



English, Indian and Pakistani Children's National, Ethnic and Religious Identifications

Shashika Vethanayagam & Martyn Barrett

Background

- To date, acculturation has been primarily studied amongst adolescents and adults rather than children
- Research has focused mainly on members of immigrant minority groups rather than members of the host majority group.
- Various models have been developed to describe the acculturation of individuals from minority cultures to the majority national culture (e.g., Hutnik, 1991; Berry, 1997, 2001; Bourhis et al., 1997). However, many minority individuals do not live within bicultural societies, as most acculturation models assume. In many locations (such as London, where the data for the present study were collected), they live within multicultural societies in which many different ethnic groups reside alongside one another.
- In addition, it should not be assumed that acculturation is only experienced by minority individuals. Particularly within multicultural contexts, the majority group also undergoes change and adaptation in response to intercultural contact.

Aim of the present research

- To examine the acculturation of English, Indian and Pakistani children living in London

Participants

- 240 children (80 Indian, 80 Pakistani and 80 English) aged 7-11
- 120 males and 120 females from 7 different multicultural schools in London

Method

The children were interviewed one-to-one in order to assess their:

- Classification skills
- Strength of ethnic, British and religious identifications
- Ingroup and outgroup attitudes
- Levels of perceived discrimination
- Cultural practices in various domains (including music, food, movies, clothing, sport, religion, travel, festival celebrations, language use and friendships)

Only the identification results are presented in this poster. The identification scale employed the following items:

- Which one of these do you think best describes you? [*very X, quite X, a little bit X, not at all X*]
- How proud are you of being X? [*very proud, quite proud, a little bit proud, not at all proud*]
- How important is it to you that you are X? [*very important, quite important, not very important, not important at all*]
- How do you feel about being X? [*very happy, quite happy, neutral, quite sad, very sad*]
- How would you feel if someone said something bad about X people? [*very happy, quite happy, neutral, quite sad, very sad*]

Results

Reliability analyses

- Ethnic identification: Cronbach alpha = 0.63
- British identification: Cronbach alpha = 0.67
- Religious identification: Cronbach alpha = 0.73

Responses to the degree, pride and importance questions were therefore rescaled onto 5-point scales, and the mean strength of ethnic, British and religious identification calculated

A 3 (identity) x 3 (child ethnicity) x 4 (year group) mixed ANOVA revealed that there were no significant main effects, and no effects involving year group, on the strength of identification. However, there was a significant interaction between identity and child ethnicity ($F(4, 386) = 3.77, p < 0.05$)

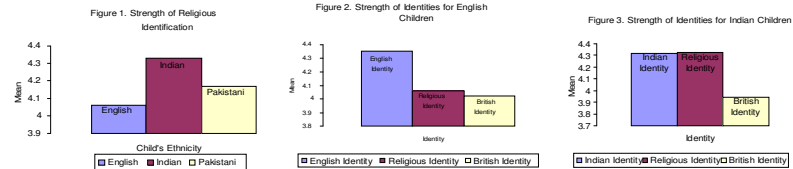
Post hoc analyses revealed that the mean strength of religious identification for the Indian children was significantly higher than for the English children, but that the Pakistani children were not significantly different from either the Indian children or the English children (see Figure 1)

These post hoc analyses also revealed that:

- The English children rated their English identity ($M = 4.35$) significantly more positively than both their British ($M = 4.02$) and religious identities ($M = 4.06$), which were not significantly different from each other (see Figure 2)

- For the Pakistani children, there were no significant differences in the strengths of the three identities

- The Indian children rated their religious ($M = 4.33$) and Indian identities ($M = 4.32$) similarly, but these were both significantly more positive than their British identity ($M = 3.94$) (see Figure 3)



Partial correlations were also carried out for the three identities, controlling for age, for each of the three ethnic groups of children individually. The results are shown in the Table below:

		British identity		Religious identity	
		Ethnic identity	British identity	Ethnic identity	British identity
English children	Ethnic identity		.67***		.43**
	British identity				.37*
Indian children	Ethnic identity		.21*		.48***
	British identity				.23*
Pakistani children	Ethnic identity		-.07		.24*
	British identity				-.32***

Notice that the Muslim Pakistani children show a very different pattern of correlations from the other two groups, and that for these children British and religious identities were negatively correlated with each other.

Summary of findings

- The strength of the three identifications varied in different ways for children belonging to different ethnic groups
- There were no differences associated with age in any of the three ethnic groups
- Patterns of correlations between the three identities also differed across the three ethnic groups
- Importantly, for the Muslim Pakistani children alone, there was an inverse relationship between the strength of British and religious identity

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Contact details: Shashika Vethanayagam, Department of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XH, UK; email: s.vethanayagam@surrey.ac.uk