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## Bicultural identity orientation of immigrants to Canada

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### ABSTRACT

Studies of bicultural identity have claimed conflict–harmony and distance–overlap as relevant axes for describing bicultural identity, whereas other research emphasises variations across social situations. Based on this literature and focus group interviews, the bicultural identity of 300 young adults from immigrant families was examined, and a new bicultural identity instrument was developed, which included subscales assessing conflicted, monocultural, situationally alternating, complementary and hybrid identity orientations. The reliability indices and factor structure supported the distinctiveness of each of these subscales, and correlational analyses supported their validity. A second survey confirmed the factor structure and demonstrated meaningful differences between first- and second-generation Canadians (G1:  $n = 367$  and G2:  $n = 217$ , respectively). In particular, both groups endorsed identity hybridity and complementarity more strongly than alternation and alternation was endorsed more strongly than monoculturality and identity conflict. As well, the G1 group reported more conflicted, monocultural and alternating identities than did the G2 group, and the G2 group reported more complementary and hybrid identities than the G1 group. These findings provide a more comprehensive understanding of the diversity of identity experiences of bicultural persons, as well as an instrument to assess these orientations.

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Acculturation; biculturality; identity; immigrants; Canada

## Introduction

Over the past decades, there has been an expansion in social and cultural psychological research on acculturation and biculturality, primarily because of the increased mobility of people within and between societies. Migration contributes to the complex dynamics of current societies, and individuals living in these changing contexts need to juggle their affiliations with the various social and cultural groups with which they interact, and, if possible, integrate them into a coherent sense of self. In response to these changes in societies, researchers from a variety of subfields of psychology and related social sciences have become increasingly occupied with the ways in which people construct their identities and deal with having multiple, and sometimes contradictory, identities. The present study builds on existing research to better understand how young adults from immigrant families experience their multiple cultural identities. Our main purpose is to develop and validate an instrument for measuring the various orientations they have towards their biculturality.

We will present and challenge previous research that discusses what it means to be bicultural through a consideration of existing models of bicultural identity. In order to understand the aspects of bicultural identity and how it is constructed, we describe current research on acculturation,

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bicultural identity and the various outcomes that the internalisation of a second culture into the self might have on the individual (i.e. hybridity, switching between identities, contextual influences and various studies relating bicultural identity with psychological well-being). Building on this research, we will construct a new model of bicultural identity, which takes into account the challenges encountered in the field to date. This model is then assessed statistically to test its validity and reliability.

## Literature review

### *Acculturation and integration*

For several decades, researchers have maintained that people who live in bicultural and bilingual contexts may evidence a variety of reactions to their experiences, across many functional domains (e.g. Berry and Annis 1974). One of the best-known models of responses is the bidimensional model of acculturation developed by John Berry (1980, 1997). According to Berry, when two groups come into continuous first-hand contact, cultural change can take place in different ways depending upon the extent to which people wish to have contact and engage with the new culture (i.e. the host society) and the extent to which they wish to retain their original culture and identity. When one wishes to adopt the new culture and disengage from the heritage culture, this strategy is termed assimilation, while the converse is labelled separation or segregation. The decision to reject both cultures is termed deculturation or marginalisation. Berry has argued that the fourth option, engagement with the new, mainstream culture and retention of the original heritage culture is the most commonly endorsed strategy, termed integration. This bidimensional model has also been discussed in reference to ethnic identity (e.g. Clément and Noels 1992; Ward 2001, 2008, among others). Although the notion of integration in the context of acculturation and bicultural identity has its roots in Berry's work, the manner in which people experience the combining of cultures is not fully articulated in this model.

Other researchers have described a variety of possibilities for how people integrate or manage their bicultural experiences and identities. In their discussion of acculturation, for instance, LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) propose assimilation (loss of heritage culture and complete absorption into the host culture), which corresponds with Berry's notion of the same appellation, and acculturation (acquired competency in the majority culture, but continuous membership in the heritage group), which has some similarities to Berry's construct of separation/segregation in that it involves the retention of the original heritage identity. Three other acculturation profiles, including alternation (proficient competence in both culture, and the ability to respond appropriately to the demands of the context), multiculturalism (maintenance of the heritage culture and simultaneous engagement in the host culture, positive regard for both identities) and fusion (blend of two cultures to form a third, new culture, different from the two original ones), could be reasonably suggested to reflect an integrated bicultural identity.

Still others have tried to explain identity integration from a developmental perspective. For instance, Amiot et al. (2007) propose a 'four stage model that explains the specific processes by which multiple social identities develop intra-individually and become integrated within the self over time' (364). The first stage is anticipatory categorisation (the processes that take place even before the immersion in the new culture, as expectations of the future integration of identities). The following stage is categorisation (the individual finds him-/herself in the new environment, and recognises and groups the characteristics of the heritage group versus the host culture). The next developmental stage is compartmentalisation – the individual develops a context dependent membership to various social groups within the host and heritage culture. The final stage is integration, at which point the individual understands that although some of the social identities are conflictual, they form a coherent self, which incorporates identities closer related to both the heritage and host culture, which at this point are no longer context dependent. Nonetheless, integration can have two forms: restrictive or additive; the former is similar to the concept of fusion, where the bicultural individual identifies with the members of the intersection of the heritage and the host group (i.e.

a third culture). The latter form is more inclusive, as the bicultural person perceives membership to both groups.

### **Identity hybridity**

The multicultural and fusion models proposed by LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) resonate with other theorists' conceptualisation of multi- or bicultural identity. Dallaire and Denis' (2005) revealed that some Canadian Francophone youths do not identify themselves as either Francophone or Anglophone, but rather as bilingual Canadians whose identity was best described as a fused hybrid of these two Canadian identities. Depending on the sociopolitical context of French-English relations in their regions, these hybrid identities may be more or less asymmetrical, reflecting the regional power imbalance. In a similar vein, Boski (2008) described a mode of culture perception and evaluation, in which there is perceived similarity of the two cultures or their fusion to form a third one. Boski's (2008) cultural heteronomy, the achievement of a 'universalist self', is similar to Bennett's 'constructed marginal individual' (Boski 2008), or the 'integrated bicultural' (Roccas and Brewer 2002).

Another theoretical model for bicultural identity integration is described by Roccas and Brewer (2002). They posit that there are different ways to manage the requirements of multiple cultural identities. They propose four different orientations: the first is hyphenated identities, where biculturals do not identify with either the heritage or the host group, but rather with a fusion, a hyphenated version of the two. The second is cultural dominance, when a bicultural person finds that the host culture is preferable. The third is compartmentalisation, that is, adapting one's identity to the particular context s/he is in and alternating with ease between the demands of the host and heritage group. The last orientation to manage the requirements of multiple identities is the integrated biculturalism, described as the formation of the identity as a world citizen, rather than belonging to one or more cultural groups.

The model proposed by Herrmann, Risse-Kappen, and Brewer (2004) argues that membership in different groups can take three different forms at the identity level: nested identities ('concentric circles or Russian Matruska dolls, one inside the next', 8); cross-cutting identities (people from a group could belong to a different group, but not all members of the first group are part of the second); and separate identities (when the same individual is the only member of two groups, which have no other common members). Risse (2010) adds another layer to these models, which he names the marble cake or blended identities, referring to the scenario when an individual's identities are so interwoven they cannot be looked at separately. The Russian doll and the marble cake models are vivid illustrations of potential hybrid identities developed by bicultural individuals.

### **Identity conflict**

Benet-Martínez and her colleagues (2002, 2005) found that bicultural experiences are organised around two dimensions: distance (ranging from perceived remoteness of the two cultures to an overlap) and conflict (varying from disagreement to a harmonious relation between cultural identities). The overlap concept is another way of integrating the two identities, but it is not evident whether they form a third, different identity – as in the case of the fusion model (LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton 1993) or blended identity, like the marble cake model (Risse 2010). Research with their instrument showed that only the distance scale correlates with most of the predictors, indicating that either the theoretical model of the conflict scale was imprecise or that the particular items of the scale were not valid indicators of the construct (see also Benet-Martínez and Haritatos 2005; Manzi et al. 2014; Ferrari et al. 2015; Hong et al. 2016).

Any doubt regarding the validity of the conflict orientation was resolved in the studies conducted by Ward and her colleagues. In these studies, the concept and the scale used by Ward to measure it proved reliable and valid (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011). She suggested that conflict was a function of

the cultural distance between the two groups, and proposed that developmental factors, family values and dynamics, as well as intergroup factors were relevant predictors of identity conflict. The ethno-cultural identity conflict scale showed that individuals who are integrated (according to Berry's model) experience less conflict than those who were assimilated, marginalised or separated. The scale also correlated significantly with measures of depression and social difficulty (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011), suggesting that it could be a reliable indicator of well-being in bicultural individuals. A meta-analysis of 83 research studies carried out by Nguyen and Benet-Martínez (2013) suggests that there is a definite positive relation between biculturality and adjustment. The study also indicates that the strength of this relation is higher than the relation between adjustment and either the heritage or host culture. It is thus extremely important to understand the bicultural experience and the various orientations people have to biculturality, since an integrated bicultural identity is strongly related to better adjustment.

### ***Situational alternation***

Whereas some researchers have devoted considerable attention to the notions of identity hybridity and conflict, others have emphasised that bicultural people might alter their identities depending upon the affordances and constraints of social situations and their interpersonal interaction goals. For instance, in their situated ethnic identity approach, Clément and Noels (1992) argue that identities are negotiated through interactions with others in specific social situations, such that at times people might identify relatively strongly with the heritage group (most often in private settings, during interactions with friends and family), while at other times they might identify relatively strongly with the mainstream group stronger (most often in public settings, such as at work or in the broader community). This situational aspect of ethnic identity has also been examined in the diary and palm pilot studies (Yip 2005), which found that the presence of family members, other members of their ethnic group, or use of the heritage language corresponds with an increase in identification the heritage group. The alternation of identities was also discussed by Ward (2013), with reference to young Muslims integrating in the New Zealand society. This study, which used qualitative research techniques, found strong indications that some participants preferred to alternate between their identities depending on the context and people involved in the interaction. Ward (2013) emphasises the fact that biculturals who alternate do not necessarily perceive their identities to be conflictual, rather they have the option of choosing which aspect of their identity to display in different contexts. This idea is also supported by the research conducted by Grosjean (2015).

The importance of the social context for identity switching is underscored by the experimental work of Hong et al. (2000). They found that behaviour and ethnic identity can also be primed with culturally relevant icons, leading the bicultural individual to being predisposed to making decisions based on that identity or 'cultural knowledge system'. This view of identity is also shared by Chao et al. (2007), who argues that essentialist beliefs about race (the beliefs that boundaries between races are rigid, and moving between cultures is difficult) construct a frame of mind that makes it hard for bicultural individuals to navigate between cultures. Two views emerge from these studies: one would suggest that this is an automatic process, triggered by primes in the environment, while the other suggests that biculturals are aware of the norms and rules of both cultures, and display the ones which are appropriate for a particular context. This notion of situational alternation of identities is echoed in Boski's (2008) concept of functional specialisation of the life domains into public and private spheres (see also Arends-Tóth (2003); see also Roccas and Brewer's (2002) notion of compartmentalisation, as well as Hermann and Brewer's (2004) cross-cutting and separate identities).

### ***Objectives***

Because empirical work in this field is still quite nascent and fragmented, the main purpose of the present study is to explore the diverse ways in which people from immigrant backgrounds describe

their bicultural identity in one comprehensive framework, and to develop an instrument that can assess these orientations in a psychometrically sound manner. We frame these aspects as bicultural identity orientations, in that they describe a perspective or lens through which people living in multicultural contexts frame their identity experience in relation to (at least) two relevant cultural groups. We do not regard these orientations as necessarily categorical and mutually exclusive, but as potentially interrelated, such that one or more orientations could describe a bicultural person's identity. Based on the theory and research described in the literature review, it is expected that at least three bicultural identity orientations will be evident, including identity hybridity (i.e. 'fusion', 'overlap', 'marble cake'), identity conflict and situational alternation of identities (i.e. 'functional specialisation', 'compartmentalisation' or 'switching'). To elicit alternative orientations, we used a mixed methods research strategy that would allow participants to articulate other possibilities, as described below.

## Study 1

The first study was exploratory in nature, and aimed to construct a model of bicultural identity that included not only the various bicultural orientations identified in the literature but also other orientations described by research participants. As a first step, we conducted 10 focus groups with participants who were either born outside of Canada or whose parents had immigrated to Canada. These focus groups explored issues related to bicultural identity as presented in the literature review, but we also encouraged participants to bring up new topics, if they desired. Thematic analysis of the responses indicated three distinct categories consistent with the hypothesised hybridity, alternation and conflict orientations. In a second step, we developed a self-report instrument to tap these orientations using phrasings from the participants, and then conducted a questionnaire survey to collect numerical data, which we analysed with statistical methods to determine the convergent, discriminant and concurrent validity of this instrument. The details of the questionnaire and the analyses appear below.

## Method

### *Participants and procedure*

Three hundred participants (62.3% female) enrolled in psychology classes at a Canadian university were selected on the basis of their response to a question posed in a pre-screening test, which asked whether they or their parents had been born outside of Canada. They were invited to complete an online questionnaire in group-testing sessions, for which they received partial course credit.

The participants' ages varied between 17 and 47 years ( $M = 18.8$ ,  $SD = 2.5$ ). All participants had parents who were born outside of Canada, and 39.3% were themselves born outside Canada. Among the latter group, the length of residence in Canada varied from 2 to 20 years ( $M = 10.2$ ,  $SD = 5.0$ ). Over 90% of the participants were Canadian citizens, while the rest were permanent residents. The countries of ancestral origin were diverse: China (6.3%), Hong Kong (4.3%), India (3.7%), Korea (2.3%), with smaller numbers from Pakistan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Malaysia and Taiwan, Iraq, Bangladesh, Bosnia, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Poland, Russia, Sudan, Ukraine and many more.

### *Materials*

The questionnaire included a background information section, as well as the sections described below. Most measures included Likert-type items asking the participants to indicate their agreement on a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree). Cronbach alpha indexes of internal consistency are reported in parentheses.

### ***Bicultural identity orientation items***

As noted above, items of the Bicultural Identity Orientation Scale (BIOS) were derived from focus group interviews and existing bicultural identity assessment instruments. We constructed 40 Likert-type items, including 12 that were hypothesised to reflect identity conflict, 16 items reflecting identity hybridity, and 12 items reflecting situational alternation. Randomly ordered within this section were the 8 items from Benet-Martínez and Haritatos's (2005) Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) scale: 4 items to reflect conflict ( $\alpha = .46$ ) and 4 to represent overlap ( $\alpha = .77$ ). The BII items were included here in order to assess them alongside the newly developed items.

### ***Situated ethnic identity scale***

Following the work of Noels and Clément (e.g. Clément and Noels 1992), participants were presented with 16 interpersonal scenarios reflecting four situational domains (family, friends, university and community) and for each situation were asked to reflect on their feelings of identification with their heritage and the Canadian group using two separate 7-point scales. Two indexes were computed, allowing the assessment of situational variability for each identity (cf. Damji, Clément, and Noels 1996; Noels and Clément 2015).

### ***Synchronic and diachronic bicultural identity***

Two items used by Simon and Ruhs (2008) tapped whether participants experienced their ethnic identities synchronically or diachronically.

### ***Circle diagrams***

Inspired by Aron, Aron, and Smollan (1992), we presented participants with seven pictures of two circles with varying degrees of overlap, from none at all to almost a perfect overlap. They were asked to select the image that best represented the relation between their heritage and Canadian identities within themselves.

### ***Ethno-cultural identity conflict scale***

Twenty items assessed the ethno-cultural conflict (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011,  $\alpha = .92$ ).

### ***Self-esteem scale***

The Rosenberg (1965) scale assessed participants' self-esteem on 10 items ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

### ***Essentialism scale***

Five items addressing whether participants held essentialist beliefs about ethnicity were adapted from Chao et al. (2007;  $\alpha = .47$ ).

## ***Hypotheses***

Based on the above literature review, we formulated the following hypotheses (H):

H1. The scale will show evidence of three bicultural orientations: conflict, hybridity and situational alternation.

H2. Convergent validity:

- Conflict will show positive correlations with the ethno-cultural identity conflict scale (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011);
- Hybridity will correlate with the scores on the circle diagrams (Aron et al. 1992) and the synchronic identities measure (Simon and Ruhs 2008).
- Alternation will correlate positively with the variability indices from the situated ethnic identity scale (Noels and Clément 2015), as well as the diachronic identities measure (Simon and Ruhs 2008).

### H3. Concurrent validity:

- Conflict will be negatively correlated with self-esteem, whereas hybridity will be positively related with self-esteem (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011; Nguyen and Benet-Martinez 2013).
- Conflict will be experienced by first-generation (G1) than second-generation (G2) Canadians than second-generation (G2) Canadians, whereas the converse will be true
- Based on sociological work concerning immigrant generation differences (e.g. Rumbaut 2004; Pottie et al. 2015), we reasoned that G1 Canadians will face greater conflict between cultures because they are relatively early in the process of adapting to differences between cultural groups, whereas G2 Canadians have dealt with cultural differences their whole lives (or at least since elementary school) and have had more experience with integrating the two cultures.
- Alternation will correlate negatively with essentialism, assuming that the capacity to switch identities across situations reflects crosscultural adaptability.

## Results and discussion

### H1: Exploratory factor analyses

In order to address the first hypothesis and to examine the factor structure of the newly developed scale, we conducted exploratory principal axis factor analyses (EFA) with oblique rotation. An initial analysis yielded a solution with nine factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.00, accounting for a little over 65% of the total variance. Inspection of the scree plot indicated that only the first three factors had an obviously different slope, which suggested that a more parsimonious solution could account for the variance in the data. Additional factor analyses were conducted, including 4-, 5- and 6-factor solutions, and each solution was evaluated based on the variance accounted for, its parsimony, clear definition by at least three loadings, and interpretability (Gorsuch 1983). The five-factor model was determined to be the most appropriate because of the combination of items that loaded on each factor reflected theoretically meaningful and conceptually distinct constructs, while still accounting for a sizeable amount of variance in the data (53%).

We proceeded to repeat the factor analysis in order to eliminate the items that cross-loaded or did not load on any of the five factors (i.e. those with loadings  $< |.30|$ ). In the final solution, each of the items loaded on one factor, yielding five subscales between three and six items for each factor (see Table 1). The variance accounted for by the five-factor model was 52.5%. The factor correlation matrix showed that some of the factor correlations were moderately high (ranging from .13 to .56). A close examination of the content of items of these factors showed that, despite their intercorrelations, the five factors reflected conceptually distinct aspects of biculturality.

An examination of the factor pattern matrix indicated that the analysis yielded three factors similar to those predicted and two additional factors. The first factor was defined by six items and was named Monocultural Orientation. The items reflected ideas about choosing one culture over the other, being loyal to one cultural group and being uncomfortable in situations that involved both the participants' ethnic group and the Canadian group (Items 1–6 in Table 1).

The next factor was defined by five items and was called the Alternation Orientation because the items reflected the participants' beliefs about the variability and flexibility of their identity depending on the situation and people involved (Items 7, 10, 11 in Table 1). It also captured the idea that depending on the context, biculturals behaved either according to the norms of their ethnic culture or the norms of the Canadian culture, but the two were kept separate and distinct (Items 8 and 9 in Table 1).

Three items loaded on the next factor, which was called the Complementary Orientation, because the items reflected the participants' belief that the two cultures, though different, are compatible and Complementary (Items 12–15 in Table 1).

The fourth factor was named the Conflicted Identity Orientation because the items that loaded on it conveyed a sense of discomfort and distress belonging to two ethnic groups. Two items loaded negatively on this factor; they were reversed for the purposes of further analysis, since they referred to the ease of belonging to two cultural groups (Items 16–20 in Table 1).



**Table 1.** Study 1: Results of standard regression analyses with orientations as predictors of criterion variables.

Variables	Equation		Coefficients		
	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Beta	Zero order r	Semi-partial r
Ethno-cultural identity conflict	.64	108.26*			
Conflicted			.77*	.80	.57
Monocultural			.02	.53	.01
Alternating			.07	.31	.07
Complementary			-.02	-.35	-.02
Hybrid			.03	-.34	.02
Circle diagrams	.39	38.83*			
Conflicted			.09	-.35	.07
Monocultural			-.26*	-.50	-.19
Alternating			-.16*	-.29	-.14
Complementary			.15*	.41	.13
Hybrid			.36*	.53	.29
Situated ethnic identity variability index	.03	2.98*			
Conflict			-.11	-.09	-.09
Monocultural			-.10	-.07	-.07
Alternating			.18*	.13	.17
Complementary			-.11	-.04	-.10
Hybrid			.04	.07	.03
Self-esteem	.05	3.98*			
Conflict			-.25*	-.24	-.18
Monocultural			.02	-.14	.02
Alternating			.05	-.02	.04
Complementary			-.02	.10	-.02
Hybrid			.07	.16	.06
Generation <sup>a</sup>	.09	6.63*			
Monocultural			.25*	.29	.18
Alternating			.09	.19	.08
Complementary			-.13	-.21	-.11
Conflict			-.06	.16	-.05
Hybrid			.02	-.14	.02
Essentialism	.02	2.25*			
Conflicted			-.04	.01	-.03
Monocultural			.03	.06	.02
Alternating			.19*	.18	.17
Complementary			.04	.01	.04
Hybrid			.00	.01	.00

Note: The squared semi-partial correlation provides an index of each predictor's effect size by indicating the percentage of variance accounted for by each predictor variable (i.e. orientation) uniquely from all other predictor variables.

<sup>a</sup>For 'Generation', 1 = born in Canada and 2 = born outside Canada.

\**p* < .05.

The last factor was comprised of five items that reflected the idea of mixing and overlapping between the two cultures and thus it was termed the Hybrid identity orientation. These items suggested that the participants who scored higher on them perceived their two cultures as integrated, mixed or overlapped (Items 21, 22, 23 in Table 1), they thought that others saw them as part of two cultural groups (Item 24 in Table 1) and they were happy to be part of this mixed cultural group (Item 25 in Table 1).

Cronbach alpha indices of internal consistency for all the five subscales ranged between  $\alpha = .65$  for Alternation and  $\alpha = .86$  for Conflicted. The pattern of correlations between the five factors suggested that Conflicted and Monocultural orientations were positively correlated ( $r = .63$ ), and Alternation was less strongly but positively correlated to these two scales ( $r = .30$ , and  $r = .38$ , respectively). Hybrid and Complementary were positively correlated ( $r = .46$ ), and both were negatively correlated with Conflict ( $r = -.45$ , and  $r = -.42$ ) and Monocultural orientation. Alternation evidenced a low but significant negative correlation with Complementary ( $r = -.21$ ), but was unrelated with Hybridity ( $r = -.08$ ).

## H2: Convergent and discriminant validity analysis

Correlational and standard regression analyses were conducted in which the five subscale mean scores served as predictors of the criterion variables (see Table 2). Inspection of the correlations and beta coefficients showed that the Conflicted identity subscale was the strongest correlate and the best predictor for ethno-cultural identity conflict (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011). All subscales, except Conflict, predicted the circle diagrams, such that Hybridity and Complementarity were positively related and Alternation and Monocultural subscales were negatively related to overlap. Only Alternation predicted the situated ethnic variability index (but was unrelated to the Canadian identity variability index) and the diachronic identity index. The synchronic and diachronic items were predicted by more than one subscale at the multivariate level: both items were predicted by the Hybrid subscale, but Complementary subscale also predicted the synchronic item, whereas the Alternation subscale also predicted the diachronic one. Thus, there is evidence of the convergent and discriminant validity of the three hypothesised scales.

**Table 2.** Study 2: Standardised regression coefficients from confirmatory factor analyses, means, standard deviations, and factor intercorrelations as a function of immigration generation.

Items	Generation 1					Generation 2				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
There is a conflict within myself between the two cultures I belong to.	.85					.75				
Sometimes I am confused about my ethnic identity.	.69					.82				
I feel it is hard to belong to two cultural groups.	.83					.84				
I have difficulty reconciling the differences between my ethnic culture and the Canadian culture.	.71					.68				
If I were born again, I'd choose to be part of only one cultural group.		.68					.71			
I feel one has to make a decision of choosing a particular culture over the other.		.76					.85			
I feel one should be loyal to only one cultural group.		.71					.79			
I feel that I must decide which of m two cultures is more central to my identity.		.78					.82			
My ethnic identity varies depending on whom I am with.			.63					.72		
I often find myself switching between cultures in different situations.			.71					.73		
I adjust my identity depending on whether I am with people from my ethnic group or Canadians.			.88					.88		
I adapt my ethnic identity according to the circumstances.			.91					.81		
My ethnic culture is compatible with the Canadian culture.				.65					.75	
Although they are different, the two cultural groups I identify with go well together.				.78					.87	
My ethnic identity pairs nicely with my Canadian identity.				.89					.91	
My ethnic and Canadian identities are in harmony.				.89					.89	
I feel my identity is a hybrid of two cultures.					.78					.78
I feel my identity is a mix of two cultures.					.90					.85
If I were to describe the relationship between the two cultures within myself, I'd depict them as integrated.					.73					.75
Most of my friends see me as belonging to both my ethnic culture and the Canadian culture.					.56					.65
Means	2.43	2.58	3.43	4.06	4.18	2.11	2.16	3.11	4.33	4.35
Standard deviation	1.14	1.23	1.30	1.08	1.32	1.10	1.18	1.23	1.10	1.08
Factor intercorrelations										
1. Conflicted										
2. Monocultural		.74					.64			
3. Alternating		.31	.30				.35	.21		
4. Complementary		-.54	-.40	-			-.41	-.35	-	
5. Hybrid		-.25	-.33	.21	.47		-.22	-.30	.16	.66

Note: Factor labels: 1 – conflicted; 2 – monocultural; 3 – alternation; 4 – complementary; 5 – hybrid.

No specific hypotheses were made for the Monocultural and Complementary orientations that unexpectedly emerged from the EFA. However, consistent with expectation, the Monocultural identity subscale predicted little overlap in the circle diagrams and the Complementary orientation predicted high overlap in the circle diagram and high synchronic identity. Thus, the five subscales were consistently related with measures of similar constructs and did not relate with measures of dissimilar constructs, supporting their convergent and discriminant validity, respectively.

### **H3: Concurrent validity**

We conducted a series of correlations and regression analyses examining the associations between the five subscales and measures of constructs that were expected to be associated with them. Perceived conflict between the two cultures has been previously linked with low self-esteem (Ward, Stuart, and Kus 2011), a finding that was replicated with the BIOS Conflict subscale. At the bivariate level, the Conflict and Monocultural subscales correlated negatively with the self-esteem scale, whereas the Hybrid subscale correlated positively. At the multivariate level, the Conflict subscale proved to be the most significant predictor of low self-esteem. The strong bivariate relation found between hybridity and self-esteem is also consistent with previous research that those people with an integrated sense of self are likely to experience better well-being (Nguyen and Benet-Martínez 2013).

We expected Alternation to positively relate with the essentialism scale, reasoning that people who felt that identity was socially constructed (not a fixed entity) would be more capable and comfortable with identity switching than those who felt that identity was an unalterable personal characteristic. The results of the correlational and regression analyses indicated that the only subscale that predicted essentialism was Alternation, but contrary to our prediction, there was a negative correlation. It appears that if one believes that ethnicity involves stable, unchangeable characteristics, one is likely to switch from identity to identity as the situation demands.

In sum, the results of the EFA indicated that people's descriptions of their bicultural experience could be characterised in terms of five correlated factors. Three of them were hypothesised based on previous research: Conflict, Alternation and Hybridity. Two additional distinct factors also emerged: the Monocultural and Complementary factors. Correlational and regression evidence supported the convergent, discriminant and concurrent validity, although contrary to expectation, beliefs about essentialism predicted a stronger rather than weaker alternation orientation.

## **Study 2**

Because the EFA resulted in two more factors than we hypothesised, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to replicate and ascertain the validity of the five-factor model. Because immigrant generation status was predicted by different orientations in Study 1, we compared the model across G1 and G2 Canadians to ascertain its equivalence across immigrants.

## **Method**

### **Participants and procedure**

Participants included 582 university students (61.7% female) enrolled in introductory psychology classes, who had been pre-screened to ensure that they or at least one of their parents had immigrated to Canada. Their ages varied between 17 and 38 years ( $M = 19.0$ ,  $SD = 1.9$ ). Three hundred and sixty-five participants (62.7%) declared they were born in Canada, whereas 217 (37.3%) were born outside of Canada. G1 participants indicated that they lived in Canada for a mean of 11.06 years ( $SD = 5.06$ ). With regards to the ethnic distribution of this sample, participants were asked to choose from a number of options and their responses yielded the following: the largest sample represented (49%) considered themselves to be East Asian, 19% said they were South Asian, 10% European, 5% declared they were Middle Eastern, 5% Euro North American, 5% African and

1.5% Hispanic, the remaining participants filled in the 'other' category. Ninety-three percent indicated they were Canadian citizens, while 7% were permanent residents.

### **Materials**

Participants completed an online questionnaire that included the items of newly developed BIOS, that is, the four items from Study 1 with the highest loadings on each of the five factors and no cross-loadings on other factors. In the case of Complementary, an item was added in order that the subscale would have four items. The participants were asked to rate each item from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree). The internal consistency was high for both generations, between  $\alpha = .85$  and  $\alpha = .91$ .

## **Results and discussion**

### **Confirmatory factor analysis**

CFA was carried out using EQS 6.1. The hypothesised model consisted of five factors, each defined by four variables, with the error terms uncorrelated. We also hypothesised that the factors were correlated with each other. One factor-loading parameter within each set of indicator variables per factor was fixed at 1.00 (Byrne, 2006).

### **First-generation (G1) Canadians**

This first five-factor model yielded a respectable fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 350.31$ ,  $df = 160$ ,  $p < .000$ , CFI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.08). The relation between Monocultural and Conflict factors proved to be quite high in the standardised solution ( $r = .74$ ), and thus we investigated a second model consisting of four factors, in which the items for these two subscales loaded on one factor. This model produced a poorer fit ( $\chi^2 = 437.90$ ,  $df = 161$ ,  $p < .000$ , CFI = 0.87, RMSEA = 0.09). The difference between these two models was significant ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 87.59$ ,  $df = 1$ ), and so the five-factor solution was deemed the better, even if the correlation between Monocultural and Conflict factors was high.

The multivariate Wald test indicated that the goodness of fit might be improved by removing the correlation between Alternation and Complementary orientations. An inspection of the multivariate Lagrange test suggested that some variables could load on more than one factor. Various subsequent models were tested to assess the improvement in fit of the model incorporating these changes. A better fit could be obtained when we allowed five indicators to load each on two factors, while also relaxing the correlation between the two factors ( $\chi^2 = 274.65$ ,  $df = 156$ ,  $p < .000$ , CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.06). This more complex model did not substantially change the interpretation of the factors, and so the more parsimonious model that already had an acceptable fit to the data without the cross-loadings was retained.

### **Second-generation (G2) Canadians**

A similar five-factor model was tested with the data collected from the G2 immigrants, and it proved to be a good fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 446.02$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $df = 160$ , CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.08). The multivariate Wald test showed that an improved fit would result if the factor correlations between Alternation and Hybridity and between Alternation and Complementary were relaxed. We tested this second model and found that it showed a poorer fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 620.14$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $df = 162$ , CFI = 0.88, RMSEA = 0.09). We re-ran a third model by relaxing just the relation between Alternation and Complementary, and the goodness of fit improved ( $\chi^2 = 448.40$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $df = 161$ , CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.07).

An inspection of the multivariate Lagrange test suggested that further improvement could result if six variables loaded on more than one factor. This fourth model was investigated. The goodness of fit showed an improvement after these changes ( $\chi^2 = 336.80$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $df = 153$ , CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.06). By making these changes however, the interpretability of the obtained model and its relations between variables and factors would be more complex without substantively changing the meaning

of the factors. For these reasons, we maintain that although the goodness of fit of the model is improved by allowing the variables to load on more than one factor, it comes at the cost of the parsimony and interpretability of the results. We thus selected the third model, with five factors inter-related except between Alternation and Complementary, as the final model.

### **Test of measurement and structural invariance**

We then proceeded to test the equivalency of the factor loadings (i.e. the measurement model) and the factor correlations (i.e. the structural model) across G1 and G2 participants (Byrne 1994). The initial test of the measurement model yielded a CFI value of .92, indicating that the hypothesised model in which all factor loadings were constrained to be equal across groups represented a reasonably good fit for the data ( $\chi^2 = 823.40$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $df = 337$ ). A close examination of the Lagrange multiplier test for releasing constraints indicated that in only one of the 15 factor-loading constraints was not equivalent across groups. The problematic item referred to conflict ('Sometimes I am confused about my ethnic identity'): for the G1 model it loaded on the Conflict factor with a loading of .69 (the lowest among the four items), whereas for the G2 model, it had a loading of .82. We proceeded to re-test the invariant structure of the scale, releasing this constraint. The CFI did not change ( $\chi^2 = 813.20$ ,  $p < .000$ ,  $df = 336$ ,  $CFI = .92$ ). We concluded that the models obtained from the data for both generations were equivalent, with one minor exception: for the G1 participants the Conflict factor as strongly defined by a sense of confusion as it was for the G2.

### **Means analysis**

Having concluded that the underlying structure of the bicultural model for the two generations was equivalent, we examined the mean differences between the generations in their bicultural orientations through a  $2 \times 5$  ANOVA, with generation status (G1 vs. G2) as a between-subject factor, the five bicultural orientations as a within-subject factor. The results yielded a significant Generation main effect ( $F(1, 567) = 6.09$ ,  $p < .014$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ ) and a significant Orientation main effect ( $F(4, 2268) = 395.83$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .41$ ). The interaction effect was also significant ( $F(4, 2268) = 11.49$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .02$ ).

Post-hoc Tukey tests indicated that both generations most strongly endorsed Hybridity and Complementary (which they equally endorsed) than the other three orientations, and they endorsed the Alternation orientation more strongly than the Monocultural and Conflict orientations (which they equally endorsed). The G1 group endorsed Conflict, Monocultural and Alternation orientations significantly more strongly than did the G2 group, whereas the G2 group endorsed Complementary more strongly than did G1 group. For Hybridity, there was no significant difference between the two generations.

## **Discussion**

The main objectives of this research were to explore the diverse ways in which young adults from immigrant background describe their bicultural identities, and to create an instrument to assess these orientations. We found five interrelated orientations of bicultural identity: conflicted (a perceived discord between the two cultural identities), monocultural (identification with only one of the two cultures), alternating (the shifting of identities according to the cultural context), complementary (compatibility between the two distinct identities) and hybrid (the blending of two cultural identities from which emerges a new identity). A new instrument, the BIOS, was developed based on the literature review and the accounts obtained through focus groups with bicultural individuals. The instrument showed sound validity and reliability. The analyses revealed that the model of bicultural identity obtained was generally equivalent between G1 and G2 immigrants.

The orientations were generally associated with other constructs in the manner that we expected. Two of the orientations, conflicted and monocultural, were positively interrelated, and bore a more negative connotation (e.g. linked to other conflict measures and distance between identities) and

related to lesser well-being. Complementary and hybridity orientations were also interrelated, and suggested distinct but positive identity orientations toward both the heritage and the Canadian group. Contrary to expectation that situational alternation between identities would be associated with the belief that social reality is constructed in specific social interactions and thus identity switching reflected greater adaptability, greater alternation was associated with greater essentialism, as well as conflicted and singularity in identities. This finding implies that alternation instead reflects a belief that the two cultural identities are bounded and separate entities, that are possibly unchangeable, maybe even biologically determined. However, alternation was also positively associated with hybridity and showed no negative relation with complementarity, and so we cannot conclude that alternation never implies that bicultural identities could never be paired or mixed. Clearly more study on how identity alternation functions across diverse groups is necessary.

Across the two generations, the bicultural identity orientations were structurally analogous, but there were differences in how strongly they were endorsed. Both generations most strongly claimed hybrid and complementary identities rather than monocultural, conflicted and alternating identities. People cannot comfortably live in constant conflict and identity struggle, and these results indicate that it is possible to reconcile the differences and conflicts between the two cultures, and find a way to achieve complementarity and/or blendedness. The G1 participants reported that their identities were more conflicted, situation-specific and particularly monocultural than did the G2 participants. This difference could be an indication that over time and with greater exposure to both groups over the lifespan, bicultural persons who perceive their two ethnic identities as conflicted and distinct could develop a way to integrate their identities.

The five orientations showed strong relationships with each other, with the only exception being the relation between alternation and complementarity. If the five orientations are part of a continuum (see Amiot, Blanchard, and Gaudreau 2008; Roccas and Brewer 2002), this lack of a relation might suggest that a leap of faith is necessary in transitioning from cultural opposition to switching between them to finding them compatible, even if distinct. Another explanation could be derived from No and her colleagues' (2008) discussion of the lay theory of race: people who endorsed a more social constructivist approach to race are more inclined to navigate easily between the two cultures, as opposed to the ones who endorse an essentialist set of beliefs. To test a developmental model, a longitudinal study should look at changes over time in biculturals' endorsement of the five orientations and the other variables specific to their life circumstances that might influence these changes.

We conducted 14 follow-up interviews with some of the participants from Study 2 to further assess the validity of the scale. Participants were selected based on their scores on the five subscales. In these interviews, we again found support for the inter-connectivity between the subscales. The participants' discourse revealed connections between the five orientations. It is worth noting here that some bicultural persons who scored highest on Complementary and Hybridity maintained that they are not part of two separate groups, but rather one hyphenated group (e.g. 'It gives you great opportunities, any culture goes well with another. In today's age, everyone is mixing together, it doesn't matter the age, race ... especially, here in Canada'; female of Chinese heritage, born in Canada). Some even surpassed this level, and declared themselves to be above a clear-cut culture and more like a citizen of the world, adopting a universalistic conception of identity. These nuances point to the complex nature of hybridity, complexities that are best identified in a qualitative study involving people with diverse multicultural experiences.

Future studies should investigate the best ways to support bicultural persons to achieve desired orientations. The relation between the five orientations and other measures of well-being, such as life satisfaction, social adaptation, social loneliness or depression, should be investigated in order to identify which of the five concepts is the best indicator of psychological well-being. In a similar vein, although we have framed conflict as an orientation, it is conceivable that cultural conflict could be an antecedent or consequence of other orientations. The cross-sectional nature of our data did not allow us to examine this possibility. Studies could also further examine the reasons

for the relation between essentialism/constructivism and alternation, such as how the social environment, including both the heritage family and community and the broader society, might perpetuate ideologies that cement divisions between cultures and cultural identities.

The results of the studies presented here should be interpreted in light of the characteristics of the participants: they were university students, who probably have a relatively high socioeconomic status. As well, because most of the participants migrated before adulthood, they are better described as Generation 1.5 immigrants, those who settled in Canada before adulthood and hence have had a good deal of Canadian experience. Although the results showed clear differences between the generation groups, we would expect more extreme differences in orientations between those who arrived after adulthood and the G2 (and possibly G1.5). Moreover, these orientations might relate to well-being differently across generations (cf. Noels and Clément 2015). Given these limitations, as with much of the research in the field of bicultural identity, these results should be replicated ideally with a random sample from the general population, and include consideration of more and less recent immigrants, more nuanced generations of immigration, and a greater diversity of socioeconomic backgrounds, among other relevant demographics.

## Conclusion

This study extends previous research concerning the facets of bicultural identity both theoretically, and methodologically. From a theoretical point of view, this project expanded on the notions of conflict, alternation, and hybridity, and identified five inter-connected concepts pertinent to bicultural identity. Methodologically, it employed the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to better understand the meaning of these concepts. The results from this study showed that bicultural persons who perceive their identities to be in conflict tend to be less well-adjusted psychologically. As well, show generational differences in endorsement of different bicultural identities, and underscore the importance of recognising that not all bicultural persons are the same; life histories, family dynamics, language proficiency, and many other contextual and personal factors likely influence patterns of bicultural identity. Since bi- and multiculturalism is rapidly changing the social composition of the world today, we need to devote ourselves to understanding the underlying processes and possible outcomes of biculturality, as well as what is it that bicultural individuals need in order to integrate their two cultures in their self-concept.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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