Parental Cultural Conflict and Children's Cultural Identity Development

Amanda Araki
*Dominican University of California*

Survey: Let us know how this paper benefits you.

Recommended Citation


https://scholar.dominican.edu/ug-student-posters/43

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at Dominican Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research Posters by an authorized administrator of Dominican Scholar. For more information, please contact michael.pujals@dominican.edu.
Introduction

What key influences are there on a child’s cultural identity development?

For the bicultural children, incompatible messages from their parents about their different cultures of origin may be detrimental in their identity development.

Previous research on Cultural Identity Development has determined:

- **HELPFUL factors:**
  - Closeness of the child-parent relationship
  - Perceived parental ethnic identities
  - Exploration of both parents’ cultures
  - Freedom to choose self-identify.

- **Potentially HARMFUL factors:**
  - Perception of the parental cultural incompatibility
  - Marital challenges leading to parenting style that negatively impacts the child
  - No difference in self-esteem levels for biracial and monoracial teenagers.

Hypothesis

Bicultural offspring with culturally incompatible parents will have greater difficulty developing their cultural identity than with culturally compatible parents, and will be more susceptible to identity-confusion or insecurity when exposed to conflicting messages.

Other Gender Identity Development factors to be considered (no specific hypotheses):

- Age of participant
- Travel to parents’ country of origin
- Openness of family communication.

Method

**Participants:** 15 males and 28 females
- Origin: 17 different countries, 5 continents, 12 first-generation immigrants

**Materials:**
- Parental Cultural Conflict Scale (PCCS): measures parents’ cultural incompatibility
- Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM): levels of ethnic identity development
- Personal Information Questionnaire (PIQ): demographics and family history

**Procedure:**
- Survey invitation through Email and Facebook
- Participants anonymously completed the online survey

Results

**Hypothesis was not supported.**

Virtually no linear relationship between the measures (See figure 1).

**Notable Findings**

- 50% of participants viewed the other parent’s culture positively.
- 83% of participants identified with both parents’ cultures.
- 50% of participants were not fully immersed in any one culture, but 93% content to incorporate culture into self-identity.
- No notable cultural identity development difference between study’s bicultural sample and population norms for various mono-cultural groups (See figure 2).

**Other Evaluations**

- **Re. Age of Participants**
  - No relationship between participants’ ages and cultural identity.
  - $r (\text{Age} \times \text{MEIM}) = 0.08$, $p = 60%$

- **Re. Travel to Parents’ Country of Origin** (See Figure 3)
  - No significant difference on the MEIM for participants who travelled and those who did not travel to parents’ country of origin.

- **Re. Openness of Family Communications**
  - 36 (84%) of the participants reported having families with high levels of openness for cultural discussions; nearly all perceived as positive experiences.

Conclusions

- **Evaluation of Hypothesis is inconclusive.** due to limited range of PCCS.
- However, the absence of high conflict, patterns of open communication, along with the similarity of MEIM ethnic identity means for bicultural sample and monocolural population norms, are consistent with hypothesis.
- Limited range of PCCS values suggests that most parents did not discourage the child exploring both cultures.
- Travel to Home Countries may be a mitigating factor where higher conflict exists.
- Children may be resilient and work out cultural identities, even when parents make the task more difficult by their inability to resolve cultural differences.