = .85. See Table 1 for mean ratings of each trait and value for each culture.

We asked participants to indicate, using the numeric keypad, the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with two statements for each trait and value: "To me, being Canadian means being (valuing) . . . " and "To me, being East Asian means being (valuing) . . . ." Participants responded to each of these statements for each of the 20 traits and 8 values. The traits were presented first in a randomized order, followed by the values, which were also randomized. Level of agreement was measured using a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*). Half of participants received statements regarding the East Asian culture first, and the other half received the Canadian statements first. We found no significant effects of culture order on Asian or Canadian cultural construals or on any of the dependent variables. All subsequent analyses were collapsed across scale order.

Uncertainty, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. We assessed uncertainty with 17 items embedded within a list of other mood adjectives (McGregor, Zanna, Holmes, & Spencer, 2001). Participants rated the extent to which each item described their current feelings on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). This measure demonstrated acceptable reliability, α = .89. In addition, we assessed state self-esteem (SSE; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991) and satisfaction with life (SWL; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

TABLE 1. Mean Ratings From Study 1 of Each Trait and Value for Each Culture, with Mean Absolute Difference Scores, Sorted by Culture and the Magnitude of the Difference Score

Variable	Ratings of Canadian culture		Ratings of Asian culture		Absolute difference scores	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Chinese traits						
Traditional	4.29	2.29	7.09	2.56	3.19	2.43
Quiet	3.30	2.07	5.52	2.79	3.05	2.84
Obedient	5.41	2.26	7.36	2.06	2.49	2.33
Humble	5.88	2.11	6.32	2.25	2.05	2.14
Self-disciplined	6.03	2.12	7.21	2.07	2.04	2.03
Respectful	6.59	2.04	7.85	1.79	1.86	1.94
Dutiful	5.42	2.19	6.77	2.12	1.82	2.14
Practical	5.90	1.99	6.85	1.82	1.67	1.77
Rational	6.13	1.86	6.58	1.75	1.52	1.66
Moderate	5.55	1.92	5.77	1.60	1.50	1.73
Canadian traits						
Adventurous	6.87	2.00	4.25	2.28	3.20	2.33
Daring	6.20	2.26	4.34	2.39	2.73	2.54
Talkative	6.53	2.00	4.68	2.34	2.61	2.36
Romantic	6.47	2.16	4.94	2.33	2.26	2.09
Emotional	6.27	2.06	4.76	2.29	2.15	2.33
Modern	6.98	2.02	5.99	2.18	2.11	2.10
Materialistic	5.05	2.26	5.64	2.13	2.01	2.09
Idealistic	6.32	1.86	5.52	2.01	2.00	2.24
Independent	7.49	1.93	6.38	2.20	1.95	2.12
Proud	7.37	1.82	6.61	2.30	1.47	1.83
Chinese values						
Keeping the old ways	4.12	2.34	6.88	2.31	3.46	2.39
Fitting in	6.09	1.95	5.96	2.15	1.85	1.97
Self-control	6.23	2.10	7.02	1.91	1.67	2.10
Social order	6.32	2.18	6.61	1.92	1.58	1.89
Canadian values						
Going your own way	7.24	1.88	5.11	2.29	2.88	2.45
Personal freedom	7.85	1.84	5.76	2.33	2.64	2.40
Emotional expression	6.93	2.02	5.13	2.12	2.59	2.28
Being different	7.29	1.85	5.53	2.40	2.35	2.26

Those variables had acceptable reliability: for SSE, $\alpha = .90$ (20 items), and for SWL, $\alpha = .84$ (5 items).

Simultaneous Identification Index. To measure the degree to which participants identified with each of their two cultural groups, we had participants complete

two versions of Cameron's (2004) 12-item measure of in-group identification, one for each in-group. We measured responses on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Each item was presented twice in a row, referring first to the Canadian in-group and then to the East Asian in-group. This scale demonstrated acceptable reliability: For Canadian items, α = .77, and for East Asian items, α = .78.

We assessed the degree to which participants highly identified with both cultures simultaneously by using a variation of the Kaplan (1972) method and the calculations developed by Jamieson (1993; as cited in Newby-Clark, McGregor, & Zanna, 2002) to measure attitudinal ambivalence. This variation was proposed by Bassili (1996), and has been used in research on cognitive inconsistency and attitudinal ambivalence (i.e., McGregor, Newby-Clark, & Zanna, 1999; Newby-Clark et al.). For each participant, the lower of the two identification scores was squared and divided by the higher score, so the higher the identification with both cultural groups, the higher the score on this index. Therefore, participants who scored equally high on both measures of identity received higher scores on the simultaneous identification index than did those participants who scored high on only one. This index is also sensitive to the individual's actual level of identification with each culture, so those who identified equally highly with both cultures received a higher score than did those who identified equally weakly.

In-group fit (prototypicality and likability). To date, research in this area has used single-item measures to assess participants' ratings of their own degree and others' degree of in-group prototypicality. Likewise, social attraction, or likability, has been measured with the single-item format (i.e., Haslam, Oakes, McGarty, Turner, & Onorato, 1995; Reid & Ng, 2000). Participants responded to each of the following two items for each in-group: "With reference to the characteristics and values listed earlier, how typical or representative are you of the East Asian (Canadian) culture?" and "How likable would you say you are to typical members of the East Asian (Canadian) culture?" Responses to these items were made on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*). The prototypicality and likability items were significantly correlated for both the Canadian culture, $r = .47$, $p < .001$, and the East Asian culture, $r = .60$, $p < .001$, and these two items were summed, yielding an in-group fit score for each culture. The in-group fit score reflects how typical participants see themselves as part of their in-group and how likable they believe they are to other members of the in-group. As an index of the degree to which participants feel they fit with both in-groups at once, a simultaneous in-group fit index was calculated using the Kaplan–Jamieson method. Therefore, for each participant, the lower of the two in-group fit scores was squared and divided by the higher score, so the higher the fit with both cultural in-groups at once, the higher the score on this index. Following this last set of items, participants were thanked and fully debriefed.

Results and Discussion

For each participant, absolute difference scores were calculated from the ratings made for each culture on each trait and value, and the resulting mean difference scores are shown in Table 1. We found the Canadian and East Asian cultures to differ most on the traits of *adventurous* and *traditional* and on the values of *keeping the old ways* and *going your own way*. In contrast, they differed least on the traits of *proud* and *moderate* and on the values of *self-control* and *social order*. These trait and value difference scores were then summed to yield a measure of perceived cultural difference that ranged from 11 to 168 ($M = 62.7$, $SD = 33.2$).

We hypothesized that the difference score would predict simultaneous identification and that this relation would be mediated by in-group fit. In addition, we expected that the difference score would predict the indicators of well-being and that these relations would be mediated by simultaneous identification. Correlations among these variables are shown in Table 2. The cultural difference score did not correlate significantly with uncertainty or life satisfaction, but it did correlate significantly with self-esteem, $r(123) = -.20$, $p < .05$; the simultaneous in-group fit index, $r(123) = -.26$, $p < .01$; and the simultaneous identification index, $r(123) = -.28$, $p < .01$. Simultaneous identification was found to correlate significantly with self-esteem, $r(123) = .23$, $p < .01$, and life satisfaction, $r(123) = .23$, $p < .05$.

On the basis of these correlations, we calculated regressions to test for a mediating role of simultaneous in-group fit in the relation between the cultural difference score and simultaneous identification. Following the procedure outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986), we found that each of the conditions for

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TABLE 2. Correlations From Study 1 Among Cultural Difference Scores, Simultaneous Identification, Simultaneous In-Group Fit, Cultural Identity, and Well-Being (Uncertainty, Self-Esteem, Life Satisfaction)
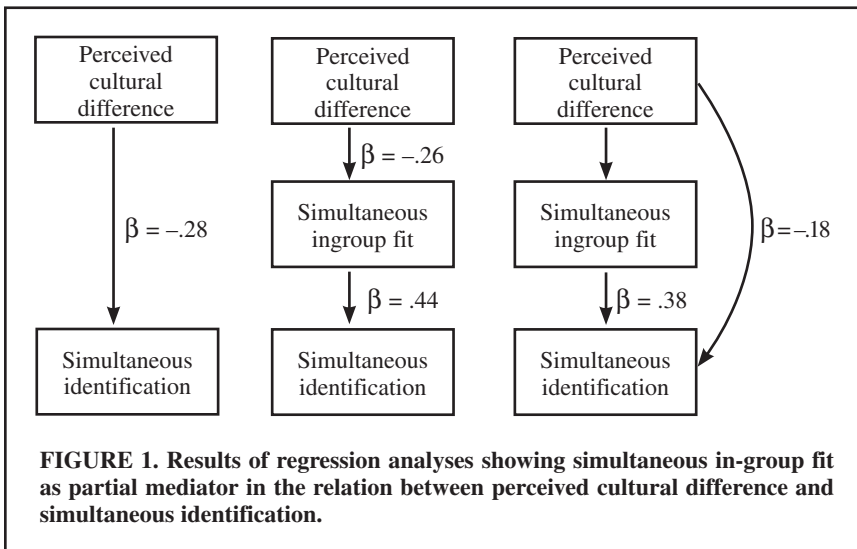
Variable	Cultural difference score	Simultaneous in-group fit	Simultaneous identification
Uncertainty	.06	−.10	−.13
Self-esteem	−.20*	.21*	.23**
Life satisfaction	−.00	.13	.23**
Canadian identity	.02	.09	.49***
Asian identity	−.16	.31***	.42***
Simultaneous in-group fit	−.26**	—	.44***
Simultaneous identification	−.28**	.44***	—

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

mediation were met (Figure 1). The difference score significantly predicted both simultaneous identification, $\beta = -.28$, $p < .01$, and simultaneous in-group fit, $\beta = -.26$, $p < .01$. Simultaneous in-group fit significantly predicted simultaneous identification, $\beta = .44$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, when entered together in the prediction of simultaneous identification, simultaneous in-group fit remained a strong and significant predictor, $\beta = .38$, $p < .001$, whereas the difference score also remained significant but was reduced, $\beta = -.18$, $p < .05$. A Sobel test revealed that the relation between the cultural difference score and simultaneous identification was significantly reduced by the inclusion of in-group fit in the model, $z = -2.51$, $p < .05$. Therefore, simultaneous in-group fit acted as a partial mediator between the cultural difference score and simultaneous identification (Figure 1).

We also calculated regressions to test for a mediating role of simultaneous identification in the relation between the cultural difference score and self-esteem. Following the procedure outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986), we found that each of the conditions for mediation was met. The difference score significantly predicted both simultaneous identification, $\beta = -.28$, $p < .01$, and self-esteem, $\beta = -.20$, $p < .05$; and simultaneous identification itself predicted self-esteem, $\beta = .23$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, when entered together in the prediction of self-esteem, simultaneous identification remained a significant predictor, $\beta = .18$, $p < .05$, whereas the difference score was reduced to nonsignificance. Therefore, simultaneous identification acted as a full mediator in the relationship between the cultural difference score and self-esteem.

This study provided some initial support for the hypothesis that construing one's two cultures in highly different ways may be associated with a lesser ability to

FIGURE 1. Results of regression analyses showing simultaneous in-group fit as partial mediator in the relation between perceived cultural difference and simultaneous identification.

identify highly with both cultures and that this relation may occur, in part, because of the effects that such construals have on one's ability to feel like a prototypical and likable member of these in-groups. Furthermore, some evidence suggested that defining two cultural in-groups very differently may be associated with lower levels of self-esteem through the effects of these construals on one's capacity to identify with both in-groups.

STUDY 2

In Study 2, we attempted a replication of these findings. One limitation of Study 1 was its reliance on the calculation of difference scores to assess the degree of difference in participants' construals of their two cultures, which may not have been a sufficiently sensitive measure. Furthermore, various concerns have been raised (Cronbach & Furby, 1970) and debated (Tisak & Smith, 1994) about the reliability of difference scores. Therefore, in Study 2, participants directly assessed the degree to which they saw their two cultures as differing on each of the traits and values. We expected that these direct ratings of perceived cultural difference would predict reduced identification with both cultures, mediated by simultaneous in-group fit. We also expected that perceived cultural difference would predict lower well-being and that this relation would be mediated by simultaneous identification, replicating Study 1.

Method

Participants

Participants were 127 Chinese Canadian undergraduate students (35 men, 92 women; age range = 17–28 years, *M* age = 19.3 years, *SD* age = 1.78 years) who took part in the study for course credit. In all, 69 participants were born in Canada. For those 58 participants who were born outside of Canada, the mean duration of residing in Canada was 12 years (*SD* = 4.57 years). The majority of participants (*n* = 121) were citizens of Canada, and 6 were permanent residents.

Materials and Procedure

After providing informed consent and demographic information, participants completed the following measures using 5-point Likert-type scales. We included these measures within a larger study on the bicultural experience of second-generation Chinese Canadians.

Uncertainty, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. Participants completed measures of uncertainty (McGregor et al., 2001), SEE (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991), and SWL (Diener et al., 1985). Reliabilities for these scales were all acceptable: for uncertainty, α = .88; for SSE, α = .91; and for SWL, α = .83.

Simultaneous identification index. As in Study 1, we used two paper-and-pencil versions of the three-factor measure of social identity to assess participants' levels of identification with Chinese culture, $\alpha = 0.76$, and with Canadian culture, $\alpha = 0.85$ (Cameron, 2004). We then used these scores to calculate a simultaneous iden-tification index using the Kaplan–Jamieson method. This index represented the degree to which participants identified highly with both cultures simultaneously.

Perceived cultural difference. The participants completed the final two measures on computers running MediaLab, Version 2002 (Jarvis, 2001) in private workstations. Participants were asked to indicate as quickly and accurately as possible how much they felt the Chinese and Canadian cultures differed on each of the 20 traits and eight values used in Study 1. Participants selected their responses using the numeric keypad and a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very similar*) to 5 (*very different*).

In-group fit (prototypicality and likability). Participants then completed the same single-item measures of prototypicality and likability that were used in Study 1, indicating on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extreme-ly*) how typical or representative they believed they were of each culture and how likable they felt they were to typical members of each culture. The prototypicality and likability items were again found to be significantly correlated for both the Canadian culture, $r = .56$, $p < .001$, and the Chinese culture, $r = .50$, $p < .001$, and were summed into an in-group fit score for each culture. As an index of the degree to which participants felt they fit with both in-groups at once, a simultan-eous in-group fit index was calculated using the Kaplan–Jamieson method. After this last set of items, we thanked and fully debriefed the participants.

Results and Discussion

We calculated the mean ratings of the degree of difference perceived between the Chinese and Canadian cultures (see Table 3). Mirroring Study 1, participants indicated that the two cultures differed most on the traits of *traditional* and *quiet* and differed the least on the traits of *moderate*, *idealistic*, and *proud*. The two cultures were also seen to differ most greatly in the degree to which they valued *going one's own way* and differed the least in the degree to which they valued *social order*. These ratings of perceived trait and value differences were then summed to yield a measure of perceived cultural difference that ranged from 49 to 132 ($M = 102.3$, $SD = 12.5$).

Correlations among these variables are shown in Table 4. The perceived cultural difference score correlated significantly with uncertainty, $r(127) = .19$, $p < .05$, but did not correlate significantly with life satisfaction or self-esteem in this study. Perceived cultural difference did correlate significantly with in-group fit, $r(127) = -.23$, $p < .01$, and with simultaneous identification, $r(127) = -.22$, $p < .05$. Simultaneous identification was found to correlate significantly with self-esteem, $r(127) = .27$, $p < .01$, and life satisfaction, $r(127) = .21$, $p < .05$.

TABLE 3. Mean Ratings From Study 2 of the Perceived Cultural Difference for Each Trait and Value, Sorted by Culture and the Magnitude of the Difference

	Perceived cultural difference	
Variable	*M*	*SD*
Chinese traits		
Traditional	4.09	0.85
Obedient	4.02	0.88
Quiet	4.02	0.83
Humble	3.79	0.90
Self-discipline	3.71	1.02
Rational	3.71	0.76
Dutiful	3.71	0.93
Respectful	3.51	1.19
Practical	3.27	1.01
Moderate	3.18	0.74
Canadian traits		
Daring	3.96	0.76
Adventurous	3.91	0.74
Emotional	3.77	0.96
Romantic	3.69	1.10
Talkative	3.54	0.97
Materialistic	3.50	1.13
Modern	3.47	1.02
Independent	3.43	1.18
Proud	3.24	1.28
Idealistic	3.24	1.07
Chinese values		
Keeping the old ways	3.85	0.85
Social order	3.57	1.03
Self-control	3.47	0.98
Fitting in	3.13	1.00
Canadian values		
Going your own way	4.05	0.83
Freedom	3.97	0.87
Emotional expression	3.78	1.02
Being different	3.76	0.90

On the basis of these correlations, we calculated regressions to test for a mediating role of simultaneous in-group fit in the relation between the perceived cultural difference score and simultaneous identification. The procedure outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) indicated that each of the conditions for mediation was met. Perceived cultural difference significantly predicted both simultaneous in-group fit, $\beta = -.23$, $p < .01$, and simultaneous identification, $\beta = -.22$, $p < .05$. Simultaneous in-group fit itself predicted simultaneous identification, $\beta = .41$, $p < .001$.

TABLE 4. Correlations From Study 2 Among Perceived Cultural Difference Scores, Simultaneous Identification, Simultaneous In-Group Fit, Cultural Identity, and Well-Being (Uncertainty, Self-Esteem, Life Satisfaction)

Variable	Perceived cultural difference score	Simultaneous in-group fit	Simultaneous identification
Uncertainty	.19*	−.12	−.12
Self-esteem	−.02	.01	.27**
Life satisfaction	−.04	.03	.21*
Canadian identity	−.06	.06	.47***
Asian identity	−.03	.32***	.35***
Simultaneous in-group fit	−.23**	—	.41***
Simultaneous identification	−.22*	.41***	—

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Furthermore, when entered together in the prediction of simultaneous identification, simultaneous in-group fit remained a strong and significant predictor, $\beta = .38$, $p < .001$, whereas the difference score was reduced to nonsignificance. Therefore, in-group fit was a full mediator in the relation between perceived cultural difference and simultaneous identification in this study.

Study 2 provided some additional support for the hypothesis that biculturals who define their two cultures in highly different ways may find themselves unable to identify with both cultures and that this effect may occur because such cultural construals prevent them from feeling like prototypical and likable members of both in-groups. Study 2 failed to replicate the relation between perceived cultural difference and well-being observed in Study 1. Therefore, the role of simultaneous identification as a mediator in this relation could not be replicated. Nevertheless, we found simultaneous identification to correlate with two indicators of well-being in Study 2, suggesting that dual in-group identification, which some biculturals find inaccessible, is associated with benefits for adjustment.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Results from Studies 1 and 2 provided some initial support for the hypotheses that we tested and for the application of the social identity perspective to issues of bicultural identity. We specifically expected and found in Studies 1 and 2 that the perception of difference in the characteristics associated with two self-relevant cultures predicted a lower level of simultaneous identification with both cultures. Furthermore, we found this relation to be mediated by participants' feelings of fit with both in-groups. In other words, the greater the contrast in bicultural participants' perceptions of their cultures, the weaker their identification with both

cultures because this contrast affected how prototypical and likable they felt they could be as members of both in-groups (Turner, 1987, 1999).

We found less consistent support for the additional expected relations with well-being. In the present studies, we found simultaneous identification to correlate with certain indexes of well-being, particularly self-esteem and satisfaction with life, suggesting that identification with both cultures has important implications that are supported by social identity theory (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). However, the direct relation between perceived cultural difference and well-being was not as strong and consistent as we had expected, correlating only with uncertainty in Study 2 and self-esteem in Study 1; this latter relation was fully accounted for by simultaneous identification. Therefore, simply construing a person's two cultures differently may not itself be associated with well-being, but it could be associated with a reduced capacity for identifying with both cultures, which may, in turn, be associated with adjustment (Hogg, 2003; Taylor & Moghaddam; Vignoles et al., 2006).

These results expand the understanding of bicultural conflict in existing qualitative research by incorporating the social identity perspective. According to this qualitative research, biculturals face the potential for conflict as they attempt to reconcile the expectations, values, and characteristics of two cultural identities, and they may feel that they must distance themselves from one culture to conform to the other (e.g., Garrett, 1996; Sung, 1985). Furthermore, having a strong sense of both of one's cultural identities is considered an important factor in adjustment and bicultural competence (LaFromboise et al., 1993).

The social identity perspective reveals much about the process of internalizing an in-group in the form of a social identity and about how this process could result in the experience of bicultural conflict. Specifically, Taylor and Moghaddam (1994) argued that a basic motivation to seek clear, distinct, and positive identities drives a tendency to use social comparison to define salient in-groups in contrast with situationally relevant out-groups. Also, Turner (1987) argued that through self-stereotyping, we take on our salient social identities behaviorally and evaluate our worth and fit with those in-groups through comparison with abstract in-group prototypes. We proposed that among bicultural individuals, this process could lead to a tendency to define the two cultures in contrast to each other, thus making it impossible to be a close fit with both in-group prototypes and reducing the capacity to identify with both groups. The present studies indicate that increased contrast in participants' construals of their cultures did predict reduced identification through additional effects on in-group fit. Thus, the present studies linked the earlier qualitative research with the social identity perspective.

Adopting a social identity perspective to examine issues of bicultural identification contributes significantly to the existing literature in this area. For example, researchers taking the dynamic constructivist perspective have described how certain bicultural individuals are able to switch fluidly between two cognitive sets of cultural information in response to situational cues (Benet-Martínez et

al., 2002), describing the mechanisms behind the alternating form of bicultural identification (LaFromboise et al., 1993). Furthermore, those researchers have found that the capacity to switch appropriately in response to situational cues is moderated by individual differences in identity integration (the degree to which the identities are seen to overlap or be hyphenated), so that those bicultural individuals slow in integration respond to cultural cues by adopting the characteristics of the unprimed culture. The social identity theory perspective connects with and extends this research in several ways. First, it provides an established and well-supported theoretical and empirical foundation that can help to explain and predict which features of the social or intergroup situation affect in-group identification, beyond experimentally manipulated cultural primes. In addition, as observed in the present studies, this perspective can also offer one reason why seeing one's cultures as different may interfere with identification; namely, that such perception affects self-assessments of in-group prototypicality. Future researchers of this area could explore how measures of simultaneous identification, which are drawn from social identity theory, relate to the cognitive capacity for cultural frame switching.

One limitation of the present research is that it did not address the situational specificity emphasized in the social identity perspective (e.g., Turner, 1987). We assumed that by presenting both studies as explorations of the bicultural experience among Asian (Chinese) Canadians, we would ensure that both identities would be salient for participants as they completed the measures. However, we did not measure identity salience, and its variability among participants may have introduced error. In addition, we suggest in this discussion that bicultural conflict may ultimately stem from a tendency to define the two cultures in contrast to one another in the intergroup context, with each culture viewed as the defining out-group for the other culture. We assumed such a tendency would produce the contrasting cultural construals measured in these studies, but in the future, researchers should test this assumption by systematically varying features of the salient intergroup context.

Another limitation of the present studies is the generalizability of the findings to other bicultural samples. Both studies were conducted with participants of Asian background in Canada. The specific heritage background of a bicultural individual plays a role in shaping acculturative experiences and hassles, such as discrimination (Yeh & Inose, 2003). In addition, Canada, as a culture of settlement, is associated with particular acculturative attitudes favoring integration over assimilation, for example. As shown in other research (e.g., Bourhis et al., 1997), host-culture attitudes also play a role in shaping acculturative experiences. Therefore, the present findings may be limited to those people of Asian background in Canada, and in future research, the model should be tested with biculturals of other backgrounds and settings.

Canada's official policy of multiculturalism reflects a long history of intercultural contact, stretching from the diverse Aboriginal cultures through

generations of immigration. The makers of such policies hope to give these diverse peoples a framework in which to celebrate both their unique cultural heritages and their developing sense of shared identity. By suggesting that a strong and positive heritage identity should present no barrier to an equally strong and positive Canadian identity, this policy sets simultaneous identification as a reachable goal for Canada's bicultural population. The results of the present research indicate that simultaneous identification is associated with well-being, but it is not accessible to all bicultural Canadians. Specifically, these two studies indicate that construing the two cultures in a way that prevents one from feeling prototypical of both cultures can undermine this goal. Understanding the mechanisms that block simultaneous identification can aid the development of policies and programs that facilitate the well-being of immigrants and their second-generation offspring.

AUTHOR NOTES

Mirella L. Stroink is an assistant professor at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Canada. Her research explores bicultural identification in first- and second-generation immigrants and Aboriginal Canadians, and she has recently examined how bicultural individuals navigate and reconcile two sets of cultural values, how this process is affected by identity structure, and the implications of this process for adjustment. **Richard N. Lalonde** is a professor of psychology at York University in Toronto, Canada. His research falls at the intersection of culture, identity, and intergroup relations, with a particular focus on issues that are pertinent to multicultural societies.

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