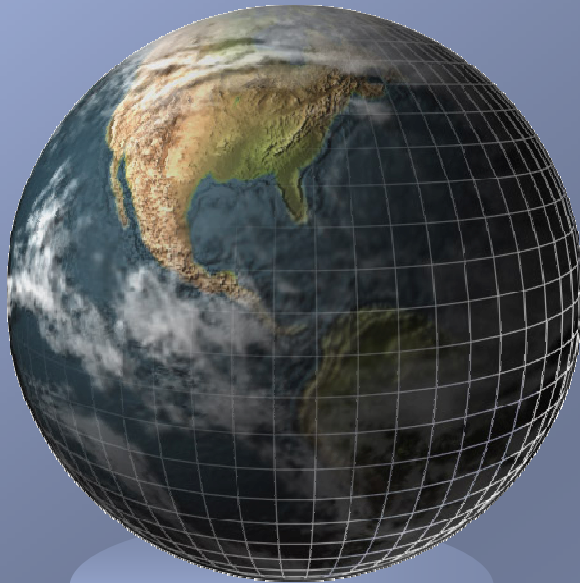


# ETHNO-CULTURAL IDENTITY CONFLICT IN THE ACCULTURATION PROCESS

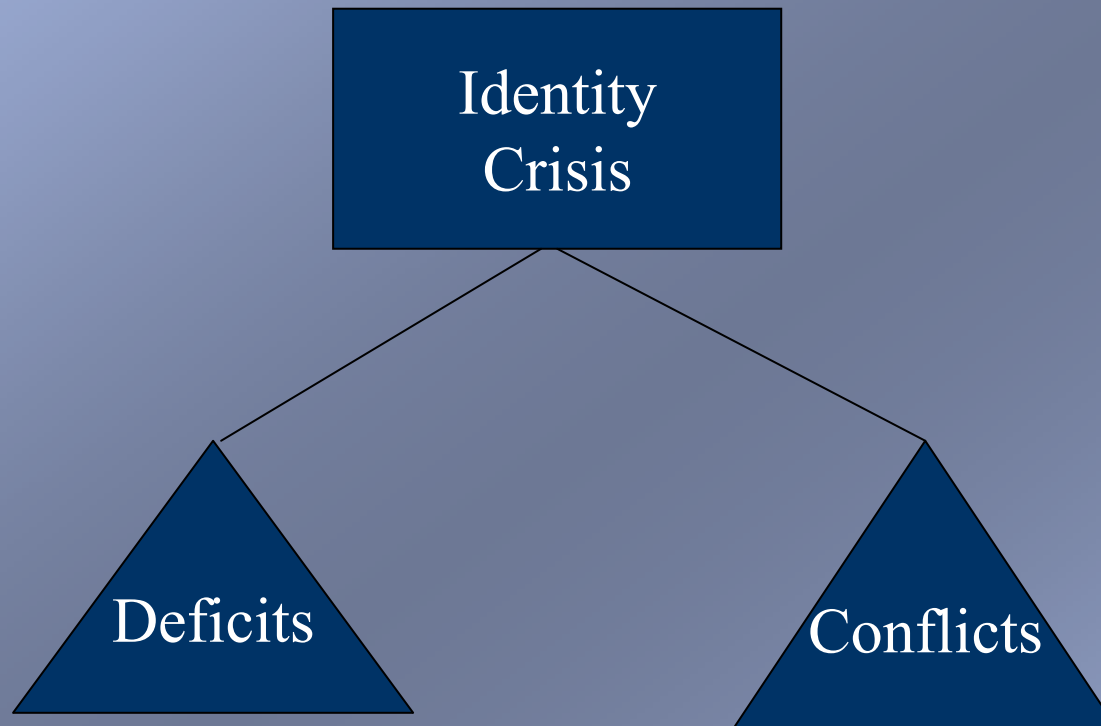


Colleen Ward, Larissa Kus and Jaimee Stuart  
Centre for Applied Cross-cultural Research  
Victoria University of Wellington  
New Zealand

Society for Australasian Social Psychologists  
Annual Conference, Wellington, April, 2008.



# BACKGROUND



Baumeister, Shapiro & Tice (1985)

# *IDENTITY CONFLICT*

*THE PROBLEM OF THE MULTIPLY  
DEFINED SELF WHOSE DEFINITIONS  
HAVE BECOME INCOMPATIBLE.*

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How to measure ethno-cultural identity conflict (EIC)?
- How does EIC relate to acculturation strategies?
- Does EIC conflict vary as a function of cultural distance?

*HOW TO MEASURE ETHNO-  
CULTURAL IDENTITY CONFLICT?*

# RESEARCH SAMPLE

## □ 304 research participants

- 187 first generation migrants, 51 NZ-born ethnic minorities, 66 international students
- 48% female
- 11-77 years ( $M = 32.36$ )
- Asian, European, North American, Middle Eastern, African, Pacific
- English language proficiency :  $M = 5.27$  on 7-point scale

# EIC ITEMS

		M	SD	Item-total correlation
1.*	No matter what the circumstances are, I have a clear sense of who I am .	1.89	1.03	.57
2.	I have difficulties fitting into the wider society because of my cultural background.	1.91	1.07	.61
3.	In general, I do not think people from my ethnic group know the real me.	2.56	1.28	.50
4.	I sometimes do not know where I belong.	2.03	1.22	.73
5.	I am an outsider both in my own ethnic group and in the wider society.	2.11	1.19	.60

\* Reverse

# EIC ITEMS

		M	SD	Item-total correlation
6.	Because of my cultural heritage, I sometimes wonder who I am.	1.79	1.07	.68
7.	I experience conflict over my identity.	1.95	1.11	.69
8.	I find it impossible to be part of both my cultural group and the wider society.	1.86	1.01	.54
9.	I am uncertain about my values and beliefs.	1.72	1.06	.46
10.	I have serious concerns about my identity.	1.70	1.08	.46



# EIC ITEMS

		M	SD	Item-total correlation
11. *	People tend to see me as I see myself.	2.73	1.06	.42
12.	I do not know which culture I belong to.	1.73	1.06	.62
13.	I find it hard to maintain my cultural values in everyday life.	2.31	1.15	.52
14.	I sometimes question my cultural identity.	2.11	1.19	.64
15.	I am confused by the different demands placed on me by family and other people.	2.01	1.08	.64

\* Reverse

# EIC ITEMS

		M	SD	Item-total correlation
16.	Sometimes I do not know myself.	1.76	1.02	.63
17. *	I find it easy to maintain my traditional culture and be part of the larger society.	2.28	1.07	.46
18. *	I feel confident moving between cultures.	2.21	1.04	.29
19.	I have difficulties fitting in with members of my ethnic group.	2.09	1.17	.47
20.	I am sometimes confused by who I really am.	1.76	1.09	.68

\* Reverse

# RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

- Cronbach alpha .92
- EIC correlates with:
  - Self concept Clarity -.66
  - Sense of Coherence -.57
  - Identity Distress .45
  - Social Desirability -.19

*HOW DOES ETHNO-CULTURAL  
IDENTITY CONFLICT RELATE TO  
ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES?*

# RESEARCH SAMPLE

- 317 first generation immigrants
  - 56% female
  - Asian (e.g., Pakistani, Chinese, Filipino), European (e.g., British, French, German), Middle Eastern (e.g., Iraqi, Palestinian), North and South American (e.g., Canadian, Mexican, Chilean), African (e.g., Somali, Sierra Leonean, Zimbabwean), Pacific (e.g., Samoan, Tongan, New Caledonian)
  - 15-86 years ( $M = 38.82$ ,  $SD = 11.99$ )
  - Mean arrival age in NZ: 30.85 years,  $SD = 10.92$  (range 3-70)
  - Length of residence:  $M = 8.16$  years,  $SD = 9.44$
  - 78% tertiary educated
  - 67% Auckland based
  - Median income \$30-40k per annum

# MEASURES

- Ethno-cultural Identity Conflict Scale
- Acculturation Index
  - Co-national identification
  - Host national identification

# ACCULTURATION AND EIC

INTEGRATION 1.88	SEPARATION 2.10
ASSIMILATION 2.30	MARGINALIZATION 2.14

$F(1,290) = 4.68, p < .025.$

*DOES ETHNO-CULTURAL  
IDENTITY CONFLICT VARY AS A  
FUNCTION OF CULTURAL DISTANCE?*



# RESEARCH SAMPLES

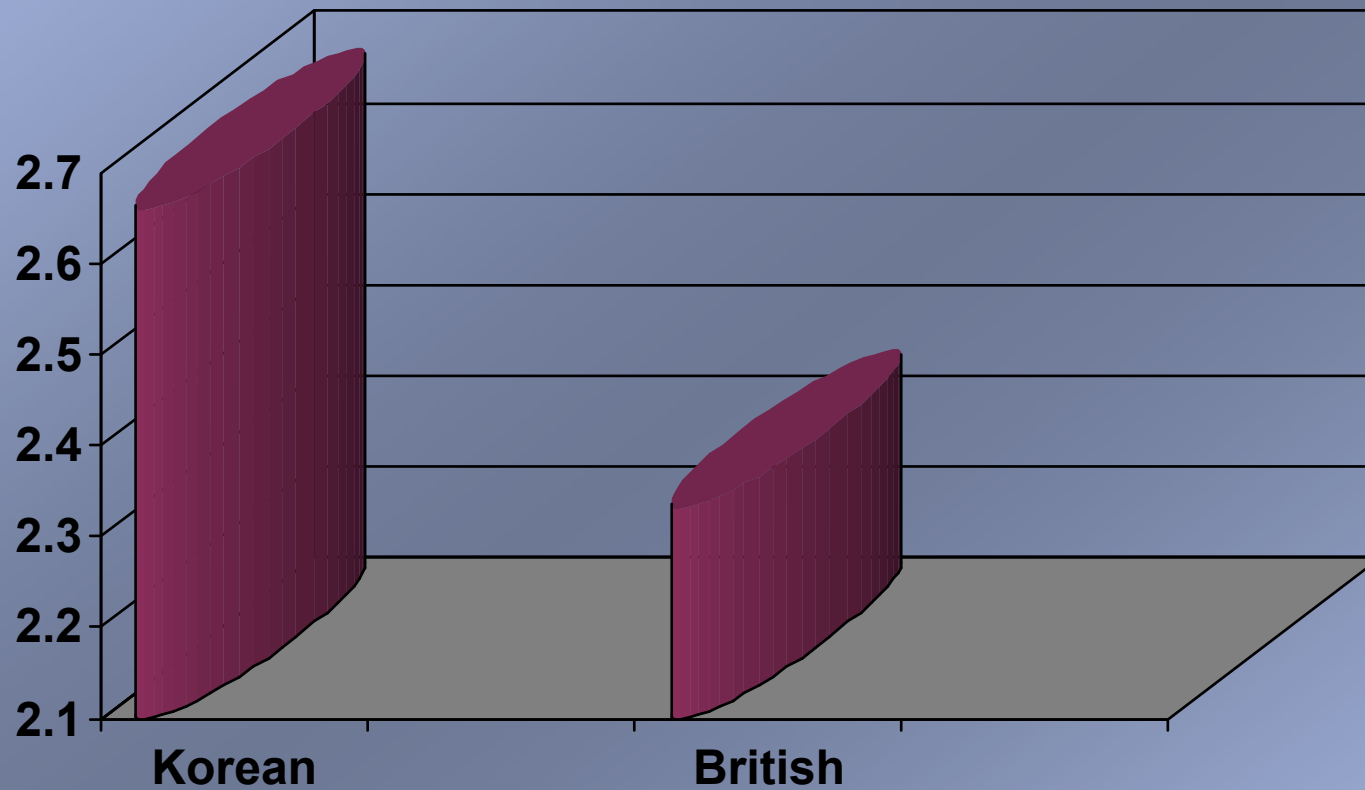
## □ 188 Korean youth

- 46.8% female
- 13-19 years ( $M = 15.9$ )
- 96% overseas born
- Mean arrival age in NZ: 9.5 years
- 44% New Zealand citizens
- English language proficiency :  $M = 4.13$  on 5-point scale

## □ 111 British youth

- 41.4% female
- 12-18 years ( $M = 14.98$ )
- 81% overseas born
- Mean arrival age in NZ: 9.95 years
- 56% New Zealand citizens

# ETHNO-CULTURAL IDENTITY CONFLICT IN MIGRANT YOUTH IN NZ



$F(1,219) = 17.02, p < .001$

# SUMMARY

- A reliable and valid measure of EIC has been constructed.
- Integrated migrants experience less ethno-cultural identity conflict than separated, marginalized and assimilated migrants
- Ethno-cultural Identity Conflict increases with cultural distance

# RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

- Predictors of EIC
- Examination of EIC as a mediating variable and as an outcome variable in the prediction of cross-cultural adaptation
- Examination of EIC over generations



For further information  
contact:  
[Colleen.Ward@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Colleen.Ward@vuw.ac.nz)