

ABSTRACT

Josephine Kwon
Public Views of Biculturalism
(Under the Direction of Dr. Victoria Plaut)

As America becomes increasingly globalized, concepts such as multiculturalism and biculturalism will be important to consider in public policy and social issues. Biculturalism in a psychological light refers to the process by which an individual considers two distinct ethnic cultures as integral to their ethnic identity and behaves in a manner that expresses elements from both cultures (Nyugen & Benet-Martinez, 2007). Bicultural individuals, generally from minority groups, will comprise an estimated 40% of the population by 2020 (US Census Bureau, 2008). As such, considering biculturalism in a public light could illustrate existing attitudes in public relations in America. Estimating the public opinion of biculturalism could indicate the type of social environment within which immigrants and their children live, as well as possible public issues in relation to globalization and biculturalism. To understand the public opinion of biculturalism today, we have composed a questionnaire to comprehensively determine if and what kind of public opinion exists regarding biculturalism. The questionnaire is meant to discern what kind of reaction the term biculturalism produces, how internalized the idea of biculturalism is, and how important biculturalism is perceived to be in America. The responses to this questionnaire could indicate any common attitude towards bicultural individuals in America.

INDEX WORDS: Biculturalism, United States, Public Opinion, Bicultural Demographic, Public Relations

PUBLIC VIEWS OF BICULTURALISM

by

JOSEPHINE KWON

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by

JOSEPHINE KWON

Approved:

Dr. Victoria Plaut
Dr. Victoria Plaut
Faculty Research Mentor

04-20-2010
Date

Approved:

Dr. Kecia Thomas
Dr. Kecia Thomas
Reader

04-20-2010
Date

Approved:

Dr. David S. Williams
Dr. David S. Williams
Director, Honors Program, Foundation Fellows
and Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities

05-07-2010
Date

Approved:

Dr. Pamela B. Kleiber
Dr. Pamela B. Kleiber
Associate Director, Honors Program and
Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities

05-07-2010
Date

DEDICATION

For my mother, who has shown me how to love and how to endure.

For my father, who has taught me how to think in a profound and effective way.

For my brother and sister, without whom I would feel alone in this world.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In societies with high incidences of immigration and globalization, the resulting increase in exposure to new cultures brings inevitable cultural change. As a society with a strong historical legacy of both diversity and immigration, as well as a rapidly evolving culture, the United States is perhaps the exemplar of this idea. In the United States, immigrants often maintain their home cultures in addition to adopting mainstream culture. This cultural maintenance fosters cultural diversity within the United States population, thus encouraging cultural change (Ratner, 2002). In the US today, globalization and immigration has become increasingly pertinent as an estimated 11.7% of the population in 2003 was foreign born, meaning the persons emigrated from another country and now resides in the US with a visa or citizenship (Larsen, 2004). Importantly, this statistic does not include the children of these foreign born persons, nor other citizens that were born in the US but engage with more than one culture.

To fully consider the extent of cultural variety in the US, the continuing generations of these foreign born citizens should be considered. About 27.5% of US residents in the last national census were neither white nor black¹ (Asian, Hispanic, Latino, Bicultural, etc.), and by

¹ Though considering African-American culture in relation to US culture is a significant and meaningful aspect to understand, the influence of African-American culture on US culture is a different matter from the potential impact of more current bicultural immigrants in the United States. Because African-Americans have struggled with ethnic relations in the US for longer and with a deeper historical context than do current bicultural individuals, to consider these

2020, an estimated 40% of the US Population will be Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Hispanic, or of more than one ethnicity (US Census Bureau, 2008). These population percentages represent the burgeoning population of multicultural US inhabitants that can influence current US culture. These statistics represent a demographic within the United States that carries with it the potential for further cultural change. As the quantity of cultures composing the ethnic makeup of a society becomes increasingly diverse, the majority culture will need to adapt to this diversity. The intermeshing of cultures through interracial relationships and families further imply the growth of the bicultural population in the US. As more US inhabitants identify with minority cultures, the dominant culture will become more complex, and this complexity will manifest through public policy, opinion, and its citizens.

Considering a significant percentage of the US population will be influenced by more than one culture, it can be inferred that the diversification of culture will play a part in future changes in US society. For these reasons, I feel that trying to gauge any discernible and significant public opinions on biculturalism today would be useful and possibly crucial in determining ethnic relations within the United States.

Culture and Society

Culture is crucial to society; it tells us everything from what to eat and how to obtain it to what to say, what to wear, and perhaps even what to think (Shweder & LeVine, 1984). Culture,

demographics within the same lens would create too broad of a scope to infer significance. For the sake of this thesis and study, I focus on current bicultural individuals and the influence of biculturalism in reference to more recent populations of immigrants, such as those from South and East Asia and Latin America who have shown potential for cultural change (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006, p.43-57).

as loosely defined by Vygotsky, is “a system of social activities, artifacts, ... concepts and psychological phenomena” relative to its surroundings (Ratner, 2002, p.67). Studying cultures through a psychological lens can reveal how cultural changes can affect the individual as well as the society (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993). Cultural psychology aims to study these resulting effects of cultural change or difference, specifically attempting to "examine ethnic and cultural sources of psychological diversity in emotional and somatic functioning, self organization, moral evaluation, social cognition, and human development" (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993, p.497).

Cultural psychology not only considers how culture affects the individual, but also how the individual expresses the culture, and in general, how every possibly meaningful variable within the culture interacts with every other variable (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993). Thus, the macro-interaction between self and society is a specific focus of cultural psychology. Culture influences the individual through the society it exists in. In this way, culture is crucial to shaping both the individuals that form a society, as well as shaping the society that inevitably will provide the environment in which the individuals develop (Shweder & LeVine, 1984).

Culture heavily impacts the formation of one’s ethnic identity development. Sam and Oppedal (2002) allow that human development matures through a “specific socio-cultural context”. Sam and Berry’s (2006) model of “sociocultural contextual development” identifies the indirect and direct variables within the sociocultural environment that can guide a child’s social development and ethnic identity. These factors may include the media and healthcare, as well as a religious community, parents, and friends (Sam & Berry, 2006).The situation becomes more complex, however, when more than one culture develops in a maturing ethnic identity.

Cultural Identity Development

Culture is a learned aspect of identity, attained through the process of socialization whereby a child learns the norms, customs, and ideologies of their natal culture (Berry, Vinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). However, the intricacy of the process changes when more than one culture is learned. Acculturation refers to when a person of a minority ethnic group in a ethnically diverse country learns the norms, customs, and ideologies of the dominant culture within their society after, before, or in conjunction with learning their natal culture (Berry et al., 2006). Both socialization and acculturation are essential to the formation of a cultural identity or ethnic identity. To wholly comprehend these phenomena can be especially critical and relevant for second-generation immigrants for whom acculturation occurs in younger ages and younger stages of psychological development as opposed to immigrants of an older age who acculturate once entering a new host country. The implication is that immigrants of an older age already maintain a developed ethnic identity and must adjust their existing cultural identity to majority culture in order to function successfully (Harker, 2001). In contrast, second-generation immigrants who grow up in the United States are bicultural in a more profound sense, in that they must understand both the majority culture and their natal culture at a young age without a solid ethnic identity to build from or adjust to. The process is considerably more confounding and taxing on these second-generation immigrants because of this lack of established ethnic identity, as shown by studies demonstrating that first-generation immigrants have higher levels of life happiness and psychological well being than do second-generation immigrants (Sam & Oppedal, 2002). Min's (2002) social construction perspective states that the two components of ethnicity are "identity and culture...culture to give meaning to our identity and...identity to

construct affiliations and boundaries with other individuals and groups within the culture” (Min, 2002, p.57). This definition emphasizes the interdependence of culture and identity, marking ethnic identity as essential to the self. Therefore, socialization and acculturation are directly involved with defining one’s ethnic identity.

As gaining a positive and complete identity is crucial to a growing self, it is imperative to study the possible dysfunctions between acculturative processes and ethnic identity, and how best to avoid or prevent these potentially detrimental factors. Sam and Berry (2006) have shown integration of both the natal culture and the majority culture to have the most favorable effect for psychological well being (p.84). Accordingly, integration could be the best mode for an optimal well-rounded ethnic identity, in particular, for second-generation immigrants who consistently deal with biculturalism.

Min’s social construction perspective also features ethnic identity as a changing concept, altering with the adjustments between culture and identity (Min, 2002). As the individuals of a culturally diverse society adapt to the changing cultural milieu, it will be important to note how such changes affect the individuals of the dominant culture as well as the individuals of the minority cultures. Additionally, it would be beneficial to consider how and if the dominant culture itself is adjusting for a minority culture, not simply engulfing it.

As the subjects of a society consider a changing culture, the society itself will inevitably change. Analyzing the mindsets of the people within the society can be important in understanding the roots of these changes. Public opinion surveys and polls are important instruments in gauging the attitudes of the individuals of a society (Doob, 1966). Through the use of such tools, the individuals within a society can express their attitudes about the current

state of the country. (Doob, 1966). This method is often used in measuring the popularity of presidential candidates, as well as estimating opinions on controversial political issues (Erikson, Luttbeg, & Tedin, 1991, p.331-335). Particularly in democratic nations, the consideration of public opinion can be central to the nation's public policies (Doob, 1966, p.207). In this study, I am looking specifically at the United States as a Westernized and democratic country that is home to an ethnically diverse population.

Culture and US Society

The motto of the United States is *E Pluribus Unum*, meaning 'Out of many, one'. Historically, this motto referenced the original thirteen colonies coming together as one country formed by immigrants. The implications of the motto reverberate today in the diverse cultural population of the United States. US history with immigrants has been an ebb and flow of strict and loose immigration laws, depending on the state of the nation. The relationship between immigration and civil rights policies developed as immigrants began entering illegally into the United States for a chance at the "American Dream" (Keely, 1982, p.30). More recently, the trend of increasing immigration has continued as the globalization of economy has risen. Terms like "multiculturalism" and cultural diversity" are heard more and more often. As the ethnic composition of the US population continues to diversify, it will be crucial to consider the evolution of ethnic relations within the United States, as well as individual psychological issues that can arise through experiencing multiculturalism, biculturalism, and essentially the diversification of US culture.

The US people's attitude towards immigrants has ranged from positive friendship to xenophobia, from a "Love it or Leave it" attitude to attitudes fostering pluralism. Still, three

central themes in American culture expressed in American attitudes continue to be “individual freedom, equality at least of opportunity, and pluralism itself” (Keely, 1982, p.30). In the idea of pluralism lies the dilemma of American culture. Though rooted in sustaining friendly relations through all differences, including religion and culture, the question remains of how much more the American culture can absorb (Keely, 1982, p.30). The problem intensifies if you consider the difficulties in representing the different ethnic minorities of the country in an equal and satisfactory manner in national public policy. How will these public policies then affect the individuals of the majority group, the minority groups, the bicultural individuals who must somehow negotiate between the two and between themselves, and finally, the relationships between these groups? The plethora of aspects to this singular issue exhibits both its magnitude and difficulty.

Though little literature has been written specifically on biculturalism, much literature has focused on the related topic of multiculturalism and its possible influence on American society. One obvious component of this issue would be the interaction between ethnic relations and public policy within the United States. Though I will not attempt to address all aspects of public policy, I will offer a singular perspective of considering multicultural ethnic relations. Stephen P. Banks (2000) suggests that a social-interpretive theory of intercultural communication would cross cultural boundaries and make the goal of multicultural public policy more attainable by establishing a sense of “community, emphasizing commonalities while communicating across differences” (p.14). In essence, Banks promotes the celebration and recognition of diversity as a way of uniting people, not dividing them.

By realizing diversity as the “normal human condition of variation” instead of focusing on the differences that diversity provides could ease ethnic relations (Banks, 2000, p.18):

“Diversity creates the problematic context of intergroup communication, but variety also provides the means for finding solutions that enrich the whole social ecology. With this approach to reframing diversity, the core concept of ...cultural diversity can be understood as the normal human variation in the systems of meaning by which groups understand and enact their everyday lives and which they acquire through experiential apprenticeship” (Banks, 2000, p.18).

In contrast, Charles Keely (1982) considers that the “worst case scenario” would be a “breakdown of civic culture itself, a loss of agreement on basic values, and a contest of interests that cannot be accommodated within the political system” (p.32). Hopefully, such a scenario will never be met. To prevent such drastic and alarming circumstances, I believe it would be advantageous to consider how the changes in the cultural atmosphere in the US today are influencing individual attitudes. As a first step, I have attempted to determine if the public has any particular opinions about biculturalism and bicultural individuals, and if so, what they may be.

The Importance of Biculturalism

“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 (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005, p.1016)

The term ‘biculturalism’ can be referred to any combination of cultures, from professional cultures to ethnic cultures. For this particular study, I am referring to ethnic cultures and their relation to the psychological meaning of being bicultural. In the last several years, much research has begun regarding biculturalism in the psychological sense. While there is no authoritative definition for biculturalism, bicultural individuals are generally those who identify

themselves with two different ethnic cultures, who have internalized these two cultures, and who behave in a manner that includes elements from both cultures (Nyugen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). In the US, biculturalism would influence immigrants, children of immigrants, as well as any persons who actively engage in two cultures.

Children of immigrants, often called second-generation immigrants, must deal with bicultural or multicultural worlds and societies. This maintains that bicultural individuals must handle dual cultures with dual sets of social cues, attributions, and languages. The difficulty of negotiating two or more cultures can cause a strain on one's ethnic identity or acculturation. Studies have shown that being bicultural can negatively influence factors such as mental health, stress associated with depression, subjective well-being; these factors are often handicapped by outside hassles, such as discrimination (Leu, et al., 2008; Romero, et al., 2007; Harker, 2001; Lay & Safdar, 2003). Alternatively, studies have also shown that being bicultural could be beneficial. Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu (2006) used cultural priming to access participants' cultural schemas revealing that bicultural individuals maintained a higher cognitive complexity in their cultural schemas than those of the monocultural participants. This study suggests that because bicultural individuals function with two sets of cultural norms and values, this increases the complexity of their cultural schemas. This implies that experiencing biculturalism may increase a person's ability to process and interpret "complex and multidimensional cultural representations," and in turn understand more "of their own cultural makeup" (Benet-Martínez et al., 2006, p.401). Biculturalism as a process has yet to be understood fully, but these studies illustrate that it is a highly complex process that can produce many different outcomes. I believe

it would be favorable to consider what directs these different outcomes, to discern if and how social relations can have a positive influence for bicultural individuals.

Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005) address the important first step towards monitoring the bicultural process that can psychologically affect an individual. Bicultural Identity Integration (BII), as proposed by Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris (2002) is the personal difference created by either the functional or dysfunctional relationships between the differing aspects of their dual ethnic identities (p.493). Some may perceive their identities as “compatible and complementary,” and others may perceive them as “oppositional and contradictory” (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002, p.493). A high BII score would indicate that the individual views their component ethnic parts as compatible, while a low BII score would indicate the opposite. Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) used cultural priming to compare BII and culture-frame switching, which is a phenomenon that occurs in bicultural individuals wherein they alter between some parts of their ethnic self to accommodate the present cultural cues (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002, p.494). In these cases, those with low BIIs would have some level of culture clash within themselves, which provides evidence for the argument that negotiating between cultures can be distressing to one’s ethnic self. These findings confirm that biculturalism is not only a societal influence, but a personal process that one goes through. Additionally, the correlation between a high BII and integration shows that the cultural perspective of an individual can affect their own psychological well being, again showing that the cultural environment of an individual influences the individual himself. These findings indicate that while biculturalism has yet to be studied extensively and wholly, there are at the very least known psychological reactions to the

process of biculturalism. Thus, it would be beneficial to identify those impacted by the process of biculturalism in order to understand how relevant biculturalism may be to the United States.

Though there is no objective way to measure if individuals are behaving in a way that expresses two cultures, we can estimate the percentage of bicultural individuals in America through census figures. In the US, an estimate of the demographic population that is bicultural can be determined by counting each minority group². We can then add to the estimate by considering the foreign born population. In 2000, the total percentage of minority groups including the foreign born population was 31.95% (US Census Bureau, 2000). In 2003, 11.7% of the US population was foreign born (Larsen, 2004). By 2020, an estimated 40% of the US Population will be Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Hispanic, or of more than one ethnicity (US Census Bureau, 2008). These figures confirm that bicultural or multicultural persons will soon be a significant percentage of the population. These statistics offer further proof that understanding how the US public views biculturalism and multiculturalism is of vital importance. Doing so will help us to better understand how cultural changes may occur, and how they may affect cultural relations in the United States.

Public Views of Biculturalism

Regarding public opinion as important when writing public policy is not a new idea. Leonard Doob (1966) provides that “public opinion refers to people’s attitudes on an issue when they are members of the same social group” (p.35). It can be stated that the persons living in the US are all of the same, though quite broad, social group. In order to interpret a general public

² Assuming that these individuals in these minority groups would also engage in US culture, and that individuals of a mixed background are also included in a minority group

opinion, Doob (1966) maintains that the attitudes of all the persons must be “more or less in common,” which is one aspect of public opinion that may make it difficult to utilize in this study because there are no documented or established public opinions specifically in reference to biculturalism (p.36). There is also the possibility that there is no real, common public opinion on the matter of biculturalism yet, which would manifest as insignificant data expressing public apathy or public contentment (Erikson et al., 1991, p.337-338). Public contentment or apathy could indicate one of several things in regards to biculturalism: that there is no serious disharmony in regards specifically to bicultural individuals and the living atmosphere in America, that though there may be problems in the ethnic relations of America, it is not enough to create issues, and finally, though there may be significant problems to be dealt with, recognizing these problems may be difficult because of the great variety of bicultural individuals in America. For instance, the problems and concerns of Mexican-Americans may be entirely different from those of Chinese-Americans, which could also be different from Irish-Americans. Though the prospect of determining entirely the main public opinions on biculturalism seems complex, it still remains an important aspect of public relations to consider in lieu of its potential usefulness.

The importance of public opinion lies in the simple fact that it reveals the public’s general position on matters of importance in the country represented (Doob, 1966). In a democratic society, such as the US, these opinions can be seen with far greater importance, as the basis of democracy is that “people are supposed to be supreme” (Doob, 1966, p.207). Public opinion has its limitations, and understandably, it is not the only influence in policy making. Though interpreting public opinion can prove to be difficult, there are tactics to assist with

interpretation. Relationships between national, state, and public policy can be a good predictor of public opinion, which explains its extensive use today (Erikson et al., 1991, p.334). Because public policy deals with many matters in great detail in great frequency, to expect the public to have an active opinion on every national matter would be inefficient. However, to discern public opinion on larger issues that can impact the individual lives of the citizens would be wise. In the US, as shown previously by population statistics, matters regarding biculturalism and bicultural individuals will prove to be of increasing importance. Thus, to realize any latent public opinion concerning biculturalism is imperative.

Current Study

This study focused on public views of biculturalism. Though biculturalism in individuals has been studied recently, there is little research on the public opinion of biculturalism in society. Studies on biculturalism or multiculturalism in a social setting (like an education environment or a work environment) show different opinions. Multiculturalism has been shown as a positive influence to increasing positive cultural contact in the workplace (Plaut, Thomas, & Goren 2009), but considering biculturalism in the social-political arena in New Zealand was met with controversy (Sibley & Liu, 2004). This study will consider the public ideas of biculturalism in a representative college-aged sample population.

An 18-item open-ended questionnaire was created specifically for these purposes and covers concepts from the meaning of biculturalism to considering biculturalism in the media, to the future influence of biculturalism in America. The goal of this study is to clarify if there is what general public opinions exist regarding biculturalism and whether any significant societal attitudes can be inferred from the data. Although this study is largely exploratory in nature, I do

hypothesize that one's conceptions about biculturalism in the United States will have an effect on one's feelings towards biculturalism.

CHAPTER 2 METHODS

Participants

The sample consisted of 101 participants (33 male, 68 female, $M_{\text{age}} = 18.5$, age range: 18-22 years with one outlier of 30 years old, $SD_{\text{age}} = 1.56$) from the University of Georgia. The participants were sampled regardless of race or ethnicity, and most of the participants had just entered into a collegiate setting. The participants were recruited through a university research pool. The participants were required to have access to a working computer with access to the internet. The participants were given research credits towards the completion of their psychology course for their participation.

Measures and Equipment

I used a secure online survey website to post the survey online and to make the survey accessible to participants. Participants were not required to come to a specified location, allowing for greater anonymity and comfort to respond to the questions honestly.

We created an open-ended 18-item questionnaire geared to measure four specific topics related to biculturalism: questions meant to determine any personal relevance or relationship with the concept of biculturalism (Q#1-4, 13), questions meant to determine if there was any bicultural influence in society (Q#5-7, 9), questions meant to personify bicultural individuals and gauge participant reaction (Q#10-12, 14), and questions meant to determine public opinion of the perceived importance of biculturalism in America (Q# 8,9,13,15-18). The questionnaire can be

found in Appendix A. We also used an immigrant demographic questionnaire found in Berry et al., 2006. We specifically used an immigrant demographic questionnaire to account for familial ethnic history, rural or urban birthplace, and ethnic composition of childhood and current living environment. Rural was categorized as per the U.S. Census 2000 Urban and Rural Classification (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b).

The first and one of the most important questions asked was “What does the term biculturalism mean to you?” The responses to this question were coded according to the definition mentioned above as well as patterns discerned from the responses from initial data collection. From these two sources the following codes were produced: two cultures, individual identification with two cultures of a person, elements of place, personalizing / internalizing, race/ethnicity, inherence to individual, bicultural interaction, American biculturalism, minimal contact, and acceptance of more than one culture within a society. The code descriptions can be found in Appendix B. The coding of these responses had two purposes: to determine how aligned the responses are with a psychological perspective of biculturalism based on previous literature (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007, Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005, & LaFramboise et al., 1993), and to measure how personalized the definitions are. Responses aligned with an acceptable psychological definition of biculturalism were noted by the presence of two cultures, individual identification with two cultures, and bicultural interaction, while a response indicating elements of place, race/ethnicity, inherence to individual, American biculturalism, and minimal contact showed less association. The level of personalization was measured by the code personalization / internalization.

Questions two and eight were numerically categorized using an ordinal scale according to each question: Q#8 (0 – Very important, 1 – Important, 2 – Somewhat important, 3 – not very important, 4 – not important at all) and Q#2 (0 – Very often, 1 – often, 2 – somewhat, 3 – rarely, 4 – never). Questions three, four, six, seven, and nine to fifteen were categorized using nominal scales tailored to each question: Q#3(0 – family/spouse or significant other, 1 – close friends, 2 – some friends/roommates, 3 – acquaintances, 4 – None/few people), Q#4 (0 – exciting, 1 – exhausting, 2 – both, 3 – neither), Q#6 (0 – agree, 1 – disagree, 2 – depends, 3 – sometimes, 4 – I don't know), Q#7 (1 – yes, 2 – no, 3 – unsure), Q#9 (0 – yes, 1 – no, 2 – yes, but not in primary education), Q#10 (0 – yes, 1 – no, 2 – maybe, but they fare allright, 3 – it can be help and hurt), Q#11 (0 – participant provided a “strategy” with a personal example or insertion of personal words (i.e. I or My), 1 – participant provided a strategy that maintains both cultures, 2 – participant provided a strategy, 3 – participant provided a strategy that maintains one culture, and 4 – participant did not provide a strategy), Q#12 (0 – yes, 1 – no, 2 – unsure, 3 – I already do), Q#13 (0 – yes, 1 – no, 2 – I don't know), Q#14 (0 – helps, 1 – hurts, 2 – can be both, depending on the situation, 3 – unsure), Q#15 (0 – yes, 1 – no, 2 – I don't know/unsure).

Procedure

Participants signed up for the survey via an online research pool from the University of Georgia. Participants were then contacted via email by a research coordinator with instructions on how to complete the survey online and a link to the survey website. Participants were given a duration of one week to complete the survey, after which a reminder email was sent to complete the survey. If the participant still did not complete the survey, the participant was not given research credit.

Once the survey link was activated by the participant, the survey displayed a consent form prior to the actual survey. The questionnaire required about 25-30 minutes to complete. The participant received a debriefing form online after completing the questionnaire. The research coordinator was then notified of the completion, and the participant was given credit.

CHAPTER 3 RESULTS

Sample Characteristics Breakdown

Ninety-nine percent of the sample was between the ages of 17-22, with one outlier of the age 30. About seventy-eight percent of the sample had been in college for less than 2 years, and 22.3% of the participants had been in college from 3 to 5 years. Less than twenty-four percent of the participants were born in a rural location in the United States, and 76.2% of the participants were born in an urban area. Only three participants out of the 101 were non-white and non-black.

Less than sixteen percent of the participants currently live in an area where almost all of the people are from their ethnic group, 40.7% of the participants currently live in an area where a majority of the people are from their ethnic group, 24.1% live in an area with an equal mix of people from their ethnic group and other groups, 8.3% live in an area where the majority of the people are from a different ethnic group, and 4.6% of the participants live in an area where almost all of the people are from a different ethnic group. Almost forty-one percent of the participants grew up in an area where almost all of the people are from their ethnic group, 31.5% of the participants grew up in an area where a majority of the people are from their ethnic group, 12% grew up in an area with an equal mix of people from their ethnic group and other groups, 3.7% grew up in an area where the majority of the people are from a different ethnic group, and 5.6% of the participants grew up in an area where almost all of the people are from a different ethnic group.

The Definition of Biculturalism

The definitions of biculturalism given were determined in accordance with acceptable characteristics of the definition of biculturalism in a psychological sense through several measures from the first question. Only the following codes proved reliable: two cultures, bicultural interaction, minimal contact, race/ethnicity, personalization/internalization, and elements of place. Seventy-four percent of the participants identified biculturalism as consisting of two cultures, indicating that there is at least a basic understanding within the sample of what biculturalism means. However, incomplete understanding was demonstrated as twenty percent of the participants identified biculturalism in reference to elements of place (communities, locations, etc.), and about seven percent of the participants required race or ethnicity as relevant to biculturalism. These data indicate that the sample had an idea of what biculturalism may be referring to, but may not have had the academic understanding of biculturalism in a psychological and personal sense. In contrast, only twenty-seven percent of the participants acknowledged the active bicultural interaction present in biculturalism, implying that though there may be an understanding of the components of biculturalism, there may only be a superficial comprehension of the process of biculturalism.

Only twelve percent of participants personalized their responses to “what does biculturalism mean to you?”, a question phrased to promote more personalized responses, further indicating that perhaps the idea of biculturalism is not extremely salient to the public.

Personal Bicultural Interaction

Roughly forty-one percent of participants had no close relationships with bicultural individuals, 26.7% of the participants knew acquaintances that were bicultural, 19.8% of the

participants had friends or roommates that are bicultural, 4% had close bicultural friends, and 7.9% had a bicultural family, spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend.

If given the opportunity to interact with bicultural individuals more frequently, 81.2% of the participants would do so, 5% of the participants would not interact with bicultural individuals more frequently, and 4% of the participants might, while 9.9% of the participants felt that they already interact with bicultural individuals on a regular basis.

Over forty-two percent of participants felt that biculturalism hurts a person's functioning in American society, while 22.8% of the participants felt that it does not hurt their functioning and may help their functioning in American society. Over twenty-nine percent felt that biculturalism may hurt a person's functioning in society, but that many manage well, and 5% were unsure. Fifty-three percent of participants included an explanation of why biculturalism might help or hurt a person's functioning in society, even though the question did not ask for one.

When asked "what strategies do you think bicultural people use to negotiate between their two cultures?", 5% of the participants provided a strategy with a personal example, 36.6% of the participants provided a strategy that maintains both cultures, 36.6% of the participants provided any kind of strategy, 9.9% of the participants provided a strategy that maintained only one culture, and 11.9% of the participants did not provide a strategy.

About forty-five percent of the participants felt that bicultural individuals did have a more difficult time blending into, or functioning in, society today, while 25.7% did not. Almost ten percent felt that bicultural individuals may have a somewhat difficult time functioning in society, but they do well nonetheless, while 18.8% of the participants felt that the depending on

the setting, being bicultural could be advantageous or disadvantageous. Over thirty-seven percent of participants felt that the reason for difficulty functioning in society for bicultural individuals had to do with an external source within the society, while 25.7% felt that there was an inherent internal source that creates the difficulty functioning in society, and 36.6% of the participants' responses did not indicate either direction.

Those with closer relationships with bicultural individuals perceived greater difficulty for bicultural individuals when functioning in society at 20.5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). There was a twenty-three percent correlation between opinions on integrating biculturalism and bilingualism into school curriculum and opinions on interacting with bicultural individuals ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that the more "exciting" bicultural interaction is viewed, the more likely one would be to condone the integration of biculturalism or bilingualism in school curriculum. More years of college experience correlated with more positively perceived bicultural interaction at 26% ($\alpha = 0.01$). More years of college experience correlated with the kind of strategies provided for bicultural negotiation in American society at 36.8% ($\alpha = 0.01$). Ethnic makeup of current living area correlated with ethnic makeup of the childhood living environment at 56% ($\alpha = 0.01$).

Biculturalism in the Public Eye

Twenty-one percent of participants agreed with the portrayal of bicultural figures in the media, while 50% disagreed with their presentation. Seventeen percent felt that the agreement of the portrayal represented depended on the situation, and 12% were unsure about their opinion on this matter. Twenty-five percent of the participants identified stereotypical representations of minorities as a point of controversy. Of the fifty percent who disagreed with media portrayal of

bicultural individuals, only 40% identified biased representations of bicultural individuals as a point of disagreement.

About twenty-six percent of the participants felt that bicultural figures in the public arena influenced their opinion of biculturalism, while 68% of the participants did not. About five percent felt that it depended in the situation. Of the twenty-six percent of the participants that were influenced by bicultural persons in the public arena, 23.1% indicated a positive influence, 3.8% indicated a negative influence, and 73.1% of the participants showed a neutral influence.

The mentioning of stereotypes in relation to bicultural representation in the media correlated at forty-one percent with the type of bicultural negotiation strategy provided by the respondent ($\alpha = 0.01$). More years of college experience correlated with the mentioning of stereotypes in reference to media bicultural representations in the media at 32% ($\alpha = 0.01$). The more positive the influence of bicultural individuals in the public arena was perceived correlated with the agreement of bicultural figures in the media at 71% ($\alpha = 0.01$).

The Perceived Importance of Biculturalism in the United States

Around forty-six percent of participants feel that biculturalism is personally important to them, while 49.5% did not feel this way, and 4% of the participants avoided answering this question. Exactly ninety-two percent of the participants felt that biculturalism will impact American society in the coming years, while 6.9% of the participants did not feel this way, and 1% was not sure.

About fifty-five percent of the participants felt that biculturalism is very important in American society today, while 34.3% felt that it was important, 5.1% felt it was not very important, and 1% was not sure. About thirty-two percent of all the participants mentioned a

theme of cultural diversity being central to America as a country. Of the nearly ninety-four percent of participants that felt biculturalism was important or very important, only 34.4% had a theme of American diversity in their responses.

Seventy-two percent of participants felt that schools should incorporate biculturalism or bilingualism into the curriculum while 11.9% felt that schools should not, and 10.9% of the participants felt that biculturalism or bilingualism should be added to the curriculum but only in high school or college.

The greater perceived importance of biculturalism in America correlated at 36.6% with greater perceived difficulty of a bicultural person's functioning in American society ($\alpha = 0.01$). Greater perceived future impact of biculturalism correlated at 23 % with approving biculturalism in school curriculum ($\alpha = 0.05$).

There was a correlation between rural/urban birthplace and characterization of cultural diversity in America in reference to the importance of biculturalism in America of -0.22 ($\alpha = 0.05$). Chi-square analysis on urban/rural origin and characterizing biculturalism as important to American diversity revealed a significant relationship ($\chi^2 (1, 101), p = 0.043$).

CHAPTER 4 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to discern public attitudes towards biculturalism; specifically, the questionnaire was geared to determine how important biculturalism seemed to be, to see how biculturalism may be perceived through the media, to see if participants were empathized with bicultural individuals, and to estimate the salience of biculturalism. A few broad patterns emerged throughout analyses. Though biculturalism was perceived as important by a significant majority of the sample throughout most of the questions structured to measure the importance of biculturalism, the questions relating to their behavior with regards to biculturalism or bicultural individuals did not necessarily reflect the belief in the importance of biculturalism. Additionally, a majority of the sample did not reflect an entirely accurate definition of biculturalism in their responses. Further analysis introduced possibilities of why this disconnect may exist. Several factors that may prove helpful in increasing the relevance of biculturalism include level of exposure or experience with bicultural individuals, the attitude with which we consider biculturalism, and the education we receive with regards to biculturalism or more simply, cultural diversity.

Do people in the US think biculturalism is relevant?

Biculturalism was deemed an important societal issue in an astounding majority of the participant responses: ninety-four percent felt that biculturalism was important in US society, seventy-seven percent felt that biculturalism/bilingualism should be incorporated into school

curriculum, forty-six percent felt that biculturalism was personally important to them, and ninety-two percent of the participants felt that biculturalism will be influential to US society in the coming years (See Table 1, for frequencies). These statistics might indicate a tendency towards the belief that biculturalism is an important concept to consider personally as well as nationally. However, this belief is not revealed in the behavior of the participants: forty-two percent of the participants did not have any close relationships with any bicultural individuals, only twelve percent of the participants personalized their definition of biculturalism, and sixty-eight percent of the participants did not feel that bicultural individuals in the media influenced their opinions on biculturalism (See Table 2 & 3, for frequencies). These data are important in that they imply several things about the nature of public interaction with biculturalism.

First, the lack of interpersonal interaction with bicultural individuals suggests that either the belief in the importance of biculturalism is superficial or that the belief is genuine. If the belief is genuine, it may not be internalized to the point of influencing day to day interaction, or the participants may not feel that personal experience is necessary to understand biculturalism and bicultural individuals. The absence of meaningful contact with bicultural individuals may be caused by either the dominant demographic as well as the minority demographic. There is an “oppositional culture” being documented amongst U.S. minority youth as a reaction to the “social isolation and constrained opportunities” of minorities (Zhou, 1997, p.69). Through the lens of this oppositional culture, interaction with the dominant majority (in this case white society) is seen as undesirable (Zhou, 1997). Thus, the lack of bicultural interaction may be due to the emergence of this oppositional culture amongst minority youth. Second, the lack of influence of bicultural figures in the media suggests that though there may be bicultural

representation in the media, the representations are not effective in speaking for biculturalism. Without effective bicultural representation in the media and without personal experience with bicultural individuals, how are United States citizens able to grasp the concept of biculturalism and its implications?

Perhaps they are not; perhaps the matter of biculturalism has not yet been deemed relevant enough to United States society. Only five percent of participants empathized with bicultural individuals as shown through their personalized responses when asked to consider potential bicultural functioning in U.S. society (See Table 5, for frequencies). The deficiency in empathy for bicultural individuals in the responses suggests that the idea that biculturalism may not actually be pertinent enough for participants to want to empathize. Though the previously mentioned responses indicate that biculturalism is viewed as pertinent to U.S. society, the lack of behavioral confirmation suggests that the answers provided may not have been entirely authentic. Perhaps the U.S. cultural values of pluralism and acceptance of diversity played a role in producing general answers to a question about the diversification of the United States. To further bolster this line of thought, the incidence of personalization or internalization within the biculturalism definition question was low, indicating that though the question was phrased to encourage personal introspection (“What does the term biculturalism mean to you?”), little effort was made. Lack of personalized responses indicates that participants may have distanced themselves from considering biculturalism profoundly. This distancing may be due to discomfort, lack of knowledge, or simple laziness. Whatever the reason for distancing, the fact remains that comprehending biculturalism remains an important component to more clearly

understanding ethnic relations within the United States and internationally (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007).

Possible Factors that affect Biculturalism in the Public Eye

Further analysis introduced possible variables that interplay when considering biculturalism in a public light. The results indicated that the more positive a participant viewed previously experienced bicultural interaction, the more likely the participant was to include an element of acceptance of biculturalism in their definition. This correlation suggests that the manner of interaction with bicultural individuals may influence our reception to biculturalism: the more positive the interaction, the more positive the reception. The more positive the reception is to biculturalism, the smoother intercultural relations can potentially be. Thus, the attitude with which the public attends to biculturalism can contribute to healthy public relations in U.S. society.

Results also indicated that the more experience or exposure to bicultural individuals and biculturalism a person influenced ability to empathize with bicultural individuals, as well as both the attitude with which one interacts with bicultural individuals and the accuracy of one's definition of biculturalism. Those with close relationships with bicultural individuals empathized more with the potential difficulty of bicultural functioning in society. The experience of having a relationship with a bicultural individual might have allowed for greater introspection with regards to biculturalism and bicultural individuals. This finding suggests that simple, yet meaningful, experience with biculturalism or bicultural individuals may permit greater salience. Greater cultural heterogeneity of a childhood environment affected the attitude with which one interacted with bicultural individuals. The young exposure to cultural diversity may have

influenced how the participant perceived bicultural interaction. This finding suggests that early experience with biculturalism can foster positive intercultural interaction. Both of these results suggest that experience with biculturalism and with bicultural individuals is beneficial in generating empathy for bicultural individuals and is a positive influence on the attitudes with which we consider biculturalism.

Results revealed that college experience may be an important aspect in allowing for greater comprehension of biculturalism. More college experience paralleled with the acknowledgment of stereotypes in reference to bicultural figures in the media. The acknowledgement of stereotypes in reference to bicultural figures in the media indicates an awareness of bias and prejudice in the media. This correlation suggests that more college experience may allow for greater awareness of bias towards bicultural individuals in the media. More college experience positively correlated with correctly identifying biculturalism as requiring two cultures specifically. These data suggest that more college experience can allow for greater accuracy about the concept of biculturalism. These data imply that the more college experience one has can influence one's interpretation of biculturalism. This may be simply due to the fact that the college environment is ideal in experiencing cultural diversity; in fact, diversity is often celebrated on college campuses. Perhaps it is this influence that allows for greater consideration of biculturalism.

A rural birthplace seemed to be a predictor for whether or not the participant referenced American diversity in regards to if biculturalism will impact the United States in the coming years. Though there are countless differences between rural and urban living, one main difference seems to be the level of conventionality in the values (Slama, 2004). Though the

correlation seems contradictory, it is in fact quite fitting; conventional American beliefs include pluralism and egalitarianism (Keely, 1982, p.30). As rural culture may adhere more closely with conventional U.S. values, it is understandable how the data shows this relationship. An important inference of this connection is that American values need not be lost entirely in order to accept biculturalism and cultural diversification.

Limitations and Future Direction

Several caveats should be kept in mind while considering the implications of this study. There are several possibilities related to the public nature of the survey that may prove to cause unreliability within the data sets: the possible unreliability of the public opinion due to major current events³, wording of questions, possible dishonesty of responses, and merely the fact that people in general are inconsistent (Doob, 1966, p61-64). Moreover, the study in itself is a preliminary gathering of data meant to be a first step in delineating the processes behind the social reception of biculturalism in the United States. While we can use the data from this study to direct future investigations; to infer causation from the presented analyses would be a mistake. A larger sample and a more specified questionnaire would likely produce a clearer picture of the public views of biculturalism. Additionally, the demographics of the sample suggest that there may be a sampling bias. Though the recruitment of participants was highly anonymous and ethnicity was not considered when approving participants, the participants were predominantly white, from more ethnically homogeneous areas, currently living in homogeneous areas, and from the South. The attitudes shown may only be representative of the dominant demographics; thus reducing the external validity of the results. Finally, a level of response bias may be present

³ Such as the inauguration of President Barack Obama as the first non-white president in the United States

due to the nature of the study. The study was titled public views of biculturalism, which may have primed the participants to consider diversity even before viewing the questions. The responses may be intentionally skewed by the participants to show themselves in a socially desirable light in favor of diversity. If so, then the fact that the mere use of the word biculturalism could create a significant response bias might indicate an automatic response to biculturalism or diversity. If such an automatic response exists, then the attitudes towards biculturalism themselves may be more complicated to access, which is another topic to consider when reviewing intercultural relations in lieu of biculturalism.

Considering the implicit framework of biculturalism would further clarify existing ideas and attitudes the US people may have towards bicultural individuals and biculturalism. There may exist different levels of stigma and bias between the different combinations of bicultural people; for example, the stigma for a bicultural individual of a dominant culture and a minority culture may be different from the level of stigma for a bicultural individual of two minority cultures. Delineating the underlying concepts of biculturalism and the possible differentiations of the large variety of bicultural people would highlight how complex this process is when considering the societal implications of biculturalism.

This study is meant to be an introductory step into considering bicultural interaction in the United States, so future direction of this study is potentially endless. Sampling wider sets of demographic groups to compare responses with a more developed and specific questionnaire could more directly measure the public views of biculturalism with greater validity. More specific objectives would be to scrutinize more thoroughly the relationship between attitude towards biculturalism and interaction with bicultural individuals, the relationship between

education or exposure level and ability to empathize with bicultural individuals. Increased exposure to diversity through education may enhance the receptivity of an increasingly multicultural world, thus to study how this relationships is fostered would be crucial (Banks, 2000). Finally to look at the influence of childhood living environment in relation to attitude towards biculturalism may prove consequential in determining key characteristics that affect bicultural interaction. To systematically understand biculturalism, and thereby diversity, would prove advantageous for improving cultural and public relations within the United States society.

Table 1

Participant's ratings of importance of biculturalism across variables

Variable	Percent		
	Agree	Disagree ^a	Unsure
Biculturalism is personally important to me.	46.5%	49.5	4.0
Biculturalism will impact U.S. society in the coming years.	92.1	6.9	1.0
Schools should incorporate biculturalism/bilingualism into their curriculum.	77.2	11.9	10.9
Biculturalism is important in U.S. society today.	93.9	5.1	1.0
I would interact more with bicultural people if given the opportunity.	81.2	5.0	13.9

^a*Not very important to the participant*

Table 2

Participant's levels of relationships with bicultural individuals⁴

Types of Relationships	Percent
None	38.9%
Acquaintances	25.0
Some friends/Roommates	18.5
Close friends	3.7
Family/Spouse/Boyfriend or Girlfriend	7.4

⁴ Content analysis revealed different levels of bicultural relationships. Additionally, some participants may not have even realized that some of their daily relationships are with bicultural people as all bicultural persons are not always recognizable through physical features.

Table 3

Media influence of biculturalism on participants' opinions

Variable	Percent		
	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
Bicultural figures in the public arena affect my opinion of biculturalism.	26.8%	68.0	5.2
I agree with most portrayals of these peoples and cultures in the media or public arena.	21.1	50	31.0 ^a
I feel that much of the media portrayal of bicultural persons involves stereotypes or bias. ^b	25.7	--- ^b	--- ^b

^aTwelve percent of these participants felt that their decision depended on each individual portrayal.

^bSome participants expressed this idea, while other participants did not. The lack of expression is not sufficient to assume disagreement with the idea.

Table 4

Presence of American diversity ideology in participant responses

Presence	Percent
Mentions or indicates a theme of America, as a country, being defined/identified/associated with cultural diversity	31.7%
Does not mention this.	68.3

Table 5

Participants' opinions on the difficulty of functioning for bicultural persons in U.S. Society today

Variable	Percent
Bicultural people have a more difficult time blending into, or functioning in society today.	45.5%
Bicultural people do not have a more difficult time functioning in society today.	25.7
Bicultural individuals may have difficult time functioning, but they manage fine.	9.9
Being bicultural could be both advantageous or disadvantageous in society depending on the situation.	18.8

APPENDIX A
BICULTURALISM OPEN ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) What does the term biculturalism mean to you?
- 2) How often do you come in contact with bicultural individuals?
- 3) Do you have close relationships with any bicultural individuals? If so, please explain?
- 4) Do you find it exciting or exhausting to deal with bicultural individuals? Why?
- 5) How often and where do you see bicultural people or different cultures in the media?
- 6) How do you feel about most portrayals of these people or cultures?
(Agree/Disagree?Explain.)
- 7) Do bicultural figures in the public arena affect your opinion of biculturalism?
- 8) How important do you think biculturalism is in American society today?
- 9) Do you think schools should incorporate biculturalism and bilingualism into their curriculum? Why or why not?
- 10) Do you think that bicultural people have a more difficult time blending into, or functioning in, society today?
- 11) What strategies do you think bicultural people use to negotiate between their two cultures?
- 12) Would you interact with bicultural people more frequently if given the opportunity? Why or why not?
- 13) Is biculturalism personally important to you? Why or why not?

14) Do you think that biculturalism helps or hurts a person's functioning in American society?

15) Do you think that biculturalism will impact American society in the coming years?

16) What is your definition of globalization?

17) How do you feel about globalization?

18) How do you feel about legal immigration?

APPENDIX B
QUESTION 1 CODE DESCRIPTIONS

Code Name	Code Description	Examples ^a
Two cultures	Mentioning “two cultures” in any way; terms such as “multiple cultures” or “different cultures” does not suffice. “Two or more cultures” is acceptable.	‘Biculturalism means a mix of two cultures.’
Individual identification with two cultures	The response indicates active personal effort towards being a part of more than one culture (practicing beliefs, traditions, customs, etc.) and/or that a bicultural person actively identifies with more than one culture. This code requires that there is an active and aware cognitive component of a bicultural person. What would not fit here is a "person who is born into more than one culture" or "a person who's ancestry involves more than one culture" etc., or any other kind of statement that implies that biculturalism affects the identity of the person, not that the person themselves actively identifies with two cultures.	‘Someone that considers themselves a part of two different cultures and chooses to partake in activities of both cultures’
Elements of place	The response will indicate that biculturalism is when two or more cultures come to a "place, region, society, area, city, community, etc" (a "place") and coexist. The response must mention a location wherein which biculturalism exists. Simply saying that biculturalism exists does not count.	‘That there are two cultures in a country’ or ‘When two cultures can successfully come together and coexist peacefully’
Personalizing / internalizing	The response includes an "I or to me" aspect. i.e. "I believe" or "to me..." Personalization of the response is indicated, meaning that the response shows personal involvement or internalization through identifying words like "I" or "me."	‘ To me, biculturalism seems to be...’ or ‘I think that...’
Race / ethnicity	The response will indicate that being bicultural is mostly related to a person or group's race/ethnicity. Responses in here will often quote specific ethnicities i.e. African-American or Hispanic. Even the terms "race/ethnicity" qualify for this code.	‘To me, it means the relationship between americans and african americans or the relationship between americans and mexicans...’
Inherence to individual	Response will indicate that a bicultural person "is born into more than one culture" or "has an ancestry that involves more than one culture"... any kind of statement that implies that biculturalism affects the inherent identity of the person, not that the person themselves actively identifies with two cultures. The response will express that the idea that biculturalism is simply a part	‘People who come from two different cultural backgrounds.’

	of some people or that it simply happens, and that there is no active acceptance to be bicultural. Kind of like blonde hair, it's just something you are born with.	
Bicultural interaction	This code indicates that the different cultures actively interact together. The interaction can be a power struggle (i.e. a minority/majority culture), or simply two cultures cooperating together within an individual or an area or a society. All of the possible responses will indicate that there are two cultures that interact within biculturalism. At its simplest, the response will indicate that two cultures interact (whether by power struggles, balance, or conflict). A phrase like "two cultures exist" would not qualify because it would not indicate an active interaction.	'It means the joining of two separate cultures in either a situation or a group of people' or 'when 2 different cultures exist; one usually has most of the power'
American biculturalism	The response specifically references America as where biculturalism exists, grows, begins, is nourished, etc.	'I view america as a perfect example biculturalism. Our nation was built on the mixing of cultures to form one nation. As a definition, I would say that biculturalism is the taking ideas and beliefs of two cultures and forming the best of both worlds.'
Minimal contact	This code will express that a person (not regions or areas) can be bicultural simply by being exposed to different cultures or being acquainted with different cultures/bicultural people. This code cannot coexist with the codes "individual identification, acceptance of more than one culture, or inherent to the individual."	'Bioculturalism to me means being exposed to two or more cultures.'
Acceptance of more than one culture within a society	Indicates that there are several cultures that are accepted as a part of society. Often with this code, you will find the word "accept". This code refers only to society or other macrocosmic systems beyond the "self" (ie community, region, area...). An individual acceptance of more than one culture would fit into the "individual identification" code.	'A society in which many cultures exists or an individual whose parents are from two different cultures.'

^aExamples are direct quotes from data set.

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