

Similarities or Differences in Identity Development? The Impact of Acculturation and Gender on Identity Process and Outcome

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This study examined the effects of variations in acculturation and gender on identity processes and outcomes. Three hundred fifty-seven students at a culturally diverse university completed measures of identity processes (exploration, commitment, and identity style) and outcomes (identity status). The generalizability of the underlying identity processes across contextual variations was ascertained by evaluating the consistency of factor solutions across immigrant generation and gender. Results suggested that the processes underlying identity development are consistent across variations in acculturation and gender. Supplemental analyses revealed effects of acculturation and gender on the extent to which individuals utilized various identity processes and manifested various identity outcomes.

KEY WORDS: identity; acculturation; gender; structure; process; outcome.

INTRODUCTION

Immigration to the United States has reached an all time high, with 12% of U.S. residents currently being foreign-born (Lollock, 2001). According to the most recent data, 26.4% of all Americans are ethnic or racial minorities (projected to increase to 39.5% by 2025), with the largest proportion being Hispanic (Lollock, 2001). In many cases, immigrants are coming to the United States from collectivist-oriented countries. This contrast of cultures provides a unique opportunity to document the

effects of acculturation on development as successive generations of individuals adapt to a new host culture and adopt (as well as transform) its ideals.

Acculturation has been defined as “the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when individuals with different cultures come into contact” (Gibson, 2001, p. 19). The steadily increasing influx of immigrants has prompted scientists and practitioners alike to attend to the important role that acculturation plays in shaping the process of human development (Betancourt and Lopez, 1993; Broughton, 1987; Sampson, 1993; Szapocznik and Kurtines, 1993). Indeed, understanding the cultural context of development has been declared a high-priority research agenda for the 21st century (Fisher *et al.*, 1998), one with profound implications for practitioners who work with diverse youth. In light of the constantly changing demographic profile of the United States, acculturation is a significant dimension of cultural context. Cultural context includes the culture of gender as well, as roles and expectations for genders tend to differ within and between cultures (Cole, 1998; Sorell and Montgomery, 2001).

Attempts to explore the cultural context of development have called into question the historical views of developmental structures, processes, and outcomes as universal (i.e., trans-cultural, trans-gender, etc.) in all

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developmental domains, including the formation of a sense of identity. Identity formation has historically been viewed as one of the principal tasks of the passage to adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Côté and Allahaar, 1994; Erikson, 1950, 1968; Waterman, 1985). Although identity was originally conceptualized as a developmental task of adolescence (Erikson, 1950), changing cultural and developmental contexts have allowed greater numbers of young people to spend significant time in the university environment before moving on to marriage, gainful employment, and parenthood (Côté and Levine, 1997). As a result, the psychosocial moratorium associated with forming an identity has gradually extended into the early to mid-twenties, a life stage that has been termed *emerging adulthood* (Arnett, 2000).

Moreover, in Erikson's original formulation (1950), identity formation was conceptualized as one stage within a universal epigenetic sequence that unfolds over the life span. Erikson's epigenetic approach, and its conceptual and empirical extensions, has become the most widely used framework in the psychosocial development literature (Berzonsky and Adams, 1999; Schwartz, 2001). However, the universalistic claims of Erikson's (and similar) approaches have been vigorously challenged with the emergence of postmodernism and associated traditions (postpositivism, poststructuralism, etc.). Indeed, postmodernists have challenged *all* universal and objective views of knowledge, arguing instead for a view that "knowledge" can only be personal, local, and particular (Chandler, 1995; Kvale, 1992).

Erikson's epigenetic claims, in particular, have been challenged by those who argue that the theory's view of the outcome of the identity formation process (i.e., successful achievement of an identity) as well as its view of the process itself (i.e., epigenetic and universal) is based on the individualistic, androcentric, late-modern, Euro-American tradition characteristic of the current cultural mainstream in the United States (cf. Côté, 1996; Gergen, 1991; Gilligan, 1982/1993; Josselson, 1988; Sorell and Montgomery, 2001). Critics of Erikson's approach, and of extensions of it, point out that the individualistic orientation this approach stands in contrast to the more collectivist orientation of many new immigrants to the United States (e.g., Hispanic or Asian) and may, therefore, not adequately reflect the experiences of members of these groups (cf. Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Particularly in the case of adolescents from immigrant families, the developmental experiences involved in the transition to adulthood may vary according to the extent to which the adolescent has acculturated to American values and ideals. Similarly, the primary processes and outcome of identity development might be expected to differ between young men and young

women as they mature in contexts differing in gender-related expectations about self-development (Archer, 1985, 1992; Gilligan, 1982/1993; Schiedel and Marcia, 1985). Such differences, if they were to emerge, would challenge the assumption that identity development unfolds in a universal way.

Theoretical Implications and Empirical Questions

The universal, epigenetic view of the development of identity has thus been challenged, raising theoretical and empirical issues that have yet to be resolved. Erikson's epigenetic approach, rooted in the universalistic and objectivistic modernist tradition, and the alternatives of his critics, rooted in the local and particularist postmodern tradition, appear to have vastly differing theoretical implications for understanding the cultural context of development. The epigenetic approach suggests that the structure, processes, and outcomes of identity formation are universal and transcultural, unfolding in ways that are relatively immune or unresponsive to the effects of acculturation- and gender-related experiences. In contrast, the more radical critiques of the epigenetic approach, such as those rooted in the postmodern tradition, suggest exactly the opposite: not only are the basic components of the formation of an identity, including its structure, process, and outcome, contextually labile and affected by acculturation- and gender-related experiences, but the very nature of those components and how they operate is largely or primarily determined by experiences that are local and particular (e.g., based on gender and level of acculturation).

These two approaches not only have divergent theoretical assumptions, they also suggest contrasting empirical hypotheses. Although both hypotheses appear plausible and have articulate supporters, little empirical research has been conducted to address this issue directly. Although the effect of acculturation on identity development has not been directly investigated, some studies have revealed both similarities and differences in identity structure, processes, and outcomes across cultural variations (e.g., Berzonsky *et al.*, 1999; Nurmi *et al.*, 1997; Phinney, 2000). Similarly, a handful of studies have found evidence of both gender differences and similarities in how young men and young women characterize both the *process* of identity development (Ollech and McCarthy, 1997; Schultheiss and Blustein, 1994) and the *outcomes* of this process (Benson *et al.*, 1992; Mellor, 1989) within mainstream Euro-American culture. However, in our review of the literature, we could find no published studies documenting the similarities or differences in identity processes and outcomes between young men and women as a function of acculturation (or across cultural contexts).

Moreover, the availability of two perspectives postulating radically differing hypotheses does not rule out a third, and highly plausible, alternative hypothesis, namely, that the components of identity formation (structure, process, and outcome) are *more or less* universal and/or *more or less* affected by acculturation, depending upon both the nature of the particular component (exploration, commitment, etc.) and the specific context of development (e.g., family, peer group; cf. Adams and Marshall, 1996). This third alternative thus steers clear of both ends of the universalistic–particularistic dichotomy in favor of a mid-range position. The availability of these different perspectives, each suggesting differing empirical outcomes, facilitates the garnering of empirical evidence that begins to address this issue and close this knowledge gap.

Practical Implications

Research that addresses such issues not only has theoretical and empirical significance but considerable practical significance as well. Specifically, the growing interest in developing and evaluating intervention programs to facilitate the identity formation process (e.g., Archer, 1994; Josselson, 1994; Ferrer-Wreder *et al.*, 2002); has highlighted the need for more detailed and specific knowledge of effective intervention strategies. Because exploration is seen as the “work” of identity formation (Grotevant, 1987), for example, increasing exploration would appear to be a useful intervention strategy. However, the importance of exploration itself (and of other identity components) may be, to varying degrees, more or less universal and more or less a function of acculturation. If this is the case, the development of workable and effective identity interventions would be advanced by having knowledge of how acculturation and gender impact the structure, processes, and outcomes of identity formation. An understanding of the role of acculturation and gender in development would help to ensure treatment integrity and specificity in such interventions, particularly when working with diverse populations composed of individuals at varying levels of acculturation (Sue, 1999). Moreover, an empirically derived knowledge base would be useful in specifying the intervention format (i.e., generic versus tailored for specific populations; Berman *et al.*, 2001).

The Current Study

The purpose of this study was to extend the evidence-based knowledge concerning the effects of acculturation on the structure, processes, and outcomes of identity

formation for both young men and young women. More specifically, a sample of first, second, and third/subsequent generation male and female immigrants was used to investigate the impact of acculturation- and gender-related experiences on identity structure, processes, and outcomes. In contrast to many prior investigations of identity, the study was conducted in a city with a high proportion of immigrants and at a culturally diverse university campus where the majority of students are intergenerationally interdependent (e.g., residing at home with their families). Our sample thus provides a snapshot that will become increasingly representative of many urban regions, not only in terms of increasing cultural diversity but also in terms of the upward extension of the stage of identity formation into young adulthood.

METHOD

Participants

Volunteer participants were recruited from psychology courses at a large, urban, culturally diverse, public university in southeast Florida in a city (Miami) with a high proportion of Hispanic immigrants, most of whom arrived within the last 2 generations. Each participant completed a survey packet of measures at home over the weekend and returned it the following week, and received academic credit.

Of the 357 students who participated, 82 (22.9%) were male and 275 (77.1%) were female. With respect to ethnicity, 88 participants (24.6%) identified themselves as non-Hispanic White, 45 (12.6%) as non-Hispanic Black, 205 (57.4%) as Hispanic, 12 (3.4%) as Asian, and 7 (2.0%) as from other ethnic/racial groups. In terms of total annual family income, 80 (22.4%) participants reported less than \$30,000, 114 (31.9%) reported between \$30,000 and \$50,000, 108 (30.3%) reported between \$50,000 and \$100,000, and 55 (15.4%) reported more than \$100,000. More than 90% of participants reported that they resided at home with their parents or other nuclear family members. The sample was comprised of emerging adults; the mean age of the sample was 21.6 years, with 90% of participants between 18 and 26 years old.

Immigrant generation cohort was used to index the impact of acculturation-related experiences on identity development (e.g., Harker, 2001). Immigrant generation data were obtained in terms of the number of generations that participants and their families had been in the United States. One hundred twenty-seven individuals (36% of the sample) identified themselves as first-generation immigrants (born outside the United States), 148 (42% of the

sample) as second-generation immigrants (U.S. born but raised by parents born outside the United States), and 79 (22% of the sample) as third or later generation (both participant and parents born in the United States). Three participants were missing immigrant generation data. Consistent with recent immigration trends in the greater metropolitan area of southeast Florida, most (72.7%) of the first and second generation immigrants in the sample were of Hispanic origin, whereas most (93.7%) of the third or later generation participants were from other racial/ethnic groups. Participants indicated many native countries in Central/South America and the Caribbean, including Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.

Measures

Demographics

Participants were asked to provide their age, ethnic identification, annual family income, place of birth, and places of parents' births.

Identity Measures

Several scholars have offered empirical operationalizations of Erikson's construct of identity (see Schwartz, 2001, for a review). Given our specific aims in this study, we included identity measures that would allow us to investigate the impact of acculturation- and gender-related experiences on the structure, processes, and outcomes of emerging adult identity development from multiple measurement perspectives.

Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status II (EOM-EIS-II). The EOM-EIS-II (Bennion and Adams, 1986) provided our primary measure of identity outcomes. The most widely used measure of identity status in the identity literature, the EOM-EIS-II contains 64 statements, with 16 statements targeting each of the four identity statuses (achieved, moratorium, foreclosed, and diffused)³ identified by Marcia (1966). Participants' scores for each of the four identity statuses served as our measure of the outcome of the identity formation process at the time of assessment. The EOM-EIS-II surveys 8 content domains, 4 ideological (politics, religion, occupation, and

philosophical lifestyle), and 4 interpersonal (friendships, dating, gender roles, and recreation). Participants respond to each item using a 5-point Likert scale. In previous research, Cronbach's alpha values for the EOM-EIS-II scales ranged from 0.60 to 0.80 with a mean alpha of 0.67 (Jones and Streitmatter, 1987).

Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ). The EIPQ (Balistreri *et al.*, 1995) provided a measure of 2 core identity processes, exploration and commitment, proposed by Marcia (1966). The EIPQ assesses exploration and commitment within 4 ideological domains (politics, religion, occupation, and values) and within 4 interpersonal content domains (friendships, dating, gender roles, and family). Previous research reported Cronbach's alpha values of 0.76 for the exploration scale and 0.75 for the commitment scale, with test-retest reliability coefficients of 0.90 and 0.76, respectively (Balistreri *et al.*, 1995). For this study, we calculated and analyzed exploration and commitment scores for the EIPQ separately for the ideological and interpersonal domains for 2 reasons. First, separate scores on the ideological and interpersonal content domains for exploration and commitment provided *process* data that were conceptually parallel to that of the ideological and interpersonal *outcome* scores (i.e., identity status measures) that we derived from the EOM-EIS-II (for this reason, only content domains common to both measures were included in analyses). Second, in our analyses of the consistency of the structure of process and outcome measures, this method of scoring the EOM-EIS-II and EIPQ provided the opportunity to replicate a previous factor analytic study of the structure of identity processes and outcomes (Streitmatter, 1993), which similarly included separate ideological and interpersonal content domain scores.

Identity Style Inventory (ISI). The ISI (Berzonsky, 1997) provided a measure of the 3 processes that Berzonsky has identified as underlying the identity statuses (Berzonsky, 1989). Berzonsky labeled these processes *identity styles*, where an identity style represents the usual manner in which one addresses (or fails to address) life choices, life dilemmas, and identity issues. The ISI consists of 40 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Eleven items measure the *informational style*, which refers to the active problem-focused and exploratory orientation that moratorium- and achievement-based individuals tend to adopt when faced with life issues (e.g., "I find that personal problems often turn out to be interesting challenges"). Nine items measure the *normative style*, which refers to the tradition- and rule-focused orientation that foreclosure-based individuals adopt when making choices and solving problems (e.g., "I generally rely on others' advice when I have a problem"). Ten items measure the

³Because identity status is well known, it is not described in detail here. Readers are referred to Marcia (1966), Schwartz (2001), and Waterman (1999) for in-depth reviews of identity status theory. Briefly, diffusion represents apathy and disinterest, foreclosure represents rigid and inflexible commitments, moratorium represents the search for self, and achievement represents the consolidation of a sense of self.

diffuse/avoidant style, which refers to the evasive and procrastinatory orientation that diffusion-based individuals adopt toward problem solving and decision making (e.g., “I don’t worry much about the future”). Ten additional items comprise a commitment scale that was not analyzed for this report. Previous research with the ISI scales has reported Cronbach’s alpha values ranging from 0.66 (normative style) to 0.76 (diffuse/avoidant style), with average test-retest reliabilities of 0.86 (Berzonsky, 1997).

These measures demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency reliability in the current study. Cronbach’s alpha values ranged from 0.52 to 0.80, with a median alpha of 0.65. A listing of the internal consistency estimates for each individual scale is available from the first author.

RESULTS

Data Analytic Strategy

Investigating the impact of acculturation- and gender-related experiences on the components of emerging adult identity development involved a 2-step process. The first step involved using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to investigate the consistency of the structure of the identity *processes* measured by the EIPQ and the ISI and the consistency of the structure of the identity *outcomes* measured by the EOM-EIS-II, across immigrant generations and between genders. The second step involved using multivariate analysis of variance to investigate *the impact of acculturation and gender* on the identity processes measured by the EIPQ and the ISI and on the identity outcomes as measured by the EOM-EIS-II.

Consistency of the Structure of Identity Processes and Outcomes Across Immigrant Generations and Between Genders

To investigate the consistency of the structure of the process measures (exploration, commitment, and the 3 identity styles) and the outcome measures (the 4 identity statuses), the identity process measures (EIPQ and ISI) and the identity status measure (EOM-EIS-II) were separately factor analyzed for each immigrant generation and for each gender. The separate confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs; principal components with varimax rotations) were conducted twice, once at the item level and once at the scale level. For both sets of analyses, factors with eigenvalues above 1 and factor loadings with absolute values of 0.50 or greater (indicating 25% shared variance with the factor) were considered significant. Complete

tables of all item and scale loadings are available from the first author.

Item-Level Analyses: Consistency of Subscale Factor Structure in an Immigrant Population. Item-level analyses were conducted as a preliminary step in investigating the consistency of the structure of the process and outcome components across immigrant generations and between genders. Because the scale scores that represent the hypothesized identity processes and outcomes are comprised of these items, the aim was to confirm that, in the population assessed in this study (which is different from populations with which the measures were originally developed and validated), the item factor structure for each of the measures approximated the intended (and previously replicated, in other populations) structure of the theoretical dimensions being assessed. For these analyses, we used only the first and second-generation participants, because the demographic characteristics of the third/subsequent generations of the sample were similar to populations on which the measures were developed.

The CFA of the EIPQ items yielded 4 factors, representing commitment (Factors 1 and 4) and exploration (Factors 2 and 3). In this analysis, 20 of the 32 items loaded on the expected factors. The CFA of the EOM-EIS-II items yielded 5 factors, representing foreclosure, moratorium, diffusion (in a negative direction), and achievement (2 factors). In this analysis, 40 of the 64 items loaded on the expected factors. The CFA of the ISI items yielded 3 factors, representing the diffuse/avoidant, normative, and informational styles, respectively. In this analysis, 22 of the 30 items loaded on the expected factors (the 10-item commitment scale was not analyzed). The overall pattern of results thus provided sufficient evidence that, for the first- and second-generation immigrants in this study, the item-level factor structure of each of the measures used approximated the theoretical dimensions that the measures are designed to assess.

Scale Level Analyses: Consistency of Subscales Factor Structure Across Immigrant Generations and Between Genders. The second step involved using CFA to investigate the structural consistency of the identity processes and outcomes at the scale level. To do so, another series of factor analyses (principal components with varimax rotation) were conducted on the EOM-EIS-II, EIPQ, and ISI scales together, for each generation and for both genders. The consistency of factor solutions across immigrant generation and between genders was evaluated using the *s* statistic (Cattell *et al.*, 1969). The *s* statistic is computed similarly to the chi-square statistic and is evaluated against a sampling distribution with degrees of freedom equal to the number of factor loadings in each solution.

Across Generations. The consistency of the structure of the identity processes and outcome components was first investigated by evaluating the consistency of factor solutions across immigrant generation for these components. When all identity scale scores were factor analyzed for first generation participants, four factors emerged. Factor 1 was associated with positive loadings for the diffuse/avoidant style, ideological diffusion, and moratorium in both sets of domains, and with negative loadings for interpersonal commitment and both the informational and normative styles. Factor 2 was associated with positive loadings for the informational style, exploration in both sets of domains, and moratorium in both domains, and by a negative loading for interpersonal commitment. Factor 3 was associated with positive loadings for interpersonal commitment and achievement in both domains, and with a negative loading for interpersonal diffusion. Factor 4 was associated with positive loadings for the normative style and for foreclosure in both domains.

When the CFA was conducted for second-generation immigrants, 4 factors again emerged. Factor 1 was associated with positive loadings for the diffuse/avoidant style and for diffusion and moratorium in both domains, and with negative loadings for commitment in both domains. Factor 2 was associated with positive loadings for the informational style and for achievement in both domains. Factor 3 was associated with high loadings for the normative style, ideological commitment, and foreclosure in both domains. Factor 4 was associated with positive loadings for interpersonal moratorium and for exploration in both domains.

When the factor analysis was conducted for third-generation participants, 4 factors again emerged. Factor 1 was associated with positive loadings for the diffuse/avoidant style and for diffusion and moratorium in both sets of domains, and with negative loadings for ideological achievement and commitment in both sets of domains. Factor 2 was associated with positive loadings for the normative style and for interpersonal commitment and achievement, and with a negative loading for interpersonal exploration. Factor 3 was associated with positive loadings for foreclosure in both sets of domains. Factor 4 was associated with positive loadings for the informational style and for exploration in both sets of domains (see Table I).

Factor structures were comparable across generations: first with second, $s = 0.73$, $p < 0.001$; second with third, $s = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$; first with third, $s = 0.76$, $p < 0.001$.

Between Genders. We next investigated the structural consistency of the identity processes and outcomes by evaluating the consistency of factor solutions between genders. When all identity scale scores were factor ana-

lyzed for male participants, four factors emerged. Factor 1 was marked by positive loadings for the diffuse/avoidant style and for diffusion and moratorium in both sets of domains, and by a negative loading for ideological commitment. Factor 2 was marked by positive loadings for the informational style and exploration in both sets of domains. Factor 3 was marked by positive loadings for the normative style, interpersonal commitment, and achievement in both sets of domains. Factor 4 was marked by positive loadings for the normative style and for foreclosure in both sets of domains.

When the factor analysis was conducted for female participants, 4 factors again emerged. Factor 1 was marked by positive loadings for the informational style, interpersonal commitment, and achievement in both domains, and a negative loading for interpersonal diffusion. Factor 2 was marked by positive loadings for the diffuse/avoidant style, ideological diffusion, and moratorium in both domains, and by a negative loading for ideological commitment. Factor 3 was marked by positive loadings for the normative style and for foreclosure in both sets of domains. Factor 4 was marked by positive loadings for the informational style, interpersonal moratorium, and exploration in both sets of domains, and by a negative loading for interpersonal commitment (see Table II). (Full scale loadings are available from the first author.) Factor structures were comparable between genders, $s = 0.82$, $p < 0.001$.

Replication of Previously Obtained Structure

As an additional check on the consistency of the structure of the identity processes and outcome components, the factor-analytic structure of identity processes and outcomes obtained with our first- and second-generation immigrant samples were compared to the factor-analytic structure previously observed by Streitmatter (1993) in a primarily non-Hispanic White sample. In her factor-analytic study, Streitmatter reported that the identity style scales clustered into separate factors when factor analyzed along with identity status scale scales. Although Streitmatter reported a 5-factor solution, the 3 identity styles and the status variables grouped together on factors in conceptually predictable ways: the foreclosure subscales and the normative style loaded together (Factor 1), moratorium subscales loaded together (Factor 2), diffusion subscales and the diffuse/avoidant style loaded together (Factor 3), and ideological achievement subscales loaded with the informational style (Factor 4). Streitmatter's Factor 5 contained interpersonal achievement only.

Because Streitmatter did not report the numerical values of factor loadings in her study, similarities between the findings from the Streitmatter study and the findings of the

Table I. Rotated Factor Matrix by Immigrant Generation

Scale	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	η^2
First generation					
Ideological commitment	-0.62				0.45
Ideological diffusion	0.55				0.47
Diffuse/avoidant style	0.59				0.52
Ideological moratorium	0.68	0.43			0.67
Interpersonal moratorium	0.42	0.64			0.62
Informational style	-0.49	0.57			0.60
Ideological exploration		0.76			0.73
Interpersonal exploration		0.80			0.65
Interpersonal commitment		-0.44	0.64		0.69
Ideological achievement			0.60		0.52
Interpersonal diffusion			-0.69		0.62
Interpersonal achievement			0.88		0.78
Ideological foreclosure				0.87	0.78
Interpersonal foreclosure				0.85	0.73
Normative style	-0.49			0.50	0.53
Eigenvalue	3.65	2.59	1.96	1.16	$t = 9.36$
% variance explained	24.3	17.3	13.0	7.8	62.4
Second generation					
Diffuse/avoidant style	0.61				0.57
Interpersonal commitment	-0.51				0.67
Ideological diffusion	0.76				0.74
Ideological moratorium	0.79				0.68
Interpersonal moratorium	0.65			0.41	0.66
Interpersonal diffusion	0.50				0.46
Ideological commitment	-0.46		0.46		0.55
Ideological achievement		0.79			0.69
Interpersonal achievement		0.74			0.74
Informational style		0.73			0.67
Ideological foreclosure			0.83		0.81
Interpersonal foreclosure			0.74		0.64
Normative style			0.69		0.61
Interpersonal exploration				0.83	0.71
Ideological exploration				0.65	0.64
Eigenvalue	3.99	2.55	2.25	1.03	$t = 9.84$
% variance explained	26.6	17.0	14.9	6.9	64.4
Third generation					
Ideological moratorium	0.85				0.68
Ideological commitment	-0.79				0.55
Ideological diffusion	0.75				0.74
Ideological achievement	-0.59				0.69
Interpersonal moratorium	0.60				0.66
Diffuse/avoidant style	0.60				0.58
Interpersonal diffusion	0.56				0.46
Interpersonal commitment	-0.42	0.68			0.67
Normative style		0.77			0.61
Interpersonal achievement		0.72			0.74
Interpersonal exploration		-0.41		0.60	0.71
Interpersonal foreclosure			0.92		0.64
Ideological foreclosure			0.88		0.81
Ideological exploration				0.89	0.64
Informational style				0.84	0.67
Eigenvalues	4.80	2.72	1.41	1.22	$t = 9.85$
% variance explained	32.0	18.1	9.4	8.1	67.6

Table II. Rotated Factor Matrix by Gender

Scale	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	η^2
Males					
Ideological moratorium	0.83				0.71
Ideological diffusion	0.82				0.71
Interpersonal diffusion	0.65				0.55
Ideological commitment	-0.64				0.61
Interpersonal moratorium	0.63				0.55
Diffuse/avoidant style	0.58				0.49
Interpersonal exploration		0.86			0.76
Ideological exploration		0.82			0.77
Informational style		0.74			0.63
Interpersonal commitment			0.66		0.73
Ideological achievement			0.64		0.66
Interpersonal achievement			0.83		0.71
Normative style			0.55	0.57	0.68
Ideological foreclosure				0.90	0.87
Interpersonal foreclosure				0.89	0.81
Eigenvalues	4.17	3.23	1.71	1.11	$t = 10.24$
% variance explained	28.8	21.5	11.4	7.4	69.1
Females					
Interpersonal achievement	0.87				0.54
Interpersonal diffusion	-0.63				0.47
Ideological achievement	0.58	-0.41			0.54
Interpersonal commitment	0.57			-0.46	0.58
Informational style	0.52			0.50	0.55
Ideological moratorium		0.76			0.65
Ideological commitment		-0.70			0.44
Ideological diffusion		0.64			0.46
Diffuse/avoidant style		0.53			0.37
Interpersonal moratorium		0.43		0.56	0.61
Ideological foreclosure			0.85		0.77
Interpersonal foreclosure			0.81		0.68
Normative style			0.56		0.52
Ideological exploration				0.72	0.69
Interpersonal exploration				0.77	0.46
Eigenvalues	3.79	2.53	2.00	1.00	$t = 8.33$
% variance explained	25.3	16.9	13.4	6.5	62.1

current study are presented conceptually. In the Streitmatter study, as in the current study, each identity style formed its own factor, with each style's factor associated with the same identity status scales that have been found to associate most strongly with that style in past research. With regard to the analyses by generation, Streitmatter's Factor 1 (normative style) was comparable to Factor 4 for first-generation participants, Factor 3 for second-generation participants, and Factor 2 for third-generation participants. Streitmatter's Factor 3 (diffuse/avoidant style) corresponded to the first factors for all 3 generations. Streitmatter's Factor 4 (informational style) was comparable to Factor 2 for first- and second-generation participants, and to Factor 4 for third-generation participants. For first- and second-generation participants, the factors not associated with any identity style corresponded to additional factors

reported by Streitmatter (first-generation Factor 3 with Streitmatter's Factor 5, and second-generation Factor 4 with Streitmatter's Factor 2).

Impact of Acculturation and Gender on Identity Processes and Outcomes. The first set of analyses investigating the impact of culture and gender on identity, the confirmatory factor analyses, provided evidence for consistency of the structure of the identity processes and outcomes. This second set of analyses involved using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to investigate the impact of culture and gender on the content of identity process and outcome domains.

A 3 (Generation) \times 2 (Gender) MANOVA was conducted on the EIPQ and ISI process measures (exploration, commitment, informational, normative, diffuse/avoidant) and the EOM-EIS-II identity outcome measures

Table III. The Impact of Generation on Identity Processes and Outcomes

Scale	Generation			F ratio
	1st (M, SD)	2nd (M, SD)	3rd (M, SD)	
ISI scales (process)				
Informational style	39.51 _a (5.27)	38.24 _b (5.32)	39.76 _a (5.66)	3.04*
Normative style	29.84 (5.36)	29.58 (5.55)	27.65 (5.26)	1.55
Diffuse/avoidant style	24.93 (6.26)	25.13 (6.02)	23.55 (5.18)	2.01
EIPQ scales (process)				
Ideological exploration	25.45 _a (4.81)	26.06 _a (4.94)	27.99 _b (5.32)	5.55**
Ideological commitment	27.55 (4.24)	27.05 (3.77)	26.61 (3.91)	2.99
Interpersonal exploration	26.99 (5.03)	28.50 (4.64)	29.19 (5.18)	2.81
Interpersonal commitment	29.90 _a (5.14)	28.34 _b (5.39)	28.67 _{ab} (5.90)	3.20*
EOM-EIS-II scales (outcome)				
Ideological diffusion	20.42 (4.52)	21.09 (4.77)	19.93 (5.46)	0.90
Ideological foreclosure	15.41 (5.27)	17.02 (5.70)	14.91 (5.33)	2.37
Ideological moratorium	19.51 (5.50)	20.88 (5.49)	20.63 (5.88)	1.59
Ideological achievement	29.11 (4.68)	28.23 (4.86)	29.35 (4.90)	2.90
Interpersonal diffusion	18.59 (5.18)	18.37 (5.02)	17.39 (4.95)	0.18
Interpersonal foreclosure	13.59 _a (4.91)	15.61 _b (5.54)	14.01 _a (5.53)	3.23*
Interpersonal moratorium	21.31 (4.51)	21.68 (4.78)	20.95 (4.44)	0.19
Interpersonal achievement	28.93 (5.62)	28.86 (5.02)	29.39 (4.69)	0.86

Note. Within each row, means with different subscripts differ significantly.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

(achieved, moratorium, foreclosed, diffused). The MANOVA revealed multivariate main effects for Generation, Roy's $\Theta = 0.10$, $F(15, 331) = 2.03$, $p < 0.02$; and Gender, Roy's $\Theta = 0.13$, $F(15, 331) = 2.64$, $p < 0.005$, but no Generation \times Gender interaction.

As shown in Table III, there were significant univariate effects for Generation on 4 of the 15 scales, with a larger number of significant differences (3 of 4) in the identity processes (informational style, ideological exploration, and interpersonal commitment) than in the outcomes (1 of 4; interpersonal foreclosure). Post hoc analyses indicated that second-generation students were significantly lower on the informational style and higher on foreclosure than were first- or third-generation students. Second-generation students were also significantly lower on interpersonal commitment than were first-generation students. Third-generation students, on the other hand, were significantly higher than both groups on ideological exploration.

As shown in Table IV, there were a greater number of significant univariate effects for Gender (8 of the 15 scales) than for Generation (4 of the 15 scales). Moreover, the significant differences in outcomes yielded effect sizes of larger magnitudes than did the significant differences in identity process (average process effect size = 0.030; average identity outcome effect size = 0.022). Additionally, the 5 largest effect sizes obtained were associated with gender differences. Comparisons of the genders indi-

cated that females were significantly higher on the normative style, interpersonal commitment, and both interpersonal and ideological achievement, whereas males were significantly higher than females on the diffuse/avoidant style, ideological and interpersonal foreclosure, and interpersonal diffusion.

To examine whether the Generation effects obtained (on 4 of the 15 subscales) may have been artifacts of ethnic group membership, the process and outcome variables were entered into a one-way MANOVA by ethnic group (coded as Hispanic or non-Hispanic). No significant multivariate or univariate effects emerged from this analysis, indicating that the effects of immigrant generation were due to differences in the cultural experiences of the individuals in each of the differing immigration generation cohorts rather than to ethnic group membership.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to further our understanding of the cultural context of psychosocial development, with a specific focus on the impact of acculturation and gender on identity development. Our goal was to contribute to developing knowledge to help meet the challenges that those working at the intersection of cultures will face as subsequent generations of immigrant youth come of age. To begin to address this issue, this study was conceptualized within the framework of 2 traditions

Table IV. The Impact of Gender on Identity Processes and Outcomes

Scale	Gender		<i>F</i> ratio
	Males (<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>)	Females (<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>)	
ISI scales (process)			
Informational style	38.72 (5.40)	39.12 (5.42)	0.25
Normative style	27.69 (5.25)	29.68 (5.46)	5.25*
Diffuse/avoidant style	26.15 (6.17)	24.30 (5.83)	5.83*
EIPQ scales (process)			
Ideological exploration	26.00 (4.80)	26.34 (5.13)	0.24
Ideological commitment	26.66 (4.34)	27.37 (3.90)	1.44
Interpersonal exploration	27.34 (5.07)	28.32 (4.93)	1.78
Interpersonal commitment	27.18 (5.67)	29.48 (5.29)	11.85**
EOM-EIS-II scales (outcome)			
Ideological diffusion	20.84 (5.27)	20.60 (4.62)	0.79
Ideological foreclosure	17.18 (5.75)	15.63 (5.42)	5.83*
Ideological moratorium	20.81 (5.53)	19.89 (5.57)	1.41
Ideological achievement	27.39 (4.55)	29.19 (4.82)	8.50**
Interpersonal diffusion	19.91 (4.71)	17.76 (5.07)	13.20***
Interpersonal foreclosure	15.41 (5.25)	14.27 (5.46)	3.67*
Interpersonal moratorium	22.00 (4.31)	21.21 (4.67)	2.17
Interpersonal achievement	27.28 (4.37)	29.49 (5.28)	11.46**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

(modernist and postmodernist) associated with opposing theoretical and empirical implications with respect to the impact of acculturation- and gender-related experiences on identity development and its component structures, processes, and outcomes. The modernist tradition, it was noted, holds an epigenetic view of the components of identity development as universal (transcultural, transgender, etc.) and the unfolding of these components as relatively unresponsive to the effects of acculturation- and gender-related experiences. The postmodernist tradition, in contrast, holds the opposite view, namely that not only are the basic components of identity development affected by acculturation and gender related experiences, but the very nature of those components and how they operate is largely or primarily determined by experiences that are idiosyncratic, local, and particular (e.g., culture related, historical, gendered).

Although both views appear plausible and have articulate supporters in the theoretical literature, the results of this study lent support to a third, alternative hypothesis that (a) the fundamental structure of identity is quite consistent across variations in gender and level of acculturation, but that (b) acculturation and gender do influence the degrees to which individuals draw upon specific processes and outcomes within this overarching structure.

Determining the impact of context on identity development is complex and difficult because identity development itself is a complex process that is multidimensional in its components (cf. Adams and Marshall, 1996; Schwartz, 2001). The impact of context on

development may depend upon both the nature of the specific identity component (e.g., exploration, commitment) and the particular context of development (acculturation-related, historical, social class-related, gender-related, etc). By investigating the impact of acculturation and gender on 3 basic components of identity (structure, process, and outcome), this study allowed us to begin estimating the links between specific cultural contexts and identity development. Thus, within the limited range of the theoretical perspectives and associated measures used in the study and the limitations of sample size and ethnicity captured in our sample, our findings add to the knowledge of context's role in development in a number of important ways.

However, we acknowledge 2 primary limitations inherent in the present study. First, the cross-sectional nature of the investigation prevented us from examining developmental aspects of identity processes and outcomes across variations in culture and gender. Although the current study was the first to investigate the effects of gender and acculturation-based experiences on identity, a richer picture of the interaction of acculturation and identity could be constructed by following immigrant participants and noting identity change over a long period of time.

Second, the location in which the study was conducted resulted in a sample largely comprised of Hispanic immigrants rather than other ethnic groups. Additional research is needed to clarify whether the immigrant-generation patterns would be similar or different for non-Hispanic Caribbean immigrants, Asians, Arab-Americans,

or other immigrant groups. Replicating these findings with more diverse immigrant groups would provide increased evidence of the universality of the structure of identity. Moreover, further research with more diverse immigrant groups would allow for the examination of interactions between immigrant generation and cultural background on identity development. Collapsing individuals from different cultural backgrounds into immigrant-generation categories may have diluted the effects of cultural background on identity structure, process, and outcome; immigrants may follow different patterns of identity development depending on the countries from which they have immigrated.

Despite these limitations, the results of this study allow us to draw several broad conclusions about similarities and differences in identity processes and outcomes between males and females and among immigrant generations. These conclusions, in turn, may have significant implications for the design and implementation of identity intervention programs.

Consistency of Structure

The study's basic pattern of findings provides compelling evidence in support of the structural consistency of identity processes and outcomes between genders and across cultural variations. The pattern emerging from the confirmatory factor analyses clearly suggested that, at least for the range of variation in the cultural experiences of the young women and men represented in our sample, the structural organization among the process and outcome components of the formation of an identity tends to be relatively unaffected by the effects of acculturation and gender-related experiences. These results suggest that the structure of identity is fundamentally similar, rather than individual and idiosyncratic, for youths in modern societies. The results of the item-level factor analyses, within samples of first- and second-generation (largely Hispanic) immigrants, replicated the basic factor structure identified with non-Hispanic populations. The results of the scale-level factor analyses across all 3 immigrant generations *and* between genders provided even more persuasive evidence for the transcultural and transgender consistency of the basic structure of the identity processes and outcomes, including not only the number of factors but also the relative size of the loadings. All *s* tests comparing the loadings across all 3 generations and both genders were highly significant, indicating a robust isomorphism of structure. Thus, consistent with the theoretical expectations of the epigenetic approach, the pattern of results indicated considerable transcultural and transgender consistency at both the item and scale measurement levels.

Impact of Culture and Gender on Identity Processes and Outcomes

In contrast to the pattern of findings with respect to impact of culture and gender on the *structure* of the identity process and outcome domains, the findings on the impact of culture and gender on identity *processes* and *outcomes* yielded a more complex and less clear cut pattern of results. Specifically, the pattern of findings ran counter to the epigenetic view of identity processes and outcomes as relatively impervious to the effects of culture and gender-related experiences. We found significant effects of both immigrant generation and gender, indicating that identity processes and outcomes were relatively *responsive* to the effects of culture and gender-related experiences.

In a similar way, the pattern of findings also ran counter to the postmodern view that the very nature of what those components are and how they operate is largely idiosyncratic. More specifically, although the effects of both generation and gender on identity processes and outcomes support the view that identity development is contextually *labile* and *open* to culture and gender related experiences, the mid- to moderate range and the number and magnitude of these effects counters the view that identity processes and outcomes are determined *primarily* by idiosyncratic local and particular experiences.

The pattern of findings emerging from the examination of the impact of culture and gender on identity processes and outcomes thus did not provide strong support for either pole of the universalistic–particularistic dichotomy. Rather, the pattern of findings appeared to be most consistent with the theoretical expectations that the components of identity formation (structure, process, and outcome) are to varying degrees, but not absolutely, both transcultural and culture specific. Specifically, while the structure of identity may be more or less transcultural, the processes and outcomes of identity may be more-or-less culture-specific.

Although our results did not yield significant interactions between immigrant generation and gender on identity processes and outcomes, the overall findings revealed a complex pattern of relationships between the identity components and the contexts of development (generation and gender). One of the more striking findings was that gender tended to have a relatively greater impact than did immigrant generation. For example, among the 15 process and outcome variables, there were a larger number of significant univariate effects (8 of 15) for gender than for immigrant generation (4 of 15). These gender differences included the largest effect sizes found in the study. In addition, the differences in the outcome measures generally yielded effect sizes of larger magnitudes than did those in

the process measures, both for gender and for immigrant generation. Finally, when comparing across immigrant generations, there were more differences in identity process variables (3 of 7) than in identity outcome variables (1 of 8). The opposite pattern was true when comparing across genders, with more differences in identity outcome variables (5 of 8) than in identity process variables (3 of 7).

The overall pattern of results of the analyses of generation and gender differences thus helped to shed light on the complex relations among and between the components and contexts of identity development. In general, the pattern of findings suggests that the impact of context depends upon both the particular component studied (process versus content variables) and the specific context of development examined (e.g., cultural, gendered). The general pattern, for example, indicated that the overall impact of gender-related experience was greater than the impact of culture-related experience, and that gender had a greater impact on identity outcomes than on the processes by which those outcomes are achieved—again, at least for the young women and men and the range of cultural experiences represented in our sample.

Practical Implications

With respect to practical significance, the findings of this study appear to have implications for developing interventions that target adolescents experiencing identity distress, such as is often associated with the diffused status (cf. Kidwell *et al.*, 1995). Although foreclosure may be more adaptive than achievement in some cultural contexts, diffusion is generally coupled with poor developmental outcomes (e.g., drug involvement, difficulty completing one's education) regardless of context. Therefore, young adults who show evidence of the diffused identity status or of the diffuse/avoidant identity style have the greatest need for psychosocial intervention (Marcia, 1989).

The structural consistency of identity processes and outcomes between genders and across immigrant generations suggests that broad psychosocial interventions that foster identity achievement (such as those currently being developed) are psychosocially appropriate for individuals from diverse backgrounds. Some writers (e.g., van Hoof, 2001) have argued that identity interventions are inappropriate because they assume a universalistic pattern of identity development. However, the consistency of identity structure across levels of acculturation suggests that broadly designed interventions can be effectively delivered to individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.

On the other hand, our pattern of results indicates that, to be effective, the specific intervention *strategies*

employed might be developed and implemented differentially depending upon the nature of the target population. In working with populations mixed in terms of acculturation and gender, differential findings with respect to the specific impacts of acculturation or gender on processes or outcomes could be incorporated into the implementation strategies employed. For example, in this study of recent immigrants, there were distinct differences in the pattern of significant effects by immigrant generation as compared to those found by gender. The finding that first-generation immigrants were lowest in exploration and that second-generation immigrants were lowest in use of the informational style suggests that, if first- or second-generation individuals are experiencing identity distress, interventions to promote exploration and thorough problem solving may be particularly useful, at least in Western cultural contexts that endorse agency and individual choice.

Additionally, the pattern of results for gender indicated that females in this population may be functioning more adaptively than males with respect to identity development, as females scored higher on achievement scales and males scored higher on diffusion scales. Males were also more likely to be both interpersonally and ideologically foreclosed, indicating that when commitments are enacted, the males in the sample are doing so without the benefits gained from significant amounts of exploration. The higher rates of diffusion and of the diffuse/avoidant style and lower rates of interpersonal commitment reported by male participants also suggest the need for intervention strategies that foster both exploration and commitment in young men. Such intervention strategies may be helpful in allowing emerging adult males to shift out of diffusion. Diffusion (and moratorium) may be somewhat adaptive during emerging adulthood because they allow for the consideration of multiple alternatives (Côté and Levine, 1997), but it is vital that individuals enact significant commitments in their lives by the end of emerging adulthood (i.e., by the time they leave the university environment and undertake significant adult responsibilities). However, second-generation immigrants may require a longer period of time to sort through their identity issues, due to their embeddedness in both local and familial cultures (cf. Arnett, 2000).

In summary, the implications for intervention derived from these results, like the results themselves, represent a combination of modernist and postmodernist assumptions. In accordance with modernist assumptions, identity interventions are best designed to alleviate identity-related distress and to promote exploration. In accordance with postmodernist assumptions, the aspects of the intervention that should be emphasized vary according to the gender and culture-related context and experiences of the

individuals involved. In this way, both universal similarities and idiosyncratic differences in identity development can be acknowledged and supported in psychosocial interventions for diverse populations of emerging adults.

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