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Abstract

Increasingly, individuals identify with two or more cultures. Prior research has found the degree to which individuals chronically integrate these identities (bicultural identity integration; BII) moderates responses to cultural cues: High BII individuals assimilate (adopting biases that are congruent with norms of the cued culture), whereas low BII individuals contrast (adopting biases that are incongruent with these norms). The authors propose BII can also be a psychological state and modulated by shifts in processing styles. In four experiments, the authors induced a global or local processing style using physical posture (Experiment 1) and cognitive manipulations (Experiments 2–4) and found that BII is enhanced in contexts facilitating a more global processing style (i.e., smiling, high-level construal, and similarity focus). The authors also found that contrastive responses to cultural cues are diminished when BII is situationally enhanced. Implications for research on processing style, identity integration, and performance in culture-based situations are discussed.

Keywords

processing style, identity integration, priming, bicultural, perception

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With globalization, the number of people who work and live in more than one culture is increasing. Many people hold more than one cultural identity and report bicultural identification (e.g., Chinese and American). Bicultural individuals organize their cultural identities in different ways. Some represent their cultural identities as integrated or interconnected, whereas others represent the two as divided or separated (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002). The degree to which individuals integrate two cultural identities has implications for cognition and behavior. For example, among immigrant biculturals, integrated heritage and host culture identities foster self-perceived similarity to members of those cultures in personality (Miramontez, Benet-Martinez, & Nguyen, 2008). More integrated bicultural identities are associated with more culturally diverse friendship networks (Mok, Morris, Benet-Martinez, & Karakitapoglu-Aygun, 2007). Less integrated cultural identities are associated with cognitively complex thinking about culture (Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu, 2006) and with resistance to groupthink, specifically less tendency to conform to erroneous consensual judgments of cultural in-groups (Mok & Morris, 2010b). Bicultural identity integration also moderates responses to situations that cue one of their cultural identities. Integrated cultural

identities engender culturally assimilative judgments and behaviors (e.g., making more dispositional attributions in Western cultural contexts), whereas divided cultural identities engender culturally contrastive judgments and behaviors (e.g., making more situational attributions in Western cultural contexts; Benet-Martinez et al., 2002).

Bicultural identity integration has been mostly regarded as a stable individual difference. Research has examined its antecedents, including personality dispositions and social-contextual factors (e.g., acculturation stressors; Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). The current article explores the extent to which biculturals' identity integration can be situationally induced. We investigate factors that temporarily manipulate identity integration, as opposed to conditions that change it gradually across the life span (cf. Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). Consistent with the notion that a subset

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of the chronic self-concept can be temporarily altered by the situation (Markus & Wurf, 1987), we aim to show that identity integration can be a psychological state, besides a trait. Only one study has explored this (Cheng & Lee, 2009). Little is known about how bicultural identity integration can be situationally induced or changed.

To address this underdeveloped area of research, we present four empirical studies on the situational malleability of bicultural identity integration (BII). Our research examines this systematically by drawing on research that cognitive processing styles—global or local—influences conceptual representations at a broad versus narrow level. For example, a global processing style promotes inclusive categorization of stimulus information, whereas a local processing style promotes more exclusive categorization (Forster & Dannenberg, 2010; Isen & Daubman, 1984; Schwarz & Bless, 2007). We propose that if a global processing style is induced, biculturals will perceive greater association or integration between their cultural identities (higher BII). Conversely, if a local processing style is induced, biculturals will perceive less association or less integration between their cultural identities (lower BII). Examining the malleability of BII is useful for a number of reasons. For example, it implies that individuals with chronically low BII are capable of meshing with cultural audiences to the extent that BII can be situationally increased. Likewise, individuals with chronically high BII could contrast away from (counterproductive) norms in cultural in-groups to the extent that BII can be situationally decreased.

In this article, we aimed to provide stronger evidence that BII is capable of short-term situational changes. We propose that situations activating a global (local) processing style would enhance (decrease) perceptions of integration between two cultural identities. We induced processing styles using subtle contextual manipulations that temporarily widen or narrow the scope of conceptual processing. We also explored whether situational changes in BII have consequences for responses to cultural cues.

Bicultural Identity Integration

Biculturals are individuals who identify strongly with two cultures. For immigrants, these often refer to the heritage and host country cultures (Berry, 1990). Biculturals differ in how they organize their two cultural identities (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). Benet-Martinez et al. (2002) posited a construct of BII, which refers to the degree individuals represent their two cultural identities as interconnected, coherent, and integrated (high BII), as opposed to separated, divided, and unintegrated (low BII). BII is often measured as an individual difference and conceptualized as a dimension of the chronic self-concept (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). Recent research has explored the situational malleability of BII and has implied it can also be conceptualized as a state. Drawing on research that biculturals with low BII hold more negative views about their cultural identities,

Cheng and Lee (2009) studied multiracial individuals and found that inducing recall of negative aspects associated with being multiracial decreased multiracial identity integration (compared to before the recall task), whereas inducing recall of positive aspects increased it. This suggests identity integration can be momentarily enhanced or decreased by contextual changes.

Accumulating evidence supports that the self-concept includes a chronic and a malleable active dimension. Specifically, the active self-concept is the part of the chronic self-concept that is currently accessible and used to guide action (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Wheeler, DeMarree, & Petty, 2007). Situational cues can rapidly shift the active self-concept even when the underlying chronic representation is relatively stable. For example, regulatory focus is both a personality and situational variable. People may be chronically concerned with ideals versus oughts, yet situations can also trigger one concern over the other (Higgins, Roney, Crowe, & Hymes, 1994). Generally, one could assume that biculturals have a relatively stable way to describe the structure of their cultural identities, yet at the same time, the judgments are subjective and could fluctuate across situations. Consistent with this notion, research shows that self-reported traits (Dijksterhuis et al., 1998), social comparisons (Mussweiler, 2001), and affective reactions (Gasper & Clore, 2002) can be context dependent. The present research focuses on the malleable dimension of BII. We propose that situations that trigger a certain processing style can temporarily change BII, and in turn affect behavior.

Global Versus Local Processing

Processing styles refer to ways that people see or attend to information. A global processing style is described as attending to information as the entire gestalt, whereas a local processing style is described as focusing on the details (Derryberry & Tucker, 1994). Global or local processing can operate in perceptual attention (Navon, 1977) and conceptual attention (Friedman, Fishbach, Forster, & Werth, 2003). Recent theorizing from the global versus local processing model, a systems account (GLOMOsys; Foster & Dannenberg, 2010) suggests that styles of processing can be situationally induced, such as through bodily posture cues and tasks that focus attention on a broad versus narrow visual area. The scope of perceptual attention mirrors the scope of conceptual attention (Derryberry & Tucker, 1994; Forster & Dannenberg, 2010). For example, Friedman et al. (2003) found that raising (vs. furrowing) the eyebrows led to higher originality in a creativity generation task. This suggests a broadened perceptual focus (through raising the brows) widens the conceptual scope. In another study, participants asked to look at the gestalt of a state map (vs. a specific city on it) generated more unusual exemplars for a number of categories, implying widened conceptual attention (Friedman et al., 2003). These studies moreover show that global versus local processing styles can be primed (carry over to subsequent

unrelated tasks) without participants' awareness (Friedman & Forster, 2000, 2010), and it is considered as a form of procedural priming (E. R. Smith & Branscombe, 1987).

Priming a global (vs. local) processing style can affect (dis)similarity judgments besides creative expansive thinking. For example, participants induced with a global (local) processing style searched for and reported more shared (unshared) features between two targets, whether the two were objects or people (Forster, 2009). The effects of global or local priming could extend to how individuals process or construe two self-aspects. We suggest that priming global (local) processing will lead biculturals to report higher (lower) integration or interconnectedness between two cultural identities, to the extent that it activates a broadened (narrowed) conceptual scope and inclusive (exclusive) mental categorization.

The Present Research

We test the hypothesis that activating a global (local) processing style would increase (decrease) BII, or the conceptualization of two cultural identities as integrated. In four experiments, we induced processing styles in different ways to show that changes in BII do not depend on any one manipulation. The manipulations were also unrelated to culture or to participants' self to illustrate broad carryover effects of processing styles on BII.

We induced global or local processing styles using contextual manipulations at the physiological (Experiment 1) and cognitive levels (Experiments 2 to 4). Specifically, we used tasks that varied participants' affective expression (Experiment 1), level of construal (Experiment 2), and search for (dis)similarity (Experiment 3 and 4). We describe in more detail the way these variables are linked with processing styles in the respective experiments. We hypothesized that BII would increase (decrease) after priming with global (local) processing. We also explored the effects of momentary changes in BII on responses to cultural cues, such as whether enhancing BII diminishes contrastive responses to cultural cues. We tested our hypothesis with East Asian American biculturals.

Experiment 1

Positive affect can trigger global processing at a perceptual or conceptual level. Increased positive affect promotes visual classification of composite figures on the basis of their global form rather than their separate components (Gasper & Clore, 2002). Positive affect engenders use of more abstract rather than concrete language in describing social events (Beukeboom & Semin, 2006) and other people (Isbell, 2004). Similarly, positive affect triggers conceptual expansion or more integrative categorization of diverse stimuli (Isen & Daubman, 1984). Positive affect is likely to activate more abstract or superordinate construals in memory, characteristic of global processing (Friedman & Forster, 2008, 2010). This suggests that elevating positive affect

could enhance biculturals' identity integration (e.g., representing the self as "Asian American" rather than as belonging to Asian and American cultures separately).

Research shows that conscious feelings of positive affect are not required for global processing. Subtle cues associated with positive affect can broaden the scope of perceptual or conceptual attention, such as cues of pleasant or desirable environments (e.g., bodily postures of pulling the arm toward the body, which reflects acquiring favorable objects—Friedman & Forster, 2000; contracting facial muscles associated with smiling, which conveys happiness—Strack, Martin, & Stepper, 1988). Drawing on the approach that implicit affective cues can change processing styles without eliciting conscious affect (see Friedman & Forster, 2010, for a review), we examined whether implicit positive affect cues could enhance construals of integration between two cultural identities.

We induced positive affect through manipulating facial posture. Participants were subtly induced to smile or inhibited from smiling. This procedure has been shown to induce or inhibit positive affect, respectively (Niedenthal, 2007; Strack et al., 1988). Furthermore, participants are not consciously aware that it elicits positive affect (Strack et al., 1988), thus highlighting a role of implicit affective cues on processing style.

We asked participants to report their BII twice (before and after the posture manipulation) to assess changes in BII. We hypothesized that a smiling pose (associated with positive affect) would procedurally prime a global processing style and lead to higher BII, whereas inhibiting a smiling pose would not affect processing style and not change BII.

To further minimize participants' awareness of the link between the posture manipulation and the dependent measure, we used a measure of BII that is unassociated with affect. Recent research describes BII as emerging from two relatively distinct dimensions: the perceived connectedness (vs. separation) between two cultural identities and the feeling of harmony (vs. conflict) between the two identities (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). We used the former measure of BII to provide more compelling evidence that induced global processing increases BII, while reducing demand characteristics.

We also examined whether this effect carries beyond cultural contexts. First, Asian culture is associated with a holistic processing style (Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001), which could facilitate perceptions of bicultural identities as interconnected. We explored whether the effects of global processing on BII are magnified with Asian (vs. American) priming or whether it influences BII independently. Second, cultural priming studies typically administer the individual difference measure of BII at the end of the experiment (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002; Mok & Morris, 2009). One concern is that the cultural priming itself moderates BII. Asian priming might inadvertently inflate reports of BII (through triggering holistic processing) compared to American priming. We probed this possibility throughout all the studies in this article.

Last, although the current study focuses on the effects of implicit affective cues on BII, could BII be related to conscious or chronic affect? Studies (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005; Chen, Benet-Martinez, & Bond, 2009) have found a negative association between BII and trait neuroticism, which suggests BII could be grounded in chronic positive affect (or low negative affect). In the latter part of our study, we assessed whether trait BII relates to chronic or explicit affect.

Method

Participants. A total of 76 Asian Americans (31 males; mean age = 27.42, $SD = 8.73$; mean years in the United States = 20.95, $SD = 11.53$) were recruited from Columbia University ($n = 41$) and community centers in New York City ($n = 35$). Of the participants, 36 were first-generation biculturals (born in an East Asian country) and 40 were second-generation biculturals (born in the United States). Participants identified with both American ($M = 5.15$, $SD = 1.00$) and Asian culture ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.31$), rated on a scale of 1 (*very weak*) to 7 (*very strong*). No sample or sex differences emerged on any of the independent or dependent variables, so they are not discussed further. As past research has documented a positive association between immigrant generation and BII (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005), we controlled for immigrant generation in the analysis.

Materials and procedure. Participants received a paper survey on "Personal Experiences." They first rated their BII on four items on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*): "I feel Asian American (i.e., hyphenated)," "I feel part of a combined culture," "I keep Asian and American cultures separate," and "I am simply an Asian who lives in America" (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). BII was scored by averaging ratings across the items after reverse scoring the last two ($\alpha = .68$); higher scores denote more integrated cultural identities.

Next, participants were randomly assigned to a facial posture condition—holding an object with either their teeth or lips, which was designed to induce or inhibit smiling, respectively. As a cover story to disguise the purpose of the posture manipulation, participants were told,

We are interested in task performance while eating. For example, many people have lunch at their desks so they could continue working; we are interested to see whether eating versus refraining from eating affects mental performance.

Participants in the smiling condition were asked to "simulate eating" by holding a popsicle stick tightly with their teeth and were told that the stick should not touch their lips. This posture has been shown to induce positive affect implicitly (Strack et al., 1988). In the no smiling condition, participants were asked to "simulate refraining from eating" by holding a popsicle stick tightly with their lips and were told that the stick should not touch their teeth. This posture has been

shown to inhibit positive affect (Foroni & Semin, 2009; Niedenthal, 2007). The first author gave the participant the stick and made sure they held it in the right position, correcting them if necessary. Participants were told to hold the stick in this position for the next few (filler) tasks until they received explicit instructions to release it.

To examine any effects of cultural priming on BII, participants in each posture condition were randomly assigned to view an icon from Asian or American cuisine, which was a bamboo dim sum basket or an apple pie, respectively. This icon appeared on the page with the cover story and also on each page of the filler tasks that followed.

After the filler tasks (e.g., rating preferences for shapes) which lasted about 5 min, participants rated their BII on the same items and scales as in the beginning of the study ($\alpha = .64$). The items for each measure appeared in a different order from the previous order, and participants kept the stick in their mouth during all this time. Afterward, participants were told to release the stick, and they filled out a demographic survey. Participants were interviewed at the end to probe if they saw through the cover story or saw any connection between the posture manipulation and subsequent tasks. None did.

Results

Hypothesis testing. We expected that inducing smiling would activate global processing and enhance BII. We submitted the two BII scores to a 2 (time: pre vs. post; within subjects) \times 2 (posture condition: smiling vs. no smiling) \times 2 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American) \times 2 (immigrant generation: first vs. second) General Linear Model (GLM). Results showed a main effect of time, $F(1, 72) = 5.35$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$, which was qualified by an interaction with posture, $F(1, 72) = 4.76$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. No other effects emerged. Supporting predictions, when participants were subtly induced to smile, they reported higher BII ($M_{\text{post}} = 5.02$ vs. $M_{\text{pre}} = 5.26$), $F(1, 72) = 10.07$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$, whereas when smiling was not induced, BII did not differ ($M_{\text{pre}} = 4.86$ vs. $M_{\text{post}} = 4.87$), $F < 1$.

Moreover, the increase in BII was shown by 55.3% of participants in the smiling condition—it was not driven by a few individuals. A further analysis established that the effect is not limited to low BII individuals (e.g., a ceiling effect may apply to high BII individuals). We submitted the change in BII (computed as $BII_{\text{post}} - BII_{\text{pre}}$) to a posture condition \times cultural prime \times immigrant generation GLM, controlling for BII_{pre} . We included the interaction between posture condition and BII_{pre} . Importantly, baseline BII did not interact with posture condition to influence the change in BII, suggesting that chronically high and low BII individuals were similarly affected by the smiling manipulation.

Additional analysis. Although BII is malleable by implicit affective cues, could BII be associated with chronic or explicit affect? We recruited a separate sample of 83 Asian Americans who completed an affect measure. On a scale of 1

(*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*), participants rated the extent to which they currently felt happy, cheerful, calm, relaxed, disappointed, discouraged, tense, and worried. The items were drawn from Friedman and Forster (2001) and were presented in a randomized order. Then participants rated their BII along the same items and scale as described above. BII was uncorrelated with any of the affect items or with separate indices formed for positive and negative affect. This suggests that trait BII is not merely a matter of chronic or conscious affect.

Discussion

BII can be situation dependent. Priming global processing facilitates higher BII. Participants subtly induced to smile perceived their bicultural identities as more integrated, whereas participants inhibited from smiling did not change their perception of identity integration. Results are consistent with evidence that eliciting positive affect leads to construing information at a more global or inclusive level (e.g., Isen & Daubman, 1984). More specifically, implicit cues associated with positive affect (a facial muscle manipulation) can expand the scope of conceptual attention (e.g., Friedman & Forster, 2010), in that it enhanced construals of BII. Chronic or explicit affect does not underlie individual differences in BII.

In the above analysis (as well as in the subsequent experiments), we found no interactive effects of the processing style manipulation and cultural cues on BII. This suggests the effects of global processing on BII generalize across cultural contexts. Also, we found no main effect of cultural priming across the present studies, which implies that BII is mostly stable across cultural contexts. Despite research that Asian culture is associated with a more holistic or relational processing style than American culture (Nisbett et al., 2001), Asian priming did not facilitate more integrative construals of two identities among our participants. This result is reassuring as prior studies have typically measured BII after the culture priming manipulation and observed that it moderates the effects of priming (e.g., Benet-Martinez et al., 2002). Hence, past findings of the BII moderation effect are not invalidated. Manipulating processing styles, rather than cultural frames, appear to be a more potent means to influence integrative construals of bicultural identities.

Our next studies sought to extend the initial evidence that processing styles can temporarily influence BII, and independent of conscious affect. We used tasks that manipulated the level of construal (Fujita, Trope, Liberman, & Levin-Sagi, 2006) and comparison focus (Forster, 2009), which induce global and local processing styles without evoking affect. We predicted that inducing global (local) processing would increase (decrease) BII.

Experiment 2

We primed global versus local processing through activating high- versus low-level construals of objects. According to construal level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2003), the same

event or object can be represented at multiple levels. High-level construals involve constructing abstract, broader conceptualizations about events, objects, or persons (e.g., “I am a human being”), whereas low-level construals involve constructing concrete, specific conceptualizations about events, objects, or persons (e.g., “I am a female”). High-level representations are more integrative and coherent, whereas low-level representations are more discrete and exclusive (Liberman, Sagristano, & Trope, 2002). Activation of high-level construals leads to mental categorization in broader and fewer units, whereas activation of low-level construals leads to mental categorization in narrower and multiple units (Liberman et al., 2002). We hypothesized that activating a high-level construal would promote more global, integrative, and broader thinking and enhance BII. Conversely, activating a low-level construal would prompt more local, discrete, and narrower cognitive processing and decrease BII.

Although research has demonstrated that construals at high and low levels can be experimentally induced (Fujita et al., 2006), stable individual differences in global versus local processing also exist. The latter part of our study explored whether chronic tendencies to process information in a global, abstract manner accounts for BII as an individual difference.

In the present and following experiment, we used the BII measure from Study 1 to expand the findings there.

Method

Participants. A total of 53 Asian Americans (26 first generation, 27 second generation; 29 men; mean age = 22.75, $SD = 3.19$; mean years in the United States = 17.53, $SD = 6.44$) at Columbia University participated. The levels of identification with American and Asian culture were 5.26 ($SD = 1.44$) and 5.70 ($SD = 1.23$), respectively, assessed with the scale in the previous study. Participant sex did not affect the results below, so it is not discussed further.

Materials and procedure. Participants received a web link with instructions to complete the study in one sitting and in a private and quiet location. Participants were first randomly assigned to the Asian, American, or noncultural priming condition to assess any effects of the cultural context on BII. Specifically, we adapted the pronoun circling task from Gardner, Gabriel, and Lee (1991), in which participants read a paragraph about a trip to the city. We modified the paragraph such that it described two people’s trip to the city, and we replaced personal pronouns (*I, me, my; we, us, our*) with proper nouns—people and place names that referred to Asian culture or American culture or were culture neutral. Participants in the Asian prime condition read about Yang and Zhou’s trip to Shanghai; participants in the American prime condition read about Dallas and Carter’s trip to Chicago, and participants in the control condition read about L and P’s trip to city N. Participants were asked to highlight or click on all the proper nouns in the paragraph with their mouse. Clicked proper nouns turned green.

Next, participants rated their BII along the same items and scales as in the prior experiment ($\alpha = .58$). We presented them with filler tasks for about 5 min, before manipulating their processing style, adapting the materials in Fujita et al. (2006). Participants were randomly assigned to the high-level ($n = 26$) or low-level construal ($n = 27$) condition and were presented with a list of 29 nouns (e.g., book). In the high-level construal condition, participants were asked to generate a superordinate category label for each noun (e.g., media), and those in the low-level construal condition were asked to generate an exemplar of the category (e.g., the Bible). Superordinate categorization should activate global processing, whereas subordinate categorization should activate local processing. The generation task took about 10 min. Afterward, participants rated their BII with the same items and scales as used earlier in the study (the items were randomized, $\alpha = .55$), and they completed a demographic survey.

Results

Hypothesis testing. We submitted the BII ratings to a 2 (time: pre vs. post; within subjects) \times 2 (construal level condition: high vs. low) \times 3 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American vs. neutral) \times 2 (immigrant generation: first vs. second) GLM.¹ The results revealed a main effect of immigrant generation, $F(1, 48) = 6.02, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .11$. Second- versus first-generation participants generally felt more integrated in their identities ($M = 4.86$ vs. $M = 4.14$). The predicted interaction between time and construal level was significant, $F(1, 48) = 8.63, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .15$. A high-level construal, associated with a global processing style, led to an increase in BII ($M_{\text{pre}} = 4.38$ vs. $M_{\text{post}} = 4.63$), $F(1, 48) = 4.07, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$. A low-level construal, associated with a local processing style, led to a decrease in BII ($M_{\text{pre}} = 4.63$ vs. $M_{\text{post}} = 4.37$), $F(1, 48) = 4.96, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .09$. These results support the hypothesis. As in Study 1, we found no main or interaction effects of cultural prime, suggesting that the effects of processing style held across cultural contexts.

Subsequent analysis indicated that the observed changes in BII were not driven by a few participants. BII increased for 53.8% of the participants in the high-level construal condition, and BII decreased for 48.1% of participants in the low-level construal condition. Also, as in Study 1, chronic levels of BII did not vary the effects of processing style on BII.

Additional analysis. Although momentarily induced processing styles can alter BII, could chronically adopting a global or local processing style explain individual differences in BII? We investigated this by asking a separate sample of 43 Asian Americans to complete the Behavior Identification Form (BIF; Vallacher & Wegner, 1989), a 25-item questionnaire that taps global versus local processing as an individual difference. Participants were asked to describe an action (e.g., having a cavity filled) by selecting one of two options, one corresponding to a more global, higher level construal of the action (e.g., protecting your teeth), and the

other corresponding to a local, lower level construal of the action (e.g., going to the dentist). Responses were coded as 1 if participants selected the high-level construal option and 0 if they selected the low-level construal option. We computed a BIF score ($\alpha = .69$) by summing across the responses for each participant; higher scores reflect a chronic tendency to process information globally. After completing the BIF, participants rated their BII on the same items and scales as described above.

BIF was unrelated to BII, $r(43) = .13, ns$. This implies that trait BII is not merely a matter of chronic processing style.

Discussion

Experiment 2 conceptually replicated Experiment 1 with a different manipulation of processing style. Prior research has demonstrated that priming high or low levels of construal engenders global or local processing styles (Trope & Liberman, 2010) and that this manipulation does not significantly change affect (Fujita et al., 2006). Our results showed that activating high-level construals (associated with global processing) enhances BII, whereas activating low-level construals (associated with local processing) decreases BII. These effects were not bound to a specific cultural context. We provide further evidence that BII is a situational, besides individual difference, variable. However, although situations that trigger global processing can lead to higher BII, it is notable that general tendencies to process information in a global manner do not explain BII as an individual difference.

Experiment 3

We introduced another manipulation of processing style using a comparison focus task. We asked participants to search for similarities or dissimilarities between pairs of objects. Forster (2009) found that a focus on similarity versus dissimilarity spontaneously triggers a global versus local processing style. Participants induced to search for similarities (vs. dissimilarities) tend to look at the gestalt rather than the specific detail of stimulus information in a following unrelated task (e.g., when presented with fragmented pictures of familiar objects, they were more likely to perceptually integrate and recognize the objects). Hanko, Crusius, and Mussweiler (2009) found that priming a search for similarities induced participants to represent their current self as more similar to their past self. A search for (dis) similarities at the perceptual level influences that at the conceptual level (Forster & Dannenberg, 2010).

Drawing on Forster (2009), we presumed that priming a similarity focus, associated with global processing, would make evidence for similarities between two cultural identities (or two cultures) accessible. This should engender impressions that the two identities can fit together and enhance BII. Conversely, priming a dissimilarity focus, associated with

local processing, would make evidence for dissimilarities between two cultural identities (or two cultures) accessible. This should engender impressions that the two identities are incompatible and decrease BII.

We also examined the consequences of BII as a situational variable on responses to cultural cues. Low BII tends to engender contrast effects to cultural primes, whether in judgments or behavior (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002; Mok & Morris, 2010a). Research posits that biculturals with unintegrated or divided identities contrast against cultural primes as a self-protective strategy, in that enacting the cultural identity cued by the situation would leave behind their other cultural identity (Mok & Morris, 2010a). Studies of self-control have found that people develop inhibitory responses to cues they do not want to follow (Fishbach, Friedman, & Kruglanski, 2003; Myrseth, Fishbach, & Trope, 2009). For example, dieters respond to the situation of tempting food by resisting the temptation and exercising instead (Fishbach & Shah, 2006). Likewise, the contrastive responses of low BII individuals may reflect a counteractive control strategy of resisting the invitation of a cultural cue to avoid leaving out their other cultural identity. This implies that increasing perceptions of integration between cultural identities may diminish contrastive responses. To the extent that a global processing style increases BII, we explored whether the momentary increase in BII reduces contrastive responses to cultural cues. We tested this with a measure of personality.

Moreover, we develop the idea that the contrastive responses by low BII individuals can be automatic and non-conscious. Research in public behavior documents that low BII individuals contrast from cultural norms more frequently than those with high BII (Mok & Morris, 2010b). Repeated behaviors can be overlearned to the point of nonconscious occurrence (Bargh & Williams, 2006). We tested for an automatic process by using cultural primes that are subliminal (not consciously perceived). If BII moderates the effects of subliminal cultural primes, it would illuminate that the contrastive responses can transpire nonconsciously.

We first presented participants with subliminal primes of Asian or American culture and tested for the cultural prime \times BII effect on self-perceived extraversion. Studies on self-perceived personality have found that Asian Americans with low BII contrast against cued cultural norms—they perceive the self as less extraverted after American vs. Asian priming, whereas those with high BII assimilate—they perceive the self as more extraverted after American vs. Asian priming (Mok & Morris, 2009). We expected to replicate these results without participants' awareness of cultural cues.

After the personality rating task, we randomly assigned participants to focus on similarities or dissimilarities, which induces a global or local processing style, respectively (Forster, 2009). With random assignment to the focus conditions, we presumed that BII would moderate the effects of cultural priming for both the similarity and dissimilarity groups prior to the focus manipulation. Next, participants

rated their personality again but on a broader set of traits. The crucial items assessed extraversion. We predicted that contrast effects to cultural priming (in self-perceived personality) would be observed in participants induced with a dissimilarity focus, not in those induced with a similarity focus.

Method

Participants. A total of 58 Asian Americans (36 first generation, 22 second generation; 19 men; mean age: 21.90 years, $SD = 3.26$; mean years in the United States = 12.03, $SD = 8.20$) were recruited from Columbia University. Participants identified with both American ($M = 4.88$, $SD = 1.17$) and Asian ($M = 5.12$, $SD = 1.33$) culture, rated on the same scale as in the prior experiments. No effect of sex emerged in the analyses below, so it is not considered further.

Materials and procedure. On arrival, participants were randomly assigned to the Asian or American priming manipulation. The primes were presented subliminally and embedded in a lexical decision task administered on the computer. The ostensible goal of the task was to assess their reaction times. As a cover story, participants were told that in today's fast-paced world, organizations seek to hire individuals who are attentive, reliable, and efficient. The following computer task was designed to gauge this potential.

Participants were told that strings of letters would appear on the screen. They were instructed to press the letter *z* when the string was a word and the letter *m* when the string was a nonword. Participants were told that their goal was to respond as quickly and as accurately as possible.

Participants then completed 4 practice trials and 72 lexical decision trials. Each trial included a 250-ms premask (XXXXXXX), a 15-ms exposure to the prime (the word *Asian* or *American* in the Asian and American prime conditions, respectively), and a 50-ms postmask (XXXXXXX), followed by the target letter string (Dijksterhuis, Preston, Wegner, & Aarts, 2008). Target words remained on the screen until a response was made. The trials were evenly divided between letter strings that were words and nonwords. The (real) words were not specific to Asian or American culture (e.g., *design*, *locate*, *inform*). The practice trials did not contain any prime words.

Afterward, participants received a personality measure. They rated on a scale of 1 (*not at all like me*) to 7 (*very much like me*) how well a series of traits described them. Of the 15 traits, taken from Mok and Morris (2009), 5 tapped extraversion (*active*, *energetic*, *outgoing*, *assertive*, *talkative*) and 5 tapped introversion (*shy*, *reserved*, *unadventurous*, *timid*, *quiet*). An extraversion score was formed by averaging the extraversion ratings and the reverse-scored introversion ratings; higher scores reflect higher extraversion ($\alpha = .88$, $M = 4.74$, $SD = .99$). Then, participants rated their BII along the same items and scale as in the prior experiment ($\alpha = .71$).

Participants then engaged in an allegedly unrelated task on "object perception" that was intended to induce a focus



Figure 1. Pictures for comparison focus task (Experiment 3)

on similarities or differences. Participants viewed three pairs of pictures that featured keys, socks, and toothbrushes (see Figure 1). In the similarity (dissimilarity) focus condition ($n = 26$ and 32 , respectively), participants were asked to list three similarities (differences) for each pair of pictures. Then, participants completed the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003) along a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The focal trait, extraversion, was computed by averaging the extraversion (*extraverted, enthusiastic*) and the reverse-scored introversion (*reserved, quiet*) item, $r(58) = -.52, p < .01$. Afterward, participants rated their BII along the same items and scale as earlier in the study ($\alpha = .74$), with the items appearing in a different order. They completed a demographic survey. No participants guessed the purpose of the task to list similarities or differences, or how it could relate to their responses on subsequent tasks.

Results

Preliminary considerations. Participants assigned to the different focus conditions did not differ on BII or extraversion to start, all $p > .05$.

Change in BII. We submitted the BII ratings to a 2 (time: pre vs. post; within subjects) \times 2 (focus condition: similarity vs. dissimilarity) \times 2 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American) \times 2 (immigrant generation: first vs. second) GLM. Results

showed a main effect of immigrant generation, with second-generation versus first-generation participants having higher BII in general ($M = 5.20$ vs. $M = 4.43$), $F(1, 54) = 5.38, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .09$. The predicted interaction between time and comparison focus was significant, $F(1, 43) = 5.28, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .09$. Priming a similarity focus, which fosters global processing enhanced BII ($M_{pre} = 4.64$ vs. $M_{post} = 4.84$), $F(1, 54) = 6.82, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .11$. Priming a dissimilarity focus, which fosters local processing, decreased BII ($M_{pre} = 4.95$ vs. $M_{post} = 4.92$), though nonsignificantly, $F < 1$. Subsequent analysis confirmed that the effects were not driven by a few participants—BII increased for 61.5% of the participants in the similarity condition—and also did not vary by chronic levels of BII. The effects of the processing style manipulation generalized across cultural contexts.

Effects of state BII. Recall the proposal that contrast effects to cultural priming would be shown by low BII individuals prior to the focus manipulation. Yet after inducing a similarity (but not dissimilarity) focus, the contrast effects should be absent.

To test this, we conducted analyses predicting extraversion from cultural priming and BII. First, we focused on the measure of extraversion and BII taken prior to the focus manipulation. We fitted extraversion_{pre} to a 2 (focus condition: similarity vs. dissimilarity) \times 2 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American) \times BII_{pre} (mean centered) GLM, including all main and interaction effects. Immigrant generation was entered as a covariate. A three-way interaction among focus, cultural prime, and BII_{pre} emerged, $F(1, 49) = 5.64, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .10$. This interaction suggests that the moderating effect of BII on cultural priming varies with the focus manipulation.

To probe this, we examined the BII moderation effect for the focus conditions separately. In the similarity focus condition, a 2 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American) \times BII_{pre} (mean centered) GLM on extraversion_{pre}, controlling for immigrant generation, revealed a significant interaction of cultural prime and BII_{pre}, $F(1, 21) = 4.35, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .17$. We decomposed the interaction at one standard deviation below (above) the mean to observe the simple effect of cultural priming for low (high) BII participants. As expected, and shown in Figure 2, low BII individuals exhibited contrast effects by reporting lower extraversion after American versus Asian priming, $F(1, 21) = 7.39, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .26$. This is consistent with past results (Mok & Morris, 2009). However, contrast effects were not observed in high BII individuals, $F < 1$. A parallel analysis for participants in the dissimilarity focus condition showed no significant effects. Thus, the moderating effect of BII, driven by low BII individuals in this case, happened to emerge in the similarity focus condition only, not also in the dissimilarity focus condition, despite the random assignment to conditions. Moreover, these results are the first to indicate that low BII individuals can contrast against cultural cues nonconsciously.

We hypothesized that a global processing style, induced by a similarity focus would reduce or eliminate the contrast

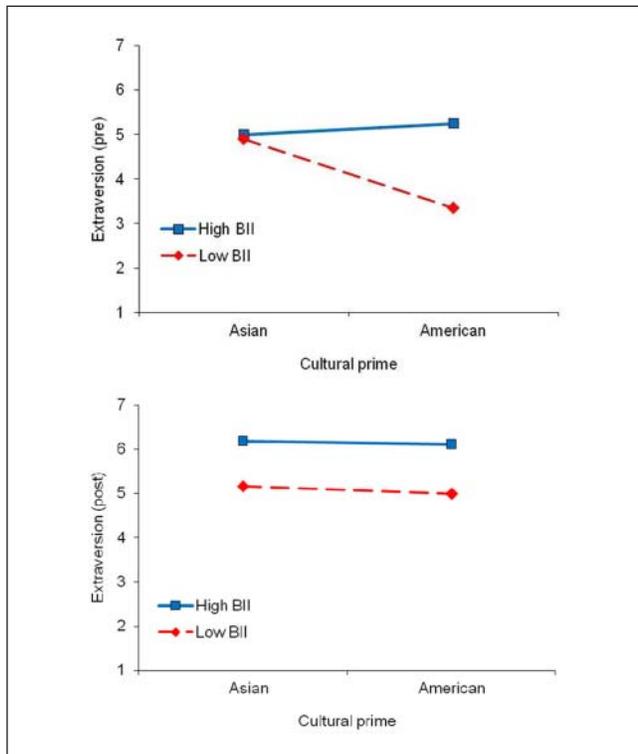


Figure 2. Extraversion as a function of cultural priming for low and high bicultural identity integration (BII) participants before versus after the similarity focus manipulation (Experiment 3) Low and high BII are plotted at one standard deviation below and above the mean.

priming effects. Consistent with expectations, a GLM predicting extraversion_{post} from immigrant generation, cultural prime, BII_{post}, and the interaction between cultural prime and BII_{post} for participants in the similarity focus condition showed no significant interaction between cultural prime and BII, $F < 1$ (see Figure 2); no effects were significant. To ensure that it is the change (increase) in BII that led to the absence of contrast effects, rather than a global processing style per se, we assessed whether a similarity focus by itself affected extraversion. We submitted the extraversion ratings to a 2 (time: pre vs. post) \times 2 (focus condition: similarity vs. dissimilarity) \times 2 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American) \times 2 (immigrant generation: first vs. second) GLM. This analysis showed no main or interaction effects of comparison focus, $F < 1$. This suggests that the absence of contrast effects runs through an interplay of situationally enhanced BII and cultural cues, rather than directly through a similarity focus. In other words, BII, rather than a global processing style, is a more proximal predictor of responses to cultural primes.

Given that a search for dissimilarity did not significantly decrease BII in the present study, we were unable to further test whether a local processing style, induced by a dissimilarity focus, could produce contrast effects to cultural primes.

Probing Alternative Account

The effects of enhanced BII on contrast reduction or inhibition may alternatively be explained by goal satiation. Research implies that when individuals have acted on a primed goal, subsequent actions are no longer consistent with the prime; the goal is satisfied (Forster, Liberman, & Higgins, 2005). Low BII individuals may inhibit their contrast tendency after the similarity focus manipulation, not because of enhanced BII per se but because they had prior contrasted against the cultural primes.

To provide support for the enhanced BII account, we conducted a follow-up study with a separate sample of 26 Asian Americans that adopted a similar design and materials. We made two modifications. Participants did not receive a comparison focus manipulation between the personality measures at Time 1 and Time 2. (The time lapse between the two extraversion measures was about 10 min.) Another modification was the cultural prime manipulation. Participants were asked to write about Asian ($n = 12$) or American ($n = 14$) cultural traditions. Analysis showed a significant cultural prime \times BII effect on extraversion measured at both Time 1, $F_{pre}(1, 22) = 7.26, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .25$, and Time 2, $F_{post}(1, 22) = 9.79, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .31$. Low BII individuals displayed contrast effects (lower extraversion after American vs. Asian priming), $F_{pre}(1, 22) = 5.81, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .21$, $F_{post}(1, 22) = 6.42, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .23$, whereas high BII individuals displayed assimilation effects (higher extraversion after American vs. Asian priming), $F_{pre}(1, 22) = 2.95, p = .10, \eta_p^2 = .12$, $F_{post}(1, 22) = 5.70, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .21$. These results run contrary to the goal satiation account. Previous contrast against primes does not necessarily reduce subsequent contrastive responses. The results are more consistent with our proposal that contrast effects can be diminished by fostering higher BII.

Discussion

The present experiment yields three noteworthy results. First, processing styles shifted BII in the predicted direction. A focus on similarity, which fosters global processing, produced higher BII, whereas a focus on dissimilarity, which fosters local processing, produced lower BII. Second, situational enhancement of BII can buffer against contrast from cultural cues. Hence, situational changes in BII can affect responses to cultural cues, not only chronic levels of BII. Third, low BII individuals need not be aware of cultural primes for the contrast effects to occur. Although high BII individuals did not exhibit assimilation effects in the present study, recent evidence (in decision making; Mok & Morris, 2011) indicates they can respond assimilatively to subliminal cultural primes. We reveal that BII can moderate responses to cultural cues without conscious attention. Further work could explore the durability of contrast effects after priming and why chronically or situationally high BII

may not necessarily translate into assimilation effects (e.g., Mok & Morris, in press). One idea, based on neo-Piagetian models of multiple identity integration (e.g., Amiot, Sablonnière, Terry, & Smith, 2007), is that integrated cultural identities promote more cross-situational stability; high BII individuals could be at times relatively unconcerned with regulating their behavior to fit cultural norms or expectations.

Experiment 4

It is important to examine whether the effects of processing style generalize to a different measure of BII. We used the processing style manipulation from the prior experiment and assessed BII as the harmony versus conflict experienced between two cultural identities (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). Our hypothesis is that priming a similarity focus would widen the scope of conceptual processing and facilitate a coherent representation of two cultural identities (higher BII). Priming a dissimilarity focus would narrow the conceptual scope, thereby facilitating a representation of the two identities as incompatible (lower BII).

Method

Participants. A total of 71 Asian Americans (21 first generation, 50 second generation; 24 men; mean age = 26.61, $SD = 4.52$; mean years in the United States = 23.56, $SD = 7.43$) were recruited from online forums in New York City. Participants identified with both American ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.10$) and Asian ($M = 4.82$, $SD = 1.25$) culture, rated on the same scale as in the prior studies. No effect of sex was found on BII, so this variable was dropped from the analysis.

Materials and procedure. In a web survey, participants first rated their BII along on the same scale as the prior experiment. They rated four items: "I don't feel trapped between the Asian and American cultures," "I feel caught between the Asian and American cultures," "I feel conflicted between the American and Asian ways of doing things," and "I feel like someone moving between two cultures" (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). BII was scored by averaging ratings across the four items after reverse coding the last three ($\alpha = .76$); higher scores denote higher identity integration. Then to assess whether the hypothesis generalizes across cultural contexts or whether the cultural context plays a role, we cued culture by querying participants about their attitudes toward Asian or American culture. Participants rated 10 statements (e.g., "I am well aware of events in Asia [America]," "I like to know about Asian [American] news more than world news"). Afterward, participants completed a number of personality scales, which served as filler tasks and lasted roughly 7 min.

The "object perception" task to manipulate comparison focus appeared next. Participants were randomly assigned to the similarity ($n = 35$) or dissimilarity ($n = 36$) condition, using the same procedure and materials as the prior experiment. Afterward, participants rated their BII along the same

items and scale as in the beginning of the study, with the items presented in a randomized order ($\alpha = .76$). Last, they completed a demographic survey.

Results: Hypothesis Testing

We submitted the BII ratings to a 2 (time: pre vs. post; within subjects) \times 2 (focus condition: similarity vs. dissimilarity) \times 2 (cultural prime: Asian vs. American) \times 2 (immigrant generation: first vs. second) GLM. The predicted interaction of time and comparison focus was significant, $F(1, 67) = 5.05$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Inducing a dissimilarity focus, associated with local processing decreased BII ($M_{pre} = 4.66$ vs. $M_{post} = 4.40$), $F(1, 67) = 4.29$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Inducing a similarity focus, associated with global processing, did not significantly increase BII, although the trend was in the expected direction ($M_{pre} = 4.13$ vs. $M_{post} = 4.25$), $F < 1$.

Subsequent analysis indicated that the decrease in BII was not driven by a few individuals. BII decreased for 52.8% of participants in the dissimilarity condition. Also, the decrease in BII was not limited to participants with high trait BII.

Discussion

Processing styles triggered by situations affect BII. Supporting the hypothesis and the results of the prior experiment, a global (local) processing style induced by a focus on similarity (dissimilarity) influenced higher (lower) BII. This finding held regardless of the cultural context and the measure of BII.

General Discussion

Although BII has been mostly treated as a stable individual difference, we examined whether contextual factors leading to a global or local processing style can change biculturals' construal of identity integration. We experimentally manipulated processing styles through bodily cues (Experiment 1), level of construal (Experiment 2), and comparison focus (Experiments 3 and 4), documenting that they varied participants' level of BII.

This research informs how BII can be facilitated or decreased, at least momentarily. Shifts in processing style may moderate chronic BII. Experiment 3 examined whether state BII could moderate responses to cultural cues and suggested it is higher BII that reduced contrastive responses to cultural primes and not the primed global processing style per se. Thus, biculturals' divergent responses to cultural primes appear linked to identity-based processes rather than to domain-general processing styles.

Theoretical Implications

Bicultural identity integration. We expand research on the conceptualization of BII. Although our proposal that contextual factors shape BII is not new (e.g., Benet-Martinez &

Haritatos, 2005), what distinguishes the current research is that we examine how momentary situational experiences affect BII. Past work (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005) focuses on the relationship between situational experiences over the long run and BII. Moreover, we examine the impact of implicit situational influences on BII, as opposed to explicit or conscious social experiences (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). At the same time, we further the understanding of chronic BII. We found it is not explained by chronic positive or negative affect or dispositional tendencies to process information globally. We appreciably add to the evidence that BII is situationally malleable or manipulable (Cheng & Lee, 2009). We demonstrated this whether the underlying (formative) dimension of BII is the connectedness (Experiments 1–3) or harmony (Experiment 4) experienced between the two cultural identities.

Our research draws attention to the automaticity of biculturals' responses to cultural cues as a function of BII. We show that awareness of cultural cues is not necessary for contrastive responses of low BII individuals. Priming research emphasizes that individuals contrast against priming effects when they detect a priming influence (Wheeler et al., 2007). This explanation does not appear tenable in light of Experiment 3, which used subliminal cultural priming. The findings suggest people with low BII may automatically activate motives to resist the cultural influence (and hence assimilative responses) because of the divided structure of their cultural identities; following the lead of cultural cues could require leaving out their other cultural identity. Preliminary evidence supports this notion (Mok & Morris, 2011). More research is needed to test this account. The extent to which low BII facilitated by local processing translates into adaptive or counterproductive outcomes also needs further study, as our findings stop short of demonstrating effects of decreased BII for behavior (see Experiment 3).

That biculturals contrast from cultural cues seems incompatible with past studies that documented main effects of cultural priming (assimilative responses; e.g., Hong, Benet-Martinez, Chiu, & Morris, 2003). One plausible reason is that past studies used a stricter operationalization of bicultural, such as those who lived more than 5 years in both the heritage and host cultures. Individuals with high BII could compose the majority of participants. The current research (and our other experiments; e.g., Mok & Morris, 2009) sampled self-identified biculturals. This broader operationalization of bicultural could increase the number of low BII participants and give rise to the contrastive priming responses. Future research could explore this view.

Global versus local processing. We highlight a role of processing style on the conceptual representation of dual identities. We introduce the global versus local processing model (GLOMOsys; Forster & Dannenberg, 2010) to understand how biculturals can increase or decrease their perceptions of BII. Our evidence supports this model by showing that situationally cued global or local processing carries over to other unrelated tasks. (For example, the global or local priming in

the current studies were unrelated to culture or self-identity.) Perceptual processing styles affect conceptual processing styles (Experiments 3 and 4). Also, global or local processing can be elicited in a number of ways (e.g., simple bodily cues, abstract thinking, attentional focus). Our research, using diverse manipulations of processing styles, is the first to bring the GLOMOsys model to the processing of self-identities.

The present research suggests that processing styles may momentarily bias representations of two cultural identities as (un)integrated, without expanding to underlying chronic representations. The findings are congruent with theorizing that the self can be construed in broader or narrower categories and is situationally malleable (Markus & Wurf, 1987; Wheeler et al., 2007).

Research on global (vs. local) processing has found that it expands conceptual attention, such as to promote inclusive categorization, abstract representations, similarity generation, and assimilation effects in social judgments (see Forster & Dannenberg, 2010, for a review). Using BII as our dependent measure, our results support a link between global or local priming and the former three processes but not the latter. Experiment 4 did not observe an interaction between global or local priming and cultural cues on a measure of self-perceived personality; participants with global priming did not report higher extraversion after American priming or lower extraversion after Asian priming, which would imply assimilation effects. This suggests that although processing styles are likely to affect the breadth of categorization of two cultural identities (e.g., an integrated "Asian American" identity reflects a broader, more inclusive categorization), and independent of the cultural context, they do not directly elicit assimilative responses in cultural contexts, at least among biculturals.

Other factors that activate global (vs. local) processing, such as high (vs. low) power (P. K. Smith & Trope, 2006), promotion (vs. prevention) focus (Friedman & Forster, 2001), and social independence (vs. interdependence; Kuhnen & Oyserman, 2002), may similarly increase (decrease) levels of BII. Research suggests global processing also fosters integration of novel stimuli into existing knowledge structures (Forster & Dannenberg, 2010; Forster, Marguc, & Gillebaart, 2010). This implies global processing may help new immigrants to embrace the host culture into their self-concept and promote BII in the short run. Similarly, global processing could facilitate employees' acceptance of the new organizational culture after a merger and promote more coherent organizational identities. The systematic study of induced processing styles on identity integration seems to be a fruitful area of research.

Practical Implications

Whether biculturals perceive their two identities are integrated has consequences for behavior. In situations that evoke both cultural identities, increasing BII could enhance individual creativity, such as the extent to which information

from both cultures are integrated to yield original solutions (Cheng, Sanchez-Burks, & Lee, 2008). Enhancing BII may increase inclusive behavior toward others who are culturally dissimilar to oneself (Mok et al., 2007). It could also lead individuals to display personality characteristics more aligned with typical members of their current cultural context (Miramontez et al., 2008).

Decreasing BII could also be useful. As low BII tends to evoke anticonformity to cultural cues (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002), Mok and Morris (2010b) found this response extends to public behavior. Low BII individuals are more likely to resist the consensus in their cultural in-groups, presumably because their other cultural identity feels left out of the cultural context. Lowering BII may make individuals less susceptible to groupthink in their cultural in-groups. Similarly, lowering BII may make biculturals more effective at representing and communicating the culture of their home country when studying or working overseas, thus facilitating knowledge transfer. Investigating the behavioral effects of state BII is an interesting future direction.

Limitations and Future Directions

Research could explore how long the change in BII persists once a global or local processing style is cued by the context. Research could investigate other means to satiate the contrast effects of low BII biculturals.

In the current studies, the reliability of the BII scales was low to moderate. This may reflect the small number of items and high content heterogeneity on the scale (see John & Benet-Martinez, 2000). Bicultural identity structure is a relatively broad construct. Future research could tap biculturals' identity integration using scales of longer length. A recently developed measure by Huynh and Benet-Martinez (2011) with 19 items yielded high alpha reliabilities ($> .80$).

Conclusion

The way individuals represent or integrate two cultural identities was initially conceptualized as an individual difference. We show BII is also a psychological state, subject to subtle contextual influences. A way to get biculturals to experience (low) integration between their cultural identities is to have them adopt a (local) global processing style. Momentarily changing BII has implications for adherence to cued cultural norms. Our findings that (low) BII can be situationally induced provides new insights into understanding how biculturals can enhance their performance in cultural contexts.

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Note

1. We explored the low reliability of the bicultural identity integration (BII) scores. A factor analysis showed that two factors emerged in both Time 1 and Time 2 measures, rather than a single factor (cf. Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). Accordingly, we derived two composite scores for BII (each with two items) and tested the hypothesis with the subscores separately. Results generally supported the predicted interaction of time and processing style manipulation for both subscales ($p < .07$), so we report results using the entire BII scale for brevity's sake.

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