

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 065

UD 032 976

AUTHOR Kim, Chungsoon C.; Miura, Irene T.
TITLE A Study of the Relationships between Acculturation, Cultural Identity, Family Bonding, and Parent-Child Conflict among the Korean-American Adolescents.
PUB DATE 1999-04-00
NOTE 6p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Montreal, Quebec, Canada, April 19-23, 1999).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Acculturation; *Adolescents; Conflict; *Cultural Awareness; *Family Relationship; Immigrants; Immigration; *Korean Americans; *Parent Child Relationship
IDENTIFIERS Korea

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship of mother-child conflict in immigrant Korean families to their acculturation level, cultural identity, and family bonding, focusing on whether the intensity or frequency of mother-child conflict decreases as the level of acculturation or cultural identity increases. Fifty-two pairs of immigrant Korean American mothers and their children, aged 15 to 18, were interviewed. Twenty-six of the adolescents had been born in Korea and 26 were born in the United States. The intensity of mother-child conflict was significantly related to family bonding as measured by responses to a family bonding scale. The level of acculturation was significantly related to cultural identity, but the relationships among the other variables were not statistically significant. Findings suggest that the frequency of conflict is not related to family bonding, but the intensity of the conflict may be. Findings further suggest that mother-child conflict is not necessarily related to the child's acculturation level or cultural identity, although continued conflict may weaken family bonding. (SLD)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

A Study of the Relationships Between Acculturation, Cultural Identity, Family Bonding, and Parent-Child Conflict Among the Korean-American Adolescents

By Chungsoon C. Kim & Irene T. Miura
San Jose State University

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

Chungsoon Kim

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A study of the relationships between acculturation, cultural identity, family bonding, and parent-child conflict among the Korean-American adolescents

Chungsoon C. Kim & Irene T. Miura
San Jose State University

Paper presented at AERA annual meeting
Montreal, Canada, April 1999

SUMMARY

Objectives of the study

This study examined the relationship of mother-child conflict in immigrant Korean families to their acculturation level, cultural identity, and family bonding. We studied the relationship in terms of two aspects of conflict: the frequency of the conflict and the intensity of the conflict. Specific research questions were as follows: 1. Is the degree of acculturation of the adolescents related to the mother-adolescent conflict? 2. Is the adolescent's cultural identity related to the mother-adolescent conflict? 3. Is the level of family bonding related to the mother-adolescent conflict?

Perspectives

The number of Korean immigrants to the United States has more than quadrupled since 1969, and continues to grow at a steady pace (Hing, 1993). Meanwhile, there has been a corresponding increase in the population of Korean-American children in American schools. Despite this increase in the number of Korean-American students, little empirical research has been conducted on Korean-Americans as a distinct population. Korean-American adolescents struggle to balance the traditional cultural values of their Korean parents with American attitudes and values. Therefore, in addition to experiencing the typical conflicts that arise from the generation gap that separates an adolescent from his/her parents, the Korean-American adolescent must also experience conflicts arising from this culture clash. The major sources of such conflict between immigrant Korean mothers and their adolescent children were previously investigated and the findings suggest that some of the most frequent and intense conflicts stem from a culture clash between Korean and American values (Kim & Miura, 1996).

The current study examined whether or not the frequency and/or intensity of the mother-child conflict decreases as the level of acculturation or cultural identity increases, and examined the extent to which the frequency or intensity of conflict is related to family bonding. The following research findings attempted to provide insight into the complex inter-relationships among these variables. Such studies should be helpful for educators, program developers, and community workers in developing strategies for youth programs and counseling.

Methods and data sources

The search for and recruitment of possible mother-adolescent pairs for personal interviews was extremely difficult. Potential subjects were selected at random out of the Korean-American telephone directory for Santa Clara County in California. Only a small portion of the families contacted had a target age child in the family, and only about 10% of these families agreed to be interviewed. Fifty-two pairs of immigrant Korean American mothers and their 15- to 18-year-old children (28 females and 24 males) were interviewed. All the

mothers in the study were born in Korea. Twenty-six adolescents were born in Korea, and 26 were born in the United States. The educational and occupational backgrounds of the mothers varied widely --from some high school education and unskilled labor to mothers with terminal degrees and professional careers.

Data were collected through a 30-minute personal interview with each mother and a 20-minute interview of her child. All interviews were conducted by the first author at the interviewees' homes in either English or Korean, depending on the subjects' linguistic proficiency. The mother and adolescent were interviewed separately. The interview form was a modified version of the Family Issues Checklist (Prinz, Foster, Kent & O'Leary, 1979). Topics/issues considered to be potential sources of parent-child conflict specific to Korean families were added to the original instrument. Interview questions were refined during a pilot study. The final form contained several questions on personal and family background and a list of 50 areas of potential conflict (topics/issues). For each area, the respondent answered on two measures: the frequency of conflicts over the last four-week period and the intensity of the conflicts on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = "calm" and 5 = "very angry"). The topics of conflict centered on daily schedules, household chores, manners and customs, school-related concerns, illegal activities, and issues of adolescent self-expression.

Level of acculturation was measured based on the responses to three interview items: (1) What language do feel most comfortable speaking? (2) With what group do you feel most comfortable? (3) What is the racial group or ethnic background of your friends? Cultural identity was measured by three interview items also: (1) How do you see yourself in terms of your behaviors and the cultural values you hold (very American, mostly American, multicultural)? (2) How do you feel about yourself being American (extremely proud, somewhat proud, etc.)? (3) How important is it for an ethnic minority member to understand his/her native language and culture? Family bonding was measured by the responses to an 8-item Family Bonding Scale (Kim & Wu, 1994) which was included as a part of the interview form.

Results

As shown in Table 1 below, the intensity of mother-child conflict is significantly related to family bonding. Also, the level of acculturation is significantly related to cultural identity. The relationships between all the other variables were not statistically significant.

Table 1
Correlations among the measures on mother-child conflict, acculturation, cultural identity, and family bonding (N=52)

Variable	Conflict: frequency	Conflict: intensity	Acculturation	Cultural identity	Family bonding
Conflict: frequency	1.00				
Conflict: intensity	.04	1.00			
Acculturation	-.11	-.14	1.00		
Cultural identity	-.11	-.09	.41**	1.00	
Family bonding	.01	-.34*	-.06	.18	1.00

* p <.05; ** p <.01

More specifically, the results of correlational analyses suggest that:

- There is little relationship between the frequency of mother-child conflict and the intensity of conflict reported by the Korean-American adolescents.
- The frequency of conflict has no significant relationship with the level of acculturation, cultural identity, or family bonding.
- The intensity of conflict has a significant negative relationship with family bonding. The lower their family bonding, the more intense mother-child conflict is.
- The more assimilated to U.S. cultures the adolescents are, the more they identify with main stream cultural values.
- There appears to be some evidence that the more assimilated to U.S. cultures the adolescents, the lower their reported family bonding, although the relationship was not statistically significant.

Educational/scientific importance of the study

The findings of this study suggest that the frequency of conflict is not related to family bonding but the intensity of conflict may be. The findings also suggest that mother-child conflict is not necessarily related to the child's acculturation level or cultural identity (i.e., whether he/she identifies with Korean values or American values). If the conflict continues, it may weaken their family bonding. These findings will help professionals who work with Korean-American children and families to gain insight into the complex relationships of the parent-child conflict with their acculturation level, cultural identity, and family bonding. Such an insight will help them in dealing daily with the students facing stressful situations as well as in the development of a prevention program for high risk Korean-American adolescents.

Korean immigrant and second-generation adolescents experience enormous challenges involving conflicting values, norms and expectations between their parent's native culture and American main stream culture. Many Korean immigrant adolescents reject their own culture while simultaneously feeling rejected by the larger society surrounding them. They feel alienated and experience identity conflict as well as intense conflict with their parents. As a consequence, many of them are at risk regardless of their academic performance at school. Educators and community workers realize that teaching high-risk students how to cope with stressful experiences is an important part of their job.

References

Prinz, R., Foster, S., Kent, J., & O'Leary, D. (1979). Multivariate assessment of conflict in distressed and nondistressed mother-adolescent dyads. *J. of Applied Behavioral Analysis*, 12, 691-700.

Hing, B. O. (1993). *Making and remaking Asian America through immigration policy, 1850-1990*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Kim, C. C., & Miura, I. T. (1995, April). *Areas of conflict between immigrant Korean mothers and their adolescent Korean-American children*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA

Kim, Y. & Wu, Y. (1994). *Final report on the 1993-94 evaluation of the recovery for the East Bay Asian Youth Project*. Oakland, CA: ARC Assoc., Inc.



UD 032 976

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: A study of the relationships between acculturation, cultural identity, family bonding, and parent-child conflict among the Korean-American adolescents

Author(s): Chungsoon C. Kim & Irene T. Miura

Corporate Source:

Publication Date:

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

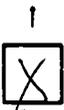
The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1



Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A



Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

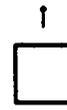
The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B



Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, →

Signature: <i>Chungsoon Kim</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: Chungsoon C. Kim, Professor	
Organization/Address: San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192-0075	Telephone: (408) 924-3716	FAX: (408) 924-3758
	E-Mail Address: ckim@email.sisu.edu	Date: 6-15-99

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education Box 40, Teachers College Columbia University New York, NY 10027

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to: