

Psychological Maladjustment Among Asian and White American College Students: Controlling for Confounds

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Differences in psychological maladjustment among foreign-born Asian-, U.S.-born Asian- and White-American college students were examined, after controlling for variables that have been confounded with ethnicity (i.e., demographics, response set, and personality style) in previous studies. Psychological maladjustment was measured in terms of both intrapersonal and interpersonal distress. Results indicated that foreign-born Asian-American students differed from White-American students on levels of social desirability, other-directedness, and extraversion. However, even after controlling for differences on these variables, greater levels of intrapersonal and interpersonal distress were found for foreign-born Asian-American students. The findings suggest (a) that for Asian-Americans there are ethnic differences in psychological maladjustment that covary with generation level, and (b) that these differences cannot be solely attributed to cultural variations in response or personality styles. Implications for counseling with Asian-American students are discussed.

Asian-Americans are often perceived as a "model minority" (D. W. Sue & S. Sue, 1972) because of their high levels of educational and economic achievement (S. Sue & Abe, 1988; U.S. Department of Commerce, 1983; S. Sue, 1977). Yet Asian Americans may be more psychologically maladjusted than their popular stereotype would suggest. Chinese- and Japanese-American students have reported more isolation, loneliness, nervousness, anxiety, and less autonomy than other students (D. W. Sue & Frank, 1973; D. W. Sue & Kirk, 1973). Similarly, Chinese-American graduate students had lower self-concept scores than their White counterparts (White & Chan, 1983), a finding that was also observed among Japanese-American children (Pang, Mizokawa, Morishima, & Olstad, 1985). Studies done with relatively young samples may not be representative of the entire Asian-American population, but these empirical findings have also been supported by observations of clinicians and researchers working with Asian-American groups (S. Sue, 1977; Kim, 1973; Kitano, 1969).

It is not surprising that a higher level of psychological maladjustment has been observed among Asian Americans, given a high proportion of recent Asian immigrants who may be at greater risk for the development of mental health problems. The incidence of psychotic disorders, including schizophrenia, affective psychosis, and reactive or acute psychosis (Nicassio, 1985; Kinzie, Tran, Breckenridge, & Bloom, 1980), major depression (Kinzie & Manson, 1983; Kinzie et al., 1980), and anxiety (Liu, Lamanua, & Murata, 1979; Rahe,

Looney, Ward, Tung, & Liu, 1978) is quite high among Asian immigrants. Westermeyer, Vang, and Neider (1984) noted that Indochinese refugees "experienced the highest recorded 1-year incidence rate of psychiatric disorders yet observed in any group of adults" (p. 173).

Yet Southeast Asian refugees are not the only immigrants to experience adjustment difficulties. S. Sue and Zane (1985) found that recently immigrated (6 years or less in the United States) Chinese students were less autonomous, extroverted, and personally integrated, and more anxious than Chinese Americans who had lived in the United States for a longer period of time. Similarly, first-generation Japanese reported greater stress, lower self-esteem, and a more external locus of control compared to later-generation Japanese Americans (Padilla, Wagatsuma, & Lindholm, 1985). Asian immigrants face language difficulties, unfamiliar role expectations, conflicts due to clashing value systems, intergenerational friction, and various other stresses inherent in attempting to reconcile two different cultural systems (Cheung, 1980). At times, these stresses may lead to psychological maladjustment and other mental health problems.

When interpreting ethnic differences in psychological maladjustment, it is difficult to determine to what extent such differences actually exist because they are often confounded with other variables that covary with ethnicity. With respect to non-White groups, it has been suggested that higher levels of self-reported maladjustment are due more to cultural differences in demographics, response style or personality style (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1966; Chin, 1983; D. W. Sue & S. Sue, 1987) than to actual levels of psychopathology.

Ethnic Differences in Factors Influencing Psychological Maladjustment

Demographics

Nicassio (1985) found that age, English proficiency, and socioeconomic indicators were associated with the adjustment

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status of Southeast Asian refugees. Ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES) have long been confounded in ethnic minority research (Mirowsky & Ross, 1980) and much effort has been expended in attempting to delineate the effects of each variable independent of the other. Furthermore, this has been a major problem in examining mental disorders among ethnic minority groups, because SES has long been associated with mental disturbance (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1966). Even when controlling for response biases such as social desirability and acquiescence, the relationship between SES and disorder persists (Phillips & Clancy, 1970).

Response Style

In their classic study of Jewish, Irish, Black, and Puerto Rican Americans, Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1966) discussed the problems in interpreting ethnic differences in symptom scores because of possible response biases, such as interviewer effects, acquiescence, social desirability, and subcultural differences in the symptoms used to express psychological distress. These biases also interacted with SES and level of education, further compounding the problem. In a cross-cultural survey of mental health among Mexican and White Americans, providing socially desirable and acquiescent responses was associated with SES, age, and being of Mexican origin (Ross & Mirowsky, 1984). Acquiescence, however, had no effect on reporting psychological distress, supporting earlier findings (Gove & Geerkin, 1977).

Social desirability reflects the tendency to "deny socially undesirable traits and to claim socially desirable ones" (Nederhof, 1985, p. 264) and may occur consciously or unconsciously (Paulhus, 1984). Whether it is deliberate or not, socially desirable responding has been found to consistently contribute to the invalidity of self-reported psychopathology (Klassen, Hornstra, & Anderson, 1976; Sackeim & Gur, 1979; Paulhus, 1984). Because ethnic differences in the tendency to provide socially desirable responses have been found (Ross & Mirowsky, 1984), this response style also needs to be adequately controlled.

Personality Style

In studies of personality assessment, Asian Americans have been found to have lower self-concepts (Pang et al., 1985; White & Chan, 1983), greater feelings of isolation, loneliness, and anxiety (D. W. Sue & Kirk, 1973), more social anxiety and apprehension in evaluative situations (D. W. Sue & Frank, 1973; Cambra, Klopff, & Oka, 1978), and greater introversion, self-restraint, and passivity (Abbott, 1976; Bourne, 1975; Meredith & Meredith, 1966) than other racial or ethnic groups. Many of these scores may indeed indicate higher levels of maladjustment. Determining the extent of psychological maladjustment, however, requires consideration of the cultural values and sociocultural context in which maladjustment occurs (Chin, 1983). D. W. Sue and S. Sue (1987) suggest that many personality scores may indicate "positive cultural values involving filial piety, modesty, and

respect for authority rather than introversion, self-abasement, and lack of self-confidence, which are viewed negatively in American society" (p. 481).

Cultural differences in personality styles may also inflate estimates of psychological maladjustment among Asian Americans. For instance, Miyamoto (1986/1987) has proposed that Asian Americans are motivated to establish harmony in social interactions, and are consequently highly attuned to the desires and needs of the other person. Such "other-directedness" would also reflect a certain degree of self-presentational concerns, particularly concern for the appropriateness and regulation of one's social behavior (Briggs, Cheek, & Buss, 1980). These self-presentational concerns have been conceptualized as stemming from a state of self-consciousness (Fenigstein, 1979). Self-consciousness has two components; private self-consciousness refers to an awareness of one's internal thoughts and feelings, whereas public self-consciousness refers to the salience of the self as social object (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975). As expected, public self-consciousness and other-directedness have been found to be positively correlated (Briggs et al., 1980).

For Asian Americans, a high degree of public self-consciousness and other-directedness may be necessary to maintain harmony within social interaction. With White samples, other-directedness is correlated with shyness, neuroticism and lack of self-esteem (Briggs et al., 1980), but with Asian-American samples, these attributes may reflect cultural factors and not necessarily psychopathology.

For instance, Asian Americans may favor self-effacing behaviors such as denying positive attributes and exaggerating negative ones to appear modest, and being quiet unless directly addressed in order not to call undue attention to themselves. These self-effacing behaviors are valued because they shift the focus of attention within an interaction away from the self and direct it toward the other person(s). Some degree of public self-consciousness would be necessary to regulate this process. But such culturally valued styles of social interaction may make Asian Americans appear insecure, anxious, or passive, contributing to perceptions of them as being psychologically maladjusted. In contrast, White Americans may endorse extroverted behaviors, such as telling jokes that may place them at the center of attention at a party, or being friendly to strangers, that make them appear outgoing, gregarious, and socially confident. It is possible that cultural differences in personality styles can be misinterpreted as differences in psychological maladjustment.

The purpose of the current study is two-fold: (1) to determine if ethnic differences occur among variables previously identified as being confounded with maladjustment, and (2) to assess levels of psychological maladjustment among Asian- and White-American college students, controlling for these confounding factors. Demographic variables, response bias, and personality styles have been described as potentially confounding factors. Thus, this study specifically addresses whether SES, social desirability, other-directedness, self-consciousness, and extraversion can account for differential levels of psychological maladjustment reported by Asian- and White-American college students.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were 136 students enrolled at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). There were 61 White Americans (23 men and 38 women), 29 U.S.-born Asian Americans (9 men and 20 women), and 46 foreign-born Asian Americans (26 men and 20 women). The composition of the Asian-American sample included 17 Chinese (23%), 13 Japanese (17%), 24 Korean (32%), 5 Filipino (7%), and 16 other Asian American (21%), including 2 Thai, 3 Vietnamese, 1 Cambodian, and 10 who did not identify themselves other than "Asian/Pacific Islander." By class, there were 90 freshmen (66%), 32 sophomores (24%), 12 juniors (9%), and 2 seniors (1%). There were no significant differences in the average age ($M = 18.9$, $SD = 1.2$) between groups. There were no significant differences between men and women on all the primary variables (e.g., private and public self-consciousness, social desirability, other-directedness, acting, and extraversion), so the groups were combined by gender for all analyses. Similar results were found in comparisons between separate Asian-American subgroups, so these groups were simply differentiated as "foreign-born" and "U.S.-born."

For the foreign-born Asian Americans, the mean age at time of immigration was 9.2 years old ($SD = 4.5$), and the average number of years in the United States was 10 years ($SD = 4.3$). Among the U.S.-born Asian Americans, 45% were second generation, 14% were third generation, 34% were fourth generation, and 7% were "other" (later generation subjects and subjects whose parents were of mixed generation, such as a subject's mother being an immigrant and father being second generation).

Measures

Data were collected from self-report questionnaires. The questions and instruments used are as follows.

Demographic information. Subjects were asked for demographic information, including age, sex, major, year in school, ethnic background, generation, age at time of immigration (if applicable), number of years in the United States since immigration (if applicable), approximate yearly income, father's highest level of education, father's occupation, mother's highest level of education, and mother's occupation. The latter four questions were used to determine each subject's socioeconomic status (SES), using Hollingshead's two-factor index of social position (Hollingshead, 1965).

Self-consciousness. The self-consciousness scale (Fenigstein et al., 1975) is a 23-item self-report measure designed to assess three dimensions of self-attention: public self-consciousness, private self-consciousness, and social anxiety. Public self-consciousness refers to awareness of oneself as a social object (e.g., "I'm concerned about the way I present myself"), whereas private self-consciousness reflects awareness of one's own internal states in terms of thoughts, feelings, and motives (e.g., "I'm generally attentive to my inner feelings"). Social anxiety is presumed to be derived from public self-consciousness in the sense that a person who is keenly aware of himself or herself as a social object may become apprehensive; thus, public self-consciousness may be a necessary antecedent of social anxiety (e.g., "It takes me time to overcome my shyness in new situations"; Turner, Scheier, Carver, & Ickes, 1978). Considerable construct, convergent, and discriminant validity have been established for both the public and private self-consciousness subscales (Fenigstein et al., 1975; Carver & Glass, 1976; Carver & Scheier, 1978; Turner et al., 1978).

Four items were omitted due to previous findings that they were conceptually inconsistent with the underlying dimensions or did not load onto the identified factors (Mittal & Balasubramanian, 1987), so that a 19-item scale was administered. Each item contained a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *extremely uncharacteristic* to *extremely characteristic*, indicating the extent to which subjects experienced the various self-attentive attitudes and feelings.

Self-monitoring. This 25-item, true-false inventory was designed to tap "self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness" (Snyder, 1974, p. 526). There are three major characteristics of the self-monitoring construct: concern for the appropriateness of social behavior, sensitivity to important cues, and self-regulation (Briggs et al., 1980). The scale has been found to have at least three factors (Briggs et al., 1980): (1) other-directedness (11 items), emphasizing pleasing others, conforming to the social situation, and masking one's true feelings (e.g., "In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons"); (2) acting (5 items), referring to acting, entertaining, and spontaneous public speaking abilities (e.g., "I would probably make a good actor"); and (3) extraversion (6 items), involving being the center of attention, telling jokes and stories, and being good at charades (e.g., "I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite as well as I should"), which is scored in reverse direction. The alpha coefficients of the subscales and full scale appear to meet the acceptable standards for internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978, p. 245). The Kuder-Richardson reliability of the whole scale has ranged from .63 to .70 (Snyder, 1974), whereas the test-retest reliability after one month was .83.

Social desirability. Five items from the Marlowe-Crowne inventory (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) were used in this study. The split-half reliability of the inventory ranges from .74 (Ford, 1964) to .87 (Crino et al., 1983), although Milham and Jacobson (1978) noted the nonequivalency of items. The items were as follows: (a) "I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble," (b) "There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others," (c) "It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged," (d) "I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings," and (e) "When I don't know something I don't mind at all admitting it." Previous research showing that socially desirable responding tends to vary over time suggests that items tapping social desirability should not be presented sequentially (Nederhof, 1985). To control for this tendency, the five true-false items were randomly distributed throughout the self-monitoring scale.

Psychological maladjustment. Levels of psychological maladjustment were assessed using the Personal Integration subscale (PI) of the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI; Heist & Yonge, 1968). This 55-item subscale is part of a 385-item true-false inventory containing 14 scales. The PI scale taps social-emotional adjustment characteristics (Heist & Yonge, 1968). The OPI scales cover a broad range of normal personality characteristics, chiefly oriented toward higher education (Schuerger & Allen, 1986), and are therefore particularly relevant for a college-aged sample. Norms for the OPI were developed using over 7,000 college students. In addition, the OPI has been used as a measure of psychological adjustment for Asian Americans in previous studies, and has been found to have sufficient convergent validity in this population (S. Sue & Zane, 1985; D. W. Sue & Frank, 1973).

Procedure

Subjects were recruited from two introductory courses in psychology at UCLA during the winter and spring quarter of 1989, and received extra credit for their participation. Subjects were scheduled

in groups of 2 to 20 individuals, and typically took between 20 and 40 minutes to complete the survey. The survey was administered by one of three Asian-American research assistants. On completion of the questionnaire, subjects were provided with a one-page debriefing form that described the purpose of the study.²

Analyses

Data reduction analyses. We subjected the self-consciousness, self-monitoring, and psychological maladjustment scales to factor analysis. Three factors were obtained for the self-consciousness scale, using a varimax solution to yield orthogonal factors (SAS Institute Inc., 1985). These factors perfectly corroborated the original private self-consciousness, public self-consciousness, and social anxiety subscales, with alpha coefficients of .77, .79, and .74, respectively. The internal consistency of the entire scale was .79.

The self-monitoring scale had adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .68$), with factor analysis using a varimax solution to yield three orthogonal factors previously identified (Briggs et al., 1980): other-directedness ($\alpha = .65$), acting ($\alpha = .67$), and extraversion ($\alpha = .64$). Only a few items loaded slightly differently than the original scale. Because the factor structures for both self-consciousness and self-monitoring scales sufficiently matched the original measures, scores on the original measures were used in all analyses.

Two highly reliable, orthogonal factors were derived from the Personal Integration scale that accounted for 18% of the variance in the scale. The first factor, "interpersonal distress" ($\alpha = .93$), contained 23 items, and was represented by such questions as "I am apt to hide my feelings to the point where people may hurt me without their knowing it" and "I often feel that the people I meet are not interested in me." The second factor contained 15 items and was labeled "intrapersonal distress." The internal consistency of this scale was .86, and this factor was represented by such items as "I have had strange and peculiar thoughts" and "Sometimes an unimportant thought will run through my mind and bother me for days." Original scores on the two factors in this measure were used as the dependent variables.

Group comparisons. A 3×6 (Group \times Independent Variables) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed in order to identify differences among foreign-born Asian, U.S.-born Asian, and White Americans on these factors. Social anxiety was excluded in this analysis because of its conceptual overlap with psychological maladjustment, because social anxiety may itself be an indicator of psychological maladjustment (S. Sue & Zane, 1985).

Once the variables on which there were significant group differences were identified, we performed a 3×2 analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on psychological maladjustment on the three groups, controlling for these variables.

Results

Demographics

There were no significant differences on age and academic class between groups. In terms of SES, foreign-born Asian Americans ($M = 42.52$, $SD = 14.88$) were at a significantly lower SES level than were either White ($M = 51.45$, $SD = 11.90$) or U.S.-born Asian Americans ($M = 53.16$, $SD = 13.36$), using Bonferroni's procedure for controlling experimentwise error, $F(2, 133) = 8.32$, $p < .0004$. However, because SES level was not correlated with any other variable, including psychological maladjustment, it was not used as a covariate in the subsequent analyses.

Response Style

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations of response style and personality style variables. A 3×6 MANOVA examining group differences on social desirability, private and public self-consciousness, other-directedness, acting, and extraversion, was significant, $F(12, 256) = 2.26$, $p < .01$. In a subsequent one-way ANOVA, the groups differed on levels of social desirability, $F(2, 133) = 4.10$, $p < .02$, with White Americans scoring significantly higher than foreign-born Asians, whereas U.S.-born Asians did not differ significantly from either of the aforementioned groups.

Personality Style

Subsequent one-way ANOVAs revealed no group differences on the two dimensions of self-consciousness, private and public self-consciousness. However, there were significant group differences on levels of other-directedness, $F(2, 133) = 3.35$, $p < .04$, and extraversion, $F(2, 133) = 3.05$, $p < .05$, after Bonferroni corrections for Type I experiment-wise error. Foreign-born Asian Americans were significantly more other-directed, and less extroverted, than were White Americans, who were the least other-directed and most extroverted group (see Table 1). U.S.-born Asian Americans fell between both groups on levels of other-directedness and extraversion.

Psychological Maladjustment

The one-way ANOVAs were significant, indicating group differences on levels of psychological maladjustment, $F(2, 133) = 10.91$, $p < .0001$, both in terms of interpersonal distress, $F(2, 133) = 12.09$, $p < .0001$, and intrapersonal distress, $F(2, 133) = 8.24$, $p < .0004$. Using Bonferroni correction procedures, we found that foreign-born Asian Americans were significantly more psychologically maladjusted ($M = 114.0$, $SD = 36.0$) than were U.S.-born Asian Americans ($M = 92.1$, $SD = 36.7$) and White Americans ($M = 85.3$, $SD = 28.0$), reporting greater levels of both intrapersonal and interpersonal distress.

Of greater importance was whether these differences in psychological maladjustment would persist after controlling for the confounding influences of response styles and personality styles, specifically, social desirability, self-consciousness, other-directedness, and extraversion. Indeed, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on both interpersonal distress, $F(5, 130) = 23.53$, $p < .0001$, and intrapersonal distress, $F(5, 130) = 11.52$, $p < .0001$ were highly significant, with foreign-born Asians (adjusted $M = 43.46$) reporting more interpersonal distress than both U.S.-born Asian (adjusted $M = 35.46$) and White Americans (adjusted $M = 25.32$). These results indicate that ethnic differences on both types of psychological maladjustment were still found after controlling for the influences of response style or personality styles on which there were group differences.

In addition to cultural differences in response style and personality styles, it is possible that the differences in psychological maladjustment may have been largely due to the inclusion of subjects of Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Thai

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of All Variables by Group

Variable	Foreign-born Asians (<i>n</i> = 46)	U.S.-born Asians (<i>n</i> = 29)	Whites (<i>n</i> = 61)
Social desirability (range = 0-5)			
<i>M</i>	2.4 _a	2.8 _{a,b}	3.1 _b
<i>SD</i>	1.3	1.2	1.2
Self-monitoring (range = 0-25)			
<i>M</i>	13.3 _a	13.5 _a	13.2 _a
<i>SD</i>	3.6	4.6	4.0
Other-directedness (range = 0-11)			
<i>M</i>	3.9 _a	3.6 _{a,b}	3.0 _b
<i>SD</i>	1.7	2.0	1.9
Acting (range = 0-5)			
<i>M</i>	2.1 _a	2.5 _a	2.6 _a
<i>SD</i>	1.5	1.8	1.5
Extraversion (range = 0-6)			
<i>M</i>	2.8 _a	3.2 _{a,b}	3.5 _b
<i>SD</i>	1.5	1.7	1.4
Self-consciousness (range = 0-76)			
<i>M</i>	51.7 _a	50.2 _a	49.5 _a
<i>SD</i>	8.6	7.8	9.4
Private (range = 0-32)			
<i>M</i>	21.8 _a	19.8 _a	20.2 _a
<i>SD</i>	4.7	4.8	4.8
Public (range = 0-28)			
<i>M</i>	19.8 _a	20.7 _a	20.3 _a
<i>SD</i>	4.2	4.8	4.8
Social anxiety (range = 0-16)			
<i>M</i>	10.0 _a	9.6 _a	9.0 _a
<i>SD</i>	3.5	3.4	3.5

Note. Differences noted are within rows. Means with different subscripts differ significantly at $p < .05$. Scores on each measure are positively scaled such that higher scores reflect higher values on the measure.

background in the foreign-born Asian sample. The particularly stressful nature of the circumstances surrounding emigration for Southeast Asians has resulted in observations of greater psychological maladjustment for this group (Kinzie et al., 1980; Kinzie & Manson, 1983), and may not be representative of the stress level experienced by Asian immigrants in general. To determine if the differences in psychological maladjustment were largely due to the inclusion of this high-risk group, we replicated the analyses without this group.

The results of the ANCOVA ($n = 130$) were consistent with the first set of analyses. Foreign-born Asians continued to report greater levels of interpersonal, $F(5, 124) = 21.29, p < .0001$, and intrapersonal, $F(5, 124) = 10.94, p < .0001$, distress than did both U.S.-born Asian Americans and White Americans, even after controlling for differences in social desirability, other-directedness, and extraversion.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to assess differences in levels of psychological maladjustment between Asian and White

Americans while controlling for the potentially confounding influences of cultural differences in response style and personality style. Ethnic differences in social desirability, other-directedness, and extraversion were found, demonstrating that ethnic differences in response style and personality style do occur and are important to consider. More important, the levels of psychological maladjustment between foreign-born Asian Americans and both U.S.-born Asian Americans and White Americans remained significantly different, even when the influence of these response style and personality style variables was controlled for.

Asian and White Americans scored differently on the social desirability scale, with Asian Americans scoring lower than White Americans (see Table 1). It may have been that the Asian sample scored lower because the items confounded social desirability with nonself-effacing behaviors. That is, if the foreign-born Asian American group responded in a self-effacing direction, it would result in a lower social desirability score.

On most measures the U.S.-born Asian-American sample never differed from the White-American sample. Ethnic dif-

ferences in psychological maladjustment between Asian and White Americans were solely due to the differences between the foreign-born Asian Americans and White Americans. This finding underscores the heterogeneity within the Asian sample. This heterogeneity may involve important acculturation differences if we can assume that generational differences reflect differences in acculturation level. This assumption appears to be a reasonable one in view of findings that generational differences have been shown to differentiate between levels of acculturation among Asian Americans (Padilla et al., 1985; S. Sue & Zane, 1985).

Differences in psychological maladjustment between the foreign-born Asian-American and White-American groups persisted even after excluding Southeast Asian refugees—a group that has been found to be at great risk for mental health disorders—from the foreign-born Asian sample. Foreign-born Asian Americans continued to report greater levels of interpersonal distress. The greater levels of interpersonal distress experienced by the foreign-born Asian-American sample is particularly noteworthy when one considers that the group had been in the United States for an average of ten years ($SD = 4.3$). Thus, the various stressors that many Asians face when immigrating to the United States may have long-term impact, as suggested by the higher psychological maladjustment levels of the relatively acculturated foreign-born Asian Americans in this sample. Interpersonal distress may result from such factors as language barriers, unfamiliar social norms, cultural differences in values and expectations, and lack of close contact with previous social support network and kinship ties.

The present study has several limitations. First, it was based solely on self-report measures of psychological maladjustment. However, there is evidence that self-report measures do have convergent validity for foreign-born and U.S.-born Asian Americans (D. W. Sue & Frank, 1973). Second, the study was conducted with a relatively small sample of college students, and its generalizability beyond this particular sample is unknown. Because a majority of the Asian-American subjects (59%) were from Japanese, Chinese, or Korean background, it is unclear if these findings are applicable to other Asian-American groups (e.g., Southeast Asians). Third, all the measures were administered in English and it is possible that some of the more recently immigrated foreign-born Asians had difficulty comprehending the survey questions. Given that all the subjects were students admitted to a highly competitive university, this possibility seems relatively unlikely. Finally, it is conceivable that there were important confounding variables that the present study neglected to consider that may have influenced self-reports of psychological maladjustment. In future comparative research on Asian and White Americans, these variables would be important to identify and address.

This study has several implications for counseling Asian Americans, but these should be considered with the limitations discussed previously in mind. The results strongly suggest that Asian immigrants are at greater risk for mental health problems than are U.S.-born Asian Americans or White Americans. Southeast Asians, in particular, demon-

strated greater levels of intrapersonal and interpersonal distress than did the other groups under study. Furthermore, even when foreign-born Asian Americans have lived in the United States for a relatively long period of time, they still report greater levels of interpersonal distress. Hence, student counseling centers need to be attuned to the needs of all Asian immigrants, even after such individuals have lived in the United States for a considerable length of time and appear to be relatively acculturated.

One important implication of the study is that clinicians may inadvertently underpathologize their Asian-American clients in their attempts to be culturally sensitive in the assessment of psychopathology. Lopez and Hernandez (1986) found that counselors who endorsed culturally sensitive attitudes and behaviors tended to judge problems as less severe or pathological when they were considered "cultural" in nature. The present results suggest why this may occur. We found that ethnic differences occur in both personal style and psychological maladjustment, but that these differences occur somewhat independently of each other. It appears that when cultural differences in styles of communication or expression are noted, counselor may at times overestimate the influence of these variables in their assessment of the client's maladjustment. It is just as detrimental to underpathologize a client's problems as it is to overpathologize them. Clinicians, in their commendable efforts to provide culturally sensitive services, must carefully consider the relative influence that cultural differences in interpersonal and personal style have on observed or reported maladjustment. The results suggest that (a) these influences are not as great as previously thought, and (b) when these influences occur, there still may be significant levels of psychological maladjustment. One interesting possibility for future research is to examine whether the direction of this bias may be domain-specific. Future studies with Asian Americans might assess differences in overpathologizing and underpathologizing biases (if these actually exist) across the different domains of maladjustment, namely, intrapersonal and interpersonal distress.

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Butcher, Geen, Hulse, and Salthouse Appointed New Editors, 1992-1997

The Publications and Communications Board of the American Psychological Association announces the appointments of James N. Butcher, University of Minnesota; Russell G. Geen, University of Missouri; Stewart H. Hulse, Johns Hopkins University; and Timothy Salthouse, Georgia Institute of Technology as editors of *Psychological Assessment: A Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, the Personality Processes and Individual Differences section of the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behavior Processes*, and *Psychology and Aging*, respectively. As of January 1, 1991, manuscripts should be directed as follows:

- For *Psychological Assessment* send manuscripts to James N. Butcher, Department of Psychology, Elliott Hall, University of Minnesota, 75 East River Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455.
- For *JPSP: Personality* send manuscripts to Russell G. Geen, Department of Psychology, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri 65211.
- For *JEP: Animal* send manuscripts to Stewart H. Hulse, Johns Hopkins University, Department of Psychology, Ames Hall, Baltimore, Maryland 21218.
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Manuscript submission patterns make the precise date of completion of 1991 volumes uncertain. Current editors will receive and consider manuscripts through December 1990. Should any 1991 volume be completed before that date, manuscripts will be redirected to the newly appointed editor-elect for consideration in the 1992 volume.