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Bicultural Identity and Self/Group Personality Perceptions

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In two samples of Latino biculturals, we examined the link between bicultural identity integration (BII; degree of compatibility vs. opposition perceived between ethnic and mainstream cultural orientations; Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005) and the psychological overlap/distance between the personality traits ascribed to the self, a typical Latino, and a typical Anglo American. As predicted, BII's component of blendedness (vs. distance) was consistently and positively associated with higher overlap between personality ratings of the self and a typical Latino, the self and a typical Anglo American, and a typical Latino and a typical Anglo American. Also as predicted, results with BII's component of harmony (vs. conflict) were not robust. Overall, our results suggest that biculturals with integrated cultural identities have social perceptions of themselves and their cultural in-groups that are closely aligned together, supporting social identity theory.

Keywords: Bicultural identity; Personality; Self-perceptions; Group-perceptions; Stereotypes.

In today's increasingly diverse and mobile world, growing numbers of individuals have internalized more than one culture (due to forced or voluntary migration, mixed cultural heritage/social networks, or frequent travel); these individuals can be described as bicultural or multicultural. In the USA, 12% of the population is foreign born, 33% non-White, and 19% speak a language other than English at home (US Census, 2005). Aside from the foreign-born population, there is a large number of US-born ethnic and cultural minorities (e.g., children and grandchildren of immigrants) for whom identification and involvement with their ethnic cultures, in addition to mainstream US culture, are the norm (Phinney, 1996).

The prevalence and importance of multiculturalism and biculturalism have been acknowledged by a number of psychologists (e.g., Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Hermans & Kempen, 1998; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), but the phenomenon has only recently begun to be investigated empirically. Moreover, the study of multicultural identities has exciting implications for the field of psychology and for social-personality psychology in particular, as the issue of how individuals develop a healthy sense of national, cultural, ethnic, racial, and even political, group membership becomes particularly meaningful in situations of cultural clashing, mixing, and integration (Baumeister, 1986; Phinney, 1999). Furthermore, the study of bicultural identity provides social and personality researchers with another window through which to understand individual variations in self-concept dynamics. In fact, as Phinney (1999) eloquently stated, "...increasing numbers of people find that the conflicts are not between different groups but between different cultural values, attitudes, and expectations *within* themselves" (p. 27; italics added).

Bicultural Identity: Dynamics and Individual Differences

In an attempt to model the dynamics of biculturalism, Hong and her colleagues (Hong, Benet-Martínez, Chiu, & Morris, 2003; Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martínez, 2000) introduced and tested the concept of cultural frame-switching (CFS). CFS refers to the process by which bicultural individuals move between their two cultural meaning systems in response to cultural cues in the environment. Specifically, Hong and her colleagues have shown that Asian-American biculturals made more internal attributions, a characteristically Western attribution style (Morris & Peng, 1994), after being primed with American cues, but made more external attributions, a characteristically East Asian attribution style, after being primed with Chinese cues. Biculturals' CFS effects have been successfully replicated across different samples and behavioral domains (e.g., Gardner, Gabriel, & Dean, 2004; Lau-Gesk, 2003; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002). Together, these studies demonstrated that individuals can have more than one cultural meaning system, and that these individuals (i.e., biculturals) can move between their two cultural orientations quite fluidly.

With the goal of bridging the above socio-cognitive approach to biculturalism with a personality perspective that is sensitive to individual differences in the bicultural experience, Benet-Martínez and her colleagues (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, in press) recently proposed the theoretical construct of bicultural identity integration (BII). This work focuses on biculturals' subjective perceptions of how much their dual cultural identities intersect or overlap and the feelings associated with these perceptions. BII, which was drawn from an extensive review of the empirical and qualitative acculturation and biculturalism literature, captures the degree to which "biculturals perceive their mainstream and ethnic cultural identities as compatible and integrated vs. oppositional and difficult to integrate" (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002, p. 9). Individuals high on BII tend to see themselves as part of a "hyphenated culture" (e.g., Mexican-American) or even part of a combined "third" emerging culture (e.g., Chicano culture), and find it easy to integrate both cultures in their everyday lives. High BII biculturals are described as having developed a "compatible" or integrated bicultural identity (Padilla, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Rotheram-Borus, 1993). Biculturals low on BII, on the other hand, report difficulty in incorporating both cultures into a cohesive sense of identity

(Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Vivero & Jenkins, 1999). Low BII biculturals are particularly sensitive to specific tensions between the two cultural orientations and see this incompatibility as a source of internal conflict.

It is important to clarify that both high and low BII biculturals identify with mainstream (i.e., American) *and* ethnic (e.g., Chinese) cultures, similarly endorsed an integrative (biculturalism) acculturation strategy (Berry, 1990), and, overall, had relatively similar acculturation and immigration trajectories (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2006; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). Thus, the main difference between these two types of biculturals was their ability to create and internalize a synergistic, integrated cultural identity.

Recent work by Benet-Martínez and her colleagues (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005) has unpacked BII and shown that this construct encompasses two psychometrically independent and reliable components: cultural blendedness (vs. distance) and cultural harmony (vs. conflict), each representing unique and separate aspects of the dynamic intersection between mainstream and ethnic cultural identities in bicultural individuals. Specifically, cultural blendedness captures the degree of *overlap* vs. dissociation or compartmentalization perceived between the two cultural identities or orientations (e.g., "I feel part of a combined culture" or "I am a Chinese American" vs. "I keep Chinese and American cultures separate" or "I am simply a Chinese who lives in the US"). Cultural harmony, on the other hand, captures the degree of *harmony* vs. tension or clash perceived between the two identities or orientations (e.g., "I feel that my Mexican and American identities are quite compatible" or "I don't feel caught between the two cultures" vs. "I feel like someone moving between two cultures").[1]

Benet-Martínez and Haritatos's (2005) examination of the demographic, contextual, and personality correlates of BII showed that cultural blendedness and harmony encapsulate different psychological components of the bicultural experience. In this study, cultural harmony was negatively linked to Neuroticism and interpersonal types of acculturation stress (e.g., discrimination, strain from dual cultural group loyalties and expectations), and was quite independent from traditional demographic, attitudinal, and performance-related acculturation variables such as amount of cultural exposure, acculturation attitudes, and linguistic skills. Cultural blendedness, on the other hand, was positively associated with Openness to Experience, negatively with linguistic/structural types of acculturation stress (e.g., self-consciousness about one's accent or fluency, lack of cultural diversity in one's habitat), and positively related to traditional demographic, attitudinal, and performance-related acculturation variables (see Figure 1 in Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005).

As discussed in Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005; see also Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, in press), these above patterns of associations (e.g., links between cultural harmony and low Neuroticism and between cultural blendedness and Openness to Experience) suggest that blendedness captures the more *perceptual* (e.g., attentiveness to the overlap and permeability between the two cultures), and performance-related elements of the acculturation experience (e.g., linguistic and behavioral competence on each culture), whereas cultural harmony captures the more *affect*-driven, interpersonal component (e.g., not feeling torn between the two cultures and the dual cultural-group loyalties and expectations). Thus, when a bicultural individual high on cultural blendedness states that he or she feels part of a combined culture (e.g., "Chinese American"), his/her self-concept is placed in proximity to both cultures and orientations (irrespective of the degree of tension or strain felt between the two cultures and group loyalties). On the other hand, when a
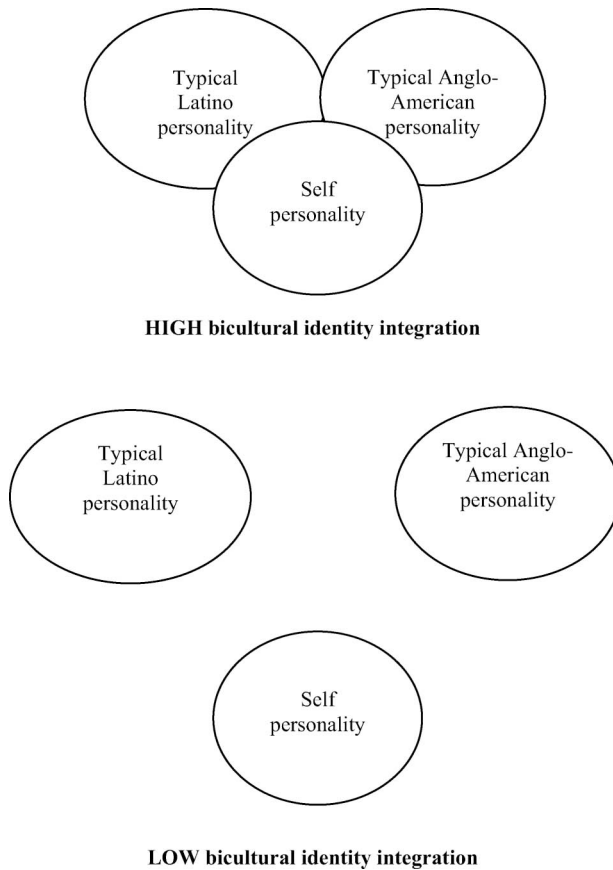
FIGURE 1 Hypothesized relations between BII and self/group personality perceptions.

bicultural individual high on cultural harmony states that his/her ethnic and mainstream cultural identities are quite compatible, he or she is expressing rapport and compatibility between each cultural orientation and membership (irrespective of the degree of overlap or similarity perceived between the two cultures).

BII and Self/Group Personality Perceptions

So far, Benet-Martínez and colleagues' work on bicultural identity has largely focused on the within-individual aspects of this construct: defining and unpacking BII, developing a reliable instrument to measure it, and exploring an initial network of *personal* antecedents (e.g., demographics, acculturation stressors, personality traits) and consequences (e.g., well-being) for this construct (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Chen, Benet-Martínez, & Bond, in press). A necessary next step in furthering BII theory is to explore how this construct influences biculturals' *social* perceptions (e.g., group-oriented attitudes and stereotypes).

When relating BII to social identity theory, for instance, several interesting hypotheses come to mind. For example, perhaps biculturals high on BII, especially those high on cultural blendedness, by virtue of having more integrated cultural

identities see themselves as more similar to both ethnic and mainstream group members; that is, they integrate features of both social groups into their self-concepts. We focus here on cultural blendedness because, as we said earlier, this BII component reflects the perceptual organization of biculturals' two cultural identities (overlapping vs. separate) and the perception of similarity between cultures (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). Social psychological theory on identity complexity seems to support this notion (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). According to this theory, individuals with "merged" or overlapping social identities (see Figure 1 and page 93 in Roccas & Brewer, 2002) are those who embrace the larger social groups, from which their narrower identity derives, as part of their in-group (e.g., a self-described "female lawyer" who sees both the larger "women" and "lawyer" social identities as part of who she is).

The above idea is also supported by social projection theory, which posits that individuals expect people in their in-groups to be similar to themselves (Krueger, Acevedo, & Robbins, 2005) as a result of (1) applying characteristics typical of the in-group to the self (self-categorization or self-stereotyping; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994), and (2) projecting one's own qualities onto in-group members (self-projection; Robbins & Krueger, 2005). Thus, in the case of biculturals with integrated cultural identities, representations of the self and their two in-groups may become particularly synthesized, compared to biculturals with lower levels of BII. Because cultural blendedness is the perceptual (i.e., organizing) component of BII, we expect that a synthesized representation of in-groups would be especially related to cultural blendedness.

Another related issue is whether biculturals high on BII also have social perceptions (e.g., stereotypes) of each of their cultural groups that are more integrated (i.e., see ethnic and mainstream American individuals as more similar to each other). Given our first hypothesis above (that higher BII, particularly higher cultural blendedness, relates to higher overlap between self and in-groups' attributes), the answer would have to be yes. If self-perceptions overlap with perceptions of the two cultural groups, then the attributes seen in each of the two groups should also be overlapping because they share self-related information in common. In other words, if the correlations between self and cultural group perceptions are .5, for instance, one should expect the correlation between the two group perceptions to be around .25 (i.e., .5 × .5). Thus, to the extent that BII, specifically cultural blendedness, relates to higher overlap between self and in-groups' attributes, it should also relate to higher overlap between the perceptions of the two groups.

All in all, given the work on social identity theory and BII reviewed above, it makes sense to study the unexamined link between individual differences in bicultural identity structure and self/group social perceptions; thus, that is the goal of the current studies. In fact, as Roccas and Brewer (2002) eloquently said, "Understanding the structure of multiple social identities is important because representations of one's in-groups have effects not only on the self-concept but also on the nature of relationships between self and others" (p. 88).

To the best of our knowledge, only one study has examined self and group personality stereotypes among bicultural participants. Kosmitzki's (1996) study of first-generation German-American biculturals found that, compared to monocultur-als, these biculturals (regardless of whether they were Americans living in Germany or Germans living in the US) perceived themselves as more similar to their original ethnic cultural group. Surprisingly, these German-American biculturals also perceived both their ethnic and mainstream cultural groups as less similar to each

other relative to monoculturals. Notice, however, that Kosmitzki's main focus is on differences between biculturals and monoculturals, whereas ours is on differences among biculturals varying on BII.

Study Goals

Consistent with Benet-Martínez and colleagues' previous work, we use the term ''bicultural identity'' to refer to individuals' self-reported membership in and identification with two cultural groups with distinct differences in geography, history, and language. Given that the majority of Benet-Martínez's work has focused on Asian immigrants and minorities, we saw a need to examine bicultural identity issues among Latinos, the largest and fastest growing minority group in the US (US Census, 2005). Therefore, the two cultural orientations we examine in this paper are (1) US American culture, which is largely defined in terms of the Anglo/Northern European cultural tradition and the primacy of the English language; and (2) Hispanic/Latin culture, rooted in cultures from Mexico, Central America (e.g., Guatemala, El Salvador), and South America (e.g., Colombia, Peru) and the primacy of the Spanish language.

The present two studies examined the relationship between bicultural identity organization, specifically BII, and three kinds of personality perceptions: personality traits ascribed to the self, a typical ethnic (Mexican/Latino) person, and a typical Anglo American individual. Our prediction was that differences in BII, particularly cultural blendedness, would be linked to the psychological overlap/distance between these three kinds of personality perceptions. Specifically, we hypothesized that Latino biculturals with highly integrated cultural identities, particularly those high on cultural blendedness, would rate (1) their own personality as being more similar to both the stereotypical personalities of Latinos and Anglo Americans, and (2) the stereotypical personalities of Latinos and Anglo Americans as more similar to one another. These two hypotheses are represented in Figure 1.

Our argument for predicting that BII's component of cultural blendedness would be linked to the aforementioned overlaps in personality judgments to a larger degree than cultural harmony was based on the notion that blending or combining one's cultural identities entails the perception that the self is psychologically positioned in proximity to the two cultures (and thus that the two cultures are also overlapping), while cultural harmony does not. Further, social identity complexity theory (Roccas & Brewer, 2002) specifically hypothesizes a link between endorsing a hyphenated identity (e.g., Chinese-American) and degree of overlap perceived to exist between groups of which a person is simultaneously a member. However, because no previous work to date has *empirically* examined the relation between variations in bicultural identity (or other types of complex identities) and group perceptions, our predictions were tentative.

Study 1: Mexican American Bicultural Identity and Self/Group Personality Perceptions

Method

Participants

Our sample included 320 Mexican-American biculturals (72 males, 248 females; $M_{age} = 19.11$, $SD = 1.59$) who self-identified as of Mexican descent and had lived in

the USA for at least 5 years. Thirty-eight of them were first-generation immigrants, 196 were second generation (born in the USA), 36 were third generation (parents born in the USA), 18 were fourth generation (grandparents born in the USA) and 32 specified "other." The "other" category consisted of Mexican-American biculturals who had one parent/grandparent born in the USA and the other born in Mexico, or they considered themselves beyond fourth generation. For the first-generation subsample, the average length of time spent in the USA and Mexico was 17.95 ($SD = 2.98$) and 5.13 ($SD = 4.61$) years, respectively. Participants were recruited from the University of California at Riverside psychology undergraduate participant pool and were given course credit for their participation.

Procedure and Instruments
Participants were invited into a lab where they completed an anonymous questionnaire individually or in a small-group setting. The questionnaire, which was administered in English, included standard demographic questions (e.g., sex, age, ethnicity, country of birth, years lived in the USA and in Mexico) and the following measures.

Acculturation measures. Our first measure of acculturation consisted of questions regarding English and Spanish language proficiency and usage (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). Two 7-item scales independently assessed self-reported English and Spanish language levels on the following domains: (a) two language-ability items (e.g., "Rate your overall Spanish language ability"); (b) eight past and present language-usage items (e.g., "How much do you use/have you used English to speak with your parents?"); and (c) four media-exposure items (e.g., "How often do you read Latino newspapers?"). The language-ability items were answered on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*little knowledge*) to 6 (*perfectly fluent*); the rest of the items were answered on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 6 (*very often*). Internal consistency reliability coefficients (α) for the English and Spanish scales were .69 and .90, respectively. Our participants reported comparable levels of use and fluency in English ($M = 5.03$, $SD = 0.76$) and Spanish ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.21$) languages.

Our second measure of acculturation consisted of two items regarding Mexican and US cultural identification (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002): Participants were instructed to rate the strength of their identification with Mexican and US cultures with two separate items that read: "I feel North American" (defined as the US culture) and "I feel Mexican." Responses were measured on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Participants' reported levels of identification with US and Mexican cultures were 4.43 ($SD = 1.30$) and 5.17 ($SD = 1.10$), respectively. These comparable, yet statistically different: $t(317) = 7.26$, $p < .001$, levels of cultural identification support the bicultural status of the sample.

Bicultural Identity Integration Scale – Version 1 (BIIS-1; Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). This 8-item measure captures the experiential, phenomenological aspects of negotiating dual cultural identities, specifically biculturals' own perceptions of and feelings about how their ethnic and mainstream cultural identities are organized and how they intersect with each other. BIIS-1 comprises two independent scales tapping (1) the degree to which a bicultural individual perceives his/her two cultural identities as fused/hyphenated versus dissociated (cultural

blendedness vs. distance; e.g., "I am a Mexican American" or "I feel part of a combined culture" vs. "I am simply a Mexican who lives in the US"), and (2) how much he/she feels not torn or conflicted between the two cultural identities (cultural harmony vs. conflict; e.g., "I don't feel caught between the two cultures" or "I feel that my Mexican and American identities are quite compatible" vs. "I am conflicted between the American and Mexican ways of doing things"; see Table 2 in Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005, for items and detailed information about the development and refinement of this instrument). Participants rated their agreement with each item on a scale that ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The internal consistency reliability coefficients (α) for the harmony ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.12$) and blendedness ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.77$) scales were .82 and .62, respectively. The correlation between the two scales was .36.

Big Five Inventory (BFI; Benet-Martínez & John, 1998). This measure uses 44 short phrases to assess the most prototypical traits associated with each of the Big Five basic personality dimensions (John, 1990): Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience. Respondents rated each phrase on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*). Participants rated the BFI items three times: to describe the self, to describe a typical Anglo-American individual, and to describe a typical Mexican individual.[2] The three BFI measures were counterbalanced across participants. Internal consistency reliability coefficients (α) for each personality dimension were all above .70 across the three types of ratings.

Results and Discussion

An examination of the means and standard deviations obtained for ratings of the self, a typical Mexican, and a typical Anglo American on each of the Big Five factors would be informative regarding the in-group cultural stereotypes held by Mexican-American biculturals. However, because these issues are the focus of a different manuscript (Miramontez, Nguyen, & Benet-Martínez, 2007), we do not report these descriptive statistics here (nor do we report them in Study 2).

Following Kosmitzki's (1996) approach, three overlap indices were computed using Fisher's *z* transformations of Pearson's *r* correlations. Specifically, for each individual, the 44 self-report personality ratings were correlated with the set of 44 personality ratings for a typical Anglo American and the set for a typical Mexican, and the latter two sets were correlated with each other. The resulting three correlation coefficients were used as three individual difference variables capturing the overlap between: (1) the individual's own personality and his/her personality perceptions of a typical Anglo American ($M = .09$, $SD = .31$); (2) the individual's own personality and his/her personality perceptions of a typical Mexican individual ($M = .33$, $SD = .26$); and (3) the individual's personality perceptions of a typical Anglo American and of a typical Mexican individual ($M = .11$, $SD = .34$).[3] As these correlational means indicate, for this bicultural group, the largest overlap is between self and Mexican personality ratings.

Pearson correlation coefficients were then computed among these overlap indices and the dimensions of BII (see bottom half of Table 1). These zero-order correlations provide some insight into the potential links between BII and the overlaps between self, Anglo-American, and Mexican personality ratings; however, because cultural blendedness and harmony were somewhat correlated with one another, it is more

optimal to examine our main predictions using regression analyses. Accordingly, in three separate hierarchical regression analyses, we regressed each overlap index on cultural blendedness (centered; step 1) and harmony (centered; step 2). These analyses are summarized in Table 2. Notice that the pattern of associations (i.e., betas) was remarkably consistent across the three personality overlap indices. That is, cultural blendedness was positively associated with each type of profile overlap, whereas cultural harmony was not.[4]

Overall, our results supported our hypotheses. Mexican-American biculturals who perceived their two cultural orientations as blended and overlapping had personality self-views that were aligned with the personalities they saw in both a typical Anglo-American individual and a typical Mexican person. Further, Mexican-American biculturals with blended and overlapping cultural identities saw the typical personalities of Anglo-American and Mexican individuals as also having overlapping characteristics.

Limitations
Study 1 relied entirely on a single group of Latino biculturals, namely Mexican Americans. This raises a concern about the generalizability of our findings to other

TABLE 1 Inter-Correlations among Dimensions of BII and Overlap Indices

	1	2	3	4	5
1. BII: blendedness	–	.22*	.24*	.18	.29**
2. BII: harmony	.36**	–	.07	.13	.35**
3. Self–Ethnic overlap	.13*	.06	–	.18	.39**
4. Self–Anglo overlap	.23**	.15**	.17**	–	.15
5. Ethnic–Anglo overlap	.17**	.15**	.22**	.58**	–

Notes: Correlations in the bottom half are for Study 1 ($N = 320$ Mexican American biculturals) and top half correlations are for Study 2 ($N = 102$ Latino biculturals). **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$.

TABLE 2 Study 1: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Personality Overlap Indices on BII

Variable	B	SE B	β	t	p	Step	R^2	ΔR^2
Self–Anglo overlap								
Blendedness	.269	.080	.204**	3.37	.001	1	.054	.054**
Harmony	.074	.057	.079	1.30	.194	2	.059	.005
Self–Mexican overlap								
Blendedness	.170	.078	.134*	2.17	.031	1	.018	.018*
Harmony	.022	.056	.024	0.390	.696	2	.018	.000
Anglo–Mexican overlap								
Blendedness	.190	.086	.136*	2.22	.027	1	.030	.030**
Harmony	.106	.061	.107	1.78	.083	2	.039	.009

Notes: $N = 320$ Mexican American biculturals. **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$.

Latino groups, who are very likely to have different cultural norms, migration histories, and patterns of economic, political, and social relations in the USA. Thus, Study 2 was conducted to examine the replicability of the above pattern of results in a diverse sample of Latinos.

Study 2: Latino Bicultural Identity and Self/Group Personality Perceptions

Method

Participants

Our sample included 102 Latino biculturals (27 males, 75 females; $M_{age} = 19.18$, $SD = 1.92$) who self-identified as Latino and had lived in the USA for at least 5 years. Seven of them were first-generation immigrants, 59 were second generation, 16 were third generation, 7 were fourth generation, and 13 specified "other." As in Study 1, the "other" category consisted of biculturals who had one parent/grandparent born in the USA and the other born in their native country, or they considered themselves beyond fourth generation. For the first-generation subsample, average length of time spent in the USA and their native country was 17.96 ($SD = 3.85$) and 5.54 ($SD = 5.10$) years, respectively.[5] Participants were recruited from the University of California at Riverside psychology undergraduate participant pool and were given course credit for their participation.

Procedure and Instruments

Similar to Study 1, participants were invited into a lab where they completed an anonymous questionnaire individually or in a small-group setting. The measures included in this questionnaire were identical to the ones used in Study 1. For a description of each measure, see Study 1. In the present study, internal consistency reliability coefficients (α) for the English ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 0.72$) and Spanish ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.25$) language proficiency and usage scales were .68 and .91, respectively. Regarding cultural identification, participants reported comparable, and statistically similar: $t(101) = 0.21$, $p > .05$, levels of identification with US ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.23$) and Latino ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.42$) cultures, supporting the bicultural status of the sample. For the BIIS-1, internal consistency reliability coefficients (α) for the blendedness ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.77$) and harmony ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.04$) scales were .51 and .80, respectively, and their intercorrelation was .22. As in Study 1, individuals used the BFI to provide personality descriptions of the self, a typical Anglo American, and a typical Latino. Internal consistency reliability coefficients (α) for each personality dimension were all above .70 across the three types of ratings.

Results and Discussion

Three correlational indices similar to those used in Study 1 (see Kosmitzki, 1996) were computed to measure the overlap between (1) the individual's own personality and his/her personality perceptions of a typical Anglo American ($M = .04$, $SD = .33$); (2) the individual's own personality and his/her personality perceptions of a typical Latino ($M = .24$, $SD = .28$); and (3) the individual's personality perceptions of a typical Anglo American and a typical Latino ($M = .05$, $SD = .28$). As in Study 1, the largest overlap was between self and ethnic (Latino) personality ratings.

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed among these overlap indices and the dimensions of BII (see top half of Table 1). Again, these zero-order correlations provide some insight into the potential links between BII and the overlaps between self, Anglo American, and Latino personality ratings; however, as we did in Study 1, we chose to examine our main predictions using hierarchical regression analyses. We regressed each overlap index on cultural blendedness (centered; step 1) and harmony (centered; step 2). These analyses are summarized in Table 3. Replicating results from Study 1, cultural blendedness was consistently and positively associated with each type of personality profile overlap. Notice that, in this mixed group of Latino biculturals, cultural harmony was also positively linked with the Anglo-Latino overlap (but not with the other two types of overlaps).

Overall, our results supported our hypotheses. As in Study 1, Latino biculturals who perceived their two cultural orientations as blended and overlapping viewed their personalities as closer to the personalities of both a typical Latino and a typical Anglo American, and viewed the personalities of Anglo Americans and Latinos as similar to each other. Furthermore, Latino biculturals who perceived their two cultural orientations as harmonious and non-conflictual viewed the personalities of Anglo Americans and Latinos as similar to each other.

General Discussion

In two samples of Latino biculturals, we examined the links between BII and the psychological overlap/distance between the personality traits ascribed to the self, a typical Latino individual, and a typical Anglo-American individual. As predicted, in both Study 1 (Mexican-American biculturals) and Study 2 (Latino biculturals), BII's component of cultural blendedness (vs. distance) was consistently and positively associated with higher overlap between personality ratings of the self and a typical Latino, between personality ratings of the self and a typical Anglo American, and between personality ratings of a typical Latino and a typical Anglo American. Also as predicted, results with BII's component of cultural harmony (vs. conflict) were not robust in that they only predicted the Anglo-Latino personality overlap for Latino biculturals in Study 2.

TABLE 3 Study 2: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Personality Overlap Indices on BII

Variable	B	$SE\ B$	β	t	p	Step	R^2	ΔR^2
Self – Anglo overlap								
Blendedness	.283	.136	.214*	2.08	.040	1	.032	.032*
Harmony	.075	.106	.072	0.711	.479	2	.042	.009
Self – Latino overlap								
Blendedness	.280	.133	.224*	2.10	.039	1	.058	.058*
Harmony	.029	.104	.029	0.279	.781	2	.058	.001
Anglo – Latino overlap								
Blendedness	.294	.106	.274*	2.78	.007	1	.082	.082**
Harmony	.253	.082	.300*	3.09	.003	2	.179	.096**

Notes: $N = 102$ Latino biculturals. **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$.

To the extent that the personality attributes assessed in the present studies reflect cultural self- and group-based stereotypes, the consistent pattern of associations found for cultural blendedness seems to support Benet-Martínez and Haritatos' (2005) view that this component of BII captures the more perceptual (vs. affective) elements of the acculturation experience. That is, the degree to which biculturals assert that they feel part of a combined culture or have a hyphenated cultural identity may be at least in part driven by their perceptions regarding the intersection and overlap between ethnic and mainstream cultural identities, including stereotypes ascribed to members of each of the two cultures, and discrepancies between these stereotypes and self-views. The less consistent results obtained with cultural harmony (vs. conflict), on the other hand, suggests that biculturals' feeling that one's two cultural orientations and memberships do not clash or are compatible with each other are experiences less directly related to the perceptual processes examined in our studies.

The links between BII's blendedness and the three types of personality overlaps also support several notions from social identity theory (Krueger et al., 2005; Roccas & Brewer, 2002; Turner et al., 1994). Specifically, as posed by Roccas and Brewer's (2002) identity complexity theory, individuals with ''integrated'' or ''merged'' social identities embrace as part of their in-group the larger social groups from which their narrower identity derives. Our findings are also consistent with the social projection theory notion (Krueger et al., 2005) that individuals tend to perceive members of their in-groups as similar to themselves. Our studies show that these processes are exacerbated in the case of individuals whose group and cultural identities are integrated with each other.

It is worth discussing that in Study 2, which relied on a more broadly defined (and perhaps representative) Latino bicultural sample, cultural harmony was also significantly associated with a higher Anglo-Latino personality overlap. These results were somewhat unexpected but do not take away from our more general premise that BII (particularly the cultural blendedness component) has meaningful links with social and group perceptions. Overall, these results suggest that when examining how one's ethnic identity is positioned in relation to the larger host or Anglo American culture (an issue which some researchers describe as the crux of the immigrant and ethnic minority experience; Chun, Balls-Organista, & Marín, 2003), the feeling that one's two cultural identities and memberships do not clash or are compatible with each other is also relevant. However, when examining how the self is positioned in relation to either the ethnic or mainstream cultures, these feelings are less consequential.

Our study has implications that go beyond the understanding of biculturals' self-concept and its links to group perceptions. The psychological distance between the attributes individuals ascribe to themselves and members of their cultural in-groups affects the nature of their intergroup attitudes and social perceptions. Biculturals with blended cultural identities, by virtue of having perceptions of their ethnic and mainstream cultural groups that are more overlapping, probably have more positive, inclusive, diverse, and equitable attitudes towards individuals representative of these groups, and thus reduced in-group/out-group biases and stereotypes (Urban & Miller, 1998). Further, overlapping cultural identities and stereotypes may reduce the importance of any one cultural or social identity for satisfying an individual's need for belonging and self-definition (Brewer, 1991), thus again reducing the motivational base for in-group biases. Lastly, one may even speculate that these cognitive, motivational, and interpersonal factors may in fact also be associated with reduced

in-group favoritism and increased tolerance and positivity toward out-groups in general.

Limitations and Concluding Remarks

Given the correlational nature of our studies, future studies are needed to replicate our results and establish the causal directionality of the links between BII and the personality overlaps. Further, future research should examine our questions in non-Latino cultural groups, who are likely to have different cultural norms, migration histories, and patterns of economic, political, and social relations in the USA. Third, an examination of the actual content of the ethnic and Anglo-Americans personality stereotypes provided by biculturals will also be informative. Lastly, because our study focused on the role of bicultural identity dynamics on self- and group-perceptions, it did not include a monocultural sample. Still, future work interested in the role that cultural exposure and membership may have on the content and dynamics of self- and group-perceptions may benefit from comparisons between biculturals (who have extensive contact with two cultures) and monoculturals (who have extensive contact with only one culture).

The present work suggests that the structure of biculturals' cultural identity may function as a perceptual frame of reference that influences their personal and social views. Thus, as compared to biculturals with lower levels of identity integration (especially those with compartmentalized identities), biculturals with integrated cultural identities (especially those with merged identities) have representations of the self and their two cultural in-groups that are particularly synthesized. In addition, our study examines these processes among Latino individuals, a group that is consistently left out in mainstream psychological research.

We hope that our questions and findings resonate not only among researchers interested in biculturalism but also with the larger community of social, personality, and cultural researchers. As multiculturalism and intergroup contact become more prevalent in the twenty-first century, it is important that we understand how the structure of one's cultural identity affects the content of and intersections among self- and group-perceptions. In fact, as recently said in a paper published in *Science*: "a deeper understanding of the links among personality, culture, and national stereotypes is particularly critical at this time, as countries around the world adapt to globalization, experience a 'clash of civilizations,' and cope with other social changes related to intercultural understanding (and misunderstanding)" (Robins, 2005, p. 63).

Notes

1. The psychometric independence of cultural harmony vs. conflict, and cultural blendedness vs. distance suggests that these psychological variables are "formative" (i.e., causal) rather than "reflective" (i.e., effect) indicators of BII (Bollen & Lennox, 1991). That is, rather than a latent construct with two resulting dimensions (cultural blendedness and harmony), BII should perhaps be understood as emerging or resulting from (rather than leading to) variations in these two dimensions (see Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005, for full details on the psychometric properties and correlates of BII's two components).
2. Instructions for the latter two ratings of Big Five Inventory (BFI) read as follows: "How would you describe the personality of a typical Mexican (Anglo-American)

person? In other words, what are the majority of Mexicans (Anglo Americans) like? Below are a number of personality characteristics that may or may not apply to a TYPICAL Mexican (Anglo-American) person. For example, do you agree that a typical Mexican (Anglo American) is someone who is moody? Please choose a number for each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement in terms of how it describes a typical Mexican (Anglo-American) person (regardless of sex).''

3. Tests to explore possible differences between overlap indices obtained from participants who completed the questionnaire individually vs. in a small group (with others from the same heritage culture) revealed no differences in this study or Study 2.

4. An examination of possible gender effects using a dummy variable revealed that the three profile overlaps were significantly higher for females, self–Anglo overlap: $\beta = .20$, $t(300) = 3.70$, $p < .001$; self–Mexican overlap: $\beta = .12$, $t(300) = 2.03$, $p < .05$; and Anglo–Mexican overlap: $\beta = .16$, $t(300) = 2.90$, $p < .005$. No gender × blended-ness or gender × harmony interaction effects were found. Tests of possible generational main and interaction effects (using a dummy variable contrasting first- vs. older-generation participants) revealed no significant differences. In Study 2, no gender effects (main or interactions) were found. We also tested possible main and interaction generational effects with a dummy variable contrasting first- and second- vs. older-generation participants (recall that the first-generation subsample in this study included only seven individuals) and found no significant differences.

5. In the first-generation subsample, participants were from El Salvador (32.2%), Guatemala (25.4%), Colombia (6.8%), Honduras (6.8%), Bolivia (5.1%), Peru (5.%), Argentina (3.4%), Puerto Rico (3.4%), Nicaragua (3.4%), Cuba (3.4%), Ecuador (1.7%), Chile (1.7%), and Brazil (1.7%). Our US-born participants had backgrounds from El Salvador (20.9%), Puerto Rico (18.6%), Colombia (11.6%), Spain (9.3%), Peru (7%), Guatemala (7%), Argentina (7%), Nicaragua (7%), Trinidad (2.3%), Belize (2.3%), Chile (2.3%), Panama (2.3%), and Brazil (2.3%). Brazilian participants were excluded from the language-proficiency analyses because Portuguese (not Spanish) is the language spoken in Brazil.

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