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Cultural Factors Contributing to the Perceived Discrimination

among Asian American, Korean American, and Korean Adolescents

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts

in Education

by

Hye-Young Yun

2015

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Cultural Factors Contributing to the Perceived Discrimination

among Asian American, Korean American, and Korean Adolescents

by

Hye-Young Yun

Master of Arts in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Sandra H. Graham, Chair

In this study, Romero and Roberts' model (1998) and Phinney's causal model (1997) were

used as frameworks to test the relationship between ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, out-

group attitudes, and the perception of discrimination. Among Asian American, Korean

American, and Korean students. These models tested direct effects of ethic identity on

perceived discrimination and indirect effects mediated by in-group attitudes and out-group

attitudes. School-based surveys in California and Korea were undertaken with seventh grade

Asian American (n=576), Korean American (n=146), and Korean (n=130) students using

multiple measures of the UCLA Middle School Diversity Project (MSDP). Structural

equation modeling (SEM) in EQS indicated that both direct and indirect effects were found:

higher ethnic identity was associated with more perceived discrimination for the direct

effect; higher ethnic identity was associated with less perceived discrimination, through

positive in-group attitudes and out-group attitudes for the indirect effect. The model was the same in all three ethnic groups. This model may capture relatively core psychological processes—those that operate in a similar fashion across a variety of groups. These results have important implications: while there are unique socio-cultural factors surrounding these groups' experiences, some of the more *core* processes operate similarly among Asian ethnic groups.

The thesis of Hye-Young Yun is approved.

Connie Kasari

Rashmita Mistry

Sandra H. Graham, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

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Korean American, and Korean Adolescents

Between 2000 and 2010, the Asian American population increased four times

faster than the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The speed with which

the Asian American population has increased has surpassed that of the Hispanic

population (Pew Research Report, 2012). With an ever-increasing number of Asian

immigrants, interests in Asian American youth have also grown. However, those interests

still focus mainly on their academic achievements (S.J. Lee, 1996; Louie, 2004) while

their psychological development, such as intergroup attitudes or perceived discrimination,

garners far less attention. Moreover, most of the research studies mentioned above were

conducted under the preconceived idea that still defines more than 28 different ethnicities

using the terminology, *Asian American*. It may be difficult to understand and develop

theories about the growing Asian American population so long as they are viewed as a

single group without accounting for their within-group heterogeneity.

Recently, an increasing number of studies have found that a substantial number of

Asian American youths also experience discrimination based on ethnicity just as other

ethnic groups do (Alvarez et al., 2006; Choi et al., 2006; Greene et al., 2006; Goto et al.,

2002; Lee, 2005; Louie, 2004; Qin et al., in press; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). A few

studies have shown that East Asian youth (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000), Chinese

American youth (Goto, Gee, & Takeuchi, 2002; Qin, Way, & Pandy, in press), and

Korean American youth (Lee, 2005) experience ethnic discrimination. Luther, Cicchetti,

and Becker (2000) indicated that the outcome variability in the context of discrimination

is determined depending on the presence or absence of factors, such as psychological,

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social, or material resources. Among them, many researchers have consistently assumed that ethnic identity or intergroup attitudes are contributing factors that affect perceived discrimination for ethnic minority groups (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Phinney, 1990, 1992). Unfortunately, empirical studies have yet to be conducted on the adolescents of specific Asian American ethnic groups that examine how dynamic relationships between ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, and out-group attitudes simultaneously develop and affect perceived discrimination.

The current study tested the pathways to perceived ethnic discrimination with ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, and out-group attitudes as contributing factors among seventh-grade Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans. Unlike previous studies that heavily focused on older adolescents, such as high school or college students (see Rivas-Drake, Hughes, & Way, 2008), this study concentrated on early adolescence (seventh grade), a critical period when people begin to contemplate who they are as a member of an ethnic minority group in terms of ethnic identity and discrimination (Quintana, 2007). Moreover, among more than 28 Asian ethnicities, despite a relatively short immigration history, Korean Americans are one of the five largest Asian American groups and have formed sizeable communities, mainly in large cities such as Los Angeles and New York. However, relatively little is known about the psychosocial development of Korean Americans. To address the limitations above, this study tested the pathway between ethnic identity, intergroup attitudes, and perceived discrimination of seventh-grade Asian Americans and Korean Americans at ethnically diverse schools in California and seventh-grade Koreans who live in Ansan, which is the city with the highest ethnic diversity ratio in Korea.

Literature Review

Asian Americans and Perceived Discrimination

The fact that a substantial number of ethnic minority youth in the U.S regularly experience ethnic discrimination no longer surprises anyone. Among ethnic minority youths, because the experience with perceived peer discrimination brings troubling and serious impacts on adolescents, Fisher and her colleagues (2000) emphasized the importance of distinguishing between peer and adult discrimination. Unfortunately, in the case of Asian Americans, discrimination often times is believed to be minimal or less severe than it is for other ethnic minority groups. This erroneous view that discrimination is not relevant to Asian Americans can be attributed largely to the model minority myth and other forms of racial politics that obfuscate the debilitating effects of discrimination on Asian population (Wu, 2002). Regarding this issue, the focus began shifting to Asian American youth in very recent years (see Alvarez, Juan, & Liang, 2006). Research consistently demonstrates that Asian Americans do experience ethnic discrimination. According to Rosenbloom and Way (2004), Asian American adolescents, unlike African Americans or Latinos, indicate that they have experienced ethnic/racial discrimination from their peers, but not from teachers, shopkeepers, or police officers. A further distinction was that Asian American adolescents often receive unfair and differential treatment based on their ethnicity/race by non-Asian American peers at school (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000).

Very few studies have been conducted to examine ethnic discrimination experiences of Korean American youths specifically. For example, Shin, D'Antonio, Son, Kim, and Park (2011) found that Korean American adolescents not only encountered a

higher level of discrimination but also perceived more discrimination than adolescents of other ethnic groups. Moreover, according to Yeh (2003), in an examination of perceived discrimination and general mental health outcomes among Chinese-, Japanese-, and Korean American adolescents, Korean American youths exhibited significantly more mental health symptoms (e.g., depression, stomachaches, or performance anxiety) in comparison to the other groups.

Ethnic Identity and Perceived Discrimination

Ethnic identity is valued as a critical psychological resource that empowers ethnic minority groups to be resilient against discrimination (Phinney, 2003). According to Phinney (2003), ethnic identity provides a sense of belonging, commitment in an ethnic group, and awareness of what it means to be a minority in society—and this self-awareness plays a pivotal role in compensating for the negative psychological consequences arising from discrimination. On the other hand, according to the model of status-based rejection sensitivity, individuals with a strong ethnic identity respond more sensitively and negatively to ethnic discrimination incidents. Individuals who are included in a stigmatized social category or status group display a tendency to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and intensely react to discrimination (e.g., Chan & Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002; Lee, 2005).

Intergroup (In-Group and Out-Group) Attitudes and Ethnic Identity

Intergroup attitudes are the outcome of interactions and other factors including ethnicity, ethnic identity, place of birth, socioeconomic status, self-esteem, and neighborhood, among adolescents having different ethnic/racial or cultural backgrounds. Based on Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory, many people display in-group

bias and positive attitudes towards their own groups (Messick & Mackie, 1989). On the other hand, Yee and Brown (1992) found that children of ethnic minority groups holding negative stereotypes against their in-groups demonstrated out-group bias arising from their preference towards out-groups with higher status. It is evident that some minority adolescents have out-group bias and demonstrate a preference for Whites (Phinney, 1989).

However, in-group and out-group biases change with the development of ethnic identity (Phinney, Ferguson, and Tate, 1997). Although some ethnic minority children may hold negative in-group attitudes, such attitudes gradually decrease as they explore their ethnic identity and eventually become committed to that identity during adolescence. Ethnic adolescents explore the meaning and implications of their ethnic group membership, and their adolescence is a critical period of their lives as they secure a sense of group membership, which is referred to as an achieved ethnic identity. This achieved ethnic identity has a direct correlation with positive attitudes regarding one's own group (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990; Phinney, 1989, 1990, 1993).

Studies have shown three different perspectives on the relationship between in-group and out-group attitudes. From the first perspective, more positive in-group attitudes lead to more negative out-group attitudes. Masson and Verkuyten (1993) supported this perspective in a study in which Dutch adolescents displayed stronger prejudice against other ethnic groups while simultaneously displaying a stronger positive assessment of their own ethnicity. Such negative attitudes are based on the fear of strangers, which often develops into a driving force that motivates prejudice and discrimination against other ethnic groups (Aboud, 1988). The second perspective suggests that in-group and

out-group attitudes are related to one another either positively or negatively depending on given contexts (Hinkle & Brown; 1990; Messick & Mackie, 1989). Terrant (2002) suggested that higher ethnic identity leads to stronger in-group bias, but ethnic identity appears to be unrelated to negative views of the out-groups. Finally, a third perspective, which has recently started drawing attention, suggests that in-group and out-group attitudes share positive associations.

Ethnic Identity, Intergroup Attitudes, and Perceived Discrimination

According to Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory, individuals demonstrate an in-group favoritism motivated by strong ethnic identity, and good feelings about their own group are maintained in the face of discrimination. That is, not only strong ethnic identity but also in-group favoritism protects an individual from the negative impact of perceived discrimination (Mossakowski, 2003). Phinney and Alipuri (1996) interpreted this by stating that strong ethnic identity helps to maintain a positive sense of well-being, as it encourages individuals to feel that they are a part of their own ethnic group.

Romero and Roberts (1998), employing Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory, examined the relations between ethnic identity, out-group attitudes, and perceived discrimination with data from ethnically diverse samples of youth. As a result, they found not only a direct effect but also an indirect effect. For the direct effect, ethnic identity was positively associated with perceived discrimination. It showed that stronger ethnic identity led to more perceived discrimination. For the indirect effect, the higher ethnic identity the youths had, the more negative out-group attitudes they displayed, and in turn, more perceived discrimination was predicted. These patterns were found not only from

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African-Americans and Latinos but also from Asians (e.g., Vietnamese-Americans).

Phinney et al.'s (1997) study indicated that although the positive relationship between ethnic identity and in-group attitudes was expected, it is important to recognize that the two measures examine different concepts. They found that ethnic identity did not have a direct effect on out-group attitudes, but had an indirect effect on out-group attitudes mediated by in-group attitudes. Ethnic identity predicted positive in-group attitudes, and in-group attitudes in turn predicted positive out-group attitudes. Moreover, Phinney, Jacoby, and Silva (2007) suggested that intergroup attitudes (in-group or out-group attitudes) need to be tested to separate behavioral aspects (such as enjoying being around and meeting people) and affective aspects (such as awareness and understanding people).

Ethnic Identity, Intergroup Attitudes, and Perceived Discrimination Among Koreans Living in Korea

Few studies have systematically examined the intergroup attitudes and ethnic identity of Koreans living in Korea. From young children to adolescents, it has been found that Koreans are generally under the influence of negative out-group attitudes toward other ethnic groups. Ko's (2005) study on ethnic prejudice among elementary school students found that Korean children have a significantly discriminatory perception of other ethnic groups. These students have overwhelmingly negative attitudes not only toward African Americans but also toward Southeast Asians. These tendencies were also detected in even younger children. For example, Um (1999) examined the ethnic preferences of 121 Korean children between the ages of three and five. When toddlers were asked which ethnicity they would choose to play with, they chose Asians most

frequently, followed by Caucasians and finally African Americans. Pak and Ahn (2013) suggest that ethnic identity is the most significant factor in influencing the negative out-group attitude among high school students toward other ethnic groups. The authors suggest that the key reason that Koreans are reluctant to accept people from other ethnicities is because their ethnic identity is excessively strong. Yang et al. (2008), representing the psychosocial perspective, say that Korean adolescents have developed such attitudes because of the fear of potential economic losses from competition for limited resources as other ethnic groups have immigrated to Korea. In Korea, where the number of other ethnic immigrants has finally increased at an accelerated pace in the past 10 years, the Korean ethnic group is still the dominant majority group in Korea. That is why there has not been a single study conducted on Koreans as a dominant majority group to examine perceived ethnic discrimination in Korea.

The Present Study

The purpose of the current study was to better understand the relation between ethnocultural contributing factors (ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, and out-group attitudes) and perception of discrimination. Romero and Roberts' model found a positive relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination, as mediated by out-group attitudes. Phinney et al.'s model, on the other hand, indicated we need to account for in-group, as well as out-group attitudes. This means we might generate a different set of direct and indirect effects from Romero and Roberts' model. Phinney et al.'s model implied that the relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination would be negative, because ethnic identity leads to positive in-group attitudes, which leads to positive out-group attitudes, in turn leading to less perceived discrimination. That is,

Romero and Roberts' model and Phinney et al.' model have different predictions about the relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination. Our understanding of the literatures is that it is important to incorporate in-group, as well as out-group attitudes. Building on Phinney et al.'s model, we would expect the indirect effect between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination would be negative. Moreover, to examine whether the uniqueness of Korean American youths, compared to other Asian ethnic groups mentioned above, can be captured from the psychological process integrated with the two models, Asian Americans (excluding Korean Americans) must be concurrently examined under the same contexts for comparison. At the same time, including Koreans living in Korea as the comparative group will provide a more representative sample of a specific national culture.

Overall, this study had three goals. First, we tested whether ethnic identity had a direct positive effect on perceived discrimination. It was hypothesized that those who had higher ethnic identity would report more perceived discrimination. Second, we tested whether ethnic identity had an indirect negative effect on perceived discrimination. It was hypothesized that those who had higher ethnic identity would report more positive in-group attitudes, which would predict more positive out-group attitudes, and subsequently, less perceived discrimination (i.e., ethnic identity ➔ in-group attitudes ➔ out-group attitudes ➔ perceived discrimination) (see Figure 1). Third, we tested whether the above direct and indirect pathways operated similarly across three groups (Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans).

Figure 1

Conceptual model of cultural factors contributing to the perceived discrimination
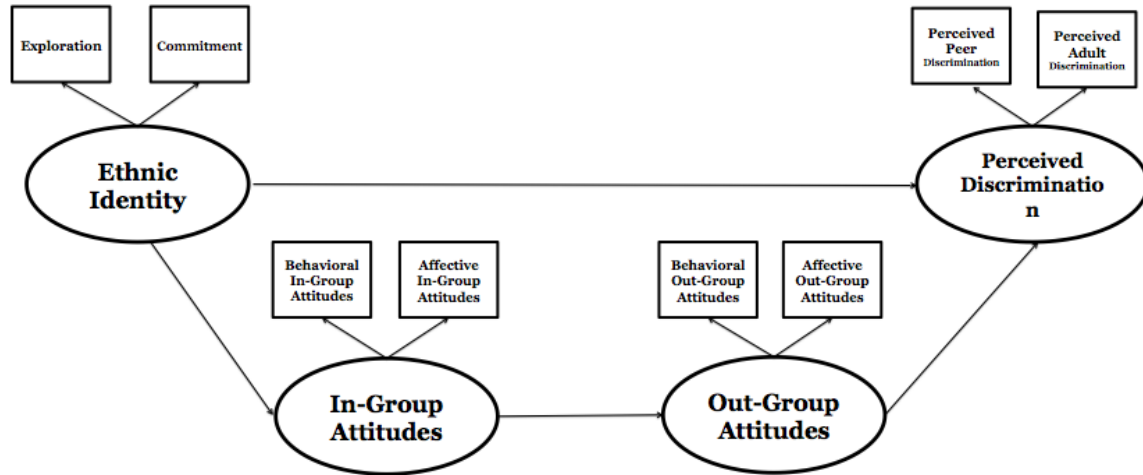
Note. ETH-E = ethnic identity-exploration; ETH-C = ethnic identity-commitment; BEH-IN = behavioral in-group attitudes; AFF-IN = affective in-group attitudes; BEH-OUT = behavioral out-group attitudes; AFF-OUT = affective out-group attitudes; PEER = perceived peer discrimination; ADULT = perceived adult discrimination.

This study will offer opportunities to systematically and simultaneously capture the dynamics between ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, out-group attitudes, and perceived discrimination that can be experienced by Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans.

Method

Participants

The participants were seventh grade students from three ethnic groups: 576 Asian Americans, 146 Korean Americans, and 130 Koreans (see Table1). The Korean American students were a subsample of the UCLA Middle School Diversity Project (MSDP), directed by Dr. Sandra Graham and Dr. Jaana Juvonen, The research is a

longitudinal study that aims to understand the challenges and psychosocial benefits of ethnic diversity for middle school students in Northern and Southern California. Among MSDP students ($n = 6012$), Asian Americans make up 9.58 %, including East Asians, Southeast Asians, South Asians, Filipinos, and Pacific Islanders. Of these Asian Americans, East Asians make up 7.78 % of the population and of these East Asians, Korean American students ($n = 146$) were identified solely by their last names and parents' places of birth. Our Asian American group was excluded from this Korean American group. The Korean students were selected from the three schools with the highest ethnic diversity ratio in the city of Ansan, which has the highest ethnic diversity ratio in Korea, according to the data provided in 2013 by Korea's Ministry of Education. Two classrooms from each school were randomly selected and surveyed.

Procedures

In Korea. The school system in Korea differs somewhat from the system in the United States. For instance, schools in the U.S. start a new academic year during the fall semester, whereas schools in Korea begin their new academic year during the spring semester, in March. Korean schools have five weeks of summer vacation following the spring semester and lasting until the second semester, which begins in September. Thus, the fall semester in Korea may be deemed equivalent to the spring semester in the U.S. Almost all of the questions from the MSDP survey were repeated exactly the same way with the Korean sample, except for a few occasions during which some words were modified slightly to help the Korean students better understand the question. To ensure the precision of the translation, the translation process from English to Korean and from

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the participants

Variables	Asian American (N= 576)	Korean American (N = 146)	Korean (N =130)
Grade	7th	7th	7th
Gender			
Girls	318 (55.2 %)	71 (48.6 %)	60 (46.2 %)
Boys	258 (44.8 %)	75 (51.4 %)	70 (53.8 %)
Place of Birth			
Korea	N/A	60 (41.2 %)	130 (100 %)
U.S.	409 (71.0%)	81 (55.4 %)	0
Others	167 (29.0%)	5 (.03 %)	0
Generation status			
First generation	155 (26.9%)	65 (44.6 %)	N/A
Second generation	340 (59.1%)	74 (50.7 %)	N/A
More than third generation	68 (11.8%)	7 (4.7 %)	N/A

Korean to English was repeated three times using professional translators in Korea. All participating students in the Koreans ample who completed the survey received an honorarium of a mechanical pencil and pen worth $3.00; only those who wished to participate in the next survey were asked to provide their contact information (phone number or email address) for the purpose of the future longitudinal study. All measures were assembled in booklet form, and the survey was conducted by both a researcher and a teacher. It took approximately 60 minutes for the students to complete all of the survey instruments. In order to guarantee the confidentiality of the surveys provided by the students, stickers were distributed along with the survey booklets, so that the students could seal each questionnaire following its completion.

In the United States. During the spring semester, the students completed a group-administered survey led by research assistants. All measures were assembled in booklet form, and it took the students approximately 60 minutes to complete all of the instruments. All students received an honorarium of $10 for their participation in this study. No students were allowed to participate in the study without parental consent.

Measures

Ethnic identity. The ethnic identity measure was adapted from Phinney's Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992). Ethnic identity is a multidimensional construct, and we focused on the exploration and commitment dimensions as defined by Phinney (e.g., "I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs," (exploration) and "I feel like I really belong to my ethnic group" (commitment). The response options used a 5-point scale: 1 = "definitely yes" and 5 = "definitely no." The Korean version of the

survey also used the same six items to measure ethnic identity. Factor analysis revealed that the two dimensions identified by Phinney et al. (2007) were documented in all three groups: ethnic identity-exploration (EI-E) and ethnic identity-commitment (EI-C) (Asian American EI-E α = .75; Korean American EI-E α = .80; Korean EI-E α = .78; Asian American EI-C α = .75; Korean American EI-C α = .75; Korean EI-C α = .76).

Intergroup attitudes. The intergroup attitude measure has the following two components: behavioral and affective.

Behavioral: The participants were asked whether they wanted to participate in certain kinds of activities (e.g., "Would you want to eat lunch together with an African American?" or "Would you want to dance together at a party with Latinos?"). The response options used a 5-point scale: 1 = for "Sure, yes!" and 5 = "No way!"

Affective: The participants were asked how they feel about people from four different ethnic groups: Asian, Black, Latino and White (e.g., "I like kids who are Asian," "I am comfortable being around African-American kids"). The response options used a 5-point scale: 1 = "For sure, yes!" and 5 = "No way!"

All of the items posed questions about the four major ethnic groups included in the U.S. sample: African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and White Americans. Among these four ethnic groups, Latinos were excluded from the Korean version of the survey because the pilot study revealed that Korean adolescents had the least amount of knowledge about Latinos.

For this study, in-group attitudes and out-group attitudes were categorized as follows: for Korean Americans, Asian is their in-group, and the other three ethnic groups are the out-groups. (Asian American in-group attitude α = .88; Korean American in-

group attitude α = .83; Asian American out-group attitude α = .94; Korean American out-group attitude α = .92; Korean in-group attitude α = .86; Korean out-group attitude α = .89).

Perceived peer/adult discrimination. The discrimination measure was adapted from the Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000). The participants were asked to rate their experiences with discrimination during the previous six months, using a 5-point scale (1 = never, 5 = a whole lot). Among eight items, four items provided measures of perceived peer discrimination (e.g., "How often did other kids exclude you from their activities because of your race/ethnic group?"), while the other four items were measures of perceived adult discrimination (e.g., "How often were you disciplined unfairly at school because of your race/ethnic group?"). The description of the scale stated that people are sometimes treated unfairly, and that other kids have said that they were treated unfairly because of their race/ethnicity. The higher the mean score, the more discrimination experience it represents. The Korean version of the survey also used the same items for perceived discrimination measure. (Asian American perceived peer discrimination α = .84; Korean American perceived peer discrimination α = .84; Korean perceived peer discrimination α = .84; Asian American perceived adult discrimination α = .81; Korean American perceived adult discrimination α = .68; Korean perceived adult discrimination α = .93).

Data Analytic Strategy

Hypotheses were tested using the structural equation modeling (SEM) program EQS (Bentler, 2006). By using SEM, we were able to examine simultaneously the direct and indirect links between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination, accounting for

the role of in-group attitudes and out-group attitudes. Latent variables (factors) were constructed for ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, out-group attitudes, and perceived ethnic discrimination using the items designed to measure each factor, respectively. This explains the reliability of observed variables by representing each construct as a latent variable.

An important difference between the two samples, however, reflects the degree of missing data. Whereas data for the Koreans were complete (i.e., no missing values), those for the Korean Americans had some missing scores; specifically, a planned missingness 3-form design was implemented for the out-group attitudes measures. This design involved administering different items to different participants in order to reduce the amount of time it takes each participant to complete a survey, and to ask more questions than could be answered in a set amount of time by a single participant. Therefore, these variables were treated as "missing completely at random" (MCAR), as the missing data mechanism could be ignored, and valid estimates could be obtained without an explicit model of that mechanism. Under MCAR, maximum likelihood (ML) estimations were used for estimating parameters of these variables.

Normality of the data was evaluated using Mardia's coefficient, which should be -3 to +3 range (Bentler, 2006). Statistical research has shown that, whereas skewness tends to impact tests of means, kurtosis severely affects tests of variances and covariances (DeCarlo, 1997). Given that SEM is based on the analysis of covariance structures, evidence of kurtosis is always of concern. In particular, it is now well known that multivariate kurtosis is exceptionally detrimental to parameter estimation in SEM analyses (Curran, West, & Finch, 1996). Substantial large multivariate kurtosis occurred

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for both groups, normalized Mardia's coefficients of 73.97 (Asian Americans), 15.23 (Korean Americans), and 73.03 (Koreans) indicating the assumption of normality was violated. Analyses were based on a Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square statistic (S-B χ^2) (Satorra & Bentler, 1988), rather than the usual maximum likelihood (ML) χ^2 statistic, as it serves as a correction for χ^2 when distributional assumptions are violated. Statistics based on normal theory, such as the ML and χ^2 tests, may be valid for non-normal data. However, normal theory requires that errors of latent factors, as well as the factors and errors, be independent (Satorra &Bentler, 1990). Because this is difficult to evaluate in practice, robust corrections for data that are not multivariate normal were used.

The conventional test of statistical significance for evaluations of structural equation models is the chi-square goodness-of-fit index. For this index, a better fitting model is indicated by lower chi-square values. A non-significant chi-square value (conventionally, $p > .05$) indicates that the difference between the estimated and observed covariance matrices is not reliable, thus suggesting that the hypothesized model fits the data well. However, with large sample sizes it is difficult to obtain low chi-square values, even when the hypothesized model fits the data well (Bentler, 2006; Ullman & Bentler, 2013). Therefore, it is conventional to consider other stable indices of fit. Here, we report the comparative fit index (CFI; with values ≥ 0.95 indicating a good fit) and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA; where values ≤ 0.06 and a confidence interval upper-bounded at less than 0.10 indicate a good fit) (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1998; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Additionally, we test the significance and magnitude of the path coefficients in the hypothesized model.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Means and standard deviations for all study variables for Asian American, Korean American, and Korean groups are presented in Table 2. For Asian Americans, the means of affective in-group attitudes, behavioral and affective out-group attitudes, and perceived peer discrimination are significantly higher than the means of Korean Americans. In contrast, for Korean Americans, the means of ethnic identity-exploration and -commitment are higher than the means of Asian Americans. For Korean Americans the means of ethnic identity-commitment, in-group attitudes (behavioral and affective), affective out-group attitudes, and perceived peer discrimination are significantly higher than the means of Koreans. The Asian- and Korean American groups show in-group bias; the means of in-group attitudes are higher than the means of out-group attitudes. In contrast, the Korean group does not show in-group bias, but the means of their affective out-group attitudes variables are significantly higher than the Korean American group.

Bivariate correlations are provided in Table 3 for Asian American, Korean American, and Korean groups. For Asian Americans and Korean Americans, the ethnic identity-commitment and in-group attitudes (behavioral- and affective-) are significantly and positively correlated. However, the ethnic identity-commitment does not have significant relationships with out-group attitudes. The Asian American group displayed that both their behavioral- and their affective in-group attitudes had significantly positive associations with both their behavioral- and their

Table 2
Variable means and standard deviations

	Asian American (N= 576)	Korean American (N=146)	Korean (N=130)
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
ETH-E	3.279 (.849)	3.406 (.925)	3.277 (.824)
ETH-P	4.270 (.711)	4.290 (.716)	3.930 (.864)
BEH-IN	3.981 (.801)	3.941 (.774)	3.221 (.819)
AFF-IN	4.162 (.619)	4.014 (.652)	3.498 (.772)
BEH-OUT	3.476 (.851)	3.236 (.847)	3.226 (.758)
AFF-OUT	3.672 (.680)	3.236 (.744)	3.555 (.671)
PDISR-PEER	1.474 (.654)	1.752 (.816)	1.109 (.411)
PDISR-ADULT	1.145 (.450)	1.213 (.406)	1.160 (.509)

Note. Standard deviations are provided in parentheses. Asterisks denote significant

differences between Asian American and Korean American groups.

ETH-E = ethnic identity-exploration; ETH-C = ethnic identity-commitment; BEH-IN =

behavioral in-group attitudes; AFF-IN = affective in-group attitudes; BEH-OUT =

behavioral out-group attitudes; AFF-OUT = affective out-group attitudes; PDISR-PEER

= perceived peer discrimination; PDISR-ADULT = perceived adult discrimination

Table 3

Intercorrelations among study variables for Asian American

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. ETH-E	1							
2. ETH-C	.370**	1						
3. BEH-IN	.173**	.263**	1					
4. AFF-IN	.210**	.308**	.584**	1				
5. BEH-OUT	.085*	.052	.627**	.320**	1			
6. AFF-OUT	.059	.044	.293**	.441*	.677**	1		
7. PDISR_PEER	-.023	.125	-.039	-.060	-.081	-.092	1	
8. PDISR_ADULT	-.008	-.164	.008	.026	-.068	-.128*	.461**	1

Note. ETH-E = ethnic identity-exploration; ETH-C = ethnic identity-commitment; BEH-IN = behavioral in-group attitudes; AFF-IN = affective in-group attitudes; BEH-OUT = behavioral out-group attitudes; AFF-OUT = affective out-group attitudes; PDISR-PEER = perceived peer discrimination; PDISR-ADULT = perceived adult discrimination. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Intercorrelations among study variables for Korean American

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. ETH-E	1							
2. ETH-C	.324**	1						
3. BEH-IN	.069	.239**	1					
4. AFF-IN	.094	.275**	.462**	1				
5. BEH-OUT	.041	-.029	.558**	.081	1			
6. AFF-OUT	.320	-.039	.135	.252*	.525*	1		
7. PDISR_PEER	-.106	.038	.093	-.085	-.073	-.365**	1	
8. PDISR_ADULT	-.081	.109	.020	.102	-.128	-.250*	.395**	1

Note. ETH-E = ethnic identity-exploration; ETH-C = ethnic identity-commitment; BEH-IN = behavioral in-group attitudes; AFF-IN = affective in-group attitudes; BEH-OUT = behavioral out-group attitudes; AFF-OUT = affective out-group attitudes; PDISR-PEER = perceived peer discrimination; PDISR-ADULT = perceived adult discrimination. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Intercorrelations among study variables for Korean

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. ETH-E	1							
2. ETH-C	.584**	1						
3. BEH-IN	.301**	.210*	1					
4. AFF-IN	.342**	.272**	.762**	1				
5. BEH-OUT	.299**	.159	.769**	.642**	1			
6. AFF-OUT	.181*	.128	.518**	.555**	.668*	1		
7. PDISR_PEER	.123	.046	.028	-.044	.025	-.081	1	
8. PDISR_ADULT	.187*	.007	-.012	-.086	.012	-.014	.832**	1

Note. ETH-E = ethnic identity-exploration; ETH-C = ethnic identity-commitment; BEH-IN = behavioral in-group attitudes; AFF-IN = affective in-group attitudes; BEH-OUT = behavioral out-group attitudes; AFF-OUT = affective out-group attitudes; PDISR-PEER = perceived peer discrimination; PDISR-ADULT = perceived adult discrimination. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

affective out-group attitudes. However, in the Korean American group, behavioral in-group attitudes showed a significantly positive relationship only with behavioral out-group attitudes while the affective in-group attitudes demonstrated a significantly positive relationship only with the affective out-group attitudes. The relationship between out-group attitudes and perceived discrimination did not exhibit any significant correlation except with affective out-group attitude and perceived peer discrimination in the Korean American group.

Korean American ethnic identity-exploration is not correlated with any other variable. In addition, Korean American and Korean groups showed positive correlations between in-group and out-group attitudes. For Korean American adolescents, behavioral in-group attitude was only significantly correlated with behavioral out-group attitudes, and affective in-group attitude was only significantly correlated with affective out-group attitude. However, two groups show different association against perceived discrimination: for Korean American adolescents, behavioral and affective out-group attitudes had negative associations with perceived peer discrimination. Specifically, affective out-group attitudes significantly and negatively correlated with perceived discrimination by not only peers but also adults. However, ethnic identity and in-group attitudes were not significantly related to perceived discrimination. For Korean adolescents, ethnic identity-exploration had a significant positive correlation with perceived adult discrimination.

Preliminary Analyses

Establishing the baseline (configural) models. Before testing our hypothesized model, which we mentioned above in Figure 1, we need to establish a well-fitting baseline model for each group separately, Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans. The validity of these baseline models is tested separately for each group. Ideally, these models will be well-fitting and therefore best fit the data from the perspectives of both parsimony and substantive meaningfulness. However, measuring instruments are often group-specific in the way they operate, so it is possible that baseline models may not be completely identical across groups (Bentler, 2006).

Initial testing of the hypothesized model for the Asian American group (n=576) found that there was work to do in establishing an appropriate baseline model (S-B$\chi^2_{(15)}$= 17.06, *p*= .32; CFI= .99; RMSEA= .02, 90% C.I.= .00, .06). This means that this model was to be the baseline model for the Asian American group. The Korean American group (n=146) produced a good fit to the data (SB$\chi^2_{(15)}$= 24.21, *p*= .06; CFI= .91; RMSEA= .09, 90% C.I.= .00, .15). This model was deemed the appropriate baseline model for the Korean American group. The Korean group (n=130) also established an appropriate baseline model (S-B$\chi^2_{(15)}$= 13.82, *p*= .54; CFI= .99; RMSEA= .00, 90% C.I.= .00, .08).

With these baseline models established, we are now ready to test hypotheses bearing on the equivalence of the Asian American, Korean American, and Korean groups. The baseline models are shown in Figure 2, which provides the baseline models for the three groups under study, and we now combine them into one file for purposes of testing multi-group equivalence.

Testing for Ethnic Group Differences

To determine whether our hypothesized model fit equally well for each group (Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans), we ran multiple groups analyses. This procedure essentially tests whether ethnicity is a moderator of the hypothesized model. It simultaneously analyzes the data from each group separately (Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans) and determines whether a single model can reproduce the sample covariance matrices for each group within sampling accuracy. This step in testing cross-group equivalence requires only that the same number of factors and their loading pattern be the same across groups without equality constraints on the parameters. The configural model simply incorporates the baseline models for Asian American, Korean American, and Korean groups and allows for their simultaneous analyses. The multi-group representation of the baseline models allows for equivalence tests to be conducted across the groups simultaneously and provides the baseline value against which all subsequently specified invariance models are compared.

Results of the multiple groups analyses indicated that the hypothesized model fit equally well across all three ethnic groups, Satorra-Bentler χ^2 (63, N = 849) = 85.45, $p <$ .03, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = .04, 90% C.I.= .01, .06 (see Table 4). We also tested the model with fewer restrictions and model fit did not significantly change (e.g., ΔCFI < .01). This indicated that the hypothesized model fit equally well for each ethnic group, suggesting that variables used in this model conceptually reflected the same underlying constructs and each construct was related to the others in the same way for each ethnic group. Therefore, we can conclude that the configural model represents the data very well. This means that both the number of factors and the pattern of their variable loadings are similar across Asian American, Korean American, and Korean groups.

Table 4

*Results of model fit estimations by three groups for the hypothesized model*

	n	S-B χ^2	df	p	CFI	RMSEA	CI
All Ethnic Groups	849	85.45	63	.03	.98	.04	.01-.06
Asian American	576	17.06	15	.32	.99	.02	.00-.06
Korean American	146	24.21	15	.06	.91	.09	.00-.15
Korean	130	13.82	15	.54	.99	.00	.00-.08

Note. Satorra-Bentler chi-square (S-B χ^2), Comparative fit index (CFI), Root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) and its confidence interval (CI).

Path coefficients analysis

We also examined the significance and magnitude of the path coefficients in the hypothesized model for each group separately, Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans (see Figure 2). As predicted, ethnic identity was directly associated with more perceived discrimination ($\beta = .17$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .09$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .20$, $p < .001$, for the Asian American, Korean American, and Korean groups, respectively). Additionally, as predicted, ethnic identity was positively associated with in-group attitudes ($\beta = .40$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .57$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$), indicating that individuals (Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans) with higher ethnic identity viewed their in-group (Asian group) as more positively. Positive in-group attitudes were associated with more positive out-group attitudes ($\beta = .49$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .29$, $p < .001$; $\beta = .81$, $p < .001$), and in

turn less perceived discrimination (β = -.15, p < .001; β = -.62, p < .001; β = -.09, p < .001).
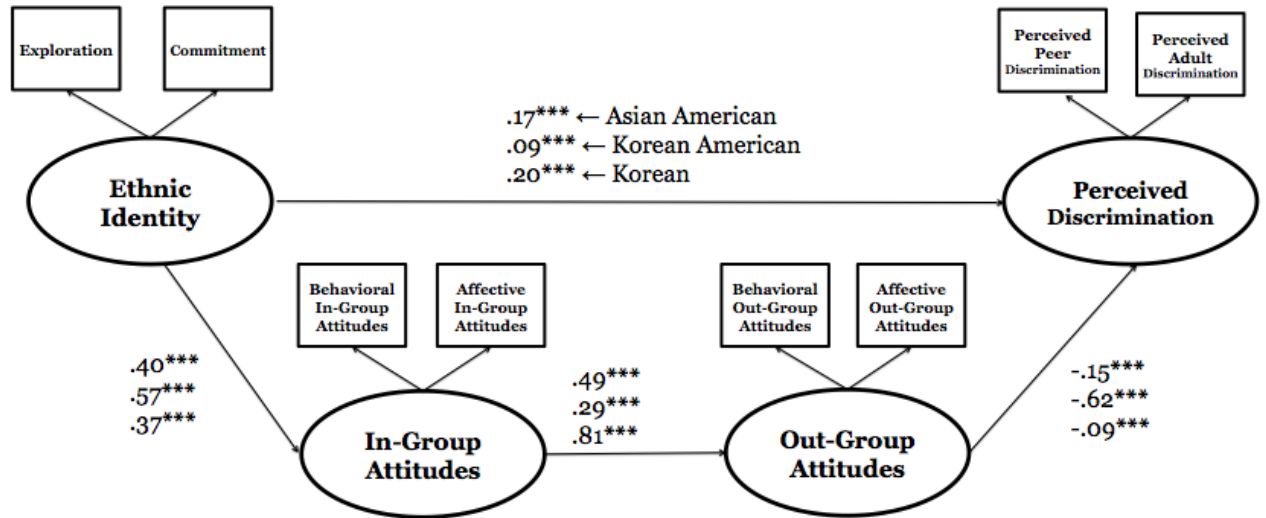
Hypothesized model with standardized path coefficients for Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans (top-to-bottom); *p < .05, ***p < .001, ⁺p = .06. LaGrange Multiplier and Wald Tests indicated that no additional paths should be added nor any of the hypothesized paths removed.

Discussion

Since public perceptions and discussions of Asian Americans have focused on their high level of academic achievement in the past, the myth of Asian Americans as a model minority continues. Consequently, the heterogeneous nature of the Asian-American group as well as their social-psychological development has been overlooked. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationships between ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, out-group attitudes, and perceived discrimination among Asian American, Korean-American, and Korean youths. Previously, the very few studies solely focusing on Asian Americans found that they continue to encounter group-based discrimination, which adversely affects their psychological health, as it does to other

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ethnic minority groups. Moreover, considering experiences of discrimination and intergroup attitudes, even though Phinney et al. (1997) suggested that ethnic identity and in-group attitudes should be differentiated, focus on out-group attitudes has overshadowed in-group attitudes (see Psacoe & Smart Richman, 2009).

The current study, by comparison, provides an integrative new framework for systematically and simultaneously examining how ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, and out-group attitudes represent dynamic relationships that lead to perceived discrimination. That is, the study showed how Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans, who have been simply viewed as members of a single group, Asian, undergo social-cognitive processes to experience perceived discrimination. The current study tested a hypothesized model with three goals. The first was to test whether ethnic identity has a direct effect on perceived discrimination. Consistent with Romero and Robert's model (1998), ethnic identity had a positive direct effect on perceived discrimination. That is, individuals who had stronger ethnic identities report more perceived discrimination.

The second goal was to examine whether ethnic identity has an indirect effect on perceived discrimination through in-group attitudes and out-group attitudes. Individuals who had stronger ethnic identities reported more positive in-group attitudes, which predicted more positive out-group attitudes and, subsequently, less perceived discrimination. Unlike Romero and Robert's model (1998), which asserted that people with stronger senses of ethnic identity are prone to form more negative out-group attitudes and perceive more discrimination, the current study showed that the relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination might change once in-group attitudes are taken into account. This indirect effect supported the necessity of separating

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ethnic identity and in-group attitudes, which Phinney et al. (1998) proposed. The indirect effects of ethnic identity and out-group attitudes, through in-group attitudes, are a part of the pathway of the hypothesized model, which not only replicates Phinney et al. (1998)'s causal model but also emphasizes the importance of positive in-group attitudes.

Since this study is cross-sectional, one should be cautious in interpreting casual relationships; nonetheless, these results suggest that when both strong ethnic identity and positive in-group attitudes (e.g., intra-group friendship) are properly formed, positive out-group attitudes will be formed, which will eventually leads to less perceived discrimination (ethnic identity ➔ in-group attitudes ➔ out-group attitudes ➔ perceived discrimination).

The final goal was to determine whether the above direct and indirect effects accurately capture the experiences of individuals across three different ethnic groups: Asian Americans, Korean Americans, and Koreans. The multiple group analyses, using SEM (EQS), indicated that the hypothesized model fit equally well across all three ethnic groups. This suggests that contributing factors to the perception of discrimination used in this model conceptually reflected the same underlying constructs, and each construct was related to the others in the same way for each ethnic group. While there are unique socio-cultural factors surrounding ethnic groups' experiences, some of the relatively "core" social cognitive processes (ethnic identity ➔ in-group attitudes ➔ out-group attitudes ➔ perceived discrimination).

To our knowledge, the current research is the first to evaluate whether the hypothesized direct and indirect pathways commonly operate in Asian Americans, who are within the same contexts as Korean Americans, and in Koreans, who share the same

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ancestry as Korean Americans. Considering the relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination, the positive direct effect and negative indirect effect imply that a higher sense of ethnic identity may become a double-edged sword for perceived discrimination. If we think there is a positive relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination, having a strong ethnic identity may be a risk factor, which leads to more perceived discrimination. We worry that a stronger ethnic identity is predictive of even greater perceived discrimination. On the contrary, if we think about indirect effects, which include in- and out-group attitudes, a stronger ethnic identity could be a good thing, because it leads to better in- and out-group attitudes, therefore leading to less perceived discrimination. Depending on the model and whether in-group attitudes are taken into account, a strong ethnic identity can be a risk factor, which leads to more perceived discrimination, or it can be a protective factor, leading to a lower likelihood of perceived discrimination. In short, these results indicate that not only a stronger ethnic identity but also enhanced positive in- and out-group attitudes are necessary to achieve less perceived discrimination.

Thus, we provide empirical support for the idea that there are both direct positive and indirect negative relationships between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination. Unlike previous studies, which asserted that people with stronger senses of ethnic identity are prone to form more negative out-group attitudes and perceive more discrimination, the current study showed that the relationship between ethnic identity and perceived discrimination might change once in-group attitudes are taken into account. Moreover, there is support for this idea across the three groups.

Limitations and Future Directions

The results need to be replicated by additional research before generalizations are made about Asian Americans or Korean descendants in other contexts or with other ethnic groups. Within the sample of Korean Americans, the subsample of middle school students in Northern and Southern California was heavily focused on a single school and involved 101 (69%) of the 140 students. Also, with the Korean sample, as the highest consideration was placed on an ethnically diverse context that was similar to that of the Korean American sample, three middle schools with the highest ethnic diversity in Korea were carefully selected. However, because the context in which each ethnic minority (including Korean Americans) was situated was also very diverse, the extent to which ethnic identity, in-group attitudes, and out-group attitudes operate as contributing factors to perceived discrimination may have been affected. To understand how the contributing factors above function across groups and contexts, more research incorporating more diverse contexts and ethnic groups needs to be conducted.

The fact that ethnic identity and intergroup attitudes related to the reporting of experiences of perceived discrimination may be inflated by individual factors, such as subjective experiences and perceptions, cannot be completely excluded or overlooked. Moreover, the cross-sectional nature of the data was another methodological limitation to this study. Since all the data were measured at a single time point, it is difficult to truly determine casual conclusions in a precise fashion. These cross-sectional data are vulnerable to the possibility that the experiences of perceived discrimination may influence the reports of ethnic identity or intergroup attitudes. Therefore, future studies are required to conduct a relevant longitudinal study.

Since the immigration of other ethnic groups into Korea has accelerated in very recent years, it is questionable how well Korean adolescents, members of a dominant majority group, truly understand ethnicity and how well they can provide precise answers to questions regarding ethnic identity, intergroup attitudes, and perceived discrimination. Researchers who conduct future cross-cultural studies on ethnicity targeting a homogeneous country should ensure that participants fully understand the concepts of ethnicity and ethnic identity.

When participants answered questions about in-group attitudes (e.g., attitudes about other Asian students), it is important to note that not all students may have identified with this broad category labeled "Asian;" on the contrary, students could have identified as a specific ethnic group under the category of Asian (e.g., Korean or Chinese). Based on the ethnic group information provided by the students, researchers categorized the Asian group as their in-group, while categorizing all other ethnic groups (African American and White groups) as out-groups. However, the authenticity of this classification may not be guaranteed. For instance, some Korean American adolescents may have identified the Asian group as their in-group, whereas other Korean American adolescents may have identified the East Asian or the Korean American group as their sole in-group. Thus, future studies need to allow students to self-identify their own in-group based on their own perceptions within the school context.

The current study demonstrated how feeling valued within one's own ethnic group shapes perceived discrimination directly and indirectly. Furthermore, identifying specific cultural mechanisms that can help moderate the effects of perceived discrimination may be useful in developing prevention-based interventions for at risk

Korean Americans and other Asian minority populations.

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