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The Relationship Between Loneliness, Ethnic Identity, and Dimensions of Membership Across First, Second, and Third Generation Americans

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Loneliness has scarcely been studied across differing generational statuses. However, loneliness has been associated with cross-cultural transitions and descriptions of "culture shock" (Neto & Barros, 2000). Often, research is focused upon differing racial groups, rarely capturing the experiences of first (i.e. those who have emigrated from another country), second (i.e. those who were born in the United States but have at least one parent who emigrated from another country), and third generation Americans (i.e. those who were born in the United States and have at least one parental generation who was also born in the U.S.). The current study sought to explore the possible relationship of loneliness and ethnic identity, specifically whether a higher ethnic identity in one's native culture is related to lower rates of loneliness. Furthermore, the author did not want to overlook the experiences of one's membership within the U.S. (i.e. through discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group) and how they may relate to ethnic identity. In order to comprehend the complexities of this issue, it is pertinent to understand the concept of loneliness as well as past findings on the aforementioned cohorts.

Literature Review

Loneliness

Loneliness is defined as "the unpleasant experience that occurs when a person's network of social relationships is deficient in some important way either qualitatively or quantitatively" (Perlman & Peplau, 1982, p. 31). It is a subjective experience and should not be used interchangeably with physical isolation: "People can be alone without being lonely, or lonely in a crowd" (Peplau & Perlman, 1982, p. 3). Loneliness is strongly related to the perception of one's relationships rather than the amount of relationships one has. It can occur in varying degrees based on situation; being sporadic and short-lived, or felt so frequently that it bears a resemblance to a personality trait (Neto & Barros, 2000). Nonetheless, the experience of loneliness is common and can surface during transitional periods during a person's interpersonal development (Ginter, Abdel-Khalek, & Scalise, 1995). It is important to keep these definitions in mind when understanding the cultural transitions which first, second, and third generation Americans face in developing their native and/or American identities.

Studies have delved into loneliness among certain populations but have not compared loneliness among differing generations within the U.S. For example, Neto and Barros (2000) compared loneliness in Portuguese immigrants living in Switzerland to people actually living in Portugal and found that those who had a low ethnic identity had higher loneliness. Overall, the study compared 95 adolescent Portuguese immigrants (mean years in Switzerland was 7.2 years) to 363 Portuguese people living in Portugal. The study found no significant differences in loneliness between Portuguese immigrants and those still living in

Portugal (Neto & Barros, 2000), suggesting that immigrants still strongly identify with their culture even after moving to another country, and that their experience of loneliness is similar to those in their natal country. Yet, the study did not compare loneliness scores of Portuguese immigrants to their second generation counterparts, as the strength or level of ethnic identity may differ in the latter. Since the U.S. is very diverse in generational identities, it is pertinent to recognize how ethnic identity will relate to levels of loneliness across cultures.

Numerous studies have found that higher levels of loneliness exist in Western cultures that promote individualism (Bhogle, 1991; Rokach & Bacanli, 2001; Rokach & Neto, 2000). A study by Rokach, Orzeck, Moya, and Expositio (2002) illustrates this difference in individualistic cultures. Researchers created an 82-item scale that measures the causes of loneliness, recruiting 639 participants from Canada and 454 participants from Spain to answer the questionnaire. They decided to compare these cultures because of the individualism they proposed existed in North America and the collectivist and family oriented culture of Spain. Spaniards also dedicated the most hours to social relationships per day, and when they were asked how satisfied they were with their intimate relationships, 93% answered "very satisfied, or satisfied" (Rokach, Orzeck, Moya, & Espositio, 2002). Results showed that the Canadian population had higher scores on each subscale (i.e. a greater reporting of personal inadequacies, developmental deficits, unfulfilling intimate relationships, relocation/significant separations, and social marginality) than the participants from Spain. This may mean that the cultural values of the participants from Spain influence their socialization process and their feelings of belonging (Rokach et al., 2002). However, Canada is diverse and may include people of differing levels of ethnic participation. It is imperative to see how rates of loneliness will compare in an individualistic culture in relation to cultural participation, especially when a higher ethnic identity may be related to lower levels of loneliness (Neto & Barros, 2000). Because of the mentioned promotion of loneliness in individualistic cultures, the current study explores the relationship between loneliness and ethnic identity across first, second, and third generation Americans living in the U.S.

What is the relationship between loneliness and ethnic identity in first, second, and third generation Americans? How are experiences of discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group related to loneliness and ethnic identity? The present study sought to answer these questions, but first we need to understand the distinct ethnic experiences of first, second, and third generation Americans and these dimensions of membership within the U.S.

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is defined as being an enduring, fundamental component of one's self-concept consisting of one's connection to the ethnic group (Keefe, 1992; Phinney, 1990). It is multidimensional and includes one's attitudes, values,

and behaviors (Phinney, 1996; Yeh & Huang, 1996). It also involves learning about one's culture, being proud of it, and participating in cultural practices like eating cultural food, or playing ethnic music (Phinney, 1991). Numerous studies have found that a strong ethnic identity is related to resiliency to life changes and stressors, and feelings of being part of a larger community (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994; Lee & Davis, 2000; Phinney & Allipuria, 1996; Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). These studies are precursors to understanding the relationship between ethnic identity and loneliness, as well as their link to discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group within the U.S.

First generation Americans. Kim, Brenner, Liang, and Asay (2003) sought to capture immigration experiences by interviewing ten Asian Americans. They found that some reported missing the sense of community in their native countries: "I cannot help but miss…my house…the entering and leaving friends, neighbors, and relatives who'd drop by at any time of the day" (Kim, Brenner, Liang, & Asay, 2003, p. 162). On the other hand, many of them articulated how having friends of the same background or living in an area with Asian neighbors helped them feel a sense of community in the U.S. Geeta explained, "I have always felt closest to my Indian friends. It's a strong cultural bond we share" (Kim, Brenner, Liang, & Asay, 2003, p. 165). This study reveals that immigrants may not feel as isolated, using their established cultural experiences to feel connected with others who have the same element within their self- concept.

Studies have hypothesized the maladjustment of immigrants but researchers have found that an individual's ethnic identity may be beneficial to one's development. First generations report less depression, less anxiety, and greater positive well-being than second generations who were born in the United States, which may be associated with the way first generations maintain a strong connection to their native culture (Farver, Bakhtawar, & Narang, 2002; Harker, 2001). Unlike second generation Americans, immigrants have frequent direct encounters with their native culture from which they can draw meaning from during times of stress or when experiencing discrimination (Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002). Even in the face of discrimination, will a high ethnic identity in first generation Americans be related to lower rates of loneliness among them?

Second generation Americans. Second generations are attempting to work out two (or more) cultures into their ethnic identity from a young age (Farver, Bakhtawar, & Narang, 2002; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002; Zhou, 1997). Aspects of their ethnic identity are being challenged and maintained in order to integrate both one's native culture and the host culture**.** They may feel a conflict between their loyalty to their ethnic ideals and the desire to explore their American identities. In terms of their experiences of loneliness, second

generations may feel as though they are the out-group member in that they may lose the approval of either their American peers for adhering to the cultural norms of their parents, or their ethnic counterparts for adopting American customs. One may cope with feeling isolated by assimilating more to the host culture (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Farver, Narang, & Bhada, 2002). This population differs from other generational groups in that second generations report more daily hassles, increased in-group conflict, and lower self-esteem than first generation Americans or U.S.-born peers of the same socioeconomic status and age (Atzaba-Poria & Pike, 2005; Lay & Safdar, 2003). These findings are notable in that comparatively, first, second, and third generations may be divergent in their understanding of their ethnic identities, both of the native and American culture. Second generation Americans may not have the direct experiences of their native country to draw meaning from during times of stress as their first generation counterparts do.

Second generation Americans differ from their immigrant peers in that their initial connection to their native origin is through their parents. Karl Mannheim's theory of the transmission of knowledge can be applied to how children of immigrants incorporate both "appropriated memories," those memories received from another person; and "personally acquired memories," those memories that are from first-hand experience (as cited in Vasquez, 2007). Children of immigrants may initially lack the connection of directly experiencing their native country; the information passed down from the parental immigrant generation becomes a second generation child's conceptualization of their natal culture (Vasquez, 2007). Conversely, Mannheim assigns greater importance to childhood first-hand experience, as it is the knowledge that is more enduring in one's self-concept (as cited in Vasquez, 2007). Therefore, second generations may be less likely to turn to their natal culture during times of stress as their immigrant peers do. Nonetheless, as second generation Americans experience their culture through "appropriated memories," their ethnic identity may be stronger if their parents are more open about growing up in their native country and their experiences immigrating to the United States. Furthermore, "appropriated memories" are important to account for in understanding levels of ethnic identity in second generation Americans and are incorporated in the present study.

Third generation Americans. Studies have shown that ethnic minorities report higher levels of ethnic identity than Caucasian Americans (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; St. Louis & Liem, 2005). As a result, Caucasian Americans do not perceive themselves as being a part of an ethnic group (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Tsai, Mortensen, Wong, & Hess, 2002). American culture itself is perceived as being synonymous with Caucasian American practices (Devos & Banaji, 2005).

On the other hand, researchers have found that there is an increasing amount of ethnic members within the U.S. (Arnett, 2002), budding an ethnic identity among Caucasian American practices (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002; Jensen, 2003). Third generation Americans may also endorse the individualistic conventions of the U.S., which may or may not show higher rates of loneliness. Since their roots are identified with an individualistic culture, they may not feel a sense of isolation from their peers as it is a norm. For them, greater participation in American culture may yield less loneliness among third generation Americans since they are identifying with the values of the host culture. This will be investigated in the present study.

We have explored the differing experiences of ethnic identity among first, second, and third generation Americans and how this may relate to the concept of loneliness. Yet, the ethnic experiences discussed are incomplete without understanding dimensions of one's membership within the U.S., as this may hinder or encourage one's expression or exploration of one's ethnic identity. Within the assessment of one's membership includes experiences of discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group within the United States.

Dimensions of Membership

Discrimination. As mentioned earlier, ethnic identity is seen as a fundamental component of one's self-concept (Keefe, 1992; Phinney, 1990). Second generation Americans may perceive discrimination more harshly as an attack on their self-concept than first generation Americans. For instance, Ying, Lee, & Tsai (2000) studied this idea further in a sample of 122 American-born Asian Americans and 231 immigrant participants at the University of California at Berkeley. They completed measures of ethnic identity (using the General Ethnicity Questionnaire-Chinese and American versions), and a question assessing the extent to which they felt they were "subjected to racial discrimination." As hypothesized, immigrants were more likely to experience higher rates of discrimination than U.S. born individuals as they were also found to be less assimilated to American culture. Even though second generation Americans experienced less discrimination and were more assimilated to American culture, they experienced more deleterious effects from discrimination (Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000). This may be related to how they align themselves with American culture, perceiving discrimination as an attack on their membership within America, who they are, and their role in society. Researchers speculated that the strong ethnic identity in the immigrants "buffered" against the harmful effects of discrimination because their self-concept may be more tied to their native country and they may not perceive discrimination the same way as second generations. For the immigrants, being American is an acquired identity (Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000). Does a strong ethnic identity in first generations show

lower rates of loneliness, even in the face of discrimination? The current study sought to understand this relationship between ethnic identity, loneliness, and the reporting of discrimination.

Perceived inclusion. As discussed previously, social marginality is a factor that could lead to loneliness (Rokach et al., 2002) but has not been studied across generational cohorts. First and second generation Americans may be seen as part of the American population, but they may still be regarded as being foreigners or outsiders to American society (Zhou, 1997), as exemplified by the question, "Where are you *really* from?" (Cheryan & Monin, 2005). Regardless of how much they may abandon their ethnic identities, they may still seem "unassimilated." Research has captured this phenomenon.

Devos and Banaji (2005) conducted a series of studies examining how Caucasian Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans conceptualized the identity of being American through explicit and implicit measures. Researchers used both measures because participants may outwardly hold a view of egalitarianism, but may implicitly or unconsciously internalize a hierarchy of social groups and what stereotypically represents America. In the first study, 114 U.S. citizens at Yale University completed an explicit self-report measure on the extent to which they viewed African Americans, Asian Americans, and Caucasian Americans as American, whether these groups should be treated the same in regards to their rights, and what they felt constituted a "true American." Results showed that most participants felt that the abovementioned groups should be treated equally in regards to their rights and they felt endorsing civic values (e.g. equality, democracy, independence) embodied a "true American" over affective attachment (e.g. patriotism, defending nation) and nativist ideas (e.g. born in U.S., spent most of life in U.S.). However, when asked to rate the "Americanness" of the three groups, a hierarchy formed where Caucasian Americans were "most American," African Americans followed, and then Asian Americans were the "least American" (Devos & Banaji, 2005).

Experimenters attempted to remove these associations by using famous Asian Americans who were born in the U.S. and famous Caucasian people who are not from the U.S. Thirty-seven Caucasian Americans completed implicit association measures matching the words "American" or "foreign" to ethnic stimuli (i.e. pictures of famous Asian Americans: Connie Chung, Kristi Yamaguchi, Lucy Liu, and Michael Chang; Caucasian Americans: Ben Stiller, Sandra Bullock, Tara Lipinski, and Robert Duvall; and European Americans: Elizabeth Hurley, Gerard Depardieu, Hugh Grant, and Katrina Witt). Celebrities were prescreened for familiarity and these people were the most recognized out of 81 names. Results indicated that it was easier to pair American symbols with Caucasian American celebrities than with Asian American celebrities, and it was surprisingly easier to pair American symbols with Caucasian European celebrities

than with Asian American celebrities (Devos & Banaji, 2005). Even after using famous Asian Americans who were born in the U.S. compared to European celebrities who were born in another country, participants still matched Caucasian celebrities with American symbols. When considering famous Asian Americans who were born in America and are U.S. citizens, participants still felt as though they did not exemplify the concept of "American" (Devos & Banaji, 2005). In reviewing these studies, to which degree do people of differing generational statuses feel included within American society? Do they notice the hierarchies found in this study? How is ethnic identity related to how included a person feels within society?

Park-Taylor and colleagues (2008) interviewed 10 second-generation graduate students (5 identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, 3 identified as Hispanic, 1 identified as Caribbean, and 1 identified as White/Hispanic) on what characteristics embody someone who is a true American (i.e. physical attributes, values, beliefs). Seven out of the ten participants mentioned that white skin, blonde hair, and blue eyes were physically indicative of a true American. Participants described behavioral practices of a "True American" as being patriotic or conforming to American politics. When questioned on whether they feel they are a "True American," some participants clearly internalized being American into their self-concept, "it is not something that I even consciously think of. It's part of my identity" (Park-Taylor, Ng, Ventura, Kang, Morris, Gilbert, Srivastava, & Androsiglio, 2008, p. 133), but others elaborated on not feeling completely included:

> I don't feel that I'm a "true" American…In terms of the way I've been treated and I've seen them [parents] being treated by people who have been in the U.S. for a longer period of time, they've definitely been treated as second class citizens. (Park-Taylor et al., 2008, p. 133)

One woman stated, "To not feel like a 'true' American feels like I don't belong, it feels like I'm isolated" (Park-Taylor et al., 2008). First and second generation Americans may feel less included in American society as illustrated by the presented findings. Second generation Americans may perceive themselves as being American but they may not feel that others perceive them the same way. The present study sought to understand this idea and its relationship to loneliness.

Perceptions of ethnic group. As the individuals in the last study described, feeling included in American society may be related to how existing Americans perceive them. This regards whether one's ethnic group is viewed as economically successful and whether one feels as though one's ethnic group has the same opportunities as other groups in the United States. Economic and social status of one's group is important to recognize because these two indicators have been suggested to be central to the embodiment of what it means to be American (Hochschild, 1995). Therefore, if one views one's ethnic group as unsuccessful,

he or she may feel excluded from American society. If one feels one has equal opportunities, he or she may feel more American (Hochschild, 1995).

To illustrate this further, Vasquez (2007) interviewed 29 three-generation families, revealing how the perceptions of a participant's ethnic group can challenge one's native and American identity. For example, a participant stated, "All Mexican people are gardeners and maids…[there was always] the half of me that I had to hide. I was always so embarrassed of that; I was soiled in some way because I had Mexican blood in me" (Vasquez, 2007, p. 11). The participant had internalized perceptions of her ethnic group, feeling isolated and burdened by her native culture. Another second generation American participant, Marcus, had a school counselor who would not let him take honors classes and kept placing him in shop and cooking classes: "Take shop classes because your kind of people are good cooks and good mechanics" (Vasquez, 2007, p. 15). On the other hand, Marcus's father, Juan, immigrated to the United States and felt that he "owed his life" to the receiving country for giving him a better life economically than the one he could have had in Mexico. Marcus stated being extremely hurt and angered by his experiences, while Juan felt that his son was "ungrateful" (Vaquez, 2007, p. 16). It is crucial to see how these two generations differ from each other on their perceptions of their ethnic group as well as their American identity. How will this be related to loneliness and ethnic identity in first, second, and third generation Americans?

Purpose

As mentioned earlier, loneliness is associated with descriptions of "culture shock" though it has not been studied in terms of generational statuses. Within this exploration, the author examined the relationship between ethnic identity and loneliness, discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group within the U.S. Particularly, the author hypothesized that first generations may have a stronger ethnic identity than second and third generation Americans, and this higher ethnic identity will be related to feeling less lonely (derived from the "buffering" effects found from stronger ethnic identities). In second generation Americans, "appropriated memories" from their parents were accounted for in whether this is related to engaging more in their "native culture" and being less lonely. Because third generations may have multiple generations of family members living in the U.S., they may not focus on the noted impersonal interactions noted in research; rather, it is hypothesized that the more they identify strongly with American culture, the less loneliness they may feel, internalizing the individualistic host culture as the norm.

The relationship between ethnic identity and discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group within the U.S. was investigated. First generation Americans may be more discriminated against, feel less included,

and feel that their ethnic group is viewed less positively, especially if they are less assimilated to American culture. Second generation Americans who adopt more of an American identity may feel less discriminated against, more included, and less lonely, but it is not known whether they would view their ethnic group positively. Third generation Americans are hypothesized to identify strongly with being American, feeling less discriminated against, more inclusive, and having a positive view of their group within the U.S.

Method

Participants

First, second, and third generation Americans volunteered across the U.S. to participate in an online survey which asked demographic information and questions regarding various relationships in their lives, the degree to which they participate in their native culture, and statements assessing their level of loneliness. First generation Americans were defined as "someone who has immigrated to the United States from another country." Second generation Americans were defined as "someone who was born in the United States but has at least one parent/guardian who was born and raised in another country (i.e. parent(s)/guardian(s) emigrated from another country)." Third generation Americans were defined as "someone who was born in the United States and has at least one generation (i.e. parents/guardians) who was born in the United States."

The sample of 194 participants included, 32 first generation Americans (38% male, 62% female), 48 second generation Americans (17% male, 83% female), and 114 third generation Americans (24% male, 76% female). Participants who were younger than 18 years were not analyzed in the study. The mean age of the overall sample was 24.56 years (SD= 8.08). The age of first generation Americans ranged from 18 to 52 years old, though the majority of participants were between 18 and 25 years old. The mean age which first generations immigrated to the U.S. was 11.3 years old. Participants emigrated from all over the world, including countries in South America, Central America, Africa, and the Middle East, and from countries like China, India, Russia, Mexico, and Italy. Australia, Sweden, Norway, and the United Kingdom were not represented.

Second generation Americans had parents who also emigrated from all over the world, though Russia and Australia were not represented. The age of these participants ranged from 18 to 29 years. Over 70% of second generation participants learned another language before learning English. The age of third generation Americans ranged from 18 to 61 years, the majority of the sample being between 18 and 30 years. Over 42% of third generations had four or more generations living in the U.S. before them. Third generation participants

identified with being Asian American (2%), African American (12%), Hispanic (7%), Native American/Native Alaskan (1%), or Caucasian American (non-Hispanic) (70%). Data was only collected for those who live within the United States of America.

Measures

Demographic information. The survey opened with general questions regarding the participant's sex, age, race, state of residence, and whether they were raised by both parents, only by father, only by mother, or other. Demographic information was then assessed using different questions according to generational status. For first generation Americans, age of immigration, country of emigration, frequency of visitation to native country, native language, age of learning English, and socioeconomic status were evaluated. Second generation Americans answered questions about the country their parents emigrated from, whether the parents shared their experiences growing up in another country, and whether they shared their process of immigration. They were also asked questions on how often they travel to their native country, the socioeconomic status of one's parents prior to immigration and after, and first language learned. It was crucial to ask whether the second generations' parents shared their experiences with them. These "appropriated memories" may aid in understanding how much second generations understand and participate in their native culture. Third generation Americans answered questions on how many generations have lived in the U.S. before them, their socioeconomic status, and first language learned.

General Ethnicity Questionnaire (GEQ). Level of ethnic participation in one's "native culture" was measured using the abridged version of the General Ethnicity Questionnaire (GEQ) (Tsai, 2000). Two forms were administered to first and second generation Americans, each consisting of 38 items: the General Ethnicity Questionnaire-American (GEQ-A) and a modified version of the General Ethnicity Questionnaire (which asked the participants about their native culture). This instrument measured the degree to which first and second generation Americans were oriented towards their American culture and their native culture. Third generation Americans only completed the GEQ-A, as they may perceive questions about their "native culture" as redundant if they have had multiple generations living in the U.S. before them. Both measures have the same scale: 1 = *Strongly disagree* and 5 = *Strongly agree* and 1= *very much* to 5 = *not at all*. The questionnaire assesses the participant's affiliations (e.g. GEQ: "I admire people from my native culture"; GEQ-A: "I admire people who are American"), activities, attitudes, exposure to culture, food, and language use (Tsai, 2002). All cohorts were asked if they were bilingual.

In another study using a Hmong sample, Cronbach's alpha was .87 for the General Ethnicity Questionnaire-Hmong and .84 for the GEQ-A. For the

European-American sample in that study, Cronbach's alpha was .88 for the GEQ-A (Tsai, 2002). In the current study Cronbach's alpha for the GEQ-A was .95, while the alpha for the cultural GEQ was .95, both indicating strong internal reliability.

Revised University of California, Los Angeles Loneliness Scale (R-UCLA). Loneliness was measured using the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980). The scale consists of 20 items that ask how often the participant feels alone or in tune with others on a scale ranging from: 1 = *Never*, 2 = *Rarely*, 3 = *Sometimes*, 4 = *Often*. Items included statements such as: "I feel in tune with people around me," "I feel isolated from others," and "I have a lot in common with the people around me." Although loneliness is correlated with measures of negative affect and social risk taking, it is an empirically distinct construct and there is evidence of its discriminant validity (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980). Cronbach's alpha for the UCLA-R was .94, showing strong internal reliability (Russell, Peplau, Cutrona, 1980). The current study revealed a Cronbach's alpha of .93.

Dimensions of membership within American society. Dimensions of membership was measured by a short 10-item questionnaire created by the author that revealed three distinct factors: 1) discrimination (Cronbach's alpha = .88); 2) perceived inclusion (Cronbach's alpha = .67); 3) positive ethnic sense within the U.S. (Cronbach's alpha = .78). Statements measuring discrimination included, "I feel discriminated against because of my heritage" and "I am treated differently because of my heritage in a negative way." Perceived inclusion was measured by statements including "I view myself as American," "I feel Caucasian Americans view me as American," and "I feel my culture has no bearing on how I am treated by others." How positively a participant feels their ethnic group is viewed within the U.S. was assessed by statements such as, "I feel my ethnicity has the same opportunities as other ethnicities in America," "My ethnicity is well respected compared to other groups in America," and "Compared to other ethnic groups in America, people of my ethnicity are economically successful." These last questions adhered to the notion of economic and social success being the foundation of American society. Participants rated these statements on a 5-point likert-type scale: 1 = *I never feel this way*, 2 = *I rarely feel this way*, 3 = *I sometimes feel this way*, 4 = *I often feel this way*, 5 = *I always feel this way*. It is imperative to ask these questions in order to assess whether these questions may be correlated with the participant's ethnic identity and to one another. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the present study and was .67, indicating moderate internal reliability.

Procedure

The measures described were compiled into an online survey which was part of a larger study. This allowed demographic questions to be tailored to participants' generational status. For example, if participants indicated that they were first generation Americans, questions would be generated dealing with their immigration process. Although participants had differing demographic questions, they completed the same measures (except third generation Americans only completed the GEQ-A, rather than both versions). The online survey was completed on the participant's own time and took approximately 30 minutes to complete. The opening page of the survey was a consent form which outlined the types of questions on the survey, the amount of time it would take, contact information, and it informed participants of their anonymity. Participants read and completed a consent form, indicating that they were aware of possible risks, their ability to leave the survey at any time, and that they were 18 or older.

Participants who completed the online study were recruited through two social science websites from a variety of institutions. Participants were also recruited from various multicultural groups at Towson University. Students who were recruited from multicultural organizations were given an explanation of the purpose of the study and were invited to complete the survey. Those who expressed their interest in completing the study received a flyer explaining the different types of questions that will be asked, the length of time it will take to complete the survey, and the benefits of contributing to multicultural research. The psychology faculty at Towson University was also informed of the study and encouraged students to participate with the incentive of extra credit. Students who participated in the study emailed the researcher of their completion along with their name and the instructor of the class for which they were receiving credit. Names of participants could not be linked to their responses on the survey. After completing the study, participant information and responses were kept confidential under a faculty login and password.

Results

To assess the relationship between ethnic identity and loneliness, discrimination, perceived inclusion, and perceptions of one's ethnic group in the U.S., multiple analyses were performed on each generational cohort through partial correlations and one-way ANOVAs. Because race was a significant confound, it was controlled for in each analysis, X^2 (12, N = 190) = 54.27, p = .000. There were no differences in gender across generational statuses, X^2 (2, N = 194) = 4.58, p = .101.

Preliminary Analysis

A one-way ANOVA was performed in analyzing loneliness and results were not significant, F (2, 191) = 2.875, p = .059. These almost significant results may have been adversely affected by the uneven distribution of participants

across the independent variable and may become significant if a larger group of first generation Americans were collected. This will be discussed further.

A one-way ANOVA was also performed for level of participation in American culture with first generations significantly differing from second, and third generation Americans, F (2, 185) = 4.34, p = .014. First generation Americans (M = 3.66, SD = .55) participated less in American culture than second (M = 4.00, SD = .70), and third generations (M = 4.04, SD = .59), p = .011. First generations also significantly differed from second generations in their level of participation in their native culture, F (1, 75) = 5.37, p = .023, with first generations (M = 3.40, SD = .75) participating more in their native culture than second generations (M = 2.96, SD = .85).

When the author performed one-way ANOVAs with the dimensions of membership within the U.S., there were significant differences across the groups at the $p < .001$ level. First generations significantly differed from second (M = 2.26, SD = .88) and third generations (M = 2.01, SD = .95) in the level of discrimination they have experienced, F (2, 183) = 10.26, p = .000, with first generations experiencing the most discrimination (M = 2.85, SD = .69). All three groups significantly differed from one another on how included they felt within American society, F (2, 183) = 30.00, p = .000, with first generations feeling the least included (M = 2.67, SD = .84), second generations following (M = 3.21, SD = 1.05), and third generations feeling the most included (M = 3.92, SD = .76). Third generations (M = 3.75, SD = .79) significantly differed from first (M = 3.18, SD = .67) and second generations (M = 3.33, SD =.97) in how positively they viewed their ethnic group within the U.S., viewing their group the most positively, F (2, 183) = 7.67, p = .001.

First Generation Americans

Pearson's r correlations revealed that the more first generations participated in their native culture, the less they participated in American culture, r (25) = -.709, p = .000. The more first generations participated in their native culture, the less included they felt in American society, r (25) = -.626, p = .000, and they faced more discrimination, r (25) = .465, p = .014. However, the more they participated in their native culture, the less loneliness they experienced, r (25) = -.455, p = .017. Therefore, from the analyses, it seemed as though the more discrimination first generations experienced, the less loneliness they felt, r (25) = -.386, p = .047. This may be due to the fact that ethnic identity may have a mediating, or "buffering" effect as outlined by previous research (Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000), but will be further discussed. The more discrimination first generations experienced the less included they felt in American society, r (25) = -.655, p = .000, and the less positively they viewed their ethnic group in America, r (25) = -.380, p = .050. On the other hand, the more first generation Americans participated in American culture, the less discrimination they faced, r (25) = -

.423, p = .028, and the more included they felt in American society, r (25) = .644, p = .000, but the more loneliness they experienced, r (25) = .412, p = .033. Results also supported previous research in that an American identity is something that is acquired. First generations who immigrated to the U.S. at a younger age participated more in American culture, r (25) = -.544, p = .003, while the older the age of immigration, the greater the participation in one's native culture, r (25) = .500, p = .008.

Second Generation Americans

As hypothesized, the more parents shared their experiences growing up in their native country, the more second generations participated in their native culture, r (41) = .370, p = .015, and the less loneliness they experienced, r (41) = -.314, p = .041. The more parents shared experiences of their immigration, the more second generations participated in their native culture, r (41) = .384, p = .011. Parents sharing experiences of their native culture was correlated with sharing experiences of immigration, r (41) = .446, p = .003.

The more second generations participated in American culture the more positively they viewed their ethnic group, r (41) = .373, p = .014, and the more included they felt within American society, r (41) = .541, p = .000. The more included second generation Americans felt within American society, the more positively they also viewed their ethnic group compared to other groups in America, r (41) = .525, p = .000.

Third Generation Americans

The more third generations participated in American culture, the less lonely they felt, r (107) = -.331, p = .000, the more positively they viewed their ethnic group, r (107) = .244, p = .010, and the more included they felt within American society, r (107) = .479, p = .000. The more included third generations felt within American society, the more positively they viewed their ethnic group within the U.S., r (107) = .307, p = .001.

Discussion

As hypothesized, greater participation in one's native culture was related to lower levels of loneliness. The more first generations participated in their native culture, the less loneliness they experienced. The more second generation Americans were educated about their native culture from their parents, the greater they participated in their native culture, and the less loneliness they felt. The more third generations identified with American culture, the less lonely they felt. Overall, there were significant differences in discrimination, perceived inclusion, and how positively participants viewed their ethnic group within the United States.

First generations were more prone to participating in their native culture over American culture. When first generations did participate more in American

culture, they felt less discriminated against and more included, but they experienced more loneliness; this may be due to assimilating to the individualistic host culture but not seeing it as the norm. The more they participated in their own culture the more discrimination they faced, but the less loneliness they experienced. This may be consistent with the previous research findings showing that a strong ethnic identity may "buffer" against the negative effects of discrimination. Although first generations who participate more in their native culture experience more discrimination and feel less included in society, their ethnic identity may not be strongly tied to being American; this aspect of their self-concept is not being shattered or threatened as it may be in second generations who may identify more closely with being American (Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000). In statistical analyses for the present study, this effect was not teased out. The author of the present study is not able to state that this "buffering" phenomenon is what occurred.

First generations may also be internalizing how other Americans feel about their ethnic group, evaluating themselves and others in their group less positively. This means that they did not feel their ethnic group has the same opportunities as other groups, did not see their ethnic group as being as economically successful, and felt less respected when compared to other groups in America. This was found in the present study along with previous research (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Devos & Banaji, 2005).

Results were not significant for first generations being less lonely than third generations. The almost significant results may have been due to an uneven distribution of participants across groups. When looking at post-hoc tests to see where a difference may have existed, the author found that first generations significantly differed from third generations in loneliness scores, with first generations (M = 1.82, SD = .45) being less lonely than third generations (M = 2.09, SD = .57), p = .049. However, these results could not be used. The study needs to be replicated with a larger sample in order to fully understand the mediating role ethnic identity may have on discrimination as first generations had high reporting of native cultural participation, and this was related to lower reporting of loneliness.

Results supported the second generation hypothesis in which natal cultural education from the parents was related to higher ethnic participation and less loneliness. This has not been studied in previous research and was explored in the present study. Since second generations initially experience their native culture through their parents, the more parents shared experiences of growing up in their native country and their experiences immigrating to the U.S., the more second generations participated in their native culture. Nevertheless, this may be affected by the type of relationship second generations have with their parents. Originally, this study was part of a larger study which included attachment. The author is

interested in analyzing this in the future and seeing where attachment may play a role in loneliness and how much one participates in one's native culture.

The more second generations participated in American culture the more positively they viewed their ethnic group, and the more included they felt within American society. This can correspond to the research findings that their American identity is strongly tied to their self-concept and they desire being a part of American society (Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Park-Taylor et al., 2008).

The more third generations participated in American culture, the less lonely they felt, the more positively they viewed their ethnic group, and the more included they feel within American society. This may be related to being accustomed to individualism where identifying more with the host culture is related to less loneliness.

Implications

The current study enhances findings about differing generational statuses within the U.S. and their experiences. First generation Americans are not as maladjusted as previous research may have shown, where having a higher ethnic identity is related to lower levels of loneliness. Second generations may struggle to find a balance within the conceptualization of their ethnic identities, but in the current study, it is important to see how the sharing of immigration experiences and natal cultural memories from the second generation's parents was related to their level of ethnic participation as well as loneliness. Future research on the relationship between second generations and their parents may want to focus on how this may affect the ways in which aspects of their cultural background and American identity are being challenged or maintained. It is important to recognize the types of interactions third generations have with one another as research is ambiguous as to whether the individualistic nature of America affects their rates of loneliness. Future research may need to explore this further.

Limitations

Although there are some implications of the present study, there are limitations which should be documented. Participants completed the study online limiting the demographic of the study. Individuals who do not have access to a computer were not able to participate in the study. Participants who did not know English were also unable to complete the online questionnaire. The study also needs to be replicated with more equal sample sizes as this may affect the one-way ANOVAs analyzing loneliness. There were 32 first generation Americans and 114 third generation Americans compared in analysis.

First generations and second generations also had families who came from across the world. Though the author was trying to look specifically at generational cohorts and the relationship between ethnic participation and loneliness, generalizing across cultures (i.e. ethnic gloss) may be problematic as unique cultural differences are not taken into account (Trimble & Fisher, 2006). In future

studies, the author will study first, second, and third generations who are culturally specific.

For first generations, the author was not able to tease out why higher rates of discrimination led to loneliness. Past research has shown that ethnic identity may have a mediating role or "buffering" effect against negative aspects of discrimination but this role was not statistically illustrated in the current study. There are many factors that may affect loneliness and the author would want to account for these variables (SES, romantic status, age, state of residence) in future replications.

Although the author wanted to avoid sounding redundant with third generations being administered both the GEQ-A and the GEQ (questioning experiences of one's native culture), it may be problematic that they were not able to take both as some third generations may not be far removed from a connection to another culture. In future studies, the author would want to incorporate this into comparing generational statuses that are culturally specific.

Conclusion

Results supported the hypothesis of higher participation in one's native culture relating to less loneliness even if the culture is not the majority, even in the face of less inclusivity, greater discrimination, or negativity surrounding one's ethnic group.

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