Sociability Gap between Chinese American Mothers and their Children: Consequences of Gap on Young School Age Children's Adjustment

Christine Nguyen
Psychology

Mentor: Jennifer Ablow
Psychology

Mentor: Jeffrey Measelle
Psychology

Mentor: Xiaoning Sun
Psychology

Asian Americans are known as the "model minority," an idea that views Asian Americans as academically gifted, wealthy, and living "the American dream," so that they never need any assistance (Qin, 2008; Kobayashi, 1999). However, recent research suggests that Asian American children may be paying socioemotional costs (Lorenzo, Frost, & Reinherz, 2000; Qin, Way, & Mukherjee, 2008). For example, Asian American youth are more likely to have increased depressive symptomatology, withdrawn behavior, and social problems (Lorenzo et al., 2000). Studies with adolescents have examined the role of parent-child relationships (Costigan, Hua, & Su, 2010; Qin, 2008) and, more specifically, parent-child acculturation gaps in relation to these socioemotional costs (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Juang, Syed, & Takagi, 2007; Lim, Yeh, Liang, Lau, & McCabe, 2008).

The acculturation gap itself is the different rates at which immigrant parents and their children typically adjust to their host culture (Jung, 2013; Telzer, 2011). The acculturation gap-distress model is the idea that socio-

emotional differences between parent and child, created by the acculturation gap, results in family conflict and child maladjustment (Telzer, 2011). Most studies have found that the acculturation gap is associated with socioemotional costs for immigrant youth (Chen et al., 2014; Costigan & Dokis, 2006), although other notable researchers have failed to find any association (Lau et al., 2005; Gil, Vega, Dimas, 1994). The acculturation gap has typically been described and defined in past studies with multiple domains, including language, social relationships, and ethnic interactions (Suinn, Kathryn, Lew, & Vigil, 1987). While many of these domains involve an element of sociability, past research has generally not investigated aspects of a person's sociability when considering how gaps between generations might contribute to maladjustment. Sociability is defined here as "the preference to be with people and to interact with others" (Elovainio et al., 2015, p. 204). Past research has also largely neglected to look at the acculturation gap's effect on younger populations, instead focusing mostly on Asian American adolescents and their parents.

This study investigates how an acculturation gap, defined by the difference in dimensions of sociability between Chinese American mothers and their 5- to 7-year-old children, affects the children's adjustment in their early school years. We are investigating whether these "model minority" children are paying a price following the transition to school, despite the other perceived benefits, such as academic success, that they have over children of other minorities.

Literature Review

Acculturation, Acculturation Gap, andthe Acculturation Gap-Distress Model

As Telzer (2011) discusses, acculturation is the intricate process by which immigrants adapt to their new host culture. Through this adaptation,

their heritage values, beliefs, and behaviors may change. The challenge that immigrant individuals face is retaining the values of their heritage culture while also accepting the values of their host culture. This becomes even more complicated when considered within multi-generational familial contexts that involve immigrant parents and their children adjusting to the host culture in different ways and at different rates. When such intergenerational differences occur, the result is known as the acculturation gap (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Telzer, 2011).

As briefly introduced, the acculturation gap-distress model describes conditions when maladjustment occurs because of the different rates at which immigrant parents, as compared to their children, adapt to a new culture (Telzer, 2011). Multiple approaches to the model have been taken, as Telzer (2011) points out in her integrative review. Some studies have chosen to look at how parents and children have acculturated just to the host culture (Crane, Ngai, Larson, & Hafen, 2005; Juang et al., 2007; Tardif & Geva, 2006), while others have chosen to look at acculturation in relation to both the host and heritage cultures (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Lim et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2009). Also, researchers have proposed many different ways to measure acculturation (e.g., language proficiency, friendship, traditions, and values). Some studies have chosen to focus on one domain (Juang et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2009), while others have chosen to look at multiple domains (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Crane et al., 2005). Outcomes, defined broadly in the model as family conflict and child maladjustment, are measured in diverse ways. Some common outcome variables include depression (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Crane, Ngai, Larson, & Hafen, 2005; Juang et al., 2007), family conflict (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Tardif & Geva, 2006) and parenting behaviors (Buki, Ma, Strom, & Strom, 2003; Weaver & Kim, 2008).

Because of the many different ways that researchers have approached

the acculturation gap-distress model, the various findings often conflict with other literature. Overall, most studies have found that an acculturation gap is correlated with some maladjustment, both for immigrants in general (Birman, 2006; Smokowski, Rose, & Bacallao, 2008) and, more specifically, for Chinese Americans (Tardif & Geva, 2006; Weaver & Kim, 2008). As a result, we hypothesize that the larger the gap between parent and child, the worse the maladjustment for the child. However, as Telzer (2011) argues, much more research must be done with the acculturation gap-distress model because, as it stands, findings indicate that the model oversimplifies a complex issue. Rather than simply a difference in acculturation between parent and child being the sole reason that conflicts arise, acculturation may influence other factors that also affect child adjustment. Our study approaches this model by looking at different levels of sociability between mother and child as one of these possible factors.

Acculturation and Sociability

Although sociability as it relates to the acculturation gap has been neglected in past literature, it has been acknowledged as an important part of acculturation through other, albeit minor, means. Global acculturation scales have often included measures of social relationships. The Cultural and Social Acculturation Scale (CSAS; Chen & Lee, 1996) is one example, and it has a subscale about social relationships. The Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA; Suinn et al., 1987) has a subscale for friendship/community choices similar to the CSAS's subscale for social relationships. Both scales seek to establish the ethnicity respondents choose to interact with most. Social interactions have always been a part of looking at acculturation, but sociability itself, to our knowledge, has never been used to conceptualize the acculturation gap. This oversight is surprising in that sociability is a measure of a core social characteristic that

greatly influences how open individuals are to others of a given culture. In essence, sociability defines directly what the above scales try to measure indirectly. Social relations are an important factor to examine because they are an essential way to access any given culture. After all, becoming a part of a culture means willingly interacting with individuals within that culture, and that is the definition of sociability (Elovainio et al., 2015).

In terms of possible links to maladjustment, individual differences in sociability levels have also been linked to an individual's level of depression (Elovainio et al., 2015), a symptom that has been found to be significantly correlated to the acculturation gap (Costigan & Dokis, 2006; Crane et al., 2005). Our study explores whether there is a link between acculturation and sociability—specifically, the difference between mother-child sociability levels—which may in turn explain child adjustment, including levels of depression. Asian American youth, in particular, have difficulty with depression and other issues of adjustment, despite the stereotype of being the "model minority" (Qin, 2008).

The Reality of "Model Minority" Youth

It is not so much that the "model minority" idea is completely unfounded, but rather that it reduces Asian Americans, with all their successes and flaws, down to three generalized characteristics. From these three characteristics comes one oversimplified conclusion: as the "model minority," Asian Americans are academically gifted, eventually become wealthy through successful careers, and are living "the American dream" (Qin, 2008; Kobayashi, 1999), Therefore, they do not need any sort of assistance.

Indeed Asian Americans hold the highest high school GPAs on average in the United States and have been doing so consistently for at least the last three decades (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2009). Aca-

demic success and feelings about academic competence have commonly been used in research as positive signs of child adjustment (Liu, Benner, Lau, & Kim, 2009; Measelle, Ablow, Cowan, & Cowan, 1998). Studies of Asian American adolescents suggest that, despite their academic success, they tend to have higher levels of difficulty coping with negative emotions as compared to Caucasian American adolescents (Abe & Zane, 1990). A study by Cummings, Case, Ji, Chae, and Druss (2014) found that Asian American adolescents are less likely than Caucasian Americans to endorse thoughts of depression, thoughts of suicide, or attempts at suicide as reasons to seek out mental health treatment. In addition to having difficulties dealing with such negative feelings, Asian American adolescent girls had the highest level of depression among all races, as well as the second highest rate of suicide in 2009 among all women between 15-24 years of age (National Center for Health Statistics, 2012, as cited in Hahm, Gonyea, Chiao, & Koritsanszky, 2014).

The body of past research suggests that issues related to internalizing emotions and depression are, in general, likely to play some role in higher rates of suicide. Acculturation gaps tend to be correlated with depression in adolescence in many studies, including those of Costigan and Dokis (2006) and Crane et al. (2005). It is particularly important to examine whether acculturation gaps correlate with internalizing problems in young children, as any family interventions/parental trainings can be implemented at an early age. This in turn may help lower the suicide rates and depression levels in adolescent Chinese Americans.

Young Children, their Social Development, and Acculturation

As important as it is to understand the problems of adolescents, it is also vital to examine why, developmentally, five to seven is a critical age for this study, outside of simply intervening for issues that may arise years

later. In the United State, children between five and seven years old are either just entering school or have been in school only for a year or two. In the context of culture, this is the first major introduction to any culture that children face other than the one they are exposed to at home. Developmentally, because they are now regularly in a setting with peers, children aged five to seven begin to learn social skills, including sharing (Malti, Gummerum, Keller, Chaparro, & Buchmann, 2012). Malti et al. (2012) found that at age six, children's feelings of social acceptance, which is a part of sociability as it is based in each child's perception of acceptance by peers, affects their sharing at age seven. Clearly, children at this age are already sensitive to the acceptance of their peers from the host culture and those feelings begin to affect future social behaviors. Our study focused on this critical period when children begin to build the foundations of their social interactions and when influences from environments outside the home may begin to affect their sociability.

There is also the issue that researchers simply have not closely examined acculturation and the acculturation gap for this age group. In the few studies that have examined the parent–child acculturation gap's effect on children, most chose to focus on adolescents instead of younger children. There are a variety of reasons for that emphasis, including the fact that there are limited ways to ensure younger children accurately self-report their experiences (Measelle et al., 1998). Instead, the limited studies that have looked at younger age groups in relation to acculturation have had parents report most of the child measures with a few done by the children's teachers as well (Chen et al., 2014). Therefore, it is clear that more research is needed in order to understand the effect of the acculturation gap on Chinese American parents and young children, a population that has been given little attention in relation to acculturation. Of the little research that has been done, no study has looked at the issue of acculturation using self-reports of early elementary school children.

Current Study

The present study investigates how, with mothers' acculturation as a predictor, the sociability gap between Chinese American mothers and their children is associated with children's adjustment in their early school years. We examined these associations to detect whether "model minority" children are paying a price following the transition to school. Specifically, we sought to understand whether a mother's acculturation levels were associated with her and her child's sociability. To the extent that a mother's and child's sociability levels were different, especially if this difference occurred because of acculturative processes, we expected that such a mismatch, or gap would hold negative implications for the child. In sum, this study investigated the extent to which a gap in sociability between the mother and the child anticipates the child's socioemotional adjustment (see Figure 1). We hypothesized that the more mothers were acculturated, whether to their heritage or host culture, the smaller the sociability gap between mother and child, and that a smaller sociability gap would, in turn, be associated with less child maladjustment.

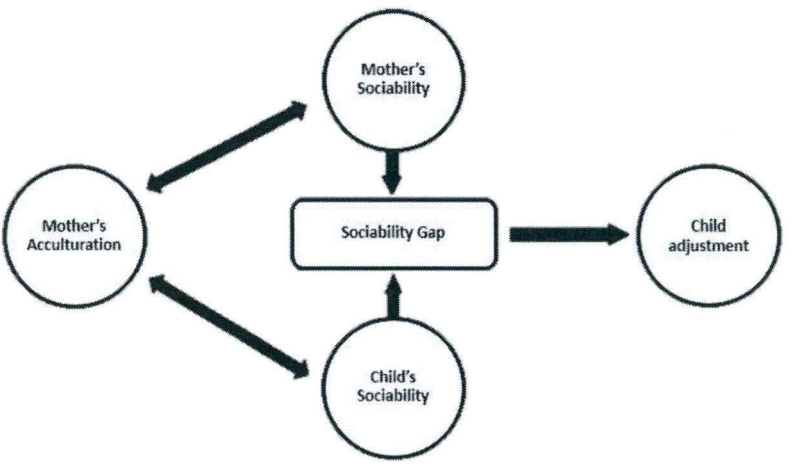

Figure 1: Sociability Gap Diagram

Method

Participants and Procedures

The sample comprised 70 Chinese American children (36 female, 34 male) and their mothers from the San Francisco Bay Area. This sample was taken from a larger dissertation study examining the emotional experience of Chinese American children as compared to that of Caucasian American children (Liu, 2008).

Measures

Mothers' acculturation. Mothers reported their acculturation on two 37-item versions of the General Ethnicity Questionnaire: the Chinese and American versions (GEQ-C and GEQ-A; Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000). Those measures assessed the degree of affiliation with each culture. Mothers were asked to rate their endorsement of language use and proficiency, social affiliation, cultural pride, participation in cultural activities, and food preference in both Chinese and American cultures using a 5-point Likert scale (1 being "strongly disagree," and 5 being "strongly agree"). The Chinese version also asked about exposure to Chinese culture, and the American version asked about preference of media in English. The internal consistencies for both scales were high ($\alpha = .916$ for the GEQ-C and $\alpha = .923$ for the GEQ-A).

Mother sociability scores. In addition to answering questions on the GEQ-C and the GEQ-A, mothers also reported their acculturation on the Suinn-Lew Asian Self Identity Acculturation (SL-ASIA; Suinn et al., 1987). Select items from the SL-ASIA and GEQ-C and GEQ-A were used to measure sociability. These items were sorted into either the introversion/extraversion or social acceptance dimension of sociability. The introversion/extraversion dimension was used in this study to determine

how open participants were to being involved within their community. The social acceptance dimension, on the other hand, looked at whether participants felt accepted by others within their community. For example, a pair of items from the introversion/extraversion dimension were "I go to places where people are Chinese" and "I go to places where people are American" (GEQ-C and GEQ-A; Tsai et al., 2000). Mothers who scored higher on this pair of items were considered more highly sociable on that dimension, as they associated with both major cultures of their identity. Internal consistencies were rather low for all dimensions ($\alpha = .467$ for the introversion/extraversion dimension, $\alpha = .429$ for the social acceptance dimension, and $\alpha = .622$ for sociability in general). These low internal consistencies are likely the result of our study being unable to tap into the different reasons behind similar results.

Child sociability scores. Child sociability was measured using the Berkeley Puppet Interview Symptomatology scales (BPI-S; Measelle et al., 1998), a semi-structured interview for measuring children's self-reported level of depression, over anxiousness, asocial behavior with peers, separation anxiety, and social inhibition.

The BPI-S used two identical, gender neutral puppy puppets named Iggy and Ziggy to interview the children. A trained interviewer had Iggy and Ziggy offer opposing statements about themselves, and then had the puppets ask the children to provide responses about their own related self-perceptions. For example, one puppet would say "I'm a sad kid," and the other puppet would say, "I'm not a sad kid." Both puppets would then simultaneously ask the child, "How about you?" Children were able to respond either verbally or in a gestural manner in order to keep the child as comfortable as possible with the process. The exchange was videotaped and coded in a laboratory on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating very negative self-perception or severe distress in reported symptomatology

(i.e., "I'm always sad.") and 7 indicating very positive self-perception or no symptomatology (i.e., "I'm never a sad kid").

Select items were categorized under the introversion/extraversion and social acceptance dimensions. An example item from the introversion/extraversion dimension is "at recess, I'd rather do things with other kids./ At recess, I'd rather do things by myself." In contrast, the example item "I wish people liked me more./ I don't wish people liked me more" helped to illustrate the dimension of social acceptance (BPI-S; Measelle et al., 1998). Internal consistencies ranged from $\alpha = .915$ for the introversion/extraversion dimension, to $\alpha = .494$ for the social acceptance dimension, resulting in $\alpha = .827$ for sociability in general.

Sociability gap scores. Three mother-child sociability gap scores were calculated using the parents' and the children's scores on the two dimensions of sociability, introversion/extraversion and social acceptance, as well as sociability in general. Again, mothers' sociability was measured from select items of the GEQ-C, GEQ-A (Tsai et al., 2000) and SL-ASIA (Suinn et al., 1987) while children's sociability was measured by responses to BPI (Measelle et al., 1998).

Child maladjustment. Child maladjustment items were measured using the Berkeley Puppet Interview Symptomatology scales (Measelle et al., 1998) on the subscales of Depression, Overanxiousness, and Asocial with Peers. The BPI scale was reversed for child maladjustment symptoms, so that on the 7-point Likert scale, 1 indicates very positive self-perception in reported symptomatology and 7 indicates very negative self-perception symptomatology. Internal consistencies ranged from .396 to .524 (Depression $\alpha = 0.524$; Overanxious $\alpha = 0.396$; Asocial with Peers $\alpha = .505$), which were a bit low.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents means and standard deviations of the participants' demographic characteristics. The gender breakdown of the children was nearly equal, with 36 girls and 34 boys. On average, the children are 6.5 years old (SD=0.8). All mothers and fathers in the sample were of Chinese descent, 95% of whom were born in Asia, and 5% of whom were born in the US. As for the Chinese American children, approximately 92% of them were born in the US while approximately 8% were born in Canada, Taiwan, or Hong Kong. All children immigrated to the US before they turned two. The Chinese American mothers had lived in the United States for an average of eight years at the time the data was collected.

Participants self-identified as Chinese American, and their levels of acculturation to both Chinese and American culture were assessed.

Mother-Child Sociability Gap Scores

Mothers' and children's scores were averaged along each dimension of sociability, respectively. This left each mother-child dyad with six means, creating three pairs along introversion/extraversion, social acceptance, and sociability in general. Each mean was standardized into z scores in order to have all scores comparable across different measurements. Both difference and regression methods were then used to analyze the gap score. Mothers' standardized averages were taken from their children's z scores, which resulted in three difference sociability gap scores for each mother-child dyad. Similarly, three standardized residual scores were generated with mother z scores as the independent variable and child z scores as the dependent variable.

Our study chose to look at both difference and regression methods, as

Table 1: Demographics Means and Frequencies

Variables	Chinese American (n = 70)
Gender	
Female	36 (51.4%)
Male	34 (48.6%)
Child's Age (months)	77.5 (9.0)
Child's Birthplace	
United States	65 (92.8%)
China	1 (1.4%)
Taiwan	2 (2.9%)
Hong Kong	1 (1.4%)
Canada	1 (1.4%)
Mother's Birthplace	
United States	3 (4.3%)
China	15 (21.4%)
Taiwan	49 (70.0%)
Hong Kong	1 (1.4%)
Malaysia	1 (1.4%)
Vietnam	1 (1.4%)
Father's Birthplace	
United States	4 (5.7%)
China	16 (22.9%)
Taiwan	44 (62.9%)
Hong Kong	4 (5.7%)
Malaysia	1 (1.4%)
Vietnam	1 (1.4%)
Community	
% of Mother's Friends with Same Ethnicity	83.1 (14.3)
% of Child's Friends with Same Ethnicity	68.7 (24.4)
Acculturation	
American Culture	3.09 (.50)
Chinese Culture	3.66 (.49)
Gap Score	
Introversion/Extraversion Difference	-.22 (1.12)
Introversion/Extraversion Standardized Residual	.00 (.99)
Social Acceptance Difference	.00 (.91)
Social Acceptance Standardized Residual	.00 (.99)
Sociability Difference	-.22 (1.12)
Sociability Standardized Residual	.00 (.99)
Child Adjustment	
Depression	3.49 (.66)
Over anxiousness	2.90 (.66)
Separation Anxiety	3.11 (.63)
Asocial w/ Peers	2.48 (.63)
Social Inhibition	3.52 (.54)
General Internalizing	3.12 (.42)

the former primarily examines the gap of each dyad but with little consideration for the sample at large, while the latter compares each dyad to the sample's results at large. The data in Table 2 reveals that the difference scores and standardized residual scores were strongly correlated on all dimensions of sociability. This indicated that both methods of examining the gap were valid, as compared to one another.

Acculturation and Sociability Gap Scores

Table 2 also lays out the correlations between each gap score from each dimension of sociability to the mothers' Chinese and American acculturation. It indicates that there were no significant correlations between a mother's acculturation to Chinese culture and mother-child sociability gaps, on any dimension. However, there was a strong negative correlation between a mothers' acculturation to American culture and the mother-child sociability gap along the social acceptance dimension when looking at both the difference ($r(65) = -.350$, $p < .01$) and standardized residual scores ($r(65) = -.339$, $p < .01$).

As mothers acculturate more to American culture, the smaller the gap between mother and child's sociability becomes when examining it along the social acceptance dimension.

Sociability Gap Scores and Child Maladjustment

Table 3, which depicts correlations between the sociability gap scores and child maladjustment subscales, shows that both the difference sociability gap score and the standardized residual sociability gap score were significantly negatively correlated with general internalizing symptoms (see columns 3a and 3b in Table 3). This result indicated that the larger the sociability gap between mother and child, the less the children suffered from maladjustment symptoms. This particular result, however, seemed to have been driven mostly by the social acceptance dimension of socia-

bility (see columns 2a and 2b in Table 3) which was strongly negatively correlated with depression and negatively correlated with general internalizing symptoms. Thus, the larger the social acceptance gap between mother and child, in particular, the less the children suffered from maladjustment symptoms, and more specifically, the less the children suffered from depression. The introversion/extraversion dimension was strongly negatively correlation with the asocial with peers subscale but was not correlated with general internalizing (columns 1a and 1b in Table 3). The over anxiousness subscale was found to be insignificantly correlated to all gap scores.

Discussion

This study aimed to see how, with mothers' acculturation as a predictor, the sociability gap between Chinese American mothers and their children affects the children's adjustment in their early school years. We hypothesized that the more mothers are acculturated to either their heritage culture or their host culture, the smaller the sociability gap would be between mother and child, and this would, in turn, be associated with less child maladjustment. Evidence only partially supported this hypothesis. Mothers' Chinese level of acculturation was not significantly correlated to any dimension of sociability gap between her and her child. Mothers' American acculturation level, in our study, was a significant predictor of mother-child sociability gap, though only along the social acceptance dimension. Although our hypothesis was based on the fact that most of past literature found significant effects of gaps in both host and heritage cultures of diverse populations (Kim, Chen, Li, Huang, & Moon, 2009; Lim et al., 2008), a few studies found that only the heritage culture was significant (Costigan & Dokis, 2006), and a few others found that only the host culture played a role in the gap (Birman, 2006).

Table 2: Mothers' Acculturation Correlations with Sociability Gap Scores

Variables		1a.	1b.	2a.	2b.	3a.	3b.	4.	5.
1a. Introversion/Extraversion Difference	Pearson Correlation	1	.889**	.173	.133	.849**	.795**	.024	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.167	.292	.000	.000	.852	.489
	N	65	65	65	65	65	65	61	64
1b. Introversion/Extraversion Standardized Residual	Pearson Correlation	.889**	1	.007	.002	.795**	.905**	.133	.048
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		.956	.985	.000	.000	.307	.707
	N	65	65	65	65	65	65	61	64
2a. Social Acceptance Difference	Pearson Correlation	.173	.007	1	.890**	.553**	.309*	.014	-.350**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.167	.956		.000	.000	.012	.916	.004
	N	65	65	70	70	65	65	62	65
2b. Social Acceptance Standardized Residual	Pearson Correlation	.133	.002	.890**	1	.553**	.347**	.051	-.339**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.292	.985	.000		.000	.005	.695	.006
	N	65	65	70	70	65	65	62	65
3a. Sociability Difference	Pearson Correlation	.849**	.795**	.553**	.533**	1	.901**	.004	-.141
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.977	.265
	N	65	65	65	65	65	65	61	64

3b. Sociability Standardized Residual	Pearson Correlation	.795**	.905**	.309*	.347**	.901**	1	.118	.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.012	.005	.000		.366	.913
	N	65	65	65	65	65	65	61	64
4. Mother Acculturation to Chinese Culture (GEQ-C)	Pearson Correlation	.024	.133	.014	.051	.004	.118	1	-.403**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.852	.307	.916	.695	.977	.366		.001
	N	61	61	62	62	61	61	62	62
5. Mother Acculturation to American Culture (GEQ-A)	Pearson Correlation	-.088	.048	-.350**	-.339**	-.141	.014	-.403**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.489	.707	.004	.006	.265	.913	.001	
	N	64	64	65	65	64	64	62	65

**. correlation is significant at .01 level (two-tailed)
*. correlation is significant at .05 level (Two-tailed)

Table 3: *Sociability Gap Scores Correlations with Child Maladjustment subscales*

Variables		Depression	Overanxious	Asocial w/ Peers	General Internalizing
1a. Introversion/ Extraversion Difference	Pearson Correlation	.169	.081	-.634**	-.156
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.179	.520	.000	.215
	N	65	65	65	65
1b. Introversion/ Extraversion Standardized Residual	Pearson Correlation	.204	.100	-.752**	-.169
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.104	.430	.000	.177
	N	65	65	65	65
2a. Social Acceptance Difference	Pearson Correlation	-.396**	-.090	-.129	-.381*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.475	.305	.002
	N	65	65	65	65
2b. Social Acceptance Standardized Residual	Pearson Correlation	-.424**	-.081	-.152	-.398*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.519	.226	.001
	N	65	65	65	65
3a. Sociability Difference	Pearson Correlation	-.057	.031	-.684**	-.367**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.654	.519	.000	.003
	N	65	65	65	65
3b. Sociability Standardized Residual	Pearson Correlation	-.003	.068	-.782**	-.343**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.984	.590	.000	.005
	N	65	65	65	65

**. correlation is significant at .01 level (two-tailed)
*. correlation is significant at .05 level (Two-tailed)

The mother-child social acceptance gap was found, in turn, to be a significant predictor of children's internalizing problems, although this significance was driven in large part by the gap's effect on depression. This study provided evidence that the less Chinese American mothers are acculturated to American culture, the larger the difference will be between their level of sociability along the social acceptance dimension and their children's level of sociability. This larger gap correlated with less child depression.

These results are surprising because, although a gap was found, it was found to be negatively correlated with child maladjustment. While some past literature has found no correlation between a gap and child maladjustment (Lau et al., 2005; Smokowski et al., 2008), to our knowledge, no research has found that the larger the gap, the better child outcomes. The results here may have to do with this study being the first to look at the sociability gap in particular. It could be that it is more beneficial for children to feel more social acceptance than their mothers who are less acculturated to American culture, so that the children feel less depressed and are less socially inhibited. Perhaps mothers who are less socialized to American culture can invest more time in their children, which in turn may reduce children's symptoms of maladjustment. Another issue related to this study is that it did not examine the fathers' acculturation and sociability levels. More investigation into the effect of acculturation on sociability levels of diverse families and subsequent consequences for their children needs to occur. Because the result from this study was vastly different from the results of past studies focused on the acculturation gap's effect on adolescents, it would be beneficial to invest in a future longitudinal study. It is possible, and even likely, that acculturation and sociability gaps have different implications for children from diverse families as the children get older.

Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that participants for this study were recruited from the San Francisco Bay Area, an area with a large community of Chinese Americans. These results may not be generalizable to other areas with smaller Chinese American communities.

The creation of mothers' sociability scores by averaging mothers' results on items across measures of both Chinese acculturation and American acculturation was another limitation of this study as indicated by the fairly low internal consistencies. These methods allow the same scores to be derived in different ways, which makes the middle ranges of these variables impossible to interpret. Consequently, this limitation caused mothers' internal consistency scores to be fairly low. Future studies would have to create a sociability scale for sociability specifically, rather than taking items from measures of acculturation. Internal consistencies for BPI subscales were also somewhat low, indicating that these Chinese American children are likely interacting with BPI items differently than populations previously examined with that scale. Therefore, it is essential that any future study wishing to utilize the BPI with Chinese American children must find a way to adjust BPI items in order to improve how these children interact with such items.

Overall, our results indicated clearly that acculturation has a potential effect on mother-child differences—in this case, a sociability gap—and subsequently one that can have an impact on child adjustment. This result, at least, is congruent with the majority of past studies done on the acculturation gap. Thus, our findings support and highlight the importance of working with Chinese American families as a whole when trying to help their children deal with issues such as depression, and that differences caused by acculturation may play a hand in any maladjustment issues.

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