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Best practices and attributes of bicultural leaders

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BEST PRACTICES AND ATTRIBUTES OF BICULTURAL LEADERS

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A Research Project

Presented to the Faculty of

The George L. Graziadio

School of Business and Management

Pepperdine University

———————————————

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

in

Organization Development

———————————————

by

Shefali Khandhar Mody

August 2014

This research project, completed by

SHEFALI KHANDHAR MODY

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been

submitted to and accepted by the faculty of The George L. Graziadio School of Business

and Management in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date: August 2014

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Abstract

This study sought to uncover the attributes of successful bicultural leaders. Findings suggested that any one of four acculturation strategies chosen by bicultural leaders depended on the intensity of the dominant spouse's alliance to their Country of Origin, their identity self-construal and opportunities to create supportive in-groups that made the bicultural individual the center of in-group connectivity. Integrated biculturals exhibit a tendency to create networks, where over time they become "central connectors" affording them unique positions of influence, knowledge transfer and power. This study posits that Network Centrality is a Bicultural Competence, recognized by its users as a pivotal antecedent to their success strategies. Educators may benefit from study findings that include participant suggested content specifically targeting new foreign born immigrants to help advance their achievements based on the study's findings of best practices and attributes of successful bicultural leaders.

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Finally, I dedicate this research study to my extraordinary parents, Drs. Navin and Shashi Khandhar. Your choices to move to Sydney Australia, and establish yourselves both personally and professionally in a foreign land, have afforded me benefits and opportunities that exceed my understanding. You are shining examples of what it means to be parents, doctors, givers, and world citizens.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The growing immigrant population in the US and globally, requires a deeper understanding of drivers of success for this demographic. In 2010, one out of every eight persons residing in the US was foreign born (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These immigrants face a multitude of challenges as they strive to succeed in their adapted country. In overcoming these challenges, foreign born leaders exhibit internal qualities, rely on external resources and acquire bicultural competences, which may prove informative for leadership development programs. The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the attributes of a successful foreign born bicultural leader. The following three research questions were identified:

1. What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the success of a bicultural leader?

2. How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

Study Setting

The Jain Center of Southern California (JCSC) is the largest non-profit Jain religious and cultural center in the United States with a membership of 3,000 families. It is a member organization of the Federation of Jain Associations In North America (JAINA). This umbrella organization governs 75 Jain Centers across the United States and Canada. As of 2012, total membership of JAINA exceeded 160,000 families. JAINA is a subsidiary organization of the JAIN World Association, which is the global organization that supports 580 Jain Centers globally and represents a membership of over

800,000 families globally. The Jain religion is a subset of major religions among the East Indian community. According to the National Federation of Indian Associations, as of 2012, there were 589 chartered non-profit organizations catering to the Indian community with a total membership of over 1.3 million people in the USA.

The JCSC's mission is to provide religious and cultural education to all of its members according to their needs. Classes run every Sunday and are standardized across all centers in the United States through the JAINA educational Intranet. At present, cultural classes that seek to inform and enable successful acculturation into the American culture are predominantly targeted toward 6 to 18 year old minors. Executives of the Jain Center proposed that workshops targeting specific skills that older professional members of the Jain Center could attain to enable them to succeed in the workplace, would be a desirable addition to the 23 workshops currently offered by the Center. Therefore, interest in the proposed content of these workshops prompted the interest from the JCSC to encourage its members to participate this present study.

The thirty participants of this research study were foreign born East Indian professionals who are active members of the JCSC. They were selected because they work full-time, have been residing in Southern California for a minimum of five years and have achieved a position of leadership at their place of work, which would imply they have overcome the obstacles typically associated with the foreign born professional. These participants represent qualities germane to over one quarter of all foreign born immigrants in the United States, in that in being foreign born, and having resided in the United States for over five years, they would have had the time to acculturate to an American schema.

Study Significance

The findings of this study can be: (a) presented to other immigrant cultural associations, (b) used by training and development professionals who seek to educate immigrant professionals and diverse teams, (c) be leveraged by large organizations as leadership development opportunities designed specifically for their bicultural labor force to help propel their success, and (d) help organizational leaders, become aware of how best to leverage the latent skills of bicultural professionals in their own diverse organizations, and e) inform consultants and leaders of organizations who have subsidiary offices across global boundaries.

The findings in chapter 4 and recommendations in chapter 5 will inform the JCSC of possible content to include in a six session leadership development workshop created for its members as a value add service provided by the Center.

Definitions

The following definitions are pertinent to this study:

1. Foreign born professional: someone born outside of the United States living and working in a full time position (Alarcon, 1998).

2. Acculturation: a dynamic and multidimensional process of adaptation that occurs when distinct cultures come into sustained contact (Brown, 2006; La Framboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993).

3. Acculturation strategy: previously called *variety*, is the response an individual makes to the acculturation process (Berry, 2006). Berry has identified four acculturation strategies: (a) *assimilatio*n, when an individual wishes to diminish or decrease the significance of the culture of origin and desires to identify and interact primarily with the other culture, typically with the dominant culture if one comes from an ethnic minority group; (b) *separation*, when the individual wishes to hold on to the original culture and avoids interacting or learning about the other culture(s); (c) *marginalization*, when the individuals show little involvement in maintaining the culture of origin or in learning about the other culture(s); and (d) *integration,* when a person shows an interest in maintaining the original culture and in learning and participating in the other culture(s).

4. Bicultural: People who have internalized both cultures in their everyday lives, exhibit behavioral competency in both cultures, and switch behavior depending on the cultural situation (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002).

Organization of Study

The present chapter discussed the rationale for the study, the study purpose and research questions, research setting, and study significance. Chapter 2 reviewed literature in support of the present study, including foreign born professionals as an immigrant subset, second culture acquisition models, and bicultural competences.

Chapter 3 described the methods that were used to conduct the present study. Procedures related to the research design, participants, data collection, ethical considerations, and data analyses were discussed.

Chapter 4 presents the results emerging from the present study, organized by research question. Chapter 5 presents a summary of key findings and presents conclusions. It then proposes recommendations for the JCSC and educators, cites limitations, and suggests directions for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to determine the attributes of a successful foreign born bicultural leader. The following three research questions were identified:

1. What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the success of a bicultural leader?

2. How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

This chapter provides a review of literature relevant to the present study. An overview of foreign born statistics and the challenges they face is presented first. This is followed by a summarization of second culture acquisition models. This is followed by a review of literature about biculturalism, bicultural identity formation and then bicultural competences. A summary of the literature reviewed is presented at the end of the chapter.

Foreign Born Professionals as an Immigrant Subset

The shifting demographics of the US population and globalization are factors that have influenced interest in understanding the occupational make-up of the foreign born population. Foreign born immigrants are individuals born outside of the United States, legally or illegally residing in the US. The number of foreign born in the US has been steadily rising since the 1970's. Although the foreign born are relatively small in absolute terms, by 2010, they numbered 40 million in population, representing one out of every eight Americans. During the same year, one out of every four people in the state of California was foreign born. Also of significance is the changing demographic constituency of the foreign born population. In 1960, 75% of the foreign born population

came from Europe. In 2010, 53% came from Latin America and 28% came from Asia (US Census Bureau, 2010). These numbers show no sign of decreasing, which makes understanding the barriers of success of this demographic vital to the economic health of the high "gateway" states of California, New York Texas and Florida, where over half of the nation's foreign born population resides.

There are many classifications of immigrants. Foreign born immigrants can enter the US legally via a study visa, work visa or be sponsored by US family residents. Foreign born illegal immigrants have entered the country crossing neighboring boarders and reside in the US without legal documentation. Some researchers also classify the US born children of these foreign born immigrants as second generation immigrants. The focus of this study is foreign born professionals who have legal residency status, have attained a leadership position at work and are first generation immigrants.

All immigrants face challenges at their workplace. Alarcon (1998) cites the following common challenges faced by foreign born immigrants: language barrier, racism, wage discrimination, and employment conditions that are colloquially referred to as "professional slave labor." The latter term refers to a condition where the employer stalls the forward progress of converting their work visa to a permanent resident or "greencard" status in favor of maintaining the employee in a "dependent" status to the employer. A review of the literature about foreign born immigrants has revealed the following four challenges:

1. Work-related challenges: Lack of U.S. residency (if entering under a student or work visa and the desire to reside permanently is salient), lack of professional network and job experience, and overcoming the underutilization of skill set (Ahmadian & Amin, 2008). Research documents that immigrants' previous work experiences in their home countries have a strong impact on their perceptions of and capacity to adapt to new organizational cultures (Baek, 1989; Kossoudji, 1988; Pooyan, 1984). Baek (1989) found that many

new immigrants tend to initially retain the practices of their prior organizational cultures, instead of adjusting to the cultures of U.S. firms. Gradually, however, they do adapt. Kossoudji (1988) asserts that adaptation to a new work environment depends on the immigrants' tenure within the United States. He also asserts that those who arrive before schooling tend to perceive fewer discrepancies and have better experiences than those who were schooled and perhaps worked in their native cultures.

2. Cultural challenges: Cultural shock (individualistic culture of US vs. communal culture), stereotyping, discrimination based on religion and national origin, language deficiency, overcoming power distance, challenges with food taste, preferences for clothing, amount of bare skin shown publicly, public displays of affection, familial role ambiguity and gender differences from work and at home (Ahmadian & Amin, 2008; Baek, 1989; Berry, 1984, 1990; Wei et al., 2010).

3. Social challenges: Lack of social support, difficulty socializing with US professionals, family related challenges and lack of trusted role models (Ahmadian & Amin, 2008; Wei et al., 2010).

4. Financial challenges: Financial limitations, lack of money or credit history, knowledge of the credit systems and pros and cons of these systems (Ahmadian & Amin, 2008; Kossoudji, 1988; Pooyan, 1984).

How a successful foreign born leader overcomes these challenges from a best practices point of view represents a gap in the literature. Therefore the first research question for this study is: What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the success of a bicultural leader?

These challenges are stressors which are events and conditions that cause change and require the individual to adapt to the new situation (Wei et al. 2010) or cause "perceived" stress, which is the outcome of a stressor and refers to the challenging experiences in daily life that people likely perceive as exceeding their coping capacity (Cohen & Willis, 1985). Together stressors and heightened levels of perceived stress impact the acquisition of the second culture (Berry, 1990) of the foreign born professional. An understanding of the chosen second culture acquisition process is vital

to the path of success for foreign born leaders (Ahmadian & Amin, 2008). Therefore, the following section reviews the literature on second culture acquisition models.

Second Culture Acquisition Models

It is a simple statement to make, that the act of immigration imposes many forms of change on the individual. A review of the literature resulted in two major models of second culture acquisition, which had origins in different academic disciplines. These models are assimilation and acculturation. Acculturation is a model that has two facets, one for low minority ratio environments, which is simply acculturation and another called multicultural acculturation when the ratio of heritage culture to host culture is higher.

Assimilation: A sociology lens. The assimilation theory literature stems mostly from the field of sociology. This model has historical roots originating in the early 19th century, is hierarchical (minority versus majority), unidirectional and multigenerational. This theory asserts that the desired goal outcome of the second culture acquisition is to become socially accepted and absorbed by the majority culture over time. The aim is for the majority and minority cultures to identify the individual as a part of the majority culture (Ruiz, 1981). Another tenet of this theory is that individuals undergo tremendous stress as they go through the assimilation process because of the need to be accepted by the majority culture and the loss of the heritage culture. In the past, because immigration into the US was predominantly white (from Europe), assimilation of these immigrants was plausible. It should be noted that these early studies did not address the African American, Hispanic and Asian populations as immigrants. The main lingering issue with assimilation theories is physical appearance which is where the theory of assimilation breaks down. Immigrants from Latin America and Asia have differences in physical appearances due to color of skin and facial features that don't allow for a seamless

assimilation into the American culture. Apart from high immigrant gateway states, the US, is still a white Anglo-Saxon majority and fifth generation Chinese immigrants are still not accepted as "American" by the majority (Brown, 2006).

  Acculturation: A psychology lens. For over three decades, Canadian psychologist John Berry has advocated a comprehensive framework for understanding the acculturation process and changes implied as they affect the individual. Berry's (1980) model is the most widely reviewed, researched, and amended model of acculturation currently available. His two-dimensional model depicts varying degrees of biculturalism, which are the result of the individual's choices and responses (Brown, 2006; La Framboise et al., 1993; Ruiz, 1981). As previously stated, a distinguishing feature between assimilation and acculturation is that in assimilation, minority individuals are presumed to want to be absorbed into the majority culture, whereas in acculturation, the minority individual is presumed to be going through an acculturation process but will always be identified as being part of the heritage culture (La Framboise et al., 1993).

  Berry (2003) suggests that with exposure to two or more cultures, an individual experiences at least two types of changes. At one level are behavioral shifts that affect the way the individual acts in areas as diverse as speech patterns, eating habits, clothing styles, and most importantly self-identity. The second level consists of emotional reactions to acculturative stress that can include anxiety and depression (Berry, 1980). Acculturative stress is related to factors as varied as the need to learn new behaviors, beliefs, attitudes and the realization of how different or even incompatible two cultures can be (Wei et al., 2010). For example, an immigrant from India may, after residing for a while in the United States, start wearing saris less frequently and begin to self-identify as

an "Indian-American" rather than as "Indian." At the same time, these acculturative

experiences may produce personal and interpersonal conflicts regarding deeply ingrained

cultural practices or values (e.g., arranged marriages or vegetarian diets) that may in turn

promote feelings of anxiety or even psychological depression (Berry, 2006).

Berry (1980) uses the term *varieties of acculturation* to describe the minority

individual's process of navigating an environment dominated by a majority culture.

Berry added that in such conditions, there is usually significant external pressure to

assimilate. However in a multicultural environment where both the host culture and

the heritage culture are of a higher mixed ratio, Berry (2003) proposes a multicultural

acculturation model, where the immigrant has a choice of *acculturation strategies*.

An individual's choice of a strategy depends on such previous circumstances as the

person's level of involvement with each culture as well as specific attitudinal and

behavioral preferences and characteristics. The strategies are as follows:

1. Assimilation. When an individual wishes to diminish the significance of the culture of origin and desires to identify primarily with the other culture, typically with the dominant culture if one comes from an ethnic minority group. For example if they are a foreign born immigrant of east Indian heritage, when asked by someone how do you identify? They would say "I am an American."

2. Separation. Whenever the individual wishes to hold on to the original culture and avoids interacting or learning about the other culture(s). In the above example the foreign born immigrant would say "I am an Indian."

3. Marginalization. Individuals show little interest in maintaining the culture of origin or in learning about the other culture(s). In this case the foreign born immigrant would say "I'm neither Indian nor American, I'm my own person or I have a new identity that is a fusion of both."

4. Integration. When a person shows an interest in maintaining the original culture and in learning and participating in the other culture(s). In this case the individual would identify as "I am Indian-American."

Acculturation studies tied to employees in the workplace have revealed varied topic areas. For example, Weinstock (1964) and Pooyan (1984) segmented their studies by nationalities, exploring how different nationalities acculturate. Adler (1991) observed that national culture and organizational culture correlate highly with one another. Because the U.S. national culture and the organizational cultures of its firms are typically individualistic (Hofstede, 1984, 1991), foreign born immigrants from collectivistic as opposed to individualistic cultures may favor different modes of acculturation. Studies have concluded that the way immigrants acculturate to a given organizational culture will be affected by how they acculturate to the more general national culture (Bhagat, 1983; Triandis et al., 1986). For example, if an immigrant chooses to assimilate into the U.S. culture, he or she will be predisposed to use assimilation in adjusting to the organizational culture as well. Of all of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, individualism-collectivism is considered to be one of the most important bases for cultural variation (Triandis et al., 1986). Individualism involves one's emotional independence from organizations, groups, or other collectives (Hofstede, 1984, 1991). Collectivism is defined as "a set of feelings, beliefs, behavioral intentions, and behaviors related to solidarity and concern for others" (Hui, 1988, p. 17). Therefore, collectivism is a measure of interdependence and individualism is a measure of independence. Another study by Kim et al. (1996) suggests if the immigrant came from a culture that favored individualism, they would formulate independent self-construals, which, in turn, elevated the perceived importance of outcomes and effectiveness. Conversely, foreign born immigrants from collectivist culture, would foster interdependent self-construals, which, in turn, raised the perceived importance of "other-oriented" concerns about hurting the hearer's feelings, avoiding negative evaluations by the hearer, and minimizing

impositions (Kim et al., 1996). These results illustrate that the individualism-collectivism dimension of national culture influences how individuals conceive of themselves and their relations with others (independent versus interdependent), which, in turn, affects what they consider to be important (outcomes versus relations with others). Therefore foreign born immigrants coming from a collectivistic culture will experience a "culture clash" when they migrate to a individualistic culture (Hofstede, 2003) and the choice of their acculturation strategy into the general culture will be emulated in their work culture.

Other studies Adler (1977), Krau (1981), and Bhagat (1983) looked at acculturation from a behavioral perspective. These studies contributed by acknowledging the importance of job satisfaction, how Maslow's hierarchy of needs impact the individual's acculturation stage and how the levels of stress can impact the individual in the various stages of acculturation. Kossoudji (1988) studied the economic factors that affect acculturation and concluded that the age of migration, occupational choice, and earnings influence individual acculturation processes. If the foreign born immigrant came to the US before adolescence, they would most likely assimilate into the general population with pre-labor earning potential similar to host country nationals. Kossoudji concludes, "Once all decisions are accounted for, child migrants outperform adult migrants in the long run in the white collar occupations. Asian child migrants have the highest earnings streams of all of the immigrants" (p. 498).

Other studies have concluded that the more "control" people have on their environment and their relationship with the majority culture, the less they will experience the negative effects of acculturation stress (La Framboise et al., 1993).

Based on a review of the literature that researches second culture acquisition models, the questions "What influences the choice of acculturation strategies of

successful bicultural leaders?" and "How do the different acculturation strategies manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?" represent gaps in the literature. Therefore the second research question identified for this study is: How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

Regardless of the chosen process, the outcome over a single generation is biculturalism (Brown, 2006). To overcome change, individuals use their existing knowledge base, skills and abilities, which over time develop into competences and strengthen the development of their identity. The act of choosing and implementing an acculturation strategy will result in the foreign born immigrant becoming a bicultural national. In moving toward this outcome, the bicultural will acquire new skills and competences to meet the challenges of internalizing and negotiating two cultural schemas (Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2006). The following section reviews the literature about bicultural competence and how these skills are beneficial to professional success.

Bicultural Competences: The Latent Skillset

The last two decades have provided a lot of interesting research on bicultural competence from many disciplines. The mixed disciplinary lens applied to the topic of bicultural competence adds not only complexity and richness to the knowledge base; it characterizes its growing importance as an area of research. From a sociological viewpoint Berry's (1993) work posited the existence of bicultural competences as coping mechanisms. The seminal work from a psychological stance of La Framboise et al. (1993) defined bicultural competences and contexts for their use. The work of Benet-Martinez et al. (2006) again from the field of psychology, contributed to the body of

knowledge by creating a Bicultural Integration Index, whereby a high score versus a low score indicted prevalence for particular competences. This work stressed that being high versus low, was not better or worse, but resulted in different competences being developed. Brannen, Garcia, and Thomas (2010) discussed the opportunities and implications of bicultural competence in the workplace thus introducing a cross cultural management lens to the body of knowledge. This literature emphasized that biculturals can be considered "culture bridges" that are underutilized in organizations, partly because organizations and biculturals themselves are unaware of these heightened skills. The work of Hong (2010) links greater team effectiveness to the specific bicultural competences of cross cultural communication skills and boundary spanning (meaning the ability to transfer knowledge across contextual boundaries). Finally, the work of Lakshman (2013) introduces Attributional Knowledge to the list of bicultural competences linking this competence to leadership effectiveness.

Table 1 lists the most widely researched bicultural competences and the organizational applications. These competences have not been ranked with respect to their impact on professional success from the perspective of the user representing a gap in the literature. Researching this gap may provide insight into: (a) the awareness level of these competences by the bicultural since heightened awareness of a skill set leads to its conscious application and improvement and (b) how self-identification may influence the value placed on each competence. Therefore this study extends a third question: How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

Summary

This chapter reviewed literature relevant to the present study purpose to determine the attributes of a successful foreign born bicultural leader. Many researchers have

contributed to the greater understanding of biculturals and the competences they have inherent in them because of the acculturation strategy they chose. The literature discusses the importance of bicultural competence and extends their application across organizations. However, the manner in which successful bicultural leaders overcame acculturation challenges, and how important they view these competences as precursors to their success is a gap in the literature around this topic. The next chapter describes the methods that will be used to conduct the investigation that will attempt to bridge this gap.

Table 1

Bicultural Competences in Context to their Organizational Applicability

Bicultural Competence	Definition	Organizational Application
Attribution Knowledge	The extent to which a person from one culture makes accurate attributions about the behavior of a person from another culture (Triandis, 1975)	Biculturals are able to correctly understand why people do what they do in the two cultures they represent, in addition to being able to internalize the value systems of the two cultures into a meaningful whole. Managing cross cultural assignments would be a strength of a bicultural because they would possess a higher understanding of the mediating process between people of two different cultures, which could make them more effective leaders (Lakshman, 2013).
Behavioral Adaptability	Refers to one's ability to appreciate and detect culture-specific aspects of social behavior. It requires a high level of culture-specific knowledge (Hong, 2010)	Behavioral adaptability helps bicultural regulate and produce culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior in cross-cultural business contexts (Hong, 2010).
Boundary Spanning	The ability to transfer knowledge across contextual boundaries (Hong, 2010).	The impact of knowledge transfer as opposed to translation because this requires high culture specific knowledge and behavioral adaptability. (Hong, 2010)
Cross-Cultural Communication Skills	The ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in a given situation as one interacts, both verbally and non-verbally, in each culture in a cross-cultural context (Hong, 2010)	Appropriate communication skills are perquisite of all leadership theories. The ability to do so across cultures allows the Bicultural to become a mediator or facilitator of change versus a translator across these two cultures. Benet-Martínez, Lee, and Leu (2006)
Cultural Cognitive Complexity	Leads to a broader and more refined understanding of culture, which involves higher degrees of differentiation (capturing all of the nuances), articulation, abstraction, and integration-indicated by an overarching framework of how the nuances fit together (Scott, Osgood, Peterson, & Scott, 1979).	Biculturals with High Bicultural Integration Index are more cognitively complex, tend to be better adjusted psychologically (Chae & Foley, 2010) and socio-culturally within both home and host cultures. In addition they possess the ability to handle cross-cultural conflicts because of their higher degree of understanding (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007) and the behavioral repertoires they have to draw upon in such situations.
Culture Specific Knowledge	Involves the degree to which a bicultural is aware of and knowledgeable about a culture's history, institutions, rituals, and daily practices (Hong, 2010).	Culture-specific knowledge is crucial to the bicultural self-image, is highly self-relevant, and is similar to other personality traits; because it is highly accessible to memory (Hong, 2010).

Bicultural Competence	Definition	Organizational Application
Cultural Meta Cognition	A heightened level of perception and intuition with respect to cultural behaviors and norms as a result of internalizing one or more cultures through lived experience inside these cultures (Hong, 2010).	Heightened perception and intuition is congruent with cross communication skills as it facilitates negotiation and mediation across both cultures (Brannan et al., 2010). This trait could be an antecedent for attributional knowledge.
Frame Switching	The ability to change or "switch" behaviors to suit the cultural norms of the present environment at will from two or more internalized cultural schemas (Cheng, Lee, & Benet-Martínez et al., 2006; Hong, 2010).	The benefit of being able to switch enables the activation of the other competences such as behavioral adaptability and cross communication skills. (Cheng et al., 2006) (Hong, 2010). At an organizational level, the ability to frame switch between two cultures could enable a bicultural to easily switch between cultures present between corporate and branch offices.

Chapter 3

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine the attributes of a successful foreign born bicultural leader. The following three research questions were identified:

1. What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the success of a bicultural leader?

2. How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

Chapter 2 presented a review of the challenges faced by foreign born professionals, discussed different frameworks for the acculturation process, and outlined existing definitions of bicultural competence that appeared in the research literature over the past two decades. This literature review informed the research design of this study.

Research Design

The qualitative method chosen for this research design is that of focus group interviews. The main argument for using them in this context is their collective nature since the topic is one that discusses success strategies among bicultural leaders. Research using focus group design, may suit people who cannot articulate their thoughts easily and provide collective power to introverted people. The primary aim of a focus group is to describe and understand meanings and interpretations of a select group of people to gain an understanding of a specific issue from the perspective of the participants of the group (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

According to Morgan (2002), there are two types of approaches for focus groups; 1) *structured* employed predominantly by market researchers and 2) *less structured*

approach which is gaining acceptance among social science researchers. The difference is that the structured approach is more a discussion occurring mainly between the researcher and the participant, whereby the researcher is an active participant in the discussion and guides the focus group with directional questions. In the less structured approach, the aim of the researcher is to observe and facilitate discussion between the participants rather than direct it with an aim to understand the lived experience of the research participants from a collective stance and "bubble-up" opposing viewpoints from animated conversation. For the purpose of this study, a less structured focus group design was used.

Focus group interviews are moderated discussions that allow for in-depth discussion about a specific topic of interest among relatively small numbers of participants. Importantly, focus group interviews allow for interaction between participants, which is believed to foster collective processing and generation of new ideas related to the topics (Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007). Participants in focus groups usually have shared social and cultural experiences (such as age, social class, gender, ethnicity, religion and educational background) or shared particular areas of concern (such as divorce, marriage, motherhood).

As a qualitative method, focus group interviewing has both strengths and limitations. Often, focus groups are criticized for offering a shallower understanding of an issue than those obtained from individual interviews (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In a focus group discussion, personal information and experiences may not be discussed as openly if they are negative in nature. Also, the social context of focus groups has an influence on issues of disclosure and social conformity (Morgan, 2002). However, this can be overcome by utilizing a written follow-up interview survey, whereby information

can be drawn out in private exchange between the researcher and the participant. In some focus groups, certain dominant or aggressive personalities may influence the group discussion. Therefore some participants may feel too intimidated to speak. In other situations, they may simply conform to the dominant ideas present in the group (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Therefore, the quality of data generated will be affected by the characteristics and context of the focus groups and the role and bias of the researcher.

Qualitative studies by nature are both innately personal and interactive. The researcher plays a unique role, whereby the researcher is linked to the participants, influencing them and being influenced by them (Punch, 2005). This study was conducted by a bicultural foreign born professional who has lived in the Southern California region for 20 years belonging to the JCSC (see permission letter in Appendix A). Miles and Huberman (2004) warned that "the apparent simplicity of qualitative data masks a good deal of complexity, requiring plenty of care and self- awareness on the part of the researcher" (p. 10).

Since this study is exploratory in nature, a qualitative less structured focus group interview approach was chosen as the most appropriate data gathering method because the study's aim was to garner a deeper understanding of the attributes of a successful bicultural leader and the group interaction would provide as valuable a data set as what was actually said.

Participants

Qualitative research studies typically tend toward small and purposive sample sizes (Punch, 2005). Two focus group interviews for this study were conducted with 30 foreign born professionals who belong to the JCSC. JCSC members were invited to participate in the study through flyer distribution at the Jain center explaining the nature

and purpose of the research (see Appendix B). Interested members of the JCSC contacted

the researcher expressing interest in the study. These JCSC members were filtered

through an initial set of questions via telephone interview to ensure they met the research

study criteria. The participants were chosen on the basis of the relevance to the research

question. They had to meet the following criteria:

1. Be born outside of the US,

2. Have a full-time position (at least 75% of this paid work having been
    performed in the U.S. or for a U.S. based company),

3. Resided in the US for a minimum of 5 years

4. Have a leadership position at work with a minimum of 2 staff reports

5. A positive response to the idea of leadership development for foreign born
    professionals.

Potential participants were subsequently contacted a second time by telephone to

schedule participation in one of two focus group interviews at the Irvine Pepperdine

Library (conducted inside one of the large study group rooms).

Data Collection

The following is a summary of the data collection steps taken for this study.

1. Potential participants were contacted by telephone to schedule participation in
    one of two focus group interviews at the Irvine Pepperdine Library (conducted
    inside one of the large study group rooms). It was important to conduct the
    focus group in a conference room setting to ensure that the participant's
    "frame" of reference was the workplace. Researchers like Benet-Martinez,
    Leu, Lee, & Morris (2002) have shown that pictures of another culture can
    cause a bicultural to frame switch from one cultural frame to another,
    therefore the professional conference room setting was the "primer" for a US
    frame of mind.

2. Participants were asked during the appointment setting call, if they identified
    as Indian-American, Indian or American. Based on their response, they were
    grouped into one of two focus groups. One focus group consisted of those
    participants that identified as Indian-American representing biculturals that at
    the onset of the study self-identified as choosing the Integrated acculturation
    strategy. The other focus group consisted of participants that self-identified as

Indian or American representing a group of biculturals that would have chosen the Assimilated, Separated or Marginalized acculturation strategies. Both focus groups had a mix of men and women. Wherever possible the researcher utilized different color markers when brainstorming to record the gender of the participant as they responded.

3. At the onset of the focus group, participants were given consent forms (see Appendix C), which were discussed. It was reiterated that participation was voluntary, the focus group could be stopped at any time, that it would be recorded and the participant's identity would remain anonymous in the study findings.

4. General demographic data was collected from each participant (Appendix D).

5. A focus group discussion protocol was followed (Appendix E).

6. A sheet outlining the definitions of bicultural competences was presented to each participant as a reference guide for their use throughout the focus group interview (see Appendix F).

7. Each participant was asked to relate a short review of their career narrative starting with when they arrived to the United States, going through each job, with a focus on their success strategies.

8. Participants were asked to brainstorm the internal qualities and external factors that attribute to the success of a bicultural leader onto flipcharts. Then they were requested to "dot vote" for the top three qualities and factors using colored sticky dots. Men and women were given different color dots to differentiate gender response.

9. The acculturation strategies were presented and participants were asked which strategy they chose and why. These responses were noted on flipcharts and pasted around the room for participant reference throughout the focus group session.

10. Toward the end of the focus group session, the participants were asked to rank the bicultural competences in Appendix F in order of importance. This step provided the data set for the third research question of the study.

Survey questions (see Appendix E) were designed to explore the following three

research questions posed in this study:

1. What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the success of a bicultural leader?

2. How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

The questions were open-ended and allowed participants to provide a spontaneous "lived experience" answer. During the focus group, participants were asked to repeat the question and "think aloud" as they go along, restating questions (and sometimes response options) in their own words, indicating the cognitive process they use in choosing the answer. This step was included to explore the cognitive frame of mind of the bicultural and to ascertain, which cultural values and beliefs held had bearing on the answers given (Sofaer, 1999). At all times the participants were able to ask clarifying questions along the way, and were asked probing questions throughout the focus group, regarding their interpretation of the questions and the reasons why they gave the answers they did. This extra step was taken during the interview process to increase understanding of how foreign born professionals perceive and interpret language, culture and their own experiences. Discussion among the participants was encouraged; participants who did not speak up were asked their opinion. Nonverbal communication such as body language or silence was noted as data and used as prompts for further probing questions. Whenever side-bar conversations occurred, the participants were requested to share the discussion with the entire group.

During the focus group, detailed notes of observations of interactions between participants were taken which was also considered a data set. Each focus group lasted two hours. These sessions were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Ethical Considerations

All human participant protections guidelines provided by the Institutional Review Board were observed during this study and it was assured that the participants were

protected from harm and that any risks they faced in participating were mitigated. Participants were advised of why the research was being conducted. Participants were advised of all procedures involved in the study and the time required for participation. Risks and safeguards for mitigating the risks were outlined. The consent form assured participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, or refuse to answer a question at any time. Each participant understood that their identity was kept confidential in the results of the study. A participant signing the study consent forms also agreed to the entire focus group session being recorded, so that it could be transcribed for data analysis at a later date. The signed consent forms, digital recordings and transcripts are kept in a locked cabinet separate from the data for 3 years. After this time, all data and consent forms will be destroyed.

Data Analysis Procedures

To analyze the data collected, this study followed the process outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) for in depth interviews. The transcripts and participants were given unique identifiers. After initial familiarization with the data, several rounds of coding were conducted. Upon completion of the coding, the saturation level for each theme was noted. The flipcharts with dot voted data were collected, reviewed and tabulated. The bicultural competence ranking sheets were tabulated using "Excel" against the demographic data of each participant to create a database that could be analyzed using "pivot tables" in the Excel software to create summary tables. The final analysis was then reviewed by a second rater. Inter-rater reliability was assessed as the quotient based on the number of codes in agreement (based on the researcher and the second rate review) divided by the total number of codes. Any areas of disagreement were discussed and

resolved. The rate of inter-rater agreement was 84%. The results reported in chapter 4 reflect the final analysis.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the research methodology for this research project, including the research design, sampling, data collection, and data analysis procedures. This study used a qualitative focus group interview method to determine the attributes of successful bicultural leaders. The next chapter reports on the results and analysis.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the attributes of a successful foreign born bicultural leader. The following three research questions were identified:

1. What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the success of a bicultural leader?

2. How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

This study was conducted using a focus group methodology. This chapter presents the results in the order the research questions were asked, during each focus group.

Participant Demographics

Thirty foreign born bicultural leaders participated in this study. They all worked full-time, resided in Southern California and have a minimum of two people reporting to them. Of the 30 participants, 15 were men and 15 were women. All of the participants had at a minimum, achieved a Bachelor's degree. All participants were married, were homeowners and had children above the age of 10.

These participants were divided into one of two focus groups based on how they self-identified during the phone appointment setting conversation. Fifteen participants self-identified as Indian-American and were requested to participate in the first focus group (Group 1-Integrated). Fifteen participants self-identified as either Indian or American and were asked to meet in the second group (Group 2-Non-Integrated). About 37% of the total study participants were born in one country, grew up in the same country and then moved to the US. Another 20% were born in India and grew up in the US. These

17 participants (57% of the total group) identify with two cultures. The other 13

participants were born in one country, grew up in another country and then migrated to

the US, making them tricultural. The following quote from one participant summarizes

the sentiment held by all of the tricultural participants, who identified strongly with the

country they grew up in:

> Although I was born in India, I grew up in Nairobi. My cousins in India don't
> think I'm Indian. I know how to be "Indian" like them if I want too. If anything
> I'm more loyal and nostalgic about Nairobi, than India. Americans immediately
> think I'm Indian because that's my race. They really are all about skin color here
> in the US and if they happen to guess I'm Indian, they don't bother to ask any
> further.

Over half of the study participants came to the US after the age of 30, having

completed a university degree in their home country. There were four study participants

that were born in India and moved to the US under the age of 18, therefore attended high

school in the US. There were ten study participants that migrated to the US between the

ages of 18 and 30. These 14 participants completed their college education in the US. In

the subset, Group 2-Non-Integrated participants, eleven of the fifteen participants came to

the US before the age of 30 having completed all of their schooling in US. This fact

would have impacted their acculturation strategy choice. The opposite is true of the

Group 1-Integrated participants, whereby twelve of the fifteen participants migrated after

the age of 30, having completed their undergraduate degrees in their country of origin.

With respect to cultural heritage of their spouse, 87% of the study participants were

married to people with the same cultural heritage as their own. Over half of the study

participants had five to ten direct reports. Group 1-Integrated had more participants that

were employed by organizations and Group 2-Non-Integrated had more participants that

owned their own business. Table 2 summarizes participant demographics for this study.

Table 2

Study Participant Demographics

	Group 1 – Integrated Bicultural Leaders *N* = 15	Group 2- Non-Integrated Bicultural Leaders *N* = 15	Total *N* = 30
Gender			
Male	7 (47%)	8 (53%)	15 (50%)
Female	8 (53%)	7 (47%)	15 (50%)
Age			
Average Age Male	48	50	48
Average Age Female	45	43	44
Age Migrated to US			
0-18	1 (6%)	3 (20%)	4 (13%)
18-30	2 (13%)	8 (53%)	10 (33%)
30 plus	12 (80%)	4 (27%)	16 (54%)
Country Born: Country Grew Up			
India: India	4 (27%)	2 (13%)	6 (20%)
India: Other Country	5 (33%)	3 (20%)	8 (26%)
India: US	2 (13%)	4 (27%)	6 (20%)
London: London	2 (13%)	3 (20%)	5 (17%)
Hong Kong: India	1 (7%)	2 (13%)	3 (10%)
Nairobi: London	1 (7%)	1 (6%)	2 (7%)
Educational Attainment			
Bachelor's Degree	6 (40%)	7 (47%)	13 (43%)
Master's Degree	9 (60%)	8 (53%)	17 (57%)
Cultural Heritage of Spouse			
Same	15 (100%)	11 (73%)	26 (87%)
Different	-	4 (27%)	4 (13%)
Spouse Grew Up:			
India	12 (80%)	3 (20%)	15 (50%)
US	2 (13%)	7 (47%)	9 (30%)
London	-	3 (20%)	3 (10%)
Hong Kong	1 (7%)	2 (13%)	3 (10%)
Self-Identify as:			
Bicultural	8 (53%)	9 (60%)	17 (57%)
Tricultural	7 (47%)	6 (40%)	13 (43%)
# Of Direct Reports			
3 or Less	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	6 (20%)
5 to 10	8 (47%)	9 (60%)	17 (56%)
10 to 35	3 (20%)	2 (13%)	5 (17%)
35 to 100	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	2 (7%)
Employment Type			
Self-Employed Consultant	2 (13%)	1 (7%)	3 (10%)
Employed by Organization	12 (80%)	3 (20%)	15 (50%)
Came Entrepreneur Small Business	1 (7%)	10 (66%)	11 (37%)
Founder/Owner Organization	-	1 (7%)	1 (3%)

Internal Qualities that Contribute to Success

Participants in both focus groups brainstormed the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to their success. After a list of words was written on a flipchart, the participants used sticky dots to "vote" for their top five responses. Of the 24 qualities listed, the top five internal qualities that contributed to bicultural leaders' success in rank order were: confidence, adaptability, ambitious, opportunistic and stand out from the crowd (see Table 3). These internal qualities are discusses further below.

Table 3

Internal Qualities that Contribute to Success: Rank Order

Words with * did NOT come up in Group 2	Group 1 – Integrated Bicultural Leaders N = 15		Group 2-Non-Integrated Bicultural Leaders N = 15		Total N = 30 150 Votes
Internal Qualities	Male n = 7 and 35 votes	Female n = 8 and 40 votes	Male n = 8 and 40 votes	Female n = 7 and 35 votes	
Confidence	5	5	5	5	20
Adaptability	5	5	5	4	19
Ambitious	2	1	6	5	19
Opportunistic	1		7	6	14
Stand Out From The Crowd	4	4	3	2	13
Great observation skills	2	4	5	1	12
Family Orientated	1	6		3	10
Intuitive	3	2	3	1	9
Patient	2	4		2	8
Compassionate		4	1	1	6
Have Integrity			4	1	5
Hard Working				4	4
Strong communicator*	3				3
Willing to do whatever it takes*	3				3
Motivated	2				2
Resilient*	2				2
Tolerant*		2			2
Creative*		1			1
Persistent*		1			1
Progressive			1		1
Self-Reliant*		1			1
Curious*					-
Honest*					-
Non-complacent*					-
Sense of Non-Entitlement*					-

Confidence. The internal quality of confidence ranked highest overall with 26 votes total over all study participants. The discussion around confidence centered on "stepping out of a cultural comfort zone;" however, the nuance was different between focus groups. In Group 1-Integrated, confidence was an antecedent quality, needed to spark all the other internal qualities. A group agreement was reached around the following statement made by one participant:

> You have to be confident to succeed in this country. In India, there's this embedded state of staying in the role that you are given, and almost remaining there and being grateful for it. Here you can be anything you want to be. However, you need to have confidence. It's one thing to be adaptable, have ambition, but the driver of these, I believe is confidence. Without confidence all the other qualities won't lift off.

In Group 2-Non-Integrated, the quality of confidence was discussed as an "American" quality that needed to be modeled in order to "be more like them." The following statement exemplified this finding:

> You have to be confident to talk like Americans, so you can become one of them. Americans are very confident. They value risk-takers. They know how to market themselves and always present a positive attitude to their work and their business.

Adaptability. While adaptability was an even choice among men and women in both focus groups, this quality had more votes among Group 1-Integrated participants and was their highest ranking internal quality. The importance of adaptability and the external factor of support systems for Integrated bicultural leaders was summed up by the following statement made by a Group 1-Integrated male participant:

> I think the most important factors that have contributed to my success are adaptability and support systems. Being adaptable has made all the changes I've faced after coming here easy. Moving from India to Chicago and then from Chicago to Irvine is a lot of change, especially because you have to create a new network everywhere you go. When I moved here, I had to learn everything, from how to eat properly with a knife and fork to how to communicate with Americans. I watched a lot of TV late into the night so I could practice "how" to talk and paid attention to my accent. We had a lot of Indian friends and I asked a lot of

questions about American systems. My wife and I changed ourselves to fit in at work, but we enjoyed being with our Indian friends during the weekend. They became our support system. Without our Indian friends, adapting to American culture would have been difficult.

Ambition and opportunistic. The internal qualities of ambition and being opportunistic were the areas of greatest disparity between scores of the two groups. These qualities scored four times higher among Group 2-Non-Integrated participants. It is possible that these characteristics scored higher because this group had more entrepreneurial small business owners than Group 1-Integrated.

Distinctiveness. The internal quality of standing out from the crowd ranked fifth among the twenty-four qualities listed. All participants that voted for this quality concurred that standing out from the crowd or being "distinctive" enabled them to create groups of friends and colleagues and allowed them to lead these groups when needed.

Family-orientated. Being family orientated was a quality that ranked higher among female participants over male participants. One female participant in the Group 1-Integrated stated:

> Our family's success is attributed to me being flexible about my career. I stayed home when our children were younger. We never comprised when it came to the kids. Our focus was our family which extended to our parents and our siblings and their families. They are all here to support us.

It should be noted that male participants applauded, while female participants voted for family-orientation. This act may have spurred other females to vote for this characteristic during the dot voting process.

Patience. The internal quality of patience scored higher among Group 1-Integrated participants than the other group. Many in Group 1-Intergrated came to the US under a work visa sponsored by their employing organization. The stress of acquiring permanent residency early on in their acculturation process, required patience, therefore

maintaining their patience through challenges was a valued quality that contributed to the success of participants in this group.

Compassion. Females in Group 1-Integrated valued compassion 4 to 1 over females in Group 2-Non-Integrated. The discussion around this quality centered on internal family dynamics of multi-generational households. The females that voted for this quality in both groups live with the husbands' parents in the same household. The following statement from one participant summarizes why female bicultural leaders believed compassion was an internal characteristic that contributed to their success at work.

> My husband's parents were a great support system, in the early days of our lives out here. They took care of my son so I could work and we could save on childcare. They still keep the Indian culture and language alive in our household, because my son has to learn our language to communicate with them. Having them around has made me more compassionate to older colleagues at work, and also to other immigrant direct reports that I have, because I understand they need to take time off to look after their family.

External Factors that Contributed to Success

A similar process of brainstorming and dot voting resulted in five external factors that contributed to biculturals participant success (see Table 4). In order of rank, these factors were: support systems (family or friends), organization/employer support, financial support, an open accepting environment, and a positive impression of Indians.

Table 4

External Factors that Contribute to Success: Rank Order

External Factors	Group 1 – Integrated Bicultural Leaders N = 45 Votes		Group 2-Non-Integrated Bicultural Leaders N = 45 Votes		Total N = 90 Votes
	Male n = 7	Female n = 8	Male n = 8	Female n = 7	Votes
Support Systems (family and friends)	15	12	5	6	38
Organization/Employer Support	10	11	6	4	31
Financial Support	5	6	10	6	27
Open Accepting Environment	2	9	7	6	24
Positive Impression of Indians	3	2	12	1	18

Support systems. Group 1-Integrated participants ranked support systems

consisting of family and friends and employer support as the top external factors that

contributed to their success. They also viewed this factor as being in their control. The

following comment from a male participant summarizes why support systems ranked

higher than other factors for this group.

> My family and friends are my social network. They have been always been a
> strong anchor to the Indian culture and values we all still hold on to. There are
> many things in the American culture that will always differ from our ethnic ways,
> but having our family and Indian friends' network close allows all of us to have
> the best of both worlds. A strong support system even within your workplace is
> imperative to climb up. I have worked hard and invited many colleagues home for
> an Indian meal. I still keep in contact with friends from my very first job in New
> York, when I was a junior accountant. Making a network is one thing, but keeping
> it alive and thriving is a skill many people don't talk about as a leadership quality.

Financial support. Group 2-Non-Integrated participants ranked financial support,

an open environment and good impression of Indians as important external factors over

social support systems. Many of these participants are small business owners; therefore

financial support from the private sector was important to their success.

Positive impressions. The open environment, referred to choosing to live in cities

that were diverse, so that they felt like they fit in. Gateway cities with diverse immigrant

populations fostered positive impressions of Indian nationals, a perception, which was important mostly to those participants who were married to non-Indian spouses. One female participant who married a male Caucasian American stated, "I'm lucky that California is so diverse. Americans love Indians here. I met my husband working as an interior designer and it was my family that initially had concerns over the marriage. His accepted me straight away."

There were two participants that owned small businesses that catered solely to the Indian population, had self-identified as Indian, choosing a "separated" acculturation strategy. These participants were grateful that city councils were in favor of Indian grocery stores and restaurants and attribute the positivity to an overall feeling their ethnicity was held in high esteem. One participant shared, "The city planner was very pleased when we got the plans approved for renovating our Indian grocery store. They all know we Indians are successful and will pay them good taxes."

Influences of Acculturation Strategy Choice that Manifest Success

This section analyzes data to answer this study's second research question: How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success? When asked directly, all participants unanimously stated that not one of them consciously "chose" an acculturation strategy at the onset of their immigration into the United States. This sentiment was captured by one participant of Group 1-Integrated, who stated:

> The word "strategy" doesn't fit. It implies we consciously made a choice and that's not the case. When we came here we were young and just wanted to get on with becoming settled here. With that comes a lot of challenges, but no one told me-hey become "Integrated" and you will succeed or "Assimilate" and you will get this. We just did what we had to and emulated those around us. It was an adaptive process; however we proactively choose who we associated with to build our support network out here. It was easier to make friends that were couples just

like us and we learned from each other want was important and what wasn't. My wife and I were conscious of who we socialized with and who formed our core circle of friends, to the point we included couples that were older than us and some whose parents migrated here in the 1950's, so we could leverage their experience. It was important for us to select the right friends to socialize with so our children "felt" normal out here as well. Our network will someday become their network, and who knows, they may fall in love and marry, and so that's good too. Our kids aren't going to want to have arranged marriages like we did, but if we socialize with the right people, then maybe their children will become friends with ours and "love" can happen naturally. Now I know of some guy's that needed greencards, who have married American citizens to stay here, I guess, they were very "strategic" if you want to use that word.

From the statement above, it was apparent that the process of acculturation is a dynamic process and conscious process for to the person that is acculturating. The act of choosing associative groups, suggests interdependent self-construal among Integrated biculturals. An analysis of demographic data and discussion during focus groups revealed three main factors that impacted acculturation strategy that was self-reported by study participants. The first was the dominant cultural identity at home, second was a perception of dual culture tension and the third factor was the external career influencers of the host country (US). Table 5 Acculturation Strategy Factors summarizes these results and is followed by a discussion of acculturation strategy factors.

Table 5

Acculturation Strategy Factors

| | Culture At Home | | Perceived Dual Culture | External Career Influences | | |
	Indian	Not Indian		Both US & Indian	Indian	US
Integrated	15		Yes	8	2	5
Separated	2		No		2	
Assimilated		7	No	1		6
Marginalized		6	No	1		5

Integrated biculturals. The cultural heritage of the spouse was a "root" factor that impacted acculturation process for most all study participants. The ethnicity of the foreign born professionals' spouse and which ethnicity was dominant among the two

partners provided the basis of the culture at home. Group 1-Integrated had participants that all were married to the same ethnicity. This fact and the strong support system of "like" families, created an "In-group" of biculturally Integrated couples all with strong desires to maintain this network because they saw it as a vital support system that contributed to their success. They all also work predominantly for US based organizations in Southern California and proactively negotiate the duality of two cultures; American at work and Indian at home. One participant stated:

> I came to the US when I was thirty and had just gotten married. I was already set in my ways, but eager to learn about America, however we both loved coming home to an Indian household. We both supported each other and upheld our culture at home and then at work we could be western. Our friends were other couples like us with children the same age so they could play and grow up together. I think over time we are not really Indian from India anymore, because times have changed over there as well. We really are a special mix that called Indian-American. My cousin and his wife that live in London are British-Indian or "Brindian" as they call themselves. Even though we are all Indians, the country we live in has made us all different types of Indian blends.

One participant owned a large company that served both India and the US. He stated:

> I try to maintain the same American culture in my subsidiary in India so that expectations are met by the employees in the US culture. We regularly have training in both companies about cross-cultural differences so that my employees understand and don't flare up on each other.

Separated biculturals. There were two participants in Group 2-Non-Integrated that self-identified as Indian or having chosen a Separated acculturation strategy. Both participants were married to a spouse that grew up in India, and they owned small businesses that catered to the Indian population. Therefore both the internal and external career cultures were predominantly Indian. The following statement encapsulates the separated acculturation choice with an independent self-construal: "Saying I'm Indian is important to my business and there isn't any need for us to "Americanize" more than we

have too. We have worked extremely hard and self-sacrificed a lot in order to get to where we are."

Assimilated biculturals. There were seven participants in Group 2-Non-Integrated that self-categorized as Assimilated. This group was characterized as having a dominant US culture in both the internal at home and external environments. This group consisted of three individuals that had married spouses of the same ethnic origin and four individuals that had married spouses of different ethnic origins. Three of these four participants immigrated after the ages of 30. Two of these four were married to Caucasian US citizens. These two participants strongly self-identified as Americans. One participant summed up this by stating:

> When you marry an American and you live in America, you become American. My family didn't support my decision at first, and my wife still feels like she doesn't belong in my family. Lucky for her they are all in India. When I go back to visit them, I can't even speak the language anymore, I can't tolerate all the social customs and I have trouble digesting the food.

The other three participants that identified as Assimilated were married to 2nd generation Indians. These three participants were female, and their husbands having grown up in the US strongly identified as American. One female participant stated that:

> I married an American, although he looks Indian. I don't mind, I grew up in London, so I don't really feel Indian. I call myself American because he does, and we don't really live with the "in-laws" or do anything cultural like going to temple or anything. He's American, I'm no longer really British so I identify as American.

Marginalized bicultural. There were six participants in Group 2-Non-Integrated that self-identified as marginalized or not wanting to self-identify as Indian, American or Indian-American. The common characteristic of these participants was that they did not have an Indian culture at home and they perceived the external career factors surrounding them as American. Marriage between Indians spouses that grew up in countries outside of

India typified this group. The primary reason given was that both partners were born in India, but grew up outside of India in countries such as Nairobi, London, and Hong Kong. They therefore, identified as "tricultural" and as such were reluctant to identify with any one nationality; instead they resonated with the following statement made by one female participant:

> I'd rather not say I belong to India, or Hong Kong or America. I really am a fusion of all three. I move between all of them and none of them. Just because I've stayed in Spain for two years, do I call myself Spanish too? I'm my own culture and really don't like to be labeled at work as just Indian, because that's what I look like. There are too many assumptions tied to any one nationality.

Situational self-identity. There were two other factors that impacted self-identification *after* the initial acculturation strategy process. Both groups discussed the impact of teenage children and the rise of India as a global economic power as impetus to change their initial self-identification. Group 1-Integrated participants, agreed that when their children reached high school age, the parents preferred to reinforce Indian norms and identified themselves as Indian in front of their children. One female participant stated she did this to "help our children continue to learn to balance both cultures so they remember where they came from especially in high school when they want to be more American to fit in with their friends."

In the case of Group 2-Non-Integrated participants that were from mixed marriages, self-identification depended on how "Indian" the child looked. If the child was fair, they identified themselves as American and if the child's skin was darker, the parent that was Indian, shifted from American to Indian to help the child feel like they belonged. One female participant stated:

> One of my daughters has gone on my husband's side of the family and is very fair and the other is darker. They don't look like sisters. I feel that here, in the US, skin color is sometimes the first categorization – your brown first, and then people

are "PC" and try to guess the country you came from. I worry for my Indian looking daughter and want her to know about Indian stuff, so she can choose what she wants to call herself later when she wants too. I hope that maybe by the time she grows up, there will be so many biracial kids, she won't have to worry about that anymore.

One bicultural leader in Group 1-Integrated summed up what most in this group

think is a growing nationalistic sentiment about India as a rising global nation. He stated:

When I'm at work, I'm now proud to call myself Indian because India is a rising economic power. In fact, I was chosen for my last project over another person in my office, because I was Indian and could understand the languages because the company now wants to expand over there. That wasn't even in the back of their minds ten years ago.

Challenges that Impact Acculturation Strategy Choice

Participants in both focus groups were asked to brainstorm on flipcharts,

challenges that they faced during the early years of immigration. Then they were all

given three sticky dots and asked to vote for the challenges that impacted them the most.

Table 6 summarizes the challenges that impacted acculturation strategy choice.

Table 6

Challenges that Impact Acculturation Choice

Challenges *specifically female challenges	Group 1 – Integrated Bicultural Leaders $N = 45$ Votes	Group 2-Non-Integrated Bicultural Leaders $N = 45$ Votes	Total $N = 90$ Votes
Acquiring green card	13	6	19
Racism	5	9	14
Stereotyping	4	9	13
Lower pay than non-immigrant peers	6	3	9
Lack of career network	2	5	7
Financial support	3	4	7
Balancing Home & Work*	4	3	7
Non-Responsive Male Direct Reports*	2	3	5
Language skills	3	1	4
Speaking up at Work*	2	2	4

The lack of permanent residency or the stress caused by it, was cited as the number one challenge by study participants overall. However, this challenge received 21% of the possible votes in Group 1-Integrated. Several of the participants stated that they entered the US under a work visa, took jobs, and were paid less than their peers. They worked long hours and they perceived their employers took advantage of their need for the visa sponsorship. Among the Group 2-Non-Integrated participants, Racism and Stereotyping were key challenges they cited they had to overcome. The following statement made by one Group 2-Non-Integrated male participant received nods of affirmation during the discussion session:

> Americans I knew made up a lot of negative assumptions about India. My boss kept delaying signing my work permit and the lawyer I was using also took advantage of my lack of knowledge of the immigration systems here. I paid him a lot of unnecessary money. Once I married Suzanne, I had the visa issue settled, and all of a sudden people at work were more social with me.

During Focus Group 1–Integrated, there was a discussion spurred on by a female participant about familial role ambiguity as a bicultural challenge. This challenge was discussed but not placed on the flipcharts for voting. The statement was:

> Living in a multi-generational family unit is a positive and a negative. With it there is a lot of support by way of childcare or cooking or other household help. However, the expectations from my husband's parents or by my husband in being subordinate to him, as an Indian female was a big area of tension for me, because I would go to work and be a CEO and come home and expected to subordinate just because I was an Indian female and it was part of our culture. It took a lot of arguments and I suppressed a lot in order to keep the peace at home.

There was consensus among all women in this focus group about the familial role challenge. There was also some non-verbal communication observed, whereby males were "shushing" some females to suppress the conversation from continuing. This display was noted as a gender role challenge faced predominantly by bicultural female

leaders. Upon further private questioning during a break regarding the cause of the

"shushing" by males toward female participants, a female participant in Group 1-

Integrated she stated:

> Men don't realize that they are putting women down with such behavior and they
> need some help in becoming aware of that. It's odd that sometimes they don't do
> it when alone with their spouse, but do it in public. My husband used to do that
> whenever we would be together in front of his family. It drove me crazy and I
> often wondered what caused it. I think that the reason is they feel very conscious
> of their role in front of the family and feel they need to live up to certain
> expectations or they feel the way they to show their capability to other men is by
> demonstrating their authority. So it's driven by their own sense of insecurity. At
> the same time women sometimes want the best of both worlds. They want men to
> take charge in making decisions on matters they don't want to deal with, but that
> the same time they want the privilege of being involved in matters they want to be
> involved in. So the awareness has to be on both sides. Women can complain about
> being treated unfairly by their spouses, but are not always sympathetic to their
> husbands, who casually are often treated unfairly by their peers at work and have
> no one to complain to. So a little more sensitivity on both sides to the plight of the
> other person can be helpful. Often there are so many expectations that each
> spouse has for the other that it leads to bitterness as soon as one person cannot
> meet up to the other's expectation.

Female role ambiguity for bicultural women who come from a male dominated

culture and immigrate to a country where women are accepted as leaders in the

workforce, represents an area of future research based on the results of this study.

There were three participants in Group1-Integrated that called out a difference in

the perception of challenges faced by participants present in the focus group may be

different than those faced by foreign born professionals today because of the growing

acceptance of multiculturalism in high immigrant gateway cities and the knowledge

leveler of the Internet, making people less dependent on social networks. This sentiment

is summarized by the following comment by a Group 1-Integrated participant:

> There is a clear difference in the 1980s era of cultural differences versus those of
> today. There is much more homogeneity across middle class mind set across
> liberal societies today than in the 80's. Young people across countries share a lot
> of similar tastes and values today thanks to social media, global marketing and

franchise awareness. The ability for large companies to create a global footprint has also brought with it an awareness of business best practices and corporate governance. The advancement of Technology has occurred exponentially and this is has brought with it, a very rapid awareness of roles and rights. Companies are encouraged to put in place proper corporate governance, professional behavior and best practices to both create efficiencies and stay out of legal trouble. If these guidelines are used to develop performance metrics, then there is little room to allow for entitlement mindsets arising from cultural/gender biases and tendencies. If anything, I have found that cultural biases are often a result of traditions and practices that have deviated from the original intent.

Factors that Helped Bicultural Leaders Overcome Challenges

The factors that helped bicultural leaders overcome challenges can be categorized into the following four themes, in order: 1) Support Systems, 2) Adaptability Methods, 3) Mentors and Influencers, 4) Individual and Peer Goals. While all four factors were somewhat equal in importance overall across all study participants, the factors differed in importance between focus groups. Table 7 summarizes these results.

Table 7

Factors that Helped Leaders Overcome Challenges: Rank Order

Challenges *specifically female challenges	Group 1 – Integrated Bicultural Leaders $N = 45$ Votes	Group 2-Non-Integrated Bicultural Leaders $N = 45$ Votes	Total $N = 90$ Votes
Support Systems	18	5	23
Adaptability Methods	19	8	27
Mentors and Influencers	5	17	22
Individual and Peer Goals	3	15	18

In Group 1-Integrated, participants voted predominantly for support systems consisting of family, friends and colleague networks and adaptability methods as factors that contributed to their ability to overcome acculturation challenges. Ten of the fifteen participants stated that not only were support systems important, they themselves created many of the groups they belonged too, becoming the organizer and hence the central gatekeeper of the group. The following statement typifies this sentiment:

I'm not going to wait around to be invited into a group of people I want to belong to. What has made me successful is that I go out and create the group I want, asking those I want in my group to join me. I did this at work too. I noticed a lot of guys like to drive fast cars, so I met with the local luxury car dealer and every time a new model came out, I got the dealer to take us all for a spin. We all bonded over happy hour drinks after.

Group 2-Non-Integrated participants favored the help of specific mentors and influencers and individual and peer goals as motivational factors versus a network or support system as contributors to factors that helped them overcome acculturation challenges. This exemplifies their inclination for an independent self-construal.

In Group 1-Integrated, when discussing 'how' to overcome the challenges faced, the group organically brainstormed to arrive at the following sequence of steps for professional success: (a) learn the US culture, (b) live the US culture, (c) take risks and overcome the US culture barriers, and (d) rise above culture to merit-based work.

When prompted to do the same, Group 2-Non-Integrated participants responded with the following sequence, which interestingly differed from Group 1-Integrated: (a) set goals, (b) associate and surround yourself with people who have reached these goals, (c) find a mentor or influencer who can help you reach your goal, and (d) seek and leverage all opportunities. Both groups concurred that the acceptance level of Indians into the American culture today was different when they migrated during the late 1980's and early 1990's.

Ranking Bicultural Competences as an Antecedent to Success

Participants in both focus groups reviewed the definitions and questioned the wording of the definitions and ranked the eight bicultural competences presented to them in order of importance to their professional success. The following statement during

review time, from one participant from the Group 1-Integrated typified this group's

viewpoint, stating that:

> It seems that academics want to suppose that these competences are unconscious acts. I know I decide when and where to "frame-switch." I use my Indian knowledge-base when I recollect it. It's not like I'm at work and some Indian music is playing and therefore I'm Indian in thought and action all of a sudden.

The statement above concludes that successful bicultural leaders regard bicultural

competences as a skillset they proactively call upon in given situations of their choosing.

Overall attributional knowledge was ranked 1st by 30% of the time by all

participants, followed by frame switching, which ranked second 30% of the time, then

behavioral adaptability ranked 3rd 30% of the time, culture specific knowledge ranked 4th,

40% of the time, then cross cultural communication which ranked 5th, 30% of the time,

followed by cultural metacognition which ranked 6th 23% of the time, then boundary

spanning which ranked 7th and lastly, cultural cognitive complexity which ranked 8th,

30% of the time. These results differed in ranking when analyzed by focus group. Group

1-Integrated participants ranked frame switching, behavioral adaptability and culture

specific knowledge above the other skills. Group2-Non-Integrated participants ranked

attributional knowledge, boundary spanning and cultural cognitive complexity along with

behavioral adaptability above the other skills. Table 8 Bicultural Competence ranking

summarizes these results.

Table 8

Bicultural Competence Ranking

All Participants n = 30	Rank							
Competence	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**
Attributional Knowledge	30%	10%	13%	7%	10%	0%	7%	0%
Frame Switching	27%	30%	3%	3%	7%	10%	20%	13%
Cultural Metacognition	0%	0%	7%	27%	20%	23%	17%	23%
Culture Specific Knowledge	0%	0%	0%	40%	13%	13%	7%	20%
Cross Cultural Communication	10%	20%	13%	10%	30%	20%	0%	0%
Boundary Spanning	0%	13%	0%	3%	0%	10%	40%	13%
Cultural Cognitive Complexity	10%	3%	27%	0%	0%	7%	10%	30%
Behavioral Adaptability	23%	23%	37%	10%	20%	17%	0%	0%

Group 1-Integrated n = 15	Rank							
Competence	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**
Attributional Knowledge	27%	7%	27%	13%	27%	0%	13%	0%
Frame Switching	40%	30%	0%	0%	7%	13%	13%	13%
Cultural Metacognition	0%	0%	0%	33%	37%	7%	13%	13%
Culture Specific Knowledge	0%	0%	0%	40%	20%	7%	7%	27%
Cross Cultural Communication	0%	20%	13%	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%
Boundary Spanning	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	13%	47%	13%
Cultural Cognitive Complexity	0%	0%	20%	0%	7%	7%	7%	33%
Behavioral Adaptability	33%	33%	40%	7%	13%	20%	0%	0%

Group 2-Non-Integrated n = 15	Rank							
Competence	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**
Attributional Knowledge	33%	13%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Frame Switching	13%	20%	7%	7%	7%	7%	27%	13%
Cultural Metacognition	0%	0%	13%	20%	13%	40%	20%	33%
Culture Specific Knowledge	0%	0%	0%	40%	7%	20%	7%	13%
Cross Cultural Communication	20%	20%	13%	20%	60%	7%	0%	0%
Boundary Spanning	0%	27%	0%	0%	0%	7%	33%	13%
Cultural Cognitive Complexity	20%	7%	23%	0%	7%	7%	13%	27%
Behavioral Adaptability	13%	13%	43%	13%	27%	13%	0%	0%

Summary

Thirty bicultural leaders (15 Integrated biculturals and 15 Non-Integrated biculturals) participated in this study. All of the study participants were foreign born and over half migrated to the US when they were over the age of 30 years having completed their undergraduate degree in their country of origin. The internal qualities that contributed the most to their success were confidence followed by adaptability. The external factors cited most as contributed to their success included family and friends support systems followed by a supportive employer or organization.

All study participants concurred that the word "strategy" did not resonate with them because the word connoted proactive forethought. The toggling variable that triggered the acculturation process for study participants was the ethnicity of the dominant spouse, which became the dominant culture at home. If this culture was in contrast to the external US/Host country culture, AND the bicultural wanted to maintain the tension of dual cultures, then the Bicultural became Integrated. If they didn't want to maintain dual cultures, then the Bicultural became Non-Integrated. The self-construal brought on by acculturation strategy choice manifested in different attributes of success. Integrated biculturals exhibited an interdependent self-construal favoring to proactively lead the creation of in-groups where they were the central individual. Non-integrated biculturals favored an independent self-construal where individual goals and the influence of mentors were favored at work.

The top challenges faced by foreign born professionals stemmed from acquiring permanent visa status, racism, stereotyping and having to take lower pay than warranted for their skillset. Factors that contributed to help them overcome these challenges included strong support systems, adaptability methods, individual and peer goals, and

mentors and influencers. When it came to ranking the bicultural competences that contributed to their professional success, bicultural leaders ranked these competences in the following order from 1st to 8th: attributional knowledge, frame switching, behavioral adaptability, culture specific knowledge, cross cultural communication, cultural metacognition, boundary spanning, and lastly cultural cognitive complexity.

    The following chapter discusses these findings, makes recommendations for the JCSC and educators, outlines the study limitations and summarizes areas for future research.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the attributes of a successful foreign

born bicultural leader. The following three research questions were identified:

1. What were the internal qualities and external factors that contributed to the
    success of a bicultural leader?

2. How do the influences of acculturation strategy choice manifest in terms of
    individual attributes that lead to success?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to
    professional success?

This chapter provides a summary and discussion of key findings, proposes

recommendations for the JCSC and educators, cites limitations, and suggests directions

for future research. Key findings and implications for each question are discussed in the

following section.

Key Conclusions Based on Findings

Three conclusions were derived: (a) self-construal, dominant spouse and in-

groups are keys to self-identity; (b) successful bicultural qualities are confidence,

adaptability, ambition and risk-taking; and (c) bicultural competence use is a situational

repertoire. These conclusions are presented below along with a discussion. Models are

presented as frameworks for each to graphically depict components and relationships to

assist in the explanation of interpretation.

Self-construal, dominant spouse and "in-groups" are key to self-identity. A

key question this study sought to research was: How do the influences of acculturation

strategy choice manifest in terms of individual attributes that lead to success?

It was apparent from the findings of this study, that the process of acculturation was a dynamic process that was a conscious act for the acculturating person. Although Berry's (2003) strategies were considered simplistic by all study participants overall, they held true in this study's findings with one important exception. Successful bicultural leaders ALWAYS seek to maintain a relationship with host country individuals that serve their interests. Figure 1 is a depiction of Acculturation patterns of successful Bicultural Indians from the definitions presented in Chapter 2 and findings from Chapter 4.
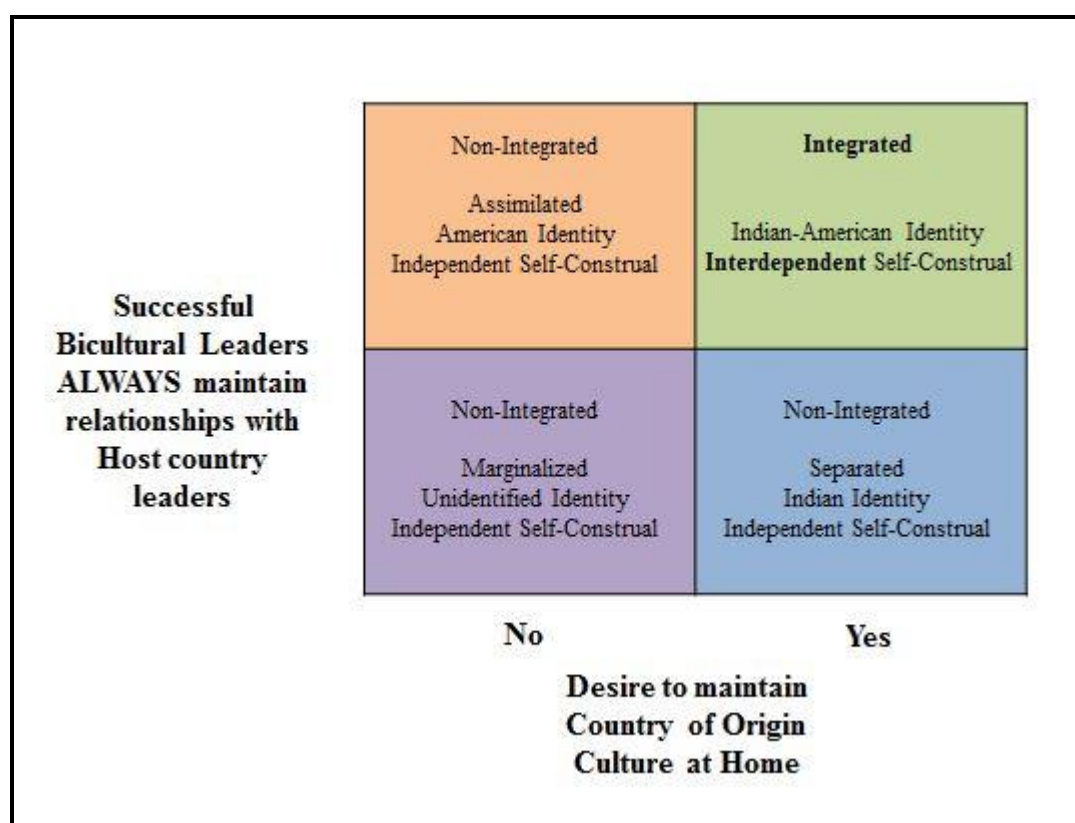
	Non-Integrated Assimilated American Identity Independent Self-Construal	**Integrated** Indian-American Identity **Interdependent** Self-Construal
Successful Bicultural Leaders ALWAYS maintain relationships with Host country leaders	Non-Integrated Marginalized Unidentified Identity Independent Self-Construal	Non-Integrated Separated Indian Identity Independent Self-Construal
	No	**Yes**

Desire to maintain Country of Origin Culture at Home

Figure 1

Acculturation Drivers of Successful Bicultural Indians

Where Berry's Acculturation Strategies divide the bicultural into groups based on "yes" and "no" answers to "whether it is important to develop relationships with the larger society," and "if it was of value to the bicultural to maintain one's cultural

heritage," the findings of this study revealed four main drivers that impacted the acculturation groupings that were self-reported by study participants. These drivers in turn manifested attributes of success as discussed below. These drivers were: 1) the dominant cultural identity at home, which is driven by ethnicity and country of origin of the dominant spouse, 2) the self-construal of the biculturals self-identity as Interdependent or Independent, 3) the importance of "in-groups" and presence of cultural "tension" and 4) the external influencers of the work environment in the host country (US) which drove the necessity to develop relationships with the larger society.

Dominant spouse equates to dominant home culture. As a finding of the study, the dominant culture at home became a distinguishing feature impacting the acculturation strategy chosen. The ethnic origin and strength of the alliance of the dominant spouse to the Host country toggled the culture adapted at home. If the ethnic culture was the country of origin of the dominant spouse, the couple would become either Integrated or Separated. If the dominant spouse was 2nd generation immigrant of the same ethnic origin of the foreign born professional or a Caucasian US national, the couple would likely chose an Assimilated strategy. If the couple, both were of the same ethnic origin, having grown up in different countries of origin with little or no allegiance to their ethnicity or the host country, or the foreign born professional was married to a minority spouse of another ethnicity, they would most likely choose a Marginalized strategy.

Self-construal. Self-construal is usually defined in terms of two dimensions, interdependent and independent. Integrated biculturals had an Interdependent self-construal, and defined themselves in terms of group membership, group achievement and social responsibly. Non-Integrated biculturals had an independent self-construal and defined themselves in terms of personal attributes, abilities and accomplishments. This

finding aligned with Nezlek and Smith (2005), who also reported that those who had an interdependent self-construal, maybe more sensitive to the presence of out-group members and are more likely to help an in-group member. This finding was true in reverse with respect to Non-Integrated biculturals aligning with US/country colleagues and is supported by Triandes (1994).

In-groups are important in forming support networks. This finding was supported by Tajfel and Turner (1986), who suggested that in order to make sense of the heterogeneity of a new environment, people view themselves and others in terms of group membership. In-groups are composed of people with similar characteristics, where one "belongs" and out-groups are groups in which one doesn't belong.

External influencers of work. All of the study participants worked for organizations or businesses located in the US and therefore the behavioral norms at work were determined by in large by their employers and the culture of the organization. A common characteristic of all bicultural leaders was that in order to succeed they all sought to create and maintain relationships with the larger US/Host country. Because of this characteristic, those leaders that self-identified as Separated and Marginalized disagreed with Berry's strategy definition of not wanting to maintain relationships with host country individuals, because success meant it was important to align with the US/Host country employer, the organizational culture at work, city and government officials (if they owned a business that served the ethnic minority) and their own employee base (if they ran an organization incorporated in the US servicing both the US and their country of origin).

The following section discusses each self-identification in relation to the four acculturation pattern drivers in relation to the attributes of success manifested by them.

Integrated bicultural leaders. Integrated bicultural leaders acknowledged that they lived in a dual culture situation and they were "proud" of it calling it an 'accomplishment'. They proactively wanted to maintain the duality seeing it as a "desired state of being," because it allowed them to "live in the best of both worlds, not having to sacrifice one in favor of the other" (See Figure 2).
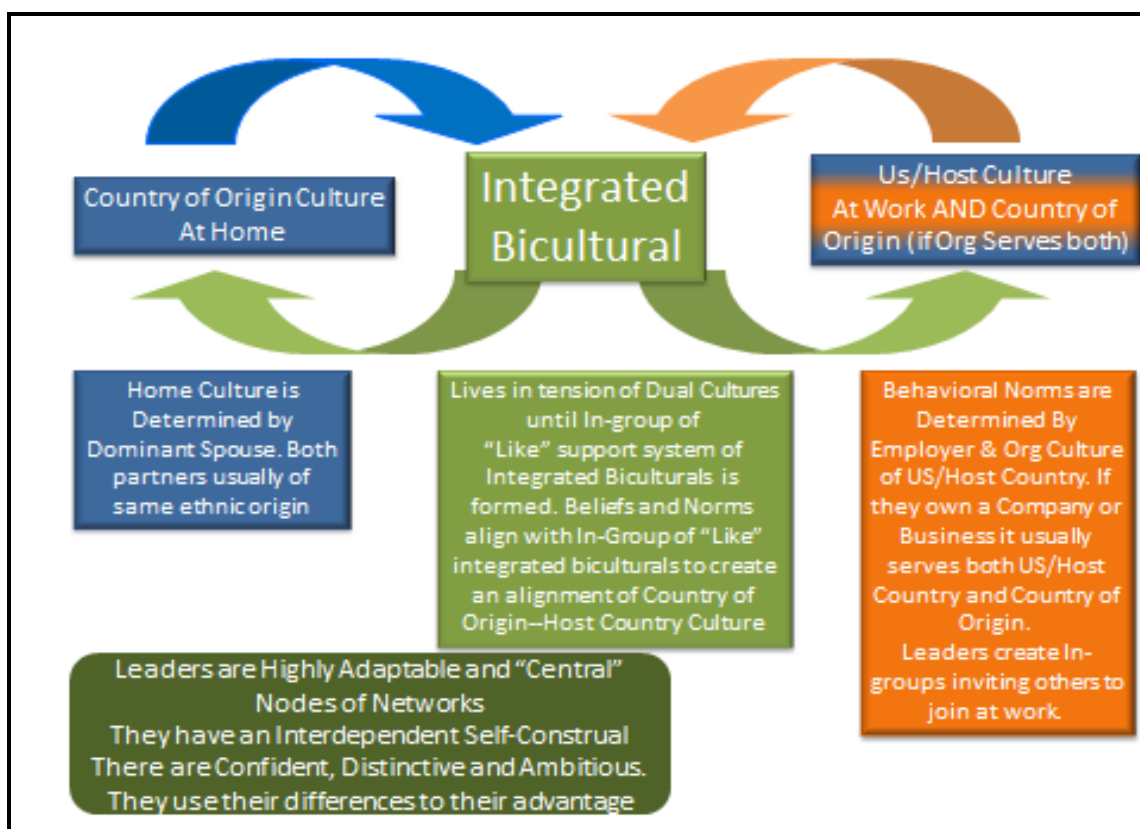

Figure 2

Integrated Bicultural Acculturation Pattern Drivers

Integrated bicultural leaders asserted that a dual-culture tension existed when cultural beliefs, behaviors and norms of their home culture and the culture of the host country were opposed in their mind. This tension was strongest during the first five years

of migration and dissipated as the foreign born professional and their partner created and maintained an "in-group" of "like" bicultural couples that became their support system.

The attributes of successful Integrated bicultural leaders of note were that: (a) they knew who they were and sought connections to "fill the gap" of who they "were not." This finding was supported by Distinctiveness Theory (McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978), which argues that people are conscious of themselves insofar as they are different from the people around them, perceiving themselves in terms of their distinctive features; (b) they proactively "created" in-groups and maintained multiple "in-groups" not just composed of individuals "like" them, but groups of "experienced elders" so they could leverage their experience as sources of trusted "short-cut"; and (c) with multiple in-groups, over time, these successful bicultural leaders became "central individuals." Network centrality has been shown to relate to positive outcomes such as performance and power (Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Tsai, 2004; Kildiff & Tsai, 2003).

The "sameness" of the Integrated couple, allowed for an "ease" to meet, accept and befriend other like couples. This fact enabled them to quickly form in-group support systems of bicultural couples giving them a sense of social belonging in a foreign environment, the ability to leverage contacts and a stable knowledge base to exchange information. This finding was primarily an antecedent to their strong inclination for support systems as an external factor of their success reinforcing an interdependent self-construal. As such, successful Integrated biculturals were more willing to help others in their in group and exhibited tendencies to be able to empathize with minorities that reported to them "knowing how they felt" and how important "family-life" was for them.

Integrated individuals worked for organizations that served the US or owned business that served both the country of origin and the US. When dealing with the subsidiary offices in the country of origin, these business owners maintained a blend of US and country of origin cultural norms and standards, therefore these business' held an Integrated Organizational culture in line with their leader. Successful Integrated leaders employed the same networking prowess at work in their organizations as they did to acculturate in the general population, creating in-groups at work that collogues of all ethnicities would want to belong too. This finding was supported by Bhagat (1983) and Triandis et al. (1986) who concluded that the way immigrants acculturate to a given organizational culture will be affected by how they acculturate to the more general national culture

Marginalized bicultural leaders. Marginalized bicultural leaders do not perceive any tension between home and work cultures (see Figure 3). In accordance with Berry's (2003) strategies, they choose not to align with the country of origin culture predominantly because both spouses aligned with different countries of origin, even if they are the same ethnicity. The home culture is one that prizes individualism and characteristically is a fusion of all cultures that the couples have been associated with over time. As previously stated, counter to Berry's framework, successful Marginalized biculturals stressed the importance of aligning themselves with US/Host country colleagues at work, albeit they did it by blending in, in an assimilative way. Typically these biculturals have an independent self-construal with a tendency to focus on personal attributes and accomplishments. These leaders prized uniqueness and integrity and sought out individual mentors and influencers as aids to their success.
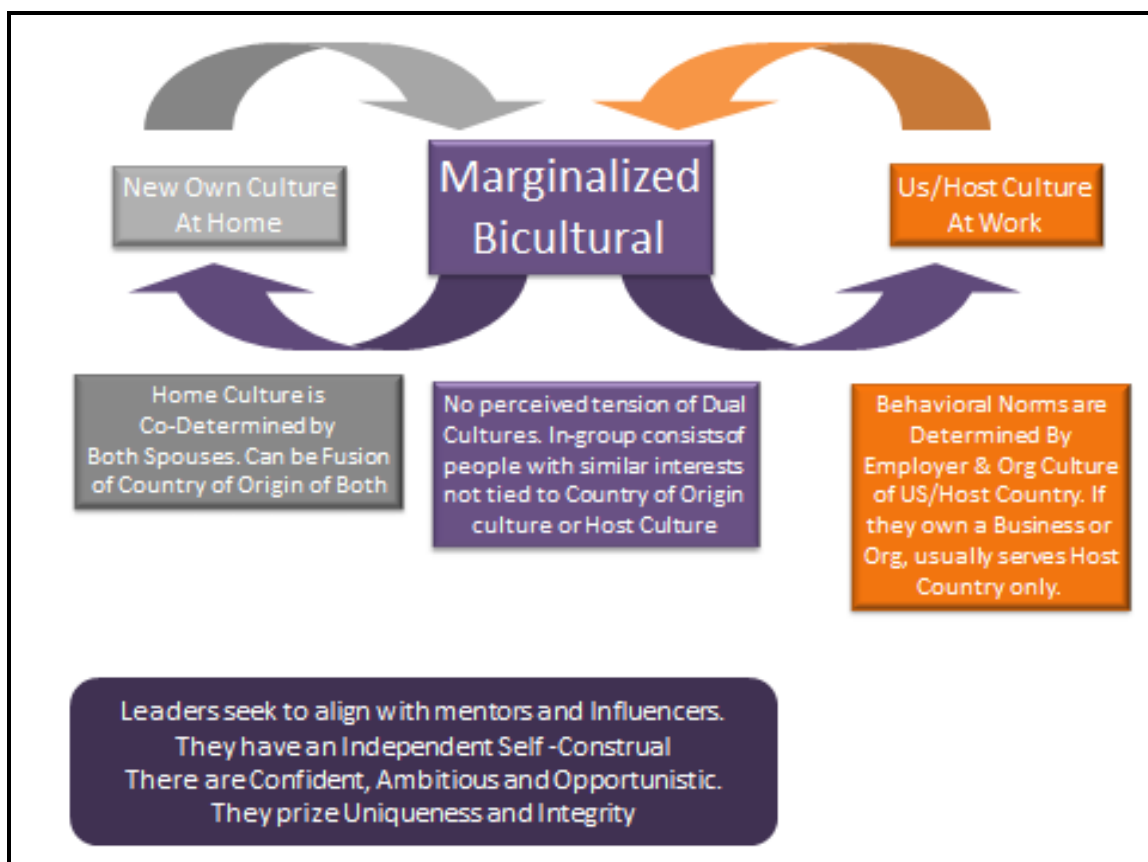
Figure 3

Marginalized Bicultural Acculturation Drivers

Assimilated bicultural leaders. Assimilated bicultural leaders are driven to

"become American." Their home culture matches the external US/Host culture and they

do not perceive any tension between the two (see Figure 4). In fact they pride themselves

on being American often "no longer being able to tolerate the ethic social customs and

not able to speak the language anymore." These successful foreign born biculturals have

either grown up in the US or are married a 2nd generation immigrant or a Caucasian US

national. Therefore the dominant spouse aligns with the American culture. In keeping

with American culture dominance, these biculturals have the strongest independent self-

construal. They are competitive goal driven individualists who actively seek out

individual mentors and influencers. Their behavioral norms at work would depend on the employer and culture of the organization. They seek to blend in and are motivated by performance metrics based on self-determined goals.
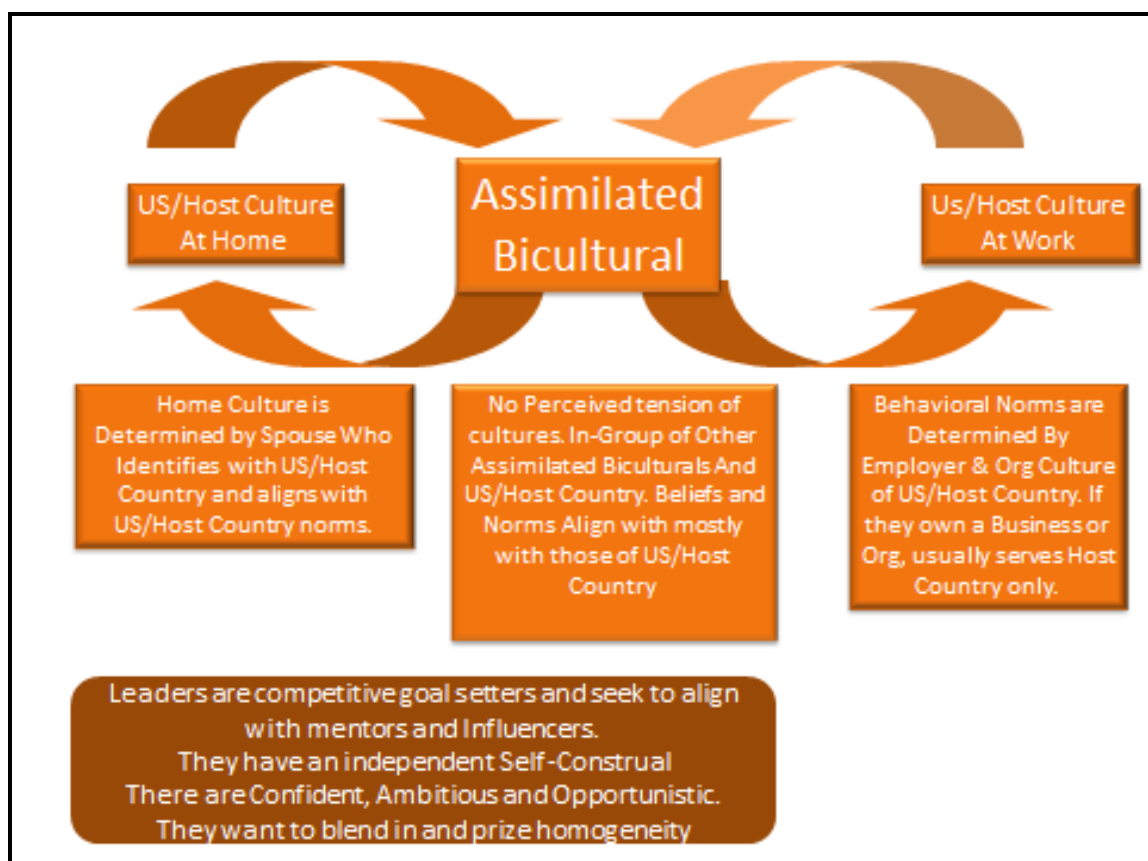

Figure 4

Assimilated Bicultural Acculturation Drivers

Separated bicultural leaders. Separated bicultural leaders were similar to the Assimilated leaders in that they do not perceive cultural tension between the work and home environment. In their minds, the country of origin culture predominately exists around them (see Figure 5). Both spouses are likely to be of the same ethnic origin, having both grown up in the same country of origin. Their in-groups are not as varied as

the Integrated Bicultural, comprising mainly of other families that identify strongly with the country of origin as the dominant preferred culture. Most of the successful separated biculturals owned businesses that catered to immigrants of their ethnicity; however, they acknowledged that they had to align with US/Host country officials in order to to be successful. Like the Assimilated and Marginalized biculturals, successful Separated biculturals held an independent self-construal, citing that financial success came from their own "hard work and self-sacrifices."
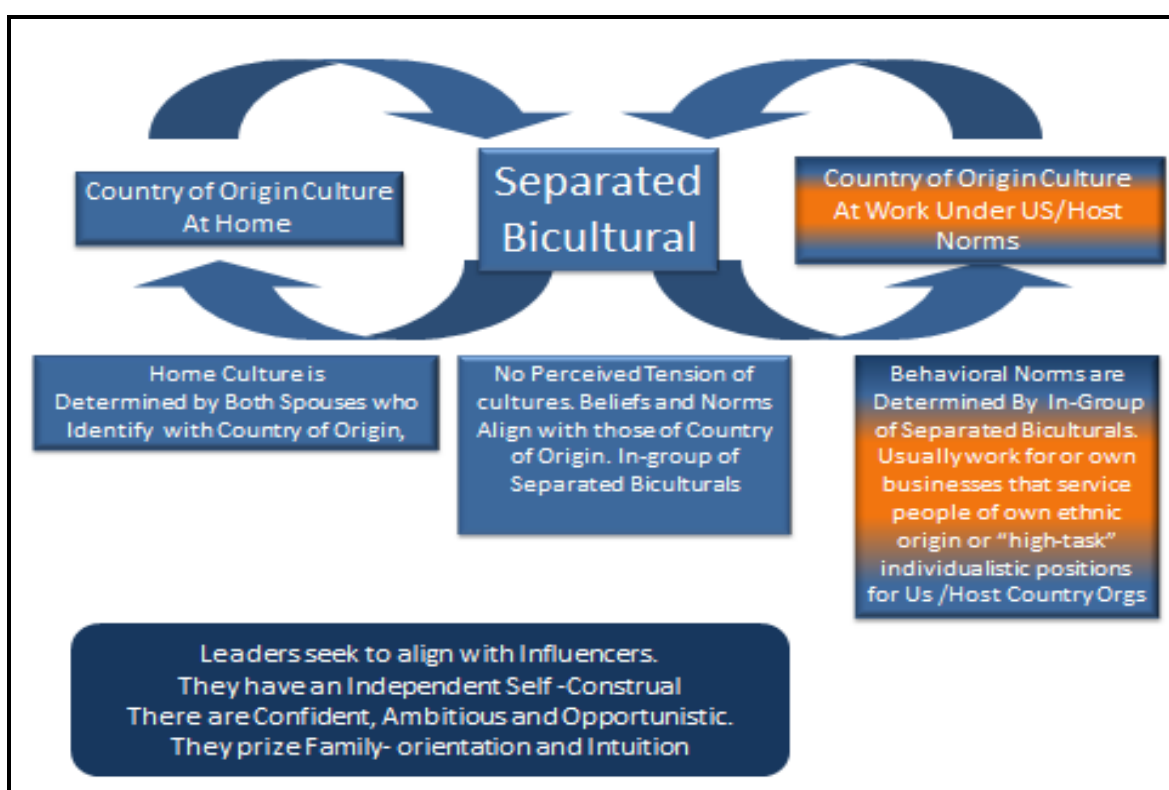

Figure 5

Separated Bicultural Acculturation Drivers

Successful bicultural qualities are confidence, adaptability, ambition and risk-taking. The top challenges faced by foreign born professionals stemmed from acquiring permanent visa status, racism, stereotyping and having to take lower pay than

warranted for their skillset. These findings concurred with Ahmadian & Amin, 2008; Kossoudji, 1988; Pooyan, 1984.

Integrated biculturals cited that they overcame these challenges because they were adaptable and had built strong support systems. Their interdependent self-construal, allowed them to not only adapt to existing in-groups, their confident nature allowed them to risk-take and "create" new in-groups, where THEY were the central point of connectivity. By creating networks and leading them, Integrated Biculturals used the personal attribute of risk-taking differently than their non-Intgrated counterparts. While this study was exploratory in nature, the personal attributes of risk-taking, confidence and interdependent propensity, may combine to substantiate the finding of an additional Bicultural Competence called Network Centrality.

Non-Integrated biculturals risk-taking resulted in the assimilated subset (in some cases) abandoning their own familial support system in favor of networks procured by their spouses who were either 2nd generation immigrants or Caucasian nationals of US/Host culture. The independent nature of non-Integrated biculturals meant that they relied on mentors and individual influences, and were driven by performance metrics at work.

Familial role ambiguity was a particular gender based challenge for female leaders. It was unclear as to how successful female leaders overcame this challenge and this finding requires future research as it represented a pain point for both Integrated and Separated bicultural female leaders.

Bicultural competences are a "situational" repertoire. The Integrated bicultural leaders were most excited by the concept of bicultural competences and ranked Frame-switching as the competence with the highest rank, followed by behavioral

adaptability and culture specific knowledge. This finding is in line with their interdependent self-construal, their desire to maintain dual cultures and their need to create and maintain multiple in-groups across dual or multiple cultures. Further, they stated that these competences were "called upon when needed" and not unconscious reactions outside of their control. This finding is supported by Blazaejewski (2012).

Non-Integrated participants ranked attributional knowledge, boundary spanning and cultural cognitive complexity along with behavioral adaptability above the other skills. Knowing the attributes of other cultures enabled them to activate their independent self-construal to actuate mediation skills to enhance their goals.

Overall, successful bicultural leaders ranked boundary spanning 7th out of eight possible rankings, typifying it as one of the least used competences. They stated that they "didn't want others to mistrust their objectives by being the one that sits on the fence of both sides." This finding is supported by Blazaejewski (2012) who stated:

> Dual Identity biculturals, who enjoy additional skills and access to knowledge unavailable to the typical mono-cultural group member, might have difficulties being recognized as an ambassador of either group. Another reason for tensions at the group level lies at the ability to switch between cultural frames according to the situation, which although at the core of the biculturals success as a boundary spanner, might at the same time create an image of being non-committed to any of the groups, being erratic and unreliable. (p. 127)

Recommendations for Jain Center of Southern California and Educators

While some study participants conceded that the conditions present when they arrived might be somewhat different than those present today, there were seven content areas, that were agreed upon by participants as considerations for educators and JCSC to incorporate into structured learning modules targeting newly arrived foreign born professionals (see Table 9).

Table 9

Content Recommendations for Leadership Development Programs Targeted at Foreign Born Professionals

Topic	Content Description
American Culture	Social and Cultural norms at the office to speed up behavioral adaptability in the workplace. What is acceptable, what isn't acceptable and the differences with respect leadership roles.
Immigration Law	Clear and correct information about current immigration law and process for permanent residency free of charge.
Confidence Training	Public speaking courses or workshop to increase personal confidence so that professionals rise above cultural differences and move faster toward merit based mentality.
Self-awareness	Personality and social identity clarity and how to manage the tension of being bicultural.
Female leadership and assertiveness	Navigating gender and familial role clarity because of the gap in role expectations between work and home cultures.
Goal Setting	Time management, goal setting and short cuts or efficiencies "how to do things and get them done" in the US.
Bicultural Competence	93% of the participants didn't know about bicultural competences. They all stated that a workshop that created awareness about these different competences, how to apply them proactively at work and how to sharpen or "speed" up these skills would be beneficial to new Foreign born professionals.

Educators and HR representatives should seek to delve deeper in understanding the self-identity choice of the bicultural national. This study's findings are clear that Integrated biculturals have an interdependent self-construal versus an Independent one, held by Non-Integrated biculturals. Thus, biculturals are motivated by different drivers as detailed in the models presented above, and as such can be recruited, rewarded and retained using these drivers.

Study Limitations

Three limitations affected this study:

1. Sample size and characteristics. This study utilized a small sample of leaders ($N = 30$) and thus is exploratory in nature. All of the participants were of one

ethnic origin. Future studies should utilize larger sample sizes such as 100-300 leaders to provide more substantive quantitative results across diverse ethnicities and also compare first and second generation immigrants' attributional differences.

2. Bicultural competence familiarity. Not all participants were familiar with the concept of bicultural competences; and therefore some of the rankings may reflect miscomprehension of psychological jargon unfamiliar to the participants. During this study more time than expected was spent explaining theses definitions, even when a sheet of definitions was provided. Once explained, most biculturals were proud of these competences. Future studies should simplify bicultural competence definitions into layman's terms. Including a common example of bicultural competence usage or asking the participants to brainstorm the usage to internalize their understanding of the competence and its correct usage would have greatly benefited the ranking process.

3. Mix of participants. It is recommended that future studies separate male and female participants if focus groups are used. Dominant male voices suppressed some female contribution to the research data.

Directions for Future Research

This study identified six areas of possible future research as follows:

1. Delve more deeply into cross cultural gender roles and how they impact the success of a female bicultural leader by use of private qualitative interview. This study should investigate female bicultural familial role ambiguity, for females whose country of origin culture may have a gender biases in favor of male leadership.

2. An exploration of cultural bias in the workplace. How does imprinted gender bias from the Country of Origin culture show up in the American workplace?

3. A "future search" that focuses on rising bicultural leaders from mid-level to C-suite positions from different stakeholders' perspective to uncover barriers of success. An example sampling of stakeholders could be immigration lawyers, immigrants trying to get permanent status, employers who target foreign born professionals to fill key positions, immigrants who have left the US having tried to acquire permanent status and failed, foreign born students who express a desire to stay, successful biculturals who have overcome these challenges.

4. Investigate the idea of Network Centrality as a Bicultural Competence by engaging in a mixed methods study with a larger diverse participant number.

5. Explore differences between success factors of first and second generation bicultural leaders to discover barriers and success strategies of each.

6. An exploration of how in-group connectivity among biculturals can be leveraged to increase diversity through recruiting incentives for companywide Diversity & Inclusion initiatives.

Summary

This study sought to uncover the attributes of successful bicultural leaders. Findings suggested that the acculturation strategy chosen by bicultural leaders manifested in attributes of success that often depended upon the degree of alliance of the dominant spouse to their country of origin, their identity self-construal and the opportunities to create in-groups that supported them by making them individual centers of connectivity. Personal traits valued by successful bicultural leaders were, in order: confidence, adaptability, ambition, distinctiveness, risk- taking and opportunism. These traits helped them overcome challenges such as lack of legal status in the US, racism, stereo-typing, and having to take jobs that paid lower than skills commensurate with their skillset.

As successful leaders, they used bicultural competences as a situational repertoire favoring attributional knowledge, frame switching and behavioral adaptability as the top three. While this study was exploratory in nature, a possibility of a new Bicultural Competence of "Network Centrality" was a finding. Integrated biculturals exhibit a tendency to create networks where over time they become "central connectors" affording them unique positions of influence, knowledge transfer and power.

When developing a leadership program targeting foreign born professionals, this study suggested that educators consider content that addresses: American culture, immigration law, confidence training, self-awareness, female leadership & assertiveness, goal setting and bicultural competences (with respect to how to sharpen and leverage these).

Areas for future research call for 1) Investigating female bicultural familial role ambiguity, for females whose country of origin culture may have a gender biases in favor of male leadership, 2) An exploration of cultural bias in the workplace. How does imprinted gender bias from the Country of Origin culture show up in the American workplace? 3) A future search with key stakeholders to uncover the barriers of entry of bicultural leaders into C-suite positions, 4) A mixed method study that explores network centrality as a bicultural competence, 5) An exploration of differences of the barriers of success between first and second generation bicultural professionals and 6) An exploration of how in-group connectivity among biculturals can be leveraged to increase diversity through recruiting incentives for companywide Diversity & Inclusion initiatives.

From an organizational development lens, Bicultural research affords an interesting dive "under the iceberg" of individual choices, patterns and motivations of people who have internalized two or more cultures. Increasing self-awareness about why these choices are made, places the Bicultural individual in control of their circumstances, making them more proactive about future success. Moving out from self, into small groups, bicultural research provides a ripple effect of data that can inform organizations about the reasons why some of their bicultural employees are team-orientated and some are independently goal orientated. Organizations that sponsor specific immigrants in large numbers for their skills can: 1) assist them to acculturate faster by putting processes in place that alleviate the stressor of permanent visa status, and 2) examine their motivational drivers, to create reward systems that attract, retain and accelerate their success. On a transorganizational level, further bicultural research on Network Centrality may suggest that self-aware bicultural individuals may prove successful as referent organizational leaders. Finally as India and China become world leaders, the impact of a

possible resurgence in country of origin pride and the ripple effect impact on the US

workplace this resurgence may cause, represents unforeseen consequences not only for

the biculturals themselves, but the organizations that have invested in them, making this

topic salient for future exploration across all academic disciplines.

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Appendix A: Letter of Permission

Jain Center of Southern California

Virendra Shah
President, JCSC
8072 Commonwealth Ave
Buena Park, Ca, 92621

Shefali Mody
611 Covered Wagon Trail
Anaheim Hills Ca 92807

Feb 10th 2014

Dear Shefali:

It was a pleasure to speak with you yesterday and get to know something new about
your studies. I was very interested in your proposed thesis topic about the attributes of
a successful bicultural leader. As we discussed, I give you permission to solicit members
of the Jain Center to participate in your research project and ask their opinions about
their educational needs. The JCSC Board and I look forward to reading your study
recommendations, so that together we can develop some workshops that address the
needs for our Jain Center members.

May God Bless your studies and future success.

Sincerely,

Virendra Shah
President
Jain Center of Southern California

Appendix B: Study Flyer Invitation

Subject: Request for Focus Group Participation on Graduate Research Topic: What are the Attributes of a Successful Foreign born Professional?

Dear Foreign born professionals,

You play an important role as a leader in the US workplace. Your journey to leadership as a foreign born national in the US has presented you with opportunities and challenges. This experience has allowed you to develop a special set of skills called bicultural competence.

As a fellow foreign born professional, as well as a student in Pepperdine University's Master of Organization Development program, I am interested in exploring what are the attributes of a successful bicultural leader. Thus, I am seeking your participation in the following research focus group study.

You will be asked to attend a focus group at Pepperdine University that will last about two hours. Specifically the questions asked during the focus group will center on:
1. What are the internal qualities and external factors that contribute to the success of a bicultural leader?

2. How does the choice of acculturation strategy contribute to the success of the bicultural leader?

3. How does each bicultural competence rank as an antecedent skill to professional success?

Additional research qualifiers include: Must be working fulltime, must have lived in the US for a minimum of 5 years, must be in a leadership position at work.
Knowledge gained from this study will be useful to help determine the content of the leadership development needs of foreign born executives. All data will be kept confidential. Only aggregate data will be reported in the thesis. Data collected will not be attributed to participants; answers are anonymous. A copy of the final research project will be provided upon request.
If you are interested in participating in this study please call Shefali Mody at 714-686-1786 or email me at shefali4oc@yahoo.com
Shefali Mody
Candidate, Master of Science in Organization Development
Pepperdine University

Appendix C: Study Participant Consent Form

1. **Research Study**: My name is Shefali Khandhar Mody, a Master's student in the Organization Development Program at Pepperdine University. The professor supervising my work is Miriam Lacey, Ph.D. If you have questions or concerns about this study, you can contact her at 310-568-5598. I am currently in the process of recruiting foreign born executives residing in the US for my study entitled, Attributes of successful Bicultural Leaders. This study is being done as partial requirement for my Master's degree.

2. **Procedures:**
   Focus Group Questions: The interview questions are designed to gather insight about your acculturation journey at work, the decision points or milestones on your journey, your awareness of your bicultural competences and how these competences impact your success at work. You will also have the opportunity to share your successes and highpoints as well as some of the obstacles you may have faced along your career journey and share how you addressed them.
   Interview Sequence: Before we begin, I will ask you to sign this consent form. Next, I will ask for your consent to audio-record the interview so I can focus on our group discussion. Your participation in this focus group is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The audio recording will be used only to create notes of the conversation. Once the transcription of the recording is validated, the audio recording will be erased. You will be provided a sheet of bicultural competence definitions to use as a reference throughout the interview. You will be requested to rank these competences in order of importance to your professional success at the end of the focus group session. A follow-up email will be sent to you three days after the focus group session to ask you about your reflections on the session and for you to include any further responses in private.

3. Confidentiality: Data obtained for this research study, including your responses to the survey will be kept confidential. The confidentiality of my records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. All tape recordings, notes, focus group information, and data analysis from the interviews will be housed in a password protected computer and in a locked file cabinet, in which only the researcher will have access. Only aggregate data will be reported in the thesis or in any subsequent analysis beyond the thesis and possible future publication of the results. All information will be kept for three (3) years after the completion of the study after which time it will be purged.

4. Consent to participate in research: By signing this consent form and completing the focus group session, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand what your study participation entails, you consent to the interview being recorded and are consenting to participate in the study.

    Participant Signature   Date:

Appendix D: Demographic Questions

1) What is your gender?
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Male

2) What is year were you born?

3) What year did you come to the US?

4) What country were you born in? Where did you grow up?

5) How do you Self Identify Culturally?
   - ☐ I identify as an American

   - ☐ I identify as an Indian living in America

   - ☐ I identify as an Indian-American

   - ☐ I identify neither as an Indian or American. I'm my own person

6) Do you work full-time?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

7) What industry do you work in? What type of organization do you work for?

8) How many employees report to you?

9) Highest level of education completed
   - ☐ Associates
   - ☐ Bachelors
   - ☐ Masters
   - ☐ Other (fill in)

10) Have you completed any education in US since your migration?
    - ☐ Yes (what was the level of education completed?)
    - ☐ No

11) Are you married?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

12) If yes is your spouse of the same cultural heritage as yourself? Where did the spouse grow up?

13) Do you have children?
   - ☐ Yes If Yes how many and how old are they?
   - ☐ No

Appendix E: Focus Group Discussion Protocol

1. Describe your career journey as a foreign born professional?

2. What were some of the challenges you faced in your career journey?

3. How did you overcome these challenges?

4. Brainstorm internal qualities and external factors that contributed to your professional success? Flip chart these.

5. Which of the following acculturation strategies did you use and why? Explain Berry's four strategy and roundtable the question.

6. Ask the participants to read the table of bicultural competences and have them discuss these. Ask them to rank the importance of these competences.

7. Are there any skills or competences not mentioned above that you can attribute to your success or struggles as a foreign born executive?

8. What types of leadership development training or workshops should the Jain Center of Southern California offer to help a foreign born professional succeed at work.

Appendix F: Bicultural Competence Definitions

Rank	Bicultural Competence	Definition	Organizational Application
	Attributional Knowledge	The extent to which a person from one culture makes accurate attributions about the behavior of a person from another culture (Triandis, 1975)	Biculturals are able to correctly understand why people do what they do in the two cultures they represent, in addition to being able to internalize the value systems of the two cultures into a meaningful whole. Managing cross cultural assignments would be a strength of a bicultural because they would possess a higher understanding of the mediating process between people of two different cultures, which could make them more effective leaders (Lakshman, 2013).
	Behavioral Adaptability:	Refers to one's ability to appreciate and detect culture-specific aspects of social behavior. It requires a high level of culture-specific knowledge Hong (2010)	Behavioral adaptability helps bicultural regulate and produce culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior in cross-cultural business contexts (Hong, 2010).
	Boundary Spanning:	The ability to transfer knowledge across contextual boundaries. Hong (2010)	The impact of knowledge transfer as opposed to translation because this requires high culture specific knowledge and behavioral adaptability. (Hong, 2010)
	Cross-Cultural Communication Skills:	The ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in a given situation as one interacts, both verbally and non-verbally, in each culture in a cross-cultural context. Hong (2010)	Appropriate communication skills are perquisite of all leadership theories. The ability to do so across cultures allows the Bicultural to become a mediator or facilitator of change versus a translator across these two cultures. Benet-Martínez, (2006)
	Cultural Cognitive Complexity	Leads to a broader and more refined understanding of culture, which involves higher degrees of differentiation (capturing all of the nuances), articulation, abstraction, and integration-indicated by an overarching framework of how the nuances fit together). (Scott, Osgood, & Peterson, 1979).	Biculturals with High Bicultural Integration Index are more cognitively complex, tend to be better adjusted psychologically (Chae & Foley, 2010) and socio-culturally within both home and host cultures. In addition they possess the ability to handle cross-cultural conflicts because of their higher degree of understanding (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007) and the behavioral repertoires they have to draw upon in such situations.
	Culture Specific Knowledge:	Involves the degree to which a bicultural is aware of and knowledgeable about a culture's history, institutions, rituals, and daily practices Hong (2010).	Culture-specific knowledge is crucial to the bicultural self-image, is highly self-relevant, and is similar to other personality traits; because it is highly accessible to memory (Hong, 2010).

Rank	Bicultural Competence	Definition	Organizational Application
	Cultural Meta Cognition:	A heightened level of perception and intuition with respect to cultural behaviors and norms as a result of internalizing one or more cultures through lived experience inside these cultures.	Heightened perception and intuition is congruent with cross communication skills as it facilitates negotiation and mediation across both cultures (Brannen et al., 2010). This trait could be an antecedent for attributional knowledge.
	Frame Switching:	The ability to change or "switch" behaviors to suit the cultural norms of the present environment at will from two or more internalized cultural schemas Cheng et al., (2006) Hong (2010)	The benefit of being able to switch enables the activation of the other competences such as behavioral adaptability and cross communication skills. (Cheng et al., 2006) (Hong, 2010). At an organizational level, the ability to frame switch between two cultures could enable a bicultural to easily switch between cultures present between corporate and branch offices.