

International Journal of Cross Cultural Management

<http://ccm.sagepub.com>

Bicultural Individuals in Organizations: Implications and Opportunity

Mary Yoko Brannen and David C. Thomas

International Journal of Cross Cultural Management 2010; 10; 5

DOI: 10.1177/1470595809359580

The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://ccm.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/10/1/5>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

Additional services and information for *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://ccm.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://ccm.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav>

Citations <http://ccm.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/10/1/5>

Bicultural Individuals in Organizations

Implications and Opportunity

Mary Yoko Brannen

INSEAD, Fontainebleau

David C. Thomas

Simon Fraser University, Vancouver

ABSTRACT Cross-cultural management research typically assumes that individuals have only one cultural profile. However, given the changing patterns in the world's workforce it is increasingly possible that more employees and managers will be bicultural. This special issue responds to the need to further our understanding of this emerging demographic in organizations. In this introductory article, we provide a brief review of what we know about bicultural individuals, point out some implications of our current knowledge for organizations, identify opportunities for further exploration of these topics, and introduce the articles in the special issue.

KEY WORDS • biculturals • boundary spanning • global leadership • global teams • multicultural identity

Ema Nishimoto, the sandy haired, hazel-eyed director of global alliances for a large Rio de Janeiro-based oil company was worried about how she'd come across in Saudi Arabia as a member of the negotiating team. Born to a Japanese-Brazilian father and Danish mother, she had spent her formative years in Brazil and Japan. Unlike her parents, she did not speak Japanese or Danish but was fluent in Portuguese and English. Equipped with an MBA from a leading European business school, she had successfully negotiated alliances around the world.

However, she was uncertain about this current challenge in Saudi Arabia, a country she knew little about. Much to her surprise, after just a few days she became the 'go-to' person for clarification on all sorts of issues, not only for her own team members but for the Saudis as well.

As in this case, the success of today's complex organizations is based increasingly on the transfer and sharing of information, knowledge, and practices of people-dependent

technologies across organizational and cultural boundaries. As collaboration, communication, and trust building gain importance, and as flows of knowledge and processes become increasingly more critical success factors, the role of individuals in mediating between and within cultures becomes vital for organizational performance. Biculturals, like Ema – people who have internalized more than one cultural profile – represent a growing and underexplored demographic, which is particularly important in the context of these organizations. As a result of low birth rates among established populations in the industrialized world and the concomitant increase in the proportion of immigrants, increasingly more employees and managers are bicultural or have mixed cultural profiles. As well as ethnic variation, these individuals carry with them mixed cultural identities: they possess the obvious knowledge of their own cultures and unique skills not shared by (and perhaps not even available to) monocultural individuals. In this introductory article, we provide a brief review of what we know about bicultural individuals, point out some implications of our current knowledge for organizations, and identify opportunities for further exploration of these topics.

Bicultural Individuals

Currently, a large percentage of the developed world *may* be bicultural. By 2020 the largest ethnic group in the US will be culturally mixed (US Census, 2008). Currently, some 12 percent (in the state of California 25 percent) of the US population is foreign born and 33 percent (in the Silicon Valley 53.3 percent) of the population is non-white (US Census, 2008). This trend is paralleled in Canada and Australia where 17 and 21 percent respectively of the population is foreign born, as well as in Europe given the low birth rates of the established population and the concomitant increase in proportion of non-European born and second-

generation immigrants (EU Census Bureau, 2008; Verkuyten and Pouliasi, 2006). Aside from the immigrant population and their offspring, there are numerous others who may be bicultural, including the children and grandchildren of multicultural households, as well as indigenous peoples. That is, demographic or ethnic labels are only a clue as to whether or not a person is bicultural. For example, Ema's Japanese-Brazilian identity is not represented in the way she looks, nor in the languages that she speaks. Surface characteristics are not always indicative of biculturalism. Furthermore, cultural identity is not consciously chosen and is formed in a subconscious and non-volitional manner. Ema did not consciously choose her cultural identity. Rather, it is formed as a result of being raised in a series of complex cultural environments.

Bicultural individuals identify with two (or more) distinct cultures because of having internalized more than one set of cultural schemas.¹ A cultural schema is a socially constructed cognitive system that represents one's knowledge about the values, attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral assumptions of a culture as well as the relations among these attributes (Fiske and Taylor, 1984). While it was once thought that individuals could have only one cultural identity, it is increasingly clear that people can internalize more than one culture. It is important here to distinguish between cultural identification and cultural knowledge. A person can have knowledge of another culture without identifying with it. For example, international students, expatriate workers, and even tourists may be able to acquire knowledge about a different culture and apply this knowledge to guide their behavior, without actively identifying with that culture.

Cultural identification involves answering the question, 'Who am I?' with reference to a particular set of values, attitudes, beliefs, and behavioral assumptions, which Hong et al. (2000) call cultural knowledge traditions.

Biculturals have a simultaneous awareness of being a member of (and sometimes an outsider in) two (or more) cultures (LaFromboise et al., 1993; Phinney and Devich-Navarro, 1997) and exhibit a behavioral repertoire that stems from having access to two distinct cultural knowledge traditions, sometimes switching between schemas in response to cultural cues (Hong et al., 2000).

Previous Research on Biculturals

While there is very little current literature on biculturals in organizational studies, the concept first emerged in relation to describing the experience of African-American organizational participants in the white-dominated work culture of the USA in the middle of the twentieth century (Bell, 1990; Hernandez, 1979; Valentine, 1971). This work focused on the experience of African-American employees in white-male-dominated work places in North America. There has been significantly more interest about bicultural individuals in the psychology literature, much of which has been developed from the large body of research on acculturation. Earlier research on acculturation assumed that biculturals had to either accept their *new* culture (assimilate) or reject it, consistent with the definition of acculturation as the process of learning or adapting to a new culture. Subsequently, biculturals were described as occupying some point along a continuum between their old (ethnic) and new (mainstream) cultures (see Trimble, 2003). This uni-dimensional approach was replaced with an influential bi-dimensional model of acculturation (Berry, 1990). This model assumes that acculturating individuals have to deal with the extent to which they retain identification with their culture of origin and the extent to which they allow themselves (or are allowed) to identify with the mainstream culture. This results in four distinct acculturation patterns of assimilation (identification with mainstream

culture only), integration (identification with both cultures), separation (identification with culture of origin only), or marginalization (lack of identification with either culture). Berry hypothesized that integration was the most conducive to psychological well being although the evidence in support of this hypothesis is not conclusive (Rogler et al., 1991; Rudmin, 2003). While this framework was developed to understand acculturation, it has been used as basis for studying biculturals equating integration with biculturalism (e.g. Nguyen and Benet-Martínez, 2007; Tadmor and Tetlock, 2006). In our view, the use of acculturation as a basis for studying biculturalism confuses the processes of becoming bicultural with the way in which people experience or manage their bicultural identities.

In researching biculturals from an acculturation perspective researchers have tended to focus on just one cell of the fourfold typology – namely, that of the integrated acculturation strategy. This ignores the possibility that there may be many other ways in which bicultural individuals experience and manage their identity that may have significant consequence for organizations. For example, excluded from this work is an analysis of the marginals in Berry's fourfold typology. However, some researchers (e.g. Bochner, 1982; Glaser, 1958; Mann, 1948; Stonequist, 1937) have argued that marginals have bicultural competence such that they alternate between two cultures that are perceived as having salient but mutually incompatible norms. In addition to the exclusion of marginal individuals from the bicultural set, this acculturation research assumes equal acculturation across various domains (language use, social affiliation, communication style, knowledge, beliefs, values, see Zane and Mak, 2003), assumes that the universe of cultures is limited to a minority and a majority culture, and that the intersection of two cultures is an empty set such that a synergistic effect is not possible (Liao and Thomas, 2009; Rudmin, 2003). Thus, the fourfold typology does not,

for example, account for the emergence of cultural identities such as Neoricans, New Yorkers of Puerto Rican heritage who identify neither with American or Puerto Rican culture but with a unique emergent culture. Our view is that cultural identities may be uniquely represented within each multicultural individual and that acculturation is but one mechanism through which individuals are confronted with the task of defining themselves in terms of their culture. Ema, for example, grew up in a multicultural home and experienced multiple cultures from birth. Biculturalism for her is not the end state of a process of acculturation but a natural part of her identity.

The limitation of considering only those with integrated identities as bicultural notwithstanding, research to date has shed light on a number of key issues with regard to biculturalism. For example, a common experience among many bicultural individuals is that they shift between their cultural identities in different situations, which is called frame switching. In demonstrating this effect, Hong and her colleagues (2000) exposed Chinese American biculturals to either pictures of American or Chinese icons (e.g. US capitol building vs the Great Wall; Marilyn Monroe vs Chinese opera singer; American Flag vs Chinese Dragon) and found that this exposure activated cultural frame switching. That is, consistent with culturally based expectations regarding attributions, biculturals exposed to American primes made more internal attributions and those exposed to Chinese primes made more external attributions for the same observed behavior. This finding is important in that it highlights the fact that biculturals have available to them more than one cultural frame which can be accessed in response to different situations. However, it should not suggest a uniform process of frame switching among biculturals, because as discussed ahead, there may be significant variation in the way biculturals experience their various cultural identities.

By attending to the cognitive factors that underpin the bicultural experience some research has focused on the extent to which individuals differ in the extent to which their identities are perceived as compatible and integrated or in opposition to each other and difficult to integrate (Benet-Martínez and Haritatos, 2005). Research on Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) has extended the understanding of bicultural individuals to show how the degree of integration of bicultural identities relates to behavioral, cognitive, and other psychological variables. In general, individuals high on BII perceive their two identities as largely compatible and complimentary, while those low on BII feel caught between their two cultural identities and prefer to keep them separate. In later work BII has been shown to be composed of two components; cultural blendedness and cultural harmony (Benet-Martínez and Haritatos, 2005). Low BIIs may be able to identify with one or the other of their cultures but not at the same time, so they suppress one identity depending on the context (Hall et al., 2001). Consistent with this description BII seems to moderate the cultural frame switching described previously in that individuals high on BII typically respond to cultural cues in culturally congruent ways, whereas individuals low on BII exhibited a reverse effect (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). Research has shown that high BII can allow individuals to be more effective in appropriately employing their cultural knowledge in specific contexts (e.g. Benet-Martínez and Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; Cheng et al., 2006; also see Nguyen and Benet-Martínez, 2007). For example, Cheng et al. (2008) found that high BII Asian-Americans came up with more innovative (creative fluency and originality) fusion restaurant dishes than did low BII Asian-Americans.

Much of the research on BII has found that individuals with low levels of conflict (high BII) are more effective in a variety of domains. However, some research also indi-

cates that those with low BII (more conflicted cultural identities) are more cognitively complex (Benet-Martínez et al., 2006). This suggests that conflicting cultural identities may have positive benefits. The logic is that because of their inner cultural conflict these types of biculturals are more systematic and careful in processing cues from cultural situations, resulting in cultural representations that are more complex. Other research also points to the idea that the more severe the cultural conflict experienced, the greater the need to engage in more effortful and complex sense-making, resulting in higher levels of cognitive complexity (Tadmor et al., 2009). What this implies is that biculturals who have difficulty in reconciling their competing cultural identities may have developed certain skills that allow them to better deal with the demands of today's dynamic complex cultural situations. For example, a study by Brannen et al. (2009) found that the degree of conflict between cultural identities was positively correlated with a self-report of a higher order cognitive skill called cultural metacognition. This parallels the literature on cross-cultural adjustment and performance that suggests the most effective expatriates in the long term are those who had the most difficult time adjusting (Thomas, 1998; Thomas and Lazarova, 2006). Thus it seems possible that those biculturals who actually have the most difficult time dealing with or integrating their cultural identities actually develop higher levels of certain skills and will ultimately be the most effective in a variety of cross-cultural contexts. Ema, for example, may be successful in Saudi Arabia, not because she has any cultural knowledge of Saudi Arabia, but because she has had to repeatedly confront and manage the differences in her Japanese and Brazilian identities, which has allowed her to develop higher order cognitive skills that are not specific to a culture.

Managing Bicultural Identities

As the work on biculturalism has progressed, researchers have come to recognize that the construct of biculturalism is complex and multidimensional and that there may be many different ways of being bicultural. A number of attempts have been made to explain the way in which bicultural identity is negotiated and organized. LaFramboise et al. (1993) distinguished between biculturals who switched their behaviours in response to situational demands (alternation) and those who identified with an emergent culture distinct from their original cultures (fusion). Birman (1998) described four types of blended (see fusion), instrumental (behaviorally oriented to both cultures but identified with neither), integrated (behaviorally oriented to both cultures but identified only with their ethnic culture), and explorers (behaviorally oriented to the dominant culture but identified with only their ethnic culture). Using a qualitative approach, Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) identified six different patterns of biculturalism. According to this model, an assimilated pattern has non-overlapping cultures and the individual identifies with only one culture. A fused pattern has cultures that overlap completely. Blended and alternating bicultural patterns both exhibit cultures that partially overlap, but the blended individual resides within the intersection of the two, while the alternating individual resides in one culture or the other, depending on the context. Finally, both separated and marginal patterns feature non-overlapping cultures, but the separated individual resides in only one culture (similar to an assimilated individual), while the marginal individual resides in neither. While this research is important in that it calls attention to the fact that there are many ways to experience or manage bicultural identity, it is conceptually flawed. For example, blended and fused refer to identity, while alternating refers to the behaviour of cultural frame switching

(see Nguyen and Benet-Martínez, 2007, for a discussion). In an attempt to clarify the strategies that individuals might use to negotiate their multiple identities, Hong et al. (2007) identify three modes of identity negotiation that individuals might use over the course of their lives. These were labelled *integration*, in which elements from multiple cultures fuse into a unitary (multicultural) identity, *alternation*, which involves switching among cultural identities according to context, and *synergy*, in which new identities emerge which cannot be reduced to the sum of their parts. However, this too falls short of providing a partitioning of bicultural strategies that is logically consistent and collectively exhaustive. While the identification of a categorization schema of biculturals is appealing, to date no classification framework of bicultural individuals exists that is rigorous enough to form the basis for theory development (see Hunt, 1983).

While it seems a fairly straightforward process of establishing bicultural types based on the presence or absence of some characteristic or along some set of dimensions, the utility of such a logical partitioning would need to be established. That is, how would identification of bicultural types lead to better explanations or predictions about bicultural functioning in an organizational context? Likewise, an opportunity exists to develop classification schemata of biculturalism inductively. This might be particularly valuable in combination with an exploration of differential performance. That is, it might be helpful to know that Ema is a certain type of bicultural if this helps to explain or predict her potential to perform in a particular context or in a particular organizational role. By this we do not wish to impose yet another layer of stereotyping on individuals in organizations. Rather, we seek to unfold a deeper understanding and clarification of what certain individuals bring that is neither clear to them nor to the organizations that employ them.

Implications of Bicultural Identification

There is as yet not a complete answer to the effects of biculturalism on individuals. Compiling a body of evidence on these effects is confounded by the ways in which biculturalism has been measured. For example, Nguyen and Benet-Martínez (2007) report the results of a meta analysis that found that biculturalism had a weak and positive ($r = .10$) relationship with psychological and socio-cultural adjustment. However, upon further examination they found that the results were attenuated by whether or not biculturalism was measured using one-dimensional or multidimensional scales. At an even more basic level, many studies of biculturals rely on self-reports of bicultural identity or demographic characteristics as indicators of biculturalism or, as discussed previously, ignore potentially important subsets of the bicultural population. With this caveat, we identify the following characteristics of bicultural individuals that in our opinion have the most potential to be important in an organizational context.

There is little doubt that biculturals have access to multiple cultural knowledge systems that they have learned as a result of significant exposure to multiple cultures, and which have shaped their identity (Hong et al., 2000). For biculturals, cultural information is very self-relevant, highly accessible in memory, and more richly elaborated (Martínez et al., 2006). Biculturals do not consciously and actively seek to gain this information. In many cases this is the result of negotiating the existential angst (Brannen, 1994) associated with constantly confronting disparate cultural schemata. Some biculturals shift their frame of reference from one culture to another as a result of contextual cues (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). This cultural frame shifting may help these biculturals develop increasingly integrated cultural schemas and recognize the self-reference of cultural infor-

mation. Not only do biculturals develop more complex cultural representations, but they seem to develop increased cognitive complexity across domains (Tadmor et al., 2009), suggesting that they may possess heretofore unrecognized cultural general skills. That is the more complex cognitive representations that biculturals develop as a result of internalizing more than one set of cultural schemata suggest that they will also develop higher order cognitive processes required to manage this complexity. Therefore, not only do biculturals possess greater empathy (Brannen et al., 2009), and flexibility (Chiu and Hong, 2005), but also the ability to integrate ideas in potentially novel and more creative ways (Leung et al., 2008).

These individual implications of biculturalism map onto the needs of today's organizations that are searching for ways to remain competitive in an increasingly challenging and complex environment. Today, global business success depends increasingly not only on being effective in understanding and bridging between different national cultures, but also on being interculturally effective by integrating diverse cultural knowledge. Because of their unique skills, bicultural individuals may be particularly well equipped to provide the type of integration and mediation required. They may excel as boundary spanners in multicultural teams, bridge among organizational joinings in culturally different contexts, or be catalysts for creativity and innovation because of their cognitive complexity.

While biculturals often learn to enjoy their multiple identities (see Shi and Lu, 2007) most biculturals, like Ema, are very likely unaware of the importance of the knowledge and skills they possess. We suggest this lack of awareness comes from at least two sources. First, deeply socialized cultural knowledge is taken-for-granted and by definition tacit (Brannen, 2004). Second, biculturals often feel inadequate with regard to the culture-specific knowledge that is expected of them

(cf. Pollock and Reken, 2001). That is, while others (employers, teachers, even friends) often expect biculturals to have high levels of knowledge associated with their ethnicities and demographics, including language ability, they often do not because of having been raised in hybrid cultural contexts. While others might expect it of her, Ema does not speak Danish or Japanese.

In addition, organizations that employ biculturals are also often unaware of their knowledge and skills and confuse ethnicity with country-specific understanding. For example, Ema (a Japanese-Brazilian person) might be better at understanding and operating across multiple cultural contexts rather than representing a Japanese cultural context with which she is only partially familiar. Mistakes such as this may make it difficult for bicultural employees to contribute their most important abilities and, at the same time, could reinforce the personal insecurities that many biculturals feel.

This special issue is designed to bring to the fore the need to further our understanding of this emerging demographic in organizations both from a management and leadership standpoint, and from a public policy perspective. With it we hope to raise awareness and influence research agendas in cross-cultural management.

Articles in the Special Issue

Our call for papers for this special issue generated a large number of submissions covering a wide variety of issues with regard to biculturals in organizations. The submissions were approximately equally divided between empirical and theoretical manuscripts. In choosing which articles to accept for publication we were of course guided by the quality of the submission but also by our desire to cover a breadth of topics. The result is five articles that range from the effect of biculturalism in performance appraisal to the implications of biculturals for multicultural teams.

The first article, by Mok, Cheng, and Morris, is perhaps the most direct extension of the current work in psychology on biculturalism that has emphasized a sociocognitive perspective. Building on Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) they extend the examination of the effect of cultural frame switching in biculturals on attributions to the context of performance appraisal. They find, consistent with previous research, that high bicultural identity integration (BII) moderated the effect on attribution such that attributions were congruent with cultural norms, while low BII participants exhibited a reverse effect. As interesting are the authors' speculations about how this result might be extended to understand how internal identity management can be applied more generally to how organizations could reduce negative reactions to culture and cultural norm violations.

The second article by Gillespie, McBride, and Riddle draws on the fourfold acculturation model in an attempt to address one of the shortcomings of this framework, the acculturation of a majority population. Results of their study indicated that bicultural or culturally independent (cosmopolitan) Mexican managers in Mexico were more likely to hold upper management positions than their single-culture counterparts. This finding suggests that in encroaching cultures top management is more likely to be bicultural. Also, the finding for positive effects for cultural independents (called *marginals* elsewhere) is consistent with recent similar results for this group by Tadmor et al. (2009) that were discussed there only as an unexpected finding. It is perhaps time, as the authors suggest, to abandon the term *marginals* and give more attention to those individuals with low levels of identification with both their cultures.

The third article by Yih-teen Lee also builds on the fourfold acculturation model as its base to examine the effect of dual cultural identity on intercultural effectiveness measure by cultural appropriateness and communication effectiveness. In this case, we are pre-

sented with a new measure of dual cultural identity as well as the unique analytic technique of response surface modeling to test hypotheses. The results using these methods generally conform to the existing literature with regard to the benefits of integrated (high-high) cultural identities on these broad outcome variables. However, and consistent with the Gillespie et al. article, the findings also demonstrate the benefits of the low-low identity configuration over identification with either home or host culture.

The fourth article by Ringberg, Luna, Reihlen, and Peracchio reminds us of the interconnection between language and culture. This study of Hispanic-Americans found that language triggered cultural frame switching such that translation of equivalent words elicited different concepts or interpretations depending on the language in which they were presented. The authors present the managerial implications of this automatic frame shifting in organizational settings.

The final article by Hae-Jung Hong is perhaps the boldest attempt at extending the study of biculturalism into the domain of organizations. In it she proposes a theory that specifies the mechanisms through which bicultural individuals influence the effectiveness of multicultural teams. Intermediate mechanisms of bicultural competence and team roles (boundary spanning and conflict mediating) provide a conduit through which the cross-cultural knowledge, skills and abilities of bicultural team members are brought to bear on team process related outcomes.

The articles in this special issue represent some of the first steps at moving the study of biculturals into the context of organizations. They build on important work in acculturation (e.g. Berry, 1990), the dynamic constructivist approach to culture and cultural frame shifting (e.g. Hong et al., 2000), and bicultural identity integration (e.g. Martínez and Harritatos), while taking into account and going beyond some of the limitations of these frames. For the most part, the advances are

incremental, as we would expect when concepts developed in one domain are applied to a new context. As has often been said however, what may be needed here is better theory. Recent attempts at understanding the processes through which individuals absorb cultural identity and the role this plays in the development of sociocognitive skills are impressive (see Tadmor and Tetlock, 2006). However, understanding these internal processes is but the first step in addressing research questions around biculturals important to organizations such as:

- Do biculturals possess unique skills and abilities that allow them to function more effectively in global business environments?
- Are biculturals better able to cope with the potentially conflicting organizational identities imposed by the multinational enterprise?
- Is there a typology of biculturals that is useful to understanding this new workforce demographic?
- Do the different ways in which bicultural individuals experience their multiple identities result in distinct skill sets for today's complex global organizations?
- Can the subconscious and non-volitional way in which biculturals learn a new culture be applied to developing global managers? And, what would be the consequences of this for cross-cultural training?
- Can the way in which biculturals shift from one cultural context to the other (frame switching) help to understand how global managers can choose from a repertoire of behaviors to adapt appropriately to the cultural context?
- Can the abilities of biculturals be leveraged to make learning and knowledge transfer across contexts less arduous, and hence facilitate global innovation?

Conclusion

The study of biculturals has the potential to present an entirely new way of thinking about cultural diversity in organizations. In addition to the direct benefits of exploiting the skills of biculturals, the recognition that cultural diversity exists within individuals as well as within organizations challenges many of our assumptions about managing diversity at the organization level. The following exemplifies this point. When asked what made him such a great hockey player Wayne Gretzky (perhaps the greatest hockey player of all time) is reported as having said, 'I skate to where the puck is going to be.' The interviewer had noted that Gretzky wasn't a very big man for a hockey player, nor was he a particularly fast skater, nor a particularly good shot maker. It is this type of non-obvious skill of biculturals that organizations must learn to harness. Like the Edmonton Oilers hockey team during the Gretzky years, organizations must create environments in which these individuals can thrive. They must foster organizational cultures in which the cultural diversity that exists *within* individuals is recognized in the same way we have come to treat the cultural diversity *between* individuals as a valuable asset. This means that individuals who are often marginalized must be integrated into knowledge-sharing and decision systems. The research agenda that has begun with this special issue will provide organizations with a road map for accomplishing this critical task.

In addition to the implications for organizations, the study of biculturals has important implications for the broader policy agenda. Mass migration is a defining feature of today's world. Pressures are growing, with masses of desperate migrants willing to risk death to cross the Mediterranean or the Rio Grande. In some countries second-generation immigrants are the most alienated biculturals (see e.g. Simon and Ruhs, 2008), accepted neither in the country of origin of their parents and of their culture (e.g. Algeria or

Turkey) nor in the country where they grew up and of which they are citizens (e.g. France or Germany). Increasingly foreign-born or second-generation immigrants make up a larger percentage of the workforce in developed economies, which need to learn how to integrate as opposed to assimilate these individuals (see Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). Although perhaps less visible, similar tensions to those in Europe or North America exist in Asia with south to north migration (Stahl, 2009). Shedding light on the complex multicultural identity processes of biculturals and the management implications for organizations, as represented in the research reported here, may also help shape a better policy agenda on immigration, naturalization, education, and other social integration mechanisms. By allowing individuals access to many different ways of negotiating their multicultural identities, society can benefit from the unique skills and abilities of this important and growing demographic.

Notes

- 1 We use the term bicultural to mean individuals who have (either been ascribed by birth or who have acquired) more than one cultural schema. This is consistent with how the term is used in the literature and can refer to three or even more cultures. The term multicultural is typically used to refer to the existence of people from 'many' distinct cultures and has thus come to be used synonymously with the term 'diversity' by academics and practitioners in reference to workforce and social diversity.

References

- Bell, E. L. (1990) 'The Bicultural Life Experience of Career-Oriented Black Women', *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 11(6): 459–77.
- Benet-Martínez, V. and Haritatos, J. (2005) 'Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): Components and Psychological Antecedents', *Journal of Personality* 73: 1015–49.
- Benet-Martínez, V., Leu, J., Lee, F. and Morris, M. (2002) 'Negotiating Biculturalism: Cultural Frame-Switching in Biculturals with "Oppositional" vs. "Compatible" Identities', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 33: 492–516.
- Benet-Martínez, V., Lee, F. and Leu, J. (2006) 'Biculturalism and Cognitive Complexity: Expertise in Cultural Representations', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 37: 1–23.
- Berry, J. W. (1990) 'The Psychology of Acculturation: Understanding Individuals Moving between Cultures', in R. Brislin (ed.) *Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology Series*, vol. 14, *Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology*, pp. 232–52. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.
- Birman, D. (1998) 'Biculturalism and Perceived Competence of Latino Immigrant Adolescents', *American Journal of Community Psychology* 26: 335–54.
- Bochner, S. (1982) 'The Social Psychology of Cross Cultural Relations', in S. Bochner (ed.) *Cultures in Contact: Studies in Cross-Cultural Interactions*, pp. 5–44. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Brannen, M. Y. (1994) 'Your Next Boss is Japanese: Negotiating Cultural Change at a Western Massachusetts Paper Plant', doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Brannen, M. Y., Garcia, D. and Thomas, D. C. (2009) 'Biculturals as Natural Bridges for Intercultural Communication and Collaboration', Proceedings of the International Workshop on Intercultural Collaboration, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA.
- Cheng, C.-Y., Lee, F. and Benet-Martínez, V. (2006) 'Assimilation and Contrast Effects in Cultural Frame Switching: Bicultural Identity and Valence of Cultural Cues', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 37: 742–60.
- Cheng, C.-Y., Sanchez-Burks, J. and Lee F. (2008) 'Connecting the Dots within: Creative Performance and Identity Integration', *Psychological Science* 19: 1177–83.
- Chiu, C.-Y., and Hong, Y.-Y. (2005) 'Cultural Competence: Dynamic Processes', in A. Elliot and C. S. Dweck (eds) *Handbook of Motivation and Competence*, pp. 489–505. New York: Guilford.
- European Census (2008) Web report on European Census Records.
- Fiske, S. and Taylor, S. (1984) *Social Cognition*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Glaser, D. (1958) 'Dynamics of Ethnic Identification', *American Sociological Review* 23: 31–40.
- Hall, G. C. N., Lopez, I. R. and Bansal, A. (2001) 'Academic Acculturation: Race, Gender, and

- Class Issues', in H. L. K. Coleman and D. Pope-Davis (eds) *The Intersection of Race, Class, and Gender: Implications for Multicultural Counselling*, pp. 171–88. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hernandez, U. (1979) 'The Dialectics of Black Womanhood', *Signs* 3: 543–55.
- Hong, Y.-Y., Morris, M. W., Chiu, C.-Y. and Benet-Martínez, V. (2000) 'Multicultural Minds: A Dynamic Constructivist Approach to Culture and Cognition', *American Psychologist* 55: 709–20.
- Hong, Y.-Y., Ching, W., No, S. and Chiu, C.-Y. (2007) 'Multicultural Identities', in S. Kitayama and D. Cohen (eds) *Handbook of Cultural Psychology*, pp. 323–45. New York: Guilford.
- Hunt, S. D. (1983) 'Theory: Issues and Aspects', in *Marketing Theory: Philosophy of Marketing Science*, pp. 348–72. Irwin.
- LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H. and Gerton, J. (1993) 'Psychological Impacts of Biculturalism: Evidence and Theory', *Psychological Bulletin* 114: 395–412.
- Leung, A. K.-Y., Maddux, W. W., Galinsky, A. D. and Chiu, C.-Y. (2008) 'Multicultural Experience Enhances Creativity: The When and How', *American Psychologist* 63: 169–81.
- Liao, Y. and Thomas, D. C. (2009) 'Acculturation as a Foundation for Multiculturalism Research', symposium presentation to the Academy of Management Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Mann, J. (1948) 'Group Relations and the Marginal Personality', *Human Relations* 11: 77–92.
- Nguyen, A.-M. D., and Benet-Martínez, V. (2007) 'Biculturalism Unpacked: Components, Individual Differences, Measurement, and Outcomes', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 1: 101–14.
- Phinney, J. S. and Devich-Navarro, M. (1997) 'Variations in Bicultural Identification among African American and Mexican American Adolescents', *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 7(1): 3–32.
- Pollock, D. C. and Reken, R. E. Van (2001) *Third Culture Kids: The Experience of Growing up among Worlds*. New York: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Rogler, M., Cortes, D. E. and Malgady, R. G. (1991) 'Acculturation and Mental Health Status among Hispanics: Convergence and New Directions for Research', *American Psychologist* 46: 585–97.
- Rudmin, F. W. (2003) 'Critical History of the Acculturation Psychology of Assimilation, Separation, Integration and Marginalization', *Review of General Psychology* 7: 3–37.
- Shi, X. and Lu, X. (2007) 'Bilingual and Bicultural Development of Chinese American Adolescents and Young Adults: A Comparative Study', *Howard Journal of Communications* 18: 313–33.
- Simon, B. and Ruhs, D. (2008) 'Identity and Politicization among Turkish Migrants in Germany: The Role of Dual Identities', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 95: 1354–66.
- Stahl, C. W. (2009) 'South–North Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region', *International Migration* 29(2): 163–93.
- Stonequist, E. V. (1937) *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict*. New York: Russell & Russell.
- Tadmor, C. and Tetlock, P. E. (2006) 'Biculturalism: A Model of the Effects of Second-Culture Exposure on Acculturation and Integrative Complexity', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 37: 173–90.
- Tadmor, C. T., Tetlock, P. E. and Peng, K. (2009) 'Acculturation Strategies and Integrative Complexity', *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 40: 105–39.
- Thomas, D. C. (1998) 'The Expatriate Experience: A Critical Review and Synthesis', *Advances in International Comparative Management* 12: 237–73.
- Thomas, D. C. and Lazarova, M. B. (2006) 'Expatriate Adjustment and Performance: A Critical Review', in G. H. Stahl and I. Björkman (eds) *Handbook of Research in International Human Resource Management*, pp. 247–64. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Trimble, J. E. (2003) 'Social Change and Acculturation', in K. M. Chun, P. B. Organista and G. Marin (eds) *Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research*, pp. 3–13. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- US Census (2008) Web report on US Census Records.
- Valentine, C. (1971) 'Deficit, Difference, and Bicultural Models of Afro-American Behaviour', *Harvard Educational Review* 41: 137–57.
- Van Oudenhoven, J. P., Ward, C. and Masgoret, A.-M. (2006) 'Patterns of Relations between Immigrants and Host Societies', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 30: 637–51.
- Verkuyten, M. and Pouliasi, K. (2006) 'Biculturalism and Group Identification: The Mediating . . .', *Journal of Cross-Cultural*

Psychology 37(3): 312–26.

Zane, N. and Mak, W. (2003) 'Major Approaches to the Measurement of Acculturation among Ethnic Minority Populations: A Content Analysis and an Alternative Empirical Strategy', in K. M. Chun, P. B. Organista and G. Marin (eds) *Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research*, pp. 39–60. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

MARY YOKO BRANNEN (PhD University of Massachusetts, Amherst) is Visiting Professor of Strategy and Management at INSEAD and the Spansion Chair of Multicultural Integration at the Lucas Graduate School of Business, San Jose State University. She serves on the editorial board of the *Global Strategy Journal*, *International Journal of Business Innovation and Research*, *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Research*, and *Organizational Research Methods*, and is deputy editor of the *Journal of International Business Studies*. She has won several awards for her work, including the Breaking the Frames Award from the *Journal of Management Inquiry*. Address: Professor

Mary Yoko Brannen, Bd de Constance, 77305 Fontainebleau Cedex, France.
[email: mary-yoko.brannen@insead.edu]

DAVID C. THOMAS (PhD University of South Carolina) is Professor of International Management and Director of the Centre for Global Workforce Strategy at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada. He also currently serves as Director of the PhD Program in Business Administration. He is the author of eight books including *Cultural Intelligence: Living and Working Globally* (2009, Berrett-Koehler Publishers). His book *Cross-Cultural Management Essential Concepts* (SAGE Publications) was the winner of the R. Wayne Pace Human Resource Development book of the year award for 2008. He has recently edited (with Peter B. Smith and Mark Peterson) *The Handbook of Cross-Cultural Management Research* from SAGE Publications. Address: Professor David C. Thomas, Segal Graduate School of Business, Simon Fraser University, 500 Granville St Vancouver, BC Canada V6C 1W6.
[email: dcthomas@sfu.ca]

Résumé

La personne biculturelle dans l'entreprise : implications et opportunités (Mary Yoko Brannen et David C. Thomas)

La recherche en management interculturel présume généralement que les individus n'ont qu'un seul profil culturel. Cependant, étant donné l'évolution globale de la population active dans le monde, il est plus que probable que de plus en plus d'employés et de cadres seront biculturels. Ce numéro spécial répond au besoin d'approfondir cette question démographique dans le contexte de l'entreprise. Dans cet article de présentation, nous faisons un bref rappel de ce que nous savons sur la personne biculturelle, soulignons quelques implications qu'ont nos connaissances actuelles sur l'entreprise, identifions des opportunités d'investigation plus poussée sur ces sujets, et présentons les divers articles de ce numéro spécial.

Fonte: *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, v. 10, n. 1, p. 5-16, 2010. [Base de Datos]. Disponible em: <<http://online.sagepub.com>>. Acesso em: 22 jun. 2010.